

# **RYE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

## **2019 ANNUAL REPORT**



***882 BOSTON POST ROAD - RYE, NEW YORK 10580***

## RPC CHURCH STAFF - 2019

The Reverend Daniel H. Love	Co-Pastor
The Reverend Dr. John W. Miller	Co-Pastor
The Reverend Jean-Paul Marshall	Associate Pastor for Christian Education
Maida Robinson	Chief Administrative Officer
Jason Charneski	Director of Music/Organist
Lisa Rawson	Director of Choirs for Children and Youth
Peggy Berretta	Administrative Assistant
Denise LeVan	Pastoral Assistant
Juan Velasquez	Head Sexton and Building Manager
Alonso Osorio	Sunday Sexton

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#### On the cover:

Susie and Jean-Paul Marshall in front of 3 Cornell Place in Rye, the new third manse purchased through the Imagine Initiative in January of 2019.

## CO-PASTOR ANNUAL REPORT 2019

During the second half of the year, the church Session read and discussed the book *Shift: Three Big Moves for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church*. I found it a very helpful guide to some of the many challenges that churches face these days, and a helpful way to step back and take a look at our own church. As I think you will see as you read through the rest of this report, the news about RPC is very good. Where so many other churches face diminishing energy and resources, RPC has remained not only steady and strong, but has expanded its work in the world. Like the community around us, turnover is fairly high. We receive more new members than most churches, but each year we bid farewell to a significant number of people as they move on to other parts of the country and other endeavors. Yet we remain a remarkably healthy church. Please read on – I think you’ll agree.

One of the ideas in *Shift* that continues to stick with me revolves around the following question. Which of the following do we say when we talk about our own personal connection to RPC?

**I go to church.**

**I am the church.**

To me, that is a shift in thinking worth thinking about.

As you’ll see in this report, RPC works hard to meet the needs of the many people who come to this church – from the most regular worshiper to the one-time visitor. We strive for excellence in all that we do, from weekend worship, to care-giving ministries, to tending to this treasure of a building. There is much to celebrate in all that we do, and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary Service Challenge will be a fascinating look into the life of this church. Beyond financial resources, how many hours of time are invested to make RPC all that it is? This year, we will get a glimpse.

But “the church” is not simply all the good that goes on within the walls of this building. In us, and through us, fed by the Spirit of God, we are the way that God’s love, truth, care, justice, and compassion become real in the world.

There is plenty of evidence of that dynamic at work in this report, and more will be revealed as we see the many places that the people of RPC serve and give elsewhere through the 150<sup>th</sup> Service Challenge. But I’m guessing even that will vastly underestimate the ways that all the people of RPC live “as the church,” as Christ in the flesh, throughout the world.

That is the beauty of being the church. All of us are in this together – seeking to be faithful in all that we do, whether within these walls or in every facet of our lives.

**We are the church.**

It has been my great joy to be a part of that “we” for the last 22 years, and to do so in partnership with an incredible staff team, strong and thoughtful leadership, and the many who both come to church and also seek to be the church every day.

With deep gratitude,

Dan Love

## CO-PASTOR ANNUAL REPORT 2019

As I looked back over the past several annual reports I've written, I noticed that I tended to end talking about the day to day activities that are a normal part of pastoral ministry - preaching, teaching, pastoral care, weddings, funerals, baptisms and staffing a variety of church committees and boards. The reality is that I spend the vast majority of my time engaged in these "mundane" ministry tasks. I use the word "mundane" here not in the sense of being dull or boring, but rather that they are routine or commonplace. Yet it is in these mundane ministries that I find that God most often at work in my life and the lives of others. In other words, God is at work in the ordinary, often blessing us with extraordinary glimpses of God's grace and love. So I begin here in this year's report because the mundane ministries are in many ways, the most fulfilling for me. That being said let me note a few other highlights from 2019.

This summer looked different again as we welcomed back to our campus the Ward Summer Camp. For four weeks almost 100 children from Port Chester were here Monday – Friday, from 9AM – 3PM, engaged in classroom work like reading and math, as well as a music program and also some outdoor time.

This year all three of your pastors joined with other clergy from the area to offer an every Tuesday afternoon chapel service at The Osborn. We rotate the leadership among us. The service includes communion in addition to a brief mediation. Jason Charneski has been gracious in joining us from time to time to play the organ in the chapel there.

Coming Home, our 18-week program for the formerly incarcerated, celebrated its fourth year. It was the first year that this ministry was fully funded from the church budget, rather than from the Imagine Initiative. We again had about 75 people from our congregation engaged in some way, preparing meals, serving as mentors, providing transportation.

We continued to offer a full program of adult education. In addition to our Sunday morning lectionary based bible study, we offered a variety of other studies and programs. Dan Love began the year with "An Evening in the Archives." This was followed by a screening of the film, "Resilience." I led a Lenten study of Adam Hamilton's book, "Unafraid." In the fall Dan Love taught a course entitled, "Everything You Missed or Forgot From Confirmation." I facilitated four week discussion on "Race and Religion", using Debbie Irving's book, "Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race." We continued our "Show Up & Make" interactive sacred art experiences. There are now four pieces of artwork on display around the building that were created by the congregation at these events following worship.

In 2019 we began a Hospitality Taskforce. We began by trying to look at our congregation and its buildings through the eyes of a Sunday morning guest. Some exterior signage was improved. We looked at the many different entrances to our buildings and thought about "first impressions." Based upon this work, some changes were made to some of these entrances, most noticeable the Parsons Street entrance and the sanctuary entrance across from the library. There are more things yet to come in the year ahead. One thing we may do is to add greeters, in addition to ushers, who can assist first or second time guests with any questions they might have.

The Mission and Outreach Committee continued to refine our grants process. We have narrowed the number of agencies we make grants to and gave several agencies two years grants. This has allowed us to give larger grants to most of our grant recipients. We continue in our efforts to connect our members to organizations within the community with which we can partner to do more "hands on" ministry. We "refreshed" our service menu which lists ways our members can be engaged in local mission. In the fall we also began to plan for The Sesquicentennial Service Challenge, where we are inviting everyone in our church, including children and youth, to be engaged in at least 150 minutes of service per month in 2020, with the goal of our congregation serving over 2 million minutes in 2020.

Within my presbytery work, I resigned as the moderator of an Administrative Commission working with First Presbyterian Church, Mt. Vernon after over two years so that I could be elected to serve as a member-at-large of the Council of Hudson River Presbytery. The team that I am leading is The Healthy, Vital Communities of Faith Team, which seeks to assist congregations to be just that, healthy, vital communities of faith, such as the community of faith that we share here together at Rye Presbyterian Church. I also continue to teach for the Rising Hope program in Sing Sing Correctional Facility in the fall semester, finding a deep sense of call in this ministry as I do.

Blessings to you, John Miller, Co-Pastor

## ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

How is it already time to write a report on my second year serving as the associate pastor here at Rye Presbyterian Church? Despite how quickly it flew by, it was a fantastic second year! Most of the things I can cover here are already wonderfully covered in the Christian Education Committee section put together by our co-chairs Judy Chin and Sarah Snell. Instead, I would love to continue answering two questions that we ask our youth at the beginning of the new year: What are my highlights of 2019? What are my hopes/challenges for 2020?

### **What are my highlights of 2019?**

- Starting the year off in the condo the church graciously purchased for us and future pastors
- Serving alongside both youth groups and Larchmont Avenue Church as we gathered and distributed clothing for Midnight Run in the spring and fall
- So much congregational support for our new “Cards for College” coffee hour, during which we gathered to write cards full of love and encouragement for our college freshmen
- Working alongside the CE committee as we formed our new mission statement and continued to imagine how we can better serve the children, youth, and families of our community of faith
- Another summer of chaperoning two trips to NOLA with two amazing groups of high school youth
- Attending the PCUSA youth conference called Triennium with the Hudson River Presbytery delegation
- Adopting a husky pup named Kylo from the Humane Society of Westchester in New Rochelle
- Starting off the new school year with both our middle and high school youth
- Rock climbing with the middle school group at BETA
- More opportunities to teach in our Sunday School program and our confirmation class
- Forming relationships with other youth-focused organizations within our area
- Researching Sunday School curriculum and introducing our new Dwell curriculum
- Researching new opportunities for our community to be eco-friendly
- Writing and preaching a sermon series on how we worship together
- Sharing many meals and conversation with members of our church
- Working alongside all of our leaders and committees
- Experiencing another full year with this wonderful community!

### **What are my hopes/challenges for 2020?**

- To continue helping children, youth, and families feel connected and known within our community
- To build a library of resources for faith development for parents and families to implement at home
- To discover new ways to support our youth and their parents in the midst of this busy and anxious world
- To find new ways to recruit and support Sunday School teaching volunteers
- To create more opportunities for children and youth leadership within worship and the life of the church

Thank you for such a fantastic second year! As always, I am excited to continue walking alongside you all as we guide and nurture our children and youth on their journeys of faith and as we continue doing the work of God as a community!

Peace be with you,  
Jean-Paul (JP) Marshall  
Associate Pastor for Christian Education

## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND ORGANIST

Thank you, members and friends of RPC for a full and blessed 2019. I share some visible highlights:

- Jazz Sunday (March 3), which included the premiere of a new anthem, *The Veil of Moses*, written by Jeremy Fletcher (soprano sax/woodwinds player and choir section leader) for the Chancel Choir and the jazz combo on-hand that morning.
- Wonderful music-making and a large audience for the *Mozart Requiem* the afternoon of March 31. What a joy it was to have our Chancel Choir combine with the choir of Christ's Church for this special occasion. The number of singers involved required the orchestra to be placed on the floor of the nave.
- The sense of the roof being lifted off of the sanctuary as the Chancel Choir, organ, and trumpets reached the climax of the Sanctus (from the Duruflé *Requiem*) in the 11:00 a.m. service on Easter (April 20).
- The sounds of Celtic music, provided by The Jolly Beggars, filling the sanctuary and enriching worship the morning of October 27.
- The ministry and community of the Chancel Choir. Beyond the music offered during the services for Holy Week, Easter, and Christmas Eve, the annual Cantata Sunday (December 15) enabled the full choir and the professional singers who serve as section leaders/soloists to sound their best (the major works being the *Beatus Vir*, by Claudio Monteverdi, and a setting of the *Magnificat*, by Antonio Vivaldi).
- Continued involvement by the Children's and the Youth choirs in worship, as they join the Chancel Choir in singing the Introit and the Kyrie eleison. It also is important to note that the roles for the Live Nativity, which is a part of the family services on Christmas Eve, are now staffed fully! Lisa Rawson works with assurance to ensure excellence in these endeavors.
- Our Knock Interns in Sacred Music. In June, Eddie Zheng concluded his year with us with a wonderful organ recital. In September, Richard Gress, our current intern, began his work (glad he enjoys singing with and wants to conduct the Chancel Choir).
- Most of the moments listed above were made possible through your collective generosity (the Imagine Initiative) or by gifts to the Music Fund from many individuals (specific to a particular event or via the annual Easter and Christmas flowers & music drives). Thank you!

In addition, I thank the members of the Worship and Music Committee and the entire staff for their commitment, thoughtfulness, inspiration, and professionalism.

May our songs continue to praise God and speak to our hearts and minds as we travel the journey of faith in 2020 – and beyond!

Respectfully,  
Jason Charneski

## CLERK OF SESSION 2019

In his letter to the church in Rome, Paul writes, “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.” (*Romans 12: 4-6*)

Throughout the year, membership was often a topic of Session meetings. Session completed a comprehensive review of the membership roll in early 2019 and created a new category called “post-college” for those confirmed in the past 10-15 years who are not currently active. Elders also reached out to other “non-participating” members in an effort to confirm their status. A new member mixer was held and received favorable reviews.

Over the summer, Elders read the book *Shift* by Mark E. Tidsworth, which focuses on the changing dynamics of the church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. During the fall, Session meetings included extended discussions of concepts in the book and their relevance to RPC. We discussed ideas such as Attractional vs. Missional church, Consumer Culture vs. Sacred Partnering, and Membership vs. Discipleship.

We created an ad hoc Hospitality Working group to develop initiatives to make RPC a more welcoming congregation. Working closely with the Deacons, the group offered several suggestions endorsed by the Session including improving interactions with visitors during and after worship, refining internal signage, updating entrances, and other ideas under discussion.

As part of its commitment to support our pastoral staff, Session unanimously approved a recommendation from the Personnel Committee to approve a sabbatical request by Dr. Miller to take place from June 7 to September 13, 2020.

As we look ahead to the New Year and the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary the sanctuary, in addition to the recently announced service challenge Session will continue to look for ways, as Paul suggests, to bring forth each individual’s gifts and flourish as one body. What was true for the church in Rome in the 1<sup>st</sup> century can also be applied to the church in Rye in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In word and deed we hope to encourage both current and prospective members of Rye Presbyterian Church to be not merely members of an organization, but humble disciples of Jesus Christ.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Douglas DeStaebler  
Clerk of Session

## 2019 STATISTICS

### 1,183 Total Communicant Membership as of December 31, 2018

**Gains:** 41 New Members received, including Confirmation Class of 2019 (22)

**Losses:** 8 Deaths of communicant members

104 Moved to “post-college” status

6 Transferred to other churches

54 No longer active at RPC

172 Total Losses

### 1,052 Total Members as of December 31, 2019

#### Other 2019 Statistics:

Total worship Attendance: 10,606 (2018: 10,497)

Averages: 5pm: 18.2 2018: 16

8:30: 19.9 2018: 19

10:00: 173.4 2018: 174.5

Non-summer average weekend attendance: 248 (2018: 245)

Adult Baptisms - 1

Child Baptisms – 10

Weddings - 10



## NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2019

The following members of Rye Presbyterian Church served on the 2019 Nominating Committee:

*From Session:* Mary Versfelt, Chair  
Doug MacLaury  
*From Trustees:* Karen Beatty  
*From Deacons:* Addy Park  
*Members at Large:* Bob Connor (Class of 2019)  
Kristin Jautz (Class of 2019)  
Sarah Barringer (Class of 2020)  
Carolyn Cunningham (Class of 2020)  
Julia Thomas (Class of 2020)

Co-Pastors Rev. Dr. John Miller and Rev. Daniel Love participated *ex officio*.

Our Nominating Committee endeavored to propose slates for the three boards and the Nominating Committee that would embody the diversity of our church, keeping in mind the skills that are needed for each of the boards. Following careful evaluation, the following slates of candidates were presented by the Nominating Committee to the congregation at a meeting held on November 17, 2019, and these nominees were elected by the congregation to serve as indicated:

### ***Session***

*Class of 2020:* Nico Eckstein (youth elder)  
*Class of 2022:* Emily Carriero\*, Judy Chin\*, Chad Estep, Dinah Howland\*, Kevin Johnson, Toby King

### ***Deacons***

*Class of 2020:* Parker Russell (youth deacon), Katie Knight (youth deacon)  
*Class of 2022:* Sue Carriero, Arthur Henderson, Nancy Jenkins-Kennedy\*, Susan Morison\*, Susan Parish\*, Allison Reynolds, Melissa Wirth\*

### ***Trustees***

*Class of 2020:* Christina Mohraz  
*Class of 2022:* Sam Croll, Liz Garrett\*, Jeff Holtman\*, Katherine Olsen, Van Siler

### ***Members-at-Large for the Nominating Committee***

*Class of 2021:* Lisa King, Kristin Kumar

\*Persons noted with an asterisk above are current officers returning to serve a second term.

I'd like to thank members of this year's Nominating Committee who worked respectfully and diligently to complete the important work of assembling these outstanding slates that are representative of the congregation. We feel confident that all who accepted the call to serve will use their talents to lead our church with devotion and discernment.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Versfelt  
Nominating Committee Chair

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE 2019

The mission of the Christian Education committee is to guide and nurture our children, youth and their families on their journey of faith. We seek to foster a welcoming environment, providing opportunities (1) to learn and engage in the Christian story, both ancient and present; (2) to develop skills needed to practice their faith in church, at home and in daily life; (3) to ask faith questions and explore answers together in a supportive space; (4) to grow closer to God and our community of faith both within RPC and in the community; and (5) to nurture the sensitivities they need to live together in our world. We strive to fulfill this mission in many ways, including organizing our Pre-K-8th Grade Sunday School program, Middle and High School youth groups, family-friendly service projects, and fellowship opportunities.

### Sunday School

Sunday school attendance remains strong year to year with 127 children enrolled and an average weekly attendance of about 50 children, including the child care service for ages birth to 3 years. RPC is blessed with a wonderful group of dedicated Sunday School teachers and high school Teaching Assistants who help provide a welcoming environment for our children to engage Scripture, ask faith questions, and grow closer to God and our community of faith.

In the fall of 2019, we started using a new curriculum called DWELL, which invites children to live into God's story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration. It also encourages children to live out of God's story every day as they respond to God's call. Each Sunday morning, we have actively engaged our children in God's story using interactive games, reflective wondering, dramatic storytelling, and a whole lot of fun!

We also made the decision to no longer hold Middle School class on the first Sunday of each month so that our youth have the opportunity to worship and celebrate communion with the rest of our community of faith. We believe this communal and sacramental experience to be a vital part of their faith journeys. In addition to this decision, the three pastors began a series of lessons on how and why we worship the way we do each Sunday morning. Rev. Marshall began the series with a focus on how we gather, and Rev. Miller taught a class on how we read Scripture together. The series will continue in the month of February with a class led by Rev. Marshall on baptism and affirmation of faith and a class led by Rev. Love on communion and the sending aspects of worship.

A few other things to note:

- Continued implementation of our church's Child Protection Policy, which includes online sexual abuse awareness training and background checks for our teaching volunteers.
- Replacement of the education building bulletin board with a magnetic chalkboard in order to reduce the use of paper for decorations and to provide a more distinct place to display pictures, flyers, maps for Sunday School and childcare rooms, and other important information for parents.
- Introduction of "classroom agreements" into our Sunday School classes in order to provide a welcoming and engaging environment for our teachers and children.
- Invited Christine Kalayjian, our head childcare provider, to serve as our Sunday School supervisor and Aileen Lynch, our clerical assistant, to assist with Sunday School preparations.

### Christian Education Newsletter

Children first begin to understand the love of God and the Christian faith through the love and care of their parents and through the faith practices observed at home. Since the fall of 2018, we have sought to help parents with faith development at home by sending out a weekly newsletter that provides a variety of ways for families to engage scripture, ask faith questions, and grow closer to God together. The newsletter consists of weekly scripture readings related to each Sunday's focus in worship and Sunday school, wondering questions to guide discussion among families, monthly faith practices, occasional recommendations for books and other resources, and updates on upcoming CE events. It is our hope that this weekly newsletter helps families experience God at work in their everyday lives.

### Confirmation Class

Rev. Love continues to oversee the confirmation class with Rev. Miller and Rev. Marshall assisting with the teaching responsibilities. During the confirmation class, 9th graders explore the questions that lie at the heart of our faith

journeys. Their year-long journey includes study, discussion, service and fellowship. 21 young people were confirmed in 2019. The current 2020 class is made up of 27 9th graders.

#### Middle School Youth Group (Connection)

Connection in 2019 has been very active with an average attendance of 25 youth. Throughout the year, we held our regular meetings full of fun, fellowship, service and a variety of spiritual practices. We were able to help prepare supplies and sort clothing at Larchmont Avenue Church for the Midnight Run into NYC twice this year. We have also invited Jessica Lodato, the Youth Educator for the Rye Youth Council to speak with our middle school youth about important social and emotional skills such as self-awareness and self-advocacy. They even enjoyed a time of showing and making art under the direction of Carol Love and Bridget Davis. We celebrated the end of the school year with our annual picnic at the Love Manse, and kicked off the new school year in September with our annual pool party.

#### High School Youth Group

The year was a good mix of getting to know each other through regular fellowship gatherings each month and serving our neighbors in a variety of ways. In the spring, we joined Larchmont Avenue Church in collecting and handing out clothes and food to people on the streets of NYC as part of Midnight Run. We also helped prepare and share meals at the Coming Home dinners. In June, we sent a group of 22 youth and six chaperones to New Orleans for the ninth year in a row, and a group of five youth and two chaperones in August. In the fall, we enjoyed dinner and conversation with the young men of the Youth Shelter of Westchester, assisted LAC with Midnight Run once again, assisted with Dinner at Noon, and spread some Christmas cheer with our annual caroling tradition in December. Going forward, we seek to include more ways for our youth to engage in fellowship and service with the rest of our community of faith and our neighbors.

#### Church Fellowship & Service

The purpose of our events is to provide opportunities for our members to come together to enjoy each other's company and to serve our neighbors within our local context and out in the world. In the spring of 2019, we partnered with Rise Against Hunger organization once again to package 10,000 meals to be distributed through school feeding and crisis relief programs around the world. We also introduced a special coffee hour in February that involved our community writing out words of love and encouragement to our college freshmen. In October, we partnered with the Mission and Outreach Committee and Feeding Westchester to pack Breakfast Bags to be shared with school children who receive free or reduced-price lunch in the Westchester area. It is our hope that this event and partnership will continue on next year. The Pumpkin Carving event was a "spooktacular" success once again as we gathered for a fun night filled with delicious food, the carving of pumpkins, and great company. The Gingerbread House party along with the tree lighting and dessert at the Millers started off the holiday season well as our community came together for a night filled with Christmas cheer.

#### Music Education

Lisa Rawson, RPC's director of Children's Choirs, continues the "Singing Our Faith" curriculum which teaches sacred music to Sunday School students. The Children's Choir and Youth Choir provide a beautiful and moving addition to our Sunday and holiday services throughout the year. The Christmas pageant is a beautiful annual tradition where children from pre-school to 8th grade help reenact the Christmas story. For the fourth year, high school youth performed a live nativity during the 3:30 and 5 pm services on Christmas Eve. We are extremely grateful to Mrs. Rawson, Mr. Jason Charneski and the Worship and Music Committee for their commitment to bring music into the lives of our children.

Many thanks to the dedicated members of the Christian Education committee: Katherine Olsen, Addy Park, Beth Duchanaud, Elizabeth Parks, Emily Carriero, José Zeilstra, Lisa King, Sue Parish, and Julia Thomas for working so hard to share our faith through education with the RPC community. Special thanks are due to Arthur Henderson, who beautifully inscribes the bibles for the first and twelfth graders every year. We would also like to thank Aileen Lynch for her continued programming support and Susie Marshall for her ongoing support of many of our programs, particularly with the Middle School and High School youth groups. We thank Dan Love, John Miller, and Jean-Paul Marshall as well for their continued support and guidance.

Faithfully submitted,  
Judy Chin and Sarah Snell  
CE Co-chairpersons

## ADULT EDUCATION 2019

During 2019 RPC continued to provide rich and diverse Adult Education offerings, with separate “semesters” in the winter/spring of 2019 and the fall of 2019. Participation was steady, perhaps slightly increased in some programs, depending on the draw of the subject matter and/or speaker. Importantly, all programs are open to the community—not just limited to RPC members—so invite your friends and neighbors.

The main building blocks for Adult Ed have been, and will continue to be, Bible studies:

- Men’s Bible Study, led by Rev. Love, meeting every other Sunday evening at 8:00 pm.
- Women’s Bible Study, led by Cynthia DeSantis meeting every other Saturday morning at 10:00 am.
- Bible Discussion led by Rev. Love every other Monday at 9:30 AM.
- The Women’s Discipleship group, meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month in the Library at 1:00 pm. Every few weeks the group decides on a new book or topic to focus on, so there’s plenty of variety and opportunity for involvement.

We continued our Sunday morning programs between services—from 9 to 9:45 in the Westminster Room, led by Dr. Miller or by members of the congregation. We used a curriculum called “Feasting on the Word”, which basically tracks the lectionary. Since our pastors follow the lectionary, this program enables those who attend to study many of the scriptural texts on which that Sunday’s sermon will be based. Thus participants can have a clearer understanding of the sermon and its context and meaning.

Attendance grew during 2018, but leveled off in 2019 to a core group of 8 to 12, plus occasional “drop ins”. We expect to continue to use “Feasting on the Word” during future years. We recognize attendance will remain low, given competition from church services, Sunday School, choir rehearsal and the busyness of this congregation.

The year started with a four week series titled “Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race”, using a book by the same name by Debbie Irving. In it we explored our own racial autobiography and the meaning of race and racism. This was intended as Part I of this subject, with Part II, in the Spring incorporating a series of meetings on the same subject matter with a racially diverse congregation from Mount Vernon. We plan on having those discussions over a number of weeks, starting with a shared meal and attempting to deal with this fraught subject across racial lines.

From Mid-September through Advent, Dan Love led an almost weekly discussion of “Everything you Missed or Forgot from Confirmation” (or in the case of many of us never had confirmation at all). It was based on the curriculum our young adults engage in during confirmation at RPC and was an eye-opening look at the origins of our faith and the meaning of the Biblical texts on which it rests.

Our Lenten Book Study in the Spring was led by John Miller and based on Adam Hamilton’s book “*Unafraid*” which dealt with a disciplined approach with dealing with fears large and small, real and imagined and overcoming through a combination of action and focusing on a life of faith.

We held several special during the Winter/Spring “semester”, including

- An evening in the Archives, led by Dan Love, looking at photos from earlier years in the life of RPC.
- A screening of “*Resilience*” a documentary about the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences, followed by a discussion on how to deal with the stress and effects of those experiences in later life.
- Suicide Prevention, a discussion of this increasingly frequent and tragic life event and its impact on those left behind.
- Show Up and Make—in which we were encouraged to loose the artistic impulses in ourselves, to experience our faith not just in our minds, but also in our hearts.

The Cancer Support Group for women who are patients, caregivers, and survivors continued all year, as did “Three T’s” (a monthly discussion group), and new member classes. And, separately, the Women’s Association and Stephen Ministry provide many programs which complement and expand the broad reach of RPC’s efforts to help each of us on the journey together toward learning and spiritual growth.

We are indebted to Dr. Miller, who not only staffs this Committee, but also is a fount of creative ideas for new programs and a rich array of resources to make them relevant and interesting to the congregation. We are also grateful to members of the congregation who have shared their ideas with the Adult Ed Committee over the year. We try to have only one or two meetings in a year—but are always available by email for input from the congregation to create new programs or improve existing ones. Our beloved church is committed to continuing to move forward as a “Learning Organization” dedicated to providing a breadth of opportunities for Adult Education and Spiritual Growth for our members and the broader community.

Respectively submitted,  
Bob and Nancy Steed, Co-Chairs

## MISSION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE 2019

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2*

### **Introduction**

The members of the committee during 2019 were: Dr. John Miller, Peggy Althoff, Peter Bennett, Cynthia Deen, Sam Dimon, Jackie Labatt-Simon, Kim O'Connor, Nancy Steed. Cynthia DeSantis and Anna Wei retired from the committee. We welcomed three new members, Kate Stevens, as youth representative, Rod Brown and Charles Luke.

### **M&O's renewed purpose and objectives on behalf of RPC:**

Our objectives are to develop more meaningful connections with the community and deeper spiritual touch points with our congregation through Christian service and generosity. The Mission and Outreach committee (M&O) aspires to live out our vision statement:

#### *Mission and Outreach Vision Statement*

*Rye Presbyterian Church aspires to transform lives, as Christ teaches, by service with others through mutual partnerships. We seek to deepen the personal engagement of our congregation through service and reflective learning opportunities as we are engaged with others in our church and broader communities. We aim to seek justice for all God's children by focusing on those most disenfranchised and in greatest need. In outreach and service, we seek to strengthen our faith and understanding of God.*

For the past three years, we have focused our efforts on three broad areas where we will offer grant funding and service to organizations in Westchester County that provide to those in greatest need:

- 1. Provision of basic human needs (hunger, clothing, homelessness, etc.);**
- 2. Youth education, especially in the areas of social and emotional development; and**
- 3. Restorative justice through prison ministry and re-entry programs.**

We direct our mission effort on a national and international level through the four seasonal offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA), with the intention to lend support to the work of our denomination.

We serve as a central, coordinated communication resource for all RPC's mission-related activities to encourage congregational support and involvement. We coordinate the grants process with the Women's Association and show a unified presence to our partner organizations and the community. We thoughtfully manage the financial gifts from the RPC mission budget, special offerings and contributions in the most impactful ways to lift the disenfranchised and transform lives.

### **Highlights of 2019**

***Mission Service Initiatives:*** - In 2019 M&O allocated \$24,925 to organize, support and encourage service efforts among the congregation. The committee regularly supports Church and Justice Sunday, the Women's Interfaith annual event, Youth mission trips to New Orleans, Christian Education/High School Youth hurricane relief buckets projects and Rise Against Hunger food packaging. Special projects this year include:

- *Church and Justice Sunday* – April 28 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this annual Sunday service run by and honoring formerly incarcerated graduates of NY Theological Seminary. Many thanks go to the graduates and to Bob and Nancy Steed for their commitment to prison ministry for the past 3 decades.
- *Open Door Family Medical Center and The "Baby Box" project* – In May leading up to Pentecost, RPC combined with the Rye Presbyterian Nursery School in the effort to collect essentials for newborns to be given to Open Door for low-income expectant parents. In this third year of the Baby Box project, we also collaborated with Rye Synagogue Nursery School. Approximately 1500 items were collected.

- On May 9, Rye Presbyterian Church was the community service honoree at Open Door’s “Power Up” annual event. We received the award for our collaboration with Open Door since it’s inception and our recent effort to spearhead the Baby Box program. Kim O’Connor spoke on behalf of RPC and received the award.
- *Coming Home* – In this fourth year of piloting a support program to men and women re-entering life post-incarceration, 12 participants started, 6 successfully completed the program and 3 left the found employment and left the program early. Over 75 congregants helped in many ways by providing cooked meals, transportation and clothing, by joining in fellowship dinners, and by mentoring the participants.
- *The Ward Summer School* – This year the Ward School returned to Rye Presbyterian, while Christ Church was undergoing renovations. M&O agreed to support the facility management by providing \$2000 funding for a facilities liaison position. The school staff and students were grateful to return to the original location of the summer school.
- *Rye Writes* – 20 pen pal relationships between RPC volunteers and inmates continue. Many more inmates are seeking a writing pal.
- *Thanksgiving Food Drive for Caritas Food Pantry* – In our annual November food drive, members of the church gave generously gave 150 bags of food for Caritas to give to those in need. Many thanks to Sam Dimon for coordinating this effort.

*Presbyterian Offerings* – The congregation contributed generously \$24,442 to the four seasonal offerings. These gifts provide important support to the mission efforts nationally and internationally of our denomination. M&O, led by Peter Bennett, organized the communication to our congregation.

*Richard E. Murdoch Award* – The 2019 recipient for outstanding mission service award is Kim O’Connor, who has energized our church to address the needs of our communities. She has served many years on M&O, and has mobilized our church to serve organizations, most recently spearheading the Baby Box initiative. In addition, Kim is deeply committed to serving the social emotional needs of our youth through her profession as a social worker and her volunteer community leadership with Rye Youth Council, RyeACT, and as founder of the Rye Healing Arts Collective. Kim chose to split the \$2000 award with \$1000 each to Rye Youth Council and Open Door Family Medical Center.

*Mission Menu of Opportunities*– M&O continued to update and expand the “Menu of Opportunities” listing both in flyers and on the updated church website. This is another way to communicate and encourage members to participate in community service.

### **Sources of Funding**

In 2019, M&O gratefully received \$100,000 from the RPC budget, an increase from \$68,500 in prior years. This increase allows M&O to continue funding the Coming Home and other one-off programs that had received seed funding from the Imagine Initiative. Additional income of \$18,647 was provided from the Mission Fund Endowment and other M&O fund contributions. Together with carryover from prior years, the funds available total to \$158,148.

### **Community Grants**

Through the community organization grant application process, M&O dispersed grants to 13 local organizations totaling \$73,000.00. Overall mission and outreach giving, including grants, offerings and other special contributions totaled \$116,339. For information regarding the recipients and amounts please see *Combined Outreach Giving* on pages 28-30.

### **Thank You!!**

Finally, thanks to all the many volunteers and generous parishioners at RPC who provide the leadership, muscle and means for RPC, for indeed *we are transforming lives!*

Respectfully submitted,

Dinah Howland

Chairperson of the Mission & Outreach Committee

## RPC PERSONNEL COMMITTEE 2019

The Rye Presbyterian Personnel committee is a joint committee of Session and Trustees. The committee's function is to provide guidance and oversight on personnel matters. Responsibilities include maintaining the personnel policy manual, establishing and overseeing salary and benefit packages, and supporting and participating in the staff goal setting and review process while ensuring that we stay in compliance with Federal, State, Presbytery and Board of Pension guidelines.

Committee members this year included Lars Ernst, Cheryl Hunt, Margaret Blum, from Session, and Jeff Holtman, Sally Beatty, and Karen Beatty, from Trustees, with John Miller and Dan Love as ex-officio members.

### **Year Highlights:**

**Staff Performance Reviews:** Staff performance reviews and goal setting were held during the early part of 2019. At the same time, we began discussing shifting the process to early summer to better reflect the church's program year and staff goals. This timing was approved and we had an abbreviated review process over the summer establishing goals for the program year starting in September. In late spring/early summer 2020, we will return to the more comprehensive review process, incorporating a survey tool for congregation feedback.

**Administrative Duties** – Each year brings various personnel related topics to review. These occur due to updates in Presbytery guidelines, or other federal or state regulations that the church has to address in order to stay current. This year we reviewed and updated pastor terms of call and the impact of housing fair market values on pastor compensation/taxes and on the RPC budget.

In addition, we reviewed the staff cost of living allowance (COLA) increases. The committee thoughtfully discussed and reviewed the annual raises for staff. With session and trustees in agreement, exempt salaried staff received the Presbytery recommended 1.6%, with non-exempt, hourly staff receiving a slight increase over the suggested COLA at 2%.

An increase for choir section leaders was approved to keep pace with the market. Those increases will go into effect in September 2020.

**Sexual Harassment Policy & Training** – New York State mandated sexual harassment policy, complaint procedures and training went into effect earlier this year. The training was required to be completed by all staff, including part-timers, by early October 2019. All staff have participated and signed the required paperwork. This is now an annual requirement.

**Healthy Pastors, Healthy Congregations Program for the Associate Pastor.** The Board of Pensions (BOP) has a program that provides financial training to pastors as well as creates a covenant between the church congregation, the pastor and the BOP so that all parties are onboard and supportive of the program and the individual. Associate Pastor Jean-Paul Marshall will be able to take courses that will assist him with financial literacy and planning. Jean-Paul's participation in the Healthy Pastors, Healthy Congregation was approved with a \$500 contribution approved by session. Three members of the personnel committee volunteered to participate in the initial training session with him.

This was my first year as Personnel Chairperson and I want to extend my thanks to the committee for their thoughtful insight, wisdom, and compassion when doing our committee work. And special thanks to Dan and John for their guidance this year. I look forward to another year serving on RPC's Session and Personnel Committee.

Respectfully submitted,  
Margaret Blum,  
Personnel Chairperson



## IMAGINE INITIATIVE 2019

As the Imagine Initiative came to completion in 2019, how amazing it is to look back over the last six years since conversations about a fundraising initiative began and to see all that has been accomplished. Together as a congregation we imagined the future into which God was leading us, and through the work of the dedicated Imagine Steering team, the staff of the church, and the generosity of this congregation, indeed it was true: God has done far more than we could ask or imagine.

### **Closing Celebration of Imagine**

In June we had a wonderful event celebrating all that has become reality over the course of the Imagine Initiative. The children of the church proudly carried posters throughout the sanctuary that displayed all that had been accomplished.

- Sanctuary restored – including repainting, AC installation and window restoration.
- Library and chapel remodeled
- A third manse purchased - into which the Marshall's moved at the beginning of the year.
- Steeple entrance restored
- Office space reconfigured, an elevator installed, and the third floor finished for added storage.
- Substantial improvements made to both existing manses, including new kitchens
- Several new programs initiated
  - Coming Home program for the formerly incarcerated
  - Saturday evening worship, with the addition of a once a month “contemplative service.”
  - Second August NOLA youth mission trip
  - Concert Series
  - Show up and Make – community art “response to worship” project
  - Music internship
  - Rise Against Hunger intergenerational service project

### **Imagine Financial update:**

Pledges – \$3,878,000

Gifts through end of 2019 - \$3,920,000

Total investments (spending) through 2019 : \$3,480,000

### **Looking ahead**

While the Imagine Initiative came to a close, it still will live on – not only in the work done to the facility, and through new ministries now incorporated into the life of the church. Seed money through Imagine remains available to support new ideas that we together we might imagine!

### **Thank you!**

Gabby and Don McCree  
Co-chairs, Imagine Initiative

*"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine."*  
*- Ephesians 3:20*

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE 2019

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, we would like to thank our co-pastors, Dan Love and John Miller for their ongoing energy and support which guided us to a meaningful campaign to engage the congregation. Also, thank you to the RPC office staff for their work in organizing and sending out the campaign materials.

As we celebrate the sesquicentennial of our beautiful sanctuary, the idea of the campaign “150 years of Open Doors, Open Hearts” came to mind, as we reflected on all those that have come through our doors for the past 150 years. It was clear that our church and its’ members have given so much both financially and of their time as well as providing support to those outside our doors. We asked the congregation to pledge in order to continue the work that God set forth for the next 150 years of worship, growth and service together, confident in this truth- *“The Lord will watch over your coming and going now and forevermore.”* (Psalm 121:8)

Stewardship packets were prepared, each one with a personalized handwritten message and received by the congregation the week of November 4. As a celebration of our shared faith and life together, we invited members to bring their pledge cards to worship on Commitment Sunday, November 17. We followed up with targeted emails to those who had not responded to express the importance of pledging.

We are delighted to report that we had an excellent response- the highest pledge total ever received- 328 pledges in the amount of \$1,270,000 (up \$41,000 from the prior year). The overall target is \$1,275,000. We will continue to reach out to those we have not heard from but feel confident in reaching our goal.

The committee also felt the utmost importance of keeping our newest members engaged and involved. We held a New Member Social in September at American Yacht Club. We invited new members from the past 3 years, about 60 in total, to an informal gathering with representatives from various groups within the church. It was highly successful as we had about 50 people attend and felt the setting provided for casual conversations in order to get to know each other better. We hope to continue this as an annual event.

We would like to thank our committee, C.J. DeSantis and Susan Gim Paxton for all their efforts and a special thank you to Amparo and Ron Sizemore for their generosity in creating the beautiful mailing- your efforts and expertise are truly a blessing.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gail Willis and Jim Gallagher  
Co-chairs, 2019 Stewardship Committee

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE 2019

Jason Charneski, our Director of Music and Organist, continued to expand the musical and concert offerings this year. Jazz Sunday (March 3) celebrated the Transfiguration of Jesus and included a new anthem, composed by Jeremy Fletcher (one of the choir's section leaders and the leader of the jazz ensemble), for the Chancel Choir. The Chancel Choir and the choir of Christ's Church combined for a performance, with orchestra, of the Mozart *Requiem* (the afternoon of March 31). For the second time, we had a brass quintet on Easter (April 20). Eddie Zheng, our first Knock Intern in Sacred Music, presented an organ recital following 10:00 a.m. worship on June 2. On October 27, The Jolly Beggars participated in the 10:00 a.m. service, which featured their specialty: Celtic folk music.

The Chancel Choir continues to provide meaningful and moving music to enhance our worship of God, especially enriching our Christmas and Easter celebrations. This year they presented Monteverdi's *Beatus vir* and the Vivaldi *Magnificat* on Cantata Sunday (December 15), which included a 14-piece orchestra. Financial support for the orchestra was provided by Ann and Samuel Croll, Susan and Dod Fraser, and Pam Kindler.

In September we welcomed our second Knock Intern, Richard Gress. Rich has been an asset to the music program with his excellent talents on the organ and in rehearsal accompaniment. We look forward to the spring of 2020 with his support.

Under the direction of Lisa Rawson, our children and youth choirs have expanded and have both contributed to our worship sharing their beautiful voices and their youthful enthusiasm.

This was our third full program year offering the Saturday at 5 service. Attendance has varied, but a faithful core of worshippers has participated. The Contemplative Service at 5 p.m. (once per month) introduced last year by Dan is popular and will continue in 2020.

Due to the popularity of our early Christmas Eve services, this year we continued with two afternoon services (3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.), both of which offered the "Live Nativity" offered by the youth of our congregation, as well as candlelighting. The 10 p.m. service format continued with lessons, carols, and candlelight, enhanced by the Chancel Choir and a string quartet.

Davidson Gordon continued his faithful work with the Worship and Music Committee, handling the week-to-week needs and responsibilities of recruiting and coordinating ushers and communion servers, and coordinating obtaining attendance statistics, as well as general logistics. He is a blessing to our congregation.

Many thanks, also, to the other committee members: Katrin Naelapaa, Jennifer Reddington, Susan Morrison, Jason Charneski, Dan Love, and John Miller.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gail Langeloh, Chairperson

## BOARD OF DEACONS – 2019

The Deacons serving Rye Presbyterian Church during 2019 were as follows:

<u>Class of 2019</u>	<u>Class of 2020</u>	<u>Class 2021</u>
Sarah Derman, <i>Secretary</i>	Peggy Althoff	Claudia Asgeirsson
Amy Dolan	Molly Boxford	Cynthia Deen
Nancy Kennedy	Philip Cicchiello	David Greear
Susan Morison	Susan Goodenough	Liz Kahle
Sue Parish	Lauren Harding	Joe Montalto, <i>Treasurer</i>
Nick Smith	Lisa Keegan	Robin Redd
Sarah Snell	Addy Park, <i>Vice President</i>	Kingsley Rooney, <i>President</i>
Melissa Wirth	Irene Waddill	Susie Van den Berg
Georgia Gallagher, <i>youth</i>		
Maddie Howson, <i>youth</i>		

The Board of Deacons is a caring arm of Rye Presbyterian Church. We share God's love in our efforts to serve the RPC community in a variety of different ways: as parish representatives, through participation in worship services and coffee hour, through the planning and facilitating of fellowship opportunities and through general community outreach, both within and outside the congregation. Each term of service is three years with the exception of the Youth Deacons who serve for one-year terms. Occasionally, terms are shorter as a result of illness, a move or other circumstances for a deacon, creating the need for a replacement until the original deacon's term is completed. Deacons have the opportunity to renew a term to serve a total of two consecutive three-year terms.

The congregation was divided into 24 parishes designated within geographic areas, but as of 2020, the newly created parish map has divided the congregation into 21 parishes. There will be 22 deacons supporting the parishes in 2020, but as of 2021 there will be an evenly aligned number of deacons to the parishes (21).

In each parish, the deacon's primary function is to communicate with the members of the parish and to respond to those members' different needs including births, deaths, hospitalizations, illnesses, temporary incapacitations and other concerns. Deacons provide solace, meals, rides, errands and communication where appropriate. Unusual or special emotional concerns on the part of a parishioner, which may be discovered by a deacon, are referred to clergy, however, the support of the deacons during a crisis and possibly beyond, provides invaluable service to the church, as each deacon represents the heart of the church.

Some of the highlights of 2019 are New Member Desserts, New Member Coffee Hours, a Summer Brunch in July, a Fall Festival/Picnic in September and the Christmas Tree Lighting & Reception.

In 2019, deacons delivered flowers weekly to two or more in regards to joys or concerns for their families, delivered many meals to those in need of care and assistance, created and mailed 35 care packages to college freshmen in the fall, delivered Bibles to graduating seniors & first graders in the spring, gave Jerry's gift cards to confirmands, delivered 27 poinsettias to those who lost someone within the year or are currently ill, assisted in multiple baptisms, organized five to six Dinner at Noon events and oversaw Nametag Sundays once a month.

In addition to parish work, the deacons perform regular roles within the life of the church and community at-large, all of which are organized and carried out under the auspices of the following: Congregational care, Coffee Hour, Congregational Fellowship, Dinner at Noon, Flower Delivery and Gifts, each of which is chaired or co-chaired by deacons and which function as follows:

### **Congregational Care**

Deacons order, organize and maintain booklets, which are displayed outside the sanctuary and are available free of charge to church members and visitors. Often the deacons deliver one of the selections to members receiving flowers after the service on Sunday. The booklets deal with a variety of topics, such as illness, grief and divorce. Deacons maintain the various supplies for the flower room, and as needed, deacons provide (or solicit volunteers from the congregation at large) transportation for parishioners to and from medical appointments. They also assist with grocery shopping when needed.

### **Coffee Hour**

Deacons purchase and serve refreshments in the Assembly Room following the ten o'clock worship each Sunday throughout the school year. They also offer fellowship during this time to new members, visitors and anyone who would welcome conversation.

### **Congregational Fellowship**

Deacons are responsible for the following congregation-wide events each year: two New Member Desserts, the Summer Brunch, the Fall Festival, the Christmas Tree Lighting and other ad hoc events that may arise.

### **Dinner at Noon**

This program is sponsored by Helping Hands for the Homeless and Hungry of Westchester and executed by several local houses of worship. Dinner-at-noon is held at the Carver Center in Port Chester each Saturday for the noon meal and is attended by approximately 40-50 people. RPC serves the meal on a rotating basis, about every sixth Saturday, except in the summer. The Deacons in charge of Dinner-at-noon receive main entrées and sides for 2-3 of the events from the Hilton or Renaissance, and they solicit volunteers from the RPC to contribute food items and/or help serve the meal.

### **Flower Delivery**

Each week, deacons arrange and deliver chancel flowers to members of the congregation who are homebound, hospitalized or who have suffered a recent loss, as well as to parishioners who are celebrating a joyful event, such as a birth. In the latter case, a white rose is delivered to the family. With their deliveries, the deacons include the weekly bulletin as well as a special card and, occasionally, a Care Notes insertion. In addition, they deliver Easter lilies and Christmas poinsettias to an expanded list of parishioners.

### **Gifts**

Deacons purchase and deliver gifts to commemorate special occasions, such as baptisms and confirmation. The deacons also send out care packages to new college freshman in time for their exams first semester. This committee is also responsible for printing and distributing Easter cards for all deacons to mail to their parish members.

### **Name Tag Sundays**

Name Tag Sundays gives congregants the opportunity to "put names with faces" on the first Sunday of every month.

The Board of Deacons also maintains representation on the following RPC committees: Christian Education, Mission and Outreach, Membership, Worship and Music, Stewardship, Officer Nominating and the Imagine Initiative Steering Committee. In addition, a deacon consistently serves on the Rye Presbyterian Nursery School Board.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kingsley Rooney, President

## **STEPHEN MINISTRY 2019**

*“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ”*

RPC has been a Stephen Ministry church since 2004. Since that time, 95 Stephen Ministers and 25 Stephen leaders have been trained and over 100 care receiver/Stephen Minister matches have been made. Care receivers have come from both within our congregation and from the community. The types of issues these care receivers are dealing with include: bereavement, loss associated with aging, family stress, illness, chronic health issues, job loss and a variety of other challenging life situations.

In January, 18 new Stephen Ministers were commissioned having completed the Caring Connections course the previous fall. Over the course of 2019 there have been 16 active Stephen Ministers providing care to care receivers. Six of these relationships were matched in 2019. Three relationships came to a natural close. Three Stephen Minister previously trained came out of retirement to return to the program in 2019.

The Stephen Ministers met each month for peer group Supervision. In conjunction with these meetings there were eight Continuing Education sessions. In February Dr. Miller did a refresher course on confidentiality. In March Stephen Leader Tav Rogers did a class on preparing for the first caring visit and in October a session on closure. Rev. Love did a session on Myers-Briggs personality test in April. Speakers from the Center for Hope & Renewal came and did a session on divorce in May and on depression in December. Dr. Miller did a session on forgiveness in September. Stephen Leaders Carol Love and Bridget Davis conducted a team building exercise for the Stephen Ministers in November.

During the year there were changes in the Stephen Leader team. Patti Adimari returned to the team replacing retiring Stephen Leader Tav Rogers as referrals coordinator. Bridget Davis also came out of retirement to rejoin the team and coordinate Supervision. Carolyn Russell and Elizabeth Lukes began attending Leadership team meeting in the fall in anticipation of their attending Stephen Leader training early in 2020.

The current Stephen Leader team of Patti Adimari, Carol Love, Bridget Davis, Jerralee Ernst, Alison Wise and Jan Kelsey together with soon-to-be trained Leaders Carolyn Russell and Elizabeth Lukes will continue to guide the program in 2020.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Kelsey

## **FRIENDLY VISITORS 2019**

In 2019, our Friendly Visitor program had a busy year providing visits to parishioners and residents of the Port Chester Nursing Home and The Osborn. We have recently created a new relationship with the Volunteer Department of the Osborn. They suggest residents who have indicated that they would like the company of a Friendly Visitor and we match them with one of our volunteers. Three new Friendly Visitors were recently matched and are now visiting residents on a weekly basis.

We are currently visiting 9 people and have 9 active volunteers. We provide companionship, conversation and friendship for those not able to get out into the community as much as they would like.

Friendly Visitors are also invited to attend the continuing education sessions offered by the Stephen Ministry Program. Our bi-monthly support meetings provide a forum for sharing, questions and advice. Our long term goal is to help the church community view caring as a natural response to Christ’s call to love one another.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jerralee Ernst

## **RYE PRESBYTERIAN NURSERY SCHOOL 2019-2020**

Margaret Sculti and Kristin Kumar began their fourth year as Co-Directors of RPNS. As Co-Directors, they continue to work collaboratively and support each other in all capacities of the job. They have delineated where each of them will focus their time and energies as Directors. Both of them share the responsibilities of parent support, faculty and staff, and curriculum development. Kristin heads up registration and admissions. Kristin also handles marketing, technology, and finances. Margaret is the head of the parent organization and is the primary contact for all fundraising and volunteer opportunities. Margaret is also the leader of special education, working with children, parents, and teachers to support different needs. She is the main liaison between RPNS and Rye Presbyterian Church.

As Rye Presbyterian Nursery School celebrates its 61st year with young children and their families, we continue to see ourselves as a community of learners. We have always believed in young children as competent individuals, filled with rich ideas and insight. We now enroll 293 children, ages 2-5 in our ten classrooms. Our staff includes two co-directors, a studio teacher, a business manager, an administrative assistant/nurse, 20 teachers, a part-time psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist. One of our teachers runs music and movement class with the children, and we have a part-time physical education teacher.

As a progressive preschool inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy, we provide a play-based, half-day program. As we listen to children's ideas, we build our curriculum. We work collaboratively with children to create long-term projects and investigations around their ideas, delving deeper into what interests the children. We integrate our goals for each child into our studies, so every child is nurtured, supported, and challenged. We offer two, three, four, and five day classes, as well as the possibility of lengthening your child's day through various extended day options. To prepare our students for elementary school, we integrate goals from the New York State common core curriculum. We have learning goals for each age group. Our goal is to nurture each young child's natural sense of curiosity and creativity. We help them develop the critical thinking skills necessary to become independent and enthusiastic lifelong learners.

The community of families at RPNS is what makes it such a special place. Bringing the parents and children together for school-wide events allows them to create life-long memories. In 2019, RPNS hosted its first ever Spaghetti Dinner and Bingo Night! Families were greeted by the delicious smell of Mrs. Sculti's homemade Italian cooking and the sound of music from a live accordion player. After enjoying a tasty meal, Bobby Tisdale (RPNS dad and professional Bingo Caller) led several rounds of alphabet/animal bingo. Bingo markers in hand, the children had a great time playing the game and winning prizes! A fun evening was had by all, and we plan to continue this new tradition in 2020.

Our Fives class participated in an incredible study in 2019. The class was fascinated by the architecture of the different bridges from around the world and began to research the different types, locations, and materials used to create them. Throughout this investigation, the class pinpointed some favorite and familiar bridges. Deep discussions took place as the children researched and documented the composition of several kinds of bridges. The most familiar bridge in the class was the suspension bridge, since lots of children had traveled on one before. The class continued to study suspension bridges, and the teachers projected images of both the Brooklyn Bridge and the new Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge over the block area. The children came to class excited to see these images projected on the wall and wanted to build right away. They really took the time to look at the images and they noticed many details. Many of the Fives recognized the arch shapes on the Brooklyn Bridge. The class compared them to the very straight lines of the Governor Mario Cuomo Bridge. The students were very deliberate when picking shapes for their bridges, many finding the arches they needed to replicate the image projected overhead. The Fives also spoke about the wires or cables that both bridges had in common. Finally, the children noticed the different materials used to build each bridge. The Brooklyn Bridge was built with lots of bricks. The Governor Mario Cuomo Bridge used metal and steel.

With the interest in full swing, a class trip took place to the Brooklyn Bridge on a Thursday morning in May. The class was split into two groups and they were met by tour guides on the Brooklyn side of the bridge. This bridge trip exemplified the power of child-centered learning. It was so amazing to see the faces of the children as they approached and stepped onto the Brooklyn Bridge. It will be a moment in curriculum that the students will always cherish!

The Nursery School Advisory Board and is made up of 14 dedicated individuals, four of whom are church members.

Elizabeth Feeney-Garrett is our Trustee Representative, Katy Ridley represents the Session and Nicholas Smith is our Deacon Representative. Katie Schmitz, our Personnel Chair, further represents the church. The remainder of the board includes Board Chair, Sheilagh DePeter, Michael Colagiovanni, Vinod Chandiramani, Michael Mormile, Andrew Layng, Alexis Scahill, Jennifer Passaretti, Jane Waluch, and Vicki Whatley. The direction, vision and continued support of all of our Board's members has enabled us to provide the best possible preschool education for our little ones and is greatly appreciated by all of the staff and parents.

The Nursery School derives income solely from tuition and each year it contributes a portion to RPC's Operating Fund. This year's \$160,000 contribution is calculated by the Trustees and Board to cover all of the RPNS expenses (heat, electricity, insurance, some custodial services, supplies, and grounds maintenance, etc.) as well as an additional contribution to the RPC Endowment. We are indebted to the congregants of RPC for their support, vision, participation on our governing board, the beautiful facility that we enjoy daily and their annual support of our scholarship program. This year we awarded more than \$21,000 in partial and full scholarships to 10 children. This was made possible by the efforts of the RPC Women's Association, our Parent Committee, friends, and staff. Upon Cheryl Flood's retirement the Eric Wesley Flood Memorial Scholarship Fund, that was established in 1995, was renamed the Flood Family Fund. Scholarships are also available from the Sally M. Davidson Fund, which was established in 1996 for the purpose of supporting children of Rye Presbyterian Church members who are attending the school.

The focus of the Board and the RPNS Co-Directors has been on continuing the long-standing tradition of excellence that the school has had in serving children and their families during these essential early childhood years. The growing collaboration with RPC helps RPNS flourish year after year. The Board of Directors and the RPNS faculty are looking forward to many years to come as part of such a welcoming community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristin Kumar and Margaret Sculti



## WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION 2019

The Women's Association had another healthy and productive year--providing meaningful fellowship and mission opportunities to the women of RPC and our community at large.

Our main focus remains the Thrift Shop, which for the fifth year in a row posted financial gains. In June we were able to donate \$80,000 to 19 local nonprofits--a very healthy increase over last year's receipts. Contributing to this success was an increased number of thrift shop volunteers as well as increased participation amongst our committed base of volunteers. We also continue to increase our presence on social media and in the Rye community.

In addition to the fellowship provided by the thrift shop, the Women's Association hosted ladies' nights out at various times during the year. One such event was a jewelry box "detox" and shopping event hosted by Sally Tobin. Another was a dinner at Tandori, complete with a henna artist. All women of the church are invited to attend and new ideas are always welcome.

Lastly, each year the Women's Association recognizes the contributions of invaluable volunteers with the Joan Kellogg service award. This year's recipients were Nancy Bassett, Ann Cassata, and Cindy Kuster.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Gim, Women's Association Coordinator

Suzanne Davies, Thrift Shop Chair

### RPC Women's Association

#### Balance Sheet

as of December 31, 2019

Assets	Checking Account	\$52,284.75
Liabilities		\$ -
Equity		\$52,284.75

### Income and Expense Report

1/1/19 to 12/31/19

Income	Membership Contributions	\$225.00
	Thrift Shop Receipts	\$79,773.25
	RPC Fellowship Income	\$ -
	Total Income	\$79,998.25
Expenses	Administration	\$ -
	Benevolences and Grants	\$(80,000.00)
	RPC Fellowship	\$ -
	Thrift Shop	\$(867.19)
	Total Expenses	\$(80,867.19)
	Total 2019 Income less Expenses	<u>\$(868.94)</u>

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2019

As business managers of the church operations and finances, the Board of Trustees had a full agenda in 2019. While much has been done to improve the working space and aesthetics of the church over the last several years, 2019 was more modest in terms of new capital outlays and renovations. The major Buildings and Grounds projects this year included the expansion of the parking lot by Milton Road, new telephone systems, refurbishment of several external doors, and routine maintenance of the three manses. The finances of the church continue to be strong and we ended the year with a small operating surplus.

Heading into 2020, the Board strives to maintain an appropriate balance between fiscal discipline while also providing appropriate funding for important new programs and mission projects.

### **Financial Overview**

The 2019 budget called for revenues and expenditures of \$1,690,192 which represented a modest increase from 2018. Similar to the prior year, we achieved a small operating surplus of \$5K largely due to lower than expected spending in several areas. Our actual revenue came in \$68K less than we budgeted, but expenses were also lower than projected by \$73K. There were a few areas that contributed to substantial savings including reduced utility costs, unspent allowances for various committees, and lower than expected administrative costs.

With most of the original Imagine objectives completed, the Board continues to contemplate the best use of the outstanding funds (approximately \$430K). The intent is to work with Session and use the remaining balance to support programs and capital projects in the spirit of the Imagine campaign.

Each year the Trustees withdraw up to 5% from the general endowment to support the capital budget. Because the Imagine campaign addressed a number of important building projects, the capital needs for the church have been minimal this past year resulting in a capital surplus of approximately \$180K. These funds will remain available for capital projects and be directed as needed to address our beautiful church facility.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

In 2019, the Buildings and Grounds committee did a commendable job of closing out several Imagine projects, completing much needed infrastructure work, and overseeing on-going maintenance. As one of the more time intensive committees, RPC is fortunate to have a strong slate of members headed up by Bob Zahm.

With Imagine drawing to close, the committee addressed two large and substantial projects. Although not part of the original Imagine vision, the addition of an elevator next to Jason Charneski's office now provides expanded access to the church offices on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. In addition, the church completed its purchase of a third manse which is conveniently located in Rye and serves periodically as a gathering place for our teenage youth members.

The most visible infrastructure work was the paving and addition of 11 parking spaces adjacent to Milton Road. In addition, work continues to refurbish a number of the external, wooden doors which will enhance overall building security and visual aesthetics. Less conspicuous projects included upgrading the church's computer servers and installing new voice-over-IP telephone systems. On-going maintenance projects included painting of the Love manse, addressing an unexpected issue with the boilers, and investigating water issues below the Assembly Room.

For 2020, the largest expected capital budget item is to address the chapel organ that is over 60 years old and needs major repairs. There is also a proposal to replace the organ which may be a better long-term option. Otherwise, we do not anticipate additional major capital expenditures, but would like to be prepared. To that end, the church is hiring Parish Property Management to conduct a thorough facilities condition assessment which will cover the entire church property and the three manses.

## **2020 Budget**

As the church has completed its transition post the Imagine initiative, the operating budget has largely stabilized and only represents a 1.4% increase versus 2019. The increase in spending mostly reflects non-discretionary items including higher cost-of-living adjustments, staff benefits, and insurance costs to cover the third manse and solar panels.

Despite a shortfall in revenues last year, the Trustees and the Budget committee felt that the church could sustain its projected spending for 2020 given the increase in pledging this year and a slight increase in projected occupancy revenue. In past years, the church has consistently underspent its projected expenses leading to budget surpluses. As a result, the Board believes that the church can stretch to meet its primary mission goals and to serve the needs of those in the community. It is worth noting that the church has a significant surplus operating account that may be used in the event there is a budget shortfall.

## **Investment Performance**

The RPC endowment had a strong year of performance as the broader equity and fixed income markets recovered from a tough year in 2018. The Investment Committee, chaired by Andy Parks, reported the endowment fund was up 17.3%, bringing the year-end balance to \$5,070,364. Not only was the endowment bolstered by strong returns, but the fund also increased by \$230K (included in total above) as it received a transfer of funds from the Imagine initiative.

Financial markets produced strong returns across almost all asset types in 2019. Large caps were up +31.4%, the Russell 2000 returned +25.5%, and high yield bonds produced +14.3%. Given the endowments conservative positioning, our investment returns were in-line with expectations. Our portfolio currently maintains a defensive posture with 49% of assets allocated to equities, 43% to bonds, and 8% to cash. We continue to invest in a selection of Vanguard equity and fixed income ETFs that will provide us with diversified exposure while also minimizing fees and transaction costs.

## **Final Thoughts**

Looking forward to 2020, we are blessed to be in a strong financial position with very few large capital projects on the horizon. As always, the Board will maintain its focus and vigilance on the financial health of RPC and continue to maintain/upgrade our beautiful facilities. Finally, I would like to thank our generous church members for their continued financial support and dedication.

The Trustees are honored and blessed to serve during this exciting time in the life of the church.

Respectfully submitted,  
Scott Snell, President

## TREASURER'S REPORT

### Rye Presbyterian Church Operating Fund 2019 Actual / 2019 Budget

	2019 Budget	2019 Actual (Unaudited)	2019 Actual vs. 2019 Budget		2020 Budget	2019 Budget vs. 2020 Budget	
<b>INCOME:</b>							
Contributions	\$ 1,473,442	\$ 1,403,175	\$ (70,267)	-4.8%	\$ 1,491,310	\$ 17,868	1.2%
Occupancy Income/Bequests	\$ 216,750	\$ 218,897	\$ 2,147	1.0%	\$ 223,125	\$ 6,375	2.9%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 1,690,192</b>	<b>\$ 1,622,072</b>	<b>\$ (68,120)</b>	<b>-4.0%</b>	<b>\$ 1,714,435</b>	<b>\$ 24,243</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>							
Pastoral	\$ 470,676	\$ 457,426	\$ 13,250	2.8%	\$ 481,000	\$ 10,324	2.2%
New Initiatives	\$ 4,000	\$ (1,466)	\$ 5,466	136.7%	\$ 4,000	\$ -	0.0%
Christian Education	\$ 28,125	\$ 24,584	\$ 3,541	12.6%	\$ 28,012	\$ (113)	-0.4%
Congregational Life	\$ 17,300	\$ 9,545	\$ 7,755	44.8%	\$ 17,300	\$ -	0.0%
Mission & Outreach	\$ 187,164	\$ 187,164	\$ -	0.0%	\$ 187,905	\$ 741	0.4%
Worship & Music	\$ 206,790	\$ 208,975	\$ (2,185)	-1.1%	\$ 213,614	\$ 6,824	3.3%
Buildings & Grounds	\$ 300,070	\$ 274,788	\$ 25,282	8.4%	\$ 291,257	\$ (8,813)	-2.9%
Administrative	\$ 375,605	\$ 360,433	\$ 15,172	4.0%	\$ 385,460	\$ 9,855	2.6%
Insurance	\$ 80,575	\$ 78,198	\$ 2,377	3.0%	\$ 86,000	\$ 5,425	6.7%
Other	\$ 19,887	\$ 17,270	\$ 2,617	13.2%	\$ 19,887	\$ -	0.0%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,690,192</b>	<b>\$ 1,616,917</b>	<b>\$ 73,275</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>\$ 1,714,435</b>	<b>\$ 24,243</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(SHORTFALL)</b>							
	\$ -	\$ 5,155	\$ 5,155		\$ -	\$ -	

Respectfully Submitted,  
Charles Hildner, Treasurer

## RPC COMBINED OUTREACH GIVING 2019

### SOURCES

Mission & Outreach Funding	\$91,897
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$26,671
Women's Association Thrift Shop	\$80,000
Church Budget for denominational support	\$42,000
Special Offerings	\$21,328
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$261,896</b>

### LOCAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A House on Beekman	\$9,000
Mission & Outreach Committee \$7,000	
Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$2,000	
Bread of Life	\$5,500
Women's Association \$5000	
Joan Kellogg Award \$500	
Bridge Fund of Westchester	\$5,500
Women's Association \$5,000	
Joan Kellogg Award \$500	
Caritas of Port Chester	\$13,120
Mission and Outreach Committee \$7,000	
November Food drive \$2,120	
Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$4,000	
Carver Center	\$10,500
Women's Association \$6,500	
Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$4,000	
Community Resource Center	\$3,143
Women's Association \$2,500	
Peace and Global Witness offering \$643	
El Centro Hispano – White Plains	\$1,500
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	
Feeding Westchester	\$3,786
Mission & Outreach Committee \$3,000	
Peace and Global Witness offering \$786	
Friends of Karen	\$4,000
Women's Association	
Furniture Sharehouse	\$3,000
Women's Association	
Helping Hands for the Homeless and Hungry	\$7,500
Mission & Outreach Committee \$5,500	
Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$2,000	
Lifting Up Westchester	\$5,000
Women's Association	
Local individuals in need	\$9,046
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	
My Sister's Place	\$6,000
Women's Association	
Pet Rescue of Larchmont	\$70
Sunday School offering	
Rye Women's Interfaith Committee	\$250
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Sharing Shelf of Port Chester	\$4,500
<i>Women's Association \$3,500</i>	
<i>Joan Kellogg Award \$1,000</i>	

**EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH**

Children's Center for Learning	\$5,000
Women's Association	
Rye Presbyterian Nursery School Scholarship Fund	\$4,500
Women's Association	
Theological Education Fund	\$1,500
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Ward Summer Institute	\$5,800
Mission & Outreach Committee \$5,000	
Pentecost offering \$800	

**INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH**

Rise Against Hunger event	\$2,000
Women's Association \$2,000	

**MEDICAL OUTREACH**

Open Door Family Medical Center	\$9,000
Mission & Outreach Committee \$8,000	
Richard Murdoch Award \$1,000	
Soul Ryeders & Friends	\$3,500
Women's Association	

**PRESBYTERIAN OUTREACH**

Christmas Joy Sharing	\$4,019
Christmas offering	
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$6,364
Lent offering	
Presbyterian Pentecost Offering	\$1,200
Spring special offering	
Presbyterian Peace & Global Witness	\$2,359
Fall special offering	
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance – Hurricane Dorian Relief	\$2,967
Special Offering	
Presbyterian Women of Hudson River Presbytery	\$1,000
Women's Association	
Presbytery of Hudson River, Synod and General Assembly	\$42,000
Mission Support	

**PRISON MINISTRY OUTREACH**

Coming Home Program	\$17,285
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Exodus Transitional Community	\$5,000
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Fishkill Toy Drive	\$500
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Hudson Link for Higher Education	\$5,000
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Prison Ministry Concert	\$862
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Sing Sing Certificate in Ministry Program – Rising Hope	\$5,000
Mission & Outreach Committee	
Sing Sing Project of New York Theological Seminary	\$5,000
Mission & Outreach Committee	

Youth Shelter of Westchester	\$7,500
Women's Association \$6,500	
Joan Kellogg Award \$1,000	

**SELF-DEVELOPMENT OUTREACH**

Hope House	\$8,125
Mission & Outreach Committee \$5,000	
Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$3,125	

SPRYE	\$4,000
Mission & Outreach Committee \$3,000	
Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$1,000	

**YOUTH OUTREACH**

5 Steps to Five	\$4,500
Women's Association	

Kid's Space of Rye	\$2,500
Women's Association	

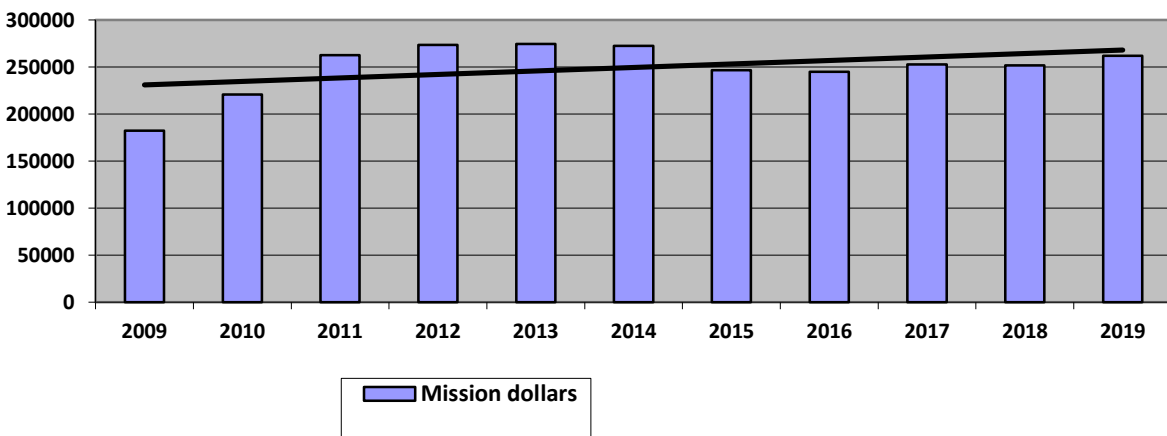
RPC Youth Mission trip	\$4,000
Mission & Outreach Committee \$2,000	
Women's Association \$2,000	

Rye Nature Center	\$1,500
Women's Association	

Rye Recreation – Summer camp scholarship	\$3,500
Women's Association	

Rye Youth Council	\$5,000
Mission & Outreach Committee \$4,000	
Richard Murdoch Award \$1,000	

2019 Total: \$261,896



## CLERGY TERMS OF CALL 2020

### Co-Pastor, Reverend Dr. John Miller

Compensation :

Cash Salary	\$	94,735
Housing Allowance	\$	10,000
Benefits and Reimbursements :		
Medical (including deductible)	\$	34,255
Pension	\$	15,371
Dental, Life Insurance, Death & Disability	\$	3,367
Auto Expense	\$	2,000
Study Leave and Book Allowance	\$	1,750
Social Security Allowance	\$	10,565
Fellowship Allowance	\$	1,000
	\$	<u>173,043</u>

Vacation : 5 weeks

Study Leave: 2 weeks

### Co-Pastor, Reverend Daniel H. Love

Compensation :

Cash Salary	\$	94,735
Housing Allowance	\$	10,000
Benefits and Reimbursements :		
Medical (including deductible)	\$	34,255
Pension	\$	15,371
Dental, Life Insurance, Death & Disability	\$	4,170
Auto Expense	\$	2,000
Study Leave and Book Allowance	\$	1,750
Social Security Allowance	\$	10,565
Fellowship Allowance	\$	1,000
	\$	<u>173,846</u>

Vacation : 5 weeks

Study leave: 2 weeks



## CLERGY TERMS OF CALL 2020

### Associate Pastor, Reverend Jean-Paul Christian Marshall

Compensation :

Cash Salary	\$	47,389
Housing Allowance	\$	10,000
Benefits and Reimbursements :		
Medical (including deductible)	\$	23,853
Pension	\$	9,063
Dental, Life Insurance, Death & Disability	\$	2,070
Auto Expense	\$	2,000
Study Leave and Book Allowance	\$	1,750
Social Security Allowance	\$	6,303
Fellowship Allowance	\$	1,000
	<u>\$</u>	<u>103,428</u>

Vacation : 5 weeks

Study Leave: 2 weeks