St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church

2021 Annual Report

From the Pastor's Desk

Rev. Dr. Chris Currie

Dear SCAPC community,

Many years ago the theologian Karl Barth compared the task of theology to trying to capture a bird in flight. The activity of God is a dynamic enterprise so trying to capture it doesn't really give us the whole picture but just a momentary snapshot of a thing in motion. In essence, an annual report is like trying to take a fixed picture of something dynamic. It is difficult to adequately capture the whole of our life together in this beautifully prepared annual report. Hard to capture here is the dexterity and nimbleness of church staff to prepare for online worship, in-person worship, covid spikes, and windows of opportunity. Hard to capture here are all the new faces we have welcomed and all the lives well-lived we have offered back to God with our gratitude. Hard to capture here are all the floors that have been mucked out and all the laughter shared and shoulders leaned upon. Hard to capture here is an elder class that began with a pastoral transition followed by a global pandemic followed by an interim pastorate followed by the calling of a new pastor followed by more waves of the pandemic. In these pages, not only will you see that we are still standing, but that through worship, spiritual formation, care of souls, small group gatherings, and all our attempts to keep us together and put things back together, we are moving forward into God's future with hope, perseverance, and thanksgiving. Most of all, as you look at this momentary snapshot of our life together in these pages, I trust you will be filled with gratitude for the presence of God in all our dangers, toils, and snares, and for that dynamic divine presence in all our triumphs, joys, and celebrations. May what you find in these pages fill you with courage to participate in this work, and fill you with hope for what is yet to come.

In faith, hope, and love,

Chris

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

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Meeting of the Congregation
St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church
New Orleans, Louisiana
Sunday, February 6, 2022

AGENDA

Call to Order and Opening Prayer	Chris Currie, Moderator
Declaration of Quorum and Purpose of the Meeting	Laurie Young, Clerk of Session
Distribution of the Annual Report	Ushers
Report of the 2022 Stewardship Campaign	Price Lanier, 2021 Chair, Stewardship
Presentation of the 2022 Church Budget	Curtis Cunningham, 2022 Chair, Finance
Presentation of the Congregational Nominating Committee	Jenny Baldwin, 2022 Chair, Member Involvement

This committee will recruit and nominate church members for the Session Class of 2025

GROUP REPRESENTED	THE 2022 COMMITTEE
Session, Class of 2022	Jenny Baldwin, Chair
Session Class of 2023	Kate Prechter
Session Class of 2024	Richard Seelman
Presbyterian Women	Kathy Randall
Senior Adults	Geoff Snodgrass
Staff	Lynn Hoffman
Young Adults and Families	Caty Johnson
Youth	Lock Gottsche

Approval of Changes in Pastors' Terms of Call	Randy Evans, 2022 Chair of Personnel
Adjournment and Closing Prayer	Sarah Chancellor-Watson, Vice Moderator

COMMUNITY MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Chair: Jane Rasi | Vice-Chair: Elizabeth Artigues

Community Ministry has been active this year working beside our community partners; meeting them in new ways when needed in the pandemic world and continuing to support them in our traditional ways where possible. Many partners had successfully transitioned into successful distance models, offering online support and take away meals. Others had found ways to keep their clients safe and thriving under the strain of new protocols by the beginning of 2021. A few agencies were closed but were still working for their clients by strengthening ties with Broadmoor Improvement Association. At the end of the year, all our community partner agencies are open and serving our city's vulnerable populations.

We started the year in lockdown, looking for ways to connect with both our agencies and our congregation. During Lent, our congregation prayed intentionally for our partners. In May, we held an outdoor event on the lawn at the Land Building and walked at Audubon as we visited and learned more about needs in the community from representatives of the agencies.

New Orleans Charter Science and Math High School moved into a new building which we were able to tour.

Okra Abbey added a community refrigerator. Our congregation is faithful in filling it.
We communicated with our agencies about their antiracism efforts and ran a series of articles in the Quatrefoil that highlighted their efforts in this area.

Through RHINO and donations by the congregation, we responded to Hurricane Ida.

Fall opened with Reconnect with the Corner where we could share information and opportunities with fellow congregants. We were able to return to some traditional events: CM workday and CM Sunday in October and Missions Marketplace in November.

We receive grant requests for 2022 in November. Our partner agencies provided us with updates on their accomplishments, goals, and needs. We are blessed to be a part of the work that they do in the city. Let us continue to be a blessing to them through our prayers, our finances, and our time.

As we reviewed the grant requests for 2022, we realized we would be able to finance repairs to the New Orleans Mission vegetable and herb garden with money from our general benevolence fund. We also answered a request for funds for gift cards for children of incarcerated women. This is an annual project of St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church.

A heartfelt thanks to the SCAPC congregation, staff, and committee members for their dedication to our neighbors.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Rasi, 2021 Chair, Community Ministries

CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE

Chair: Stephanie Haniford | Vice-Chair: Sheila Schwartzmann

Congregational Care's 2021 Objective: SCAPC's Congregational Care Committee worked collaboratively to safely meet the needs of our congregation during the pandemic.

Congregational Care Members: Stephanie Haniford, Sheila Schwartzmann, Sarah Chancellor-Watson, Chris Hazlaris, Bria Rault, Mary Lou O'Keefe, Ann Byerly, Melissa McDonald, Nancy Rix, Miriam Hollar, Larry Hamric, JoAnne Chancey, Barbara Bush, Betty Hope, Candy Cranch, Cecile Gordon, Delia Hardie, Gerlie Weinstein, Jane Rasi, Jane Favrot, Mikell Johnson, Nell Lanier, Sally Wimberly, and Susie Taylor Rumsfeld

Brunch and Fellowship with High School Seniors
In May, Congregational Care celebrated SCAPC's high school seniors. Seniors and their parents were treated to fellowship and brunch. Seniors received a blanket embroidered with SCAPC's quatrefoil as a gift. Candy Cranch created a beautiful banner and provided table decorations. Congregational Care also offered a prayer for these young adults at the 10:30 worship service.

Caring for Nursing Home and Homebound Presbyterians
Committee members assembled and delivered holiday gift bags at Easter and Christmas to SCAPC members and non-member Presbyterians living in nursing homes and other facilities.

Notes and Other Correspondence
Mary Lou has continued to provide correspondence to SCAPC members who are in need of prayer. Other members of our committee also wrote personalized notes to senior congregants that are homebound throughout the year.

Birthday Cards for SCAPC Members Age 70 and Older
Congregational Care members took turns writing and sending personalized birthday cards to church members that are 70 or older.

Pantry Ministry and Meal Trains
Congregational Care organized several Meal Trains for those in need. We were able to provide meals for those who were bereaved, had a new baby, or were ill. We were also able to welcome the Currie to New Orleans by organizing a Meal Train of our own favorite New Orleans treats, foods, and meals. The committee held a pantry drive in November to restock the freezer for those in need.

Prayer Shawls
Ann Byerly has continued to lead our prayer shawl ministry for those in need at our church. Additional shawls are in the library and a roster is being kept for those who receive the shawls so that we can pray for them at meetings.

COVID Vaccine Assistance
In February, Miriam Hollar and Larry Hamric assisted senior congregants by providing guidance on how to schedule COVID vaccinations. Committee members were available to provide transportation if needed.

SCAPC Rally Day
Congregational Care represented at SCAPC's Rally Day. We were able to share what our committee does, and several congregants expressed interest in serving our church.

Submitted by
Stephanie Haniford, 2021 Chair, Congregational Care

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE

Chair: Julie Nice | Vice-Chair: Meg Gammage

This was an exceptional year due to the pandemic, yet it is amazing what we could do to remind everyone that we are still a wonderful community! In 2021, the church was able to do many things despite necessary health protocols, supported by a modest budget, ever-inventive staff, enthusiastic volunteers, and donors of food and other supplies that leverage the available funds.

Wednesday Night Out

While COVID protocols did not allow for Wednesday Night Out events to be held in the usual manner, we had two "WNO To Go" events, one in March and one in October, that clearly met a need because we had so many people participating. Thanks to Michele Murphy for the idea and event plan, and to Jim and Bonnie Hobden for doing extraordinary cooking in the church kitchen for these popular occasions.

After Worship Fellowship

The pattern of occasional surges of cases during the pandemic yielded alternating periods of somewhat normal after-church coffee fellowship with outdoor refreshments, or no refreshments at all. We missed these small but reliable weekly get-togethers and look forward to the day when we will resume our coffee plus light snacks providing an excuse to linger after church.

Special Events and Activities, including "Gratitude and Appreciation" Occasions

- Drive-by farewell to Michael Jinkins–who would have ever dreamed we would do this sort of thing? Thanks especially to the dedicated volunteers who ran this event.
- Farewell ceremony at Michael's last Sunday as Interim Senior Pastor
- Farewell basket for the Jinkinses–Ann Van Horn was the brains and the brawn behind this lovely gesture of thanks.
- Church history book-signing featuring Don Frampton–huge thanks to Nancy Ellis!
- Snowball Sunday–done with an outdoor cart, when we didn't have any after-worship snacks, so it was remarkable!
- "Hats Off to Donald" reception for Donald Jefferson's delayed celebration of his 25th anniversary working at the church. What would we have done without Kate Prechter's fabulous hats and Jenny Baldwin's tireless efforts and offers of help?
- Welcome baskets for the Rev. Harry Barrow, the Rev. David Garnett, and finally, the Rev. Dr. Chris Currie–we were thrilled with everyone who contributed to our spiritual life in these difficult circumstances, and wanted to say, "Thanks for coming!"

• Developed the idea behind the "pandemic receiving line" cards that several kind people filled out on Chris's first couple of Sundays actually preaching in our actual church –whew!
• Provided decorations and decoration ideas for the Fall activities event after church–better a week late than never. Ida was powerful, but she didn't stop us!
• Staff appreciation luncheon–what a terrific staff we have at our church!
• Celebrating the installation of our new Senior Pastor, we planned and coordinated a reception which was "rained out." But the day was saved by volunteers and our staff angel, Pierce Young. It was an "Installation Reception To Go" another event that was unthinkable but here we are!
• Special refreshments for Scottish Heritage Sunday, again outdoors, but by then, we were glad to have anything special to eat and drink. Jane Rasi's help made all the difference!

Heartfelt thanks to committee members Meg Gammage and Katie Gilly, and to other volunteers who constantly offered and gave help, and to the dedicated church staff, especially the tireless sextons who make sure everything is ready for anything special we are trying to do–I can't thank you all enough.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Nice, 2021 Chair, Congregational Life Committee

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: W. Philip Clinton / Vice-Chair: Curtis Cunningham

Reports as of December 31, 2021, as follows:

- Operating Account Statement of Operations
- Operating Account Balance Sheet
- Visionary Fund Activity and Net Assets

Operating Budget

Church operations for the year resulted in a net surplus of approximately $1600 ahead of our 2021 budget. Pledge related income was approximately $29,000 short of budget; however, non-pledge revenue including draws from the Visionary Fund were $37,000 ahead of budget. As a result, overall revenues were approximately $8,000 over budget.

Total operating expenses were approximately $6,500 over budget. Most departments were under budget, most notably the Property department due to lower expenses than budgeted for major maintenance. Personnel expenses were higher than budgeted primarily as a result of the unbudgeted overlap of interim Senior Pastors' terms of call and housing costs. In addition, benefit expenses were higher than budgeted for all staff.

Visionary Fund

Visionary Fund net assets increased from $12,687,583 to $13,264,168 due to investment returns of $1,762,464 and contributions received, net of withdrawals. Withdrawals were larger than in previous years primarily as a result of interim and new Senior Pastor related expenses and the first progress payment for the new organ. Included 2021's ending balance is $1,705,416 dedicated for the Organ Fund.

Respectfully submitted,
W. Philip Clinton, 2021 Finance Chair

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GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

Chair: Beth Wren | Vice-Chair: Scott Montgomery

In 2021, Global Ministries supported five PC(USA) co-workers and seven global partners, finding innovative ways to support them as they courageously met the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the retirements of three mission co-workers, the committee carefully selected three new co-workers to support this year (indicated by an asterisk*).

2021 PC(USA) Mission Co-workers:

- Mark Adams & Miriam Maldonado Escobar/Frontera de Cristo (border ministry)*
- Paula Cooper/Regional Liaison for East Central Africa*
- Josh Heikkila/Regional Liaison for West Africa
- Vilmarie Cintron Olivieri/Caribbean Region*
- Larry & Inge Sthreshley/Democratic Republic of the Congo (healthcare ministry)

2021 Global Mission Partners:

- Days For Girls, International/New Orleans Chapter (chapter deactivating in 2022)
- El Fuerte Church/Cuba
- Ghana Scholarship Fund/Ghana
- Gethsemane Congregation/Senchi Ferry, Ghana
- Iglesia Evangelica Church/Dominican Republic
- Mama Maji's Kanjira Water Project/Kenya
- Muliko Literacy Project/Malawi

Cuba & Living Waters for the World:

- El Fuerte and Juan G. Hall both house SCAPC Living Water systems. Matanzas Central Church Living Water system is maintained by our LWW team on behalf of the Presbytery of South Louisiana. Renewal of our 3-year Living Waters covenant was approved in 2021 (we are now in Year 2).
- Mission trips were cancelled in 2021. We prayerfully anticipate a 2022 mission trip to visit and work alongside our Cuban siblings once again. However, food and supply shipments were made regularly this year and much appreciated.
- Water filtration supplies have now neared depletion; therefore an additional shipment of gauges, filters, etc. was sent in November 2021 so that clean water distribution would not be interrupted.

SCAPC's Global Ministries Committee continues to be humbled by the work of our mission co-workers and partners; we were honored to walk alongside them as they navigated the challenges of this past year. We give thanks for their steadfast work for peace, equity, and justice and pray for God's divine providence over them.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Wren, 2021 Chair, Global Ministries Committee

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair: Arden Barnett | Vice-Chair: Jenny Baldwin

In 2021 the Member Involvement Committee accomplished the following goals:

- Planned and executed the Elder Retreat via Zoom in January 2021
- Led the Congregational Nominating Committee in recruiting the Elder Class of 2024
- Enlisted Elders to serve as Commissioners to the Presbytery of South Louisiana
- Provided funding for training materials for the Elder Class of 2024
- Provided funding for gifts to the retiring Elder Class of 2021
- Participated and helped plan "Reconnect with the Corner" in September 2021

Respectfully submitted,
Arden Barnett, 2021 Chair, Member Involvement

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Chair: Noah Hardie | Vice-Chair: Margaret Ann Lindsey

As of December 31, 2021, The Membership Committee received 23 new members: nine through confirmation and 14 through reaffirmation of faith or transfer of membership.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic severely limiting our abilities to identify and reach out to visitors and integrate new members into the life of our congregation we are grateful for all the ways that God has continued to be faithful and lead new folks into our congregation. We look forward to a new year and being able to resume the activities and events that help us welcome new people into our church and show them that this is a place of love and belonging.

Respectfully submitted,
Noah Hardie, 2021 Chair, Membership Committee

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

In 2021, the Pastor Nominating Committee's work culminated with the congregational approval of Rev. Dr. Christian Thomas Currie as our new Senior Pastor. The Pastor Nominating Committee was named and charged in May, 2019. After exactly two years together, the PNC unanimously and joyfully recommended Chris on May 9, 2021.

The search process was slowed in 2020 by the pandemic but in early 2021 when it was safe to visit, Chris and his family traveled to New Orleans several times to meet with the PNC and tour the city. A call was issued in the spring of 2021 and with the help of the Finance and Personnel committees, a comprehensive compensation package was offered and negotiated.

The Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Southwest Louisiana conducted "fitness and readiness" interviews on behalf of the Presbytery and approved the proposed terms of call. The Session met on April 26 and called a congregational meeting on Sunday, May 9 to hear the report of the Pastor Nominating Committee. A printed report and a video introduction helped announce Chris to the congregation. The vote was unanimous to call Chris as our new Senior Pastor.

Chris completed his time with First Presbyterian, Shreveport in July and began the process of moving to New Orleans to begin his time with us on September 1. As we New Orleanians love to do, Chris and his family were welcomed with weekly meals delivered to their home. Hurricane Ida disrupted his first Sunday in the pulpit and required that his first sermon be delivered remotely. Post-hurricane and when COVID-19 numbers declined, Chris was installed on October 24 with great celebration and fanfare. A series of small group "Welcome Corners Receptions" were held during November and December to welcome Chris and Stephanie. Chris has spent time with the Session and each of the SCAPC groups to get to know them.

The PNC would like to thank our interim pastors Michael Jinkins, Harry Barrow, and David Garnett for their service during the search process.

We also appreciate the guidance of our Presbytery Liaison, Sharon Fortin, who helped make sure the process was done "decently and in order."

The PNC is grateful for the congregation's trust, support, and patience during the search process, and we rejoice that 2021 marked the beginning of many wonderful years ahead with Chris Currie as our Senior Pastor.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie November, Chair Pastor Nominating Committee

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Chair: Pat Widhalm | Vice-Chair: Randy Evans

2021 brought exciting closure to several personnel needs, and with each, an encouraging vision of the future work and leadership from the SCAPC staff.

Among the goals we wrote last January were:

- Address staffing needs, including the possibility of an interim office manager.
- Work with interim office manager to determine job descriptions, especially for staff who have expanded duties in recent months.
- Work with interim office manager to review policies and procedures that may need to be updated or added.
- Explore more ways to provide feedback in addition to the annual end-of-year meeting.

Due to the ability and commitment of the committee members, and good communication with the staff, it seems as if these goals were exceeded. We were especially pleased to be able to:

- Conduct an extensive search for a new Director of Administration that resulted in the appointment of Lynn Hoffman in August. Lynn has shown knowledge and service already by reviewing the employee handbook, reviewing benefit packages, addressing staffing needs, gaining full understanding of the finances, and generally bringing professional management to the office operations based on her love for SCAPC.
- Work on details of interim pastors and Senior and Associate Pastor Terms of Call.
- Add a committee member who could speak to children and adolescent ministries.
- Consider individual staff requests for a sabbatical, salary adjustments, and staffing as openings and opportunities occurred.
- Hold meetings in November with each staff member to understand better their work and how it can best be accomplished.
- Provide a platform for recognition of staff members.

As 2022 begins, members of the committee will be working with Dr. Currie to enter into a collaborative relationship with Austin Theological Seminary that will result in a two-year Pastoral Residency. Members of the committee will also receive and review recommendations from Ms Hoffman related to the employee handbook. Of course, there will be issues and opportunities yet unknown.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Widhalm, 2021 Chair, Personnel

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Chair: Jeffry Mazzanti | Vice-Chair: Sydney Lawder

The Property Committee started 2021 with a focus on finishing the roof replacement project for the Education Building. Property items addressed throughout the year generally fell into four main categories: aging equipment (e.g., elevator, freezer, boiler), water issues (e.g., gutters, drainage, leaks, Hurricane Ida), audio/visual equipment related to both virtual and in-person worship, and routine maintenance.

Property Items Addressed in 2021:

1. Completed the roofing project for 2nd and 3rd floor of Education Building
2. Lightning protection system put back in place
3. Freight elevator starter has been upgraded/replaced
4. New Sanctuary Camera has been installed
5. Sanctuary spotlight installed and painted
6. Landscaping, 3 lights and irrigation installed at Land Building
7. 3rd Floor AC controller unit and new thermostats installed
8. Installed leak detector in Sanctuary basement
9. Pressure washing of columbarium completed
10. Sanctuary lighting system upgraded and programmed; bulbs changed to LED
11. Gutters cleaned on Education Building
12. Termites in Sanctuary ceiling have been treated
13. Gutter attachments added to downspouts on either side of the columbarium
14. Drainage domes added to Eleonore side of Education Building
15. Upgraded security camera monitoring system installed
16. Sanctuary doors refinished
17. New freezer installed in main kitchen
18. New boiler installed for main Sanctuary heating system

The Property Committee ended the year under budget.

Looking ahead to 2022: The Property Committee's "to do" list includes additional investigation of ongoing water intrusion and drainage issues, exterior cleaning, repointing, repair and waterproofing of the Sanctuary, and repairs to the Land Building rear porch.

Thanks to all Property Team members for their input to and participation in another active year. Special thanks go out to Pierce Young for her invaluable assistance and expertise in identifying, tracking, and addressing a full slate of property and maintenance issues, and to Harper Johnson (2023 Chair) for agreeing to chair the committee a couple of months while I tended to my own Ida damages.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffry Mazzanti, 2021 Chair, Property

SPIRITUAL FORMATION COMMITTEE

Children

2021 started with limited Sunday school offerings due to Covid-19. As a weekly connection, we introduced Walk by Wednesdays. Each week we drew a chalk obstacle course in the front of the church that brought children and adults through a lesson. Some of the topics were prayer, food insecurities, Mardi Gras and a seven-week Stations of the Cross which ended with a large Easter presentation. We continued this program in the fall as a substitute for Wednesday night out. Participants were invited to add their comments and thoughts to our chalk board and design.

As we were allowed to bring members back onto campus, we offered an outdoor Family Sunday school program during Lent which was well received.

In the summer, we reopened our Vacation Bible School to 50 children. The smaller class sizes helped us keep everyone safe and allowed our youth to take on almost complete control of the leadership of the workshops.

In September, we hosted a Reconnect with the Corner event which showcased all that the church would be offering. It was a great way to get information about classes and activities for the member as well to show our new Senior Pastor, Chris Currie, what our church was all about. We also introduced a new feature for our 10:30 service. Using the new technology of live streaming in the Fellowship Hall, we set up tables with activities for families with children or individuals who wanted an alternative place to worship.

Sunday school classes for all children 3 years old through 5th grade were offered and attendance, though not at pre-pandemic levels, were well attended and volunteers were excited to get involved. The Challenger Class (4th and 5th grade) was able to hold their annual retreat in Bay St Louis, MS. 10 students and 4 chaperons enjoyed a weekend learning what it means to serve Christ.

Adult Christian Education

Adult classes were offered via Zoom from January – May due to the pandemic. We began with *Living the Questions 2*, a study that strives to create an environment where participants can interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity. Featuring thirty acclaimed scholars, theologians, and other experts, *LtQ2* consists of three independent flights of seven units each: "Invitation to Journey," "Honoring Creation" and "Call to Covenant." We then offered a Lenten series, Sermon on the Mount by Amy-Jill Levine and ended the semester with Painting the Stars. Celebrating the communion of science and faith, Painting the Stars explores the promise of evolutionary Christian spirituality. It features over a dozen leading theologians and progressive thinkers.

After a summer break, we began the fall with both in person and hybrid classes. Our young adults began a parenting podcast class which was well received. Our other adult class was offered both in person and via zoom. We started the semester with a class led by Geoff Snodgrass about John Calvin and then continued with First Light and the Kingdom of God.

During Advent season, Luminary Memorials and Honorariums were created and set up outside the front of the church in memory or honor of friends and family. Over 250 luminaries were placed.

Young Adults and Families

Young Adults and Families (YAF) has continued a legacy of excellence, fostering a community for young adults and families across different walks of life and stages of life. The ongoing pandemic did not dampen engagement this year either. YAF convened regularly from 6:45-8:00 pm for their weekly Wednesday night PINTS discussion.

Following Session's approval to gradually introduce small in-person gatherings, PINTS transitioned back to in-person attendance at the Land Building in February, maintaining social distance and enforcing mask-use at all times. Attendance increased as in-person activities returned. The topic of discussion came from multiple mediums and changed each week. Discussions included TED talks on grief, podcasts on happiness, blog posts on doubting and finding faith, excerpts from a book guiding us through prayers and meditations, and a host of many other faith-based topics.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, YAF held events once a month for special events when it was deemed safe to do so. Events in-person were cancelled for January, but YAF participated in Walk by Wednesdays. The following in-person events were held in the spring: February- a Mardi Gras party at The Fly; March- an outdoor movie night at the Land Building; April- annual crawfish boil at the Land Building; May- a Swamp Tour in Marrero and a Field Day competition at City Park. In the summer months, we kayaked Bayou St. John in June, celebrated the 4th of July at Pastor Sarah Chancellor-Watson's home, and had a Cocktail Competition in August. The fall months included our annual events: September- Saints Watch Party; October-Pumpkin Decorating and Carving; November-Friendsgiving; December-YAF Brunch and White Elephant Gift Exchange.

The YAF group continued to provide meals to families with newborns throughout the year as the need arose. The ongoing pandemic did not slow down attendance or involvement, as many young adults and families participated in events and continued to join the church as official members.

Youth

The Youth program continued to flourish as the pandemic persisted through the beginning of 2021. Sunday School remained a possibility through Instagram lessons posted weekly by Chris, and between 20 and 30 students engaged with the virtual material weekly. Youth group in the spring took the form of small groups of similar aged students, each with a youth leader, that met Sunday afternoons in Audubon Park. Each week, groups participated in a fun activity (ranging from sports to painting to board games) and always made checking-in and praying-out a consistent staple of their mini-youth groups. The high school specific "Senior High Small Group" also remained a strong community during the spring and met both on Zoom for check-ins as well as sporadically for in-person events, such as for our Lectio Divina Art Night in the Land Building and our bowling night at Rock'n' Bowl.

Community-building for all ages remained a focal point for the youth program during the first half of the year even and especially as COVID cases surged in New Orleans. Off-site events, virtual social events, and service opportunities were made available for 6th-12th graders regularly and planned carefully for safety. Examples of these included kayaking in Bayou St. John, our Zoom Jackbox and Among Us game nights, and (perhaps our most successful event of the year), an Interfaith Earth Day litter-pick up with Touro Synagogue. The highlight of the summer was certainly our annual youth trip to Montreat, which saw approximately 12 high schoolers engage in fellowship and worship with youth across the country.

The fall began with the Confirmation of 9 youth, who professed their faith in front of the congregation at the start of the schoolyear. Other than having to deal with a disruptive August, courtesy of Hurricane Ida, the youth program, come September, was able to offer organized, in-person

events for the first time since the pandemic began, thanks to waning COVID numbers and available vaccinations for children. Sunday School could now meet in person and welcomed between 6 and 14 students weekly. Youth Group like in pre-COVID years resumed once more on Sunday evenings in the youth room. The theme of the year was "Be Transformed," a reference to Romans 12:2, and was meant to focus on the different ways God's Love could transform hearts and situations and how we can participate in that transformation. Youth volunteer numbers remained strong, with a steady group of six leaders, and attendance averaged 20-30 per youth group event. The time and energy invested in building relationships with students when the pandemic raged paid off, as it was clear that, upon resuming "normal activities," our program had grown, rather than shrunk. Some notable events in the fall were our annual SCAPC Olympics, our Ping Pong and Mario Kart tournaments, and our Movie Under the Stars night on the Land Building lawn.

One final note: As the pendulum has shifted once more towards "in person normality," we have noticed a drastic uptick in youth busy-ness, particular amongst our high schoolers. Now that pandemic numbers have decreased significantly, we may schedule fewer social events, particularly for 9th-12th graders whose time is being filled once more with school social events and extracurriculars.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Chair: N. Price Lanier | Vice-Chair: Hardy Edgecombe

The Stewardship Committee for the 2022 campaign consisted of Chair Price Lanier, Vice Chair Hardie Edgecombe and committee member Stewart Peck. Former Chair George Wilson Jr. also provided guidance in the early parts of the campaign.

The campaign was heavily supported by church staff members Katie Brendler, Hallie Boh and Emily Fleshman. Katie was instrumental in selecting the theme of the campaign, "With Each New Day Comes a New Blessing." The theme was inspired by the start of a new era of the Church and the celebration of our new Senior Pastor, Chris Currie. Hallie and Emily each provided critical administrative help to the campaign. Without their behind the scenes work it would be nearly impossible to run a successful campaign.

The campaign commenced on October 3rd with Stewardship Sunday and concluded on October 17th with Dedication Sunday. The goal was to raise $1.5M. To date we are approximately $50K short of that goal but the committee is still actively working to bring in additional pledges to meet or exceed that goal.

With the uncertainty presented to our community and our congregation during our campaign by the global pandemic and Hurricane Ida, I am proud of the pledges that we have secured and am still hopeful to secure more in the coming weeks. Thank you to the Session and the congregation for all of your support.

Respectfully submitted,
N. Price Lanier, 2021 Chair, Stewardship

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

Chair: Nell Lanier | Vice-Chair Carol Maher

Worship and Music struggled along this past Covid year. However, thanks to a lot of help, we managed to worship as a community of faith with beautiful, inspiring music. Steven Blackmon did an incredible job of putting together our online worship services. They were amazing and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude. Our interim pastors, Michael Jinkins, Harry Barrow, and David Garnett, as well as Associate Pastor Sarah Chancellor-Watson, provided us with stimulating sermons. A number of Chancel Choir soloists formed the Chancel Choir Chamber Ensemble and added lovely music.

When we were first able to worship in person, Pierce Young spent an inordinate amount of time overseeing the church facilities and ensuring that we were in line with health protocols, enabling the safest environment possible for our members. One of her responsibilities was to develop a seating arrangement and reservation system for our services. Michele Murphy and Hallie Boh spent a great deal of time on this as well. Our sextons, Joe Bean and Donald Jefferson faithfully sanitized the Sanctuary after each worship service.

Libbie Reiss maintained the flower chart so we were greeted with beautiful floral arrangements each Sunday. Geoff Snodgrass and Bonnie Shoemaker kept our ushers on track each week. Mayson Buffington prepared the communion elements.

We baptized 14 infants and observed communion on a regular basis.

A very special Sunday was October 24 when Thomas Christian Currie was installed as our new senior pastor. Ted Wardlaw, President of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, was our guest preacher. Our choir and a mini-orchestra, under the direction of Steven Blackmon, overwhelmed us with outstanding music.

On October 31, we celebrated Scottish Heritage Sunday, complete with bagpipes and a Beadle. David Grissett and Chris Currie organized and led the service. We also honored three new heritage members (50+ years of membership), Carol Becker, Jackie Derks, and Anne Mathes.

Here is a prayer that next year will be one in which we can worship together in person and enjoy Christian fellowship. Again, many, many thanks to all who made this past year holy and comfortable.

With love,
Nell Lanier, 2021 Chair, Worship and Music

A special thanks to our Elder Class of 2021 for three years of hard work!

Arden Barnett
Philip Clinton
Jamie DeFraites
Larry Hamric
Stephanie Haniford
Noah Hardie
Katie Kuhns
Nell Lanier
Price Lanier
Jeff Mazzanti
Julie Nice
Jane Rasi
Pat Widhalm
Beth Wren
Scott Zander

Youth Elders:
Charlie Lowe
Madeline Weiser

Welcome to our Elder Class of 2024!

Karen Donaldson
Nancy Ellis
Ann VanHorn
John Koch
Dave Grissett
Richard Seelman
Christy McCann
Kristie Trail
Matthew Wilson
Henrietta Harris
Kelly Gottsche
Tyler Wheeler
Megan Guy
Judith Halverson
Mary Malone

Youth Elders:
Sophie Frankowski
Madeline Heymann

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