

Candidate Brochure 2023

Glenn A. Burkland, DMD: Elder Nominee for Finance



Glenn has been a member of First Presbyterian since 1996. He served two terms as a trustee and, in that capacity, was on the Finance committee. He also convened and chaired the committee to develop a mission purpose for the church's apartment rental property.

Glenn is a retired orthodontist and former assistant professor at Penn's Dental School. In retirement, Glenn and his wife Diane (a retired Presbyterian minister) enjoy spending time at their home on Long Beach Island. Since 2020, they have been leading a weekly small group Zoom Bible study that began with people from the shore, but now includes folks from other areas as well. Glenn also volunteers at Chester County Hospital and Camilla Hall with their trained therapy dog, Molly.

Glenn and Diane have three wonderful adult children, one great son-in-law, and one fantastic teenage grandson.

Gail Coxe: Elder Nominee for Faith Formation



Gail's faith journey began at FPC, WC at birth. She was confirmed in February 1972, making her a member for over 50 years! Gail is a third-generation member on both sides of her family. Her paternal grandparents were married in the FPC manse in the early 1900's. Her Grandma Coxe joined FPC in 1911 and served in various capacities, including teaching the "Golden Rules" Sunday school class. Gail's maternal great-grandmother from Ireland, Annie Sullivan Brosius Noble, worked for the Samuel Barber family on Church Street during Sam's youth. It is written that her Irish upbringing had an influence on Samuel's early works, specifically a libretto entitled "The Rose Tree." Gail's parents also served in different capacities at FPC, and her extended family are members as well.

Gail's church involvement through the years has included chancel choir, confirmation mentor, youth group leader, trustee, and deacon. She has participated in Presbyterian Women's Circles and previously served on a Nominating committee and a Youth Pastor Search committee. She is excited to serve as an elder and looks forward to any small part she can play. Gail's interests include art, nature, gardening, photography, reading, and walking. She has a daughter and a son who has made her the proud grammy of four.

Lori McDermott: Elder Nominee for Nominating Committee/Co-Chair



I am the youngest daughter of Ed and Janet Hartzell, who both played active roles at First Pres over the years. My husband, Stephen, and I are empty nesters, and between us we have five children, six grandchildren, and our rescue dog, Lily. I have spent the last 17 years at my dream job, Director of Alumni and Community Engagement, at Church Farm School. I also chair the West Whiteland Township Friends of the Parks committee.

I enjoy time with family and friends, exercising, brisk morning walks, and travel. I am grateful for the simple things in life. I began attending Sunday school at First Pres as a toddler. Although life took me "off course" from First Pres for a number of years, I began regularly attending church in 2006 after my father's death to provide support for my mom. After her passing in 2010, I continued to attend on a weekly basis and became more involved.

I have been actively involved as a deacon and have been the moderator for numerous years. I have also been actively involved on the Nominating committee. Being asked to serve as an elder and co-chair on the Nominating committee is just a small way I can personally give back to First Pres.

Esther Smith: Elder Nominee for Missions



Esther has been a member of First Pres for 20 years. She has been active as a Sunday school teacher, VBS helper, Bible study participant, and usher. She is a long-time member of PW Faith Circle and is currently serving as a Stephen Minister.

Esther obtained her bachelor's and master's degree in Computer Science. She worked for 10 years at three tech companies utilizing and expanding her software engineer knowledge before becoming a stay-at-home mom once her girls were born. She and her husband, Rich, have two grown, married daughters, one granddaughter, and a grandson due this December. Esther enjoys reading, traveling, gardening, and spending time with her family and friends.

David Stone: Elder Nominee for Worship



I am a lifelong Presbyterian, having been baptized and confirmed in First Presbyterian, York. I was active there in the youth group and the high school choir and received the God and Country award while in Boy Scouts. Worship – and particularly singing – has been part of my church life wherever I have been.

In our search for a church home, we attended a worship service at First Pres and immediately knew that this would be our home. In the 26 years I've been a member of First Pres, I have served a term on Session and one on Trustees. I have worked on numerous youth mission trips to eastern Tennessee, the coal region of West Virginia, and locally in a week's mission trip in Coatesville. Throughout this time, I have been an active member of the chancel choir and served on two organist searches. More recently, I have frequently volunteered as a liturgist. I'm excited to be nominated to serve on the Worship committee, especially as we open the next chapter with Andrew on our journey of faith as a church family.

I graduated from Penn State with a BS in Food Science and added an MBA from Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville as well as studies in International Affairs at Washington University in St. Louis. I retired after 25 years at FMC Corporation, where I was director of Global Supply Chain and Operations Planning.

With my wife, Judy (we'll celebrate 50 years next August!), I have two daughters and a son, and two granddaughters.

George C. Zumbano: Elder Nominee for Personnel



George married Gerri at First Pres in 1993. They have five grown children and eight grandchildren. George is a lawyer/partner at Lamb McErlane PC in West Chester and has practiced law for over 45 years.

Currently, George serves on Session on the Personnel committee, and participated on the PNC in its search for Rev. Andrew Esqueda. George is also active in weekly Bible studies and First Crew.

Rich Blessing: Deacon



I am a retired middle school math teacher, having served a Harrisburg-area school district for 37 years. In retirement, I am a tutor and a substitute teacher in several local districts. My wife, Lynda (Brittain), and I moved here in March 2022 to be closer to her West Chester office and to enjoy life in Chester County. Being closer to our daughter, Mollie, at Drexel and now in grad school in Philadelphia, is a nice bonus! After visiting other churches, we knew that Lyn's former church (First Pres) was definitely the place for us and became members in 2022. Mollie was baptized here in 2002, and we had visited over the years. It's always been warm and welcoming!

I have been very active in church ministry throughout my life, having sung in the choir and played handbells, served on the Service Board, Deacons, Session, and as a lay youth director in former churches. I have worked in Christian Education, Mission, Stewardship, and Fellowship committees and have served on two Pastoral Nominating committees. Here at First Pres, I am in the choir and handbell choir and help at the Act in Faith food pantry that the church supports. I am very excited to have the chance to serve as a deacon in a parish-ministry setting. In my "free time," I collect stamps, root for the Phillies, Eagles, and Penn State, walk and play with our dog, Tallie, read as much as I can, and try to remain an active learner.

Jennifer Carle: Deacon (One-Year Term)



My name is Jennifer Carle. I am a graduate of West Chester University, where I obtained a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, a teacher's certification, and a master's degree in Public Relations and Human Resources Management.

I've been singing in the First Pres choir for over 20 years and just completed a term on the Personnel committee and Session. I've been employed at my current employer for 26 years. I run the HR department. I have two sweet four-legged friends at home, a big orange tabby cat and a very furry corgi.

Karin Khan: Deacon



Hi, I'm Karin Moelgaard Khan and I live in West Chester with my husband of 17 years, Ab, and our 2 children Alex (15) and Emma (11). I am originally from Denmark and my husband is from New Zealand. However, this summer we became proud US citizens as well. West Chester has been our home for the past 10 years, and we're happy that we for the past 5 years have found a home at First Pres as well.

In my professional life, the past 15+ years I have worked in Global Mobility/International Human Resources enabling people to go on work assignments worldwide. I have a master's degree in English, Human Resource Management, and Intercultural Competence/studies. I am also a certified Life Coach/Global Transition coach and I absolutely love helping people realize their potential and to help them make choices that make them happier, both personally and professionally. I basically just love people and I'm not afraid to meet people where they are in life!

In addition to my professional work and being a mom and wife, I love traveling and have lived in many places in the world, including Tanzania, Canada, and Singapore. I jumped on my first plane when I left for Tanzania at age 19 to do mission work for a year and since then I have never stopped wanting to explore, and wanting to serve God in whatever capacity I can! I absolutely love coffee and I can be found in any coffee shop that serves good coffee! As a Dane I also love my pastries, but I prefer to bake them myself. I enjoy burning all those pastries calories off by being in nature (running or hiking) or taking photos. I am a total amateur photographer, but I'm told I have an eye for it.

Sally Hall: Deacon



I've been a long-time member of First Pres, with a few years away and now back again. I have served before as a deacon, an elder, chair of the Worship committee, and as a Stephen Ministries leader. I was part of the group that founded Stephen Ministries at First Pres and taught and trained many classes of Stephen Ministers. For many years, I served as referrals coordinator for Stephen Ministries, matching folks in need of a listening ear with a Stephen Minister. My late husband, Howard, and I sang in the choir for 20-plus years. It is good to be back, and I look forward to again serving as a deacon.

Sandy Lebold: Deacon



Hi, my name is Sandy Lebold, and my husband, Howard, and I have been members of First Pres since 1987. We have two grown daughters, Kathryn and Samantha, who now live in Maryland and North Carolina. I've previously served as an elder on Congregational Life, and this will be my third term as a deacon. I retired as a preschool teacher at the Bucket School in 2021 and enjoy volunteering at ACT in Faith and the Barn at Springbrook Farm. In my free time, I love to read, garden, bake, and hike with my golden retriever, Piper.

Barbara Lidle: Deacon



My daughter, Amy, and I joined First Pres in 2006. I have served as a deacon previously. Currently, I am involved in one of the Presbyterian Women's Circles, Bible/book studies, and I usher occasionally.

I am a retired librarian. My most recent job was assistant director at the public library in Chester. In my spare time, I enjoy reading and doing word puzzles. Besides my daughter, I have a son and daughter-in-law in Minneapolis.

Susan Seel: Deacon (One-Year Term)



I have been a member of First Presbyterian Church since the early 1990s and have been singing with the chancel choir even longer. I have previously served as a deacon several times and have also served as an elder on Session.

I am a lifelong resident of Chester County, but have moved around the county a lot, while also traveling the world extensively.

I am married to W. Stuart Lucas. Between the two of us, we have three daughters and seven grandchildren.

Susan Smith: Deacon (One-Year Term)



My husband, Richard, and I are long-time members of First Pres. We briefly spent time at the Honey Brook Presbyterian Church and then returned to First Pres in 2017. I have been a deacon at First Pres since 2020 and have enjoyed getting to know the people in my parish. I am currently retired after spending many years in the nursing profession. I enjoy reading, sewing, and trips with family and friends. I look forward to what 2024 will bring in the life of our church.

Susan Walker: Deacon



Susan was raised in Gap Pa but now lives in the borough of West Chester. She attended Bellevue Pres in Gap and has come to First Pres recently. She has worked most recently in her son's karate school in Philly. She likes to walk in the mornings and loves good food. She has joined the choir and is looking forward to continuing to be a Deacon.

Brian Claeys: Trustee Nominee for Insurance/Safety/Security



My wife Julie and I have been members of First Pres since 1998. We've been active in many aspects of church life here at First Pres. We have a grown daughter Bailey who lives in Philadelphia with her husband Bailey. They have both caught the travel bug from us. My work background can certainly be called diverse. I have a bachelor's degree in Music Education, and spent 3 years in public school education and band directing.

When Julie and I married, I shifted direction and began what ultimately became my career in employee benefits consulting. During the next 29 years I worked in pension and health & welfare plan administration and employee self service web design. I finished out my work life with 5 years as director of communications and IT here at First Pres.

I have been retired since 2019 and now spend my spare time in retirement traveling, maintaining home and property in two states, volunteering doing lab, eligibility and IT work for a nonprofit, free medical clinic here in West Chester (CVIM), managing the website and Facebook pages for Perico Bay Club (our 2nd home in Florida), and making music with:

- the chancel and handbell choirs here at First Pres West Chester,
- a community band,
- a number of 70's rock cover bands (one in Phoenixville, and one online with high school friends).

I believe I have a unique skill set which I now look forward to putting to use on Trustees, as I round out my "Triple Crown", having previously served as Deacon and Elder.

Becky Gamble: Trustee Nominee for Personnel



My husband, Scott, and I have been members of First Pres for about 38 years. This church holds a special place in our hearts, as it is where we raised our three daughters, developed cherished friendships, and shared the ups and downs of life in fellowship with our church family. We were both raised and then married in Presbyterian churches, so joining First Pres was a natural fit. We met at Grove City College where we both majored in Business Administration, which prepared me for my work in the printing industry with my father's business.

We commute from Malvern for worship at 10:45 most weeks and are both involved in many areas of our church life. I am in my third year as a trustee serving on the Personnel committee. For many years, I have been involved with children and youth through teaching Sunday school, MS Bible study, confirmation class, VBS, and the Youth committee. Serving as a Stephen Minister and leader has been an impactful way for me to use my faith and compassion together in caring, one-to-one relationships. Some of my favorite mornings each month are those spent with the women of Hope Circle and the women's Bible studies. I look forward to being part of the Wednesday community lunches as they begin again this fall. Over the years, I have found that the best way for me to get to know others is to serve alongside or to study together!

Carmelo Ortiz: Trustee Nominee for Building and Maintenance



Born here, at Chester County Hospital, I was brought back and forth throughout my childhood to Puerto Rico. I have six children, four boys and two girls, all with large personalities. I have done many jobs in my life, but all with a mechanical aspect. Cooking and feeding people are a huge part of my life. Cooking allows me to share my love to others.

Around 2006, I joined First Pres after attending with my wife, Julia, who grew up here. After growing up in a Catholic church, I felt that this church was my home. Through the years, I volunteered with First Crew and Done in a Day and had the privilege of them helping me with our fixer upper. I also supported a group of Spanish-language learners who wanted to engage with our Guatemala church family.

Eventually becoming a deacon for two terms, I continued to grow within the church. Watching my boys in childcare on Sundays was a joy, understanding the community they belonged to, and now I watch my girls. My biggest participation was sitting on the Pastoral Nominating committee, where, with my many hours of work and home life, I was very anxious about how to get it all done. God knew my stresses and gave me time for the committee, work, and family.

Craig Single: Trustee Nominee for Building and Maintenance/Rental Properties



Craig and his wife, Liz, have been members of First Pres since 1998. They both served for several years as youth group advisors for high school students. During this time, Craig participated in a number of youth trips such as The Pittsburgh Project. He has served as the leader of the ushering team, as an elder on Session on the Personnel committee, and has volunteered in a number of other ways, including with First Crew.

Liz and Craig's sons, Andrew and Daniel, were both confirmed at First Pres and are enjoying their college experiences at Virginia Tech and the University of Tennessee, respectively.

Professionally, Craig works in the Human Resources field. He led the creation and launch of his employer's neurodiversity-hiring program. Additionally, he helped to form a regional non-profit, Neurodiversity Employment Network, that assists neurodivergent adults in finding meaningful work. Craig holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Psychology.

Nominees for At-Large Members Nominating Committee

Scott Gamble: At-Large Nominee



My wife, Becky, and I have three daughters and three grandchildren. Becky and I have been members of First Pres for approximately 37 years, and we remain active in church activities, including worship, educational classes, leadership, and fellowship opportunities.

I enjoy outdoor activities such as golf, and I work for a private equity firm, Patriot Financial Partners.

Participating with the Nominating committee is a great way to stay connected with our congregation and to work with people to match their skills and passions with the needs of our church.

Charlie Myhre: At-Large Nominee/Deacon Representative



I have been a member of First Pres since 1984. I was married to Kathie at First Pres in August of 1984. I am currently a deacon at First Pres and served as a deacon for four years in the early 90's. I have been involved with Men of Mission/First Crew since 2003 and was one of the people to form a Good Works Crew of First Pres members in 2004.

I am a graduate of Drexel University in Mechanical Engineering and worked in a variety of engineering and engineered equipment sales jobs until my retirement in 2005. I have been heavily involved with Boy Scouts of America, Chester County Council from 1992 to the present. My wife, Kathie, and I have one son, Kevin, who is a patent attorney. We live in East Bradford. I enjoy woodworking and doing odd fixup jobs at First Pres.

I believe the most important thing for our congregation is to recruit qualified and dedicated leaders for our church. Also, we need to encourage getting our Zoom members back to attending church. There is nothing as moving as attending our church services.

Dan Ohms: At-Large Nominee/Trustee Representative



My wife, Nancy, and I have been members of First Pres since we were married in the church in September 1983. We have two grown children (Stephen and Heather), who are twins. Stephen resides in Royersford, PA, with his wife, Elyse, and their two children, Eleanor and Simon. Our daughter lives in Pompano Beach, FL, along with her fiancé, Chris.

I retired from Subaru of America in June 2019 with Nancy, who worked as a preschool aid with Westminster's Preschool. In our spare time, we do chores and outside work around the house. Nancy also is a member of the Sweet Dreams Quilting Group, making quilts for babies who are baptized at First Pres. She helps with other charitable causes, too.

I have served numerous terms as a trustee – two in the mid-1990's when the new lounge and elevator were added, two terms that ended in 2021, and I rejoined the trustees beginning in 2023. I am looking forward to once again serving the church as an at-large member of the Nominating committee. I am committed to the caring ministry of the church, because I believe in community service and other goals which the church strives to achieve.

Tom Pantazes: At-Large Nominee/Co-Chair of Nominating Committee



Husband to Sara and dad to Ben and Matt, Tom works as an instructional designer at West Chester University and cohosts the ODLI on air podcast. Tom's participation in First Pres ministries takes the form of chipping in where help is needed. For example, in the past he has helped with the streaming booth and as an usher with the 10:45 service. Most importantly, Tom supports the church's Director of Faith Formation as she runs amazing programming.

Tom is committed to the work of First Pres because the church is committed to loving its community through action. Time and again, we identify the needs of the downtrodden and work to build them up, and that is the kind of work he wants to be a part of. He also appreciates the ways in which First Pres looks to expand our understanding of God and Jesus and the ways in which they want us to be active in this world.

Adriana Park: At-Large Nominee



I have been a member of First Pres for over 35 years. My husband, Dennis, and I were married here in 1996. We have two grown daughters and two granddaughters ages two-and-a-half and two-years-old.

I am now a volunteer receptionist at First Pres, and in the past I've been privileged to serve as a deacon. Additionally, I have taught Sunday school in previous years and today serve as a substitute Sunday school teacher whenever the need arises.

Music has always been an integral part of my life. I play violin and have performed in church many times. I recently retired from teaching music in the public schools for 40 years, yet I still play a teacher's role with 25 private students of violin and viola.

I have a string quartet that plays for weddings, parties, and other celebrations. Additionally, I am a member of the Chesco Pops Orchestra and Orchestra Concordia.

At home, we have four crazy cats living with us!

Kelly Pruden: At-Large Nominee



My family and I have been members of First Pres for over a decade. I've had the privilege of serving as a deacon for numerous terms, as well as on the Nominating committee. I love being a part of this committee and seeing firsthand how God works through our team to discover and utilize the talents of our church family.

Scott and I have two children. Andrew is a political science major at Pitt, and Kate is a junior at Henderson High School. I like to spend my free time trail running throughout Chester County, traveling, and hiking with my family. For several years, I've had the opportunity to serve our community as a volunteer pediatric nurse practitioner at the Nurses Center at St. Agnes Church