

FPC CONNECTIONS

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



Church Staff

Pastor: Seeking Interim Pastor
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: Hannah McKibben
Nursery Attendant: 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: June

Submitted by Ken Wolf, Clerk of Session

It has now been more than a year since our church entered our year of trial, first manifest in tensions within our church family and then worsened by the Covid pandemic and shutdown which separated us from each other during a time when we might otherwise have been engaged in healing.

We often say that “God works in mysterious ways,” and so God does. We find ourselves in a new calendar year, one in which the threat from COVID has significantly diminished, allowing us to be with each other once again as a church family, as Bob Valentine noted when he welcomed us to our first in-person worship three months ago.

Our year of discontent can and will be followed by a new year of hope for FPC-Murray as we work together in the coming months with a new interim pastor who will help us reorganize ourselves not only as a church family but also as a renewed “people of God” dedicated to supporting each other as we strive to do the work of Jesus in our church and in our community.

My hope, as one of the long-term members of this church, is that each of us digs deep and finds within the hope, trust, and courage necessary to co-operate with God’s Holy Spirit. I hope we will be able to join together and join with each other in a circle of love necessary to get our church, this year celebrating its 80th birthday, back on its feet so that we can once again walk together in faithful service to our community as we have done in the past.

This trust must begin with each of us as individuals before it can manifest in our congregation as a whole. As we begin this introspective and reflective period, I offer these words from Psalm 40: 4-8, which my Bible

Join Us!



Men's Breakfast

Every Wednesday
Morning at 7 a.m.

June 2, Martha's
June 9, Rudy's
June 16, Cracker Barrel
June 23, Hih Burger
June 30, Martha's

July 7, Rudy's
July 14, Cracker Barrel
July 21, Hih burger
July 28, Martha's



Lunch Bunch

Every Thursday at
11:45 a.m.

June 3, Big Apple
June 10, Jasmine Thai
June 17, Artisan Kitchen
June 24, Applebee's

July 1, Panera Bread
July 8, Mr. B's
July 15, Dumplin's
July 22, Hop Hound
July 29, Sirloin Stockade

interestingly says was written “for the director of music,” a job we will be working to fill this summer:

Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.

Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you have planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings you did not require.

Then I said: “Here I am, I have come—it is written about me in the scroll. I desire to your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”

I pray this rock sends out a few ripples as we continue our journey in this time of transition.

An Elder's Reflection : July

Submitted by Sarah Harrison

For over a year now, our world has consisted of mask-wearing, quarantining, social distancing, and working from home (all for good reason, of course). For many, it has also been filled with fear, sadness, illness, grief, loneliness, and death. Prior to about a month ago, I had not hugged or kissed my 82-year-old grandparents in over a year. We missed birthday celebrations, graduations, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and so much more. In some ways, you could say we missed a year of our lives. But, friends, we have almost made it! The end of this pandemic nightmare is in sight.

As I reflect on the past year and look forward to what lies ahead, I am filled with gratefulness. (Now, I know, we normally only talk about that in November, but I think we should talk about it now.) I am grateful for a God of hope, love, and mercy and for a church family who shows me this every single day. I am grateful for science and for a vaccine to protect my friends and family as well as people around the world. I am grateful for sunshine and warm weather, for health and happiness, and for hope and love. But, possibly most of all, I am grateful to be able to hug and kiss my Granny and Grandad again. At 82-years-old, I don't know how many more birthdays and Christmases they have left (hopefully a lot!), but I will celebrate every single one of them to the absolute fullest with a very grateful heart. And will never take

those hugs and kisses for granted again!

As we start taking off our masks and seeing more and more of our family and friends, I hope to continue finding reasons to be grateful every single day, and I hope that you will join me!

Happy summer, my friends!

With much love, Sarah Harrison

Clerk's Report: 5-17-21 Session Meeting

Submitted by Ken Wolf, Clerk of Session

During our May 17, 2021 Session Meeting, held via Zoom, our major item of business was interview with Rev. Dr. Beth Dobyms, a retired Christian Church (Disciples) minister with extensive experience in church administration and interim ministry appointments. Rev. Dobyms was recommended to us by Dr. Tim Davis, chair of the Presbytery of Western Kentucky Commission on Ministry. Session voted unanimously to hire her as a part-time interim pastor for the last six months of 2021 to provide consistent leadership in the pulpit, pastoral support, and also help with the Mission Study, which is required before we can elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) to search for an installed pastor. A sub-committee composed of elders Debbie Hixon, George Kipphut, and Eric Frederick will work with Rev. Dobyms to prepare a contract. She will meet with the Commission on Ministry on June 1, 2021 for final approval.

At the end of Rev. Dr. Beth Dobyms' tenure, we will likely have to hire an additional interim pastor while the PNC completes its work of finding an installed pastor. The Session will meet as a committee of the whole during coming months to review candidates who have submitted Pastor Information Forms (PIFs) in response to our Ministry Information Form (MIF) now posted on the Presbyterian Church Leadership Connection at the PC(USA) website.

Seeking Liturgists and Ushers

Submitted by Todd Wright

We are still seeking volunteers to serve as Liturgists and Ushers for our worship services. If you are interested in serving in this important worship ministry, please sign up for a Sunday or two at the Sign Up Table in the narthex. If you have any questions about being a liturgist or usher, please contact Session Elder, Todd Wright: eaglesii@bellsouth.net.

GIVE BLOOD
You can make a difference.



**American
Red Cross**

Save the Date!

Our Next Blood Drive Will Be Held On:

Thursday, June 10, 2021

From 12:30-5:30 p.m. at FPC

Outreach

Submitted by Shirley Latto

FPC Outreach Service Activities for June 2021:

- FPC Donates \$1,100 to Presbytery
- FPC Donates \$84 to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund

FPC Outreach Service Activities for July 2021:

- FPC Donates \$400 to Need Line
- FPC Donates \$83 to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Beth Belote

Submitted by Marcie Johnson

The Beth Belote Circle met in person (!) at the Big Apple to celebrate Cinco de Mayo--and to enjoy music performed by Andrew O'Rourke. Andrew explained that his grandmother, our circle's namesake, had sponsored his first paying gig. He was eleven; his band played at First Presbyterian Church. Circles indeed.

We continue to support our adopted family, assisting with occasional emergencies and providing a small but steady monthly gift card for groceries and other necessities. We continue to offer prayers and emotional support to circle members, grateful that Annie Wells is "home" for the summer; that Carol Allen is enjoying retirement (and visits to grandchildren); that Debbie Burgess's mother has successfully overcome COVID-19 and settled into an assisted living apartment in Salt Lake City; that Aaron Polivick is slowly but surely gaining strength and health; that Patsy Chaney's granddaughter Hannah will assume a new role as a physician in Owensboro; that Shirley Latto's son Todd has safely finished work in the Middle East--and that we are all healthy enough to get together for music, laughter, and awe.



Independence Day

The office will be closed in observance of Independence Day on July 5, 2021.

Treasurer's Report

Submitted by George Kippbut

Our Church finances are benefitting from the very generous and consistent support of FPC's members and friends. Thank you to all who have donated during Sunday Services, through the mail, and through the FPC Online Giving Portal. For the period January 1 - May 24, 2021, our General Fund Income was approximately \$67,691 and our General Fund Expenses were approximately \$50,166. FPC expenses have been low primarily because several key personnel positions remain vacant or only partly filled, including Interim Pastor, Music Director, and Nursery Staff. Session hopes to begin filling these positions as soon as possible. If you need assistance using the Online Giving Portal, or need information or confirmation of your past donations, please contact the Church Office.



MOTA Campus Ministry
Ministry Open To All

We have a great deal of catching up to do, so I am dividing my article into sections of interest so that you can scan through and read about the topics of interest to you.

Gratitude

I would like to take a moment to thank all of you for your support while my son, Aaron, was so ill. My family members will never forget the texts, cards, and donations that you sent to support us during that difficult time. Your prayers made such a difference; it is truly miraculous that he survived and

continues to improve every day.

He has incurred some nerve damage in his feet and legs that still hamper his ability to stand for extended periods or to walk long distances, but he has made amazing progress. Neurologists are still running tests and treating him for this issue. I have never in my life experienced such an outpouring of love and support; my family was truly humbled by God's love that we experienced through the response of this congregation.

Work on campus

I have participated in two MSU virtual orientations for MOTA; however, Murray State is returning to in-person orientations later this summer. (YAAAHHH!) Some changes have been made. Separate campus ministries will no longer have their own tables at freshman orientations. Instead, all ministries will share one table. We will be passing out tumblers and flyers with MOTA information on them during orientations.

The dates for orientation sessions are June 3-5, June 16 and 18, July 8, and August 5. MOTA will be participating in Explore Murray and the lawn party hosted on Hart Hall lawn again this fall when students return to campus. I am having some bags made with MOTA information to pass out at Explore Murray. Students are given lots of free items at this event, and providing a bag for their treasures will help us advertise our program.

Community Garden

It's almost summer time! Last year, MOTA donated over 300 pounds of vegetables to Need Line from our Community Garden. We had the ground tilled yesterday for this year's garden. We are planting it at my house instead of in town so that it will be more convenient to take care of it.

I recently spoke to Terri Ford, a member of First Presbyterian at Calvert City who volunteers on the MOTA Board and gave us the idea of planting a garden. (Calvert City has had one for a few years now.) I am meeting with Terri in Calvert City on Tuesday to learn how to install a watering and fertilization system as well as laying landscape fabric to keep down weed growth. Her church just installed such a system. I will provide garden updates in case anyone wants to help work in it this summer.

Matthew 25 Initiative at FPC and in our Presbytery

Besides tending our Community Garden, MOTA will continue to support our PC(USA)'s Matthew 25 initiative in other ways. I have volunteered to serve as our church's liaison to our Presbytery's Matthew 25 meetings. I participated in a Zoom meeting last week and heard lots of interesting ideas. Owensboro Church has hosted a multicultural celebration for their community for twenty-two years; others are planning Juneteenth celebrations.

Some participate in a pulpit exchange once a year with an African-American church in their community. Others are hosting digital church services in Spanish. Owensboro First Presbyterian is initiating a cooling station this summer. Others are creating new worship opportunities called "Dinner Church," a relaxed worship service in which people gather to eat together and worship. Some churches host clothes closets; others, food pantries. Our church is already doing so much to alleviate hunger in our community. I appreciate the Presbyterian Women's amazing work with the backpack program and our church's donations of food to Need Line.

Videography/Advertising

We have been so pleased to provide housing for our videographer, Cameron Witte, during the Covid epidemic. He provided his professional videographer services to our church free for nine months in return for living free at the MOTA House. The arrangement was mutually beneficial to all. He has done such a beautiful job for our church! I certainly benefited from watching our services online! Now that Cameron is moving out, we can use the MOTA House for MOTA events again. I am interested in collecting donations of school supplies, toiletries, and laundry detergent for needy MSU students. We will be working to develop this idea this summer before the Fall Semester begins. Cameron is also helping us make some advertisements for MOTA.

Guatemala Mission Trip

Although Jennifer DeMauro did return to Guatemala recently, MOTA members have chosen not to travel because of Covid-19. We are hoping to join a mission trip there from March 19-26, 2022. MOTA is still paying \$360.00 a year to educate a beautiful child, Elizabeth Coz. She attends the school whose ministry we have supported on our mission trips. Paying for her to go to school also makes her entire family eligible to receive medical care through the school. Andrea is including a picture and short article in the newsletter about Elizabeth.



MOTA Alumnae and Adopt-A-Student Ministry

I have been in touch with some of our MOTA alumnae: Brett Eisenhower, Madelyn Hogrebe, and Da'Sha Tuck. They are all doing well. We are going to have a virtual meeting later this week to visit with each other. One of our MOTA students, Lexie Rainey, is graduating this year with a two-year nursing degree. I appreciate Marion O'Rourke, Annie Wells, and Marcie Johnson for taking her and her

roommate out to eat to celebrate her achievement. Marion has been so active in MOTA's "Adopt a Student" program of our church.



Appreciation and support of our MOTA Intern-- An Evolving Vision

Our wonderful MOTA intern, Asia Blanton, is in Florida for the summer working as an OSHA intern. She wants to continue working with MOTA next year. I am so proud of Asia for continuing MOTA's good work while I was taking care of Aaron. I was so disturbed to hear and read her account of a man with a gun threatening protesters who supported moving the Confederate Statue. I don't know if protests will continue in the fall.

I have really given a great deal of thought to Asia's reply when a white person told her, "That statue represents our history." Asia responded, "Yes, it represents my history, too." This interaction hurt my heart. Asia was being treated as "the other" by this person, as if the history of the US belonged to white people, as if black people were outside of our nation's story. With Asia's reply, she gently yet assertively insisted upon her right to be counted--to be included in the "our" in this woman's comment. And this is not a history that she wants to be reminded of every time she passes the court square in the heart of our town.

She was also treated as "the other" by the person who told her and her African-American friend to "go back where they came from" although Asia was born in the Murray-Calloway County Hospital and has lived in this community all of her life. The essential question is this: Who belongs in this community and who doesn't?

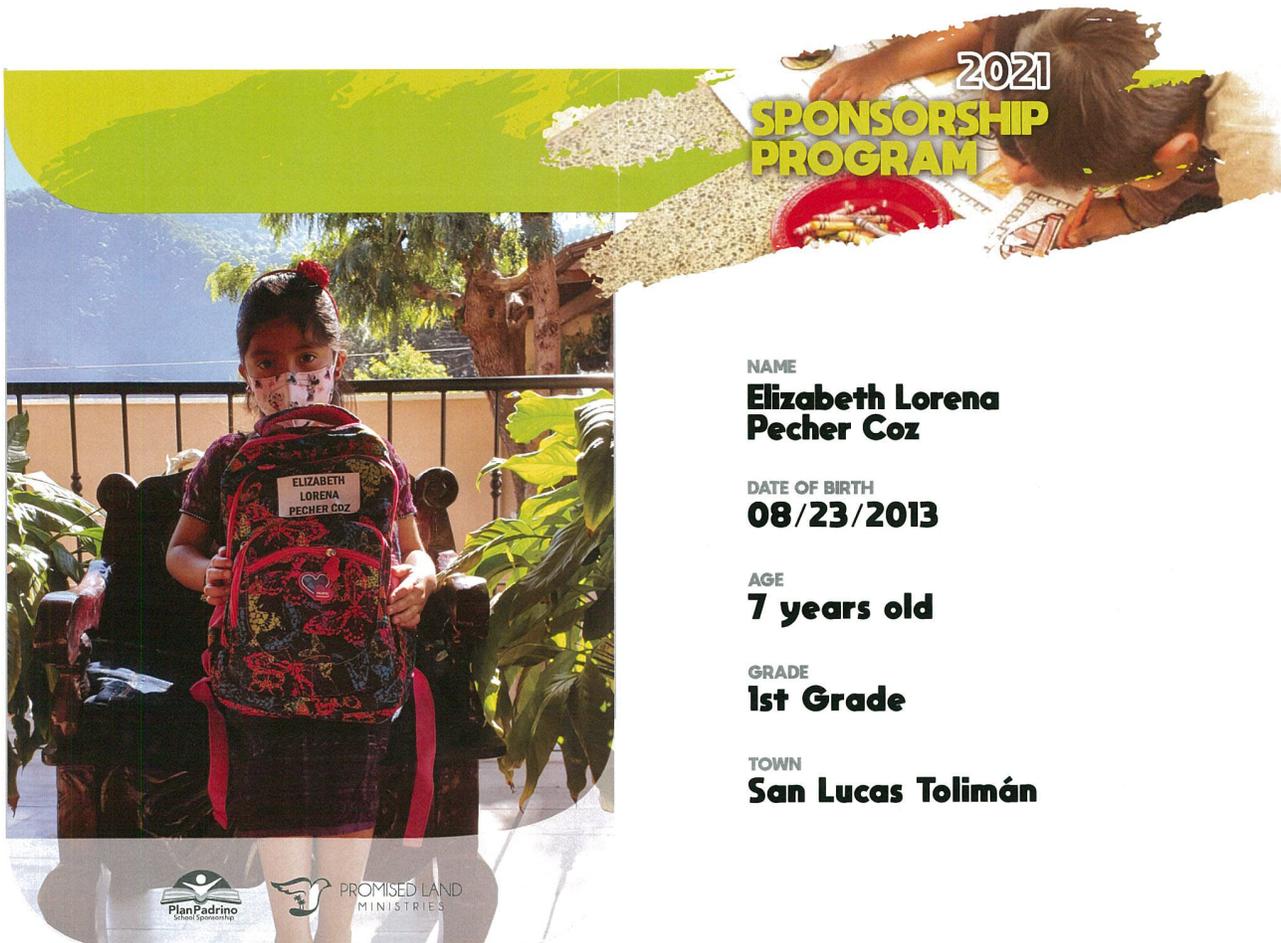
When Confederate monuments began to come down, I did not support the movement because I am a student and a teacher of history. Removing them felt as if we were erasing evidence of our past. However, my thinking has evolved as more African Americans have expressed their desire to see them moved. As students in my classroom at Murray High School participated in marches, I felt the need to support them because I loved them. I want Asia to know that I hear her quiet yet insistent voice and that I choose to stand beside her to support her wish to be fully acknowledged as a member of "our" history-- painful as it is. The love I hold for my living,

breathing brothers and sisters in Christ supersedes my attachment to granite statues and any romantic notions I still harbored about my Southern heritage.

God has already answered the question that lies at the heart of this challenge: there is no “other” in the Kingdom of God. We are all created in His image, and He loves the least among us as much as he loves those who feel the greatest sense of belonging in His kingdom. As Christians, we are called to remind the world of this fundamental truth. I am so glad that we have Asia working with our church to help us grow in our consideration of the racial divide that still exists in our country.

The Ebbing of the Storm: A New Vision

With the coronavirus raging and our thoughts on ministry swirling, we have just experienced one of the greatest storms this church will ever encounter. The dawn has finally arrived, and we need to set about the work of rebuilding. Do we have within us the fortitude needed to face today’s challenges? Absolutely. As we begin this new phase of our journey under our interim pastor, let us gather together in one spirit of love, valuing each member and remembering that each person has a vital niche to fill in our ministry. Together, we are strong, for we can lean upon each other. Together we can continue to provide our vital ministry to each other and our community. Together, with the Lord’s help, we can continue our work for the upbuilding of God’s Kingdom.



2021 SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

NAME
Elizabeth Lorena Pecher Coz

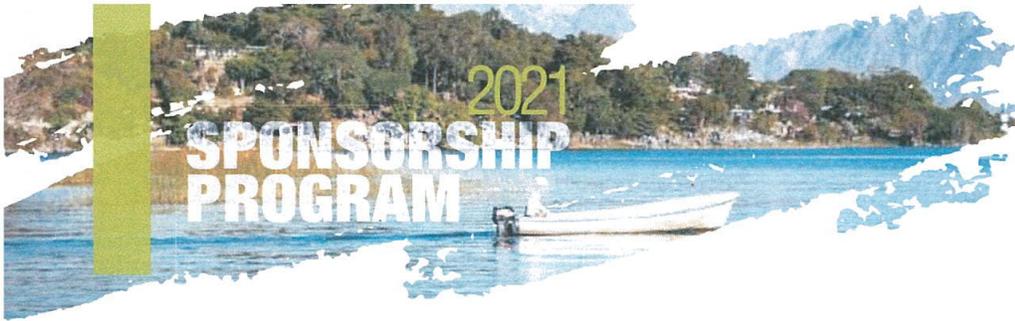
DATE OF BIRTH
08/23/2013

AGE
7 years old

GRADE
1st Grade

TOWN
San Lucas Tolimán



Dear Sponsor,

Although last year, 2020, was quite different for all of us, I hope you and your family are doing well and full of joy.

I write this letter so you can continue to get to know me and the things I enjoy doing.

What is your favorite memory of last year?

My favorite memory is playing with my classmates during recess. We had lots of fun.

This year, I want to:

This year, I want to do great in school. I want to improve my reading and writing skills.

My favorite day of the year is:

My favorite day is my Birthday because it is a very special day for me.

What makes me happy is:

What makes me happy is being able to go back to school. Even if it is only two times a week. I am happy to see my classmates.

When I grow up, I would not enjoy:

I never want to disobey God because I know that would bring serious consequences to my life.

My family is:

My family is very special because they support me and help me achieve complicated tasks.

I am thankful for:

I thank God for giving me life. I also thank my parents for giving me a little sister whom I enjoy playing with.

Please pray for:

Please pray for all the children in the world. Also, pray for the children who lost their parents because of the virus.

It is a blessing to have your support.

I will do my best this school year.

May God bless you. I send you a heartfelt hug.

Elizabeth Lorena Pecher Coz

Name



PROMISED LAND
MINISTRIES

June & July Birthdays

Stephanie McClain, June 2
Elizabeth McClain, June 2
Laynie Mitchell, June 5
Harry Conley, June 8
Melinda Wall, June 14
Dewayne Polivick, June 16
Greyson Crawford, June 16
Ian Holmes, July 2
Amy Levering, July 4
Shirley Latto, July 4
Gail Larson, July 6
Lloyd Lewis, July 11
Bonnie McNeely, July 16
Elizabeth Wall, July 19
Duncan Hoffman, July 25
Sam Mitchell, July 29
Susan Lyford, July 30
Zach Byrd, July 30



June & July Anniversaries

Susan & Bill Stewart, June 4
Deanna & Ken Wolf, June 4
Laura Ken and Ronald Hoffman, June 5
Lisa & Dewayne Polivick, June 6
Carol Jean & Lloyd Lewis, July 6
JoAnn and Sid Martin, July 18
Christy & Eric Frederick, July 20
Andrea & Todd French, July 22
Juli & Keith McClain, July 27
Susan & Tom Lyford, July 29

Prayer Concerns

Church Members and Regular Attendees

Melinda Wall and Family
Todd Goselin and Family
Aaron Polivick
Sue Cochran
Ralph and Cheryl Pittman

Passing of her mother-in-law, Betsy Wall
Passing of his mother, Nancy Goselin
Recovery and therapy, home
Recovery and therapy, home
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
Melinda Wall and Family	Passing of her husband, 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, cracked spine
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

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	Dwayne Polivick's mother, breast cancer
June Burgess	Debbie Burgess' mother
Pat Pittman	Ralph Pittman's son