

# The Call



First  
Presbyterian  
Church

Church  
Happenings

## January Newsletter

www.fpcgburg.org

### Church Services:

We are now  
holding services  
at the church on  
Sunday  
at 10:30 a.m.

Services are  
recorded  
to be shared  
on our website  
and facebook  
page

[www.fpcgburg.org](http://www.fpcgburg.org)

&

@FirstPresbyterian  
Gburg

### Sunday Conversations Class

Sundays at  
9:15 a.m.



### Thrilled to be Here!

Article by Pastors Garrett and Marena Vittorio-Schindler

We are thrilled to be your pastors. It has taken a tremendous leap of faith on *all* of our behalves (for us: leaving New York with no call; and for you: giving another clergy couple a chance), but we are so thankful to end a year none of us will ever forget with a new beginning...a new opportunity to dive into our faith with you; to think creatively about how we worship, visit, take part in mission; to get to know a new community; to celebrate your history and eagerly explore our future together. Yes...God is good and full of mystery none of us can fathom.

New beginnings can be intimidating, even full of fear, but this one feels like a breath of joyful expectation. It is so good for our spirits to be close to family...to share one congregation where we will get to raise our kiddos, even when one of them demolishes the SILENT "Silent Night" screaming, "I'm coming to you Daddy!" with glow stick flailing in the air.

Due to our deep desire to respect your Christmas traditions while also entering a new ministry during a pandemic, starting during Advent was like starting at a tax firm the week of April 15<sup>th</sup>. I think we're all letting out a collective sigh of relief.

Thank you for your patience and grace as we continue this journey together. Trust us...NEITHER of us sang solos in worship before or did sign language or rang bells (What??? Bell ringing is in our future? Oh no! Oh yes!). But...I suppose this is a good time for all of us to expand ourselves as we explore the best and safest ways to praise God in this time. If we expand too far you can say, "That was very amusing, but let's never do that again," and we'll say, "Got you!"

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On the midst of the pandemic that has made 2020 less than an outstanding year we are also hearing some truly happy words. That's right, there are many reasons to be happy. Take members of the First Presbyterian Church and others living in our community for example. Listen to them and you'll hear words such as happiness, love, excellent, joy, successful and outstanding. The historical old church on the northeast corner of the Courthouse Square has new pastors. The church members have had excellent interim pastors but they've been without a full time pastor for a long time. That's over now.

The Reverend Garrett Vittorio-Schindler and the Reverend Marena Vittorio-Schindler have already started their ministry here and are as pleased to be here as the new pastors as the members and community are to have them.

Although they have both been in New York state churches serving as pastors before they accepted the call from this church, they are more than a little pleased to be back in Indiana. That's right, they both have strong Hoosier connections. In fact, Garrett was raised in Southern Indiana in New Washington in Clark County Indiana and Marena, although she was mostly raised in what she calls "the I states" of Indiana, Illinois and Iowa, has a strong connection to this area. Her ancestors have a long history in Rush County where they settled 7-generations ago in 1826. Marena and Garrett are now in the process of "gutting and restoring" that family homestead.

Part of that happy feeling of the congregation is because Garrett and Marena are parents of three year-old Kaleb and one year-old Magdalena. As you can imagine, having the voices and laughter of little ones in a church is a joyous gift of love. The nursery in the church, that hasn't been as busy as yesteryear, has been spruced up and it is once again filled with happy voices. Those in charge are even asking members for puzzles, play-food and dishes and items for a dollhouse (they started with "Calico Critters because they nurture diversity.") Of course, they are hoping and expecting for more youngsters in that special room.

They are both thrilled to be able to continue doing what they love to do by serving as co-pastors of "the church on the square" at the First Presbyterian Church. Members are pleased too because this couple values tradition while also taking a fresh, creative spin on worship and ministry. "We want our kids to grow up loving the church," they said. "We were really involved in music and sports in school, yet the church helped us know we were accepted and valued no matter what. It offered us joy and love in non-judgmental, non-competitive ways that were lacking in other parts of our lives. We want that for other people, too, including our kids." They are eager to get to know the congregation and to get involved in the community.

The couple met at the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Garrett's hobbies are basketball (a real Hoosier) kayaking, and becoming an aspiring homesteader. Marena loves music, baking, creating new recipes, traveling, and kayaking. Marena and Garrett are excited to be part of our community and to join with our congregation as we move forward in faith.

*Written by Pat Smith*

## Pastors' article- Continued from Page 1

As we enter this new year, we look forward to settling in: moving books into our studies, and most importantly, getting to know you MUCH better. You are the church. We can't have a strong ministry without knowing you.

We've already had the opportunity to visit with a few of you, but it's our hope to visit with the rest of you over the course of the next few months.

Both of us would like to visit with you the first time so, together, we can hear your stories, learn more about your families, hobbies, and connection with the church. After our first visit, you are welcome to reach out to either of us any time. These first few months, we'll be scheduling visits on Mondays and Wednesdays when we're both at the church. We'll meet you here at the church, at your own place, or even at a restaurant breaking bread (or BBQ, sushi, pie, ginger tea...) together. Please feel free to contact us by calling the church (812-663-2197), emailing us [pastorsfpcgburg@gmail.com](mailto:pastorsfpcgburg@gmail.com), or by responding to our Pastor Visit Form found by [clicking this link](#). (Hold CTRL button while clicking on the link.)

Our very own member, Pat Smith wrote a BEAUTIFUL article for the local paper welcoming us to the area. She wrote so gracefully and spent so much time lifting up details that we wanted to include it this month in our newsletter. Thank you so much Pat.

Many blessings to you all as we continue this journey together.

Rev. Garrett and Marena Vittorio Schindler

### PRAYER FOCUS FOR JANUARY

#### Wisdom

*"The foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength."*

*1 Corinthians 1:25*

It is fair to say that many of us have said, "2021 will be better," or "I can't wait until a new year." We could never have predicted what a year we have had, but would we have done better with wisdom?

Prayer:

Dear God, we ask that in times of doubt you would remind us to trust in you. You will direct us. We need to be reminded that your wisdom is far greater than our own. We need your wisdom for 2021. Amen

*Polly Matlock, Care of Parish and Education*

**Members of Session**

Polly Matlock  
 David Schlemmer  
 David Narwold  
 Mary Stradley  
 Judy Rust  
 Mike Gommel  
 Terri Pleak  
 Pastors– Rev. Garrett & Marena  
 Vittorio-Schindler  
 Clerk– Darleen Fox

**Session Committees**

Trustees, Finance, & Stewardship  
 Care of Parish & Christian Education  
 Worship & Music  
 Mission, Outreach, & Marketing  
 Personnel

**A Farewell Note from Pastor Wally**

I wish to extend my gratitude to the congregation for the opportunity to share in ministry among you, and for the cooperation extended in receiving my ministry. I have enjoyed our two years together. Thank you for the generous parting gift. Special thanks to key leaders who have worked with me in helpful, supportive, and guiding ways. To all the members and friends of the congregation, the staff, and Garrett and Marena, I wish you Godspeed as you move forward in the grace of God.

Wally Wilson

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR 2021**

- ◇ Judy Rust is chairing our Nominating Committee. We have several session members set to go off of session this year and we are in need of people to fill those spots. Pastors Garrett and Marena assure you that it will be an exhilarating time.
- ◇ Susan Wilson wishes to retire from the treasurer position she has held for several years now. We are in need of a new Treasurer to replace her. A tremendous thanks to Susan in this ministry.
- ◇ We are also in need of volunteers to help the Trustees close up the church on Sundays. This entails making sure doors are locked, lights are out, and thermostats are turned down this winter. (Dennis and Susan have made a list of what all needs to be done, but they can use your help.)

**We have so much hope for 2021. At the same time, we recognize how tired so many of us are. Together amazing things can happen. Thank you for considering the ways you are able to help.**



**Christmas Eve Service**





## First Presbyterian Church

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## Our Mission Statement

We are a welcoming family of faith,  
Celebrating Christ's presence  
Worshiping God with joy,  
Nurturing the life of each individual,  
Carrying Christ's message to all the world, and  
Seeking to live God's word by serving others.

 **2021 Per Capita**  
**\$41.42 per person**



Church services can be found on  
Sunday mornings on our **facebook**  
**page** and on our **website**.

FACEBOOK—  
**@FirstPresbyterianGburg**



*Loving God,  
please help us  
to pray often  
and to make  
a lasting  
difference  
in others  
lives.*



**Sending  
Healing  
Prayers**

