

First Presbyterian Church
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First Press

Celebrating Christ and Serving Community

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Search for Transitional Pastor is Underway

On June 14, 2020, when Rev. Kort notified the Session of his new call to Annapolis, the Session approved the establishment of a Search Committee for a Transitional (or interim) Pastor for FPC. The members of the committee are Nathan Ernest, Nancy Goss, Kathy Hollinger, Jo Ann Main, and Dan Watts (chair). The committee organized quickly and began the search process with input from the Presbytery of Ohio Valley provided by Susan McGhee. Experience throughout the denomination provides guidance for steps that should be followed to provide for a productive transitional period for a congregation and those steps are being followed. A Mission Information Form (MIF) was prepared that detailed the mission and aspirations of our congregation and the skills, vision, and experiences desired in a transitional pastor for us at this time.

Three important characteristics we are seeking for the transitional period are significant experiences in an interim capacity, along with appropriate training, experience as a head of staff in a congregation of a size comparable to FPC, and vision and ideas to keep a congregation vibrant and connected during a time of limited contact and thereafter. The MIF was approved by Session and the Presbytery and posted to the Leadership Connection site of the denomination. From searching that site and from referrals, ten candidates have been identified. All ten have experiences and skills attuned with our expectations.

From that group, an initial three have been identified and invited for on-line conversations with the committee. As the process moves forward, the search committee will keep the Session and the congregation informed about progress. If you have any questions about the process or the status, please contact Dan Watts or another member of the committee.



Greetings FPC Bloomington!

It has been a whirlwind few weeks as I begin my time as your new Transitional Associate Pastor. I give thanks to God for this opportunity and to you all for your warm welcome. Even during these strange times, I have felt your presence, hospitality, and support and for that, I am truly grateful.

During these times, I can't help but think about the apostle Paul. It seems that his letters hit a little closer to home these days. He is writing to churches all around him – places that had importance in his heart and yet, he could not physically be with them. His letters are filled with words of encouragement for the communities that have gathered and reminders of his firm commitment to God's mission in the world.

A pastor friend of mine recently summarized Paul's letters in this way: "I really wish I could be with you. I am praying for you all the time. Please show one another love and keep the faith, until we see each other again."

These words perfectly describe how I feel as I start this new journey with you. I long for the days when we will be able to meet one another face to face, to worship in the same space and even to just grab a cup of coffee. But we all know how important it is that we are apart at this time. While difficult, we can lean on God in these moments, knowing that we are never alone. God is always with us. Our call right now is to help our neighbors by doing our part to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Please know that I am here if you need me – just an email (kelley@fpcbloomington.org) or phone call (812-217- 7211) away.

Friends, I really wish I could be with you. I am praying for you all the time. Please show one another love and keep the faith, until we see each other again.

Take good care,
Rev. Kelley Jepsen



FPC Says Farwell to Andy Kort and Family

The FPC community had the opportunity to say farewell in person to Andy Kort and his family on Sunday, July 5 with a drive-through event in the church parking lot. A banner, bubbles (overseen by the Kort children) and signs on numerous cars helped FPC wish Andy and his family well. A steady stream of cars paused at the back of the church long enough for FPC friends and members to offer personal words of appreciation and best wishes. Many brought notes or cards for a basket given to Andy after the event.



In addition to the drive-through, Bread for the Journey was presented to Andy during the July 12 worship service. A framed picture of First Presbyterian Church and a "love gift" were also given on behalf of the congregation. Andy's last Sunday at FPC was July 12 after more than nine years as pastor. He and his family are moving to Annapolis, Maryland where he and Mihee will begin a new call as co-pastors later this summer.



The end of the world as we know it

By Norm Holy and Allan Edmonds

If we carry on with business as usual, we're going to destroy ourselves. That's the conclusion of Dr. Jane Goodall, the world-renowned conservationist, who desperately wants the world to pay attention to what she sees as the greatest threat to humanity's existence.

While COVID-19 and racial justice issues have moved front and center, climate change and environment degradation continue more or less unabated. We are now beginning to see how these issues are related.

Goodall says that if we continue with business as usual, we're going to come to the point of no return. At a certain point the ecosystems of the world will just give up and collapse and that's the end of us eventually too. We somehow have to understand that we're not separated from the environment, nor from each other. We are all intertwined.

In the 14th century the bubonic plague wreaked unimaginable destruction and "Black Death" on the world of the Middle Ages, killing around a third of the European population. Out of the destruction and disruption eventually a new world order arose with the Renaissance building on the ruins of that dark time.

Maybe today we are seeing the beginnings of another deep disruption.

Can we use the present disruption in a positive way to address these deep issues as part of a fundamental re-imagining of modern life?

