

2025 - 2026 |



744 Fair Oaks Avenue
OAK PARK, IL 60302

ANNUAL REPORT



www.fairoakspres.org

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From the Co-Pastors

Dear Fair Oaks family,

When reviewing the events of the last 12 months, the word that comes to mind is **momentum**. The momentum we've had at the church this past year has been incredible. Just when you thought things might simmer down after our 2025 centennial extravaganza, Fair Oaks' 101st year as a congregation was an even bigger one than before with increased energy, increased focus, and increased staff.

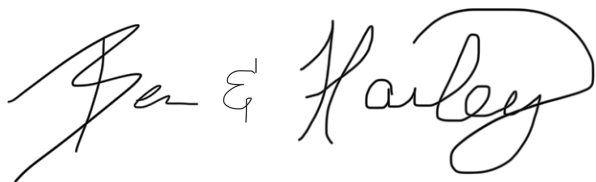
Our pastoral staff grew as we welcomed Kori and her daughter, Hattie, into our church family. Kori has been such a wonderful addition to our team, and we continue to be ever thankful for her ministry alongside the incredible work of Linda, Rose, Cathy, and Monica.

Additionally, our church continued a trend of gaining in nearly every metric you can name: membership, attendance and participation in worship services, program sizes, pledging, budget, and charitable giving.

However, much more important than our *measurable* growth is our growth in things that are *immeasurable*. We have grown together in compassion, patience, welcome, and grace. As a faith community and as people, we find ourselves in enormously anxious, divisive, challenging times, but time and again we have witnessed this congregation step up to the challenges of today. Protesting injustice and standing in solidarity with our refugee and immigrant neighbors, continually practicing genuine hospitality as we can from our little spot of earth, and showing up for one another in times of stress and sorrow. Our church has continued to bear witness to the Gospel in manifold ways this year.

All of this to say: we've started this second century of Fair Oaks with **momentum**. Keep it up, FOPC, and may Christ continue to be at the center of all we do.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben & Harley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The word "Ben" is on the left, followed by an ampersand "&" in the middle, and "Harley" on the right. The "H" in "Harley" is particularly large and loops around the end of the signature.

Roster of Session and Board of Deacons

Elders and deacons are elected to office by the congregation. They serve three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms before rolling off for at least one term.

The Session

The Session is responsible for oversight of the mission and government of the local church. The Session consists of ordained elders who have been elected to office by the congregation.

Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028
Barb Mayer	Steve Perkins	Clara Bonnlander
Joe McIntyre	Wendy Toan	Marci Ko
Rachel Tesch	Derek Inksetter	Ed Nam
John Vishneski	Caroline Older	Wendy White

Clerk of Session: Cathryn Steeves

The Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons provides several ministries as they care for the congregation, as discussed on the following page.

Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028
Julia Inksetter	Jim Haglund	Scott Benjamin
Ann Kreiter	Lisa Johnson	Katherine Bromley
Gayle O'Carroll	Charlie Mayer	Nancy Carr
Julia Schroeder	Doug Strubel	Bill Green

Board of Deacons

The Book of Order describes the role of deacon as providing “compassion, witness and service after the example of Jesus Christ.” This past year was one filled with loss, grief, illness, but no shortage of celebration, acceptance, and spiritual growth. Due to unique needs among members of the congregation, the deacons began discussing the potential for a Discretionary/Benevolence Fund in 2027. There were also discussions around how to best keep the directory up to date. Through it all, the deacons at Fair Oaks came together to ensure church members in need have ample support, and that the kitchen is always the true heart of the church.

The Deacons are organized around three areas of service to the Fair Oaks Community.

Immediate Care provides help and prayer in times of crisis, such as illness, death of a loved one, or job loss. This team works on a rotating schedule to ensure one deacon is on call to reach out to those in crisis and to coordinate the church’s response to any needs.

Confidentiality is maintained as requested by those seeking help. The Immediate Care team is headed by **Nancy Carr** and staffed by Jim Haglund, Lisa Johnson, Ann Kreiter, and Charlie Mayer.

Member Care seeks to maintain contact with the Fair Oaks community by celebrating life events, tending to relationships with congregants, and connecting with visitors. This year, the Member Care team continued to provide gifts to newborns, care packages to college students, Lenten booklets, and flowers. They serve as a resource for new and existing members to discover the programs and ministries of Fair Oaks. The Member Care team is headed by **Doug Strubel** and staffed by Scott Benjamin and Katherine Bromley.

Hospitality is an important ministry in caring for the community after services through all the seasons of life. The hospitality team ensures there is enough coffee, tea, water, lemonade in the summer, and allergen-free snacks following worship and other church gatherings. This year, the kitchen underwent some reorganizing and got upgraded with an ice machine. The Hospitality team is headed by **Julia Inksetter**.

We would like to give thanks for the gifts of service, compassion, and generosity of the deacons who are finishing their terms this year: **Gayle O’Carroll** and **Julia Schroeder**, as well as **Ann Kreiter**, who filled a one year term in Lisa Lewis’s stead. Each of these deacons brought special considerations to serve the congregation with care. The deacons are grateful for their dedication.

Julia Schroeder, clerk

The Session of Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church

2025 Statistical Report of the Clerk of Session

Starting membership: 347

Gains

Certificate gains 11

Youth by profession of faith 4

Professions or reaffirmations 4

Losses

Certificate losses 0

Deaths 1

Removed from Rolls 4

Total Membership as of December 31, 2025: 361

Baptisms

Presented by others 3

At confirmation 0

All other 1

Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church - Oak Park, Illinois

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation – February 1, 2026

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Moderator Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch at 11:13 a.m. and opened with prayer. A quorum was present.

- II. **Report from Personnel Committee:** Moderator of Personnel John Vishneski made a motion to change the associate pastor's terms of call. In particular, the 2026 terms of call include a 3% increase to salary, adjustment to housing expenses and increases for other expenses. A comment was made to note the congregation's appreciation for having an associate pastor and what they bring to the church. After discussion, the new terms of call were unanimously approved.

A second motion was made to change the co-pastors' terms of call. In particular, the 2026 terms of call include 3% raises and increases for housing and other expenses. After discussion, the new terms of call were unanimously approved.

- III. **Financial Report and Budget:** Wendy White presented a summary of results for 2025. Revenue came in as expected and expenses exceeded budget slightly mainly driven by building repairs and maintenance. The 2026 budget was presented, which showed a small planned deficit resulting from planned projects on the manse and church building to address delayed maintenance issues. The operating reserve will be used to address any budget shortfalls resulting from the building and grounds projects.

A question was raised regarding the church's investment policy and utilization of socially responsible funds. The request was made to consider a policy that requires socially responsible investing for the church funds. The question and a suggestion to consider formation of a task force was referred to the finance committee for consideration.

- IV. **Officers elected by the Session –** On January 31, 2026, the Session re-elected Greg Wolski to the position of Financial Secretary and Kent Bromley to the position of Treasurer.

- V. **Adjournment and Prayer:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m. and closed with the Benediction by Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch, moderator

Rachel Tesch, substitute clerk

Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church - Oak Park, Illinois

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation - June 1, 2025

I. **Call To Order.** The Annual Meeting of the Congregation was called for the purpose of electing officers and receiving the Annual Report. It was called to order by Moderator Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch at 11:00 am and opened with prayer.

II. **Election of Officers.** Steve Perkins, Session representative for the Nominating Committee, reviewed the members of the Nominating Committee.

- a. Mr. Perkins presented the committee's nominations for the office of Elder, Class of 2028: Clara Bonnlander, Marci Ko, Ed Nam, and Wendy White for a second term. There were no nominations from the floor. Nominations were closed and the candidates for office of Elder were elected by a unanimous voice vote.
- b. Mr. Perkins then presented the following candidates for the office of Deacon - Class of 2028: Katherine Bromley, Scott Benjamin and Nancy Carr and Bill Green for a second consecutive term. There were no nominations from the floor. Nominations were closed and the candidates for the office of Deacon were elected by a unanimous voice vote.
- c. Mr. Perkins presented Cheryl Hover to serve as an at-large member on the Nominating Committee. There were no nominations from the floor. Nominations were closed and the candidate was elected by a unanimous voice vote.
- d. Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch thanked the outgoing Elders and Deacons, APNC members, and Nominating Committee members for their service to Fair Oaks.

III. **Presentation of the Annual Report.** The congregation received the Annual Report, a description of the church's activities for the 2024-2025 program year, financial reports for 2024, and statistical information on church membership and participation.

IV. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 am. The meeting was closed with prayer by Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch, moderator

Cathryn Steeves, clerk

Adult Education

Committee Members: Marci Ko (moderator), Kristen Balzer, Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch

During the 2025–2026 program year, the Adult Education Committee met monthly on the third Sunday of each month. A key goal for the year was to ensure that the educational programs offered throughout the week were broadly communicated and that we provided a range of opportunities that would appeal to all members of the church community. Communication efforts included monthly “Minute for Education” announcements during worship services, weekly updates in the eWeekly, and periodic posts on Facebook.

For our Sunday morning Adult Education sessions, we continued offering a variety of programs at 9:00 a.m. prior to worship services. We sought to involve a diverse group of presenters and to cover a broad range of topics that would engage the congregation. This year’s Adult Education leaders and topics included:

- Kristen Balzer, who led multiple sessions on topics including the Prosperity Gospel (and its challenges), *Y’all Saints* (modern-day saints), and *Visio Divina* (contemplative prayer with religious imagery)
- Mike Balzer, who led an Advent series on *The Weary World Rejoices* and another series on *Living into Heaven on Earth*
- Beth Potterveld, who shared her knowledge of Greek through sessions on language interpretation, World Communion Sunday, and the Reformation
- Clara Bonnlander, who shared a documentary on Austin Coming Together, a local nonprofit organization where she works, and led a discussion about its mission and impact
- Joe McIntyre, who led a tour of the church facilities and grounds
- Christine Baumbach and Nancy Van Der Griend, who shared the meaning and symbolism of the church paraments
- Ellen Toobin and Rachel Ostergaard, who informed members about preparing for potential ICE activity in the community
- Brad Wolter, who presented information on native gardening
- Ed Nam, who shared information on environmental justice
- Our pastors — Rev. Ben Lynch, Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch, and Rev. Kori Robbins — who led several sessions on topics including *Rehearsing Scripture*, understanding ICE activity in Broadview, leading Palm Sunday processions, and women in the Bible

In addition to the Sunday morning sessions, the Adult Book Club continued to meet throughout the year in members' homes, typically at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The group read a mix of fiction and nonfiction titles, including *James* by Percival Everett, *Heirs to Forgotten Kingdoms: Journeys into the Disappearing Religions of the Middle East* by Gerard Russell, *Foster* by Claire Keegan, *Undivided: The Quest for Racial Solidarity in an American Church* by Hahrie Han, *Barchester Towers* by Anthony Trollope, *The Gnostic Gospels* by Elaine Pagels, *Solito: A Memoir* by Javier Zamora, and *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson.

Additionally, the Thursday morning Bible study continued to meet weekly at the church from 9:30–10:30 a.m. praying together and reading *Eve Isn't Evil* by Julie Faith Parker, *Appreciate These Things* by Jill Duffield, *Accidental Saints* by Nadia Bolz-Weber, *Freeing Jesus* by Diana Butler Bass, and *The Great Emergence* by Phyllis Tickle.

Looking ahead to next year, we plan to continue offering a diverse range of programs across multiple days of the week and on a variety of topics to support ongoing adult Christian education. We also hope to continue seeking out new voices within our church community so that we may hear from additional members and introduce fresh perspectives and ideas of interest to the congregation.

Buildings and Grounds

Committee Members: Carl Kreiter, Kent Bromley, Lamar Johnson, Ben Lynch (by force), John Beck, Joseph McIntyre, Dave Potterfield, Mike Balzer, Derek Inksetter, Charlie Inksetter, and Ken Van Der Griend.

Buildings and Grounds is comprised of:

- The Property Committee: who works to meet monthly in person or updated via email
- Handy Service: a company that we call in monthly to work on task items at the Church and at the Manse
- Sub committees for: Manse, Interior, Exterior, and Kitchen Liaison
- The Church Body: who updates me on any issues that arise throughout the church

The Mission of Buildings and Grounds is to be good stewards for the building properties (Church and Manse) that are entrusted to the FOPC Church Body, to leave a legacy in a healthy beautiful church building and home that has been here before we were and will be after we are, and to establish routine financial commitments to ensure long term viability of our church properties.

Notable events this year adding to the Buildings and Grounds is taking over the Memorial Garden as a part of our lawn and exterior maintenance.

We continue to work through projects and add to our Task list. A continuous word document we label: "Property Committee Meetings Report Out" This list has items listed in sections titled "Ongoing Maintenance", "CAPEX", and "Special Projects". We code each "task" to a sub committee.

Our committee has reestablished a regular cadence of meetings, usually monthly, and our sub committees work to have progress on their items between each meeting.

Each month we add to the list based on feedback from the congregation, our observations, and long term needs that the church properties have. We organist them into the categories and prioritize them and get them completed through a Handy Service, or congregational support.

2025/2026 Key Highlights:

- Fall Work Day at the Church
- New Chimney on the Southwest side of the Church
- Water Remediation in Church Basement

- o Concrete Crack Repair
 - o Redo of Electrical line
 - o Gutter flow
 - o Routing of pipes to the main sewer line
- Beginning of Manse repairs (Roof, Gutter, Wall, Guest Bathroom)
 - Church Roof Repair (PEMA)
 - Ice Machine in Kitchen
 - Stove repairs
 - Shelf installed in Kitchen
 - Boiler Exhaust update
 - New Boiler Valves
 - AC repair at Church

Still to Review:

- o Completed work at the Manse
- o Gutter repair
- o Efflorescent long term plan
- o Lexon Update of Church
- o New sign on Chicago Avenue
- o Move IT Equipment in basement
- o Asbestos ceiling tile removal

While these are just some key highlights and processes we have put in place, we have many items we are still working to schedule and set up for the long term future of our church properties. . While we know that the physical property of our church is just a building, we must ensure we have a healthy physical property so that when we gather in his name, then he to will be amongst us.

May our property outlive us all!

Joseph McIntyre

Children and Youth

Committee Members: Rachel Tesch (moderator), Abigail Koning, Elizabeth McVey, Beth Potterveld, Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch, and Rev. Kori Robbins.

The Children and Youth Committee met regularly this year with the goal of providing religious education, spiritual connection, and fun for the children and teens at Fair Oaks. This program year we had the support of our new associate pastor, Rev. Kori Robbins who led the middle school and high school initiatives. Rev. Braden Lynch led elementary Sunday School throughout the program year with 3 to 5 children in regular attendance. The curriculum from Sparkhouse Digital for a multi-age classroom was partially utilized, with pastor Hailey additionally helping the children to learn the books of the bible utilizing fun songs. They especially love watching Holy Moly to see the stories in a whimsical animated form prior to discussion. Middle School Sunday School was led again this year by the team of Lamar Johnson and Meghan Webster who used the Spirit and Truth Narrative Lectionary “Living the Word” curriculum and always create a safe and inviting atmosphere for the middle school students to laugh, learn, and, of course, eat donuts each Sunday.

The annual Christmas pageant was held during worship on Sunday, December 14, 2025.

During the year, in addition to weekly Sunday School for elementary and middle school, FOPC held monthly events for Middle School Youth Group and High School Youth Group, including an overnight retreat, service opportunities, fun field trips to an escape room, lunches and study breaks at the manse, apple-picking, and white elephant gift Christmas parties. The High School Youth Group also planned, prepared, and preached two Youth Sunday services in July 2025 and May 2026. We have several fantastic youth group leaders:

- Middle School: Clara Bonnländer, Charlie Inksetter, Cheryl Hover, Rebecca Kaegi and Greg Topel
- High School: Kent Bromley, Greg Meadors, Elizabeth McVey, Steve Perkins and Elaine Johnson

The 2025 Senior High Mission Trip was to Atlanta, Georgia where the group learned about the issues of shelter and homelessness. The committee worked to prepare for the 2026 SHMT to Duluth, MN by overseeing numerous fundraising events including Donut Days, Fall Feast collection, March Mission Trip Madness, and directing the offering collected during Youth Sunday to the trip.

The third year of Logos Summer was held in June 2025 with 23 children attending the full day camp and over 30 adults and youth from the congregation volunteering to make the week possible. The children enjoyed activities including: worship arts (music), compassion, story, cooking, science, bible, recreation and drama. The committee has focused on coordinating the fourth year of Logos Summer in June 2026.

Outreach and Community Engagement

Committee Members: Caroline Older (moderator through April 2026), Gretchen Burch, Anette Nam, Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch, Rev. Kori Robbins, Grace Fox

The Outreach and Engagement Committee continues to work towards strengthening our congregation's connections with both our church community and the wider community in Oak Park.

Over the past several months, the committee has focused on three primary areas:

Building Use Policies and Fee Structure

The committee has reviewed and continues updating our building use policies and fee structure to better reflect current needs, costs, and expectations. These revisions are intended to provide greater clarity for community groups, ministry partners, and members seeking to use church facilities while ensuring responsible stewardship of our building resources.

Social Media Guidelines

Recognizing the growing importance of digital communication, the committee has begun developing updated social media guidelines. These guidelines will help ensure that our online presence remains welcoming, consistent with our mission, and reflective of our values while providing clear expectations for church-sponsored accounts and communications.

Community Advertising and Visibility

To increase awareness of our ministry and seasonal worship opportunities, the committee continues to advertise our Christmas and Easter services in the Wednesday Journal.

We are grateful for the congregation's support as we continue seeking new ways to engage our neighbors, and strengthen connections inside and outside the church!

Congregational Activities

Committee Members: Ben Lynch, Karen Bromley, Cathryn Steeves, Elizabeth McVey, Angela Topel, Steve Perkins (moderator) and Wendy White

The Congregational Activities Committee offered a full year of events to provide fun and strengthen the bonds of fellowship within the Fair Oaks community. Events held this program year include:

Rally Day (September 7): A sandwich buffet lunch was served following service. Representatives from all FOPC organizations presented posters and information to share with the congregation and new and old members curious about getting involved.

Fair Oaks Tailgate (October 17): A broad group of congregation members gathered at the Steeves/Perkins house for a cookout before a home OPRF football game. Fun was had by all!

Fall Feast (November 16): The delicious annual potluck dinner was a huge success!

Advent Luminaria (December 20): A small group assembled and installed luminaria along the 700 block of Fair Oaks and Thomas. This Light Up the Night-Oak Park event coincided with the Fair Oaks Longest Night Service, providing beautiful lights for those attending.

Parents' Time Out (January 23): This is an event open to all parents with school age children. Big thank you to our host, Angela and Greg Topel. The event drew a good crowd of parents for pizza while the children played in the basement with senior high babysitters.

FOPC Ski Trip (February 20-22): A group of around 25 congregation members drove up to Granite Peak, Wisconsin for an awesome day of skiing and socializing, enjoying a group dinner on Saturday night.

Chili and Pie Potluck (April 19): The Ford-White household hosted a spectacular potluck chili and pie dinner. A crowd of around 30 enjoyed chili with many toppings, corn bread and delicious pie!

Summer Celebration (upcoming – June 7): We will again enjoy tacos although from a different vendor (Pollo). A bouncy house and lawn games will provide entertainment for all ages.

Submitted by Steve Perkins, moderator

Finance and Special Gifts

Committee Members: Wendy White (moderator), Chris Marzec, Cathryn Steeves, Ken Van Griend, Martha Fluharty, Jeff Schroeder, Ed Nam, Greg Wolski (financial secretary), Kent Bromley (treasurer)

2025 Financial Summary

The 2025 budget presented to the congregation was essentially balanced (net budget variance: \$32). During the year, Session approved an additional \$72,600 of budget exceptions. The Income Statement (which states the original budget) shows a net loss of \$26,274 for the year. As a result, the Operating Reserve will be reduced by \$26,274 – not the full \$72,600. This is due to stronger-than-expected revenues and underspending across most major categories.

- Total assets grew from \$479,248 in 2025 to \$494,056 in 2026.
- Total cash and investments at year-end were \$494,056, representing more than eight months of actual 2025 expenses.
- Church Building: \$70,975 in chimney repairs were completed in 2025. Funding came from a \$30,000 divestment from our investment account and \$32,537 from the Manse Maintenance & Improvement budget.
- Logos: Spending was lower than expected in the spring; fall spending returned to normal levels.
- Centennial Celebration: Expenses were lower than budgeted, because former pastors covered their own travel costs.
- Senior High Mission Trip: Program activity and contributions were below budget. However, the church's contribution for 2025 was higher than originally planned.
- Staffing: We budgeted nine months of compensation for our Associate Pastor, Kori Robbins, but her start date was in June. So, salary expense was lower than anticipated. Healthcare costs were higher than budgeted, due to the need to provide family coverage.
- Music: Professional singers were used less frequently than planned, producing savings in that line.

Other Committee News for 2025

During 2025, an Audit Committee was formed to conduct an internal audit of the financial records for 2024. The audit included the balance sheet, revenue, expenses, payroll, and special considerations. All findings were resolved to the satisfaction of the Finance Committee.

For the Finance Committee

May 2026

Logos

Committee Members: Wendy Toan (moderator), Beth Potterveld, Karen Bromley, Kathy Fox, Lisa Johnson, Jason Bergwerff, Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch, Rev. Kori Robbins, Rev. Ben Lynch, Linda Van Dyke, Rose Guccione

Another successful year of our Logos program is in the books. We had sixteen Elementary children (grades 1-5) enrolled; twenty Middle School youth (grades 6-8); and nine Senior High youth (grades 9-12) for a total of 45 attendees. Children, youth and adults gathered each Wednesday from September through March to experience the four parts of Logos: Bible Study, Worship Arts, Recreation, and Family Time.

We tried out two Registration periods- Fall and Winter- in order to streamline our Bookkeeping.

There were significant changes in leadership this past year. Lisa Johnson as Dinner Dean with Carol Huck as assistant.; Kathy Fox as Kitchen Head; Karen Bromley as themes/table set-up; Jason Bergwerff as Recreation co-lead; Kori Robbins as Middle School and High School Bible Study. Our kitchen was well-staffed weekly with many returning Chefs and Sous-chefs and some new Chef Volunteers from our Congregation. Our Table Parents were Tracey Truesdale, Bill Green, Sophie Eldred, Rebecca Kaegi, Cheryl Hover, Kori Robbins, Kent Bromley, Steve Perkins with Ben Lynch and Wendy Toan as subs.

Parents of our participating Logos students continued to use the "Sign-Up Genius" tool for volunteer slots but we also had other volunteers generously fill in. Nancy Van Der Griend and her dessert makers continued their tradition of wowing us with weekly themed desserts. Always crowd-pleasers. Logos Sunday was held on March 22 and all ages contributed to making the service glorious and meaningful.

We look forward to another successful year building new relationships, spreading God's love each week, and treating all as Children of God and having fun!

Submitted by Wendy Toan, moderator

Faith in Action

Committee Members: Mike Balzer, Clara Bonnlander (co-moderator), Jerry Bramwell, Ginny Gilmore, Hailey Braden Lynch, Linda Martens, Barbara Mayer (co-moderator), Beth Messina, Nancy Van Der Griend

The FIA committee seeks to make an impact through monetary giving to local, national, and global partners, to pursue hands-on projects that support our monetary giving, and to coordinate and publicize outreach opportunities to the congregation. In response to Christ's call to serve God's children, Fair Oaks is committed to dedicate at least 13% of annual pledges to mission work, in collaboration with partner agencies and congregations.

Highlights of the 2025-26 year:

- Through a non-governmental organization, **Working Water the Gambia**, funded a fourth solar powered water well in the village of Tandaito, a rural Gambian community that previously had to haul water from a small creek several kilometers away.
- Supported **Austin Coming Together** by sending groups over three weekends to distribute food after SNAP benefits were cut by the Federal Administration.
- **Continued supporting a migrant family** by funding neurodivergent after-school programming. This supports the child's growth while enabling the parent to obtain work.
- Built community through ten small groups that regularly provide lunches or dinners to **Housing Forward's new Anderson Emergency Overnight Shelter**, along with 40 under-bed storage units, and a collection of towels, and wash cloths.
- Donated holiday gift cards to residents at **Sister House**, a safe haven in Oak Park that encourages each resident to direct her God-given gifts toward realizing the sober and complete woman that God has created her to be.
- **One Great Hour of Sharing** - FOPC collected \$3518 which supports various areas of need.
- **Night Ministry** - Members stuffed 72 Holiday Gift Bags for the unhoused.
- **Infant Welfare Society** - FOPC donated \$1176 for its Emergency Fund, and members donated more than 28 coats during the coat drive.
- **New Moms** - 20 members contributed from the Amazon Operation Santa wish list and FOPC provided the remaining items.
- **Beyond Hunger** - FOPC provided regular donations through the ongoing food collections.
- **Hephzibah** - Members donated 45 hats, gloves/mittens and many school supplies.

- **Presbytery Solidarity Support Fund to support migrants** - FOPC collected \$2417 in loose offerings on Christmas Eve.
- **Learning Edge Tutoring Program** - completed its fifth successful year at FOPC.
- **Friends of TASAAGA** - Donated to the construction of a secondary and vocational school.
- Funded **Gambia Rising** - working to help Gambian students to stay in school.

The list of organizations FOPC is supporting in 2026 follows:

	Beneficiary	2026
Global Ministries	Gambia Rising Scholarship	\$1,000.00
	Gambia Water Well	\$6,000.00
	Presbyterian Cuba Partners Network	\$2,000.00
	Thailand: McGilvary FOPC Scholarship Fund	\$1,000.00
	Thailand: Payap U. Scholarship Fund	\$1,000.00
	Thailand: Prince Royals Coll. Sch. Fund	\$1,000.00
	Thailand: William Yoder Scholarship Fund	\$1,000.00
	Uganda High School -TASAAGA	\$3000.00
Total Global Ministries		\$16,000.00
USA & Presbytery	One Great Hour of Sharing	*\$3,000
	PCUSA - Basic Mission Support	\$1,000.00
	PCUSA - Theological Education	\$500.00
	PCUSA - YAV Direct Mission Support	\$3,000.00
	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	\$1,000.00
	Presbyterian Per Capita Expense	\$12,616.00
	Shared Mission Support/Chgo Pres	\$5,000.00
Total USA & Presbytery		\$26,116.00
Local	A House in Austin	\$3,600.00
	Austin Coming Together (ACT)	\$2,000.00
	Bethel New Life - Austin	
	Beyond Hunger	\$2,500.00
	Christmas Eve Gift	*\$2,000
	Community of Congregations dues	\$500.00
	Holiday Food Baskets	\$1,000.00
	Housing Forward (Have a Heart Gala)	\$2,500.00
	Housing Forward meal reimbursement	\$1800.00
	Infant Welfare Society	\$2,000.00
	Interfaith Green Network	\$250.00
	Learning Edge	\$2,000.00
	More Light Foundation	\$1000.00
	New Moms	\$650.00
	Night Ministry	\$2000.00
	Night Ministry - stockings	\$1700.00
	Refugee Support	\$4200.00
	Sarah's Inn	\$1000.00
	Sister House	\$1800.00
Total Local		\$32,500.00
	Miscellaneous and Reserves for emerging needs	\$3500.00
Total Giving	*Not incl. OGHS and Christmas Eve offering, wh	\$78,116.00

Submitted by Barbara Mayer, co-moderator

Music Ministries

Instrumental Music

Instrumental music continues to thrive here at FOPC.....

- Three handbell choirs continue to contribute music in worship: Intermission Bells (middle school), Encore Bells (high school) and Fair Oaks Ringers (adult). We were able to navigate numbers better this year for Intermission, and the middle schoolers were engaged in both handbells and other forms of music arts. Encore says goodbye to Simon Beck, Jamie Kaegi and Maggie Herman as they graduate – we thank them for many years of beautiful playing. Fair Oaks Ringers is still the rock of the handbell program. Along with playing on many Sundays, the bell choirs also offered special music on Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Youth Sunday. We continue to enjoy fellowship together on Wednesday nights.
- A special shout-out to Lisa Johnson for filling in as conductor on Ash Wednesday as I attended to family matters in St. Louis.
- The Fair Oaks Clarinet Choir remains a robust group. Many thanks to Shiloh Belance, Kathy Fox, Charlie Inksetter, Julia Inksetter, Ruth Kulkarni, Thomas Smith, John Vishneski, Susan Warner, Juliet Year and Lily Yera.
- For a second year we had a wonderful flute quartet share music in worship. Many thanks to Gretchen Burch for heading it up, and to Julia Inksetter, Lisa Johnson and Amy Kuehl for playing.
- Tehra Hiolski and I continue to find great joy and peace in providing music for the Longest Night service.
- Some musicians also offered solos: thank you to Gretchen Burch, Ruth Kulkarni, Nils Nam, Thomas Smith and Susan Warner.
- Collaborating with Rose Guccione and Cathy Dunne continues to be a joy. There's an ease to how things come together and I personally love the balance of vocal and instrumental music that we offer to the congregation.
- Looking forward, we're excited to have handbells play at the Presbytery monthly meeting in November which will be held at Fair Oaks. They want to highlight how engaged our youth are and we hope to have a mix of middle and high school ringers share their gifts at the service.

- Also looking forward, we're bringing back the Holiday Handbell Concert! Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 13 at 4pm.

Engagement is a priority of my mission to provide instrumental music at Fair Oaks. If you have an interest or talent to share, please let me know. It's a wonderful blessing to be a part of the musical life here at Fair Oaks. I feel enormous gratitude

Linda Van Dyke, director of Instrumental Music

Vocal Music

Dear Members and Supporters,

This year has been a testament to the collaborative spirit among the church staff, the dedication of the Chancel Choir, and the joy found in the singing of the children within the Logos program.

Reflection

Church Staff

This month marks Kori Robbins's first anniversary with us. It has been a pleasure to work with her and the rest of the staff; having such supportive colleagues is truly a gift.

Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir provides music for select worship services throughout the liturgical year. We typically rehearse two to three times a month during the week and on Sunday mornings prior to services. Our ensemble is composed of dedicated volunteers from the congregation, three professional singers, and occasional guest musicians. Highlights from the past year include:

The choir's 2025–2026 liturgical season ran from September 4, 2025, to June 7, 2026. Melinda Alberty and Henry Hunt continued as soprano and tenor section leaders, while Maurice Houlahan rejoined as the bass section leader (and is often the sole bass in the choir).

Through a generous donation, the Minnesota-based Kaleidoscope Quartet (featuring our very own Jack Vishneski) provided service music on September 14, 2026, followed by a lovely concert that afternoon.

The Chancel Choir significantly contributed to music for Lessons & Carols, Maundy Thursday, and Easter. I may hire an additional Bass in the coming year to relieve Maurice Houlahan of the sole responsibility of carrying the vocal line. I may also hire singers to supplement the Chancel Choir for Lessons & Carols and Holy Week. New singers from the Congregation (especially basses) are always welcome.

Our music program continues to receive generous support from the church and private donors, allowing us to maintain instruments, hire guest musicians, purchase music, and maintain our robes. The calendar year budget for section leaders remains at \$10,000.

The Chancel Choir continues to prioritize the health and safety of its members. Mask-wearing is occasionally practiced by singers with symptoms or concerns about illness.

Logos

The children of PB&J Logos and Logos Musical Notes shared their music and energy on five occasions:

- The June 15th Service;
- The October 26th Service;
- The December 14th Christmas Pageant;
- The March 1st Service; and
- The March 22nd Logos Sunday

Looking Ahead

Logos

I look forward to working with the children during Logos Summer from June 8–12 and when we reconvene in September. I am deeply grateful for the volunteers who shepherd this program.

Music Library

Katelyn Paeth did excellent work further developing a searchable database for the church's music library, indexing several drawers in my office. Completing this project will allow for more efficient programming of Chancel Choir music in the future.

Christmas Caroling

I hope to organize a group of congregants to sing Christmas carols at Belmont Village, Sunrise, Victory Center, and other assisted living facilities. As staffing at these facilities changes frequently, I would welcome any volunteer willing to help secure dates so we may resume this ministry to the elderly.

Acknowledgments

My deepest thanks to the dedicated Chancel Choir members for their inspiring passion, service, and grace. I have a deep appreciation for the church staff, clergy, Worship and the Arts Committee, and volunteers for their invaluable support. Finally, I am grateful to the congregation and community for their continued encouragement and attendance, which fuels our musical ministry.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rose Guccione, director of Vocal Music

Nominating

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord... To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

1 Corinthians 12: 4-7

Committee Members: Steve Perkins (moderator and Session representative), Derek Inksetter (Session representative), Greg Webster, Karen Bromley, Beth Potterveld, Charlie Mayer (Deacon representative), Cheryl Hover and Rev. Ben Lynch (ex-officio)

The election of church officers is at the heart of what it means to be Presbyterian. To fulfill the mission of the Nominating Committee to call effective church leaders, the Nominating Committee seeks to present officers-elect who represent the congregation’s diversity.

We request and accept names submitted by congregants, as well as by committee members. We then prayerfully and carefully consider all names to ensure representation of all groups within the congregation.

The committee’s work is to develop a slate of candidates for the church offices of Elder, Deacon and Nominating that reflect the composition and diversity of the congregation. All candidates are presented to the congregation for election at a congregational meeting before their term begins.

The Nominating Committee membership currently consists of two Elders, one Deacon and three at-large members of the congregation who are elected at the prior annual meeting. We are grateful to those individuals serving on the Nominating Committee.

In gratitude,
Steve Perkins, moderator

Personnel

Committee Members: John Vishneski (moderator), Greg Wolski, Greg Topel, and Rev. Hailey Braden Lynch (ex officio) & Rev. Ben Lynch (ex officio)

The calling of the Personnel Committee is to lead the hiring of new church staff (as needed); conduct the annual reviews of the church staff; make recommendations to Session regarding church staff compensation and benefits, position roles and responsibilities and support the performance efforts of the church staff. The very nature and composition of the Personnel Committee is such that it must coordinate closely across all FOPC committees, especially Finance/Stewardship, Worship and Buildings and Grounds.

The Personnel Committee is pleased to report that the staff of Fair Oaks work together in a collegial and positive manner that keeps the church running smoothly and ably supports its mission. Rose Guccione, Director of Vocal Music, Linda Van Dyke, Director of Instrumental Music, and Cathy Dunn, Organist/Pianist work together seamlessly as a team to provide music for worship and church events. Monica Sheehan, Office Manager, as she has consistently for years, reliably managed the church office duties of Fair Oaks. Our Co-pastors, Hailey Braden Lynch & Ben Lynch, have worked tirelessly to lead our numerous volunteers and provide spiritual inspiration for the congregation while at the same time delivering enlightening and moving sermons. The Personnel Committee is grateful for the staff's hard work, talent, and dedication, and approved a modest raise for all staff members to send a clear message of appreciation and recognition, which was in turn approved by the congregation.

We welcomed Reverend Kori Robbins as Associate Pastor for Fair Oaks on June 1, 2025. Kori immediately made a significant impact bringing energy and fresh ideas to the newly created position and adding a new layer of spiritual support to the Co-pastors, the Session, the entire congregation, and especially the youth of the church. The Personnel Committee is pleased to report that the pastoral team of Hailey, Ben, and Kori have found a rhythm in their working relationship that serves Fair Oaks very well indeed.

The Personnel Committee would like to thank all our church staff and the many volunteers for their incredible leadership. There is no question that producing all aspects of being a church takes an inordinate amount of time, talent, and technical skills. We greatly appreciate each of you who has assisted. We are blessed to have so many congregational members who are willing to work together. It is only because of each of your efforts that we were able to have another incredible year, continuing our worship and fellowship virtually and in person. The Personnel Committee appreciates everyone's time and effort and complete dedication to FOPC. We are especially blessed by the

continued leadership of Hailey, Ben, and Kori. Thank you to the Personnel Committee members for their efforts in supporting the church staff and the ministry of the FOPC congregation.

Faithfully submitted,

John Vishneski, moderator



Stewardship

Committee Members: Ed Nam (moderator), Derek Inksetter, Greg Wolski, Wendy White, Rev. Ben Lynch, Rev. Haily Braden Lynch, Rev. Kori Robbins

The Stewardship Committee completed the majority of work from October to December of 2025. The theme this year was “Real Talk About Giving.” We had some frank discussions about giving and how critical it is for the church community.

At a time when many churches are experiencing decline, Fair Oaks is in the incredibly fortunate position of continuing to grow in numbers, programming and impact. However, even with this growth, the church has a budget shortfall of 15% this year. With generous giving last year, we welcomed our new associate pastor Kori Robbins to our congregation! This year, in addition to supporting our expanded pastoral staff, one of our two main assets, our manse, needed some major repairs.

There was a big push in November and December and included following up with members to pledge (phone calls/individual emails/eWeekly distribution/Sunday service). We heard from Ed Nam, Mike Balzar and Bill Green who presented the message of stewardship to the congregation. The result was a successful campaign. With the generosity of our members, the church was able to have over 93 pledges, 11 more pledges and \$50,000 more than last year. It also included 18 new pledges.

With gratitude to the hard work of the committee and to the generosity of the members of Fair Oaks, all of whom give to the church in so many ways, not just financially,

Ed Nam, moderator

Worship and the Arts

Committee Members: Derek Inksetter (moderator), Nancy Van Der Griend, Christine Baumbach, Phyllis Tresselt, Martha Fluharty, Sheryl Martin, Rose Guccione, Linda Van Dyke, Cathy Dunn, Ben Lynch

Background on Worship at FOPC

Worship is an essential part of our life together at Fair Oaks and is one of the primary means of living out our mission “to PROCLAIM by word and deed the good news of our savior Jesus Christ, to NURTURE children, youth and adults into Christian faith and discipleship, and to SERVE, in Christ’s name, the Oak Park community and beyond.”

We worship together each Sunday at 10 am. Youth of all ages are invited to participate in worship in the sanctuary, while young children have the option of attending Bridges to Worship during the sermon, which offers a style of worship tailored to their needs. Those with infants have the option of enjoying the service in the loft above the sanctuary. Those children who choose to participate in Bridges to Worship are invited to return to the sanctuary during the offering to finish the service with their parents.

During the summer months (June-August), our worship service shifts to be more personal, informal, and interactive with the congregation.

FOPC offers special services throughout the year that incorporate liturgical colors, visuals, instrumental, and vocal music, including:

- World Communion Sunday takes place in early October, highlighting global fellowship.
- All Saints Day takes place in early November and is a moment where we give thanks for those who have died in the past year.
- Longest Night service is scheduled to be close to the Winter solstice, acknowledging that Advent can be a painful time for those who may be suffering.
- Christmas Eve services include a family-oriented service at 4:30 pm, followed by another service at 11 pm.
- Ash Wednesday commemorates the beginning of Lent with an evening service at 7:30 pm.
- Maundy Thursday service takes place at 7:30 pm on the Thursday before Easter and commemorates Jesus’s last supper with his disciples.
- Easter service marks the resurrection of Christ and includes joyful traditions like the flowering of the cross.

Highlights for the 2025-26 program year:

Liturgists

- A broad cross-section of the congregation participated in worship services by lending their voice as liturgists. This critical function allows the congregation to hear a variety of voices leading the church in readings, prayers, and other worship elements.
- The Committee secures liturgists and is grateful to all those who sign up and participate in FOPC's services.

Music

- Cathy Dunn continued in her role as organist and pianist.
- Rose Guccione continued in the role of Director of Vocal Music.
- Linda Van Dyke continued in the role of Director of Instrumental Music.

Communion

- The congregation regularly celebrates communion on the first Sunday of each month. Communion is served with the congregation coming down the main aisle to receive the communion elements from the servers and returning to their seats. The Committee secures communion preparers and servers and appreciates all who volunteer to assist.
- On one Sunday this year, the committee chose to do a communion service "in the seats", where the elements were passed down each aisle. The feedback to that format was mixed, but mostly negative, with a strong perception that it took more time to serve in that way.

Visuals

- The Committee works together to provide specially designed visual design elements for the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas, as well as Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and other special services. A small group of volunteers usually does the visual design, decorating, and installation of the visual elements.
 - The Presbyterian Church publishes a liturgical colors calendar, which informs our choices of what colors to use to adorn the church.
 - Normal time: green
 - Lent and Advent: purple
 - Easter and Christmas: white
 - Pentecost Sunday: red

Derek Inksetter, moderator

Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church
Income Statement
January 1, 2025 - December, 31 2025

	Jan - Dec 2025	Budget	\$ Over Budget
REVENUE			
Offering	\$ 626,257	\$ 621,539	\$ 4,718
Other Revenues	75,099	75,200	(101)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 701,356	\$ 696,739	\$ 4,617
EXPENDITURES			
Building and Grounds	\$ 166,819	\$ 114,734	\$ 52,085
Christian Education	9,508	13,900	(4,392)
Church Office	14,765	14,150	615
Congregational Activities	2,880	4,000	(1,120)
Deacons	2,249	3,000	(751)
Mission/Faith in Action	79,083	78,116	967
Other	18,338	18,600	(262)
Outreach	9,263	15,800	(6,537)
Programs	47,293	48,375	(1,082)
Staff Compensation	364,696	369,532	(4,836)
Worship And Music	12,737	16,500	(3,763)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 727,631	\$ 696,707	\$ 30,924
NET REVENUE	\$ (26,274)	\$ 32	\$ (26,306)

Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church
Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)
December 31, 2025

ASSETS

Cash and Equivalents	\$ 72,010
Investments - Edward Jones	422,047
Prepaid Expenses - Senior High Mission Trip	<u>3,400</u>
Total Assets	\$ <u>497,457</u>

LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	<u>\$ 11,750</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>11,750</u>

NET ASSETS

With Donor Restrictions	
Special Gifts & Memorials	9,624
Time Restrictions - Prepaid Pledges for 2026	<u>35,300</u>
Total Net Assets with Donor Restrictions	<u>44,924</u>

Without Donor Restrictions	
Building Reserve	64,416
Endowment Fund	30,326
General Operating Reserve	<u>346,041</u>
Total Net Assets without Donor Restrictions	<u>440,783</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>485,707</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ <u>497,457</u>

