



Alpharetta Presbyterian Church

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2024 Annual Report

Our Mission: *We are called to be a Christ-centered family of believers committed to growing spiritually, worshipping joyfully, and sharing God's love daily.*

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PASTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Oliver Wagner

We live on the empty tomb side of the cross event. That is to say, we know in a world of suffering, injustice and loss, death is not the last word, "for though he was crucified by Pontius Pilate, on the third day God raised Jesus from the dead." I went to a pastor's conference in the fall where our speaker said, "we live in a world on fire." And that was even before the L.A. wildfires! She was referring to the wars, toxic politics, and the many divisions, challenges and troubles before the world. And yet, the theme of the conference was not "fire is consuming us" but "seeking, preserving and sharing our joy." The church is in the world to give witness to the good news of God's triumphant and saving love. "Nothing can separate us from this love" the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans. We give witness to this good news we hold and proclaim with our words and songs and prayers. So too, do we share the good news of Jesus through our ministries, hospitality, generosity and outreach.

We live in a time of great uncertainty, anxiety and challenge. The IT revolution continues to change so much of how we live, what we know and whom we trust. By the grace of God, we face our world's worries with hope and faith that assure us of who and whose we are. Our faith gives us courage, inspiration, direction, peace and a caring community with whom to laugh, cry and share the journey. We trust and lean into the promise that God is at work in our midst and victory is God's!

As we venture into ministry in 2025, we do so with gratitude for the life, work and worship of the church we shared together last year. Let us be confident that the God who was "our help in ages past" will remain "our hope in years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast and our eternal home." May Christian joy accompany every moment of your life's journey that as we work and pray for a better tomorrow we might keep singing and bring "Joy to the World!" all year long.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Beverly Markham, Associate Pastor

There are many Sunday mornings when I am in charge of leading the time of bringing our gifts and offerings. One of my favorite Psalms to quote during this time is the first verse of Psalm 24: "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it." I paraphrase a little bit to make it more personal by saying, "and all of us who live in it." During this time of asking for some interior reflection, it seems important to me to be reminded again that we belong to God. And not only do we belong to God, but the earth and all that is in it belongs to God, too. Wow! Throughout this year at APC, I recognize again and again the importance of this sense of community...of knowing we belong to God.

As we expand this sense of belonging, we also consider being part of the Body of Christ where no one part of the body is more important than the other. 1 Corinthians says, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many." So, not only do we belong to the Lord. We need and belong to one another.

What a gift to be a part of the community at APC that is willing to engage in life together, knowing that we belong to God and to one another. Here's an example of how this is lived out at APC. This year, we started Life Goes On, a group for women who are widows. I meet with them once a month over lunch and we discuss whatever is on their minds and hearts that day. Sometimes I bring a devotion or a question, but primarily they lead the conversation. These women

laugh and cry together and discuss the best fire blanket to keep in their kitchen (complete with links texted later) and how they manage to get a ladder to climb on even though their kids would die if they knew about it. The women who have been widows for decades help the ones whose husbands died this year with planning for holidays and anniversaries. They ask one another practical questions and existential ones. In short, they belong to one another. One's grief is the grief of all. One's joy is the joy of all.

Thanks be to God for this community of faith that practices celebrating the gift of belonging to God and that practices the work of belonging to one another.

CLERK OF SESSION

Elder Jim Gray

The 2024 Session included twenty-four elders and two installed pastors. Session serves as the council for the APC congregation, supporting the congregation as a community of faith, hope, love, and witness through its activities and the elders' leadership of APC committees. The Session's activities in 2024 included eleven Stated Meetings; four Called Meetings (meetings for a special purpose, such as receiving new members); one Annual Meeting of the Corporation and Congregation; one Congregational Meeting (for all APC members) and electing commissioners to four Stated Meetings of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

The Elders of the 2024 Session were Ellen Adolph, Jennifer Autian, Jack Brogan, Woody Cannon, Dale Carter, Arthur Colby, Bob Cookson, Candice Davis, Cynthia Deck, Jim Gray, Joe Hellrung, Katherine Heyen, John Hicks, Beth Hudson, Polly Hyatt, Teya Khoury, Allison Liu, Tyler Moore, Mary Rogovin, Derek Scheidt, Randy Schiltz, Russ Thomas, Katee Whitfield.

DIACONATE REPORT

The Diaconate at APC leads in ministries of sympathy, care, compassion, service and witness. The primary concerns are for the sick, the grieving, the needy and the friendless. In 2024, we had 24 Deacons, including one youth Deacon. Andrew Bamford and Lindsey Bray served as Deacon Co-Moderators. Chuck Ghent was the Deacon representative on the Nominating Committee. Dr. Beverly Markham provides leadership and support to the Diaconate.

The work of the Diaconate is segmented into four care teams, each of which focuses on a specific area of service the Deacons deliver to the congregation and community:

---The Compassion and Care team consisted of seven Deacons and was led by Ann Bogda. The goal of the Companion Care team is to extend friendship and support to individuals in the church family who are in need or cannot regularly come to church. Members of the team are assigned home-bound members of APC. They made visits, took treats, sent cards, made phone calls, and delivered flowers.

---The Connection and Support team consisted of five Deacons and was led by Kate McChesney and then by Jeffrey Jackson. This team works to support the Open Arms Ministry and reaches out to make connections with the outside

support groups that use APC's facilities.

---The Service team consisted of five Deacons and was led by Vickie Hyde. Members of this care team organized and supported memorial services and receptions.

---The Witness and Outreach team consisted of seven Deacons and was led by Yvonne Chrimes and Meredith Haslam. This team sends cards for life events. They support families of APC who may be mourning a loss or celebrating an important event. Typical celebrations may include births, baptisms, confirmations, graduations, and weddings.

The Deacons met ten times in 2024. We do not meet in the months of June or December, and we meet jointly with the Session in November to welcome new Elders and Deacons.

The Eldercare Support Group that is part of the Open Arms Ministry and is led by Martha Frutchey, is flourishing as a support group for adults who are caring for a spouse or parent. In December, the church contracted with The Tulip Place to offer care for these adults in the room across from the Eldercare Support Group so that those attending the meeting can bring their loved one with them. This removes the barrier for many people of having to find care when they cannot leave their care receiver at home alone.

The Open Arms Special Needs ministry continues to grow in its outreach efforts. Towards the end of 2024, the Bowling Nights consistently had around 30 attendees. The program continues to seek ways to serve families who have a child with special needs.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Elder Katee Whitfield (Jan-July 2024), Katherine Heyen (Feb-Dec 2024)

Staff:

Director of Children's Ministry: Ashley Stevens (Jan. 2024-May 2024), Katee Whitfield (Aug.-Dec. 2024)

Administrative Assistant to Children and Youth: Susan Baur

Children's Choir Director: Riley Schreer

Cherub Choir Director: Gillian Graeme

Committee Members: Katee Whitfield, Katherine Heyen, Jodee Stevens, Susan Baur, Kim Hoey, Dana AbuGhazaleh, Leah Planchard, Jim Cash, Kyndall Smyre

Sunday School: In 2024 there were two Sunday school classes plus nursery offered in both spring and fall. Classes were divided by age group from preschool through 5th grade into two classes: K-2 (Pre-K option) and 3-5. We used the Whirl: Classroom curriculum. During summer, we used curriculum for one combined K-5 class, plus nursery. The summer curriculum was the same with added weekly journals. We utilized around 19 teachers throughout the school year with four teachers teaching each week. All Sunday school teachers and volunteers were approved by Session.

Youth/Child Safety Training (taught by the church staff online), and background checks were completed prior to the start of weekly Sunday school classes and again as needed. The training and background checks are required every three years, and the training is held several times a year to ensure compliance.

Kids in Worship: Children's Ministry, in coordination with Lionheart volunteers, provided worship bags that contained crafts and activities for children to use during worship services.

Worship and Sacraments Class: This was not held in 2024.

Nursery: The use of an outside agency for staffing continues to be successful. We continue to have 1-2 children in the nursery at the 9:30 am hour, and 3-5 during the 11:00 am hour.

Children's Choir: Children's Choir, led by Riley Schreer, met almost weekly in the children's choir room from 10:20-10:50am. The children's choir sang in worship multiple times throughout the year. Attendance varied with about five to seven children per week.

Cherub Choir: Cherub Choir is directed by Gillian Graeme. This is a preschool choir for children ages three - Kindergarten and is held from 10:20-10:50am. The Cherubs sang in worship multiple times throughout the year.

Vacation Bible School: We held VBS July 8-12. We limited the number of attendees to 100 and had 30-40 volunteers. Our theme was "Camp Firelight" from Cokesbury. Many families from the church and community attended.

Club 45/Club 543: This monthly youth group for children in 4th and 5th grades met during the school year and was well attended. In October, Club 45 was changed to Club 543 to include 3rd graders and increase numbers and participation. We had about 5-7 students participate with a variety of activities including Adventure Air, Pumpkin Painting, a Christmas party, and a service night serving dinner to Family Promise.

Advent Fair: On December 1, we partnered with Youth Ministry to hold an Advent Fair in Fellowship Hall from 4-6pm. Lots of fun was had with activities, crafts and desserts.

Easter Egg Hunt: Our annual Egg Hunt was held on Saturday, March 23, from 11am-1pm. The eggs were scattered across the side lawn and playground areas and the hunts were separated by age level.

Blessing of the Backpacks: Blessing of the Backpacks was held during the 9:30 and 11:00am services on August 4. Children and teachers were invited to come forward with their backpacks to receive backpack tags and goody bags.

The **Children's Sunday** service was held this year on October 20 and centered around the book, *Who is My Neighbor?* by Levine and Sasso. Children led the entire service and, for the message, acted out an entertaining play based on the Good Samaritan.

Children's Christmas Pageant: The Children's Christmas Pageant was held during the 9:30am service on December 8 with 25-30 children participating and 5-8 volunteers. Children's Choir and Cherub Choir sang together for this service.

Children's Christmas Eve Service: Our 3:30 pm family Christmas Eve service continues to be a popular choice for our young families. We had members read scripture which told the story of Christ's birth. Members ranged in age from children to young adult. Each year we have many visitors attending, including several from APC Dayschool. The Children's Choir sang. Flame-free candles were used during the candlelight song during this service. Afterward, families and children gathered in Fellowship Hall for cookies and cupcakes to celebrate the birth of Christ.

5th Grade Breakfast: We held a fifth-grade breakfast for students who are bridging from Children's Ministry to Youth Ministry. Special commemorative gifts were given to these children.

DAYSCHOOL

Advisory Board:

Wendy Curl (Dayschool Director), Alison Trizzino, (Assistant Director) Ellen Adolph (President, Elder), Mary Shevlin (Treasurer), Susan Burkett, Jamie Knopp, Maddy Post (PAC liaison), Whitney Swindle, Senior Pastor Oliver Wagner

APC Dayschool finished the 2023-2024 calendar year with excitement and accomplishment. Among the highlights of the year was the successful completion of the school year for 196 students and their families. The school year culminated in an “End of Year Bash” and graduation for the PK4 and Transitional Kindergarten students.

Additional highlights include:

- Successful 2024-2025 registration in January using the school portal “Our School Hangout.” Registration yielded **record** enrollment for the upcoming year. Registration filled 16 classes representing 194 students enrolled with several age group waitlists.
- Two successful weeks of summer camp took place during June, one the week of 6/3/24 and the other 6/17/24, with a total of 296 campers for both weeks.
- During the calendar year 10 teaching positions were filled.
- The Dayschool completed its fiscal year at the end of July, allowing for the benevolence contribution of \$85,000 to APC.
- During July, Wendy, Alison and Ellen met to finalize a Dayschool Loyalty Program. This program enables the Director to provide staff with a lump sum cash award payable in the first check of the contract year based upon length of service. (Beginning with 3 years of service.) The Dayschool Board unanimously approved this to be implemented for the 2024-2025 school year.
- The 2024-2025 school year saw a successful kickoff with 200 students, 37 teachers, and 3 administrative staff members.
- Numerous property improvements have been completed or are in process. These projects, paid for with Dayschool funds, are throughout the campus and benefit all who use APC facilities. These include:
 - outdoor classroom (in process)
 - replacement of several classroom Dutch doors
 - installation of pavers and sod in the patio area
- The Dayschool parent community, PAC, is very well supported across age groups. Activities sponsored by PAC are held throughout the year and routinely very well attended.

The Dayschool at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church maintains its reputation as a standout of nurturing and academic excellence. It fosters a supportive Christian environment that positively impacts students and their families while upholding standards that soundly reflect the entire APC community.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Elder Beth Hudson, Elder Polly Hyatt

Committee members and advisers: Melody Cookson, Deb D'Alberto, Colette Rhoades, Jodie Barger, Dot Van Dyke

Staff support: Katie Millican

Mission Statement

The mission of the Fellowship Committee is to provide opportunities for connection, conversation, and community within the APC church family. This mission is carried out through various events sponsored by the committee, as well as through activities of the affiliated groups that fall under the "umbrella" of the Fellowship Committee.

Affiliated groups:

Presbyterian Women* (Lynn Reiman, moderator)

All-Stars (Charles Moriarty, co-leader)

ACT1 Theater (Randy Bampffield, President)

APC Book Club (Katie Millican, leader)

Freebirds – monthly team trivia off-site (Katie Millican, leader)

Prayer Shawl Ministry (Mary Rogovin, leader)

Men's Softball (Eldon Prince, coach)

Men's Prayer Breakfast (Ollie Wagner, leader)

Franklin Society/Wine Lovers Education Group (Polly Hyatt, leader)

*Note: Presbyterian Women will move from Fellowship to Spiritual Growth in 2025.

Summary

In 2024 the Fellowship Committee hosted and/or facilitated several regular events, as well as a couple of new groups. We also made significant progress toward getting the kitchen cleaned up, purged, and organized. We also purchased furnishings and supplies to enhance interaction during events in Fellowship Hall.

New Roles: Melody Cookson was made Kitchen Coordinator. She works with Katie to help track supplies and linens, and coordinates kitchen cleaning and organization efforts.

Activities

Regular events

--- **Sunday morning hospitality:** Volunteer teams provide food and host a buffet-style brunch between services. Team leaders include Beth Hudson (1st Sunday), Katie Millican (2nd Sunday), Colette Rhoades (3rd Sunday), Laura Griffith* (4th Sunday), and Jodie Barger (5th Sunday).

*Nick Planchard will replace Laura as 4th Sunday lead in 2025.

Special events

1/21 **Bingo Night** attendance around 50; Youth Group ran Bingo, Fellowship provided snacks/decor

2/25 **Kirkin o' the Tartans Reception:** Scottish themed buffet; attendance around 150

5/12 **Mother's Day/Youth Sunday Brunch:** enhanced hospitality hour

8/11 **Fall Kickoff Potluck Picnic**

10/6 **World Communion Soup Luncheon with Centro Familiar:** attendance 180

11/14 **Alpharetta Community Thanksgiving Service reception:** attendance 160

12/8 **Christmas Cookie Buffet**

12/15 **Christmas Reception:** attendance 200

New activities

9/6 Wine Tasting Event (offsite)

Participants met in a member's home and enjoyed samples and pairings while learning about Spanish wines from

member Blake Cherrington, who has taught classes on wine at Georgia Tech and is a certified instructor. Plans are underway to hold repeat events in 2025.

Kitchen Management

Q1: property workday: purged and organized kitchen cabinets

Q4: Kitchen deep cleaning and space reorganization

Q4: Purchase of several high-top tables for Fellowship Hall events and Sunday hospitality.

Financials: All activities and purchases fell within our assigned budget.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Elder Bob Cookson, Elder Derek Scheidt

The Membership Committee of Alpharetta Presbyterian Church conducted many activities in 2024 focused on attracting, connecting, and nurturing members. Active in this committee were Elders Bob Cookson and Derek Scheidt, Pastoral Liaison Reverend Dr. Beverly Markham, and committee members Lee Porter, Sabine Genet, Margy Culver, Colin Rosenberger, Susan McBreairty, and Alyssa Darby. The work done by the committee falls into several areas summarized below:

New member attraction and connection

- A new visitor follow-up process was continued and improved with committee members calling frequent visitors to engage and make connections within APC; also, they are encouraged to attend new member classes and join APC.
- New member classes were conducted on 1/22, 4/28, 8/25, and 11/17
 - These classes resulted in 25 new family units and their associated children
 - All new members are actively engaged with APC
- The committee showed appreciation to 2023 and 2024 new members with a Christmas Party at Ollie and Heather Wagner's home with over 50 people in attendance.
- Coffee, donuts, and church activity flyers were shared with Dayschool parents at carpool drop-off points two times during the year.
- The All Are Welcome banner was developed for display to indicate our church's acceptance of all people.

Congregation engagement and involvement

- In 2023, we began a process to identify and connect with members who have become less active over the past two years in an effort to reconnect them to worship and activities at APC. In 2024, this program was shortened to engage members who are less active after just one year.
- Perhaps most importantly for the combined 2023 and 2024 years, APC has experienced a net growth of 75 members bringing APC to its highest membership in 15 years (~4% annual growth).

Congregational service/nurturing

- Rainbow pins were placed in several places in our building to foster understanding that truly "All Are Welcome" here.

- A new process of engaging inactive members began with a letter sent by the committee Elders to those members that had not attended in over one year. Follow-up calls by committee members were then made in hopes of getting them to return to active membership (see above).
- Worked with Session and staff to continue to communicate clearly on the APC website and social media that our denomination and congregation accept all people to worship, lead, and be active in the work of the church

MISSION COMMITTEE

Elder Randy Schiltz, Elder John Hicks

La Gonave Haiti Partners: APC sends continued financial support to pay teacher salaries on the island, allowing school to continue, thus a hot meal for the students. Our contributions do not ever pass through the mainland's corrupt banking system and go straight to La Gonave for Healthcare, Education, and Infrastructure. Continued terrible unrest has prevented most travel to the mainland, resulting in an increase in poverty, basic goods, fuel, kidnapping for ransom, and other problems arising from the unrest. APC will return to La Gonave once the violence and political unrest cease. Our sister community, Ticotelette, receives a portion of the funding needed for teachers' salaries from APC as the number one priority at this time. With our former US partner church unable to help carry the load and unfortunately having to step away from contributing, the APC contribution is the only funding received, outside of The LGHP's general education fund. It is vital that APC continue to support the people of La Gonave, and specifically Ticotelette, with prayers and funding. Contact Randy Schiltz for more information.

The Drake House: APC has supported TDH since 2006. This includes helping to maintain one of the apartment units and supporting the mother and children while they live in the unit. Support is given through mentoring as well as furnishing and supplying the unit as families transition through the unit. In 2024, two different families lived in our unit; one mother for about 120 days and the second mother and for a different 120 days. These women in particular each had two young children. They received housing, social services support, job coaching and financial skills training. Families were able to access the food pantry weekly. APC provided gift certificates and a gift basket at Christmas. Also, APC participates in Miss Mary's Ice Cream Crankin' as a fundraising sponsor. Walter Dean has been very involved with Miss Mary's and Christina Appen, Toni Raabe and Polly Hyatt are the advocates for the unit and check in frequently with the mother. We have tried and will continue to recruit other church members who would like to be involved in sponsoring and taking care of the unit.

Memorial Drive Ministries: APC continued to support MDM, with Dr. Beverly Markham on the Board. Welcome kits with essential personal items (e.g., toiletries, hygienic care) were gathered by Presbyterian Women, Youth and Children ministries. The kits were collected and provided to MDM in April. APC supported the first Bridge to Belonging event in October by paying the cost to print the 150 programs for the event. Dale Carter is our Mission Committee representative.

Family Promise: APC hosted three families per session across four sessions, from grandmothers to infants. APC, in addition to being an important FP partner, is a gathering point for the community coming together for common good, as Alpharetta Rotary, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. James Methodist, UUMAN, and the Young Men's Service League, along with APC members, cooked, slept, decorated, and did laundry during our host weeks. APC added security locks for sleeping rooms and provided incremental support for FP's summer programs through the congregation's support. Finally, APC's support extended beyond hosting, as contributions supported the broader Family Promise program, which touched over 4,000 individuals in 2024. For more information, contact Tom Gould.

Bashor Homeless Men's Shelter: APC assembled 150 sandwiches in February between the Sunday morning services and delivered the sandwiches for distribution at the shelter. Volunteer opportunities were provided to the congregation throughout the year. Sydney Schneider is our Mission Committee representative.

North Fulton Community Charities (Fiscal Year 2024): APC continues to give financially to NFCC so that it can continue to provide good services to the citizens of north Fulton County. The food pantry and the thrift shop both provide quality items at reduced pricing for people who really need the help. APC supported supply drives during the calendar year, including the warm coat drive and the Thanksgiving food program in October and November. APC hosted NFCC's Back to School Backpack Drive that provided fully stocked backpacks to over 1,000 school kids in our community. Also, the educational wing of NFCC continues to provide help to individuals in areas such as obtaining GED certification, financial planning courses, second language courses, income tax preparation assistance, etc. Kim Fulkerson is our Mission Committee representative.

The Place of Forsyth: APC continues to collect food items year-round for both NFCC and The Place of Forsyth. "Food for All" items are collected in bins in the Fellowship Hall and transported to these charities by volunteers. APC gathered donations for the Thanksgiving food drive & Holiday House and supported the Coat Drive in the Fall. Eva Wardrup is our Mission Committee representative.

Habitat Aid Initiative: HAI completed a donor trip to Kenya from Jun 28 to July 10, 2024, with 14 travelers who witnessed HAI's projects and programs in the region. APC shared financial support during 2024 which helped with the following projects described by HAI's founder Walter Dean: "We continue our support of the Munyanza Health Center with overhead funding for salaries and pharmaceuticals. In summer of 2025, we will travel to Kenya with 14 travelers, 2 of whom are doctors and who will be providing hands on assistance to the patients in addition to providing the funding for the construction of an operating ward and the necessary equipment for handling operation procedures. We continue to provide food security and school supplies for the orphans at Ekolomani Child rescue center. 2025 will bring construction of teacher housing at Khwisero Girl's Secondary School in addition to five additional water points. Our website has been updated in 2025 to highlight all the projects completed since inception of our organization (www.habitataid.org). We welcome all at APC who have an interest in participating in this mission initiative."

Hurricane Relief: In September, APC collected donations of food, clothing and household items for Hurricane Helene relief in Georgia and North Carolina. The donations were collected at APC and through the Dayschool and driven to a staging point for distribution. Also, APC provided a donation to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) for hurricane relief.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Elder Ellen Adolph, Elder Jim Gray

Committee Members: Dr. Ollie Wagner; Jim Gray, Chair; Polly Hyatt, Co-chair; Chuck Ghent, Deacon representative; Kevin Isom, Jeff Hyde, Pam Heydinger and Gladys Cannon, members at-large.

The committee met in-person on August 25, followed by regular meetings on Zoom. Bulletin inserts sought nominations. After calls to potential Elder, Deacon and “at large” 2025 Nominating Committee candidates, the following nominees were presented to, and approved by, the Session at the Oct. 26, 2024, meeting to present to the congregation:

Elder nominees:

Rick Bogda, Collin Webb, Lee Porter, Lily Womack--Youth Elder (Class of 2026), Lynn Tinley, Tom Gould, John Plocic, Jodee Stevens (Class of 2025), Susan Smith

Deacon nominees:

Kat Zagoria, Barb Denny, Tom Allison, Pam Forcier, Sophie Sabaj-Griffith--Youth Deacon (Class of 2026), Chris Norris, Tracy Norris, Mary Nelson, Anna Anton.

2025 At-large Nominating Committee member nominees:

Margy Culver, Kyndall Smyre, David Neal, Susan McBrearity.

At the election of church officers at the Congregational Meeting, Sunday, Nov. 3, 2024, Laura Griffith was nominated from the floor as a Deacon. She accepted the nomination and was unanimously approved with the other nominees.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Elder Joe Hellrung, Elder Beth Hudson

Committee members: Jim Cash, Salpi Adrouny, Ted Lynam, Valerie Fulkerson, Rob Vacko, Greg Raabe, Tracy Norris, and Ollie Wagner (ex-officio). The committee met monthly throughout the year to support church staff and fill vacancies as they emerged. Specifically in 2025, the committee is grateful to have accomplished the following:

1. Accepted the resignation of our Children’s Director, Ashley Stevens, and conducted a search which resulted in the hiring of Katee Whitfield as our new director.
2. Worked with Music Ministry leaders to hire Gillian Graeme as our new Cherub Choir (ages 3-5) director.
3. Organized a reception to thank Daniel McKemey for his two years of service as Youth Director in response to his resignation.
4. Worked with Ministry Associate Dana AbuGhazaleh as she finished her ordination requirements and is in the process of becoming an Associate Pastor for APC in March of 2025.
5. Revised and updated the Youth Director job description and formed a search committee that is now looking for a new staff person to work with APC youth and their families.
6. Conducted annual performance reviews for all staff and assured the awarding of a cost-of-living increase and Christmas bonus to all staff.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Elder Tyler Moore, Elder Woodrow Cannon

Committee Members: Dave Berry, Tim Chisholm, Diane King, David Neal, Eric Dummer, Greg Helfrich, Bob Cookson, Valerie Fulkerson, Ted Lynam, Steve Wardrup, Tim Hathy, Chris Norris

Staff support: Ollie Wagner, Laura Moore, Wendy Curl, Jason Brandt, Katie Millican

This past year was an excellent year for APC Property. Our property has completely recovered from the 2023 “flood.” The most significant 2024 accomplishment was the replacement of the roof over approximately a third of the facility. The roof replacement was completed for less than the planned and budgeted amount; does not leak; and there have been no reports of damage to car tires from discarded roofing nails. In addition to the new roof, parking lot potholes were patched, and the entire lot was re-stripped providing several additional parking spaces. Property expenses slightly exceeded the budget (~1%) largely due to significantly higher electricity and natural gas prices. Our property finished 2024 in “excellent” condition.

We have enjoyed personnel stability in 2024 with diligence and fine work by Jason Brandt as Facility Manager and excellent support from Tim Chisolm and Tyler Moore.

Regular 2024 Activities:

- Monthly review and tracking against 2024 budget
- Monthly Property Committee meetings with minutes
- Opening and closing the property each Sunday
- Review and approve property invoices
- Development of 2025 budget
- Review and approve space usage requests from outside groups
- Spring and Fall Property Work Days
- Review and pass all fire and safety inspections

Additional 2024 Accomplishments:

- Choir room ceiling patching and painting
- Dayschool had a contractor pressure wash the sidewalks and patios
- Updated patio tables outside Fellowship Hall
- Checklist for properly handling extreme cold weather conditions
- Removed aging decking on the APC Cottage and replaced with a ground-level patio
- Arranged a higher annual donation from Lionheart for their use of the Cottage
- Replaced 33 sprinkler heads
- Repaired front soffits
- Exterior caulking and painting of the three stained glass windows in the sanctuary as well as the gym’s wheel window
- Worked with the City of Alpharetta on their proposal to purchase a very small amount of APC property along Cumming Street for the purpose of installing a sidewalk. The finalization of the agreement/purchase will occur in 2025.

Projects Moved to 2025

The APC Fire Alarm has worked well for just over 20 years and continues to function properly. That being said, it is rather old and it is now difficult to find parts necessary to maintain proper function. Full replacement and updating is now necessary but the upgrade has been postponed until 2025 to avoid additional capital expense in 2024.

While the APC elevator is safe and working properly, we are overdue for an inspection by the City of Alpharetta. While we have repeatedly asked, there is a severe lack of certified inspectors approved by the City to conduct the inspections.

While the City knows this problem, there does not appear to be a resolution planned or scheduled. We will conduct the inspection whenever this is possible.

A subcommittee of the Property Committee has been established to evaluate and recommend the correct order of installation of LVT floors in many of the APC meeting rooms and halls. The subcommittee is expected to make a recommendation by Spring and LVT floors are expected to be phased in over the next several years.

APC is seriously considering the installation of solar panels for providing all or at least a significant part of our electric power. We expect to complete a feasibility study in 2025 and conduct a cost vs. benefit analysis prior to any work being authorized.

Construction/Purchase of a structure to provide covering for Tina, the church mini-bus.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH COMMITTEE

Elder Mary Rogovin, Elder Russ Thomas

Committee: Dale Carter, Polly Hyatt, Deanna Womack, Lynn Reiman

Staff Support: Rev. Dr. Ollie Wagner (Jan-May), Dana AbuGhazaleh (May-present)

APC's Spiritual Growth Ministry offered a number of regularly scheduled classes and special events for participants to enhance their Christian growth through knowledge and understanding of the Bible and of issues of faith. We offer in-person meetings in classrooms, Zoom meetings and hybrid meetings throughout the week. For the 2024-2025 class year, we changed from the Disciple 1 curriculum to the Covenant Curriculum. We also changed the name of the small group to Bible 101. We have two offerings of this course.

Special Classes/Events in 2024:

- "The Hymns We Sing" (January 7, 14, 21) Charles D. Frost, president-elect of the Hymn Society of the US and Canada, provided a 3-part series on the history and purpose of hymns in modern worship. As one of the editors of "Glory to God", our Presbyterian Hymnal, he gave us great insight into how hymns are chosen and organized. He also led us in rousing renditions of old and new hymns. His first lecture was in person. Lectures 2 and 3 were via Zoom.
- Small Group Leader lunch. In July we held a lunch for all the small group leaders. We discussed each group's curriculum and history. We connected our groups through fellowship and delighted in each group's unique mission and vision.
- "Faith and Science" (August 11, 18, 25) Paul Wallace, professor of Astrophysics at Agnes Scott College, presented a 3-part in person series on the interconnectedness of Faith and Science. He taught from his book, "Love and Quasars," and shared how he sees God in the universe.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Elder Robert Beal, Elder Dale Carter

Members: Ollie Wagner, Rob Vacko, Beth Hudson, Patrick Liu, Greg Raabe, Robert Beal, Jan Hughey, Collin Webb, Dale Carter, Laura Moore, Arthur Colby

The stewardship committee was very active in 2024. The church ended favorably versus the established budget for the year. Although pledge receipts were less than expected, non-pledge receipts were much higher than expected. Combining pledge receipts and non-pledge receipts, the church saw the second highest revenue in the last seven years.

The endowment fund more than doubled. We moved endowment investment decisions to the stewardship committee, and approved use of an outside investment advisor for guidance. Investment income surpassed mortgage payments for the first time.

The church's financial review was completed and approved. We updated and approved the Dayschool interface. We approved a non-acceptance policy of restricted gifts. We approved a space use agreement with Lionheart. And we approved a contract with the Tulip Place to serve the elder care ministry.

We also approved the sale of a section of the property to the city, subject to certain conditions, for a new sidewalk with an easement condition and created a subcommittee to oversee the process and present it in the next congregational meeting for vote.

Commitment Campaign: Dedication Sunday was November 24 with the theme of "God's Generosity Our Gratitude How will you respond?" and scripture from 2 Corinthians 9:11, "You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity." Committee members were: Beth Hudson, Lynn Reiman, Tina and Steve Bostik, Bill Godshall, Pam Forcie, Laura Jackson, and Dale Carter. The team utilized the book, "God's Gift of Generosity, Gratitude Beyond Stewardship" by Karl B. Travis in developing the campaign. The 2024 pledge drive combined the previous brochure and pledge card into a single tri-fold document that decreased mailing cost by being able to use a standard envelope. Grocery tote bags with the APC logo were given as gifts. We received 203 pledges totaling \$964,950.

**Alpharetta Presbyterian Church
2024 Results**

	Actual 2024	Budget 2024
Revenue		
Pledged receipts	\$ 955,877	\$ 1,000,000
Non-pledged receipts	181,218	150,000
Interest income	55,778	65,500
Special offerings	17,898	6,000
Dayschool benevolence	82,933	78,600
Other income	33,919	33,400
Reserves	23,488	34,000
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
REVENUE CHURCH OPERATIONS	\$ 1,351,111	\$ 1,367,500
Expenses		
Personnel	\$ 771,312	\$ 785,502
General expenses	99,136	84,300
Mortgage	48,849	48,852
Deacons and Session	6,798	9,870
Property - maintenance	121,715	124,700
Property - supplies	13,500	10,000
Property - utilities	99,859	98,000
Children's ministry	23,643	30,815
Youth/YA ministry	12,690	12,400
Spiritual growth	3,286	4,600
Fellowship	3,608	2,350
Kitchen	5,051	12,824
Membership	881	3,300
Presbytery (and per capita)	43,142	43,142
Special offerings	17,898	6,000
Missions	53,715	53,700
Commitment	3,936	4,525
Worship - supplies	11,565	16,420
Worship - music	8,651	13,000
Security	0	1,500
Communications	1,876	1,700
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
EXPENSES CHURCH OPERATIONS	<u>1,351,111</u>	<u>1,367,500</u>
NET INCOME (LOSS)	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Elder Jennifer Autian, Elder Katherine Heyen/Cynthia Deck

The Worship Committee of Alpharetta Presbyterian Church oversees all worship-related activities and functions of the church, including planning and implementation of these activities, and assists the pastoral and music leadership staff in these processes. These include core weekly worship services with scripture-based pastoral messages, participation in sacred music, communal prayer, as well as scheduled communion, and baptisms. Special worship activities such as weddings, funerals, and memorial services are overseen by the committee, as well as the planning and implementation of special seasons and times of worship, such as Lenten/Easter services and Advent/Christmas services. The committee is also responsible for other traditional elements of worship, such as liturgy, sanctuary preparation, acolyte functions, ushering, sound and lighting, flowers, and Memorial Garden planning and maintenance.

Following are some special highlights in which the committee and its membership have been involved in concert with other church members and leadership during 2024:

- The new EPIC (Experiential, highly Participatory, Image-rich and Connective) services began in 2024. EPIC is a casual service featuring praise music and interactive discussion. In 2024, we offered one EPIC service per month, typically on the fourth Sunday at 5:30pm with regular attendance 50+. Services were 45 minutes followed by food and fellowship. Communion was served at services nearest Easter and Christmas. During summer months, there was a focus on reaching out and connecting college students to the EPIC service.
- The church continues to livestream one service every Sunday, and there is a solid base of worshipers that enjoy the livestream service.
- Use of the screens in the sanctuary has been well received. Usage increased throughout the year to enhance the service with pictures or key words through the sermon and other parts of the service.
- Working on forming an Emergency Response team to report to Worship Committee. This team would hold optional sessions for emergency preparedness in sanctuary, CPR, and possible flu/vaccines. This team would also oversee updating of diabetic and first aid kits.
- Increased security presence during church services on Sundays in response to actions of neighboring churches and community.
- Lent was celebrated through February and March starting with Ash Wednesday's Drive-In morning ashes, children's pancake dinner, and evening service. Holy Week included Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday soup and bread meal and worship in Fellowship Hall, Good Friday noon service, and three Easter services – 7am sunrise in the outdoor Prayer Chapel, 9:30am, and 11am in the sanctuary. Palm Sunday's service included palm fronds for the congregation and a cast of ACT1 actors and adults and children from the congregation reenacting Jesus' entry to Jerusalem organized by Children's Ministry.
- Gifts of Women service in March, Worship Committee/Flowers gave each woman a flower during services.
- Pentecost was a beautiful service emphasizing the gift of the Holy Spirit with colors, music, and handbells.

- Sacristy and usher closets were cleaned and organized. Better storage utilized for Christmas décor in coordination with Jason Brandt from Property.
- In October the church celebrated World Communion Sunday with Centro Familiar for the fourth year. The service was held indoors in the sanctuary including music from both congregations. Fellowship continued after the service with a shared lunch. The service and fellowship were well attended and should continue. Moving the service indoors was due to changes with A/V staffing, but it was well received and many thought it was more personal and communal.
- In November, APC hosted the Alpharetta Community Thanksgiving Service, an annual ecumenical service with leadership from several local churches/congregations. Great success and all enjoyed reception afterwards hosted by the Fellowship committee.
- The Advent season was beautiful and included the Children's Pageant, Christmas Music Service, and four services on Christmas Eve. The four services were a 3:30pm Children's Service with participation from APC Dayschool, two traditional candlelight services at 5pm and 7:30pm, and the final 11pm candlelight service with communion. All were well attended. The Longest Night service was held December 18 for a special time of reflection. Great organization and details for decorating and take down by Sanctuary Prep and Property.

Number of 2024 Baptisms: 9 Weddings: 6 Offsite, 3 at APC Memorial Services: 9 hosted

2024 APC Worship Committee Subcommittee Chairpersons:

- Ministerial: Ollie Wagner
- Liturgists and Communion: Kelly Vandever
- Ushering: Jennifer Autian
- Music: Drew Bowers, Sam DeCarlo, Riley Schreer, Gillian Graeme joined as our Cherub Choir Director
- Weddings: Dawn Bray
- Flower Guild: Laura Vacko (team of Mary Nelson and Mary Busman assist)
- Audio/Visual sound/lighting function: Paul McChesney rolled off and Will Giannini joined
- Acolytes: Stacie Holloway rolled off and Carolina Smith joined
- ACT1 Liaison: Stu Moring
- Memorial Garden: Jan Hughey, Blake Cherrington
- Special Worship (Christmas/Easter) Sanctuary Prep: Valerie Fulkerson (with help from Elizabeth Hughey and other volunteers)
- Emergency Response Team: Florence White rolled off and Mallory Feazle joined
- Funerals/Memorials: Carolyn Dillon rolled off and Martha Frutchey joined

YOUTH MINISTRY

Elder Allison Liu, Elder Candice Davis

Youth Elder Teya Khoury

Committee members and advisers: Kari Minnich, Wendy Seeman, Lauren Gerhard, Derek Scheidt, Mike Womack

Sunday School Teachers: Tim Deitrich, Candice Davis, Mallory Feazle, Natalie Force, Lauren Gerhard, Amy Hewitt, Jeffrey Jackson, Allison Liu, Derek Scheidt, Wendy Seeman, Aly Sikora, Barton Smith, Katherine Thomas, Russ Thomas, Mike Womack, Kyndall Smyre.

Staff Support: Dana AbuGhazaleh, Daniel McKemey and Susan Baur

Youth Group:

January 2024: Partnered with the Fellowship Committee to host Bingo Night on January 21 in Fellowship Hall.

February 2024: Organized and led the Souper Bowl of Caring offering on Super Bowl Sunday in February and raised \$1,269.50 for families in need. The funds were split between the NFCC Food Bank and The Place Food Bank (Session).

March 2024: Youth Auction was held with an 80's theme and generated \$6,111.00 in funds to go toward Mission Trips (see Summer Mission)

April 2024: Held a Parent Meeting to gain insight and plan for future structure of the Youth Ministry. Results from the meeting (theme): Youth and Parents are seeking more faith-focused, spiritual activities and education. Dana AbuGhazaleh was approved by Session to serve as Supervisor of Youth and Children's Ministry/Christian Education.

May 2024: Youth planned and led the Youth Sunday worship service in May. Seniors gave mini sermons that day and the annual Senior Slideshow was shared.

June 2024: June, the youth participated in domestic mission trips –both High School and Middle School. (see Summer Mission)

July 2024: APC youth helped as crew leaders and volunteer helpers with VBS.

August 2024: Destination Unknown

- **Dates:** August 16-18
- **Mission Work:** Healing Farm Foundation, Lake Nantahala, White Water Rafting
- **Attendees:** 20 People (4 Adult Volunteers, 16 Kids)

September 2024: Fall Kick Off and New Sunday School Curriculum/Structure (details below in Sunday School section) Initial topic covered: Faith and Science. Fall Kick Off was aligned with this topic and brought outdoor activities that brought the two together.

Forgiveness Movie Night: 09/08/2024

Help with Fiesta Night: 09/15/2024

October 2024: Trunk or Treat, Corn Maze and Lock-In.

November 2024: As a result of the Parent Meeting feedback, the Committee reassessed communication/engagement methods with families through improved social media platforms. Confirmed APC email, Instagram, and WhatsApp platforms for primary engagement for all Youth communications. The Youth also participated in packing College Care Packages.

December 2024: Christmas Party and Angel Tree Shopping.

Sunday School:

Approved, purchased, and launched new Sunday School curriculum from PCUSA called Faith Questions. Classes were also split into two separate classes: middle school and high school for a more focused and age-appropriate discussion. The curriculum is used for both groups but is designed to adapt to middle or high school classes.

Summer Mission Trips:

- Middle School: CROSS Mission with Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC (June 16-21)
- High School: New Bern, NC, with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (June 30-July 6)

Confirmation Class:

13 members: Sophia Poggi, Matthew Agler, Carrie Agler, Eric Dummer, Jake Burley, Nathan Liu, Andrew Rhoades, Lily Womack, Tara Khoury, Alexis Isom, Delaney Smith, Kyra Perri, Garrison.

Adult Mentors: Susan Mueller, Heather Wagner, Mary Busman, Susan Burkett, Lynn Reiman, Andrew Bamford, Jeffrey Jackson, Amy Hewitt.

13 youth and 8 mentors participated in the Confirmation Class and joined during the worship service on 04/28/2024. In addition to weekly classes on Sunday afternoon with Pastor Ollie, Dana, and Pastor Beverly, the Confirmands attended an overnight Retreat at Lake Lanier on 04/20/2024 – 04/21/2024. The Confirmands prepared faith statements that were shared at the April Session meeting.

Young Adults:

APC offered scheduled lunch gatherings after the 11am service for food and fellowship with Young Adults, also known as the Ya Ya's. Fellowship also occurred with joint Trivia nights in Alpharetta with the APC Freebirds (Empty Nester group).

2024 Church Statistical Report

Church Alpharetta PIN 11004
Presbytery Greater Atlanta
Address 180 Academy St, Alpharetta, GA 30009-1704
Phone 770-751-0033 **Fax** 770-751-0873
Email office@alpharettapres.com
Web Site www.alpharettapres.com

**Membership**

Prior Active Members	781	Adjusted membership	781
Gains		Losses	
Certificate	14	Certificate	9
Youth Professions	13	Deaths	8
Professions & Reaffirmations	12	Deleted for any Other Reason	0
Total Gains	39	Total Losses	17
Total Ending Active Members	803		

Baptisms

Presented by Others	9	Average Weekly Worship Attendance	300
At Confirmation	1	Friends of the Congregation	60
All Other	0	Ruling Elders on Session	22
		Do you have Deacons?	Yes

Age Distribution of Active Members

17 & Under	33	Hearing impairment	15
18 - 25	97	Sight impairment	4
26 - 40	142		
41 - 55	140		
56 - 70	221		
Over 70	170		
Total Age Distribution	803		

People with Disabilities

Mobility impairment	8
Other impairment	12
Gender Distribution	
Women	443
Men	360
Non-Binary	

Youth in Congregation

Age 4 and under	42	Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	53
Elementary School (K-5th grade)	76	High School (9th – 12th grade)	83
		Total Youth	254

Racial Ethnic

Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	10	Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	1
Black/African American/African	16	White	747
Middle Eastern/North African	10	Multiracial	7
Hispanic/Latino-a	12		
		Total Racial Ethnic	803

Budgeted Income	1,333,500
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Budgeted Expense **1,367,500**

Receipts

Regular Contributions	1,160,141	Bequests	163,750
Capital Building Fund	0	Other Income	28,771
Investment Income	55,778	Subsidy or Aid	5,000

Expenditures

Local Program	1,236,356	Investment Expenditures	166,424
Local Mission	68,556	Per Capita Apprt	21,571
Capital Expenditures	85,315	Other Mission	24,628

Thursday, February 6, 2025

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