



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Towson Presbyterian Church

Inclusive || Curious || Compassionate || Courageous

TOWSONPRES.ORG || 410-823-6500 || 400 W. CHESAPEAKE AVE. TOWSON, MD 21204

A Letter From Your Pastors

Thank you, Towson Presbyterian Church.

It's a gift to be the pastors of such a special community of faith! As many know, it's not particularly easy to be the Church today. TPC's values alone – inclusion, curiosity, compassion, courage – should regularly push us all to new, challenging growing edges that deepen our discipleship. More than that, we believe church scholars are correct when they suggest the Church has changed more in the past 10 years than it has in the previous 100. But you, TPC, continually inspire us with the ways you adapt and grow amid your pursuit of God's kingdom.

The following pages offer rich testimony to this! Please spend time on each page savoring the fruits of your ministries in 2023 amid both the in-person and virtual campuses, giving thanks for all who served, shared, and made such ministry possible.

Among the fruits that are a bit harder to see has been the work done this past year to expand the foundation beneath our mission and outreach ministries. Soon, leadership will call a new Mission Coordinator to help facilitate expanding mission ministries, as leadership also anticipates investing more treasure and resources in both local and international outreach.

Signs of quantitative growth are also notable. In 2023, TPC was blessed to welcome 25 new members. The average weekly worship attendance increased to 253 (149 avg. in-person campus; 104 avg. virtual campus). And you not only met but exceeded leadership's stewardship (financial giving) goals for the year. Wow!!! All of this points to the depth of your discipleship and the health of this community of faith.

Such health was on full display when leadership learned of a former member's allegations of abuse by a former associate pastor. As painful and difficult as this was, we are proud of the way Session led, and how the congregation responded to such news. Indeed, we are a healthier church for honestly grappling with elements of the past, while also looking with great hope at the promise of our community's tomorrows.

Rob is exceedingly grateful for the support he received from both leadership and the congregation during his medical leave this past fall. While it is never easy when a head-of-staff is out for any length of time, TPC's tremendous staff and leadership stepped in and stepped up in inspiring ways.

For all of this and so much more, it bears repeating. Thank you, TPC! We are grateful to be your pastors, to share in ministry with such faithful disciples while working alongside a wonderful staff team! We enthusiastically look forward to 2024, eager to see where, to whom, and to what God is calling us next. Whatever it is, we are more than confident that this community will adapt, grow, and follow the Spirit into fruitful tomorrows.

Peace,

Rob Carter & Joel Strom

INCLUSIVE

The **Children, Youth, and Family Committee** (chaired by Karen Morris) devoted their year to including parents and our littlest congregants. Massanetta Springs, Montreat Youth Conference, Camp BeeTree, the Lent and Advent Festivals, Youth Sunday, and Trunk or Treat—which brought in 100+ people—were all highlights. We also had the joy of Confirming 12 students in the spring! As we joined the 4th Soil Parenting Project, CYFM's goal for 2024 is to help encourage and equip parents for faith formation at home.

The **Communications Committee** (chaired by Chris Walbert) focused on improving the experience of both in-person and virtual visitors by relaunching the building signage project and growing our online presence. In 2023, we had more than 18,000 visitors to our website (a growth rate of over 110% from last year), and our social media following has grown to over 1,200 across Facebook and Instagram.

Our **Deacons Team** (led by Pat Keller and Jim Kuhlman) welcomed worshippers to over 60+ services this year, consistently working behind-the-scenes to help Sunday worship thrive — and they held our annual Homecoming Potluck, serving 150+ attendees.



Throughout 2023, all kinds of small groups met to include people of every age. Mary, Martha, and Me, our monthly small group gathering for mature, single-again women, celebrated their 4th anniversary, and 50+ women attended our largest Women's Group of the year. Many joined the Hiking Group and the Diners Club, and the Men's Breakfast at the Towson Diner and Men's Group continued in their fellowship. We even included 15 of our beloved furry friends at Blessing of the Pets in October!

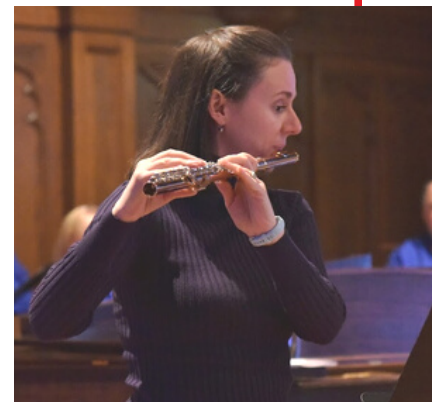


CURIOUS



The **Property Committee** (chaired by Jessica Krueger) transformed our courtyard by improving our storm water management, replacing aging infrastructure, and planting over 800 native plants, with a \$74k grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. The ongoing management of not only our building and grounds in Towson, but also of BeeTree Preserve and Cemetery, has required our curiosity and innovation as we learn how to take a faith-informed approach to stewardship of our property.

Continued curiosity marked 2023 as over 58 participants and 10 facilitators asked questions in our church-wide book study of Rev. Michael Curry's *Love is the Way*. We pondered *Poetry and the Bible* with David Jackson, reflected throughout the year on our "Epiphany Star Words," studied the Bible with Rev. Harold Cahill, and took a closer look at Handel's *Messiah* with Stephen Harouff, all thanks to the **Adult Spiritual Formation Committee** (chaired by Patty Rath and now Dave Morris).



The **Worship, Music, and Arts Committee** (chaired by Lorene LaBerge) cultivated our curiosity and creativity in worship at our Hymn Sing Sunday and Advent Cantata. The Needlepoint Stitchers added beauty with handmade ornaments and a nativity set for our sanctuary, and the Prayer Shawl Knitters presented over 15 baptismal towels.



COMPASSIONATE

Sunday Community Lunch, an intergenerational effort of our **Hunger Action Team** and made possible by over 100 volunteers (all-ages), served an average of 20 guests per week, most of whom struggle with food insecurity. We offered 52 delicious and lovingly-prepared lunches in Thompson Hall this year, joyfully joining our guests at the tables every time.

The **Mission and Outreach Committee** (chaired by Tim Burkett) held our Alternative Gift Market, collecting donations for charitable organizations that we all know and love. With the **Peacemaking Action Team**, our volunteers helped the Ahadis (an Afghan refugee family) with cultural integration, transportation, and tutoring, in addition to financial support.



The **Personnel Committee** (chaired by Lenore Chapman) hired McKenzie Allison to staff in January as our *Director of Communications and Connections* and Barbara Patrick as our *Administrative Assistant*, and provided oversight, support, and compassion, during Rob Carter's medical leave in the fall.

The **Honduras Action Team** returned to Copan in March, partnering with locals to complete construction work, dental care, medical care, physical therapy (a new addition), and community engagement, especially serving single mothers and their children. In 2024, they hope to rebuild the health clinic in Rincon del Buey, with help from the Snyder Fund.



COURAGEOUS

In 2023, we celebrated our 13th year as a certified Earth Care Congregation! In partnership with Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake and One Water Partnership, our **Earth Care Action Team** continued acting as a catalyst for environmental stewardship efforts at TPC through Project Clean Stream, our Earth Care Facebook Group, and the Intergenerational Garden. We harvested over 150 pounds of produce, plus 160 bags of vegetables, and made 56 deliveries of IGG-grown food to ACTC. We even grew flowers that were made into bouquets and given to homebound members!

The **Snyder Fund** allowed us to make an \$8,000 donation to the Malnutrition Clinic and Orphanage in Kampala, Uganda (where the Tobian family served in the summer), and \$25,000 to our Afghan family sponsorship project. \$80,000 was also finalized for the construction of a new health clinic in Honduras (where our team will serve each year).



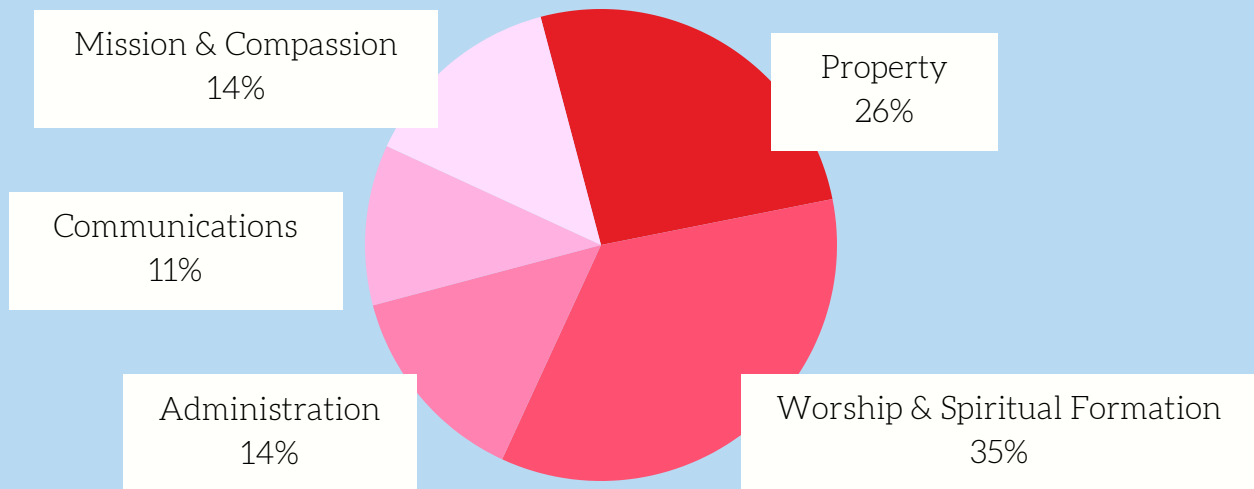
Stepping out in courage is exactly what the **Community Outreach and Engagement Committee** or CORE (chaired by Amber Bounelis) did at the Towson Spring Festival, Fall Festival and Tree Lighting, meeting our neighbors and representing our church at local community events.

STEWARDSHIP SUMMARY

We exceeded the Stewardship Committee's 2023 giving goal by more than \$15,000!

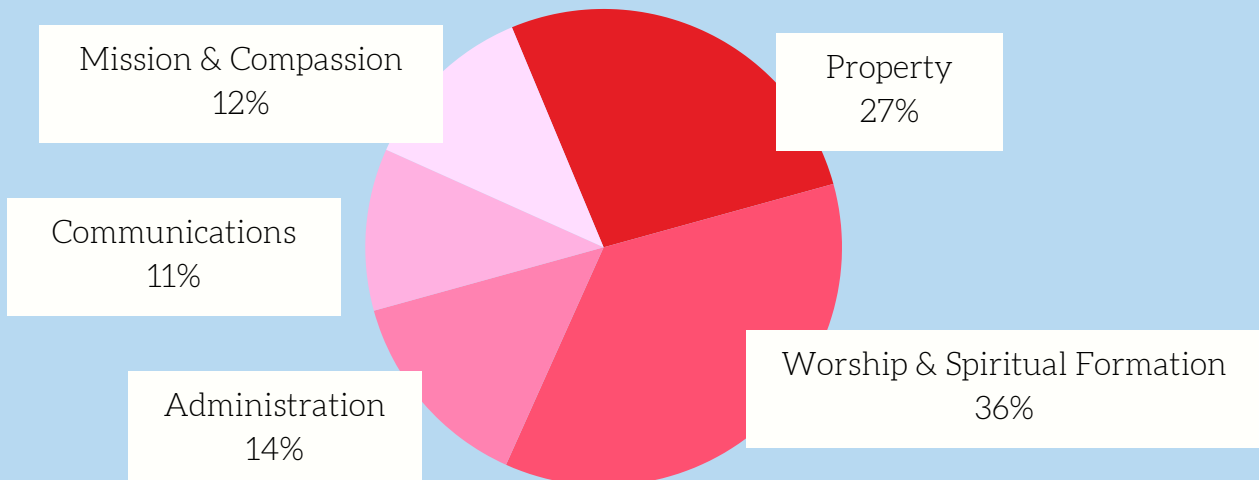
2023 Actual Expenditures

General Fund: \$961,048+



2024 Budget Expenditures

General Fund: \$1,028,354





Towson Presbyterian Church

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Towson Presbyterian Church is an inclusive community of faith growing as disciples of Christ.

TPC is a member of the Covenant Network (striving for a fully inclusive church),

& a PC(USA) Earth Care Congregation.

Staff Team:

Ministers:	All Members of the Church
Senior Pastor:	Rev. Rob Carter
Associate Pastor:	Rev. Joel Strom
Director of Music:	Stephen Harouff
Director of Children, Youth, & Family Ministries:	Jenness Hall
Director of Communications & Connections:	McKenzie Allison
Business Administrator:	Kathryn Bojanowski
Administrative Assistant:	Barbara Patrick
Sexton:	Walter Austin
Parish Associate:	Rev. Mary Gaut
Parish Associate:	Rev. Roger Rice
Parish Associate:	Rev. Harold Cahill

Current Session Members:

Tim Burkett (President), Jessica Krueger (Vice President), Pat Keller (Treasurer), Lenore Chapman (Secretary), Rob Carter (Moderator), Tim Lotz, Craig Miller, Joseph Clark, Patty Rath, Chuck LaBerge, Chris Walbert, Ro Nicolosi.

Deacons:

Pat Keller (Co-Moderator), Jim Kuhlman (Co-Moderator), Jane Barton, Matt Hemm, John Hutton, Kimberly Light, Viraj Mehta, Jill Thomas, Diane Thompson, Carol Whiteford, Ross Bregel, Kristie Burkett, Rob Culp, Karen Drake, Julie Kreif, Judith Rietz, Susan Shockley, Elizabeth Bugg, Ruth Randolph, Karen Morris, Joyce Nuttal, Stephen Swift, Ellen Tully, Bill Sherman.