

Annual Report 2017



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**2017 Annual Report of the
Pastor/Head of Staff
Nancy R. Birdsong**



Chances are that, at some time or another, you were in a church that had the image of a boat in a stained-glass window or carved into the woodwork. The boat is an ancient symbol of the church. In the first century, with Christians under persecution, the boat was a reminder that the church was a vehicle through which the gathered community of faith found encouragement to navigate the rough waters of the world. Today, we consider how our common bonds within the church not only strengthen us for life's choppy seas, but also increase our joy as we share our experiences of faith.

On a cruise ship, we have a passive role—leaving everything to be done by the professional crew. Yet, a healthy congregation doesn't sit back in their lounge chairs (or pews) and just watch while others teach the children, study Scripture, visit the sick and befriend the poor. On a boat in Jesus' time, everyone aboard was considered part of the crew—pulling oars, raising sails, and tying knots. If they didn't know how to do those things, they watched and learned from others, because to get anywhere, everyone's participation was needed.

In the 3 short months of my new journey with you in 2017, I have marveled at the ways that so many of you contribute to the ministry and mission of Southminster Presbyterian Church. Our congregation is a vibrant, growing body of Christ when we each do our part and know that our part matters. It has been exciting to see the ways you each make a unique contribution. No one is expected to do it all, and every single way someone offers his or her time and particular gifts for ministry makes a difference. Some of you teach our children or adults, some sing in the choir, some engage in caring ministries in the congregation, some nudge us to reach out into the community with compassion, others do the hard behind-the-scenes work of our teams, and the list goes on and on.

As great as it is to share our diverse gifts, it is also important that we all work together and row in the same direction! On a cruise ship, passengers pretty much do their own thing—swimming, shopping, quietly reading, playing shuffleboard, or whatever suits their own interests. On a boat like Jesus' disciples might have used, it took teamwork to raise the sails and navigate by the stars.

In the life of any church, it is easy for people to get stuck in their individual silos—limiting their scope to certain areas and not allowing for cross-over between teams and groups. When we all pull together, it helps our sense of community to flourish.

As I planned for your first Epiphany Feast here at Southminster, it was great to see the Fellowship, Worship and Christian Education teams as well as individual volunteers all contributing their efforts. I would encourage everyone, when planning an event or gathering a group, to consider how to

broaden the scope of those you involve. While it may seem easier just to ask the same people on whom you have counted in the past, intentionally drawing others into our work and ministry helps us to become a stronger church.

Back to our boat metaphor...

Passengers on a cruise ship dine at separate tables and can choose just to stick to a select group of friends. On an ancient boat, everyone ate from a common table. (*It sounds a little like communion, doesn't it?*). They not only shared the food but worked together to prepare the meal and clean up afterward.

While it is comfortable to talk to and sit near our best friends in worship or at church dinners, we strengthen our bonds as a family of faith when we look for visitors and new members. Let's make a place for them in the pews and at the table!

The wonderful thing about new members is not so much that they increase the size of our congregation, but that they bring to us their faith, love, fellowship, gifts, creativity and new ideas! If you don't know some of our new members, please make an effort to get to know them. I can guarantee that your experience of being a part of Southminster will be enriched by expanding your relationships.

When you marry into someone's family, you know how much it means to you when they offer you a warm welcome and sense of belonging. Imagine the gift you are giving when you convey the message to a visitor or a new member that he or she is valued and welcomed.

When you become a part of a family, you also hope that they notice when you aren't there, and so we also convey our caring when we let those folks we haven't seen for a while know that we miss them.

The writer, Frederick Buechner likens the church to Noah's ark. He says,

...the ark is wherever human beings come together in such a way that the differences between them stop being barriers. The ark is wherever people come together because this is a stormy world where nothing stays put for long among the crazy waves... The ark is where, just because it is such a world, we really need each other and know very well that we do. The ark is wherever human beings come together because, in their heart of hearts, all of them... dream the same dream, which is a dream of peace—peace between the nations, between races, between brothers [and sisters]—and thus ultimately a dream of love. The ark... is where we have each other and where we have hope...

The headlines in the news were beyond difficult this year. One act of violence followed another, racial harmony took steps backwards, and divisions in our country seem to be growing ever wider. Southminster is a place where we do not hide from the realities of the world. Rather, we gather strength from Christ and from each other to face the storms and discover the best ways we can be voices of calm and hope in the midst of them.

Through ministries like the Food Pantry, care boxes for Veterans and contributions to the Castle, we try to make a difference in the world. In the hope of enlarging the circle of our caring, the Mission Team is beginning a new process of surveying and assessing the real needs of the community beyond our doors. We also hope to have an all-church service day in the spring or early summer, and there will be another Habitat build. As we expand our mission, I know that we will be touched and inspired by those we serve.

Of course, no matter how much the congregation pulls together, having some special folks to help us in the effort makes a difference. I am grateful for our gifted and dedicated staff members: Garth, Kim, Erin, Jimmy, Ruth, Jim, Lynn, Sharon, Karen, Jerry, Jenny, Amanda and Katlin, as well as Victor from the cleaning service and our regular volunteers in the office: Gretchen, Lois and Barb.

Thank you so much for your incredibly friendly welcome to me as your new pastor. I don't think I have ever been welcomed to a church with such warmth and excitement. As I have made pastoral visits and have had the opportunity to get to know many of you better, I have been blessed by the ways you have opened your hearts to me. You offer inspiration to me and to others every day, and you shine Christ's light in more ways than you know.

As you strive to grow in faith and to love God and neighbor, you remind me of the dove Noah sent from the Ark. Under the beautiful colors of God's rainbow, the dove returned to the boat with a little sprig of green in his mouth to remind us that there is always hope. While you have encountered a few rough seas in the past, the love, faith and compassion that holds you together has seen you through it, and I am trusting that there are wonderful things ahead in our journey together, as the Spirit of the Living God leads us into the future.

May God's Peace be with you,

Nancy Birdsong



**The Rev. Garth Adams
2017 Transitional Associate Pastor's Report**

First, thank you to each and every one of the Southminster Presbyterian family. My family and I have been blessed to be a part of the ministries here at Southminster. As a Transitional Associate pastor, I have been able to provide support to Reverend Birdsong as she gets settled, and to this congregation during the transition. Southminster has a lot of ministries and activities which take place throughout the week. One pastor cannot be present to everyone at every moment, so one of my focuses has been to compliment the efforts of Reverend Birdsong,

During the period from October 9 to December 31, 2017, I have assisted in Sunday Morning worship. I have performed a wedding, and provided support for Session's Building and Grounds, Christian Educations and Invitation Teams. Also, I have worked with the various Deacon teams, especially Prayer and Presence, and Fellowship. Lastly, I have made calls and visits to members as needed.

During my time here at Southminster, I have made a couple of observations. First, the members of the staff and congregation have done a tremendous job of maintaining the ministries and activities of this church. It takes a while to learn about all ten of the Session teams, the four Deacon

teams and all of the ministry opportunities associated with each of these teams. Second, everyone truly loves one another and cares for each other. The passion that the members have demonstrated for Southminster speaks of the love and commitment that everyone has for each other.

I am excited for this congregation in 2018 because I believe that everyone will embrace the vision and mission of this congregation. I believe that when we all share the same vision, then we will all begin to work together on one accord. There are new opportunities for collaborative efforts. Now that Reverend Birdsong is getting settled and learning about the places we live and serve, we can be assured that the Pastoral leadership is now in place. And because this leadership is now in place, one or two individuals or teams do not have to shoulder the burdens of leadership alone.

In learning about the Southminster congregation, my greatest joy has been learning about each member's unique journey. My challenge to this congregation is to continue to share your story. You are a resource to others, but more importantly you are a witness for God. I believe this congregation has been strategically placed, in order to make an impact in the lives of everyone that God allows us to touch. When you share your stories, it allows everyone to see what God is doing in the lives of those that love the Lord. Allow God to use your testimony to encourage and embrace those who need that Blessed Assurance.

Once again, thank you for allowing my family to be a part of the Southminster story.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reverend Garth E. Adams
Transitional Associate Pastor

INVITING TO WORSHIP

Invitation Team

The year 2017 was a busy one for the Invitation Team. In January, the decision was made, and later approved by Session, to merge the Welcoming Team with the Evangelism and Membership Team to create a dynamic new team to pursue the following mission statement: "The Invitation Team leads the congregation to invite people to Southminster and warmly welcome them, to bring them into membership (if they desire), and to assimilate them into the life of the congregation."

To that end, the team worked hard on bringing focus and process to warmly welcoming our guests including a new **Welcoming Procedure** with well-defined roles for greeters and hosts. The **Welcome Desk** materials and procedures were also refreshed to include **Guest welcome folders** and welcome gifts. **Church Tours** were re-established with a schedule and tour leaders recruited and trained to provide an engaging tour of our great facility to guests and potential new members. A **New Member Class** format (now called Inquirer's Class) was adopted from Pastor Nancy's previous experience, with the goal being to provide inquirers a more meaningful introduction to SPC, the Presbyterian faith, and what it means to be part of the SPC community of faith. A new list of buddy volunteers (Shepherds) was also established for new members.

A Benchmark trip to Westminster Presbyterian Church in August provided valuable learning as the team reviewed Westminster's approach to Evangelism, Welcoming, & Membership. **A Fishing Group event** was held in the CFC in July to introduce families and kids to fishing and was followed with an actual fishing outing in August! In the fall, the team conducted a very successful **Sharing**

Your Gifts & Talents event in the CFC to align needs of the Church with members' gifts and talents. Each Session and Deacon team had a table to showcase their ministries.

In addition, part of the Invitation Team Strategy in 2017 was to utilize **social media** more effectively with several Facebooks posts to highlight events and special services. The **2018 budget** was drafted and submitted to establish financial support for the Invitation Team to carry out the team's mission in 2018. Lastly, in November, the Invitation team worked closely with the Pastor Transition Team to coordinate a **community open house** for the public, leaders of our local partners in mission, and representatives of local governments to meet our new pastor and to bring awareness to SPC. The Invitation Team is excited about the progress and momentum over the past year and looks forward to continuing to fulfill our mission and God's will for SPC in 2018.

Mark Ferguson, Chair

Worship Team

The Worship team duties encompass a vast array of duties related to the worship of God. The members of Southminster assist in providing a meaningful worship experience. Our volunteers include ushers, choir, sound team, multimedia, candles for prayer, communion set up and clean up, liturgists, flowers, and more that I am sure I have forgotten to mention. My apologies to anyone that may have been left out.

We have been able to use our budget to fulfill our duties but have found that we will need to pare back on Heritage Sunday due to the increase in cost for the Miami Valley Pipe and Drums. We have also identified that our sound system and media system need to be upgraded to keep up with the ever-changing technology.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Sutton, Chair

Ruth Mappes Director of Music Ministries

Here at Southminster, the music ministries have had a great 2017. The Bell Choir has been re-established and can be heard at least one Sunday a month during Worship. They continually work hard to learn more music, with each song incorporating more skills and more complex repertoire. The bell choir welcomed 2 new members in 2017 and is hopeful for more in the year to come.

The Sanctuary Choir continues to bring their talents and gifts to every Sunday Worship service from September to May. They perform an eclectic array of choral anthems with historical, cultural, and scripture textual significance. In May of 2017, the choir had the wonderful opportunity to perform John Rutter's *Requiem* along with the choir of Grace United Methodist Church. This 40-minute large scale work performance was accompanied by pipe organ and a seven-piece orchestra. In October 2017, the choir hosted its first ever Fall Showcase. The bell choir, sanctuary choir, and several talented individuals within the church performed that evening. It was such a success that it was asked that the Fall Showcase become an annual event. The Sanctuary Choir welcomed a new bass section leader in the fall - welcome, Dorian! The choir also hosted its first choir Christmas party in many years. The lyrics of the choir anthems have been projected during Sunday Worship to better enhance the

worship experience for the congregation. We added some new and returning members to choir in 2017! We hope to see the number of choir members grow in 2018.

"Music with Ruth" and VBS offered many musical outlets for the children in the church over the summer. The children enjoyed playing the various instruments at the church and playing music related games.

LEARNING IN COMMUNITY (Christian Education Team)

Learning Resource Center/Library

The Learning Resource Center/Library has enjoyed a modest increase in usage this past year with patronage by Presbytery members and our own congregation. We have added several DVD based study programs, which Growth Groups and Circles have found to be challenging and inspirational. The purchase of those materials, along with books dealing with social issues in the United States, and for developing spirituality in children was made possible through a grant from The Miami Valley Presbytery in the amount of \$800.00.

Member volunteers have occasionally helped with shelving returned books and processing the new materials; their service is appreciated very much! All of our Southminster family are members of the LRC/L and there is no charge for borrowing materials. Please visit the LRC/L and enjoy the bounty of our collection and/or consider volunteering.

Submitted by Gay Amos, Librarian

Children's Education

Erin Dickerson Interim Director of Children's Ministries

This year was filled with professional growth and continuing education. The year began by hosting Godly Play training here at Southminster. This was a three-part training that occurred on Saturdays. It was attended by some volunteers from Southminster along with educators and volunteers from various denominations in the tristate area. It was a wonderful educational experience filled with fellowship with other educators and volunteers.

In March, I applied for, was accepted in, and began the process of obtaining my Christian Educator Certification. I enrolled in my first course, *Biblical Interpretation*, which took place at the APCE Annual Conference in Louisville.

In April, I attended the Medical – Spirituality Conference at Sinclair that focused on pediatric health and healing. It explored the spiritual and emotional needs of our children. The keynote speakers included Rev. Cheryl V. Minor, Ph.D. who is the director of the Center for Theology of Childhood (the academic / publishing area of the Godly Play Foundation) and Chaplain Ryan Campbell who is currently on staff at Children's Medical Center, Dallas as program manager of the Center for the Spiritual Needs of Children.

This summer, I began participating in free webinars offered by PRC – Practical Resources for Churches. I participated in eight in 2017 and am scheduled for more in 2018. They ranged in topics from “Transforming Attitudes about Dementia”, “Bringing Children Back in the Sanctuary”, to “Faith Formation at Home”.

Volunteer background checks were performed with the aid of the Dayton Mentoring Collaborative for our volunteers who work with our children and youth. Checks were performed on over 65 adults who we hope to engage in the spiritual formation and growth of the children and youth.

The Nursery saw two new childcare workers. Amanda (Mandy) Brashear was hired as our second childcare worker on Sundays and as needed. Katlin Barlow was hired to fill in for Jenny Miller while she was out on medical leave and to serve as a back-up/substitute when needed. Both have been welcome additions to our Nursery Staff!

Thanks to two very generous donations, we were able to purchase two new smart TVs and mounts to be used in the Nursery and the Sunday School rooms. They will be installed soon. We are very thankful for the generous gifts!

Vacation Bible School was attended by over 45 children, and had over 40 adult and youth volunteers. The week focused on parables and concluded with a VBS Wrap Party where we sampled and voted on ice cream flavors created by the children.

A Prayer and Blessing/Spiritual Nurture class was offered to students at A Great Start Preschool during sessions in the spring and in the fall. Both sessions had nine children in attendance and were well received. We plan to repeat the offering again next year.

Growth Groups Subteam

The Growth Groups Subteam sponsored a number of educational opportunities for adults in 2017 including:

- A study of Handel’s *Messiah* led by Richard Bobo
- Studies of two Adam Hamilton books, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* and *24 Hours That Changed the World*, led by Steve Davis
- “A Year Through the Bible” led by Pastor Steve Plunkett
- A study of Tim Clinton’s book, *The Impressionist*, led by Drew Fisher
- A small group for parents led by Kevin and Adrienne Dickson
- A study of the history of the Protestant Reformation led by Steve Davis
- A class on spiritual gifts discernment led by Pastor Jackie Nowak

The Subteam also worked on developing a new mission statement and a guide for small group leaders.

Members of the Subteam included Lois Thorp, Gay Amos, Richard Bobo, Drew Fisher and Steve Davis (Chair). Pastor Jackie Nowak and Kim Catchpole provided staff support.

Youth Education

Kim Catchpole Interim Director of Youth Ministries

2017 was my first full year as Interim Director of Youth Ministry at Southminster Presbyterian Church. During this year, the youth programs have continued to slowly grow and recover from set-backs due to major transitions in leadership (4 youth directors in 3 years). I have seen some incremental growth: Gatherings of youth were typically attended by 3-5 youth in 2016 and now I am seeing between 5-8 youth at programs, including some new faces. Those youth who attend consistently are growing in their faith and in their commitment to the church and each other, as you will see in the highlights that follow.

As part of a Middle School Mission week, 7 youth, grades 4-8, attended a mission project at the Dayton Food Bank. The youth were given a tour and learned about the Foodbank's role in addressing hunger in Dayton and the surrounding community. Afterward, youth worked in the Foodbank garden, harvesting lettuce to later be sold at "Market Day." Following the project, youth used a journal and group discussion to process their experience. One youth wrote, "Today I saw God at work with the whole Foodbank. God makes sure everyone has food. He shows that everyone deserves the same and is equal. The Foodbank is an amazing organization and can help so many people."

Youth also addressed issues of food insecurity by building two raised beds for vegetable gardening on the south side of the church. Eight youth worked together to nail, drill and shovel until the beds were complete. Then, they planted beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and potatoes. They later harvested and sold these vegetables to church members. Proceeds from the sales benefitted the Fish Food Pantry.

Food wasn't the only thing that grew in 2017. Our volunteer base grew as well. In order to be in compliance with new child protection guidelines, all volunteers working with children and youth were required to get background checks. By partnering with the Mentoring Collaborative of Montgomery County, we were able to provide free background checks to the 68 adults who signed up to volunteer.

The PBnJ (Proud Believers in Jesus) Puppet Ministry continued to be one of our most popular youth ministries. Under the direction of Mark and Liz Ferguson, 4th – 12th graders worked together to create musical performances for the church and community. When the Ferguson's daughter was in a serious accident, the youth created a video to express their care and support for her. View the video at this link: <http://www.sminster.com/PBnS.html> .

Sunday Morning Christian Education included Confirmation Class using the *Colaborate Presbyterian Curriculum* from Sparkhouse. Four youth attended regularly and their mentors were very involved in the confirmation process. Youth in grades 3-8 attended Sermon 2.0, which is an age-appropriate discussion of the sermon topic in worship that day. An average of 8 youth attended Sermon 2.0.

Intergenerational programs continue to be a place where children and youth can interact with members of the congregation of all ages. Some of our most successful intergenerational programs from 2017 were Souper Bowl Sunday of Caring, VBS Wrap Party/ Ice Cream Social, Blessing of the Backpacks/Church Barbeque, the Habitat House Builds, Movie Night, Trunk or Treat, and Hanging of the Greens.

Board of Deacons

Compassion and Assistance

The Compassion and Assistance team oversees a collection of smaller ministries which provide care to other people. Here is a list of our ministries with information and updates on each one:

AED/CPR Training and Oversight

This year the oversight of the AED units was transitioned to Building and Grounds. There was no need to conduct additional AED/CPR training this year.

Anxiety/Depression Group

This ministry allows for a peer-led group of people to meet casually on a regular basis to discuss a variety of mental health issues, coping strategies, and treatments. There are about 4 regular participants, and others who come on a short-term basis throughout the year. Records of attendees are not kept due to the confidential and anonymous nature of the group.

Card Ministry

In 2017 Shirley Ogelsbee sent out 68 birthday cards to people who were 82 years of age, or older.

College Care Packages

In the winter there were 13 packages sent to college students by Jane Kessler. In the fall there were no requests received.

Flu Prevention Clinic

On October 15, after the service, an opportunity for people to receive their annual flu vaccine was held. 22 people received the vaccine. We would like to continue to offer this.

Grief Support Group

This ministry offers a monthly opportunity for people at Southminster, and friends, to gather to support one another after experiencing deep loss. This group has approximately 20 regular attendees.

Hometouch Letters

This ministry provides continued connection to people who are not able to attend Southminster physically by sending weekly letters to them. There are approximately 40 people who received these informational letters written by Pat Custer along with a print copy of Southminster's News and Notes.

Needlecraft Group

The Needlecraft group meets once a week for fellowship and to create items for various charities. There are currently 9 regular members. In 2017, we sent 3 blankets, 2 sweaters, and 4 hats to Knit For Kids, sent 30 pairs of mittens and 6 hats to Hannah's Treasure Chest, 9 pairs of mittens and 14 hats to Pam Steade at Primary Kindergarten Village for students in need, sent 9 Pocket Prayers Shawls to the Tangible Items of Blessing, and sent 5 children's hats to the Kiwanis.

Sanctuary Flower Delivery

This ministry provides encouragement of flowers to people connected with Southminster and makes good use of the flowers donated for Sunday morning worship.

Sanctuary Lambs

This ministry places plush toy lambs in the Sanctuary to be taken by anyone who needs one for love and support. In 2017, 32 lambs were taken.

Share Your Garden

There were 2 events coordinated this year by Dorothy Douglas. The spring plant sharing generated \$100 for the Food Pantry, and the summer produce sharing generated \$20 for the Food Pantry.

Take Them a Meal Program

This ministry provides a coordinated method for people within Southminster to provide meals over a short period of time to another person within Southminster. The service was offered to families with a hospitalized or chronically ill member, but no one accepted the offer in 2017.

Tangible Items of Prayer and Blessing

The office houses a collection of items which can be used as part of any visitation ministry. These items are left with the recipient as a tangible reminder of the visit and the prayers shared. Any member may take and distribute these items; those involved in visitation or prayer ministries are encouraged to do so. In 2017 the following items were used: 15 Cling crosses, 1 wooden cross, 1 guardian angel, 4 Comfort and Assurance Booklets, 8 Baby Blankets, 9 Baby Booklets, 1 Toddler Blanket, 1 Bubbles, 2 Prayer Squares, 3 Prayer Pouches, 2 Comfort Blankets, 1 Healing After Loss Booklet, 1 Prayer Pillow, and 20 Prayer Blankets. These items are created or given by The Covenant Quilters, the Youth Group, the Needlecraft Group, and various individual members.

The Blessing Center

This ministry provides spiritual formation and pastoral care especially for children and teens, but also for adults. With the retirement of Pastor Jackie, this ministry is no longer directly part of Southminster Deacons.

Submitted by Helen Davis, Chair

Fellowship Team

The Fellowship Team completed another successful year of service to the congregation. Supported events included: Maundy Thursday carry-in potluck, Heritage Sunday meal, Fall Fling Family BBQ, Farewell meal for Pastor Steve, Welcome event for Pastor Nancy, Farewell/Retirement meal for Pastor Jackie, Fellowship Team display for Sharing of Gifts and Talents, Southminster Community Open House, Deacon Thank You meal, and the Hanging of the Greens/Family Advent Celebration.

In 2017, in addition to celebrating our rich Scottish heritage in food, music, and flag; the Heritage Sunday meal included dishes and flag displays representative of nations from which many members of our congregation descend. They included the United States, Guatemala, Mexico, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Ghana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, South Korea and India. It was an opportunity to celebrate the widespread message of Christ and the international reach of the Presbyterian Church.

Four pastor transition events added a need for extra work and creativity, but the Fellowship Team showed great teamwork and a dedication to service. We were honored to be a part of this transition in the life of Southminster.

We also received excellent support from the congregation for the Coffee Corner. Jerry Craig provided invaluable individual support while Presby Groups, church social groups and individuals all stepped up to provide a wide variety of baked goods.

Submitted by: Joan Vandawaker, Chair

Deacons-Prayer and Presence Annual Report- 2017

The Ministry of Prayer and Presence reaches out to the congregation, supporting others through the gifts of listening, presence, prayer and lay counseling. The committee consists of four Deacons (Peg Sperry, Peggy Stichter, Judy Murphy and Barb Adams). Four members -at-large also serve (Marion Kaufman, Judy Bohnert, Marilyn Kemper and Irene Tip sword). The Prayer and Presence Committee consists of eight ministries, (Care Connection Calling, Hello-Good Morning, Care Notes ,Homebound Visitation, Hospital and Rehab Visitation, Follow-Up Calling and Homebound Communion).

The HELLO-GOOD MORNING MINISTRY connects individuals living alone. The participants check on each other daily in a brief conversation. This ministry has twelve people exchanging calls at present.

CARE CONNECTION MINISTRY involves teams calling members of the congregation on Sunday nights to learn of prayer concerns and joys to share. Each household is called six times per year.

Year to date totals for 2017:
Number of calls made 1448
Connections made 577
Prayer requests 326
Postcards Sent 219

The Wednesday Intercessory Prayer Group continues to pray for specific prayer requests and concerns gained from Care Connection calls.

CARE NOTES MINISTRY continues to offer small booklets giving spiritual support and help on care needs. These are located in 3 areas of the church. Members and visitors of SPC have made use of over 100 of these Care Notes available at no charge to the congregation.

HOMEBOUND VISITATION MINISTRY has many faithful volunteers connecting by phone or personal visitation with people with health and aging issues. Presently eight persons are being visited personally and 4 are getting regular phone visits each month. These numbers vary due to circumstances.

HOSPITAL AND REHAB VISITATION MINISTRY averages two to three visits per month.

FOLLOW-UP MINISTRY involves calling church members who have recently been hospitalized or are at home dealing with other life challenges. Over 120 calls were made in 2017.

The PRAYER CHAIN MINISTRY continues to be an efficient way of praying for those in need both by e-mail and telephone. Seventy-five people are currently praying on the e-mail chain and four on the phone chain.

The HOMEBOUND COMMUNION MINISTRY consists of past and present Deacon and Elder teams volunteering to take Communion to homebound or nursing facility members on or near the first Sunday of each month. An average of 8-10 persons were served each month.

Respectfully submitted,
Peg Sperry
Chair for 2017

Stephen Ministry

2017 brought some changes to the Stephen Ministry Team. We welcomed 2 new members to our team in May: Lana Ellinger and Al Herner, who had completed the 50 hours of required training. But, sadly, 3 long-time members decided to retire. We said goodbye to Marilyn Kemper, Peg Sperry and Sandy Stevens, all of whom had served faithfully for 2 years or longer. Several Care Receivers were helped during the year, being cared for by a Stephen Minister. We also volunteered to be on call to help with Pastoral Care needs that might arise when the pastors were away on vacation or study leave. We continue to distribute supportive materials to members or family of members who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Plans for 2018 include more advertising to remind people that we are still here, and recruiting for the training classes that begin in September. If you would like information about Stephen Ministry, please contact a member of the team.

Stephen Ministry Team: *Leaders:* George Lawson & Lois Thorp. *Stephen Ministers:* April Bennett, Sharon Boyko, Lana Ellinger, Pat Elliott, Al Herner

SERVING AS STEWARDS

Mission Team

The Mission Team report includes the following programs for 2017:

The Parking Lot Builds - We experienced two parking lot builds with Crossroads Build who are connected with Habitat for Humanity. Our first Build was in April during a “monsoon”. That house was dedicated in Indianapolis on August 5, 2017. The second Build was held in October in over 90-degree heat. That house went to Waukegan, Illinois and will be built this spring. Although we had Mother Nature to deal with, we had a fair turnout to build both homes. This project was led by Stephen Albright, Bill Barlow, and Robert Fyffe. The food service was led by Gretchen Cleaves.

The FISH Food Pantry – Under the direction of Jane Kessler and David Kauffman. 459 people were served 16,020 meals in 2017. Fairmont Presbyterian Church continues to send volunteers, and food is donated by Far Hills Community Church once a month. The Centerville and Springboro Swim Teams donated a very large amount of food in December. There is a current need for bread sorters as well as a coordinator to submit reports. Jim Amos has volunteered to assist David Kaufman. Funding and food donations are strong.

Family Nutrition – Organized and led by Jean Clements. Three women and one seventh grade daughter participated in the Family Nutrition class lasting four weeks in October. They experienced ways to reduce food costs and increase nutritional value by reducing the amount of meat used and adding more fruits and vegetables to the diet. Complete, easy and tasty meals were planned around pizza, chili, a casserole from the cupboard and a stir-fry. From 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., we cooked, shared ideas, ate lunch together, cleaned up and packed groceries to take home to prepare the same meal for the family. Leftover groceries were donated to the Food Pantry.

The Castle – The Castle, located at 133 North Main Street in Centerville, is a gathering place for adults who are mentally challenged. Once a month Southminster volunteers provide cookies, canned

fruit, bread and rolls, vegetables and dip and salad to this ministry. In May money is collected from the congregation to help pay for the food for a Memorial Day picnic. Over 50 people graciously donated items in 2017. This program is led by Mary Stahley

Clothes That Work – Clothes That Work’s mission is to “provide interview appropriate clothing and personalized confidence” to its clients. Southminster volunteers are divided into four teams. Each team serves for a three-month period, and takes donated clothing to the Clothes That Work location in Dayton and other drop-off locations. This clothing can be used by people who are interviewing for jobs, or placed for sale in the Clothes That Work boutique. Mary Stahley coordinates this program.

VA Hospital Christmas – This is an annual program in which the whole congregation participates. Each family selects an ornament from the Christmas tree on which is listed an item that is needed by our veterans at the hospital. The team, led by Brenda and Joe Ricketts, gathered, and delivered enough items to fill 117 Christmas-wrapped plastic shoe boxes and two cartons of games.

Emergency Assistance – Emergency Assistance is a program that provides financial support to our congregation members and the community on a one-time basis per year. Several people were helped in 2017.

House of Bread – Southminster provided financial assistance to the House of Bread. We also collect and deliver children’s books to the facility.

Missionary Support – Financial support was provided for Randy Stahley and his family living and working in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Special Offerings – The Mission Team coordinates the special offerings, including One Great Hour of Sharing, Peace Offering, Joy offering and the Pentecost Offering. The church receives a small percentage of several of the offerings while the remainder goes to the Presbytery and General Assembly to assist in programs.

Per Capita Offering – This is a new program for Mission in 2017. We are responsible for educating the congregation as to the need and use of this offering. The offering, which is based on our membership of two years previous (2015), is split into three parts – the Presbytery, the Synod and The General Assembly. The funds are used to pay for expenses incurred for supporting programs for our church, with the largest part going to the Miami Valley Presbytery. It is an annual required charge for **each** member of our congregation. We appreciate everyone’s contribution.

Composed by Gretchen Cleaves, Chair

Building and Grounds Team

Southminster Building and Grounds Team worked in 2017 to maintain the beautiful facility with routine maintenance and repairs and these projects:

- Updated our Emergency Response Plan
- Responded to repairs/concerns from Cincinnati Insurance, Boy Scout Troop 516, and A Great Start Preschool
- Worked with Rieck to install a new compressor in the kitchen AC unit and to make major repairs to our main AC rooftop unit to update it to make it more energy efficient
- Installed a donated 55" TV in the Lang Theater
- Installed smoke detectors throughout the first floor
- Installed numbers inside and outside all exterior doors for more efficient response in case of emergency situations
- Finished caulking the exterior windows to prevent leaks
- Repaired tile entries at several exterior doors
- Worked with Rieck to complete filtration of water in the new CFC boiler to maximize longevity of the boiler
- Updated the building map
- Installed four donated Bose speakers with wireless microphones in the CFC
- Worked to maintain and improve building security
- Repaired the leak in the choir room
- Repaired multiple exterior lights
- Painted multiple staff offices
- Worked with Essential Lawn and Irrigation and volunteers to maintain grassy areas and gardens

Submitted by: Linda Meily, Chair

Finance Team

Southminster will close out 2017 in a relatively stable financial position. We were blessed to have low expenses this past year. Total receipts in 2017 were \$701,556 of which \$15,341 came from our investments against total expenses of \$689,247. You may recall we began 2017 with a deficit budget of \$(32,629), but we finished it with earnings of \$12,309. However, during the course of the year we had to transfer a total of \$55,000 from our money market funds in order to meet our obligations.

Our success is owed to the generous giving of the congregation. We were also blessed to receive a substantial estate gift from Ralph Nesbit. In addition, \$63,606 was received from the cell tower and \$11,400 from the preschool lease.

Total expenses for 2017 are \$29,079 *below* what we planned for in the 2017 budget. This variance is due to lower spending in all areas except office expenses and building maintenance costs.

The Finance team thanks the congregation for their generous and timely financial support. We ask that you remember the Southminster Endowment Fund in your estate planning.

Please remember that pledging for the year helps us to establish and maintain a budget for the church. If you are able to make a commitment, we would like to encourage you to do so each year.

Finance also oversees more than \$600k in investments, including both restricted funds (endowments) and general long-term savings vehicles. In 2017, our investment value increased by \$101,432 between December 2016 and December 2017. These gains were due to good market performance as well as estate gifts. Note that these figures are before the \$18,000 in planned and scheduled transfers by the finance team and the unplanned \$55,000 in transfers noted above.

The Finance team meets every third Sunday of the month at 11:30 AM. Contact anyone on staff or the team chair, Ryan Battelle, if you have any questions.

Team Members: Ryan Battelle, Chair; Larry Schlotterbeck (assistant treasurer), Brian Stephens (investments), Linda Stephens, Patty Izor (treasurer), Ron Kuker, John Kronson, Mary Elizabeth Bales, and Ralph Adkins.

Submitted by: Ryan Battelle, Chair

Nominating Team

The 2017 Nominating Team had the task of discerning five Ruling Elders and five Deacons for the 2020 class to serve for a three-year term, as well as one Ruling Elder for an unexpired term from the class of 2019 and one Deacon for an unexpired term from the class of 2018. All of these positions were filled and the candidates elected by the congregation in fall 2017.

Thanks to all who served on the Team in 2017: George Lawson (Session representative), Peggy Stichter (Deacon representative), and congregational at-large members Sarah Albright, Cindy Battelle, Suzi Dameron, and Janet Hall.

Congregational at-large members for 2018, which will be elected at the February 18 Annual Meeting, are the following: Cindi Allison, Cindy Battelle, Andrea Calim, Suzi Dameron, Peg Sperry, and Joanne Yost. The Session representative is Brandon McFarland; the Deacon representative is Peggy Stichter; and George Lawson of the Session will chair the Team.

Submitted by Ron Kuker, Chair

Personnel Team

SPC Personnel Team 2017 Highlights:

- Approved the hiring of Amanda Brashears as Child Care Worker
- Engaged Katlin Barlow as fill in Child Care Worker
- Recognized along with the rest of SPC the retirement of Pastor Steve Plunkett
- Celebrated with all of SPC the retirement of Pastor Dr. Jackie Nowak

- Welcomed with everyone the arrival of Pastor Dr. Nancy Birdsong
- Engaged Garth Adams as Temporary Interim Associate Pastor
- Continued to offer medical FSAs to our staff at reduced cost to SPC
- Hired Jerry Craig as Property Support Technician (Sundays)
- Continued to search for a Property Technician

Submitted by Charles Tapp, Chair

Financial Report Submitted by Treasurer

(Financials not available online. See printed version.)

Communication Team

Our Objective: *To create a solid communications plan for both internal and external communications. Once the plan is in place, monitor and make adjustments as necessary.*

Accomplishments in 2017:

- Supported and helped to improve communications quality in the use of video in the Sanctuary, weekly News and Notes emails, Facebook, and scrolling announcements in the Narthex.
- Maintained the Communications Process document, describing how we operate the different communications channels to the congregation and general public.
- Developed and launched a new Southminster web site.
 - Compiled and published list of Southminster teams, chairpersons, objectives
 - Collected and published staff biographies and pictures
 - Added an archive of all News and Notes emails
 - Established a photo gallery and an easy method to share photos for publication.
- Promoted the use of our new logo on the website, on electronic documents, and by creating templates for office use.
- Promoted sign-ups for News and Notes via targeted email and after Sunday worship.
- Initial draft policies were created for the use of Social Media and office computing resources.
- Tracked and reviewed traffic statistics to measure the effectiveness of the website and Constant Contact email marketing tool.

Our primary objective for 2018 is to work with each team to understand the messages they need to communicate and help insure we have plans and methods in place to support their needs.

The Communications Team was led by the efforts of: Stephen Albright, Bill Barlow, Nancy Birdsong, Andrea Calim, Wes Cleaves, Adrienne Dickson, Lynn Grubb, Ken Irwin, Steve Plunkett, Linda Wiggers. Reach us at communications@sminster.com

Submitted by: Ken Irwin, Chair

Southminster Women's Association

Mission Giving - 2017

Project Blessing	\$250.00
Miami Valley Presbytery Pledge	\$1,320.00

Outreach, Nurture Giving

Blanket Sunday	\$522.00
Thank Offering	\$963.62

Membership Report

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total Active Membership Reported, December 31, 2016:	208	309	517
Gains:			
17 and Under	0	4	4
18 and Over	<u>2</u> *	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
Total Gains	2	10	12
Losses:			
Letter of Transfer or Removal from Rolls	25	51	76
Death	<u>4</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>16</u>
Total Losses	29	63	92
Total Active Membership, December 31, 2017	181	256	437

*two new members inadvertently omitted in 2016 report

Age Distribution of Active Members

25 & Under: 59

25-45: 71

46-55: 45

56-65: 66

Over 65: 196

2017 Member Necrology Report

	<u>Joined</u>	<u>Died</u>
Florence Krahlung	2/25/62	1/14/17
Susan Shearer	1/22/12	1/30/17
Rick Jensen	4/27/14	4/8/17
Dorothy Johnson	12/15/68	4/12/17
Betty Yost	3/20/69	4/12/17
Don Snyder	1/14/02	4/16/17
Ralph Nesbitt	1/19/64	4/18/17
Barbara Doster	9/25/66	5/18/17
Janet Holder	4/13/09	5/25/17
Deanna Dix	6/7/81	8/1/17
Margaret Wilson	12/8/74	8/14/17

Jeanne Savage	9/27/59	9/15/17
Earl Erion	4/8/02	10/29/17
Louise Lane	4/8/02	11/1/17
Dorothy Putzier	4/14/03	11/16/17
Janice Short	9/24/67	11/21/17

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 26, 2017**

CALL OF THE MEETING: The congregation of Southminster Presbyterian Church was called together, with proper prior notice, for the purposes of receiving the Annual Report.

Moderator Pastor Stephen Plunkett opened the meeting with prayer at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Seventy-Seven members were in attendance; a quorum of the Church’s membership is 53.

BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

It was moved, seconded, and accepted (**MSA**) to receive the staff reports and the reports of the Board of Deacons, the Invitation Committee, the Learning Committee, the Service Committee, the Stewardship Committee, and the Worship Committee and related subcommittees and organizations, as presented.

- Service Committee budget has always been low and expressions of regret were made that it was further cut this year
- There is a discrepancy in the membership totals 517 vs. 521 reported on the annual clerk’s report
- Applause was given that we managed to close the budget shortfall to a moderate amount

2017 Nominating team for at large members:
George Lawson presented the following slate

- Sarah Albright
- Cindy Battelle
- Abbie Campbell
- Suzi Dameron
- Janet Hall

Hearing no nominations from the floor, it was **MSA** to approve the slate as presented

The meeting of the Corporation was opened. The business of the Corporation was to elect officers to serve one-year terms. The following names were presented by Ryan Battelle:

- President: Jeff Acred
- Vice President: Irene Tipsword
- Secretary: Andrea Calim
- Treasurer: Patty Izor

Hearing no nominations from the floor, it was **MSA** to close the nominations and to adopt the slate as presented.

Open forum was declared to allow discussion of any other business.

- Discussion was brought up that the per capita expense is not broken out from regular giving on tax forms. Members with questions were directed to Sharon Ark for clarification and help.

It was **MSA** to close the meeting with prayer. Pastor Jackie Nowak closed the meeting with prayer at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Calim, Clerk of Session

CALLED MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION JULY 16, 2017

Moderator Stephen Plunkett called the meeting to order at 11:10 AM.

A quorum was present

The purpose of the meeting was declared: to vote on the recommendation of the Pastor Nominating Committee to call The Reverend Dr. Nancy R. Birdsong to serve as full-time Pastor/Head of Staff, effective October 1, 2017.

Ralph Adkins, PNC Chair, gave the report of the PNC.

Candidate Nancy Birdsong made brief remarks about her enjoyment the church so far and her excitement at the possibility of being called to Southminster.

Members of the PNC distributed a handout with information about Nancy and the proposed effective salary.

Lois Thorp escorted Nancy to the library and the following motion was made:

To call The Reverend Dr. Nancy R. Birdsong to serve as full-time Pastor/Head of Staff, effective October 1, 2017, at the following terms of call: Effective Salary (including cash salary, housing, and dental insurance): \$94,000; Board of Pension dues: \$32,900; SECA reimbursement: \$7,191; travel reimbursement: up to \$1,000; continuing education expense reimbursement: up to \$1,150; professional expense reimbursement: up to \$2,500; Workers Compensation: \$406; vacation of four weeks including four Sundays; continuing education leave of two weeks including two Sundays; and moving costs reimbursement: up to \$17,000. These terms meet Presbytery requirements for 2017.

Pastor Steve opened the floor for discussion. With no discussion forthcoming, PNC Chair Ralph Adkins explained the following to the congregation:

- You are voting on the candidate with the specified terms of call. The candidate and terms of call are not voted on separately. Yes means you are approving this candidate with these terms. No means you are not approving the candidate and these terms.
- You have the right to cast a negative vote. However, a negative vote must be cast, for reason, against the presented candidate rather than as a protest because the PNC did not choose another candidate or for some other extraneous reason.
- We will vote by secret ballot. Ballots will be distributed.
- The numerical result of the vote will be announced to both the candidate and the congregation.
- We will not take an additional vote to “make the call unanimous.”
- Having heard the numerical result of the vote, Nancy will make her decision about whether to accept or reject the call. She may make his decision immediately or reserve her decision until later.
- We will now vote. Place your unfolded ballot face down in the collection plate.

The Ushers distributed ballots, allowed time for the members in attendance to vote, and collected the ballots.

Andrea Calim, Marge Morgan, Jeff Acred, and Linda Wiggers collected the ballots from the Ushers and retired to the hospitality room to tally the votes.

The vote was counted and affirmed by Marge Morgan as follows:

145 Yes Votes

2 No Votes

The results of the vote were communicated to Nancy Birdsong at which point she accepted the terms of call. The report of the vote was taken to Pastor Steve.

Pastor Steve announced the results of the vote and invited Nancy to rejoin the meeting.

It was **MSA** to dismiss the Pastor Nominating Committee, with thanks.

Pastor Nancy Birdsong closed the meeting with prayer at 12:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrea Calim

Clerk of Session

MINUTES OF CALLED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
October 1, 2017

CALL OF THE MEETING: The congregation of Southminster Presbyterian Church was called together, with proper prior notice, for the purposes of electing Elders and Deacons for 2018.

Moderator Jackie Nowak opened the meeting with prayer at 11:20 a.m. in the Sanctuary. A quorum was present.

BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

The following candidates were put forth to fill Elder and Deacon vacancies for 2018:

Elders:

Class of 2020

Dorothy Fyffe

Elizabeth Davis

John Kronson

Kevin Dickson

Brandon McFarland

Hearing no nominations from the floor, it was **MSA** to close the nominations and to elect the slate as presented.

Deacons:

Class of 2020

Holly Woods

Sherri Swiger

Pam Bates

John Freidl

Victorine Alobwede

Hearing no nominations from the floor, it was **MSA** to close the nominations and to elect the slate as presented.

Deacons class of 2018:

Peggy Stitchter

Hearing no nominations from the floor, it was **MSA** to close the nominations and to elect the slate as presented.

It was **MSA** to close the meeting with prayer. Pastor Jackie Nowak closed the meeting with prayer at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Calim, Clerk of Session

MINUTES OF CALLED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
November 12, 2017

CALL OF THE MEETING: The congregation of Southminster Presbyterian Church was called together, with proper prior notice, for the purposes of electing Ralph Adkins to fill a one-year unexpired term as Elder. This term was vacated by Jeff Acred.

Moderator Nancy Birdsong opened the meeting with prayer at 11:25 a.m. in the Sanctuary. A quorum was present.

BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

Hearing no objections or questions from the floor, it was **MSA** to elect Ralph to a one year term as Elder.

It was **MSA** to close the meeting with prayer. Pastor Nancy closed the meeting with prayer at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Calim,
Clerk of Session

MINUTES OF CALLED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
December 10, 2017

CALL OF THE MEETING: The congregation of Southminster Presbyterian Church was called together, with proper prior notice, for the purposes of voting on a new cell tower contract with Crown Castle.

Moderator Nancy Birdsong opened the meeting with prayer at 11:06 a.m. in the Sanctuary. A quorum was present.

BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

to vote on selling the cell tower lease to Crown Castle (CC). CC currently has a land lease with SPC and over the last 21 years, SPC has received just over \$1,000,000.00 in rents. Our current agreement gives us guaranteed rent through the year 2021. If we accept the offer as approved by Session on November 28th, in a unanimous vote, we will be guaranteed \$1,800,000.00 over the next 21 years. If additional land is needed for more equipment, SPC could receive up to an additional \$500,000.00 for additional ground rental. Estimated disbursements from the proceeds would be as follows:

Pay off first mortgage, estimated at \$60,000
General Fund disbursement of the difference
Roughly \$20,000 more per annum in rent receipts will be received

Questions were raised from the floor

1. What are the negatives?
 - a. The easement granted
2. How do we know this is the best deal?
 - a. We received quotes from three different companies, and we accepted the offer with the least risk to us
3. Would we be better off forgoing paying off the first mortgage?
 - a. We are paying a greater interest rate on the first mortgage than we are receiving in our invested funds. Also, Crown Castle included the mortgage payoff clause as part of the contract.
4. Could there be an issue with future mortgages that there is an easement?
 - a. There would be no further complication with a future mortgage under this contract than there currently is with the existing contract
5. Are the funds earmarked for anything?
 - a. Not yet

MSA: to accept the contract with Crown Castle

Closed with prayer by Garth Adams at 11:15 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Calim,
Clerk of Session