

First Presbyterian Church
221 East Sixth Street at Lincoln
Bloomington, IN 47408
(812) 332-1514



First Press

Celebrating Christ and Serving Community

August 2022 Volume 64, No.8

Inside this Issue

Our New Pastor is Coming	2-3
Session Meeting Notes	4
Racial Justice Task Force	4
Report of the Treasurer	5
225th General Assembly Report	6
Meet our Newest Members	7-8
Youth Pancakes	9
Mission Update	10
Earth Stewards	11
August Birthdays	12
Calendar	13



OUR NEW PASTOR IS COMING----



At the congregational meeting on July 3, the congregation voted overwhelmingly to call Rev. John (Tommy) Grimm as our new pastor/head of staff. The call follows a prayerful and deliberate process since last summer to discern the Spirit's lead to find the individual that we believe most matches FPC's values and needs.

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) developed and submitted a Ministry Information Form (MIF) that provides not only a description of the strengths and needs of FPC, but also reflects the vision for ministry of a new pastor. The PNC also carefully reviewed more than 30 Pastor Information Forms (PIFs) from candidates, listened to numerous sermons, interviewed 10 candidates via zoom and narrowed the list to three major candidates, who were interviewed a second time. The PNC also spoke with five references for each major candidate. They visited Tommy at his current church and heard him preach. He and his wife, Mary, visited Bloomington, with which they fell in love. At every step of this process, the PNC sought the Spirit's guidance and each time came back to one person whose particular experiences, gifts, and temperament seemed to fit the specific role of pastor/head of staff at FPC and thus joyfully and unanimously nominated Tommy.

Tommy grew up in Evansville, Indiana and received his BA degree from Taylor University. Following the Spirit's guidance, he completed his M.Div. from Duke Divinity School and was ordained in the PC(USA) in 2018. He currently is Associate Pastor at Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church in Durham, NC. He is in his fifth year in this position and has served in other positions at Trinity including Director of Discipleship and Director of Children's Ministry. In addition, he served as a missionary and professor at Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary and has been a board member of the Duke Presbyterian Campus Ministry. Tommy has strong and extensive community organizing experience and is currently co-chair of the clergy caucus for Durham CAN, a Durham coalition of local congregations, associations, and neighborhoods working together on issues such as affordable housing and living-wage jobs. He helped lead Trinity in becoming a Matthew 25 congregation. In the PNC's review and conversations with references, several qualities stood out about Tommy: his spiritual maturity, his deep love of scripture, his outstanding preaching, his sensitive pastoral care, his skills at empowering others and his ability to ask penetrating, probing questions to help individuals and the congregation develop their vision. His current head of staff at Trinity Avenue says "he sparkles; the whole atmosphere around him is charged with light. You can see the love of God reflected through him." He enjoys running, playing with his kids, hiking through the woods, and black licorice.

Tommy and wife, Mary, who is a communications director of a non-profit housing organization have two children: 5 year old Amos and 7 year old Naomi. And one child on the way—mid August. Tommy's first day with us will be September 1, due to the upcoming delivery of the new baby. Please keep Tommy, Mary, Naomi and Amos in your prayers as they prepare for the move to Bloomington and the addition of a new family member.

Welcoming Pastor Tommy, Mary, Naomi, and Amos



by Karen Hahn

We all know waiting is hard. And we have been waiting for a long time. While we await Pastor Tommy and his family's first Sunday with us, the PNC has asked the congregation to hold them in our prayers.

While attending the Montreat Music and Worship conference, I wondered what it might look like if we were able to actually surround them with prayer on their first Sunday here. This is where you come in! As we prepare for their arrival, I would ask each of you to make one (you can make more if you like to) origami heart. Before you fold your heart, write a prayer on the back side.

You can use your own paper, or there will be paper in the welcome center that you can use.

Once your hearts are done, place them in the basket in the welcome center and they will be strung together to be displayed around the sanctuary on Pastor Tommy's first Sunday. Don't forget, if you are having trouble writing a prayer, God knows what is on your heart! Instructions can be found here:

http://m.origami-instructions.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.origami-instructions.com%2Feasy-origami-heart.html&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F#2880



SESSION MEETING NOTES July 10, 2022

Session Actions:

- Approved moving the worship service 10:00 am to 11:00 am beginning September 11, 2022.
- Approved the appointment of Rev. Kelley Jepsen to interim head of staff to cover the period of July 11, 2022 to August 31, 2022. A salary supplement was also approved.
- Approved the use of proceeds from the sale of timber on the Larry Crowe property to fund parking lot improvements. Cost of the work will \$12,200.

Racial Justice Task Force

JOIN A LISTENING SESSION

The Racial Justice Task Force is hosting listening sessions to engage congregation members and friends in the community to determine steps that will use our experiences and resources to advance racial equity in K-12 schools in Monroe County.

We want to hear about your experiences, concerns, goals and passions toward a more equal and just community.

If you want to have your voice heard, this is the place to be.

A listening session will be held after worship on August 14. Contact Sherry Knighton-Schwandt, (812) 361-9378 or skschwandt@gmail.com for further information or to sign up.

Note, there will possibly be one or more additional listening sessions scheduled if you are unable to attend on the 14th.

Report of the Treasurer

June 30, 2022

General Fund

Balance on Hand January 1, 2022

\$0.00

Income

Prepaid pledges for 2023

Current pledges and contributions of record

221,001.68

Future pledges and contributions of record

-

Prior pledges

-

Plate Offering

792.00

Building Use Income

1,400.00

Miscellaneous, Reimbursements, Transfers

80,982.59

Bank Interest

6.40

Ledger entries

Total Receipts

56.00

304,238.67

Disbursements

Payroll

(193,773.78)

Non-payroll GF

(77,021.42)

Other GF Checks/Disb (includes fund transfers, non budgeted items)

(46,597.92)

Total Disbursements

(317,393.12)

Balance on Hand June 30, 2022

(\$13,154.45)

Special Funds, Balance on Hand June 30, 2022

\$97,904.36

Endowment (New Covenant Funds): Balance on Hand June 30, 2022

\$ 80,858.17

Reserve Fund June 30, 2022

\$ 140,610.50

Parking Lot Fund June 30, 2022

\$ 54,571.39

Parking Lot Mortgage (monthly payments: 2,461.51)

\$ (180,005.03)

4.25%

Mary C. McClellan

Treasurer

225th General Assembly Report

by Mary McClellan



It was my privilege to be a commissioner to the 225th General Assembly. The theme of the hybrid assembly was From Lament to Hope. I was also a commissioner to the previous assembly that was conducted entirely online. Much of the work for that assembly was postponed to the 225th Assembly.

Each commissioner was assigned to a committee that met in person in Louisville. My assignment was to the International Engagement Committee. During our meeting in late June we reviewed a number of overtures and ultimately brought to the floor of the Assembly a highly controversial item declaring that the PC(USA) recognize that the laws, policies and practices of the Israeli government regarding the Palestinian people “fulfill the international legal definition of apartheid.” This recommendation was approved by a vote of 226-116.

Committees met in Louisville from June 17 through July 3, and the plenary session began on July 5. Co-moderators Ruth Santana-Grace and Shavon Starling-Louis presided during the five days of deliberations.

The work of the assembly reflected the understanding that the Presbyterian world is changing.

For many of us the recitation of the litany of repentance for the sins of slavery and its legacy was a long-overdue moment.

With the creation of a commission that would restructure the PC(USA) by unifying the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly commissioners acknowledged the need to change the way these two entities function.

The 226th Assembly will be held in Salt Lake City in 2024 in person. Committees will prepare their work online prior to the plenary sessions that will be conducted in person.

As I reflect on this incredible experience I must say that there was, at least for me, an advantage to participating from my at-home office space because as I closed my computer at the end of the long days, the work went with me. It has been easier for me to see where this work is taking the church I care so deeply about.

Please Welcome our newest members, Brian Pokornik and Cotton



Cotton is originally from Taipei, Taiwan and his husband Brian is from Chicago, IL. Cotton and Brian met eight years ago via online while Cotton was living in Edmonton, Canada and Brian was living in Venice, FL.

After a year of long distance dating Cotton and Brian tied the knot in Edmonton, Canada in 2015.

They just celebrated their 7th year wedding anniversary this past May.

Since then they have been lucky to travel, see and live in various places due to Cotton's various job opportunities. The last place being Fort Staith, Arkansas.

Cotton and Brian moved to Bloomington in September of 2021 due to Cotton accepting a position with Purdue University as a Lean Healthcare Lead Advisor.

Cotton and Brian are proud Papas to two fur babies Goku (a Rat Terrier) and Gohan (an Aussiedor).

When not being consumed by their dogs, Cotton and Brian enjoy live theatre productions, listening to live music and gardening to name a few.

Before attending First Presbyterian Church, Bloomington, the couple attended Central Presbyterian Church, Fort Smith, Ark.

While there Brian served as a Deacon, as well as a member of the Merry Muffins every first Thursday of the month for the Fort Smith Sack Lunch Program.

As well as together both served on the Second Sunday Dinner Committee making and serving dinner every second Sunday of the month at the local Salvation Army in Fort Smith.

Even though they have enjoyed all the various cities they have lived in, they think they want to call Bloomington home.

They look forward to exploring the city and becoming more involved with the church and the community.

The Youth Pancake Brunch is Back! Sunday, August 21 at 11:00



After a two year absence due to COVID, Pancakes in Lyman Hall are back! For many years the youth at FPC have raised money for mission trips by serving up delicious pancakes and we are finally able to continue that tradition. We had a very successful mission trip to West Virginia this year and we are planning on resuming our yearly trips. Hopefully, we will be able to plan a mission trip to Posoltega soon.

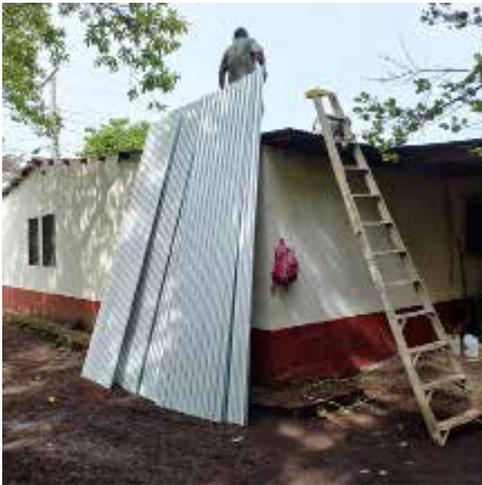


Please bring your appetite and your support for Youth Missions to Lyman Hall after the 10:00 worship service on Sunday, August 21!

Mission Update: Posoltega, Nicaragua

Even from a distance, our mission in Posoltega, Nicaragua, continues to thrive, helping FPC celebrate Christ and serve community in another corner of the world!

Every month, we provide essential financial support for our sister church, the Jesus of Nazareth Parish of Posoltega, and for a highly successful music school for children. We receive frequent reports and communications from the priest, Padre José Antonio Jácamo, and from the director of the music school, Orlando Flores.



The pandemic and ongoing political difficulties have exacerbated the financial struggles of our sister church. We have responded by using designated contributions and coffee cart proceeds to supplement the FPC budget and to help with special projects, including, most recently, a much-needed roof repair.

A new teacher in the music school, Henri Espinoza, has permitted greater use of musical instruments – including trumpets, trombones, and clarinets – that FPC members donated to the school several years ago. This past spring, on Nicaraguan Mother’s Day, the students presented a special program in the church in honor of their mothers.



Working with the Bloomington-Posoltega Sister Cities Committee, FPC also continues to provide scholarships to students from Posoltega attending college in Nicaragua. Funded by FPC donors, these scholarships provide about 25 students with modest monthly stipends to cover some of their essential expenses, including school supplies, basic living expenses, and transportation. Without our support, many of them would be unable to pursue their studies.

With respect to Covid, the news seems promising. Although governmental reports are unreliable, what we hear from our friends is that the pandemic has waned in recent months and that most Posoltegas have now been vaccinated. Indeed, they tell us that government health workers are going house to house, attempting to make sure that everyone get shots and boosters.



Subject to various contingencies, we hope to resume mission trips as soon as possible, and we are exploring the possibility of a 2023 trip. In the meantime, we are doing what we can from a distance, and our brothers and sisters in Posoltega are enormously grateful for our support, both tangible and spiritual. Padre José Antonio sends greetings, grace, and peace to everyone at FPC, thanking us for our love and “great work” and asking the Lord to multiply our blessings.

To learn more about our Posoltega mission, including support or participation opportunities, contact Dan or Debbi Conkle - conkle@indiana.edu, debbiconkle@gmail.com, 812-333-1712.

The Fireflies in the Climate Mine

By Norm Holy and Allan Edmonds

Recently we learned from an article in the Indy Star that a firefly or lightning bug is the Indiana state insect. Who knew?

In 2018, the Indiana State Legislature so-designated one of some 40 species of light-emitting beetles in Indiana, the Say's Firefly, named after Thomas Say, the Hoosier who discovered it.

The article evoked childhood memories of chasing lightning bugs around the backyard and capturing them in a jar with holes poked in the lid for air.

It's not just your imagination, but fireflies these days are nowhere near as common as they used to be.

For some time scientists have been concerned about the welfare of the insect population. Careful measurements over the years of the biomass of captured insects have led to an estimate that a half or more of ordinary insects have disappeared. Who cares? Fewer bug bites! Less mess on the windshield after driving at night.

But there is a problem. Insects are an important link in the global food chain. They are important pollinators. They eat smaller critters. And they are food for other creatures a little further up the chain.

What happened? Loss of habitat to development. Light pollution, which interferes with reproduction. Pesticides.

Biologist E. O. Wilson has noted that if all mankind were to perish, the world would revert to a natural state. But if the insect population dies out, chaos will ensue.

What to do? At a local level, plant insect friendly gardens, minimize pesticides and herbicides, minimize outdoor lighting. Advocate for similar steps at city, state and national level.

Wilson has proposed that preserving a necessary proportion of the insect population (and everything that goes with it) requires establishing inviolable natural preserves over about 50% of the earth.

Can we do it? Care for Creation requires that we act.

Sources:

1. <https://www.indystar.com/story/news/environment/2022/06/28/why-lightning-bugs-disappearing-across-indiana-and-us/7687580001/>
2. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/11/01/where-have-all-the-insects-gone-e-o-wilson-silent-earth>

Cut Your Carbon Tip of the Month: Insulate. If you haven't already done so, upgrade your attic insulation to 10-14 inches. Your home will be more comfortable and your energy savings, both cooling and heating, will start immediately.



8/3 - Rebecca Johnson
8/4- Michael Rauh
8/7 - Carol Darling
8/9 - Sue Talbot
8/13- Randall Burcham
8/15 - Derek Voskuil
8/16 - Laura Gardner

8/19 - Jim Ackerman, Sydney Goodlett
8/21- Andy Ruff
8/27- Janet Black, Joyce Krothe
8/28 - Joe Lessard, Anna Hanson
8/31- Jack Deinlein, Evan Main



AUGUST 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	11:30 am 1 Emmaus Group	7:30 pm 2 Deacons Meeting	5 pm 3 Stewardship Cmtte 5:45 pm Outreach Cmtte 6:30 pm Christian Ed	12 pm 4 Prayer Gathering 5 pm PNC Committee	5	6
9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship Service (Communion)	5:30 pm 8 Racial Justice Task Force	6pm 9 Membership Cmtte	10	11	12	13
9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship Service 6 pm FPC Session	15	16	17	12 pm 18 Prayer Gathering	19	10 am 20 PW Luncheon
9 am Youth Pancake Breakfast 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship Service	22	23	24	25	1:30 pm 26 PW Meeting	27
9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship Service	5:30 pm 29 Racial Justice Task Force	30	31			