



FAITH

PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH USA

*Beyond the Wood
and Stone,
Step-By-Step*

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Celebrating the ministry of
the congregation in 2020

Physical Address: 1349 Blue Bird Road
Mineral Bluff, Georgia 30559
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 2668
Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513
Telephone: 706-374-5912

www.faithpresbyterianusa.org

“2020 . . . what can I say?”



We've been surrounded and battered by troubles, but we're not demoralized;

*we're not sure what to do, but we know that God knows what to do;
we've been spiritually terrorized, but God hasn't left our side;
we've been thrown down, but we haven't broken.*

– 2 Corinthians 4 (The Message)

My dear Friends:

In conversation with all those called upon to contribute part of this Annual Report for 2020 I know that everyone, has found it very difficult to describe the year of 2020 - a year unlike any other year any of us have ever lived through.

That said, I invite you, as you read to remember and give thanks for every expression of our vision and mission as a church in the midst of the public health, economic and emotional resulting from the public health challenge that is the covid19 virus.

That this year also saw us take possession of our beautiful, functional and much-anticipated new building added several layers of frustration and complexity. Finally having a yet more perfect space to gather to worship, learn, care, and serve the need to stay safe and help keep one another and others safe, meant that we needed to stay apart.... but that separation is coming to an end, we see the hope that the vaccines represent. Throughout everything that happened Faith Presbyterian Church has continued to make room and create space so that every person can unite to worship God, to grow in faith, to serve our neighbors bearing faithful and fruitful witness to their and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Along with all of you I note with great gratitude the diligent and faithful service of our Director of Music, Kathy Wills and the newly arrived, Pastoral Associate, the

Rev. Susan Haynes. As a team together we look to the coming year and years!

As you read and reflect upon the reports from our Session Planning Teams and Committees please recognize the important role that each program, activity, outreach and service opportunity has in the overall nurturing of the life of the church and our expressing the gracious love that we know God has for all. While we all may have our favorite programs or activities it does take the whole to nurture all!

As we look forward to 2021, a year we will move through guided by all that the phrase and theme, **“Forward In Faith Together”** will come to mean to us, there are so many ways in which all of us can embrace and express the mission to which God is always calling us! Along with your elders I encourage each and all of you in your active engagement and involvement.

Thank you all for being the people you are and for everything you are and do that strengthens God’s work here at Faith. I look forward to continuing work with each of you as we celebrate God’s presence as we continue to do and be all it takes to become the Faith Presbyterian Church that God needs in our time and community.

By our prayers and living let us move, **“Forward In Faith Together.”**

God bless you and may God continue to extend mercy to us all, in order that we can extend mercy to all!

Jim Simpson, Pastor



The drive-in dedication of our new building on September 8, 2020. A beautiful Blue Bird day on Blue Bird Road. Well attended by our congregation who remained safely social distanced in their vehicles.

Faith Presbyterian Church

Mission Statement:

By God's love and grace, we are Called, Committed and Led.

Vision Statement:

Called by God to be Faith Presbyterian Church of the North Georgia Mountains,

we welcome all to join together to worship God.

Committed to following Jesus' example,

we joyfully share God's love, grace and gifts with all in our church family and community.

Led by the Holy Spirit,

we invite all to grow spiritually in this community of Faith.

Church Priorities for 2021 (as adopted by the Session at the Session Retreat, November 2020)

- Identify creative opportunities to safely engage, worship, and learn together, recognizing the continued challenge of covid19.
- Increase membership and participation through connecting with and serving those who reside in and beyond our community.
- Continue as a spiritual community worshipping God by the sharing of our time, talent and treasure.
- Equip and encourage all to follow in Jesus' footsteps and to show God's love, grace and care.
- Develop effective church leaders.
- Expand effective communication to include appropriate use of technology and social media.
- Pursue a sustainable way, including volunteer support, of video streaming (Zoom) for worship and other events.
- Continue to transition to our new church facility.
- Invite continuing participation in our "Growing in Faith Together" campaign (GIFT) supporting our ongoing life and witness.

Dear Faith Presbyterian friends,

2020 was a different year for all of us and I am not referring to the Covid-19 pandemic only. I began 2020 working as an Interim Pastor, fully expecting I would continue my work as an interim at another church once my contract concluded the end of April. As many of you have heard the story of how I came to serve with and among you at Faith, I will not repeat that story here, but suffice it to say, I am delighted and thankful that the way I thought this year would unfold for me professionally has been otherwise! I am thankful for the way in which you have embraced me and invited me into your lives and the Faith family.

You have heard this before and you have now seen it in print in some of our Presbyterian Church USA publications... Faith Presbyterian Church is a beacon of God's love and grace. You are the ones who have made it so as you have followed the Spirit's leading and responded to the needs of the community and the needs of each other over and over again. I have never been a part of a more energetic and committed part of the Body of Christ!

I hope you will sit awhile with this 2020 Annual Report. Read it and as you read it, give thanks to God for all the wonderful ways in which God has been worshiped and God's children have been supported through the ministry and mission of Faith Presbyterian Church.

As I know we all do, I look forward to the day when we can be closer than six feet apart and can exchange some greatly needed handshakes and hugs. In the meantime, we continue to do all we can to keep ourselves and others safe, including getting the vaccination as it becomes available to each of us. As we go Forward in Faith Together in 2021, I know we will do the ministry and mission of Faith Presbyterian with the same energy and enthusiasm and grace that is the FPC way.

Grace and Peace,

Susan Haynes

Pastoral Associate



FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 2020

Prepared by Bob Goodyear, Financial Secretary

Despite what all of us hope will be seen as an “extremely unusual year”, the friends and members of Faith were diligent in their current and future support of the church’s missions. I am pleased to report the following statuses of the various giving programs of the church that were active in 2020.

- 2020 Stewardship (supporting the general operation of the church and its ongoing ministries)
 - 88 member families and friends made pledges totaling \$257,606 to the 2020 Stewardship drive
 - By years end, \$244,953 had been received against those pledges – 95%.
 - Non-pledging member families and friends gave another \$30,233.
 - Special Offerings (Pentecost, One Great Hour of Sharing, Christmas Joy, etc.) received \$5,227.
 - \$15,172 worth of supplies and other “in kind” items were donated.

- Final Year of the Original Building Fund (to build our new church facility on Bluebird Road)
 - 93 member families and friends made commitments totaling \$970,847 to be paid over the 2018-2020 period.
 - As of the date this report is being prepared (1/13/2021), \$1,027,426 (105.8% of the total amount pledged) has been received.
 - In addition, we have received \$118,428 in unpledged gifts designated for the new building.

- Growing In Faith Together (GIFT) Campaign
 - 63 member families and friends committed \$404,931 to be paid over three years (2021-2023) to reduce the outstanding mortgage on the new church building.

\$87,493 of the committed amount was prepaid in 2020.

- 2021 Stewardship
- 63 members/families and friends have made pledges totaling \$232,152.71 as of this date.

Thanks to all our members and friends for their ongoing support of the work of Faith Presbyterian Church. With increased support comes the responsibility to increase our commitment to doing God's work!

Respectfully Submitted,
Bob Goodyear



Randy Griggs's master woodworking skills are displayed in shelving he created for Pastoral Assistant Susan Hayne's new office in our new Blue Bird building.



A long day of loading, transporting, and unloading tractor and implements donated by Ann Rand, resulted in enough equipment to create a church garden and maintain our campus. Pictured: (l-r) Dan Bailey, Charlie Lunney and Jim Reich.



Faith's Chain Saw Ministry in action. After a 2020 wind storm blocked roads they are seen clearing trees close to Doug and Patty Morris's home. Picture left-to-right are Dan Bailey, Doug Morris, Head Logger Jim Reich and Charlie Lunney.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF **INCOME AND EXPENSES**

JANUARY 1, 2020 TO DECEMBER 31, 2020

Prepared by Nancy Goodson, Church Treasurer

When the decision was made to build our own church building, Faith entered a different reality. Not only did we continue to be a church of Jesus Christ, dedicated to sharing – and living God’s call to this area and beyond, but we became planners, architects, and builders . . . a very different call.

To understand our financial performance in 2020, we need to separate those two realities.

The New Building

Members and friends of Faith have been contributing to a building of our own almost as long as Faith has existed. In fact, prior to the announcement of the original Capital Campaign in the fall of 2017, \$67,545 had been contributed for that purpose. As 2019 ended, total giving had reached \$992,143. With the initiation of a construction loan from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP), construction had begun, and we had spent \$1,183,921 for that purpose.

In the Fall of 2020, we took occupancy of the new building and PILP converted our construction loan into a 30-year mortgage. The Session authorized a capital campaign called “Growing In Faith Together” (GIFT) to raise additional funds to accelerate the retirement of the mortgage and reduce interest costs.

In 2020 an additional \$163,658 in contributions was received and another \$809,715 was spent on the construction. We also reduced the mortgage by \$93,646.

So as of 12/31/2020, we had a new building, the land it sits on and a remaining mortgage of \$810,133. We also have \$68,679 of remaining cash to complete the purchase of other items that will be needed as we fully occupy the building.

The Operation of the Church and It's Missions

Where do we get the funds that support the normal expenses of keeping the doors open and funding the many missions of the church? The answer is:

- From funds that were received in past years that were designated to be used for a specific purpose that have not yet been spent.
- From the Future of Faith (F3) account. Several years ago, the Session wisely created the F3 fund. Realizing that the church was going to grow rapidly and there might be times when we would need to invest in that growth, they authorized an account be established which would receive any donations received that were not used by year's end. Thankfully, every year since its inception, we have been able to grow that balance. Today, the F3 fund has grown to \$224,667. During the uncertain times of the COVID pandemic, having the F3 fund available provided great security. In 2020 we were able to add \$19,726 to the F3 Fund.
- From the gifts and grants received in the current year in response to the annual Stewardship drive, special offerings, investment income and other miscellaneous sources.

What was the source of funds in 2020?

Stewardship Drive (pledged and unpledged)	\$262,916
Special Offerings and Designated Gifts	6,129
A Grant from the Presbyterian Foundation	10,000
Interest on Investments	2,957
Total	<hr/> \$282,002

We also received gift in kind (donations of goods and services) worth \$11,477

So where did those dollars go?

Personnel (Pastor, Associate Pastor, Director of Music)	\$123,440
Administrative Expenses	85,368
Worship Expense	23,796
Spiritual Development/Discipleship	4,383
Missions/Outreach	22,970
Community Relations	1,104
Congregational Care	1,215
Total	<hr/> \$262,276
Surplus added to the F3 Fund	\$19,726

Those are the numbers. Even more important are several facts related to the year 2020 and Faith Presbyterian Church. Despite a year in which we were unable to welcome existing and potential members and guests to our place of worship, a year of economic uncertainty for all our members and friends, we were able to:

- Meet all of our financial obligations.
- Add to our reserve for future security.
- Add a part-time Associate Pastor to our staff.
- Bring our Director of Music onto the official staff of the church.

God has been good to Faith Presbyterian. We are grateful and renew our commitment to the Glory of God.



The FPC Annex (shed) under construction by the men of Faith, Hope, and Hammers. Pictured from left to right are Jim Reich and his 2 supervisors Jim “Bunns” Bunnelle, and Glenn “Spiderman” Ferris. Finished it has resulted in a great storage facility for our new church.

ANNUAL REPORT for 2020

Prepared by Frances Young, Clerk of Session

Membership	January 1, 2020	167
Additions		5
Losses		11
By Transfer to other churches	1	
By inactivity	5	
By Death	5	
Membership as of December 31, 2020		161

Chris Martinez and Randy Griggs were ordained and Carl Riggs was installed on as January 12, 2020 for the class of 2022.

2020 Ministry Planning Teams and Team Chairpersons

Ministry Planning Team	Chairperson	Elder Class
Administrative Team	Bruce Burn	2020
Administrative Team	Rick Borden	2021
Congregational Care Team	Lynn Hayes	2021
Congregational Care Team	Chris Martinez	2022
Mission and Outreach Team	Candy Frank	2020
Mission and Outreach Team	Randy Griggs	2022
Spiritual Development Team	Janice Glascock	2021
Spiritual Development Team	Carl Riggs	2022
Clerk of Session	Frances Young	2020



The Faith Annex designed and constructed entirely by the men and women of the church. The Annex provides much needed storage that Faith did not have at our previous home on Mountain Street.

The beautiful barn quilt was designed, built and donated by Bob and Vicki Elwell two of our newest members.

Administrative Ministry Team 2020

Prepared by Rick Borden and Bruce Burn, Co-Chairs

The Administration Planning Team is responsible for the care of the building, the personnel of the church, publicity, and the finances of the church.

- Facilities: It has been an unusual year. We moved from the building we leased on Mountain Street to our new building on Bluebird Road. Although we have been unable to use the building due to covid 19, we have the opportunity to make it fully ready when the pandemic has ended. With a building twice the size of our old space and some special cleaning needs it was decided to employ a cleaning service. Until we are able have services, meetings or study groups, we are not sure what roles Merry Maids may play in the future. A landscaping team has been hard at work on the large outdoor area. A team led by Al Gnann has been developing draft procedures for use and maintenance of the building and grounds.
- Treasurer/Finance: The church has a strong financial management team consisting Nancy Goodson as Treasurer, Bob Goodyear as Financial Secretary and Doris Riggs as check writer. Supporting them are Al Gnann as support to Nancy and Teri Charron as support to Bob. This system not only shares responsibilities among five people but also provides a balance and separation of accounts payable and accounts receivable. This financial team is commended for the job they have done in properly accounting for the church's income, paying bills expediently, and managing the resources our church receives. In addition, a team of counters is responsible for the collecting the weekly offering on a rotating basis and depositing it into the church's bank account with records provided to the treasurer and financial secretary.
To enhance our banking, we have consolidated our banking relationship from UCBI and Bank Ozark to BB&T.

- Communications/Technology: A team including Bob Goodyear, Harold Wills and Steve Williamson has been updating and maintaining the church website with a focus on information for attracting new visitors and news for existing membership.
- Stewardship: The 2020 Stewardship team was led by Randy Borden and Harry Chambers. “Beyond the Wood and Stone Step by Step”. Like last year’s “Beyond the Wood and Stone 2020” was a 12-month program, to keep the congregation involved all year, not just during the regular Stewardship season. Our approach was to biweekly submit stories of Stewardship to the newsletter delivering a message of thoughtfulness and hope when speaking of Stewardship. We had great response from members of our Faith community which led to a very successful Stewardship Campaign. Our campaign concluded with the presentation of “T.H.A.N.K.S”. We so appreciated the congregation’s participation and enthusiasm.
- Church Office Support: The physical office has been closed most of 2020 to all but a few of people, but all the work associated with it has continued remotely. Plans are developing for fully staffing the office when the church opens with both morning and afternoon volunteers. Janice Cary has been leading these volunteers, but after several years is stepping back. Doris Riggs is taking over this role for 2021.
- Church Directory: Bob Goodyear has developed a customized database program to keep our membership information, including contact information and photographs current so that all our membership records are coordinated. The directory is continually updated from our new membership database and is posted on the website with a hard copy available in the office upon request.
- Publicity: Faith newspaper ads are posted each week along with annual participation in the Chamber of Commerce publications. All ads are to be approved by the Session, so if

you have an outlet for publicity, let the Administration Team know.

- Personnel Procedures and Insurance: Debbie Peterson served as Chair of the Personnel Committee. She and the Personnel team completed the search for Pastoral Associate and extended a call to Susan Haynes. The committee also completed an evaluation of the pastor and music director with salary recommendation made to the Session.
- New Building Committee: 2020 saw the completion of our new church building. This has been a long journey, involving many of members. We all are excited, and we cannot wait for the time we can be together rejoicing in our new church. Volunteers continued to work outside on a storage shed, privacy fencing, landscaping, grounds maintenance and other projects. Many thanks to the support from our congregation, members of the New Building Committee and its several sub committees for their continued contributions of time and resources. The New Building Committee has asked to be dissolved with the responsibility transferring to the Administration Planning Team.



Dan Charron tilling in organic amendments to the church garden soil on Blue Bird Road. Excitement is high for the future produce this plot will yield for Feed Fannin.

Congregational Care Report 2020

Core Tasks: Caring and Connecting

Elder Co-Chairs: Chris Martinez and Lynn Hayes

In a year of anxiety, change and at times, confusion, it became more important than ever to reach out with care and concern to each of our congregational members in 2020. Creativity and trial-and-error became the norm for our Faith community as we sought ways to show personal compassion and support to one another while maintaining the utmost safety during the pandemic.

The year 2020 began with plans and proposals as always – some new and many repeated activities that had allowed our congregants to socialize and share in person. The year started with our second Burns Supper in January which was successful and well-attended (60 people). With many participants having experienced Scotland through our church trip the previous Spring, the event was even more meaningful and enjoyable. Second Sunday lunches were also planned and experienced in January through March. Men's Breakfasts also occurred until the pandemic made it impossible to meet safely.

The Congregational Team consisting of Randy Borden, Shirley Copeland, Connie Riggs, Kim King, Patty Hampton, Diane Shillcutt, Jane Giddens, Beth Huckleberry and Hila Giles along with Reverend Susan Haynes and the team elders met bi-monthly to review and plan ways to interface with the members of Faith and share God's love.

The Shepherd Program provided the best way in 2020 to reach out to each member of our Faith Community by communicating with each individual in their flock in a very personal and timely manner. The Shepherds met as a group four times last year and were contacted bi-weekly by either Reverend Haynes or Chris, the shepherd to the shepherd, to offer assistance for a flock member or to provide support for the shepherd her/himself. The Shepherd team consists of Sharon Brewer, Sally Crawford, Hilda Giles, Diana Gnann, Beth Huckleberry, Diane MacMillan, and Treva Wheatley. Jamielee Green stepped in to be a shepherd for Pat Barrentine's flock and the elders and Susan divided LouAnn Potito's flock until a new shepherd could be selected. A new "flockette" was created and maintained by Patty

Hampton. Under Patty's initiative, members were identified who either lived alone or who had expressed a need to be contacted on a more daily basis during the pandemic. Patty calls these individuals three times a week, and together with Shirley Copeland, makes sure they get a printed bulletin weekly. This has been a wonderful solace to many in our Faith community. Shepherds have reached out to our members with phone calls, cards, and virtual contacts and have provided meals and transportation to many who needed them.

Several Crafty Fridays were held in the early months of the year but were suspended during the pandemic. Chris held two virtual classes and Congregational Care provided the supplies and instructions for ornaments to be made and Christmas cards to be addressed by the congregation for the assisted living homes and Meals on Wheels. This was a joint initiative with the Mission and Outreach Team. Jane Graves offered an art class in January and February.

An important and exciting addition to our Faith ministry was Reverend Susan Haynes. Susan added a fresh outlook and energy to the Congregational Care Team this year. Susan has been at all our team and sub-committee meetings. Susan offers Tuesdays at Ten through Zoom for Faith members to be able to log onto and converse with a minister. Again, this is an outreach endeavor to make our congregation feel connected and welcome. Susan has been involved in many ways to make this happen throughout the life of the church.

Throughout the last nine months of the year, many of the areas under Congregational Care continued to meet and be good stewards of our community by thinking "beyond the wood and stone" while remaining safe. Faith, Hope and Hammers still operated to help many who needed assistance for minor repairs in their homes. A subgroup called the Chainsaw Ministry was created to specifically provide help to those with fallen trees. Nit Wits continued to lovingly make many prayer shawls and prayer squares that were given to people within and without the community. These blessed articles were a welcome gift of grace during a difficult time. The prayer squares are always available in the vestibule and given out in our welcome bags to visitors.

A Memorial Garden committee was set up and met in September. Its purpose is to monitor the planning and creation of the garden, and to work with our pastors to set guidelines ensuring a blessed and sacred space for quiet reflection as well as for the internment of our departed church members.

Another historic moment in the life of Faith occurred in 2020 with the opening of our new church building. Treva Wheatley and Jamielee Green were instrumental in packing up the kitchen at the old location and unpacking and organizing the kitchen at the new location. It was a big endeavor, and we are grateful for their hard work.

Although it has been a challenge to personally visit the church due to safety concerns, several alternative ways were provided to our congregation to be able to visit and experience the church. Along with a virtual tour, personal tours were set up to allow safe distancing between visits. Individual prayer times and Advent vespers were also made available.

As an outgrowth from a summer faith group, the Blue Bird Book Worms book club was formed. The club met three times in the fall and will continue to meet and discuss books in the spring of 2021. There have been 15-20 readers who have joined in the discussions each month.

The annual recognitions were more creative this year as they were done through Zoom. Mother's and Father's Days were celebrated. Graduates pictures were displayed as we congratulated them on their accomplishments. A couple of graduates even shared their future plans with us virtually. A virtual Christmas party is planned in December as a way for our members to share their memories and welcome in the spirit of Christmas together.

The year 2020 will be a year to remember and to reflect on for many more years to come. The Holy Spirit has worked its wondrous ways to help us reach out and support the many people in our congregation in creative and compassionate ways.

Mission and Outreach Report 2020

Prepared by Candy Frank and Randy Griggs, Co-Chairs

How did the Mission and Outreach Planning Team, and **Faith members support our 2020 priorities** amidst challenges presented with a pandemic that affected our entire nation.

Although many of our regular activities were cancelled, with your support we were able to continue serving beyond the walls of Faith Presbyterian.

Priority: Develop effective church leaders. We began the year with an in-person, mini-Mission & Outreach retreat. This gave members an opportunity to learn of all our current missions as well as an opportunity to brain-storm for new ideas. Members were asked to take on the role of liaison/coordinator for each of our hands-on missions. Each one that chose a specific mission successfully engaged as possible to keep Faith connected to the organization or program.

Priority: Transition to our new church facility. Under the leadership of Terri Charon, our church garden site was identified, tilled and de-stoned so the ground is prepared to plant our first garden for Feed Fannin in 2021 on our Bluebird Road property.

Priority: Increase membership and participation through connecting with and serving those who reside in our community. Wow! Who would have ever thought that we would welcome three new members via Zoom? These new members attended a Zoom Discovery Class prior to the Sunday they were introduced to the congregation.

Priority: Continue as a spiritual community worshipping God by the sharing of our time, talent, and treasure.

Time:

- Faith members helped prepare the land for our garden.
- Faith members served at the Family Connection food pantry.
- Faith members volunteered as hosts for two blood drives.

- Under the leadership of Sylvia Goodyear, a whole team of volunteers were able to safely deliver summer meals.
- Debbie Peterson helped coordinate and host a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity.
- Treva Wheatley secured items to stuff Christmas stockings and make toiletry bags for the Crisis Center.
- Diane Shillcutt made treat bags for Second Wind.
- Connie Griggs “shopped” for the Thornwell Home and blankets for Meals on Wheels.
- Jeff and Sandee Gorham delivered the blankets, ornaments and cards with meal delivery.
- Faith Members made ornaments and signed Christmas cards for Meals on Wheels, Blue Ridge Assisted Living, and Pruitt Nursing Home.

Talent:

- Denise Burn, Debbie Peterson, Shirley Copeland and Bobbi Sumner created and sewed a label for the Meals on Wheels blankets.
- Kim King and Jamielee Green knitted hats, scarves and wash clothes for gifts to less-than-fortunate children at Christmas.

Treasure:

- You, Faith members, drove-in and dropped-off many canned goods and monetary donations to support the Family Connection Food Bank and many nice gift items for the Pruitt Health residents for Christmas.
- You, Faith members, as part of Mission and Outreach’s budget gave financial support to our missionary couple Melissa and Charles Johnson, Family Connection, Habitat for Humanity, Good Samaritans of Fannin County, Open Arms, Fannin Christian Learning Center, Benos’ Honduras Fund, Snack in a Backpack, Sunny D, North Georgia Mountain Crisis Center, the Boys and Girls Club, Toys for Tots, and Thornwell Children’s Home.

The Mission and Outreach Planning Team continue to look for new ways to serve the community and involve our members. It is through Caring, Sharing and Serving that we thrive!

Spiritual Development Report 2020

Prepared by Co-chairs: Janice Glascock and Carl Riggs

Planning Team Members: Elders Janice Glascock and Carl Riggs, members, Bill Young, Doris Riggs, Janice Simpson, Martha Hefner, Grace Thomas, Kim King, Jane Graves, Jamielee Green, Bruce Graham, Beth Huckleberry, Chuck Huckleberry, Elaine Whitley, Patty Morris, Pastor Jim Simpson, Pastoral Associate, Susan Haynes, Music Director, Kathy Wills.

Spiritual Development Planning Team felt quite prepared and excited, moving into 2020 with its first activity of overseeing the February Chili Cookout. Many volunteers helped make that a great success. We were anticipating a joyous year of growth and Christian worship at our new facility on Blue Bird Road, but then WHO declared a worldwide pandemic, and everything changed. With the assignments of overseeing Worship activities including music, the Spiritual Development Team was immediately faced with new challenges and unknowns, beginning with wondering how Lent would be handled, all the while hoping we would be back to “normal” by Easter.

The need for a new plan to be developed became the main priority. How long would this last? How would we be able to worship? Would the Faith congregation attend and what would draw the most interest? What technology options did we have, and could we make them work? How would we stay safe? How would our new Associate Pastor fit in? These were all questions we had to ask ourselves for weeks and then months as the year progressed.

Worship: Besides responsibility for Sunday Worship, each year the team recommends dates for approval to the Faith Session for two Wholeness and Healing services, Lent and Advent learning services, the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday and the first Sunday of every month, Christmas Eve Service and other special services. Thus, it was, that in the middle of Lent the situation with the pandemic led to cancelling all live services. We had our first Zoom Worship service with optional live Facebook on Sunday March 22nd. There were many challenges to get members and friends connected but with much patience and divine intervention, we soon found many of us ready to be together in a whole new way. It was an effective way for us to stay in touch while conducting a meaningful service for our

congregation as well as to many other friends and family around the country and world. Little did we know that this would not end with the arrival of summer but would be with us for the remainder of the 2020 year. We are thankful that God didn't seem to mind a Zoom platform!

As the year progressed, we developed a better understanding of the capacity of Zoom, and attendance was consistently good. We were grateful for Elaine recruiting liturgists and for their willingness to participate at home on Zoom, becoming accustomed to the spotlight and the ever familiar "please unmute,". By the end of summer, having departed from Mt Street and taken occupation of our new church building, we understood that some in-person type activity was probably needed. We held several Drive-In programs in the parking lot to replace the Summer Lunch and Learn. Attendance was good with a crew of volunteer "ushers" helping with parking. It gave us hope for future planned events where the congregation could be at the church for services.

By the Fall the decision was made to investigate moving pastors into the new Faith Presbyterian Church building for Zoom Worship Service to include all the safety measures we had become so accustomed to seeing. With the wonderful assistance of Jim Crawford as our video photographer and a small technical team we were profoundly grateful to now see Pastor Jim and new Pastoral Associate Susan, leading from this sacred space that we had dreamed of. Soon we were able to secure safety screens so Music Director, Kathy Wills with husband Harold's technical assistance, began playing all music live from the sanctuary.

During Advent we took another step. In lieu of weekly Lunch and Learn programs we had held in the past, we held two live Wednesday evening Vesper services, again, with volunteer ushers and all the safety features set by our Session. We gained much experience and hope for the future. Then on Christmas Eve, as the snow began to fall and driving would be risky, we recognized another advantage of technology as we quickly moved our service from the church into home again.

From early experience with this technology, we have become committed to continuing Worship with the Zoom option even after we begin in-person worship again,

Music: Music is a huge part of our services and Faith is fortunate to have an exceptionally talented music director. With approval from the Spiritual Development Team, Personnel committee, and Session we created a new music director position, then hired Kathy Wills to fill the position. Kathy started a virtual choir with all interested members and any friends of members whose churches did not have this opportunity. With members self- video or audio recording themselves and the assistance of Jim Crawford, music has been recorded and available for every Sunday of the year. Technology again became a vital part of the successes. During the Advent season our music director gathered a team of talented volunteers to provide an inspiring musical drama.

Studies: Faith Groups were able to continue using Zoom as well as having outside group meetings when weather permitted. This included Women of Faith (Frances Young), One Anothering (Elaine Whitley), Summer Lunch and Learn (Bruce Graham), and other studies led by Patty Morris, Sylvia Goodyear, and Martha Heffner.

The Spiritual Development Planning Team greatly appreciated all the dedicated volunteers, our music director, Pastors and especially Jim Crawford and the technical team who made all these events possible through their dedication and hard work in 2020.



The pandemic of 2020 created a major food shortage during the early stages of the virus. Faith pitched in with volunteers to deliver meals to school children in Fannin County. Rick and Randy Borden were 2 of many who helped.

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday Worship Services are held weekly at 10:30 a.m.

Pastor

Dr. Jim Simpson Jim.Simpson@faithpresbyterianusa.org

Pastoral Associate

Rev. Susan Haynes susan.haynes@faithpresbyterianusa.org

Director of Music

Kathy Cardwell kathycmac@gmail.com

Congregational Treasurer

Nancy Goodson nancygoodson@tds.net

Financial Secretary

Bob Goodyear rrgoodyear@mindspring.com

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2020 SESSION

Class of 2020: Bruce Burn, Candy Frank, Frances Young – Clerk of Session

Class of 2021: Rick Borden, Janeese Glascock, Lynn Hayes

Class of 2022: Randy Griggs, Chris Martinez, Carl Riggs

Class of 2023: Candy Frank-Clerk of Session, Linda Ray, Bill Young

The **Annual Meeting of the Congregation** has been called by the Session for Sunday, February 7, 2021 following the 10:30 a.m. Service of Worship.

