

# VIENNA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ELDERS AND DEACONS FOR INSTALLATION

November 7, 2021

In the Presbyterian Church, more trust is placed in a group of people, who together seek to discern the mind of God to lead them towards faithful action, than in a single individual who has all the answers. Therefore, committees are a mainstay of the church. At the local congregational level this means two main boards: Session, as the highest decision-making body, and the Deacons, as the caregiving, pastoral group. Both groups are to be a representation of the congregation as a whole.

The Elders and Deacons are ordained positions in the Presbyterian Church (USA). That means that we believe each of them have been chosen by God and the congregation to be a leader in Christ's church. The vows they take are the same vows that the pastor takes to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament. Once a person is ordained, that ordination is considered a lifelong vocation. The ordained Elders and Deacons have a responsibility to cultivate their prayer life, to study the Bible, and to seek God in their individual and congregational life.



## ELDERS, CLASS OF 2024

### JONATHAN BENETT

Jonathan has been a member of VPC since 2008. He is married to his best friend and college sweetheart, Melissa, and they are blessed to have a 17-year-old son, Tyler, who is a senior at South Lakes High School. Jonathan is an IT executive with over 20 years of experience in technology modernization in the public sector, working both in and for the federal government.

Outside of work, Jonathan enjoys spending quality time with his family and friends, traveling, entertaining, and cooking...when he is not watching his son play baseball or run and jump in track and field. He is an adventurer at heart and enjoys mountain biking, trail running, hiking, camping, fishing, golfing, and adventure racing and orienteering with his family. He is also a self-proclaimed "adventure sports junky" and enjoys snowboarding, surfing, white water rafting, and long board skateboarding.

At VPC, Jonathan is an usher captain, leads a team distributing food monthly for the Bags of Love campaign, has helped lead a SMP to Mexico, participates in the Monday Night Men's group, is an active member of the Great Banquet community and a 10-year weekly small group that resulted from it.

Jonathan writes:

***"I choose to serve as an Elder because I love VPC and our great community of faithful members and want to attract more to join us. I want to help lead the change necessary to ensure that we***

***continue to be a great church and are successful through the transition with our new Pastor Hope Lee.”***

## **TERI DUNGAN**

Teri joined VPC in 2000 with her husband, Tom. Their three children, Thomas (27), Matthew (24), and Megan (21), were all confirmed at VPC and have participated in children’s ministry and SMPs. Commissioned as a Stephen Minister in 2011, Teri now serves as a Stephen Leader. In 2013, Teri started her Growing Your Soul journey and serves as a GYS leader. Teri served on the Pastoral Nominating Committee and joined the Financial Management Team in January, which she now serves as the Chair. Teri graduated from the College of William and Mary in 1988 with a BBA in Accounting and earned her CPA. She started her career at Arthur Andersen, LLP and ultimately finished her career at Host Hotels and Resorts, Inc. as a Senior Director of Corporate Accounting. She remains actively engaged with William and Mary and serves on the Executive Committee of the William and Mary Foundation Board.

Teri enjoys traveling, pickleball, and recently started playing golf.

Teri writes:

***“It will be an honor and a joy to prayerfully serve as an Elder. I believe that God has great things in store for VPC, and I humbly offer my time and my talents to help the church leadership and Pastor Hope during this critical transition.”***

**PAUL KASHCHY**

Paul is married to Mimi Kashchy and they have two children, Samuel (10) and Alexis (8). Paul works in commercial banking and has been in the finance industry for 20 years. Outside of work, Paul works heavily in his community by coaching his children's sports teams, volunteering with the local Cub Scout pack, and works with local non-profit and business associations.

In his spare time, Paul enjoys exercising: swimming, cycling and walking his yellow lab. Paul is an avid reader and enjoys playing video games with his children.

Paul writes:

***"I serve to give back to my community. Love the Lord, love the people, serve the Lord, serve the people."***

## **MELINDA MAYES**

Melinda has attended VPC for 24 years. She moved to Northern Virginia from California in 1997. She is a long-time member of the Sanctuary Choir and currently serves as a volunteer with the Friendship Class, and as a Women's Bible Study group leader. She is a regular participant in a small group, the Friday Racial Reconciliation Prayer Calls, and Sunday lunch fellowship with VPC friends and others. In past years, she has served as an Elder and Deacon, co-facilitator of Growing Your Soul 1, and on the Missions Committee. She has also participated in Growing Your Soul 1 and 2, Renewing Prayer, Great Banquet, and study groups, most recently the Christ and Culture Learning Community. She is a single woman who has recently retired from seven years in private industry and 30 years of federal service as a geologist and

regulatory specialist (Department of the Interior). She loves learning about and experiencing the beauty of God's creation and enjoys music, traveling, cooking, and entertaining. She is so very grateful to VPC for helping her grow her faith and discipleship to Jesus as Lord and Savior and for providing opportunities to love and serve others.

Melinda writes:

***“In this new chapter at VPC, I look forward to how God will lead us as a community in new ways to deepen our walk with Jesus and to extend his message and love in service to our local community and beyond.”***

## **KAREN MOKATE**

Karen has been a member of VPC since 2012. She and her husband, Jaime Marquez, live in Vienna. They have two adult children – Daniel, who is married to Jen, lives in Brooklyn, and Diana, who will be married in June 2022, lives in Durham, NC. Karen is in her second year of retired life, after a career related to economic and social development in Latin America. Karen enjoys the water and loves to spend time at Lake Anna, and also loves to run and bike.

At VPC, Karen has been an ESOL teacher, participates in Tuesday morning Women's Bible Study and Growing Your Soul (GYS), and is a member of the Great Banquet community. Karen is currently a third-year Deacon at VPC.

Karen writes:

***“Christian community allows us to grow spiritually, to learn from each other, to practice compassion, love and forgiveness, to support one another and to glorify God. I pray that my service will contribute to a stronger, loving Christian community at VPC.”***

## **ANDREA STRAHAN**

Andrea is a stay-at-home-mom to two daughters, Sophie and Lily, and wife to Jamison. An aspiring children’s book author, Andrea held communications positions prior to children at companies including DISH Network, IBM, and The University of Texas. Andrea enjoys running, the outdoors, and on Sundays she volunteers with VPC’s Friendship Class, our Sunday school for adults with intellectual and physical differences.

Other church activities Andrea has participated in include volunteering with VPC’s Hypothermia Week and last year’s World Vision Global 6K for Water. She also participated in a come-and-serve trip with the Community Coalition for Haiti in the summer of 2018. At her daughters’ school, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Andrea is a volunteer for its annual book fair. She has also helped coach her daughters’ softball, tennis, and basketball teams over the years.

Andrea writes:

***“I want to be the hands and feet of Christ in small ways, right here in my neighborhood. I particularly want to help those who have not been as fortunate as I have been in terms of income,***

***education and opportunities. It fills me up to know that I might please God; I take to heart the words of Luke 12:48, which says that to those whom much has been given, much is required."***

### **BETH WEBSTER (FILLING A ONE-YEAR TERM)**

Beth and her husband Rick have been active members of VPC for over 30 years. Along with their daughter Lindsay (25) and son Brady (22), the Websters think of the VPC community as family. Beth has served on Summer Mission Projects, as a Deacon and an Elder, on the PNC, and in Children's and Student Ministries.

A former high school Spanish teacher, Beth frequently answers the call to substitute in FCPS. She also served in leadership roles in Community Bible Study for about 15 years. Currently, Beth is participating in several small groups at VPC: Growing Your Soul with 7 wonderful women, and on Sunday mornings with Rick and 4 winsome couples. She delights in "Java with Jesus" every morning, and would love to chat over coffee or tea with you, too!

Beth writes:

***"I am excited to join God in the NEW THING that He is doing in and through VPC in our next chapter! As Pastor Hope told us in a recent sermon, Kingdom work is messy but that's where all the fun stuff of ministry is because that's where we get to see Jesus transforming lives!"***

**DEACONS, CLASS OF 2024**

## LISA DECARLO

Lisa was born in Buffalo, NY, but was raised in Vienna. She has seen Vienna grow from being a small town to what it is today. As a child, she attended Holy Comforter Episcopal Church. Her father passed away 5 years ago, and her mother still lives on Walker Street where Lisa grew up.

Lisa and her husband, Jay, have been married for 25 years, and currently live in Oakhill. Together they have 3 stepchildren and 2 grandchildren. Lisa has a twin sister in Washington, D.C., and a brother in Oakton.

Currently, Lisa is an Associate Broker/Realtor at Weichert in Vienna (across the parking lot). She has been a realtor for over 22 years. Lisa likes to paint (but never seems to have time). Most of her time is spent working, and raising her new puppy, Louie. Louie is a handful and adores Jay!

Lisa writes:

***“Looking back through my life, both good and bad, I know God has had a hand in the direction and has pulled me back during tough times. I enjoy giving back. I did short-term mission work in the Philippines, and it changed my outlook on life. The Filipinos in many cases have so little but are filled with the joy of God. We have so much in the US and need to share and help where possible, with God’s direction.”***



## **CLAY HAMRIC**

Clay is new to VPC and feels extremely blessed to be involved with the Church. Over his lifetime, Clay has served others in a wide variety of ways and was extremely blessed to receive the invitation to serve as a Deacon at VPC. He has served in previous churches as an adult Sunday school leader, chair of the church's Safety/Security and Facilities Committees, Peer Support Leader, Retreat Leader, Usher, Greeter, Audio/Visual Technician, and Finance Committee member. Clay served as a volunteer EMT/Firefighter in Virginia for 17 years.

Currently, Clay serves as an usher at VPC and is growing with his new church. Outside of VPC, Clay serves as a Board member for the American Trauma Society, volunteers for the Alliance of Therapy Dogs as a certified therapy dog team leader, and serves as a volunteer consultant to INOVA's Patient Advisory Committee.

Clay writes:

***“When I joined VPC, I was greeted so genuinely and openly. I quickly found that this was the place for me. God leads, and leads us to places like VPC. During these tough times, it is so comforting to have a place of God, fellowship, and like VPC in one's life. I look forward to working to pass on to others the same warmth and caring that has been, and continues to be, given to me through the privilege and honor of serving as a Deacon.”***

**DEBBIE FRANKIEWICZ**

Debbie and her husband, Joe, are celebrating their 15<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in December. They have two children, James (10) and Emma (9). Originally from rural Illinois, Debbie taught high school English before becoming a stay-at-home mom. She is an avid reader and knitter and looks forward to traveling again. Since joining VPC in 2017, she has been active in the Sanctuary Choir, the Weekday Preschool Ministry committee, and MOPS, first as a mother of preschoolers and now as a mentor mom. She also teaches in the ESOL program and participates in the Tuesday morning women's Bible Study.

Debbie writes:

***“After being cut off from so many of my activities during COVID, I had been thinking and praying about how I could serve and deepen my relationship with VPC, and this opportunity to serve as a deacon was perfectly timed. I am especially excited to serve during this important time of change in our church.”***

## **FRANK GANIS**

Although active in VPC activities since 2015, Frank formally became a member of the congregation in December 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. A resident of Fairfax, he has been happily married to his wife, Patti, for over a quarter of a century and has one son, Gabriel, a student at George Mason University.

Active in the Monday Night Men's Group and many Bridgepoint Connections programs, Frank also served as a lector for over 20 years at Holy Trinity Church in Georgetown and as an organist at Holy Guardian Angels Church in Reading, PA. A "Cradle Catholic," Frank was born in the coal mining boomtown of Pottsville, Pennsylvania, better known today for Yuengling's, America's Oldest Brewery. He grew up in the railroad town of Reading, Pennsylvania, and was immersed in the principles of trains, union steelworkers, Pennsylvania Dutch culture.

Frank earned degrees in computer science at Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania. After working as a software developer and being immersed in a culture of innovation at AT&T Bell Labs in the New York City area for a decade, he earned an MBA at the Wharton School. Upon moving to the D.C. area he continued to work in innovative digital transformation roles for MCI, News Corp, Capital One, Sylvan Learning, Blackboard, and GEG. His various roles also exposed Frank to the complexities of Walt Disney Imagineering and producing Broadway shows.

Frank writes:

***"While in Pennsylvania, I rediscovered and renewed many core values that faded while working in competitive corporate and hectic environments of Philadelphia, New York and the 'Beltway Shuffle' of Washington. The tremendous wisdom gained during these challenging three years inspired me to pursue the role of Deacon to better love and serve the Lord and others."***

## **JACQUIE GARLAND**

Jacque is widowed after 41 years of marriage with her high school sweet heart. She has two sons, one recently moved to Jacksonville, and the other lives in Vienna. She has five grandchildren. Five years ago, she retired from accounting and mortgage banking.

Jacqui has been a member of VPC for roughly 25 years. Over the years, she has attended many Bible studies including Disciple Bible Studies, Women's Tuesday Night Bible Studies, and Monday Night Bible Groups. She participated in Growing Your Soul I and II and then helped lead a GYS group for I and II. In the spring of 2018, she attended NOVA Great Banquet (#66, Table of Sarah).

Jacque previously served as a Deacon in 2017-2019 and was a member of the Agape and Funeral Reception Teams. Her time as a Deacon provided her with various opportunities to serve and the fellowship with fellow Deacons brought her closer to God.

Jacque writes:

***"I look forward to once again having the opportunity for service and spiritual growth."***

## **SARAH HOPE KILLION**

Sarah's parents were married at VPC by Pastor Pete James and she was baptized here when 3-months- old. From an early age, she was involved in the life of the church. Loving music, Sarah

was in Cherub Choir, the Bell Choir, Junior and Senior High Choir, and Young Adult Choir.

Sarah attended Sunday School, participated in Vacation Bible School and also was a VBS volunteer when she was older. Sarah was part of Youth Club, Junior and Senior High Youth Groups, and was also active in the Young Adult Ministry. Sarah also helped with overheads when VPC held Saturday Night Services. She served the church as a one of the volunteer receptionists as well.

Sarah grew in her faith by participating in adult Sunday School classes and learning more about the Bible while being in the company of other Christians. Currently, she is in the Zoom TGIF Bible Study, Racial Reconciliation Zoom meetings, Exploring Faith Sunday School class, and she supports the Northern Virginia Great Banquet, which she attended in 2005.

Sarah enjoys walking, going to parks, watching the Washington Football Team, Nationals Baseball team, British comedy, and mystery TV shows. Pre-COVID, she enjoyed travelling, going to the Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap, and going out to eat.

Sarah writes:

***“VPC has always been a huge part of my entire life. I was honored to be nominated to the Board of Deacons and look forward to serving on the Board by caring for others in our church and our community.”***

## **CLARK LINDGREN**

Clark has been happily married for 38 years to the love of his life. He is the proud father of four children ranging in age from 22 to 32 years old. As often as possible, he serves as the playmate of his twin 3-year-old grandchildren. Although he has been teaching middle and high school students for 35 years, he is convinced that if he works just one more year, he will get it right. At VPC, he has served as a 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade co-leader for the PM Youth Group. He has also volunteered with Bags of Love. At a previous church, he served as a deacon. When not putting off grading papers, he enjoys hiking, biking, watching sports, and learning about virtually anything.

Clark writes:

***“I welcome the opportunity to grow in grace by serving as a deacon at VPC. I am honored and challenged to be faithful to God and to you in service.”***

## **MARK RICHARDS**

Mark is married to Ginni, they have one son, John, and are anticipating the addition of a daughter-in-law (Bethia). He currently works part-time as a contractor for the Air Force, is an avid gardener, and plays golf and racquetball. Mark is active in various VPC communities including his role as a Stephen Minister, a recent participant in a Growing-Your-Soul (GYS) I program, as well as being a participant in a Small Group. He has participated in numerous summer mission projects and taught ESOL for many years.

Mark writes:

***“I am excited to serve as a Deacon because of its focus on service to the congregation and community.”***

### **PAM SELLARS**

Pam lives in Oakton with her husband Duncan and their sweet dog Louie. They began attending VPC over 20 years ago with their 3 children, Sophia, Henry, and Gavin, now grown and living in the area. Drawn to VPC because of strong Biblical messages, glorious music for all ages, and vibrant children’s and youth ministries, Pam loves the sense of community and purpose VPC inspires. Vacation Bible School was one her first entrees to serving at VPC. She loves our kids and students and has found joy and blessing serving as a volunteer as well as on staff in Children’s Ministries. She is excited to see what God has next for VPC in carrying out its mission to share the love of Christ.

Pam writes:

***“It is an honor to be asked to serve as a deacon. God is good, and my heart is overflowing with gratitude to know that so many have served me and blessed me at VPC. I hope to continue to learn and grow with other believers and see how God might use me to serve his people in this new way.”***

### **REBECAH SHEPHERD**

Rebecah Shepherd joined VPC in 2003 with her husband, Ray. They have three children, Anna Grace (20), Lily (17) and Luke (11). At VPC, Rebecah has been a member of Mothers’ Support Groups,

a Vacation Bible School recreation leader, a Sunday School teacher and a five-year member of a wonderful Growing Your Soul small group. Rebecah worked on Capitol Hill and then as a lobbyist for a DC firm before staying home full time. Her interests include writing, playing tennis and spending lots of time on local sports fields supporting her kids' teams.

Rebecca writes:

***“After prayerfully considering my next volunteer post, I felt strongly called to serve our church in a more consistent way and to use my spiritual gifts of listening, compassion and service to strengthen the bonds of our congregation.”***

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

### **RYAN SECKINGER**

Ryan is father to Elizabeth, Ruth, and James, and husband to Stephanie. In his day job, Ryan leads a team of engineers designing public buildings like hospitals, airports, and sports stadiums in his role as Managing Director for a national engineering firm. At VPC, he's been involved in children's ministry, youth ministry, Sunday worship, and Great Banquet. Ryan enjoys coaching and volunteering in his kids' activities, cooking - especially outside with a fire, traveling to new places, and being greeted by his two Dalmatians after a day at work.



Ryan writes:

***“I am excited to continue to participate in the new thing that God is doing at VPC by serving on the Nominating Committee and look forward to the adventure ahead of us!”***

## **GERRI WEBB**

Gerri and her husband, Bert, joined VPC in 1981. She was hired as VPC’s first Administrative Assistant for the Christian Education (CE) department. Gerri is a member of the College of Deacons, was moderator of the Presbyterian Women, traveled to Haiti on two mission trips, and helped establish VPC’s Great Banquet program.

Gerri moved to the Cascades area in Loudoun County where she worked as the Office Administrator for Riverside Presbyterian, a church planted by VPC.

Returning to Vienna, Gerri jumped back into VPC activities as a Wedding Coordinator, Special Events Coordinator, Kitchen Administrator, currently co-coordinates the WBTeam, and serves on the Safety and Security Committee. Gerri has served on two nominating committees, one Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) and along with Sally Mitchell launched VPC’s popular Sunday Summer Breakfasts.

When not at VPC Gerri loves to read and spend time with Bert and their special little fur person, Daisy!

Gerri writes:

***“My ‘yes’ answer to the call to serve on the Nominating Committee came from the hymn Here I Am Lord. ~~ ‘I will go, Lord, if you lead me.’ I am ready to join others to be led by Him as we consider who will be members of VPC’s next leadership class.”***

## **STAFF COMMITTEE**

### **ROBIN PORTMAN**

Robin has been with VPC for over 20 years, and lives in Vienna with her husband Tom, Tom’s 92-year old mother Pat, and their dog Creedence, an Australian Shepherd. Robin is now fully retired, and she, Tom and Creedence take many adventures in their RV, which is named “Starship Trooper.” Robin was formerly a CEO and board chair for a health services consulting company, and retired as the Chief Growth Officer for Booz Allen Hamilton.

Robin has been a Deacon and an Elder, and is currently on the board for Belong!, one of VPC’s mission partners. Robin especially enjoys volunteering as a teacher for VPC’s ESOL program. She has a deep passion for inclusive communities where all members are able to live healthy, joyful and productive lives. She also serves on

several other nonprofit boards that provide services for the underserved in our communities. Robin enjoys all things outdoors—hiking, biking, skiing, and swimming.

Robin writes:

***“I love the work that God is doing through all of us at VPC. We have so much opportunity as we go into a new chapter. I am excited to be a part of it!”***

### **MARY ANN SINGLAUB**

Mary Ann currently teleworks with Booz Allen Hamilton as a technical editor and trainer. She was a State Department Foreign Service Officer for 18 years and then worked as a defense contractor. She grew up as an Army Brat, and her retired Army dad turned 100 in July. She has an older brother and sister.

She is involved with Toastmasters International, the non-profit organization that helps improve communication and leadership skills.

Mary Ann has been active with VPC for almost 20 years, having moved to Vienna in 2000. She is currently rolling off as VPC deacon after three years and led the Deacon Awareness Team. She is a VPC usher and welcomes congregants at the 11:15 am service. She teaches advanced adult students in the ESOL program and enjoys fellowship with the so-called “VPC Lunch Bunch.”

She is happily single, has a black cat named Lucy, and strives to walk at least 10,000 steps every day. She loves to hike and cross-country ski, speaks fluent German and Italian, and enjoys travel and getting together with her family when possible.

Mary Ann writes:

***“I hope to contribute my leadership skills and love of VPC to my tenure on the VPC Staff Committee. Over the past 20 years as usher, ESOL teacher, and most recently as a deacon, I feel ready for a leadership role in the church.”***

**SCOTT THOMPSON**

Scott works for Booz Allen Hamilton supporting Federal Healthcare customers and has been married to his wife Rachel for 18 years. They have two boys: Josh (15) and Zack (13). Scott enjoys coaching soccer, sailing during the summer at his parents' home in Delaware, and instructing for high performance driving events. He has worked with the VPC youth program off and on for almost 20 years, and has previously served on Session as an Elder, been on the Nominating committee, chaired the Child and Youth Protection Committee (CYPC), participated in Summer Mission Projects (SMPs), and is a member of Great Banquet community.

Scott writes:

***“Ensuring that we have a focus on our staff as we are going through transition with the arrival of Pastor Hope is essential to helping VPC thrive. Having a prayerful, thoughtful approach on how we engage with, support, grow, and retain staff as well and identify and hire new staff is important for our church, and is why I have chosen to serve on Staff Committee.”***

