

Edgewood Presbyterian Church

2024
Annual Report



Report from Clerk of Session

2024 was an interesting year at Edgewood. This was our first full year nesting at 1st Presbyterian Church in Columbus. Our designated pastor, Connie Happell, retired in May. Susan Gilbert and Pete Sanders-Nesbitt each preached one Sunday a month (Pete preached all 5th Sundays). All other Sundays were covered by nearby pastors and Trained Ruling Elders. We have been so very blessed to have many in our area who are willing to fill our pulpit as we search for a pastor for Edgewood.

Our session voted to seek a pastor who would pastor Edgewood and also pastor the Abbey Fellowship. Edgewood selected a Pastor Nominating Committee, and a committee was also selected from the Abbey board. This combined committee immediately began the process of planning and searching for the person God is preparing to work at Edgewood and the Abby in Columbus, Georgia. The congregation is waiting, both patiently and expectantly to hear good information from our Pastor Nominating Committee.

The people of Edgewood Presbyterian church are a remarkable group. They have made a new place their temporary home, and made many changes to their ways of “doing business”. But Edgewood’s congregation is still dedicated and diligent in their work and worship of Jesus Christ.

The session and congregation voted to reduce the number of elders at Edgewood from nine members to six members in the future.

We began this year with 72 members on our rolls. Five of our members passed away this year. At the end of 2024 we have 66 members on our rolls.

Susan Gilbert

Clerk of Session

Class of 2024

Susan Gilbert

Martha Jane Roark

Karen Wetherell

Class of 2025

Kris Jain

Chris Posey

Amy Spear

Class of 2026

Taylor Mills

Walter Nesbitt

Allen Posey



Visioning and Planning Team

Team Members: Kris Jain (Moderator), Liz Allison, Rebecca Bush, Barry Cosby, Allen Posey, Chris Posey, Amy Spear (tentative members as of 2024 Opportunity Lists)

The Visioning & Planning team was established when Edgewood moved to “The Nest” at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Columbus. This team will eventually develop the future mission of the church, determine pastor leaderships, assist in ministry identification, research potential new church locations, and develop marketing and publicity regarding team activities.

A luncheon was held in February 2024 to gauge congregational concerns and wishes for EPC moving forward. At this time, the congregation made it clear that rest and prayer were needed, as moving from our original campus on the corner of Macon and Edgewood was an emotional and labor-intensive period for the members of our church. A Pastor Nominating Committee was formed during the summer of 2024 in order to locate a pastor to meet the needs of EPC in the new, temporary location. Amy Spear is currently heading up this team which includes members from The Abbey Board so that a joint partnership and ministry can be achieved in determining the roles of a new, fulltime pastor. This team is currently in a “learning phase” in order to understand and identify what both EPC and The Abbey need from a new pastor.

Once the Pastor Nominating Committee completes its work and identifies candidates for the new pastor, interviews will begin to find the right match for this position. Once a new pastor is in place, the Visioning and Planning Committee will take shape and have planning sessions regarding the next moves for EPC - whether staying in “the nest”, moving to a new location – depending on the vision of both the new pastor and the members of the congregation.

Fellowship and Member Care Team

Team Members: Martha Jane Roark (moderator), Lucille DuToit, Sandy Mason, Sheryl Wright

This team prepared meals for congregational members all during the year. Meals were prepared for the families of four members who passed away during the year, and seven meals were sent to the Haugen family when Jeanne was recovering from surgery.

The team planned a retirement lunch for Connie Happel when she retired, and a reception for George and Jeane Haugen was organized, which was attended by both Edgewood and 1st Presbyterian members. In February we hosted a ham biscuit lunch, where concerns and visions for Edgewood were explored. A baby shower for Allison Stone Wright was well attended by Edgewood members.

The monthly Lunch Bunch met each month on the first Thursday at various restaurants in the Columbus area.

The team created new prayer calendars for 2024, which listed all members of the congregation on a day of the month so that the congregation could include them in their prayers. The team encouraged session members to contact the members of their shepherd group.

The card ministry was organized so that shut-ins would receive cards from the church on a monthly basis.

The team prepared goodie bags for shut-ins, which were delivered when Edgewood members went caroling at Christmas time. Poinsettias were also purchased and delivered to our shut-ins at that time.

The Member Care team prepared a new directory of addresses and phone numbers, and made them available to all members.



Monthly Lunch Bunch Group

Worship Team

Team members: Susan Gilbert, Sue Ellen Williams, Patricia Banks, Lucille DuToit, Pete Sanders-Nesbitt, Karen Wetherell.

The worship team worked hard this year to make our worship special and meaningful each Sunday morning.

Our designated pastor, Connie Happell retired in May of this year. The Worship team joined with the Fellowship team to organize a reception for her retirement. She was honored with gifts and song and speeches by people who love and respect her.

Edgewood joined with 1st Presbyterian for our Ash Wednesday Service. Aaron Lickliter from 1st Presbyterian brought the message. The service was held in the Chapel.

A short skit was presented on Maundy Thursday. On Easter Sunday, the flower cross from Macon Road was placed outside the Chapel. Members brought their flowers and took their Easter pictures at the cross.

Deb Tregaskas, our Presbytery executive, met with the session to determine ways that the pastor's duties could be taken care of by congregation members after Connie's departure. Liz Allison was asked, and consented to take care of pastoral care of members who are sick and need help. Ellen Posey agreed to work in the church office when needed to help with office duties. Susan Gilbert and Pete Sanders-Nesbitt will continue to each preach one Sunday every month. The Worship team took on the responsibility of securing pulpit supply for the other two Sundays each month.

Edgewood's pulpit was filled with many capable preachers in 2024. The congregation heard many meaningful and spirit filled messages this year. Our pulpit was filled by: Deb Tregaskas, Matthew Cowell, Mark Montgomery, Sid Leak, Ron King, H K Johnston, Patti Kauffman, Linda Gunn, Aaron Lickliter and Walter Nesbitt. We are grateful to these people for being in our pulpit all during 2024.

We had one baptism; Alexandria Reynolds on May 19. Connie Happell and Susan Gilbert conducted the baptism.

The 1st Presbyterian Church of Phenix City, Alabama was admitted into Flint River Presbytery this year. There was a special worship service in October to welcome them to our Presbytery. The congregations of 1st Presbyterian, Columbus, Edgewood, and 1st Presbyterian, Phenix City met together for worship in the sanctuary of 1st Presbyterian, Columbus. The bell choirs from 1st Presbyterian, Columbus and Edgewood played two bell anthems together in the service.

The Worship Team organized a group to go Christmas caroling in December. Eight people went to the shut-ins of the congregation and sang Christmas carols. We also took goody

bags and poinsettias, which were prepared by the Fellowship Team. After caroling, the group went to the home of Patricia Banks for apple cider and cookies.

Five of Edgewood's congregants passed away in 2024: Bob Ligon, Ted Ford, Bonnie Powell, Mildred Hunter and Kathy Mewbourne. Manuel Mason and Rita Irons, friends of the congregation also passed away this year. They were remembered on All Saints Day with the ringing of a bell and flowers.

The Choir, directed by Sue Ellen Williams, presented a program of music during the worship service on December 15. The choir sang, the hand bells rang, the flute and guitar were played, and Eumee Park played the piano and organ for the program. Surri Streeter, one of our children, played the part of Mary, and brought baby Jesus to the manger during the program. The worship service of music was beautiful and meaningful.

The chapel was decorated for Advent and Christmas. The Christmas Eve service was meaningful, with Sue Ellen and Pete singing a duet and the choir singing an anthem. Susan Gilbert and Pete Sanders-Nesbitt shared the presentation of the message

Edgewood is fortunate and blessed to have a wonderful group of people on our staff. JoAnna Williams keeps the office in order, and keeps the Worship Team running smoothly. She makes sure we have everything on time and in order. Sue Ellen Williams, our Minister of Music, not only sings solos and leads the choir, but she also inspires the choir with her enthusiasm and her love of Jesus Christ, which is evident in all of her ways. Eumee Park, our pianist, plays the most beautiful music all during the worship service. Eumee also sings duets and solos and plays the organ for certain songs. The music program at Edgewood, though a small group, enhances the worship of our congregation every Sunday morning.



Outreach Team

Outreach Team

Team members: Karen Wetherell (Moderator), Lucile DuToit, Lloyd Frey, Susan Gilbert, Larry Mills, Lisa Youmans

The general responsibility of the Outreach Team is to lead in providing opportunity and structure for every member of Edgewood Church to participate in mission, exercising his or her spiritual gifts. This year the team focused on improving communication with the congregation concerning the missions we sponsor as well as evaluating/reviewing Edgewood's current missions to determine whether to continue our support or look for new mission opportunities to replace one or more of the current missions. To this end we met with two individuals who are actively involved in mission work, one in the Columbus Community (Truth Springs Academy & Truth Springs Trade School) and the other in the international community (Specifically Ukraine) through her service on the Outreach Foundation Board. We researched the global missions that we presently support to ensure we understood who they are and what they do. These were all helpful in educating the team. Lisa Youmans wrote EPC Newsletter articles concerning our international missions, in order to keep the congregation informed about our monetary support. Newsletters from the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo (ETSC) were also made available to congregants per request, as the Haugen's newsletters are available by request.

With much joy, the Outreach Team was able to increase EPC's financial support of our international and many local missions this year.

Community Outreach (Rise Against Hunger, Habitat Lunches, Right Now Hurricane Relief, etc.)	4,500.00	Media,
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	1,000.00	
Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo	2,000.00	
Eastern Wind (formally Bihar House Churches)	2,000.00	
Antioch Partners – Haugen Mission Work	4,000.00	

Early in the year, we joined with Flint River Presbytery to build a Habitat For Humanity Home located on R.C. Allen Dr. in East Columbus. Representatives from EPC were there for the groundbreaking, different phases of the construction, and at the dedication of the home. What a blessing to be part of this important mission work.

Special Offerings collected this year included the PCUSA One Great Hour of Sharing (\$586.00) collected on Easter morning and the Christmas Joy Gift Offering (\$270.00) collected on December 22nd.

EPC continues to collect aluminum cans for The Family House of West Georgia, (formerly Ronald McDonald House).

EPC joined with FPC for a covered dish lunch after worship on July 14th to hear an update from George and Jeanne Haugen and how the Lord is using them in their corner of the world.

Mission money was used to support recovery efforts for victims of the hurricanes that hit South Georgia and North Carolina. Monies (\$1500.00 each) were sent to Flint River Presbytery and to Black Mountain Presbyterian Church.

EPC continues its support of The Abbey Fellowship Ministry, (a Presbyterian College ministry), through monetary donations, food pantry donations, and serving meals to the students four times a year. In 2024 meals were served in January, April, October, and November with an average of 100 meals served each time. In November we welcomed members of First Presbyterian Church of Phenix City who desired to be a part of this ministry.

In July EPC joined an effort supported by Flint River Presbytery to collect school items to be donated to New American Pathways in Dekalb, GA. Members contributed a variety of “Back to School” items suggested by the organization. All collected items were delivered to the August Presbytery meeting in Valdosta.

October 6th EPC members participated in packing meals for Rise Against Hunger. The packing took place at First Presbyterian Church, Columbus. We support Rise Against Hunger both monetarily as well as by physically helping with the packing/ packaging of the meals.

In November, members donated gifts and money to “Santa’s Elves” at EPC making Christmas more joyful for four community members.

On the last Sunday of each month the noisy offering is collected to further support the Haugen’s ministry. This year members graciously contributed \$1,395.88.

With gratitude for the support of the congregation, the team members, and the leadership of the Session and Clerk Susan Gilbert, we respectfully submit this report.



Aluminum cans for Family House



EPC helped with FRP Habitat House



Monthly Noisy Offering



Providing lunch for The Abbey

Discipleship Team

Edgewood has one adult Sunday School class which met each Sunday. The curriculum for the class was taken from Right Now Media videos.

The Tuesday morning Bible study studied the book, “Women of the Bible” by Jean E Syswerda. The group ate lunch together and then began their study.

NaEisha Owens, Cynthia Frey and Brianna Evans worked together to make children’s Sunday School meaningful and enjoyable for their students each week.

Children & Young Adults Ministry – NaEisha Owens A Year of Together

In 2024, the Children and Young Adults Ministry focused on the theme of “**Together**” a year filled with faith, fun, and friendship. It was a time to grow in our love for God, celebrate special moments, and build lasting connections within our church family.

Throughout the year, we had many exciting events that brought our children and young adults closer to God and to each other. We celebrated important milestones like graduations, cheering on students as they moved to new chapters in their lives. Baptisms were a beautiful reminder of God’s grace, as children and young adults made the decision to publicly declare their faith.

Easter was a highlight of the year, with a special focus on helping our young adults and children **experience the joy of the resurrection**.

We ended the year with a **Birthday Party for Jesus**, a time for children to come together in celebration of Christ’s birth. Through games, and the telling of the Christmas story, we reflected on the greatest gift of all—Jesus.

Excited for What’s Ahead

As we step into 2025, our focus is on **growing in faith, serving others, and building lasting friendships**. We look forward to seeing children and young adults thrive in their relationship with Jesus while creating meaningful memories in the church community.



Stewardship and Staff Support Teams

Stewardship Team members: Amy Spear

The purpose of the Stewardship Team is to develop financial policies, monitor the operating budget of the church, and conduct the annual stewardship campaign during which members are encouraged to grow in the life of the church by pledging their time, talents and gifts to the mission and work of the church.

Staff Support Team members: Lisa Youmans, Amy Spear

The purpose of the Staff Support Team is to assist in hiring, termination, counseling and support for the staff of the church, and maintaining personnel records as required by law.

Here are tasks and accomplishments for 2024:

- Gus Youmans conducted review of the 2023 church books with the treasurer. Several recommendations were made to adapt the standard operating procedures to our current church size. This was near completion as of the date of this report.
- Robinson, Grimes & Company, CPAs has continued to provide bookkeeping and payroll services to the church and this has been running smoothly.
- The invested proceeds from the sale of the Macon Road property being managed by New Covenant Trust Company are performing quite well.
- The treasurer secured quotes from Bitner-Henry insurance for commercial liability and workers compensation insurance and made a change from Church Mutual. This change will save the church \$1,500 annually in premiums.
- Stewardship season was successful, allowing for a surplus budget for 2025. This prepares us well for the hiring of a new pastor. With that in mind, the session has agreed to continue to pull from investments in accounts at Edward Jones in the amount of \$5,000 per quarter.
- Opportunity lists were gathered up and compiled for the Session teams.
- The staff position of janitor was eliminated in 2024 and First Presbyterian has graciously provided those services to Edgewood since then, as part of our monthly rent.
- The session approved cost-of-living pay increases for each of Edgewood's staff members beginning in 2025.
- Year-end appreciation gifts were distributed to our church staff.



Three-year revenue highlights:

	2023 actual	2024 actual	2025 budget
Pledges	147,428.00	116,409.00	130,238.00
Non-pledges	10,775.00	36,927.00	10,000.00
Loose plate	6,213.00	1,323.00	1,800.00
Dividends/Investment Income	4,643.00	26,193.00	25,800.00
Sunday School	-	-	-
Total	\$ 169,059.00	\$ 180,852.00	\$ 167,838.00

2025 Annual Budget - approved

12/22/24

Accounts	Annual Budget This Year Year
Revenues	
4004 Estimate of Giving	131,438.00
4006 Non-Pledges	10,000.00
4010 Loose Plate	1,800.00
4065 Dividend Income	5,800.00
4066 Investment Income	20,000.00
Total Revenues	169,038.00
Expenses	
5020 Salary - Secretary	12,346.80
5035 Salary - Choir Director	12,402.00
5036 Salary - Pianist	6,360.00
5051 Salary - Youth Director	5,935.92
5100 Payroll Taxes	2,833.92
5101 Insurance - Workers Comp	364.00
5142 Emergency Fund	700.00
5160 Supplies, Paper, Env, Etc	1,200.00
5165 Copier	1,472.76
5167 Computer/Technology Equipment	1,650.00
5170 Postage	500.00
5175 Staff Benevolence Fund	400.00
5180 Professional Fees - Bookkeeping	6,000.00
5185 Pres Mission Exchange Fees	1,560.00
5220 Presbytery Assessment	1,260.00
5310 Community Outreach	1,500.00
5312 Sleep in Heavenly Peace	1,000.00
5320 Abbey Fellowship - Campus Ministry	2,500.00
5328 Egyptian Ministry	1,000.00
5331 Disaster Relief	1,000.00
5332 Antioch Partners-Haugen Iraq Mission	3,000.00
5470 Leadership Training	100.00
5481 Spiritual Development Fund	1,000.00
5550 Church-wide Retreats or Training	500.00
5561 Jesus' Commission Work	1,000.00
5700 Tithe Flint River Pres	16,500.00
5715 Rent Expense - FPC	18,000.00
5716 Storage Unit Fees	7,800.00
5740 Commercial Insurance	1,485.00
5775 Utilities - Phone/Internet	1,600.00
5805 Pulpit Supply	4,500.00
5807 Digital Disciple Ministry Worship	2,000.00
5808 Adult Choir Needs	2,400.00
5810 Adult Bell Choir Needs	200.00
5811 Music Leadership Training	1,000.00
5812 Worship Aids & Supplies	500.00
5815 Special Services	400.00
5820 Maintenance - Piano	500.00
5821 License, Fees & Subscriptions	1,200.00
5929 Kitchen Supply Expense	400.00
5934 Events	1,200.00
6000 Visioning & Planning Exp - Location	500.00
6001 Visioning & Planning Exp - Marketing	500.00
6002 Visioning & Planning Exp - Facility	1,500.00
Total Expenses	129,770.44
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	39,267.57

Digital Discipleship Team

Introduction The Digital Discipleship Ministry (DDM) at Edgewood Presbyterian Church has experienced a fruitful year of service and growth. As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the dedication of our volunteers, the support of our church community, and the blessings that have enabled us to expand and enhance our ministry.

Volunteer Engagement A cornerstone of the DDM's success has been the extraordinary team of volunteers who have committed their time and talents to ensure the smooth operation of our digital and in-person worship experiences. Our soundboard operators, screen technicians, camera operators, and production staff have worked tirelessly behind the scenes, contributing to:

- Seamless audio-visual support during worship services.
- High-quality live streaming of events for those unable to attend in person.
- Engaging social media content that extends the church's message to a broader audience.



Their combined efforts have not only enhanced the worship experience but have also helped us build and sustain connections within and beyond our church community.

Technology Grant This year, we were honored to receive a technology grant from Flint River Presbytery. The grant has been a transformative blessing, enabling us to invest in much-needed equipment for the chapel. This new technology has greatly enhanced our ability to deliver services, offering:

- Improved audio and video quality for live and recorded events.
- Expanded capabilities for hosting special events and productions.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Flint River Presbytery for their generous grant, which has allowed us to better serve both our congregation and the broader community.

Accomplishments Throughout the year, DDM has achieved several key milestones:

1. **Live Streaming Enhancements:** Upgraded streaming capabilities have resulted in a 20% increase in online attendance.
2. **Social Media Growth:** Consistent and engaging content has boosted our followers and interactions across platforms. Our Facebook page received over 17,500 views, reached more than 7,400 people and gained 61 new followers.

3. **Volunteer Training:** Hosted training sessions as needed for volunteers, equipping them with skills to operate advanced technology and troubleshoot issues effectively.

Looking Ahead As we look to the coming year, the DDM aims to build on this momentum by:

- Expanding our volunteer team to include additional roles for creative content development.
- Exploring opportunities to integrate newer technologies into our worship services.
- Apply for Flint River Presbytery technology grants.

Acknowledgments We extend our deepest gratitude to our volunteers, church leadership, and congregation for their unwavering support. We also thank Flint River Presbytery for their generosity, which has played a vital role in advancing our mission.

Conclusion The Digital Discipleship Ministry remains committed to its mission of spreading God's word through innovative and accessible means. With God's guidance and the continued support of our church family and community, we look forward to another year of impactful ministry.

