

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

Fourth Presbyterian Church
340 Dorchester Street
South Boston, MA 02127

Co-Pastors' Reports

From Burns Stanfield –

Another good year. That is essentially what I want to write. And that is essentially what I have written for many, many Annual Reports over these 35 years. I can get more specific: That incredible group of prayer warriors are still meeting every night at 6pm. We have five wonderful tweens in confirmation class. Eight more adults joined our community. We studied Scripture, wrote devotionals, delivered food, told our stories, fed *thousands*, taught kids how to perform, supported recovery, ministered to the traumatized, and prayed with the patter of not just one, but TWO joyous tap dancers. AND, thanks to Lauren, we brought to life in our sanctuary the classic American play, “Our Town,” with its exquisite call to notice The Holy in and around these seemingly mundane things we do in community: laugh, cry, sing, grieve, love, live.

It really is all so good. Again. Like last year and the year’s before. And now I’m at the beginning of my last year as your pastor. So while these paragraphs are technically looking at 2025, my heart can’t help but look ahead to these upcoming 12 months. So with much love and appreciation, and probably a hint of ache, I say: Let’s do it again. These routines really are so very, very holy. Friends, let’s have another good year.

From Tim Hughes Williams –

I’ve served as one of your co-pastors at Fourth Church now for 14 months, and it was such a pleasure to turn the corner on the first year. One of the great privileges of stepping into a co-pastor model alongside such an established staff is that I had the time and space to focus on listening, relationships, learning, and observation. There were opportunities for all of the above in 2025. I leaned into individual meetings, having coffee and conversation with many of you – especially newer people that I didn’t know in my earlier tenure at Fourth. If we haven’t met yet, let’s set it up! I got to immerse myself in the rhythms of Advent and Lent, re-learning the choreography of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and the Christmas concert repertoire. Having served as Youth and Children’s Director in a previous life, it was enormously satisfying to put my own kids into Children’s Theater, February Vacation Bible School, and the Summer Meals Program. When James sang “Circle of Life” during *The Lion King* this past December, it felt like a commentary on this opportunity to return to ministry in South Boston. I am grateful.

The upcoming pastoral transition was a major focus in the previous year, and once again, listening and relationships were central to the work of discerning a vision for the next season of ministry. The newly formed Vision Team is made up of faithful and capable leaders and I look forward to hearing their synthesis of the listening process in a report that will be shared with the congregation this spring. Like all of you, Burns and I have tried to be patient and “trust the

process" as we prepare for Burns' retirement and allow our leadership to discern the vision for a new staffing arrangement. There are questions that cannot be answered until their due time in the process, and much more information will be shared over the course of 2026. But I am happy to report that from my point of view, this transition is in capable and loving hands. I feel hopeful and prepared for 2026, a year that will inevitably feel bittersweet but also full of opportunity. Thank you for having me as one of your co-pastors. I'm blessed to be back in the mix.

Nurturing the Spirit

Worshipping, praying, studying, gathering. These kinds of activities continue to be absolutely central to our body. Many have their own reports down below or up above. It is tricky to summarize them for any given year, since many are planned, many spring up on their own, and others are woven into some other piece of ministry.

Our traditional way of gathering went through changes during the pandemic a few years ago, of course, and now our regular Sunday worship is hybrid: a great crew in the sanctuary, loyal friends on Zoom, and a large number of unseen folks watching us on YouTube.

Evening prayers are entering year Seven – every night! 6pm-6:30.

Our Wednesday classes are sometimes hybrid, though our studies are more likely to be in person now, with occasional discussions on Zoom, and several meetings taking place in that remote/virtual version. But through it all, we keep worshipping, praying, studying, gathering....

One piece of our study and gathering is our Sunday morning adult class, which has become a steady connecting place with Pastor Tim and certain interns along the way. (See report below).

Complementing all of that was a steady stream of **Wednesday night gatherings**. To summarize those:

We began with a study of a few faith-related articles that had appeared in the New York Times opinion section. Remarkable articles. Great conversation.

When we shifted into Lent, Burns worked with an experience team to do another "12 Steps and Christianity" group. Big support from Ken, Lauren, Carrie, Danae, Dave and Mark. That group attracts visitors from the community.

Moving into the summer, Tim and Burns worked with the deacons to support a robust Summer Wednesday Series with cookouts, worship and music-making (all outdoors). Our theme was "Show and Tell," and that gave us a nice way to feature a parade of reflectors sharing objects and stories in their testimonies.

We transitioned into the fall with our Wilmot retreat in NH, magnificently resourced by friend/professor Mike Motia around materials from the Desert Fathers and Mothers. We continued dipping into those ancient resources in the early fall Wednesday study series.

Wednesday night study also included a book club on Liz Walker's book about Can We Talk trauma ministry and another one on Margaret Renkl's reflections organized around weekly experiences of seasons.

For Advent, we returned to Taize-style services of contemplation. We slipped in four weeks of gathering and chanting – plus all of those big performances we do in December-- and it was lovely, particularly with the flowers lovingly arranged and nurtured by Karen and her team. Those evenings were gifts.

As you can imagine, these study/prayer groups also connected in many ways with Sunday worship, which continues to be the real hub of our congregation's life together.

During the year... We reaffirmed baptism in our remembrance of Jesus's baptism. We also lifted up Epiphany. We ordained leaders, reflected on a theme of "Mend the Gap" during Lenten worship, and observed a rich Holy Week. We were able to gather once again for Maundy Thursday and walk with other SB Christians on Good Friday. Easter Sunrise Service was robust with Roxbury Presbyterian Church on Castle Island.

The deacons led a creative Appreciation Day, and we had a summer healing service. We had a lovely SMP Sunday and then welcomed our families to Castle Island worship.

We had a Jubilee Service and reaffirmed baptism in September, and we remembered departed loved ones in October. We had a big ol Thanksgiving potluck and stepped into a rich Advent season, finishing with a Christmas Eve Pageant, and shared stories of Light born in our midst on the very last Sunday of 2025.

Prayer groups, vespers, Sunday worship, study sessions... these gatherings of the Spirit are at the heart of our life together. Thanks to all who participate and lead!

Vision Team

The Vision Team at Fourth Church was assembled this past year not only in anticipation of Burns's retirement, but also to give the congregation a chance to share their recollections, hopes, and dreams for the life of this church. We have had three meetings run by our consultant, Steve Lindsley from The Center for Healthy Churches. The Center for Healthy Churches helps churches navigate pastoral transitions, clarify mission and vision, and strengthen leadership structures.

Steve has offered us unique guidance through this process, and it has been helpful to have him as our leader to provide some direction and unique agendas for each gathering. From our conversations, we are beginning to glean what makes this church so special and what makes us proud, and we have opened up space to have more difficult conversations like "what can you let go of" and what is your God-sized dream for Fourth? Our Vision Team has met regularly to share notes from our meetings, and in January we will have a writing retreat. Vision Team members Melissa King, Al Circeo, and Tim Hughes Williams also completed a demographic study for Fourth Church. We are doing all of this work in order to better effectively prepare ourselves and the congregation for the difficult and complex feelings that are often associated with transition and change.

We hope that by opening up these conversations, we will not be denying the difficulty of the upcoming year, but also celebrating the optimism and vision for the future. Thank you for participating in the vision conversations and be on the lookout for the team to make a final presentation to the congregation in February.

The Vision Team consists of: Ken Grant, Melissa King, Dianne Devore, Jacob Blanton, Al Circeo, Lauren Easler, Tim Hughes Williams, Burns Stanfield, Layne Jacobs.

— Lauren Easler

Building Report

Early in 2025, Janine worked with National Grid to get a new gas meter installed in the basement of 340 Dorchester Street, because it was found that the old gas meter was undersized and could not handle the flow rate needed for the four furnaces and kitchen.

In Summer 2025, Tempco Roofing repaired, replaced, and cleaned all gutters on the church building and 5 Vinton. They also fixed rotten trim around the building, two exterior doors, and one interior door that the Boston Health Inspector requested that we fix. Here is a list of the work quoted and completed. At 340 Dorchester St (left side of building: replace door with new thermatru fiberglass, exterior door similar style including new interior/exterior trim, replace vinyl siding corner board, replace missing upper vinyl soffit, replace rotted sill/window trim, replace 60' of gutter and 50' downspout using, white seamless aluminum K5 style, including any miters/end caps etc, install new gutter guards, Front of building: replace trim on large front window, resecure railing, replaced trim around double door using PVC material, resecure loose aluminum siding, right side of building: replace rotted trim above windows (approx 20'), replace aluminum trim and vinyl soffit on high gable, add weatherstripping to door, replace basement door, including interior exterior trim with similar style thermatru fiberglass door, backside of building: replace rear gutter approximately 70 feet using K5 white seamless aluminum gutter, including new downspouts, 5 Vinton: clean gutters, replace approximately 80 feet of downspout with new. SBNDC worked with Fourth Church to remove a large box elder tree from the back of their property on Jenkins street that had been damaging the roof of the church.

In Fall/Winter 2025, the church basement door on Vinton Street and hall yard door were rekeyed to the "Hall Key." One of the outdoor stair railings leading to the hall from Vinton street broke from corrosion at the base. Karen arranged for its repair by Charles Gray (617-794-1948), who has done work for us in the past with masonry and railing repairs.

In the 5 Vinton rental unit, an interior door and door frame was purchased from Dorchester Door and Window and installed by Gary Lynch (carpenter). Gary was great to work with and should be contacted for any carpentry work needed at the church.

(lynchcarpentry@verizon.net 617-308-2866).

John Meier

Adult Sunday School

Perhaps you're unaware that there is a lively and open-hearted group of grown-ups who gather in the 5 Vinton kitchen every Sunday morning at 9:30am to study texts (Biblical and otherwise) and have *spirited* debates about them. We began the year with a deep dive into John's Gospel, accompanied by Francis Taylor Gench's wonderful commentary. After John we turned to Richard Rohr's newest (and final) book, "The Tears of Things," which studies the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures. We spent a couple of surreal weeks discussing the short stories of Flannery O'Connor before diving into a Genesis study, which continues to this day! New members (and new opinions) are always welcome.

— Tim Hughes Williams

Susan Devine: Evening Prayers

We are proud to say the 6 P.M. prayer group is going into its 6th year. It continues to bring comfort and provide a space to express concerns. It is also a place to give thanks for answered prayers. All are welcome.

Best expressed by a few of our faithful :

"6 o'clock prayers have been a source of shining light of God into our nightly prayers. Prayers of thanksgiving, healing, and communicating through scripture with one another." Shemiram Fabian

"I appreciate the 6 o'clock prayer warriors because it's a group of people that I'm walking through life with that I know care about me. I can hop on even in distress and be covered with love and prayers and know that that continues even the days I'm not able to join." Danae Jacobs

"The evening prayer services have been my connection to 4th for these past few years. Staying connected to 4th helps me continue to be my best self and has been a lifeline through some tough times. I love getting together to pray and study the Word with you." Holly Aloise

"Sunday to the next Sunday is a long time to go without connection to our church community. When the day is ending and life can feel so heavy, a nightly prayer service can be the one constant that anchors us to God. Nighttime has a way of amplifying whatever we're carrying, from illness, stress and worry to gratitude and a sense of peace. A nightly prayer service gives me a structured pause. A way to settle my mind and remind myself of all of God's glory and love for me. I'm grateful for the support and comfort that the nightly service provides."

Myneice Greenidge

"I feel blessed to have this group. I have grown in my spiritual journey in the 5 years that we have been meeting. We are like family and support each other in time and prayer. I look forward to continuing this practice."

Sheila Buckman

We are thankful for all those that keep this group going, and by all people that do reflections:
 Holly Aloise, Susan Devine, Shannon Hotchkins
 Michele Sigler, Gerri Embry, Rick Bailey
 Danae Jacobs, Myneice Greenidge Rev Burns
 Stanfield, Shemiram Fabian, Ethan Kober
 Sheila Buckman, Lauren Basler

A P.S. from participant Shannan Hudgins:

"Evening prayer is vibrant. Its impact is clear by the loving, caring souls whose ability to notice God's work in their lives keeps the Light of Christ burning bright. Year six looks to be as engaging and encouraging as every year before, each night in the wake of another evening of prayer."

Recovery Groups

It's easy to take for granted all the 12-step groups that meet in our church. It's worth pausing to remember that lives are saved in those meetings: Sunday Young Peoples, Thursday NA, Friday AA, Plus our own 12 steps and the Christian Faith. Bless this work of healing.

Fourth Fest/ 2025 Fund-raising

2025 Fourth Fest had another successful year thanks to the work of the hosts, sponsors, auction bidders, organizers, and all of the Fourth community that showed up to support ourfundraising!

We once again held the event at the beautiful Southline (the old Boston Globe building to some of us!) and had over 140 people in attendance. We enjoyed performances from our children and teen theater performers, Jon Hazilla's band, Ingrid Gerdes and our choir. The Saturday Night Live tickets, Jimmy Fallon tickets, and Hozier tickets were all big hits at the live auction, and silent auction items included a Greek cooking lesson with Rena Gyftopoulos, gift cards to some of Southie's favorite restaurants, and tickets to Red Sox and Patriot games.

We raised \$60,000 for our summer meals program, and planning is already underway for FourthFest 2026 so mark your calendars for Sunday, May 3rd 2:30-5:30 pm!

Diane Devore

Food Pantry

In 2025, the Fourth Church Food Pantry was run by John Meier and Derek Alfano, with the help of approximately 20 regular volunteers. The food pantry continued to serve as an agency of the Greater Boston Food Bank. We received two deliveries (~7500lbs each) per month, delivered by our truck driver Nelson Cogox. We served 612 unique households in 2025, which is an 8% increase over 2024.

A typical month would serve ~300 households totalling approximately 900 people. We distributed food in the Hall on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 9:00-11:30am. During Summer Meals, the GBFB asked us to continue at least two distributions per month, so those took place in the afternoons. There was a disruption in SNAP payments in November 2025, and the GBFB was able to increase our deliveries to 10,000 lbs each, so we had a special third distribution on a Monday evening. That evening distribution allowed us to sign up 35 new families, compared to a typical 5-10 new families on Tuesday mornings.

Derek Alfano earned his Food Pantry Safety Certification in January 2025. Thanksgiving turkey distribution included 160 turkeys from GBFB, 125 from SBANP, and 45 from Rose Yesu and the Corpus Christi St. Bernard Parish in Newton, MA. The turkeys from Corpus Christi are extras from a food drive done for Julie's Family Learning Center in South Boston.

John Meier

Extended Meals Program

The Extended Meals Program has now extended all the way from March 2020 through the present! What started as an expansion of the Summer Meals Program during the early weeks of the pandemic has now become a regular part of the way we care for our neighbors at Fourth. Thanks to a generous donation from a Fourth friend, we've been able to continue funding the program so far, and we are continuing to work on ways to bring program costs to a more sustainable level without compromising the quality of the food we serve or the compensation we give our amazing cooks.

We serve meals three nights a week, and we've come to know many of our guests by name. Rachel is critical to getting the food ordered. Annie and Carmelo are, of course, anchors to getting the meals prepared.

In 2025, we served over 16,000 meals, not counting the Summer Meals Program. It continues to be a remarkable response to a dire need. Although we're still unsure how long the program will be able to continue, we hope our efforts to make the program more financially sustainable will pay off by allowing us to keep feeding our hungry neighbors for as long as possible. A big thank you to the whole Fourth family for cheering the program on, and for your generous contributions in time, money, and encouragement!

Fourth Church Trauma Ministry

The Peace by Piece Program

Our Peace by Piece gatherings at Fourth have continued to play a vital role in the life of our church, bringing together the intersection of mental health, spiritually, and trauma healing in a safe and supportive space. Fourth was the first replicate site to follow in the footsteps of

Roxbury Presbyterian Church's Can We Talk...? Program back in 2017 and we continue to learn and grow from their lead. At our annual retreat in Gloucester in October, we were joined by Wyatt Jackson- who is a leader at RPC, and we also held a book study in the spring to read and discuss the Rev. Liz Walker's new book: "No One Left Alone: How Community Helps Us Heal."

Our gatherings have shifted to the second and fourth Mondays of the month- but the format remains the same. On the second Monday of the month, we have "Express Our Stories" through art- using journaling, watercolor, clay, collaging and photography. On the fourth Monday we gather for our traditional Peace By Piece- where participants can share their experiences of loss, grief, or trauma as well as their healing process. We welcomed our new clinician, Beth Waterman to this gathering in October.

We also continue to take Peace by Piece "on the road" to the apartments at 5 O'Connor Way- a senior housing community in South Boston and the home to Geraldine Embry and Jamie Maddox!

In the new year, we have goals of adding a gathering at The Goddard House- a residential home for older adults- and to add a gathering that is bodily focused such as yoga or tai chi.

The body, mind and spirit are all connected and we strengthen each other by listening, sharing, supporting and abiding together during these gatherings. We invite you to join us for dinner and a gathering in 2026.

Lauren Basler

"Our Town" at Fourth Church

On March 1st and 2nd- a cast of 25 members of Fourth Church brought to life the classic American play "Our Town" by Thornton. The performances were a culmination of a rehearsal process that started in November 2024- and was a true community oriented experience that brought together folks young and older, experienced and new to the theater.

Wilder's universal themes of birth, death, love, the universe, and finding beauty in the very day is a perfect piece of theater to bring to a church- and our cast came together in a way that truly seemed sacred. In an interesting twist of fate,

there was a revival of Our Town running on Broadway simultaneously, and some of us had a chance to see that as well. Maybe because I was the director- or maybe because of "Fourth Magic" and the hard work of the cast- our production brought a certain level of reverence that I do not believe you can find even on a Broadway stage.

As I wrote in the program: "Within this space we have grown up, married, lived, and died. We have celebrated babies being baptized and mourned the loss of countless friends. We have shared- and continue to share- joys and sorrows. Through it all we believe that as Wilder writes- "There's something way down deep that's eternal about every human being."

This experience is something I will never forget and I feel privileged to attend a church that allowed this dream to be realized. Congratulations to the cast on a FANTASTIC show. *Lauren Basler*

The cast was as follows:

Stage Manager Act I: Layne Jacobs
 Stage Manager Act II: Diane Devore
 Stage Manager Act III: Burns Stanfield
 Editor Webb: Perry Hughes Williams
 Mrs. Webb Rena Gyftopoulos
 Emily Webb Act I: Haven Foley
 Emily Webb Act II: Arianna Shepherd
 Emily Webb Act III: Fiona McCusker
 Wally Webb: Lijah Blue Jacobs
 Mrs. Gibbs: Ro Robinson
 Doc Gibbs: Andy Ward
 George Gibbs: Owyn Jacobs
 Rebecca Gibbs: Felicity Cooper
 Simon Stimson: Janine Warrington
 Joe/ Si Crowell: Scarlett Slade
 Constable Warren: Laura Massie
 Mrs. Soames: Sharon Matthews
 Professor Willard/ Joe Stoddard: David Courage
 Howie Newsome: Lauren Basler
 Mrs. Morgan: Rachel Mallett
 Sam Craig: Shelby Hall
 Woman in Balcony/ Townsperson: Alison Slade
 Man in Auditorium/ Man Among the Dead:
 Amilcar de la Cruz
 Lady In a Box/ Townsperson: Sarah Cooper
 Man Among the Dead/ Townsperson: Al Circeo
 Woman Among the Dead/ Townsperson: Cheryl Sessler
 Guitarist: Matt York
 Organist: Hugh Barrigan
 Lighting Design: John Meier

The Deacons

In 2025, the deacons of Fourth Presbyterian Church continued to do our best to love and care for our whole congregation. We continued our model of mini-parish "teams", with each member of the congregation having at least 2 deacons.

Serving together in mini-parish teams were: Al Circeo and Ingrd Gerdes; Shemiram Fabian and Carrie Austin; Alison Slade and Sheila Buckman; Katie Stansifer, Brandynn Holgate, and Fiona McCusker; Janine Warrington, Derek Alfano, and Lijah Blue Jacobs; Laura Massie and Julianna Cogswell. Alison and Katie shared the roles of moderator and clerk.

In February, we held our annual retreat at Burns and Laura's home in Arlington. We welcomed our newly elected deacons, got to know each other better through icebreakers and 1-on-1s, and held our annual "draft" to create our new mini-parish lists.

Throughout the spring, deacons reached out to their mini-parishes. In May, we celebrated our annual "Appreciation Day". The sanctuary was a "Garden of Gratitude", with paper flowers writing what we were grateful for about each member of the congregation, and the deacons led the liturgy interspersed with verbal appreciations.

Summer Wednesdays returned in July and August; we enjoyed cook outs and Wednesday night services together, and had great turn out this year! Brandynn faithfully grilled every week she was in town, Carrie made sure we always had plenty of food and supplies, and other deacons took turns bringing sides and cleaning up. In August, we gathered at Castle Island for our annual outdoor worship service, with food from Sullivan's and potluck sides.

In November, we hosted our annual Thanksgiving potluck with turkey (cooked by Annie), vegetarian turkey, and all the traditional sides and desserts. In December, we continued our tradition of delivering poinsettias to a few members of our mini-parish; it was a wonderful chance to visit and re-connect.

We've worked hard throughout the year at pastoral care: connecting regularly with our mini-parishes, having 1-on-1s at Let's Talk and

elsewhere, and praying for and reaching out to people going through hard times.

Much love and gratitude to Laura Massie, Lijah Blue, and Shemiram Fabian, who are rotating off the diaconate in early 2026. We look forward to welcoming newly elected deacons Myniece and Dave Courage as we continue serving our church community together during this year of transition.

Katie Stansifer & Alison Slade

Boston Pride Parade

2025 was our third year being present at Boston Pride For the People, and this year several churches from across Boston Presbytery joined us - Church of the Covenant, Clarendon Hill Presbyterian Church, Clinton Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church Quincy, First Presbyterian Church in Brookline, Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, Hartford Street Presbyterian Church, Newton Presbyterian Church, and the Presbyterian Church in Burlington. We registered under the name, "Presbyterians for Pride." Booth volunteers included Jack Colantuoni, Derek Alfano, Brandynn Holgate, and Melissa King. All expenses (booth fees and hand-out materials) were provided through donations.

The booth had a lot of interactions, mostly from people interested in our free "God Loves Everybody" stickers or folks who wanted to take photos with our giant colorful "God Loves You" banner. We had information about Sunday services, food pantry, and other offerings available.

This year, in addition to the booth, we also joined Boston Presbytery in marching in the parade. Janine Warrington, Burns Stanfield, Laura Massie, and Al Circeo joined in the march representing Fourth.

As many Christian churches in our country continue to be hateful and unaffirming to queer and transgender individuals, it becomes more and more important for us to emphasize that God loves them and that we at Fourth love them.

Janine Warrington

Annual Fall Retreat

We gathered a crew of over 50 participants at Wilmot this year. Our theme was *Desert Wisdom* and we showed up in body and spirit to sing, swim, eat, pray, create, and celebrate the opportunity to be together in the beautiful Camp Wilmot location. Prof. Mike Motia (beloved member of Fourth who is now getting ordained!) led us in exploring the rich resources of the desert mothers and fathers from early Christianity. And there was also, Once again, time for... Karaoke, prayer groups, square dance... and lots of good food.

Social Media

Fourth has multiple different social media accounts, and Janine has posted across them regularly over the past year. These accounts contribute to our mission in a few ways:

We bear witness to the good news of Jesus by:

- sharing live streams or clips of sermons and choir songs.

We create opportunity for growth together in the spirit by:

- creating means of connecting with the Fourth diaspora.
- sharing reminders and invitations to upcoming events and opportunities at Fourth.

We serve our neighbors in love by:

- sharing service opportunities.
- connecting with other organizations in and around Boston that serve the community.

2025 has been a year of growth for our social media presence.

- YouTube - @fourthboston

○ YouTube is arguably the most important of our social media platforms, as it allows folks who are homebound or live far away to join us for Sunday services, prayer nights, and other events that are live streamed.

○ During 2025, our views increased significantly (79% more than 2024) while our watch time decreased (10% less than 2024). This tracks with high numbers of views our shorts and short videos

of time people spent watching our content was down. Videos showcasing the immense talent of our community, such as the November talent show and March performance of "Our Town," also did very well. We also gained 27 new subscribers this year.

- Instagram - @fourthboston
- Our general Instagram account allows us to promote our Sunday services and our community offerings. It also provides an important platform for fundraising, especially for Fourth Fest.
- During 2025, our reach greatly increased. In Oct/Nov/Dec 2025, our account reached 73,354 other accounts, and a majority of our views came from people who were not following our account. Posts promoting the food pantry and community events like the talent show and Christmas concert had the farthest reach.
- Instagram - @fourthchurchtheater
- In addition to our general Instagram account, we also have an account dedicated to our kids' and teen theater programs run by Brenny O'Brien.
- Facebook - @ Fourth Presbyterian Church of South Boston
- Our followers, views, and overall engagement stayed very consistent with our engagement in 2024.

Janine Warrington

Bowling

We completed another successful season of Church Bowling. There was the thrill of victory, the agony of defeat, the joy of fellowship...and french fries. French fries and bowling, is there a better combination? Our current reigning champion is Tim Sanchez, who obtained the elusive 7-10 split to obtain his crown. For those less inclined towards competition there were bumper lanes for the kids and an all around good time had by all. See you all next season!

Children and Youth Programs

Children and Youth ministries have been a key dimension of our ministry for 35 years. They are how the community knows us, and they've been a big part of our growth over these decades.

The significant disruptions of 2020-21 affected our offerings, but we have continued ministries like theater, confirmation, dance, voice, piano... In 2025, our 9:30 Sunday kids offerings solidified, we brought back Mazemakers and we started a new version of Youth Group! A Civil Rights pilgrimage is in the works and both theater programs are strong.

Keep it all in prayer and volunteer where you can. These ministries will look different in these next couple of years, but they continue to be a vital part of our witness.

Report on Kids Church from Janine

Kids' Church provides age-appropriate church programming for kids under 9 years old in the hall during the service. The standard format for Kids' Church goes 1.) gather around a table for a small snack 2.) read or view a video about a story from the Bible or church history, 3.) sing a song, 4.) do a related game or craft project, 5.) fellowship (AKA free play).

Raymond Poon has been our regular Kids' Church staff this year. Curtisha Beckford's last day with us was March 9th. Ami Hernandez provided coverage March through May. Since then, Janine has been joining Raymond for Kids' Church with additional support from parents such as Tim Sanchez and Julianna Cogswell.

Our units for 2025 included Daniel in the lion's den, the parables of Jesus, and Zaccheaus. We added the song "Deep and Wide" to our repertoire, and it became a fast favorite!

Throughout the year, we also found ways for kids to be involved in "big church" and in the Boston community. They made a white runner for the communion table, processed in with bread from around the world for World Communion Day, and baked muffins for the Thanksgiving potluck. In April, the kids learned about Ukraine and designed postcards in support of Ukraine to be shared with Esthetic Bean, the local Ukrainian-owned coffee shop. These

postcards were then taken to Washington, D.C. and to Ukraine by our own activist, David Courage, who then joined us for Kids' Church to share his experiences with the kids.

Report from parent, Tim Sanchez

Fourth has a thriving and wonderful children's ministry! I sit in most weeks with my 2 and 7 year olds, and it's such a comfortable and rich environment for all the precious kids in our church. Janine and Raymond are great, and they plan a good mix of learning time followed by crafts and play that works very well. The kids love it.

Kids Create

Kids Create provides an additional Bible study time for kids before the church service starts. It takes place simultaneously with adult Sunday school and confirmation class, allowing parents to attend Sunday school while their children stay with Janine in the hall. Hank Yang joined this class starting in the fall to allow the group to split up based on age. We learned about many things including racial justice and Coretta Scott King, creation care and upcycling, prayer and meditation, and what Halloween can teach us about Christianity. We also did many creative projects, including planting flowers and pumpkins with Karen Flaherty, making fiery Pentecost masks, and creating the gifts the magi gave to baby Jesus in the Christmas pageant.

Janine Warrington

Confirmation Class, Happening!

Five great young people have stepped up to give us a lively confirmation class! We are moving at an accelerated pace, I'd say, since we are trying to make it possible for them to be confirmed before my retirement at the end of 2026. Catherine Freeborn, Felicity Cooper, Jaelynn Riddle, Scarlett Slade, Natalie Adkins-Vargas.

Our plan is to do the Civil Rights Pilgrimage in October. The crew meets with Burns Sundays at 9:30. Join us!

Burns Stanfield

Youth Group Returns

Tim Hughes Williams and Janine Warrington worked together to reintroduce youth group to our offerings this year, starting in March. This group is for any students in grades 6 through 12 and meets once a month for games, Christian education, and a homemade meal. Attendance has ranged from two to ten students, and lesson topics have included the last supper, dealing with anxiety, prayer, and money.

Janine Warrington

Soul Possibilities

Our Soul Possibilities arts programming continues apace! We welcomed brand new faces into our theater and art programs and put on amazing plays and recitals. We also continued Wednesday art classes with Janine into our rotation of regular offerings. The stage is set for programs to grow in 2026, as dozens of families have already registered for our next session of classes.

Some statistics from Janine:

Some statistics from Janine:

Registration numbers for teen theater:

- Winter/Spring 2025: 12
- Fall 2025: 12

Registration numbers for kids' theater:

- Winter 2025: 51
- Spring 2025: 25
- Fall 2025: 47

Registration numbers for dance classes:

- Winter 2025: 9
- Spring 2025: 8
- Fall 2025: 4

Registration numbers for Wednesday Crafternoon class:

- Winter 2025: 4
- Spring 2025: 2
- Fall 2025: 5

Scholarships granted through the year:

- Winter 2025: \$1400
- Spring 2025: \$922
- Fall 2025: \$1190

Soul Possibilities - Kids' Theater

An Email from parent Tara Tarr

I wanted to take a minute and thank you, both- and please share with Allison and Sarah too! Our hearts were all so full this weekend

after another fabulous show- and this one all the more special as Ella took on the role as Big Nala with such pride. Season after season, you nurture the kids to explore new roles and possibilities, encouraging them to take risks, while feeling supported through it all- while at the same time, giving them things to look forward to and aspire towards. Ella's been attending the plays since she was 2- we used to watch her babysitter's kids have big roles like Nala- and she was so proud to take on the responsibility this season and now Julie talks about getting excited for when it'll be her turn for a more independent role- teaching her patience, dedication and hard work.

Note from Janine

This year we saw so much growth and joy in the kids who participated in our mainstage theater productions. A child who sat backstage and cried for the entirety of "The Little Mermaid" a year ago got onstage and said her lines loud and clear and with character! A brand new participant who has experienced tragedy in her young life said she loved doing the show and loved the people she did it with. One boy carried himself with newfound confidence as he donned his costume and belted out his solo. Another boy graduated from our program and immediately got cast as a lead role in his new middle school, and he was so excited and proud to share the news with us. It was incredible to see these young people grow not only as performers but as human beings. I am so proud of each and every one of them and can't wait to see what they do next year!

A Report from Alison Slade on Mainstage Theater, Teen Theater & Voice lessons

2025 was a busy year for my voice students at 4th church. The studio has grown to nearly 20 students and most are involved in the Main Stage productions and/or Teen Theatre productions at the church, as well as their own high school programs. I still very much enjoy using my skills as voice coach and giving music direction always gives a sense of complete satisfaction! In addition to the 5 shows I was involved with, Shrek, All Star Review, Lion King, Mean Girls

and What the Dickens, I was also preparing students for three solo voice recitals which were held in April, June and December. I continue to be amazed at the work that these kids and teens (and adults!) put into their performances. It is so gratifying to see them grow in their artistry and musicianship. I feel very much that I am where I am meant to be and very blessed to teach these students each week and to be part of fabulous creative teams here at 4th.

A Report from Kathy Encarnacao on Dance

The dance program entered 2025 with a bang! Ms. Kathy and the littles warmed up a cold church hall with some zesty **Zumbini** moves on Monday mornings. In some cases, this class was the toddler's first interaction with others in a social setting. The parents and caregivers got in a nice little workout, as well.

Thursday afternoons were set aside for the older crowd (5-7yr. olds) with an imaginative ballet class that took place in a "toy shop," followed by a **Tween Dance** class for 7-10 year olds. Ms. Kathy also taught a dance workshop for the February vacation camp.

Dance continued into the warmer months, with a **Spring Into Ballet** class and a **Fresh and Funky** hip hop class.

A ten week fall session of **Zumbini** saw the siblings of previous students join the class to make it a family affair. We even had some grandparents get in on the action. You're never too old to dance!

Katherine Encarnação
Report from Diane Devore- Teen Theater

Teen Theater kicked off 2025 with rehearsal for an early summer performance of Mean Girls Jr. 13 teens and 2 adults from our congregation (thank you, Dave Courage and Lauren Basler!) were part of the cast. We performed to a full house for both performances. Our performers were busy in this show with many in the cast playing multiple roles, and many opportunities to shine collectively and individually. We continue to see these performers grow as artists and ensemble members.

In the fall we brought back a Christmas themed show with an original script What the Dickens!

and many familiar Christmas songs. We had 12 teens in this production including performers new to the teen group. We continue to have new performers "move up" from the younger performers group as they grow up. We look forward to getting started on our production of Mary Poppins Jr with auditions in early 2026.

New adult Soul Possibilities offerings

This year we added an adult art class taught by Sara Theophall in the fall session. This class focused on creating papier mache pieces and had three students. The free Spanish conversational class led by volunteer Andrea Eraso also continued to meet throughout the year, with about eight attendees throughout the year and an average of three attendees at each session. Multiple people in the community have expressed interest in expanding offerings for adults in the coming years. *Janine*

Summer Meals Program

2025 saw a lot of change in the structure of our Summer Meals Program. We did not continue our "Teen Crib" program after virtually no attendance in 2024, and instead expanded the offerings available to kids ages 9 to 13 present in our day program in a mini-version of the old Mazemakers program.

We offered breakfast and lunch for six weeks, five days a week for kids ages four to thirteen. Total registrations were consistent, going from 104 in 2024 to 103 in 2025, while average daily attendance dropped from 41 in 2024 to 38 in 2025. We were also inspected by DESE this year and were found to be lacking sufficient Product Formulation Statements or Child Nutrition Statements for some of the meals we served. This resulted in having \$1,312.81 deducted from our total state reimbursement for 2025. This new requirement was unknown to our staff but will be easy to accommodate moving forward.

Our staff in 2025 was fantastic, with some veterans and some brand new staff and volunteers. Fourth Church member Gracie Paterson led outdoor games, and newcomers Grace Maldonado and Sara Theophall taught a science class and art class, respectively, with assistance from Zoe Chaparro and Eddie Rice. Fiona McCusker, Braeden Cavanaugh, Rose Auguste, Raymond Poon, Owyn Jacobs, and

Luis Martinez provided supervision and deep care for our attendees as shepherds. Five teenagers volunteered in various capacities throughout the summer as well.

Tim Hughes Williams, Janine Warrington, and Rachel Mallett worked together to develop a new version of Mazemakers which took place during the 8:30am-12:30pm time slot, offering electives to kids ages 9 to 13 to allow them to customize their summer experience. See more details from Rachel Mallett below.

Field trips this year included Mei Mei Dumpling cooking classes, Rock Spot Climbing, and the South Boston fire station. Visitors included magician John Marshall magic, the Flying High Dogs, and Curious Creatures. We also took advantage of the city's bikes in the park program, giving children the chance to ride a bike in Moakley Park once a week.

Report from Gracie Paterson (Outdoor Games leader):

It was my pleasure to lead the outdoor games program for SMP 2025! The program provided the opportunity for campers of all ages to get daily fresh air, move their bodies, and exercise imagination and teamwork. This year, we partnered with Boston Bikes to offer weekly biking lessons in Moakley Park. It was amazing to discover the issues that are of deepest concern for us in order to identify where to act next. Fourth Presbyterian committed to engaging 70 people in these meetings, which will be held in 2026.

In parallel with organizing cycle activities, GBIO endeavored to respond to the current political moment of nationwide threats to immigrants, social safety net funding, and transgender rights. GBIO created a "Solidarity Organizing Team" with discussion and listening sessions to understand how members of our communities are feeling the impact of these threats and to identify concrete, local steps that GBIO institutions can take in response. GBIO leaders from Fourth, including Rev. Burns Stanfield and Janine Warrington, have been deeply engaged in these efforts. This work continues in 2026!

Layne Jacobs

value of developing a more age-appropriate curriculum.

It seemed clear to me that developing a more age-appropriate curriculum would be worthwhile. We introduced a structure of three-week "courses" that students could choose from, divided into two three-week sessions over the summer. Some courses were more popular than others, but overall, it created many opportunities for creativity, exploration, and engagement. Weekly field trips did not hurt either! The classes offered were archaeology, taught by Finn McCusker; Latin dance, taught by Adan Acosta; film-making, taught by Hank Yang; Spanish culture, taught by Shamia Chaparro; DnD taught by Adan Acosta; music and performing arts, taught by Betsy Pabon, Finn McCusker, and Janine Warrington; cooking, taught by Kyle Belanger; and fashion crafts, taught by me. Field trips included visits to Mei Mei Dumpling, a rock climbing gym, and a scavenger hunt in the Boston Public Garden.

As far as pilots go, Maze Makers had many joyful and successful moments. I especially enjoyed watching students become excited about their projects and take pride in specific lessons and skills they were developing like performing feel the effects! But we do keep making music!

Some treats in 2025 --- Jon brought TWO tap dancing percussion student to church – and he tapped along with the hymns. We welcomed back and said goodbye again to saxophonist Hui (and his beautiful wife, Sila, and son, Silas). Hui is a great sax player. Matt York continues to bring his soulful twang, and now his partner, Angel, fiddles along.

Meanwhile, we managed to do another Passion Play, we had moments of featuring our theater kids, and we had an extraordinary Christmas concert. There was also a great talent show, thanks to a robust representation by the kids theater and teen theater programs. There was also a lovely sampling of our amazingly talented musicians.

AND.... We celebrated the Return of the Summer Gospel Concert, remembering Shorty Henry along the way. His family joined us in the audience.

GBIO

Fourth Presbyterian is a member of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO), a coalition of churches, synagogues, mosques and other civic institutions around Greater Boston that uses community organizing to advance the public good and social justice.

After completing a housing justice campaign in 2024, GBIO in 2025 embarked upon a new organizing cycle, beginning with internally focused work to ensure we as an organization have the ability to create change. GBIO entered into a “Season of Power” in which members of its various institutions, including over ten people from Fourth Presbyterian, attended trainings focused on building power. What is power? Why is it good? How do we create it? The key to building good power, we learned, is building relationships. So GBIO next entered into a season of relationship building, in which members of various institutions committed to one-to-one relational meetings within and across institutions. Leaders from Fourth Presbyterian engaged in more than thirty one-to-one meetings as part of these efforts. Finally, at the end of 2025, GBIO initiated a house meeting campaign, called “Get Real,” in which our institutions biking lessons in Moakley Park. It was amazing to watch campers, some who had never ridden a bike before, gradually grow in confidence (and speed!) on the bike. Campers also enjoy weekly water days at the park, thanks to the generosity of the Ollie. We beat the heat by speeding down the slip-n-slide, relaxing in the pool, and eating popsicles. Other outdoor games favorites included: capture the flag, four square, and tag on the playground. Thanks to all who made this summer a blast!

Report from Rachel Mallett (Mazemakers supervisor):

This summer, I had the opportunity to help reignite the Maze Makers program within Summer Meals. Pastor Tim was present during its earlier years, and this felt like a natural moment both to reintroduce the program and to reimagine what it could be. Last summer, while serving as the outdoor activities counselor, I spent quite a bit of time with the older age group (ages 9–12). I noticed signs of understimulation as they participated in the same activities as much younger children, which made clear the

Spanish Class

From Participant Kathy Burger

Over the past year in Andrea’s Spanish class, I’ve experienced steady growth and a genuinely enjoyable learning environment. Our core group of regular students created a consistent rhythm each week, while others dropped in from time to time, adding fresh energy to the class. Throughout the year, I expanded my vocabulary and deepened my understanding of Spanish tenses, which has strengthened both my confidence and accuracy when speaking. My conversational skills have noticeably improved, and I’m becoming much better at listening to and understanding spoken Spanish. Andrea keeps the class engaging with creative activities—videos, news stories, games, and other interactive exercises—that make learning both fun and effective.

MoreMusic, A Summer Concert!

It is hard to overstate how important music is to this community. Our ways of musical expression had to change during the pandemic, and we’ve had to do lots of re-building and re-inventing. We saw the musical interests and skills they were developing, like performing their rehearsed Latin dances for the entire camp! To close out the summer, Maze Maker students helped plan portions of our camp-wide celebration and assisted with its execution. While there were certainly areas for improvement, the program was a fun and meaningful addition to Summer Meals, it holds a lot of potential for the summers to come, and there were powerful moments of student ownership!

Some statistics from Janine:

Total number of kids registered (SMP): 103

Average daily attendance (SMP and Teen Crib):
38

Total meals served (B/L/S): 2,297

Total spent on food: \$5760

Total reimbursed by state: \$8647

Field Education Students

Support of seminarians doing their field education continues to be an important piece of our ministry. In the first part of 2025 Ro Robinson finished her unit with us. During the summer, Rachel Mallett worked in the Summer Meals Program, though not technically as an intern. In the fall, we had Rachel, Ethan Kober and Carson Crochet all begin new internships. We are exceptionally blessed by these students!

Passages

New Members: Terry Woodfin, Anita Gnikpendu, Gilbert Anyah, Matt York, Terry Woodfin, Joe Lazar, Jamie Maddox, Myniece Greenidge, Rachel Pearson

Members Removed as part of their ordination process: Mike Motia, Ro Robinson, Brent O'Neill

Some news in 2025
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Fourth Presbyterian Church
Budget vs. Actuals: 2025 Budget - FY25 P&L Classes
January - December 2025
Summary
Created for Session 1-13-26
By Susan Devine and Kathy Burger

Rev 3
 2025

2025 Budget - FY25 P&L Classes

January - December 2025

Summary

Created for Session 1-13-26

By Susan Devine and Kathy Burger

Account Balances as of 12/31/2025

General Operating - \$175,801.38

Vision - \$318,267.38

Food Pantry - \$13,529.56

Investments - \$284,390.90

Community Program - \$330,610.71

Sabbatical - \$1,148.23

Notes

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2025 Church Statistical Report



Church Fourth PIN 4556
Presbytery Boston
Address 340 Dorchester St, South Boston, MA 02127-2757
Phone 617-268-1281 **Fax** 617-268-1281
Email bstanfield@hds.harvard.edu
Web Site www.fourthpresbyterian.org

Membership

Prior Active Members	162	Adjusted membership	162
Gains			
Certificate	0	Certificate	3
Youth Professions	0	Deaths	0
Professions & Reaffirmations	8	Deleted for any Other Reason	6
Total Gains	8	Total Losses	9
Total Ending Active Members	161		

Baptisms		Average Weekly Worship Attendance	85
Presented by Others	0	Friends of the Congregation	20
At Confirmation	0	Ruling Elders on Session	9
All Other		Do you have Deacons?	Yes

Age Distribution of Active Members

		People with Disabilities	
17 & Under	7	Hearing impairment	1
18 - 25	12	Sight impairment	0
26 - 40	35	Mobility impairment	2
41 - 55	60	Other impairment	4
56 - 70	42		
Over 70	5		
Total Age Distribution	161	Gender Distribution	
		Women	94
		Men	64
		Non-Binary	3

Youth in Congregation

Age 4 and under	8	Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	9
Elementary School (K-5th grade)	10	High School (9th – 12th grade)	9
Total Youth			36

Racial Ethnic

Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	11	Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	0
Black/African American/African	26	White	113
Middle Eastern/North African	0	Multiracial	