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# Incoming Deacons and Elders 2022

## **Al Beery**

### **Deacon, Class of 2025**

I am a new member of First, joining in 2021. Initially, my desire to start attending a traditional in-person service and a top-notch music program is what attracted me. The Resident Minister program, the Men's Group, and FPC's participation in the "Rotating Shelter" program is what keeps me interested.

With our emergence from the pandemic, and the addition of a new lead pastor, there are a number of opportunities for growth. I am particularly interested in the role the church can play in local missions, such as the unhoused population.

I am most interested in using my time to support people in both times of joy and times of need. I look forward to getting to know some church members better.

## **Daniel Bizer-Cox**

### **Deacon, Class of 2025**

The music and how open and accepting this church is first attracted me to First Pres and is still so important to me. I love how the church has grown in these areas while I have been a member. I am excited about having a new lead pastor.

I am looking forward to getting to know and visit in person with the families in my chapel—the pandemic started shortly after I began my first term as deacon, so I haven't really experienced what it's like in "normal" times.

## **Bill Black**

### **Deacon, Class of 2025**

I find First Presbyterian Church to be very welcoming and active. I look forward to meeting more new friends and to be of service to the church and its members. Extending care and concern to members, particularly in a time of need, is very important.

This year we have moved into a retirement community in Ann Arbor and have met so many wonderful people.

## **Nikki Black**

### **Deacon, Class of 2025**

From our first visit to First Pres, we were greeted by warm, welcoming people who made us feel part of their church family. As we have participated in some of the many fun, educational, and serving activities available, we are meeting more of the wonderful people here. It was just a year ago we moved to Ann Arbor and All Seasons Ann Arbor and found a vibrant, interesting, caring, accepting community and church. I have been so pleased with the warmth, acceptance and caring of the congregation, the excellent staff, the meaningful worship, the educational opportunities, and the emphasis on mission.

Serving in God's name has been an essential part of my life, and I am praying that as a deacon, I will hear God's call and direction. I love meeting new people, building relationships, and being of service in any way I can.

## **Lois Bryant**

### **Deacon, Class of 2025**

First Pres was my parents' church, so naturally when I moved to Ann Arbor in 2003, I started attending this church. I immediately got involved (was "volunteered") for artsy activities like Vacation Bible School's Marketplace. Interesting people, interesting activities, and good sermons are what keeps me involved.

I am looking forward to interacting with and supporting members of First Pres.

## **Anne Colvin**

### **Deacon, Class of 2025**

I first came to First so my children could grow up going to church, and I enjoy singing in the choir. I have since helped with some mission projects and gotten so much from Bible Study class. I appreciate the use of Zoom and YouTube. I am excited about First Presbyterian's social justice, food missions, and music programs.

I am looking forward to being part of the church's mission to support members and being able to contribute and help others.



## **Don Deatruck**

Deacon, Class of 2025

Our new pastor and his family coming to First Pres is one of several good things that excite me. The clergy staff, the good will of the people in the congregation, the deacons and church staff are what attracted me to First Pres. The sermon messages regarding biblical scripture and lessons each week during children's time are very important to me.

I am looking forward to serving the people in the church in ways to make their lives better and implementing our church's and pastor's goals.

## **Michele Derr**

Deacon, Class of 2025

The joy has returned to First Pres, and I think we all feel it. We, as a congregation, were in a dark place for a while, but we now have a senior pastor with a young family, and he is bringing to all of us energy and enthusiasm which is so infectious. Together with our outstanding music (thank you David V and David H) we can be sure that God is in our Sanctuary with us. I am quite sure God feels the joy too.

As a deacon, I am looking forward to visiting and getting to know more of our parishioners and serving their needs where I can.

## **Barbara Dobson**

Deacon, Class of 2025

I was struck by how welcoming First Pres was to me when I was an occasional visitor some years ago. The meaningful sermons and the transporting music and the active service of the church in the community all attracted me, but at the heart of why I joined is that welcome that enveloped me. Among the reasons I want to be involved is to help others feel they, too, can find welcome at First Pres. that First Pres is looking for them.

Now that I have a few years at First Pres, I have been feeling it is time to find a way to become more involved and hopefully to serve others in a meaningful way. When I learned about the role of deacons, it felt like this might be just the service opportunity I was looking for. I also am looking forward to getting to know more First Pres people more closely.

## **Mark Gehrke**

Deacon, Class of 2025

When I first started coming to church, I stayed largely because of the cradle to college youth opportunities along with the excellent pastoral staff, and the people I've met and the roots I've put down here.

The church has changed a lot in the past few years, and I'm hopeful my service as a deacon will help me acclimate to the changes, as well as provide service to the church. I'm looking forward to building relationships with others at First Pres as we return to more typical interactions.

## **Prudence (Prue) Heikkinen**

Deacon, Class of 2025

I was initially drawn to First Pres as it resembled my home church. Now after many years, I have grown to appreciate the staff, plus I am optimistic about life of the church given the new lead pastor and events and activities that draw me in. I am excited about the new lead pastor, two fine Resident Ministers, and Faith Formation for youth and adults.

I am looking forward to wider contact with members of the congregation I may not otherwise get to know.

## **Matthew (Matt) Hulbert**

Deacon, Class of 2025

First Pres is a community of Christians with whom I can worship and serve. What I see every Sunday as I participate in our own worship and learn of our outreach in love to our surrounding community is what excites me about the church. I am looking forward to understanding where my place of service is within our congregation—or in the world.

## **Virginia Koster**

Deacon, Class of 2025

Initially I came to First Pres in 1988 to hear Bill Hilligons preach, but I stay now for the friendships, congregational care, Mature Ministries, and weekly worship. I am excited about the enthusiastic engagement in the areas of mission, social justice, adult education, and the growing involvement of young families, as well as college students. And then there's our strong music program, congregational care, mature ministries, and preaching. Every aspect of our dear church seems ready to embrace the future.

I am looking forward to being a loving presence to my little flock of members and to getting to know other deacons.

## **Amy Lindauer**

Deacon, Class of 2025

I find the church on Sundays and the sermons keep me centered in a world that seems to be uncertain. Every Sunday there is something in the service, whether it is the music, the mission statement, or sermon, to be an inspiration and encourages me to want to serve or help others.

I hope to be in better contact with our chapel families. The last few years have been a little hard to navigate with Covid. I also look forward to working with Maureen Nelson, sharing our deacon duties.

## **Henry (Hank) McQueen**

Deacon, Class of 2025

What first attracted me to First Pres was the music and youth/children programs. As we continued to grow in our faith, mission work became important also. Now, we continue to enjoy the music, sermons, mission work, both local and international, other programs, and service opportunities.

I am looking forward to contributing to the growth in congregational life, sustainability of the church, and increased membership. A rebirth of local and international mission work is also important.

## **Maurine Nelson**

Deacon, Class of 2025

I was first attracted to First by the number of ways to serve "out" my beliefs with programs at Hope Clinic, the Bible Study that I enjoy, the support of prayer groups, and the sense that I was home. I joined the church this year and met new friends. I have participated in different activities and was given such love and support from the people of First Pres during my own times of loss.

I am looking forward to getting to know the people of First Pres, as well as all the guidelines written and lived that help God's people+ be a voice in our world. I am particularly interested in finding ways for the church to be an "everyday" part for those of us that live geographically further away.

## **Brian Schneidewind**

Deacon, Class of 2025

I was first attracted to First by the Sunday morning services and the beautiful building in which to reflect. I am excited about our new lead pastor, and I am looking forward to reconnecting with our congregation after Covid—celebrating the good moments together and supporting each other in tough times.

## **Amy Shepherd**

Deacon, Class of 2025

I was initially attracted to First Pres because I grew up in the Kalamazoo First Pres, but it has been my longtime friendships with members who have a deep appreciation for the church staff that has encouraged me to become more involved. I am excited that worship services are back in person, but I also have to say that I really enjoyed the option to participate virtually. We are in a stage of life where we are traveling a lot and the virtual option has given me the opportunity to stay connected. I am also enjoying being part of the Monday morning prayer team meeting. As a deacon, I am looking forward to meeting new people and connecting at a deeper level with my faith.

## **Carol Gottlieb**

Deacon, Class of 2023

I was first drawn to First because of the faith, people, and local mission. I am excited about the new pastor, refugee efforts, music program, variety of Bible studies, along with the mature ministries speakers and activities. As a deacon, I am looking forward to continuing serving the congregation in every day milestones.

## **Michele Snyder-Madden**

Deacon, Class of 2024

I was first attracted to First as a UM student in 1962. Ernie Campbell was the senior pastor and was an important part of my life then. Returning to Ann Arbor in 1970, I married Bob Snyder at First Pres, and we were active in the church until we moved to Indonesia with our son in 1973. Upon our return to Ann Arbor in 1975, we had three children, and we again became active in the church. Over the years I have experienced personal challenges that have brought me physically in and out of this faith community. However, I have always returned, recognizing it as the spiritual foundation in my life.

I see serving as a deacon a privilege and an opportunity for a ministry of love, care, and compassion, a role to which Jesus calls us. It's an opportunity to reach out personally to members of our church community, ascertaining their needs, providing support, celebrating their joys, and getting to know them in a deeper way.

## **Holly Majorprice**

Deacon, Class of 2024

I am honored to have been asked to serve as deacon. In the past, I have served as a Sunday school teacher, volunteered with Vacation Bible School, and helped create a group called Families at First. I've enjoyed volunteering with various events, dinners, and such. My family and I have attended First Pres for many years and have gained lifelong, valuable relationship.

Serving as a deacon is such an honor, gift, and grounding experience. We are excited for the new changes at First, they're a breath of fresh air and inspiration. I'm happy to be a part of moving forward with an open mind, heart, arms, and a smile!

## **Jane Dutton**

Elder, Class of 2025

My initial introduction to First Pres was through my sister, Anne Keesor, who had been a member for a long time. I love the service of the church and the residency minister program. I have been deeply affected by the church's outreach when people are suffering which helps me see the compassion of the church. I am excited by the leadership team at First and all the new possibilities for fellowship, outreach, hospitality, and service.

I am looking forward to being put to use as an Elder and serving in whatever way I can. I love learning about the culture, practices, and impacts of organizations, so I am hoping to share my perspective in a way that is useful to the church.

## **Mel Kesterson**

Elder, Class of 2025

When we first joined this church it was because of recommendations from people we knew. First became our church family and it was hard to leave that family when we moved away. Coming back to the area, it was natural for us to gravitate back to our church family. I admire that our church is facing and talking about tough issues in our country, that we persevered through the pandemic, and that we plan to move forward with optimism.

As an Elder, I am looking forward to serving this congregation, a deepening of my faith, a closer connection to our church family, reconnecting old relationships and creating new ones. I look forward to being part of the process where church leadership steers the programming of the church to identify, react, and respond to issues our larger community is facing, all done with an underlying Love.

## **Mark Lindley**

Elder, Class of 2025

I have been a member since 1994, when First Pres welcomed me and my two young daughters. The music attracted me, but the welcome and nurture surprised and engaged me. The many friendships I have made and enjoy keep me connected, and I continue to find new ways to be involved.

I am looking forward to learning more about "how the sausage is made," and getting my hands in the bowl and doing my part.

## **Betsy McCallister**

Elder, Class of 2025

So many things drew Ben and I to First Pres 30 years ago! My uncle, Dave Krehbiel, was a pastor here, it was our neighborhood church, the youth program was amazing for our four young ones, the focus on and opportunity for mission was unmatched, the community of people was beautiful, and the theology was open and appealing. Many of these same things keep me involved today. I trust that First Pres is a place that will keep me growing in Christ as I attempt to convey God's unconditional love and generous grace.

I have enjoyed being active in various programs and groups, as well as my work as a deacon, but I have no idea how big decisions are made that impact the ministries that our church community loves. I am honored to serve as an Elder and look forward to getting to know another side of our church and church family.

## **Tom McKarns**

Elder, Class of 2025

I was drawn to First for its serious but accessible preaching, the full course of activities, and its caring people. At First, we are inclusive and welcoming to everyone.

I am looking forward to serving the church as an Elder and giving back for all of the positive influences the church has granted me and my family.

**Jim Schaafsma**  
Elder, Class of 2025

I was first led to First Pres because it was a church in the Reformed tradition that had a capable pastoral staff, a good youth program, and was committed to active ministry beyond its walls. I am excited about First being poised to take steps forward to more fully and relevantly demonstrate God's love and grace to this community and the surrounding communities.

As an Elder, I am looking forward to working with the lead pastor, the pastoral and program staff, and other church officers in the congregation to more fully realize the potential of this church to do God's will in courageous and dynamic ways.

**Diane Tamblyn**  
Elder, Class of 2025

My husband, Patrick, and I joined First Pres 32 years ago when we learned we were having our first child. This church has been central to our family life and continues to be the place where our faith journey is nurtured. I am grateful God keeps inviting me back into the life of First Pres.

As an Elder, I look forward to building new relationships and deepening existing ones as I learn how to serve the needs of our congregation. I hope to grow in my faith.

**Susan Whitlock**  
Elder, Class of 2025

When I first visited FPC in 1997, the music and preaching were wonderful; but the loving way children were treated clinched the deal for me: I became a member ASAP! I am excited about the chance to really think together about how we want to shape the future of the church as we re-emerge from the pandemic. As an Elder, I will be thinking about youth in our church and seeing young people become ever more central.

**Aidan Majorprice**  
Elder, Class of 2025 (one-year term)

When I was eight, I started attending church services at first Presbyterian with my mom and sister. My sister and I were in choir, Sunday school, Mids, and then both of us were confirmed. I then became a deacon in 2017 and enjoyed helping more of our church family who could not come to service. Besides Choir, Sunday school, Mids, and being a deacon or a part of session; there are tons of events and gatherings to be involved in at First Presbyterian Church.

As an Elder, I am looking forward to learning how to make church an even better place of worship. I hope to bring a new mindset to Session. I also hope to help out and improve our technology.

## Congregational Nominating Committee

Sarah Glinka, At Large  
Debbie MacVey, Deacon Rep  
Jay Pflasterer, At Large  
Margie VanTuyl, At Large  
Katrine Weismantle, At Large  
Nancy Oliver, At Large

