

2024 Annual Report from FPUPC Mission Committee

Mission Committee Members – Susan Conrad, Rev. Heather Finck, Aimee Heinly, Judy Hunt, Ellen McCutcheon, Carrie McGrath, Julie Mecca, Thomas O’Grady, Mary Ann Russo, Colleen Snavelly, Susan Stuebner, Judy Walters. New members are welcome in 2025! As co-chairs of the Mission committee, Ellen McCutcheon and Colleen Snavelly thank the congregation for its continued support. The committee meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm on Zoom. This report details projects and local and world outreach made possible by the generosity of the congregation.

Appalachian Service Project – ASP participation continued in WV this year from Jul 13th-20th with 10 adults and 9 kids.

ASK Offering – This year the congregation donated over \$12,000 to Heifer International to Feed a Village for the Easter ASK offering. A group of donors matched the Freedom Plains donation, so our donations were doubled! These funds help train farmers to negotiate better prices for their goods and share their expenses so that they can continue to feed their villages.

Brookhaven Christmas Gifts – Aimee Heinly again coordinated the purchase of gift cards for Brookhaven apartment families. Thanks to the generous donations and gift cards from the congregation and a \$2500 allocation from the Discretionary Mission funds, we were able to provide each family with \$150 in gift cards.

Committee Fair – The Mission Committee participated in the fall activities fair.

Crop Walk 2024 - Team Moody (in memory of Ken and Mary Moody) was a contributor to the Dutchess Interfaith Council Crop Walk this year, raising about \$1300. Additionally, individual congregation members donated and participated in the walk.

Dutchess Outreach – The Mission Committee donated money to Dutchess Outreach quarterly to support many programs including the Pantry, Lunch Box and Farm Stand. Thanks to the congregation for donations of cash, non-perishable food items, and time. The pantry serves hundreds of households every month. This year we supported their 50th anniversary gala and several congregation members attended.

Dutchess Outreach Lunch Box Meals – We again provided two Sunday noon take-out meals this year in March and August thanks to cash and dessert donations from the congregation – serving 100-150 at each meal. We are planning to provide meals on March 16th and August 17th in 2025.

Earth Stewards – The committee once again fulfilled requirements to be designated as an Earth Care Congregation for the 6th consecutive year thanks to Ruth Sheet’s careful

documentation, new windows and other improvements. We returned to using glass communion cups to reduce our plastic footprint. We officially named the pollinator garden as "Love The Earth Garden". While we did not add plantings in 2024, most plants made it through the dry summer thanks in part to the watering system installed in 2023. Plans for 2025 include extending the foot path up to the parking lot, now that the stone is available.

Habitat for Humanity – We supported the Habitat for Humanity gala this year to honor Maureen Lashley the director who retired this year. Several congregation members attended.

Homeless Shelter Meals – On the 4th Wednesday of every month through August, we provided a meal to the Homeless shelter or provided funds for the shelter to buy a meal. The Homeless population varied between 120 and 150 residents. We reduced the cost of the meals with the help of congregation members preparing simple recipes. The shelter now contracts with Dutchess Outreach to provide evening meals, so we are determining the best way to help several smaller Hudson River Housing facilities. In October the Deacons provided and served a meal to elderly residents at the Cannon St facility, and the Hahm family provided a meal to veterans at Liberty Station on Clinton St. in November.

Hope on a Mission – Several members of the congregation participated in providing breakfast items on Sat morning November 23rd on S. Clinton St. We used some discretionary funds to buy food. Hot chocolate was popular. We will serve again this year on Sat Jan 25th.

Minutes for Mission – Committee members spoke several times this year to celebrate Black History Month, kick off the toiletry drive and ASK offering, and promote peacemaking. In September Mission members led the congregation in making Origami swans. We now have a bulletin board to highlight our activities.

More Light Presbyterians – Our congregation joined More Light Presbyterians this year to support and welcome the LGBTQIA+ community to participate in the life of our church. We will continue to support the work of this organization with a \$500 annual membership.

Toiletry Drive for Dutchess Outreach and HOAM - We conducted a toiletry drive April 21st through May 5th. We collected over 1000 toiletry items and purchased 350 diapers and more toiletry items with cash that was donated. Thanks to everyone who donated!

Ryan White Missionary Visit – On Thursday May 23rd, Ryan White stopped at Freedom Plains as part of his Northeast tour. He visited 5 congregations in PA and NY, traveling by bike and train to reduce his carbon footprint. We enjoyed a potluck dinner with him after viewing his presentation about his and Alethia's mission work in Europe. They are now back in Berlin.

Friendsgiving – We celebrated Friendsgiving with Shir Chadash on Sunday Nov 17th. We enjoyed hors d'oeuvres thanks to Melissa Haras and congregation members and games led by

Rev White and Rabbi Jacob. Thanks to both congregations for donating over 800 food and household items for Dutchess Outreach.

Presbytery Mission – This past year we allocated funds to support these disaster relief effects and PC(USA) fundraising:

Disaster Relief for Ukraine

Disaster Relief for Texas Wildfires

Disaster Relief for Palestine/Israel

Disaster Relief for Hurricanes Helene and Milton

Peace and Global Witness Offering

Christmas Joy Offering

Dutchess County Interfaith Council – We continue to support this organization of faith groups with semi-annual donations. DCIC runs the annual CROP walk and has had sponsored Interfaith music concerts.

Direct Missionary Support – Our semi-annual donations go to a general Presbytery International Mission Fund, but we earmarked these donations to support Ryan and Alethia White. We also supported Ryan White's travel during his Northeast church mission visits this spring.

Discretionary Mission – We provided monetary support to the following additional local and worldwide organizations and causes in 2024:

World Central Kitchen

Presbyterians for Earth Care

Clearwater Educational Fund

Rural and Migrant Ministry

Bridges To Community

Grace Smith House

Children of Grace

Trinity United Methodist Food Pantry

Holmes Camp and Retreat Center

Black Mountain Presbyterian Church (for Hurricane Helene relief)

Hudson Valley Hospice Foundation

Global Refuge

Arlington Interact Club for their student food backpack program

Respectfully Submitted,

Colleen Snively

Ellen McCutcheon

Mission Committee Co-Chairpersons