

May 1, 2020



*But the Advocate,
the Holy Spirit, whom the Father
will send in my name, will teach you
everything, and remind you of all that
I have said to you. Peace I leave with
you; my peace I give to you. I do not
give to you as the world gives. Do not
let your hearts be troubled, and do not
let them be afraid.*

John 14:26-27



First Presbyterian
Church of Littleton

First Word



April 9, 2020 – Newsletter

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Did anyone see this coming? I sure didn't! A month ago, we were still worshipping together like normal. A month ago, I was finalizing plans to travel to Italy for my sabbatical. A month ago, we were finishing the details for our Holy Week and Easter worship services.

While we have seen many disruptions to our “normal” plans, we have also seen people in our church step up as the hands and feet of Christ in new ways for these new days.

I am encouraged by our pastoral care during this time. We have more than fifty people getting weekly check-in calls. Most of our church groups are checking in with each other far more regularly and with far greater attention to needs and ways to serve one another. Pastor Carol has been able to rally the Deacons and neighborhood Stewards on behalf of our congregation. We gave out King Sooper's gift cards to our Whiz Kids families, to others we knew who were in need, and to ministries who are still working with our community.

I am encouraged by our church staff as we have put together deeply meaningful worship services on video. This has required quick thinking and flexibility from everyone. While I miss gathering together in person, I do believe we have been blessed with exceptional opportunities to worship the living God over video. We have not been together in person, but we have still been one in spirit on Sundays.

I am encouraged by our ability to quickly add new and creative opportunities throughout the week. I have heard from many of you that the musical devotionals, the mid-week stories, or the sermon preparation videos have been unexpected blessings. I am frankly astonished that we had about forty people on our Maundy Thursday online prayer and Communion gathering!

As I have been checking in with people throughout the church, I have received a few common questions. I will attempt to provide whatever insight I have on these topics for everyone to see.

Q: What is happening to Pastor Cody's sabbatical due to this disruption?

A: I have chosen to delay my sabbatical for a year. I don't feel comfortable leaving during this time.

Q: How are the church's finances?

A: Thanks to your continued faithfulness in giving by check or online, and thanks to our leadership's fiscal discipline for the last several years, we are generally doing well! Obviously the longer this stretches the more impact we will see, but we are in very sound shape. We have also applied for access to some of the stimulus funds. The biggest component of our church budget comes in the form of personnel, and we are

continuing to pay everyone their full salary. If you have felt blessed by the church staff during this disruption, I encourage you to continue to give generously. You can mail a check at any time, and it gets held at the post office until Joan picks it up on Monday. You can also give online at fpcl.org/give. Thank you for investing in the new ways Jesus is working in us and through us during these new days.

Q: When will we worship in-person again?

A: Our church's Session continues to meet (online) to discuss this. We decided to cancel in-person worship through the month of April to follow the stay-at-home order from the state. We will continue to meet and evaluate our options, and we will communicate that as best we can. It is likely that there will be limits on the size of gatherings even after the stay-at-home order is lifted, so we are thinking about ways to gather while still complying with those. For example, I'm thinking about a drive-in movie theater style of worship service where we stay in our parked cars, see a live video feed of our sanctuary projected on a large screen, and tune our car radios to a special station that plays our church audio feed. We're considering other ideas as well, so nothing is definite at this point. We are trying to balance the need for people to be able to plan and the need to remain flexible in our decision making.

Q: How are we engaging in mission and service during this time?

We are encouraging people to support our community primarily through the Care Portal (for foster families), donating to the Life Center food bank, donating to the Severe Weather Shelter Network, and generally being Christ-like neighbors in our local areas. We continue to update our website with new opportunities to serve at fpcl.org/serve.

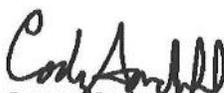
Q: What about upcoming events like VBS, Legacy Sunday, Community Dinners, and the Church Picnic?

Each event is being handled on a case-by-case basis. Legacy Sunday has been canceled. Some of the Community Dinners have been canceled, and the team will evaluate when and how they can resume at some point. VBS is still being evaluated, so it might be normal, it might be delayed, or it might be canceled. The same goes for the Church Picnic. We will continue to be in communication as we make decisions on these big events.

If you have a question that I did not address above, feel free to send me an email at cody@fpcl.org. I'm hard to catch by phone these days, but I am checking email very frequently.

Thank you for your faithfulness and devotion to Christ during this difficult time. I covet your prayers for wisdom as we try to make the best decisions we can for our church's present and future.

In Christ's Service Together,


Pastor Cody



A GREAT BIG **THANK YOU** FROM GRATEFUL HEARTS!

On Sunday, March 8, the FPCL youth mission team held day 1 of what was to be a fundraiser across 2 Sundays in March, in order to raise financial and spiritual support for serving in Alamosa, CO this July.

Only God knew, that day, the events that would unfold leading to a cancellation not only of the second fundraising day a week later, but of worshipping together, in person, as a church family and community until at least this publication.

It is crystal clear that the Holy Spirit was stirring in the hearts of many that day, as nearly all of the delicious goodies were sold and every single green envelope was taken and returned!

A generous **\$1,680.00** was raised in that single day! **WOW GOD!**

Below are words of thanks from the mission team themselves:

"Thank you for donating so much. I haven't been on a mission trip before but I can see our church does a lot for us. Thank you to everyone for buying goodies or donating."

"I just want to say thank you to everyone who thought of us and donated money towards our trip! It means the world to me and the rest of the youth group!"

"I am humbled by the generosity of our congregation in supporting our youth and their summer mission trip. As a leader it has been my privilege to be a part of many of these trips and witness our youth growing in their faith through service, worship, and connecting with God and each other. These young men and women work amazingly hard in sometimes very tough conditions with nary a complaint. We celebrate, laugh a lot, pray, sing, talk it out, sometimes struggle with challenges put before us and at the end of the week are better for the experience. Thank you! Your support makes that all possible."

Prayerful planning continues toward what is surely to be a different mission experience than originally thought. There is no doubt, however, that God has a plan, through these generous donations, to use this eager team of His servants, in His time.

Celebrate our Youth! 2020 Graduating Seniors



Cara Laughlin: High School: Columbine High School.
Fall 2020 plans: attending Colorado Mesa University- wants to become a teacher
Hobbies: Co-Captain of her high school swim team and is now on Varsity Lacrosse.
Favorite FPCL memory: Youth group overnight Lock-ins.
FPCL connection: Daughter of Kenny & Melissa Laughlin and sister: Moira



Charlie Graham: High School: Stem School Highlands Ranch
Fall 2020 plans: Currently deciding between several options:
 -Stay in Colorado studying Mechatronics, a STEM based field for the more mechanically inclined, before college
 -Stay in state at a 4 year college for Computer Science and such passions.
 Go out of state! The number one out of state choice is Purdue.
 Participate in a program that would allow him to live and work in Germany for a semester before either coming back home or spending another semester within a gap year (before college).
Hobbies: Piano, Model Rocketry, Theater, Robotics, Coding, Composition, Saxophone
FPCL connection: Son of Megan & Andrew Graham siblings: Oliver, Elliot, Caroline.

Financial update

	March 2020		Year to Date 2020	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Income	\$42,007.60	\$43,425.39	\$ 132,634.12	\$ 124,036.84
Expenses	\$36,209.97	\$36,080.08	\$ 107,907.47	\$ 111,569.48
Surplus/Deficit	\$5,797.63	\$7,345.31	\$ 24,726.65	\$ 12,467.36

Thank you to all who continue to contribute via mail or our online giving option. You are keeping this church financially healthy through this crisis. We are all looking forward to being able to worship together again. Meanwhile, stay safe and pray for your fellow Parishioners.

Sharing Our Faith

My Story by Bill Frear

I am an introvert. I am not a public speaker. I use humor in an attempt to overcome my shyness. I am not a singer, but as the hymn goes, "This is my story, this is my song, praising my savior all the day long." I am not a writer, but this is my attempt at telling my Jesus story.

I was born in Utica, New York, during World War II. I was christened in the Unitarian church as that was my father's religion at the time. We lived in a Victorian-style house, built by my great-great-aunt in the early 1900s. It seemed huge to me. I don't remember this particular story, but I have heard it from my mother many times. One day, when I was about three or four years old, she could not find me, and, in a panic, she called the police. They came to the neighborhood to look for me. They eventually found me, and, after asking me my name, took me home. It turns out that I was riding my tricycle around the block, going up and down the driveway and sidewalk of every house. By the way, in those days, it was safe for me to walk by myself to and from kindergarten.

When I was five, we moved to a small town in Alabama because my father's job transferred him there. We lived in a small, one-story, row home that had been built to house workers during the war. We had a lot of company in the form of rats and cockroaches. During Christmas break while I was in the first grade, I came down with the chicken pox. One of my presents that year was an electric train set, so I sat in the corner of the living room playing with it almost full time.

While walking behind a row of cars one day, one of the cars started reversing. With my quick thinking, I knew that Superman could stop the car, so that is what I tried to do. Bad idea! The car knocked me down and I fell under the car. I tried to crawl out from underneath it, and it stopped before it ran over me. The woman who was driving said that she thought she had heard a noise, which is why she stopped in time. I am convinced that there was someone up above watching over me.

On August 4, 1950, we were in the next town over to do some shopping. When we were getting back in the car, I caught my little finger between the door frame and the roof, breaking it. Fortunately, we were right across the street from a fire station, and they took me to the hospital. The doctor who operated on me said that I was lucky I didn't lose my finger because it was about the size of a matchstick. I had a splint on the finger, with a wire going up the outside of my arm, and a cast on my arm to hold the wire in place. To this day, I can not bend the first joint of my finger. By the way, the woman in whose car we were riding is the same woman who ran over me.

We didn't go to church while living in Alabama. The nearest Unitarian church was 40 miles away, and my father said he didn't have to go to church every Sunday in order to be a good Christian. During this time, I believed that God was like a big puppet master. I felt that He was up in Heaven controlling everyone's movements and thoughts. I think that I believed in predestination.

The morning of May 29, 1961, the day I graduated from high school, has to be the saddest day of my life. We woke up that morning to find out that my father had died in his sleep

during the night, without ever having been sick a day in his life. By some strange coincidence, my parents had given me my graduation present before we went to bed that night. I still have that present. And, after all this time, I still very much miss my father.

Following my graduation, I went to college in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I was fortunate to receive a half tuition scholarship which was very helpful in paying for my education. After finishing college, I got a job as a computer programmer in Milwaukee. That is when I got converted to being a life-long Green Bay Packers fan.

While living in Milwaukee, I got interested in sports cars. That allowed me to meet quite a few people some of whom are friends to this day. I became involved in working at sports car races. One day I was working near the edge of the track, with my back to the race cars as they came past. The person who was watching the approaching cars suddenly started running away from the edge of the track, so I did the same. It turned out that one of the race cars had spun around and was headed right through the spot where we had been standing. Close call! Again, someone up above was watching over me.

Over the Christmas holiday of 1963, I drove to Alabama to see my mother and sister. While I was there it snowed in Tennessee and Kentucky. The return drive home proved to be an interesting one. While rounding a curve near Nashville, Tennessee, I hit a patch of ice and spun off to the right side of the road into a snowbank. As I was spinning, I was thinking how my mother was going to react when someone had to tell her that her son had been killed in an automobile accident. A passing motorist helped me get my car back on the road. It turned out that there was a sheer drop-off on the left side of the road. Later in that trip, due to my being very sleepy, I opened my eyes to see that I was traveling north on the south bound side of the highway. Fortunately, there was very little traffic on the road at that time of the night. Again, someone up above was watching over me.

Due to changing jobs, and job transfers, after Milwaukee I worked in Chicago, Philadelphia, southern Maryland, and back to the Philadelphia area. As the saying goes, I was always one step ahead of the law.

April 20, 1991 was one of the happiest days of my life, although I didn't know it at the time. That was the day I was introduced to Kathy Holden by some mutual friends of ours. Almost a year later, I asked her to marry me. It came as a shock to her since we had never mentioned the idea before then. It took her almost two months before she said yes, in the form of a "Yes" cake. Kathy made most of the decisions regarding the wedding ceremony. I told her that the only requirement I had was that the ceremony had to be in a church. We were married on October 17, 1992, the happiest day of my life. And we are still married!

We made many trips from our home in the Philadelphia area to northern New Jersey, where Kathy was born, and her parents still lived. It was during that time that we quite often would attend Sunday services at her Presbyterian church. I think it was those visits that started me thinking about the seriousness of religion.

My mother passed away on March 6, 1995, at the age of 83. She had been in the ICU for two weeks leading up to that day. We had her funeral in Alabama, then took her back to Utica to be buried next to my father.

Continued page 8

On our first trip to Denver, to visit Kathy's sister at Christmas, we stayed in Jane's townhouse. When we woke up in the morning, we looked out the window, which happened to face west. Seeing the beauty of the mountains, we knew that we would have to move to the area at some time. Due to family circumstances, we moved to Denver in the summer of 2003. We bought our current house in July 2005.

On August 2, 2009, I was doing some work on our house. I placed an extension ladder against the garage and climbed up to start work. The ladder was at a low angle and was not braced at the lower end. It started slipping. I jumped off the ladder onto the garage roof. I slid off the roof face first onto the driveway. I was lucky that my only injuries were a broken nose and a compound fracture of my left wrist. It could have been much worse. Once again, someone up above was watching over me.

There is a saying that God watches out for animals and little children. I am also convinced that He watches out for stupid people as well, considering the number of times He has protected me from all the stupid things I have done in my life.

To anyone who might question the existence of God, I would say just look around you. Look to the magnificent mountains to the west. Drive west on I-70. Just before you get to the buffalo overlook, you will crest a hill. The view of the mountains will take your breath away. Drive south on US-285. As you go over Kenosha Pass, and go around a curve to the right, you will get a spectacular view of South Park. And there are many more instances in this wonderful country of ours that should be able to convince anyone of the existence of God. Dave Blackburn, a retired Presbyterian pastor and former visitor to our church, told the story of his grandfather walking with Albert Einstein on the grounds of the Princeton Seminary one day. Professor Einstein suddenly stopped, walked over, and hugged a tree, and said, "There really is a God."

With all the experiences I have had in my life, both good and bad, how much time do I have left in this world? Will my life end tomorrow, next week, next year, when? I don't know. Not even Jesus knows. God is the only one who knows. There is a line from William Shakespeare's play in which Julius Caesar says, "Of all the wonders that I yet have seen, it seems to me most strange that men should fear, knowing that death, a necessary end, will come when it will come." We should all live our lives to their fullest, so that we are prepared whenever our final day comes. Thanks be to God! Praise Jesus!

Share Your Story!

If you are interested in contributing your faith story, please let us know. Sharing your story maybe just what someone needs. Encouraging each other in our walk with God is so essential to bringing us all together. Contact Elinor Packard or Cody Sandahl with questions or to request help . 303-798.1389 or fpcl@fpcl.org or cody@fpcl.org

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:11



THE BELL CHOIRS NEED YOUR TALENT “SEW” MUCH!

Your FPCL “ding-a-lings” have four foam bell pads that need to be covered in muslin. They are 30” x 48” x 4” each, and once covered, these pads will then go underneath the black performance covers you see when we ring. All supply costs will be reimbursed to you! We would really appreciate your help, and there is no rush! Please email Miss Karen at meers@ecentral.com if you are interested in helping!

Thank you SEW much!



As we look toward Memorial Day the end of this month, we remember our loved ones who have passed away. We think of our family members and friends who rest in the Columbarium and throughout the world, and those who have recently died from the Corona virus.

In their memory, we will add wreaths to the Columbarium over Memorial Day weekend, whether or not we are able to worship in our building. May it bring you comfort to know they are remembered.

FREE COMMUNITY DINNER TEAM UPDATE



We had a wonderful start to 2020 in our fourth year of providing delicious, fresh cooked healthy dinners to our community. The volunteers have continued to provide warm hospitality to all who come each month.

So with the rest of the country cancelling events, we felt for the safety of guests and volunteers we had to cancel the

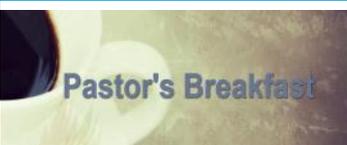
March and April dinners.

AND NOW: The Community Dinner committee has regretfully decided to cancel the May 26th community dinner. We feel it is in the best interest to look out for the health and safety of those we serve as well as our own church community of volunteers. We will decide at a later date about the June 30th dinner.

Thank you for your understanding.

Lynda, Ruth, Sue, Suzanne, Deb, Cheryl, Stacey, Becky and Carolyn

And PS: WE WILL BE BACK AS SOON AS SAFELY POSSIBLE!



Due to the continuing situation, the May Pastor's Breakfast has been cancelled. We look forward to being able to celebrate your birthday and meeting new people soon! Stay safe and well!

A Minute for Stewardship – FPCL at Work in a Time of Crisis

FPCL family and friends,

Even though the coronavirus and associated COVID-19 illness have prevented us from being able to worship and serve together in person, FPCL has not been sitting idly by in this time of social distancing and isolation. We encourage you to read (and re-read) Pastor Cody's Q&A column and marvel at all the ways that FPCL is remaining an active witness in service to Christ. Consider how we have enhanced pastoral care to reach out regularly with check-in calls to our congregation. We've introduced new ways of connecting and worshipping via YouTube and video conferencing including music devotionals and a Thursday prayer service with Communion. We're offering King Soopers gift cards to those in need, working hard to identify new opportunities for direct support in our community, and encouraging members to support charitable causes in our local areas. It's your generous gifts of time, talent and certainly treasure that make this all possible.

We are pleased to share that the church finances through March remained strong. However, the outlook as we close April and enter May is a little more uncertain. We still need your financial support so that we can compensate our staff for their service in these extraordinary times and cover the other regular church expenses. We encourage you to consider online giving at the church website (<http://fpcl.org/give>) offering a secure option through Tithe.ly for donations/offerings using a credit/debit card or from your bank account. Mailing a check to the church is also a secure option as mail is being held at the post office until Joan or an authorized FPCL staff member/Elder retrieves it. Contact one of us if you have questions or concerns.

Finally, we encourage you to reach out to anyone on our committee if you are feeling disconnected and desiring to re-engage in the life of the church. We are here to support you and each other.

Blessings – while we might not “see” you in church soon, we look forward to hearing from you and connecting in a safe and healthy way!

Your Stewardship Committee:

Dave LeMay, Co-Chair: 303-619-5190, leprinoRD@gmail.com

Trey McDowell: 720-254-0639, trey.mcdowell@gmail.com

Sue Chandler, 303-347-9191, mesue35@aol.com

Dee Getzinger, 303-797-8343, deedg2667@gmail.com

Don Meersman, 303-319-6774, dmeers77@gmail.com

In Service to Our Country

Prayer List

- Jon Heggie
- Gloria Pool
- Jim Biner
- Joyce Lei
- Eleanor Spence
- Joyce Fuller
- Rollie Fuller
- Wilmajean Coate
- Kent Griffith
- Jean Wilbur
- Joy Carreño
- Lonna Williams
- William Hults
- Jay Radcliff
- Doug Lemieux
- Joanie Coffey
- David Turner
- Tracey Eidson

- Capt. Ricky Casburn
- Capt. Connor Venrick, Hawaii
- Brett Wilson, at sea
- Sgt. Benjamin Lund, Afghanistan
- Bobby Johannsen
- LCDR. Per Rychucky, USS Harry S. Truman
- Connor McDaniel, Army
- Donnie Donahue, PFC, Marines, Prague
- Nathaniel Syron, Aide to the Army Chaplain
- Pvt. Isaiah Boehm, Ft. Polk, LA
- Jeremy Colwell, Afghanistan

Missions

- John Altemus
- Jory Bayne, Metro Denver
- Presbytery of Zimbabwe
- Cross Cultural Community
- South Asia Mission
- Jeffco Action Center
- Highline Place

Staff Directory

Pastor Cody Sandahl: (303) 798-1389 ext 104,

- Emergency Number: 720-258-6185, Email: cody@fpcl.org

Pastor Carol Parsons, Director of Congregational Care: (303) 798-1389 ext 106

- Cell: (303) 919-7624, Email: pastorcarol@fpcl.org

Kate Ballard, Director of Children's Ministry, (303)798-1389 ext. 111

- Email: children@fpcl.org

Mary Dailey, Director of Worship Arts, Cell: (303) 668-0727

- Email: mkdailey@me.com

Karen Meersman, Director of Handbells & Children/Youth Music

- Email: meers@ecentral.com

James Bierschwale, Interim Director of Youth, (303) 798.1389 ext. 110

- Email: youth@fpcl.org

Cynthia Kern, Wedding Coordinator Cell: (720) 985-7090, Home: (303) 988-1984

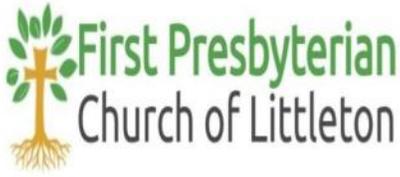
- C.A.Kern@icloud.com

Elinor Packard, Office Administrator (303) 798-1389 ext 101

- Email: fpcl@fpcl.org

Joan Lund, Financial Secretary (303) 798-1389 ext.103,

- Email: finance@fpcl.org



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OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday : The church office is closed until the session and staff decide otherwise.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- ◆ **Sunday Worship: online at fpcl.org**
- ◆ **Children’s Sunday School check out Kate’s recorded message during online worship.**
- ◆ **FIRST WORD NEWSLETTER: The DEADLINE for the June Newsletter is Friday, May 15**

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