



First Press Magazine

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First Presbyterian Church
200 S Lincoln Ave
Marshfield, WI 54449

Phone: 715-384-2484
E-mail: pastor@fpcmarshfield.org
Website: fpcmarshfield.org
Editor: Dan Crump

From Pastor Laurie

*Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.
I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. --Isaiah 43:19*



Are you ready for the new thing that God is about to do? As we emerge from the pandemic at last, this summer of 2022 issue glistens with newness. Indeed, we are a church expecting. Look at these numbers: 1 new person, 2 new members, 2 new confirmands, 4 brand new officers ordained (1 new Ruling Elder + 3 new Deacons), 5 baptisms, and 100 new white oak seedlings. We are also expecting and preparing to welcome 1 of 3 new refugee families into our Marshfield community this summer.

Weatherwise, we seemed to skip spring this year. Take a moment now with this issue, catch your breath, and be thankful for the new thing that God is springing forth through every one of us, together again. It is a beautiful thing to behold.

LOOKING AHEAD

VBS DAYCAMP: AUGUST 1 – 4, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Grades 1 – 6 @ FPC
All Aboard! Sailing the High C's: Studying the Characteristics of God
Register your child, grandchild, and/or volunteer! Contact Carmen Lawler.

SHE'S BACK! STEINWAY PIANO REDEDICATION RECITAL:
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 3:00 P.M. *Save the date.*

First



Press

The Magazine of First Presbyterian Church — Marshfield

Summer 2022



Refugee Resettlement Marshfield

Beginnings

New Members



Jon Burnett was born in Marshfield and has spent most of his life in nearby Spencer. He has two adult children, Austin and Quentin. He joins FPC because "life is getting shorter and it's time to be in a good place with new people."



Linda Merriman Hitchman moved to WI from Seattle in 1988, worked in state gov't until 2019, and moved to Marshfield two years ago. Linda has two adult children, Anna and Jillian. She is a member of FPC Outreach committee and has joined the deacons.

New Person!



Leo Stewart Olson was born on May 9, 2022 to Josh and Saydi Olson, and very proud grandparents, Tracy Olson and Patty Faber.

Baptisms



William Henry Davis, III, child of William Henry II and Heather Davis, was baptized on May 1, 2022.



James Theodore Krohn, child of Ted and Kelsey Krohn, was baptized on May 8, 2022.



Kendra Rendmeister, child of Nicholas Rendmeister and Olga Alonso, was baptized on May 29, 2022.



Oswald Jackan, child of Ted and Andrea Jackan, was baptized on June 19, 2022.



Clara Aune Kesanen, child of Matthew and Lindsay Kesanen, was baptized on June 26, 2022.

New Staff

Gil Nimm has stepped down as chair of Buildings and Grounds to bring his remarkable gift for keeping things running smoothly to the staff of FPC as our new **Maintenance Custodian**.

Thanks, Gil!



"Why is the communion liturgy in both English and Spanish?"

Not long after **Jorge Ramirez** and his family joined our church, the Session of FPC, in accordance with the PCUSA Book of Order, extended permission to him to administer the communion elements. Since then, whenever his schedule allows, Jorge, an ordained pastor in the National Presbyterian Church in Mexico, has administered communion in Spanish, the language of his faith, alongside our English-speaking pastors.

Although currently, Jorge and his wife, Carmen, are the only FPC members who directly benefit from our inclusion of the Spanish language in worship, we have welcomed the company of other Spanish-speaking church members, friends and visitors in the past.

For those of us who do not speak Spanish, our bilingual communion liturgy, made possible by Jorge's faithful service, calls us to remember that our celebration of the Lord's Supper is extended to all,

and that God's word speaks to the heart, unbound by human language.



Faith Stories



Shortly after his birth, John was adopted by long time FPC members, Ben and Alice Wing. He has been a member himself ever since. He attended Sunday School and was confirmed at FPC, and learned the art of the long, flat basketball shot in the low-ceilinged basement of the old church. John met Kutzie Burr just before entering military service, and they married during his army tour of duty.

Kutzie was a lifelong Catholic, so they married at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, though John remained Presbyterian. Theirs was Marshfield's first mixed faith full mass marriage ever, setting the stage for a life of commitment and mutual appreciation for their different faiths. John especially appreciated Kutzie's huge, close-knit family. The kids, Tim and Jill, and their kids in turn, were raised Catholic, but have always appreciated John's ecumenical attitude. After becoming an empty nester, John allowed himself to focus on serving the church of his parents, as deacon, elder, and on the finance committee.

John Wing

Ben and Alice owned a series of drug stores, which gave John, who inherited the family business, the opportunity to learn the importance of showing up faithfully, treating both customers and employees well, and serving the broader health of the community. John closed the pharmacy in 1992, and he and Kutzie focused on their Hallmark Gold Crown stores which they retired from in 2009.

John's faith is formed by the story of the Good Samaritan who went out of his way to help someone walking a different path than his. He completes his second, and final, six-year tenure as a deacon, faithfully showing up, greeting people with a smile, making coffee, and setting up tables for church events.

We depend upon such opportunities to show up for each other. The pandemic and the busy-ness of modern life require schedules that challenge these life-affirming routines. The near future holds little promise, but John is hopeful that if we show up for each other and appreciate our differences, better times will come.

Green Team—Faith in Action

Birth Announcement

The FPC Green Team is pleased to announce the arrival of 100 new 6-12 inch white oak tree seedlings recently delivered in the Marshfield area. These newborns were adopted and quickly planted by church family and friends on May 8th. The oaks' new "parents" were sent home with instructions for care and nurturing of these amazing newborns which will grow an epic 60-80 feet in height and width during their 500 year life spans.

White oaks were selected in honor of Earth Day because they thrive in growing zones 3-8, cope with warming earth temperatures, and are much more disease tolerant than red oaks. They will provide food for countless species of wildlife and pollinator caterpillars and will gobble increasing amounts of carbon dioxide as they mature.

Several oaks were set aside for planting to mark the south side of our church property and to eventually provide a shady place to park.

We invite you to name your new arrival and measure its growth annually. Meet Quirky Quercus

Alba adopted by the Gillespies. He is 10 inches tall and weighed about one ounce at birth. He has two leaf buds already.



Close-up

Linda Merriman Hitchman

Linda's dad was raised in a very conservative church that forbade movie-going, dancing, card-playing, and drinking alcohol. Once he got out from under his parents' roof, he never stepped into another church again. Her mother epitomized what Linda sees in many of our members of FPC. She was always thinking of other people, helping her neighbors, constantly doing all kinds of volunteer work, and teaching kindness and unselfishness, but it seemed to be in her DNA rather than as a product of faith or creed.

When Linda was 10 years old, her grandmother moved close by, giving Linda the opportunity to see where her mother got her passion for selfless service. Her grandmother had spent many childhood years in an orphanage and vowed that no one would have to experience the emotional deprivation she felt she had. Both women blessed Linda with a love of service and a commitment to connection that, though it was not dependent upon church of any

kind, Jesus would have said, "This is my soul."

Grandmother, born in 1897, was a 21st century thinker. She blessed Linda with a lifelong love of books and, with that, the gift of being able to hold conflicting ideas in a kind of intellectual ambiguity. Such ideas might have truth, but they must not be allowed to sow division or prejudice, inspire violence, or deprive anyone of what they need to flourish. "I owe her a lot," Linda says.

Service and faith came together at Orchard Ridge UCC in Madison before Linda moved to Marshfield and joined FPC. Faith, for Linda, is the ability to hope that if you follow a path you believe in, you will be a better person and do better things than if you just accept what you find to be believable. In this world, the hope for good lies outside of what is merely believable. One of our newest deacons, Linda believes that mental health is a major problem in society and should be an important part of our Christian ministry.

Refugee Resettlement Marshfield

"*Sawabona*" is a Zulu greeting which translates to English, "I see you, respect and acknowledge you." Pastor Laurie taught us this new word in one of our first meetings, when an expanding group of faith leaders and concerned citizens from the greater Marshfield area gathered by Zoom in late 2021 to discuss the idea of welcoming Afghan refugees to our community. We all watched the rapid withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in August of 2021 and the acute dangers the Afghans who had worked with US and NATO forces were facing with the Taliban takeover. Our neighboring communities of Wausau and Stevens Point modeled for us that even small midwestern cities can find a way to help. Being a **Matthew 25** church, there was no question that FPC would lead the way forming the **Refugee Resettlement Marshfield (RRM)** movement.

"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."
Matt. 25:35

Fast-forward through countless meetings, emails, webinars and trainings to summer 2022. We have learned that refugees are coming to our country from many places torn by war, poverty, and climate crises including Ukraine, Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, etc. We currently have 94 Marshfield area volunteers who have agreed to help in a variety of ways. With the guidance of



Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC), one of nine agencies authorized by the U.S. Department of State, to resettle refugees, we have formed three local "**Co-Sponsorship**" teams to date,

each of which is preparing to accept a partner family in Marshfield as soon as mid-summer 2022. "**Co-**" in the title stands for the cooperative relationship we have formed with the governmental offices providing core services. Additional support groups have formed to assist the teams.

Co-Sponsorship is intensive and important work that requires a minimum commitment of nine months. FPC members have enthusiastically re-

sponded to the call for help. We formed Team #3 along with members of Good Shepherd Lutheran, Wesley Methodist and P.E.O. Chapter CY. Teams work to raise over \$3,000 to supplement initial rent/utilities, commit ourselves to be trained and to work together to solve problems, and respond to any issues as they surface, documenting all of our activities closely with the ECDC office in Wausau. Our team has organized ourselves around key integration pathways.

Seven key integration pathways:

- Housing and Welcome** — Gathers household furnishings, sets up the home, providing ready-to-eat food upon arrival as well as appropriate clothing. Meets the family at the airport.
- Transportation** — Provides rides to essential appointments and destinations, teaches them to use public transport and how to apply for a driver's license.
- Health** — Assists the family in finding primary care, tracking and following up medical and dental appointments, and teaches them to stay healthy in the American context.
- Education** — Assists parents in enrolling children in school and following up on participation as well as supporting adults in English language and job training classes.
- Cultural Adjustment** — Assists the family in learning how to accomplish daily tasks, use appliances, and take full advantage of community services such as grocery stores, library, parks, etc.
- Jobs and Finance** — Assists the family in learning how to accomplish daily tasks, use appliances, and take full advantage of community services such as grocery stores, library, parks, etc.

Team #3 will soon complete our final training session as we continue to prepare the required nesting items to create a welcoming home for our family. We join you in being grateful for this opportunity to live our faith and are eager to meet our partner family.



Confirmation Class of 2022

Gratefully, this year's confirmation class returned to the Youth Group room for in person gathering. Class members, **Antonio Koehn** and **Owen Hoerneman**, mentors **Mark Nelson** and **Dan Kayhart** and teachers **Carmen Lawler**, **Pastor Laurie**, and **Dan Crump** juggled their schedules to meet from Sept. '21 through May '22. Owen and Antonio were confirmed on May 15th. Antonio was also baptized at this time.



Committed to service, **Owen** (left) assisted with food packing for the Feed My Starving Children program at Zion United Methodist, and **Antonio** (right) has graced our worship with his musical skills many times.

Faith Statement Excerpts

Owen: After all, church is not just for religious purposes. It is about community and the people within coming together for the better of themselves, others, and (at FPC especially) the ones in need. This is a standout way to show Christ's love, it is what Jesus would have wanted.

Antonio: [Y]ou don't have to be perfect to be Jesus's child. He already bore our sins so we could be healed and forgiven. But also, I believe the true meaning is that you need to want a deeper relationship with Jesus, God, and with others. And by doing this, you can finally begin to grasp the surface, of what God has truly done for us.

Ordination and Installation of Elders and Deacons



A new slate of church officers was ordained and installed on May 1, 2022.

RULING ELDERS
Class of 2025:
 Darlene Berry
 Jan Clouse
 Kristine Johaneck

DEACONS
Class of 2025:
 Sue Ferguson
 Dorothy Halle
 Linda Hitchman
 Gail LaFontaine
 Diane Saindon
 Cathy Sutterer

Class of 2023:
 Judy Bentley
 Kathy Kramer

Did You Know?



Once again, a lot of hands made the rummage sale a success. New additions this year included a boutique of special items in the Narthex and a campaign on Ebay to sell one of a kind items to collectors. All the hard work netted a total of over \$4000. Thanks for the hard work everyone!

Did You Know?



All summer while the choir is on break, we look forward to musical offerings from musicians of all ages from our FPC community. On June 19th, **Ken Zittleman** offered a beautiful rendition of "Let There Be Peace on Earth."

Did You Know?



This year's "United We Can" sculpture entry collected 511 items for the Soup or Socks shelves.

Did You Know?



So far, FPC and the Wood County Health Department have worked together to provide 255 Covid vaccine doses. Thanks to all for the dedication and hard work!

Did You Know?

Thanks to Rainbow Team members, **Roxie Wetterau** and **Nicole Johnson**, FPC was represented at Marshfield's Pride event on June 18th, 2022. They provided free "Mom hugs," and passed out 50 "pride poles." **Pride poles are still available in the narthex for a suggested donation of \$5.**

