

FPC CONNECTIONS

First Presbyterian Church | 1601 Main St., Murray, KY 42071 | (270) 753-6460



Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Renee A. Meyer

Clerk of Session: Carol Allen

Treasurer: George Kipphut

Admin Assistant: Andrea French

Campus Ministry Director: Lisa Polivick

MOTA Interns: Natasha Purcell, Elise Eaton

Children & Youth Ministry Director: Kelly Holland

Music Director: Emma Whitt

Accompanist: Christy D'Ambrosio

Storyteller: Lucy Mitchell

Nursery Attendants: Mandy Brogan, Lucy Mitchell, Lindsay Crafton

Custodian: Monte Fisher

Office Hours: Monday-Friday:

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

From Pastor Renee's Desk

This is the season of Advent. We are waiting to greet anew the gift of the Christ into our lives. As we ponder God's gift of light and love in Christ, may we once again be challenged to model an incarnational theology in our own lives, because God has reached down in love, in part perhaps, so that no human experience is outside of God's understanding and empathy. However, I think the incarnation may be more about how God, in Christ, has shown us the depth of God's love for humanity, and the desire that God has for us to know how to truly love one another. In my view, the most critical aspect of incarnation is that we humans might have the opportunity to be followers of Christ's model by loving our neighbor, as did the Good Samaritan in Jesus' parable—even when it is difficult, even countercultural, to do so. This is what it means to live out incarnational theology. In so doing, we live into our full humanity. We become fully human. We become who we were created to be in the first place. We reclaim what our Jewish sisters and brothers call our "original blessing"—there is no such thing as "original sin" my friends. The slate has been clean from the beginning. We were created in the divine image from the outset—and we still are made in God's image.

Before we can talk about incarnation, we must first talk about our conceptions/theories of Divinity. Many philosophers of religion, both present and past, charge religious people with anthropomorphizing the Divine. This is just a fancy way of saying that we humans create God in our own image. Such theorists claim that our God-conjuring consists of projecting all of our best human qualities: compassion, empathy, love, kindness, mercy, etc. onto an imagined being who also has supernatural characteristics like omnipotence, omniscience, and eternal existence. Then we denigrate our own human qualities by calling ourselves weak,

Join Us!



Men's Breakfast

Every Wednesday
Morning at 7 a.m.

Dec 4, Martha's

Dec 11, Rudy's

Dec 18, Cracker Barrel

Dec 25, No Breakfast



Lunch Bunch

Every Thursday at
11:45 a.m.

Dec 5, Artisan Kitchen

Dec 12, Applebee's

Dec 19, Panera Bread

Dec 26, No Lunch

sinful, greedy, covetous, and any other number of depressing and shameful descriptors. We humans have no supernatural powers, but rather exist in the land of finitude with limited understanding and knowledge. Hence the chasm between divinity and humanity is established.

In the religious camp are those who say that to be created in the image of God is to have some piece of divinity within us—some call it the Holy Spirit, others say it is the soul. Then there are those who say that to be created in God's image is to have the propensity toward, or at least the capacity for: love, kindness, compassion, mercy, justice, and all manner of good.

Personally, I think the incarnation demonstrates to us that when we reach our capacity to be Fully Human—that is—when, by the grace of God, we become all that we were created to be, it is then that we best demonstrate what it means to be created in the image of God. Sit with that for a moment.

Think about the most meaningful events over the course of your life. Picture them now in your mind. Chances are, the older we get, the more likely we are to say that the most significant moments center around those we have loved and those who have loved us. They are about moments of compassion, friendship, and joy. They are about moments of tenderness and moments of celebration. They are about the times when we felt so strongly the connection to another human being that it seemed as though our hearts beat as one. I would suggest that living into these moments is what it means to be Fully Human. And this, my friends, is what it means to be made in the image of God. That is the divine spark within us. It is Emmanuel. God among us.

Perhaps the incarnation of God, in Jesus of Nazareth, is about one who has modeled for us all we were created to be. Perhaps the incarnation is meant to help us reclaim our Full Humanity, and thereby, the image of the Divine—in each and every one of us. Shalom, Pastor Renee

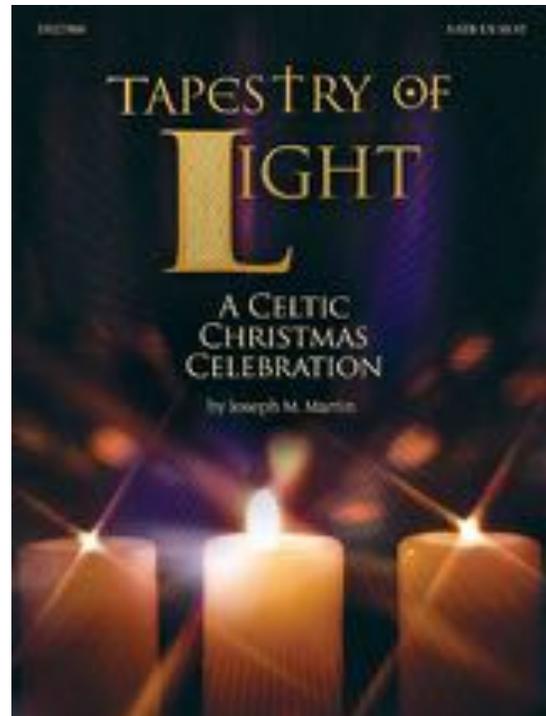


FPC Christmas Cantata to be held December 8, 2019

Submitted by Emma Whitt

The FPC Choir will present its Christmas Cantata, "Tapestry of Light: A Celtic Christmas Celebration," by Joseph M. Martin, during the 10:45 a.m. service on Sunday, December 8, 2019. Directed by Emma Whitt, this Cantata will feature the talents of Christy D'Ambrosio, Chloe Frisby, Tanner Jones, Logan Agcanas, Katie Hodge, and Robert Valentine. Please invite your friends and family to join us for this special musical service celebrating the Advent season and Christ's birth!

"May the Father of all lights gather us all to His heart and weave us into a wonderful tapestry of Light," - Joseph M. Martin



Buckhorn Christmas Tree

Submitted by Cindy Barnett and Andrea French



If you have been in the Narthex lately, you might have noticed a little Christmas tree on the sign-up table. This humble little tree has a mighty purpose: to help support the abused and neglected children of the Buckhorn Children's Home in eastern Kentucky. Our church supports Buckhorn through financial contributions. Members are encouraged to make a suggested donation of around \$5-\$10 (or however much or little members choose to give), which is used to purchase Christmas presents for these precious children.

If you would like to support this ministry, please visit the Buckhorn Tree in the narthex and leave a monetary gift there for a special child. Each ornament on the tree represents a child in need. Simply take an envelope from beside the tree, put a donation in the envelope, and place it in the basket underneath the tree. These donations will help support the children at Christmastime.

To learn more about the Buckhorn Children's Home, and how they are working to make a difference, please visit: <http://buckhorn.org/who-we-are/>.



Holly Berry Wrap-Up

Submitted by Cheryl Pittman

Presbyterian Women would like to thank everyone who supported Holly Berry this year, whether you baked goodies, helped serve food, or just spent your money at our breakfast and bake sale. This year we did not have our "Attic Treasures" room, but after consideration, PW has decided to resume "Attic Treasures" and "New to You" sale at Holly Berry next year.



Money raised from Holly Berry allows our church to participate in the Community Back Pack Program.

Unfortunately, this year our proceeds were considerably less at \$1,700. After purchasing the back pack goods for \$1,300, we will be very close on our other mission pledges. If you would like to donate to the back pack fund, please see Cheryl Pittman or Marcie Johnson. We appreciate your consideration.



Back Pack Sacks

Submitted by Kathie Fleming

Our church will provide back pack sacks for low income students in both the city and county schools for the month of December, enabling these children to have food to eat on the weekends when they do not have school breakfasts and lunches available to them.

We are scheduled to prepare sacks on December 4, 11, and 18. Set up each day begins at 12:00 p.m. and packing will start at 1:00 p.m. Bags to pack currently stand at 226 per week.

The Presbyterian Women have chosen for several years now to make these supplemental food sacks the primary beneficiary of Holy Berry funds, as it helps to cover a critical need in our community.

Your help will be greatly appreciated in set up and filling of the sacks. Need Line Staff will pick them up and deliver them to the appropriate facility for distribution.

If you have questions, please call Kathie Fleming, (270) 759-1145, or (270) 293-5621.



Christmas Caroling December 22

Submitted by Emma Whitt

You are invited to join us for a fun afternoon of Christmas Caroling at the homes of some of our homebound members. We will meet at FPC at 3:00 p.m. to pick up our hymnals and discuss the caroling route. All ages and abilities are welcome to help us spread some Christmas joy! Chris and Laynie Mitchell have graciously opened their home for refreshments afterward. Save the date on your calendars and begin thinking about some of your favorite songs that you would like to sing! Questions? Contact Music Director, Emma Whitt: ewhitt@murraystate.edu or (865) 307-3461.

Soup for the Soul



Soup for the Soul

Submitted by Marcie Johnson

Wow! Scrambled eggs with ham, sausage, biscuits and gravy for eighty or more hungry diners? Our November workday at Soup for the Soul gained expert guidance from Zach Byrd, assisted by meal-prep crew members Marcie Johnson, Shirley Latto, and Donna Leigh. Jerry Meyer led the second shift crew of Ralph Pittman, Tom and Sue Lyford, and Todd French, who were joined by MOTA volunteers Lisa Polivick, Elise Eador, and Natasha Purcell. It was a wealth of generous-hearted, capable workers!

Special thanks to Kaycee Byrd, who had organized her family's afternoon so that she and Zach could trade places and child care responsibilities. Given the large group who showed up for that second shift, we relieved her of duties for November but look forward to working with her on our next workday, January 20.

Wonderfully, Zach has agreed to lend his professional chef experience to leading future meal-prep crews for FPC's every-other-month service in the kitchen. (Marcie Johnson will appeal for volunteers to help Zach). Jerry Meyer has kindly taken on second-shift leadership while Ann Stanley heals from her surgery (and Ann will line up the second-shift volunteers).

We'd love to add you to our list, especially because not every person who helped in November will be able to help next time. If you are willing, please get in touch with either Marcie (270) 753-5531, or Ann (270) 753-8747.

Shop The Alternative Christmas Gift Market

Submitted by Deanna Wolf

The Alternative Christmas Gift Market will be open for shopping after worship service on Sunday, December 8 and Sunday, December 15. This is a great opportunity to purchase meaningful gifts for some of the toughest people on your list! Simple review our 2019 catalog of charities [HERE](#) and make a contribution in honor of or in memory of someone special. It's the gift that gives twice! We are offering a variety of choices, so you can pick the one that will be most meaningful to your giftee. You will be given a lovely card, with information about the charity you've chosen, to give to your giftee. You may also fill out an order form at home and bring it to the market. Those are available [HERE](#).



Save the Date!
Our Next Blood Drive Will Be Held On:
Thursday, December 19, 2019
From 12:30-5:30 p.m. at FPC

Beth Belote Circle

Debbie Burgess will welcome women of the Beth Belote Circle to her home, 1710 Audubon, on Thursday, December 5, when Patsy Chaney will lead the discussion of faith experiences.

We will also confirm Christmas gift plans for the circle's "adopted family." We meet from 6:00-7:30 p.m. and invite all women who'd like to join us--for just this meeting or for every first-Thursday of the month. No homework preparation is required!

McKenzie-Moore Circle

The Dorothy Moore/McKenzie Circle will meet on Monday, December 9 at 1:00 p.m. in the session room. We will continue our study of "Believing Jesus: A Journey through the book of Acts." Cheryl Pittman will be the hostess. All are welcome!



Presbyterian Women

Submitted by Cheryl Pittman

Presbyterian Women will meet on Monday, December 2 in the session room at 11:30 a.m.. Bring a lunch and join us as we plan our "Open your Hearts to Women in Need" meeting for February. Kathie Fleming will be our hostess. All women are welcome to attend!

Kids' Night Out in December: Fun For Everyone!

Submitted by Bill and Susan Stewart

Parents and Caregivers: You're invited to drop your kids off at Church and enjoy a night out on the town or get some Christmas shopping done--or watch a movie at home without interruption!

Kids' Night Out at First Presbyterian Church

Friday, December 20, 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

(Because let's face it, we all need a break from adults!)

For our children who are in grades: Nursery through Fifth Grade

Please sign up now to reserve your spot!

Movies! Games! Pizza! No Parents!



Renee and Jerry's Annual Open House: See New Date!

Submitted by Renee Meyer

Saturday, December 14

12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m

You are invited to attend our annual Open House, which has been rescheduled for Saturday, December 14, at our home, 631 Oaks Country Club Road. Please come hungry!

There will be food, desserts, and Renee's famous Wassail! Stay for as long as you would like. This is our gift to you, so please do not ask us if you can bring anything for it—the answer is NO! All you need to bring is you!

Head & Heart

Submitted by Ken Wolf

Head and Heart will meet in the New Year on Thursday, Jan 2, 2020. We will share our thoughts about the content of chapters 3-5 of Richard Rohr's "Immortal Diamond."

Clerk's Corner

Submitted by Carol Allen

Stated Session Meeting

November 14, 2019

Actions by Session:

- received into active membership Zach and Kaycee Byrd
- approved the request from Margaret Boone's children to plant a tree on the church property in her memory
- approved the purchase and installation of a security system from Murray Electronics at a cost of \$3,488.78

Financial Report

Submitted by George Kipphut

- 2019 General Fund Income as of November 24, 2019 - \$162,965
- 2019 General Fund Expenses as of November 24, 2019 - \$167,900

Thank you to everyone who has made a Pledge towards the 2020 FPC Budget. If you need information regarding fulfilling a 2019 Pledge, please contact the Church Office or the Treasurer.

December Birthdays

Marcie Johnson, Dec 1
 Rocky Long, Dec 3
 Joan Adams, Dec 6
 Hannah McKibben, Dec 10
 Don Gaskin, Dec 11
 Morgan Randall, Dec 12
 Bill McKibben, Dec 15
 John Gregory, Dec 25
 Donald Fleming, Dec 25
 George Kipphut, Dec 28
 Elizabeth Gilliam, Dec 28
 Debbie Hixon, Dec 30



December Anniversaries

Melinda & Russ Wall, Dec 19
 Barbara & Harry Conley, Dec 28
 Laynie & Chris Mitchell, Dec 28

Prayer Concerns

Church Members and Regular Attendees

Sue Cochran	Spring Creek #213 Leg Wound Healing
Kathie and Don Fleming	Passing of their grandson, Adam Seo
Cheryl Pittman	Foot and hand nerve pain
Chris Holland	Recovery from shoulder surgery
Marilyn Miller	Recovery
Jamie Helton	Passing of her husband, Roy
Sal Matarazzo	At Brookdale
Terry Holmes and family	Passing of Terry's brother, Greg
Judy Thomas	Passing of her husband, Warren
Eva Hopkins	Home
Deanna Wolf	For continued strength & recovery
Marcie Johnson	Breast cancer treatments

Sue and George Cochran	Passing of Sue's daughter, Susie Taylor
Paul Shaw	Declining health due to Parkinson's Disease
Mary Lynn Christensen	Alzheimer's, Spring Creek #129

Family and Friends of the Congregation

Bruce Pittman	Heart Attack
Sherry Willits	Surgery recovery (Sue Cochran's sister)
Sheila Harrison	Heart testing (George Cochran's sister)
David Schaaf & Family	Andrea French's friend, stage IV melanoma, treatment
Mickey Alba	Dialysis (Laynie Mitchell's brother)
Eddie DePauw	Pneumonia (Wolf's friend)
Jeri Graham	Surgery recovery (Fleming's friend)
Melissa	Emma Whitt's mother, health concerns
Barbara Bush Meier	Cancer
Marcia Beam	Debbie Hixon's friend
Jacob Brown	Emma Whitt's friend
Family of Marilyn Beale	
Family of Margaret Boone	
Family of Rita Hendon	
Family of Hubert Stroud	
Employees of Briggs & Stratton	
Jim McCollouch (Maribeth Crawford's father)	Prostate cancer treatments
Brian O'Neil (Dennis Mills' friend)	Metastatic brain cancer
Baby Finn (Family friend of Hoffmans)	Stage 4 cancer, chemotherapy
Pastor Ruth Ragovin's Stepfather	Cancer
Darcy Hendricks (Tana Field's friend)	Recovery from brain stem stroke
Jim McCullouch (Maribeth Crawford's grandfather)	Recovery from mini strokes
Mark Jones (Debbie Hixon's brother in law)	Leukemia and Non-Hodgkins disease
Bill and Anne Williams (Cindy Barnett's parents)	Care for Bill's Parkinson's disease, dementia
Gwen Wolf (Deanna's friend)	Lung transplant recovery