

FPC CONNECTIONS

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



Church Staff

Pastor: Vacancy

Office Administrator: Andrea French

Campus Ministry Director: Lisa Polivick

MOTA Intern: Asia Blanton

Youth Ministry Director: Kelly Holland

Music Director: Vacancy

Accompanist: Julie Park

W&W Storyteller: Lucy Mitchell

Nursery Attendants: Lindsay Crafton

Custodian: Monte Fisher

Clerk of Session: Ken Wolf

Treasurer: George Kipphut

Office Hours: M-F 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

An Elder's Reflection: Faith, Family & Friendship

Submitted by Todd M. Wright

Longtime and former pastors of this church, Mr. and Mrs. David and Ann Marie Montgomery, preached this often in their sermons: We serve God by serving each other.

In sharing this, it brings to mind a passage from a book I'd read long ago by a Russian dissident named Vladimir Bukhovskiy (*To Build A Castle: My Life As A Dissenter*); to paraphrase, 'There are no greater treasures this life can offer than one's family and one's friends.'

It's been many, many a year since I've read that (hence the paraphrasing), but that expression has always stayed with me, and as I've gotten older I've come to realize more and more the truth of it. Not that I ever really doubted it; it's just that over a life thus far and observations made therein, certain truths begin to emerge.

It certainly can be a lonely, frightening world out there if we're not careful.

Like many of you, I'm grateful for the family life I had growing up; while certainly patchy in select places (seriously, whose family life isn't?), it is the rock I continue to draw from to this day. And intend to draw to my dying breath. The folly of youth is such that we don't realize the sacrifices our parents make on our behalf.

I think of how hard my father worked for the railroad each day over the years, and then after many a day's

Join Us!



Men's Breakfast

Every Wednesday

Morning at 7 a.m.

April 7, Martha's

April 14, Rudy's

April 21, Cracker Barrel

April 28, Hih Burger



Lunch Bunch

Every Thursday at

11:45 a.m.

April 1, Hop Hound

April 8, Los Portales

April 15, August Moon

April 22, Don Sol

April 29, The Keg

work the numerous trips he made back and forth between our home on the river to Prescott for football/basketball games, band concerts, theater plays, awards ceremonies, fundraisers, dinners, parent/teacher nights, etc...

My mother, who was a homemaker to nine of us kids: nine! Cooking, laundry, cleaning up after all of us, keeping up after us to do our homework (me especially at times), keeping us in line (and yes, we could be a fractious bunch, bless our quarrelsome hearts). Serving on the school board. Accompanying dad on all those aforementioned trips.

When Mom passed several years ago, I remember going to the movie theater soon after to watch Wonder Woman; mom always like the TV version of that show from when I was a kid (Linda Carter), and it was an homage to both her and her efforts towards raising her children to grow into nine overall compassionate, fair-minded, reasonable, and contributing members of society.

Wonder Woman, indeed.

What's tragic in all this is that I know too many people – even one is too many - who did not have the benefit of a nurturing family growing up, or who perhaps had some semblance of one but have let silly things like money, politics, and yes, religion, get in between them. As mentioned earlier, this realm can get lonely and frightening enough for any of us; I can't imagine having to navigate it alone, or with at most one or two trusted acquaintances.

Much like how my biological family has not gone without its fair share of hitches and hardships (even to this day), so too I'm sure is the case for most church families, and every house of worship I've been privileged to have been a member of – including here at First Presbyterian, Murray - has been no different.

Flawed here and there, yes; varying degrees of bickering at times, sure. We are but imperfect mortal souls in this realm,



after all.

Again, whose earthly family – church or biological – can boast otherwise?

But verily I can tell you, that just like my biological family, I consider myself blessed indeed to have made the acquaintances of, and been embraced by, this congregation here at First Presbyterian. Shortcomings be durned, this church has been, for me and many others, first and foremost – overall and overwhelmingly - nurturing and spiritually well-grounded.

It is emblematic of the scene Max Lucado paints in his book *The Applause of Heaven*, wherein life in this realm is likened to that of a race of endurance, and we cross the finish line in the midst of Heaven's cavernous stadium to the thunderous applause of the saints and the angels, where the Lord our God & Creator awaits us at the finish line with open arms and the warmest of smiles, saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant..."

All my beloved church families, First Presbyterian amongst them, have made my life richer and more full of meaning, from whom many fond memories are drawn, and of whom I can (and do) boast.

“Just between us, I think it’s time for us to realize
the spaces in between leave room for you and I to grow.”

Lyric: *Entre Nous* - Neil Peart -



Dear Members, last year in July of 2020, the Session voted unanimously in favor of becoming a Matthew 25 church, of which there are already a number in our Presbytery. The Matthew 25 Initiative is adopted by PC(USA) Churches and Presbyteries to focus on one or more areas:

- Building congregational vitality by challenging people and congregations to deepen their faith and get actively and joyfully engaged with their community and the world.
- Dismantling structural racism by advocating and acting to break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.
- Eradicating systemic poverty by working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.

The following report on MOTA activities by Asia Blanton is an example of how we are moving in the Matthew 25 Church direction. I want to thank Asia for her efforts to represent us in the Presbyterian campaign to reduce the impact of systemic racism in our community.

Ken Wolf, Clerk of Session



Hello Congregation!

My name is Asia Blanton. I was born and raised in Murray, Kentucky. I am a sophomore at Murray State University, seeking a Bachelors and Masters of Science degree in Occupational Safety and Health. I was featured on the Murray State University Fall 2020 Dean's List. This semester, I had the privilege of being a liaison between Ministry Open To All (MOTA), the MSU student body, and Murray community. I was on a mission this semester, promoting racial justice and fighting poverty on campus and in the community.

I have joined other organizations at community protests to promote racial and social equality. Every Saturday morning from 10:00-11:00 a.m., I attended the "Move the Monument" protests at the court square. People often holler, "keep the monument," "go back to where you came from," and "that's my heritage." Many of these people have yet to realize that the Civil War is a part of my heritage, too. The main goal of the Confederacy was to preserve slavery. A woman randomly walked up to me one Saturday morning and blurted out that "[she wants] the monument to stay, but [she is] not racist." Of all the people out there she chose to tell me, the only black person present.

At the "Move the Monument" protest the following week, I saw a white middle aged man threaten to pull a gun out on a Black man around my age. I will use mock names to explain this situation. I will refer to the middle aged white man as John and the Black man as Brandon. Testimony begins:

Brandon and I were talking in front of the monument for a few minutes. Then, a few counter protesters, in favor of keeping the monument, walked up to us. They asked Brandon and I why we would like to move the monument, and we determined that the monument embodies racism and Murray, Kentucky should not honor the Confederacy. One of the counter protesters stated that Brandon and I should, "go back to where we came from" if we do not want to see the Confederate statue. He would like us to go back to Africa, since we are Black. I informed him that I am in fact from Murray, Kentucky and Brandon is from Nashville, Tennessee. Then, Brandon started walking around telling everyone that he is from here and that his ancestors built America. John was in his car and stopped at the red light. John saw Brandon, who happened to be walking in his direction on the sidewalk, pulled his gun out and threatened to shoot him. John stated that he would not shoot Brandon, because there were people watching. Imagine what

**"I GIVE YOU A NEW COMMANDMENT, THAT
YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER."**

Jesus Christ. - John 13:34



would have happened if people were not there. Based on John's words, John would have shot Brandon without reason. End of testimony.

On February 2nd, I made Valentines for the residents at Spring Creek with Lisa Polivick, Dewayne Polivick, Sarah Harrison, and Bryant Harrison. Many of those residents have not seen their family and friends in quite some time now, because of COVID-19. I hope we brightened their day with a few handmade Valentine cards.

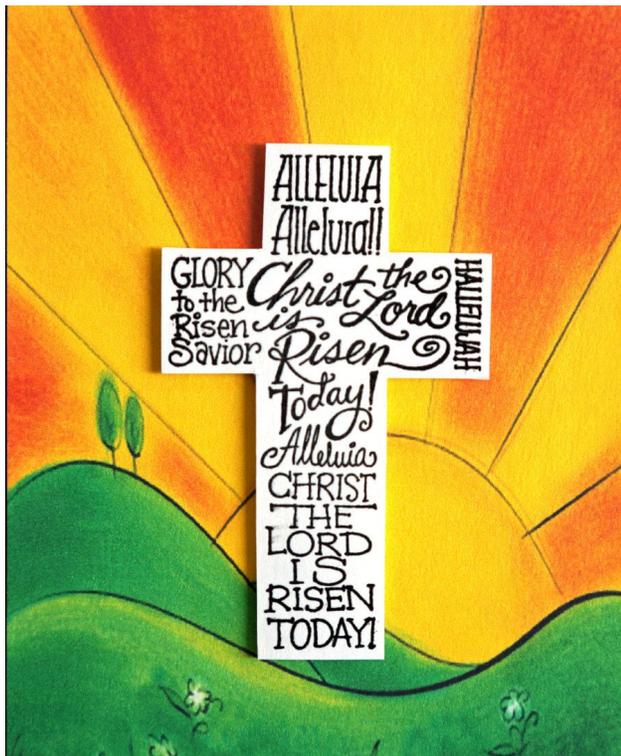
On March 13th, I attended the Breonna Taylor candle vigil at the MSU Elizabeth College amphitheater. The vice president of MSU College Democrats conducted this event to honor the "Life of Breonna Taylor and countless other victims of police violence." We stayed silent for six minutes, symbolizing six of the bullets that the officers shot to kill Breonna Taylor. Leaders of College Dems spoke during the vigil, and emphasized the impact Breonna Taylor had in her community and ways that we can take a stand where we are right now. I will promote hope, justice, equality, kindness, and love. Will you join me?

On March 14th, I collaborated with the MSU College Democrats and made blankets for the homeless and masks for elementary school students. We met in the Mississippi Room at the Curris Center from 4-6:00 p.m. I enjoy volunteering and desire to positively impact the lives of those around me!

If you have any suggestions or ways we can fight poverty and promote racial justice in another fashion, feel free to email me: ablanton5@murraystate.edu . Thank you! Have a wonderful day!

Sincerely,

Ministry Open To All (MOTA) Outreach Intern, Asia Blanton



He is Risen!
Easter Sunday
Church Service

April 4, 2021

10:45 a.m.

Rev. Anthony R. Barta

Dr. Tana Field, Mezzo-Soprano

Julie Park, Piano

Clerk's Report: 3-8-21 Session Meeting

Submitted by Ken Wolf, Clerk of Session

Dear Church Members,

After the March 8 Session Meeting, our Clerk of Session, Ken Wolf, has prepared the following updates for us in his March 2021 Clerk's Report:

- The Ministry Information Form (MIF) was amended and approved by the Session and has been submitted to Presbytery where approval is expected in early April by the Commission on Ministry. It will then be posted nationally where it can be seen by those seeking positions as interim ministers. The interim minister is hired by the Session;
- As of February 28, income exceeded expenses;
- Children's Worship and Wonder restarted on Sunday, March 14; those wishing to bring nursery-age children to church should inform the church office so a nursery attendant can be secured;
- The Worship Committee has been authorized by Session to gradually reintroduce vocal music (solo and congregational) into our in-person worship services over the next two months;
- The Building and Grounds Committee was asked to supervise the rekeying of all the external doors of the church. Since the opening of the new building in 2008, more keys have been distributed than returned as former Session members have moved away;
- Session approved the request by Andrea French to return to full time work in the church office from 8-3 each weekday and another hour of work at home after her children return from school. Her new title will be Church Administrator / Secretary;
- Session asked the Clerk of Session to contact Dr. Tim Davis, Chair of the Presbytery Commission on Ministry, for help in locating an ordained minister to help us with pastoral care needs until we are able to secure an interim minister;
- Andrea French will work from home April 5-9, 2021, when Murray Independent School District observes its Spring Break.



Living Easter Cross

Submitted by Tana Field

We are looking forward to displaying our Living Easter Cross again this Easter! This year we are asking folks to bring fresh flowers to our church from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 3, the eve of Easter. If you would like to help decorate the cross, please let Worship Elder, Tana Field, know: tana.field@gmail.com or (513) 479-2480.



Save the Date!
Our Next Blood Drive Will Be Held On:
Tuesday, April 13 , 2021
From 12:30-5:30 p.m. at FPC

Pastoral Care with Rev. Dr. Tim Davis

Submitted by Ken Wolf and Andrea French

Dear Church Members,

As a follow up to the action item of finding someone to help with our Pastoral Care needs, Ken Wolf, Clerk of Session, contacted Dr. Tim Davis, who resides in Paducah and is the Chair of the Presbytery Commission on Ministry (COM: the group designated to help us find and approve our selection of a new minister), to see if he could find someone to help us. Ken is pleased to announce Dr. Davis has offered to spend one day in Murray with us each week! He plans to start this outreach in April and looks forward to fulfilling the pastoral care needs of our congregation, especially those best met by an ordained Presbyterian minister.

As a way to get to know us and assess our Pastoral Care needs, Dr. Davis would like to meet with Session Elders and members of our congregation on Thursday, April 8 at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. We apologize that this time of day might not work for our working members who have jobs or other obligations, but we were limited with Dr. Davis' ability of time. Dr. Davis wants us to advise him how best he can serve us during his weekly "day trips" to Murray. These much-needed weekly visits will continue until we are able to secure an interim minister.

We hope that you will be able to join us on Thursday, April 8 at 10:00 a.m. After the meeting, you are welcome to join Dr. Davis for more fellowship at Los Portales Mexican Restaurant for "Lunch Bunch". If your work schedule does not allow you to make the meeting, then perhaps you can join us for some good food and fun during your "lunch break"!

Between now and April 8, please spend some time thinking about your "Pastoral Care Wish List" and be ready to share your ideas when we meet with Dr. Davis. If you would like to submit your ideas to either Ken or me, we will make sure it is conveyed to Dr. Davis on your behalf.

Ken Wolf, Clerk of Session



Financial Report

Submitted by George , Treasurer

Thank you to all members and friends of FPC who have continued their financial support during the first three months of 2021. As of March 30, our General Fund Income for 2021 was approximately \$36,500 and our General Fund Expenses were approximately \$34,600. If you need information or assistance with our online giving option, please contact the church office.

April Birthdays

Lisa Polivick, April 8
Laura Ken Hoffman, April 10
Whitey Adams, April 10
Sal Matarazzo, April 21
Deanna Wolf, April 21
Ralph Pittman, April 30



Good Friday

The office will be closed in observance of Good Friday on April 2, 2021.

April Anniversaries

Andrea & Dave Howe, April 4

April 2021 Pulpit Supply Schedule

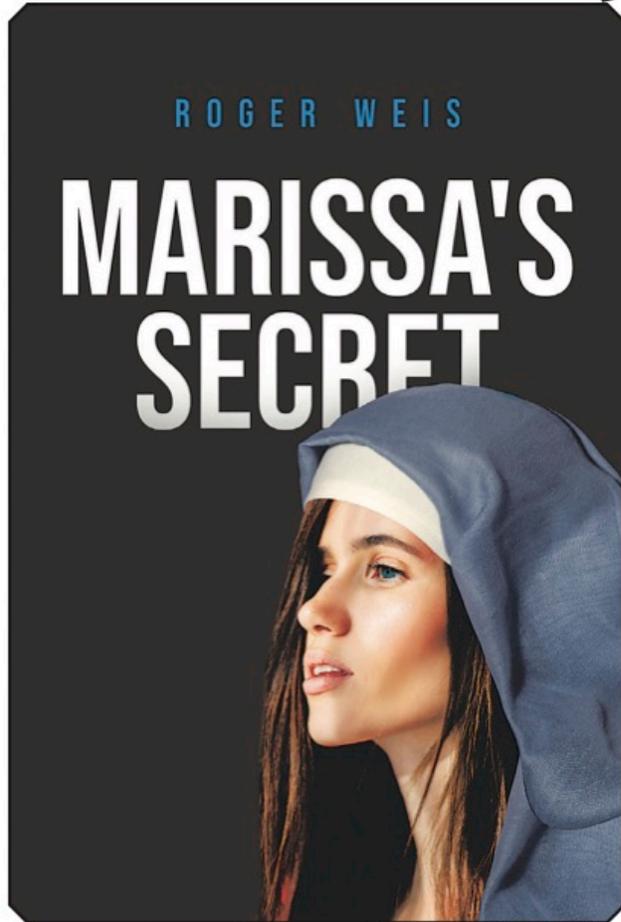
Easter Sunday April 4: Rev. Anthony R. Barta

April 11: Rev. Larry Walker

April 18: Rev. Gordon A. Foltz

April 25: Rev. Larry Walker

New Novel by Roger Weis



Book Summary

Marissa's Secret is a highly controversial, thought provoking novel that moves back and forth from biblical times to the 1960s then concludes on the campus of Princeton's Theological Seminary.

Christopher Matthews was a typical young college student when he was drafted by the U.S. Army to serve as a reporter in Vietnam. His life would never be the same. Christopher's search for purpose and truth would take him on a journey of mystery, religion, and love all wrapped in one explosive work of fiction.

About the Author

This is national best selling author Dr. Roger Weis's 15th book and first work of fiction.

Roger is Professor Emeritus of Murray State University and a Marshall University graduate.

Marketing & Distribution

Marissa's Secret is available on-line for \$19.95

amazon.com

BARNES & NOBLE
BOOKSELLERS

Google play

iTunes

Prayer Concerns

Church Members and Regular Attendees

Andrea Howe and Family

Passing of her grandmother

Aaron Polivick

Recovery and therapy at home

Sue Cochran

Recovery and therapy, home

Ralph and Cheryl Pittman

Passing of Ralph's brother, Bruce Pittman

JoAnn Martin

Uterine Cancer, recover from hysterectomy

Laynie Mitchell and Family

Passing of Laynie's brother, Mickey Alba

Barbara Conley

Strength and recovery, Hickory Woods

Family of Russ Wall

Marion and Pete O'Rourke	Passing of their son, Peter Francis O'Rourke III
Reba Vogel	Passing of her husband, Bob Vogel
Marilyn Miller	Passing of her husband, Cary Miller
Terry Foreman	Recovery at home
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

Nancy Goselin	Todd Goselin's mother
Brandon Bethune	Whitey Adams' good friend, undergoing series of back surgeries
Sheila	George Cochran's sister, COPD
John Cooper	Kaycee and Zach Byrd's grandfather, continued strength and recovery, improved appetite
Marilyn	Dewayne Polivick's mother, breast cancer
June Burgess	Debbie Burgess' mother, Hospice Care, Covid-19
Sonia Fall	Renee's son-in-law's mother, pulmonary fibrosis of lungs
Pat Pittman	Ralph Pittman's son