

# FPC CONNECTIONS

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



## Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Renee A. Meyer

Admin Assistant: Andrea French

Campus Ministry Director: Lisa Polivick

MOTA Intern: Asia Blanton

Children & Youth Ministry Director: Kelly Holland

Music Director: vacant

Accompanist: Julie Park

W&W Storyteller: Lucy Mitchell

Nursery Attendants: Mandy Brogan,  
Lindsay Crafton

Custodian: Monte Fisher

Clerk of Session: Ken Wolf

Treasurer: George Kipphut

Office Hours: By appointment only. Staff are currently working remotely from home due to Covid-19 .

## From Pastor Renee's Desk

*by Rev. Dr. Renee A. Meyer*



Holy Trinity Icon, Andrei Rublev, 1425

Jesus doesn't tell us to baptize people in the name of God, or to baptize them in his name, but rather to baptize disciples into the name (the reality) of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We are immersed into a community—not only the community of the church but

also the community of the triune God. When First John says “God is love,” it does not mean that God is loving. It means that God is love. God is that love, empathy, and delight among the Father, Son, and Spirit. That is as close to a definition of God's essence as a Trinitarian Christian can get. I think there is a reason that Jesus, and Matthew, did not give us a simple name to be baptized into. God's nature and God's inner life cannot be made simple. Jesus gave us a name as complex as God, a name that speaks of relationships rather than a one-person, unilateral, dictating deity.

The most famous image of the Trinity is the Russian Orthodox icon by Andrei Rublev painted in 1425 (image above). It shows three angelic figures with halos sitting around a table sharing a meal. They share similar features and long braided hair, as if they were brothers

## Join Us!



### Men's Breakfast

*Every Wednesday*

*Morning at 7 a.m.*

Jan 6, Hih Burger

Jan 13, Martha's

Jan 20, Rudy's

Jan 27, Cracker Barrel



### Lunch Bunch

*Every Thursday at*

*11:45 a.m.*

Jan 7, The Keg

Jan 14, Tom's Grille

Jan 21, Culver's

Jan 28, Cracker Barrel

or sisters. They each wear something blue, which ties the picture together. The icon is based on the story of the three strangers who came to Abraham and Sarah under the oaks of Mamre in Genesis 18, three persons who turned out to be the Lord, bringing the promise of a son. But Rublev's painting is a painting of God the three-in-one. It's a wonderfully balanced and peaceful picture, but what it says to us is that the Trinity is more like a dinner than a doctrine. It tells us that at the heart of God is the experience of fellowship and communion, and that God is not adequately described as a king or a Zeus-like figure on a throne or a cloud. God is more like three persons sharing a meal and love and life.

The main message of the picture is that God is like a tea party. The idea of the Trinity is not a mathematical formula to try to make rational sense of God. The Trinity means that God is and always has been a God in community. God's inner life is a life where love flows constantly between three persons who are so united—who, to use the word from classical theologians, so interpenetrate—that they are experienced by us as one being and one love.

The Trinity and its relationship of community; the love and devotion found among Father, Son, and Spirit and the ability as human beings to live into community—is much of what it means to be created in the Divine image.

Philosopher Cornelius Plantinga said that God is “a zestful, wondrous, community of divine light, love, joy, mutuality and verve,” where there is “no isolation, no insulation, no secretiveness, no fear of being transparent to another.” It is into that community that God is inviting us.

Listen to what Catholic priest Ron Holheiser (OMI) says:

“God is not, first of all, a formula, a dogma, a creedal statement, or a metaphysics that demands our assent. God is a flow of living relationships, a trinity, a family of life that we can enter, taste, breathe within, and let flow through us....

To make God real in our lives, therefore, we needn't sneak off, shamrocks and triangles in hand, to try to somehow picture how three-can-be-one and one-can-be-three. Nor indeed need we read academic books on theology, valuable though these may be. No. God is a flow of relationships to be experienced in community, family, parish, friendship, and hospitality. When we live inside of these relationships, God lives inside of us and we live inside of God.”

Over these 6.5 years, it has been my joy to be a part of this community of faith. It matters not who you are or how well I have known you while being here, it has been my privilege to have shared a bit of the journey with you. Now there is one thing I want to say about community—you cannot have it—church or otherwise, without a little discord from time to time. Human beings were never meant to agree all of the time—be they Christians or otherwise! The days ahead will have some challenging moments, this is true. Whatever disagreements you encounter, deal with them in the open and do so honestly, in a spirit of mutual confession, responsibility, and forgiveness. And know that what makes conflict problematic is not that you have it, but how well you handle it. Just remember that with the community of the Trinity by your side and the strength of your sisters and brothers in Christ to lean on, there is nothing you cannot overcome.

But more than anything, the days ahead will be full of excitement and promise! Now is the time to band together as a community and to be supportive of one another. It is time to keep praying with and for one another, to brainstorm together, to talk about your hopes and dreams, to support the search for your next pastor, and most importantly to be there for one another. To band together. Check on one another, offering prayers and support however you can. Be the Beloved Community for One Another. As long as you are that, this transitional period will be a spiritual growth moment for this congregation. Just don't be in a rush. You have one another, under the providential care of God's Divine Light. Accomplish the work that the presbytery recommends you do and know that it will only benefit you and make you stronger and more ready to do the work that God has in mind for you.

Godspeed, my friends. I will always hold you in my prayers. You have been such a blessing to me and to Jerry. Know that if you are ever in Rome, Georgia—you have two friends there that would be most happy to host you during your stay.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Renee

## 2020 ACGM Update: It's A Wrap!

*Submitted by Andrea French and Deanna Wolf*

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family, our 2020 Alternative Christmas Gift Market has come to a close, and we are thrilled to announce that we have had one of our best years--and perhaps the best year ever--in the history of our ACGM. We would like to sincerely thank everyone who contributed this year. Your generous financial support to these four local charities will be a blessing for so many people in our community, especially after a most difficult year. Here's how our numbers finished this year:

Pastor's Discretionary Fund	15 giving units—\$585.00
Soup for the Soul	16 giving units—\$470.00
Laundry Love	17 giving units—\$1050.00
HOPE Calloway	14 giving units—\$485.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20 giving units—\$2,590.00</b>

# Christmas Bags for FPC Youth

*Submitted by Laura Ken Hoffman*

Christmas gift bags were delivered to our young children of FPC on December 13, 2020! It was a wonderful, fun, collaborative effort but the best was seeing the smiles on everyone's face! Morgan made reindeer food (don't want to forget Santa's reindeer!) and Mom made cookies that the children are accustomed to having during special events at the church. Dad assisted with deliveries and it was a wonderfully successful day!

Laura Ken Hoffman, Morgan Randall, and Bill and Susan Stewart

Congregational Care/Fellowship Committee



## Clerk's Corner

*Submitted by Ken Wolf*

Session members are in the process of setting up a plan for this transition period, and are using information from the PC(USA) and the Presbytery of Western Kentucky to plan the process of hiring a transitional pastor to help lead our church until a Pastor Nominating Committee can be elected and complete the task of selecting a new pastor for our approval. The Presbytery's Commission on Ministry (COM) will appoint a moderator for Session as needed after Renee moderates her final Session meeting on February 9 and completes leading our online worship services with a final one on February 28. We have already lined up a pulpit supply for Sunday, March 7.

Pastor Renee and the Session encourage Session and congregation members to attend one or more online training events being conducted by the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center that would be useful during this time of transition. Anyone interested in attending either training should call Session member Shirley Latto in order to sign up.

- The first is "Conflict Transformation Skills for Churches" from (9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) which gives you the option of the following dates: January 16, February 13, March 22, OR April 10, 2021. Cost of the Zoom meeting is \$99.00. Discounts of \$10 per person are available for groups of 4-6 people, and \$20.00 per person for groups of 7 or more people.
- A second workshop on "Healthy Congregations" (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with the same cost and discounts) will be conducted on January 30, February 18, March 27, or April 17, 2021. Some scholarship money is available for those who find the cost prohibitive.

While the coming year will pose challenges to all of us as we seek to return to in-person worship and other activities, once sufficient numbers of us are vaccinated and can join the "herd" that we hope will become immune at some point in 2021, there is some positive financial news to report.

As of this writing (December 29), Treasurer George Kipphut reports that pledges for the coming year have reached \$149,040 with the expectation of a few more to come. The Stewardship Committee is working diligently on a new budget to replace the one that you received earlier.

Please note that our Annual Congregational meeting on Zoom will be held Sunday, January 10 at 10:45 a.m. and will take place **BEFORE** worship begins. At that time, we will approve a two-month term of call for Renee, announce the 2021 budget, complete the election and installation of new Ruling Elders Eric Frederick, Shirley Latto, and Todd Wright, and elect Carol Allen to the Board of Trustees.



**Save the Date!**  
Our Next Blood Drive Will Be Held On:  
**Thursday, February 11, 2021**  
**From 12:30-5:30 p.m. at FPC**

## January Birthdays

- Soojin McKibben, Jan 2
- Charlie Jenkins, Jan 4
- Patsy Chaney, Jan 4
- Tanner Jones, Jan 4
- Juli McClain, Jan 5
- Chris Holland, Jan 5
- Marion O'Rourke, Jan 7
- Joe Belcher, Jan 12
- Lily Levering, Jan 14
- Debbie Burgess, Jan 19
- Kathey Shaw, Jan 20
- Steve Rayburn, Jan 22
- Bill Stewart, Jan 25



## January Anniversaries

Kathey & Paul Shaw, Jan 24

## Prayer Concerns

### Church Members and Regular Attendees

Laynie Mitchell and Family	Passing of Laynie's brother, Mickey Alba
Barbara Conley	Recovery from broken pelvis
Family of Russ Wall	
Zack Burgess	Recovery from accident, facial surgeries
Lisa Polivick and Family	Recovery from Covid-19
Family of Carleen Belcher	A Memorial Service will be held in the spring
Kelly Holland	Recovery from foot surgery
Deanna Wolf	Recovery from knee replacement surgery
Terry Foreman	Recovery at home
Reba Vogel and Family	Passing of her husband, Bob Vogel
Marion and Pete O'Rourke	Passing of their son, Peter Francis O'Rourke III
Marilyn Miller	Passing of her husband, Cary Miller; Recovery
Joan and Whitey Adams	Passing of their nephew, Ruben Adams
Cindy Barnett	Passing of her father, Bill Williams

Sal Matarazzo	At Brookdale
Eva Hopkins	Home, providing meals
Paul Shaw	Declining health due to Parkinson's Disease
Mary Lynn Christensen	Alzheimer's, Spring Creek #129

## **Family and Friends of the Congregation**

Essential Workers and Families affected by Covid-19

Debbie Wolf	Covid-19
Mary Jane Adams	Whitey Adams' family (hospitalized with low oxygen, tests)
John Cooper	Kaycee and Zach Byrd's grandfather, hospitalized, Covid-19
Family of Jeanette DePauw	Ken Wolf's cousin
Family of Marietta Norwood	
Family of Donnie Hendrix	
Madison Berry	Kaycee Byrd's young friend, recovery from heart surgery
Emily Lathem	Lisa Polivick's niece, upcoming brain surgery
Marilyn	Dewayne Polivick's mother, breast cancer
Debbie Burgess' mother	Hospice care
Courtney Fall	Rev. Dr. Renee A. Meyer's daughter, prayers for a healthy pregnancy
Sonia Fall	Renee's son-in-law's mother, pulmonary fibrosis of lungs
Nancy Goselin	Todd Goselin's mother, recently positive for Covid-19
Bruce Pittman	Hospice Care
Pat Pittman	Ralph Pittman's son
Jim McCollouch (Maribeth Crawford's father)	Prostate cancer