

Faith In Action

Family Promise of Warren County Newsletter

President's Page

by Carol Spicer
Board President

Family Promise of Warren County is excited to kick-off 2024! We will be holding a "Ribbon Tying" at our new location - 600 Cincinnati Avenue, and welcoming our Families. Our new location, "the Neighborhood", will give us an opportunity to serve up to two-times more homeless families within Warren County. FPWC's Mission is to assist families experiencing homelessness in Warren County, to achieve sustainable independence through a community-based response. Homelessness in Warren County continues to grow and FPWC is on the right path to ensure success for many families!

In 2023, FPWC had the opportunity to serve:

- 232 families through our core programs (Shelter, Homeless Crisis Response Program (HCRP), and Heaven & Hearth)
- 345 children
- 650 individuals
- 31 families served in Prevention
- 56 families exited shelter for positive outcomes

We are very sad to share that our long-time leader David Yelton passed away on December 18, 2023. David's service and dedication is why Family Promise has been able to serve Warren County for over 25 years. His guidance has

set us up to be successful for decades to come.

It is my honor to step in as the Board President of FPWC effective January 2024. I have served on the Board in a variety of roles since 2016 and began volunteering with FPWC on fundraising projects in 2011. My goal is to support Linda and our exceptional staff to continuously improve and work toward achieving our vision of being "a county where every family has a home, a livelihood and a future full of promise."

We have also increased the number of Board members to support our growth. Please do not hesitate to connect with us. We welcome your support and look forward to partnering with you on many volunteer and fundraising opportunities.

On behalf of FPWC we want to THANK our friends, family, businesses and congregations for your continued support and prayers. We can only make it happen through YOU.



600 Cincinnati Ave.
Lebanon, OH 45036
www.familypromisewarren.org
513.934.5250
facebook.com/IHNWC

FAITH • Hope • Love
Justice • God
peace • Kindness
HOSPITALITY

New Life • encouragement
Family

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Linda's Letter

by Linda Rabolt
FPWC Executive Director



Many of you know Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 *“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and time to die, a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, a and time to laugh; a time to morn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to case away; a time to rend and a time to sew; a time to keep silence and a time to speak; a time to love and a time to hate; a time of war and a time of peace.”*

As I write this and reread this purpose filled words, I have to think of Family Promise of Warren County. I think of those who planted the seeds that began this organization almost 26 years ago. I mourn when I think of folks like Marianne Duere, Bill Keezer, Dean Froelich, David Yelton and other dedicated volunteers that we lost in 2023. Each of them, so committed to

those that they did not know but yet understood their need for a home for their families, a better future and overall self-sufficiency. Each of these folks dedicated much of their lives and their time to Family Promise. Each of these touched the lives of others not by their words but by their deeds. For each volunteer, there is a family that has found success through their love and concern.

I think of the words, “a time to be born.” It is our time to be reborn. To start our new journey in our new facility. A facility that brings dignity to those who have lost their dignity, lost their way and need a place to heal. A facility that our many volunteers have built with their hearts. A facility that when someone breaks down, there will be another someone who will embrace them, encourage them, and hold their hand on their journey to a better life.

This new facility is already brimming with hope; a time to build up. We are seeing families and others who have lost their way. Lost hope. Lost everything. We see them arrive with heads down and then leave with heads held high having had someone who listened to their story and give them an opportunity to speak. To be heard. Isn't that what we all want and need?

I see families at peace with their decision to join Family Promise of Warren County; knowing that the journey will not be easy, but it will be filled with laughing, dancing, weeping, gaining confidence in oneself and a time to grow as they move into their new homes.

The week of April 21, Family Promise of Warren County plans to

Vision:

“A county where every family has a home, a livelihood and a future full of promise.”



Family Promise of Warren County was blessed with a Neighborhood Library Box from Lebanon Public Library for the use of the shelter families and children in the neighborhood. We are so grateful for this gift of reading!

Pictured from left to right:

Monica Widdig, FPWC Treasurer
Carol Spicer, FPWC President
Julie McClellan, Lebanon Public Library Director
Linda Rabolt, FPWC ED
Laura Peyton, Lebanon Public Library

Mission:

“To assist families experiencing homelessness in Warren County to achieve sustainable independence through a community based response.”

Linda's Letter cont. on next page...

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carol Spicer	<i>President</i>
Jennifer Goepper	<i>Vice President</i>
Monica Widdig	<i>Treasurer</i>
Jennifer Fry	<i>Secretary/Co-Chair HRR</i>
Leo Cronin	<i>Member</i>
Michael Hoelscher	<i>Member</i>
Rev. Mary Joseph	<i>Co-Chair HRR</i>
Doyle Key	<i>Co-Chair Fundraising</i>
JoAnn Key	<i>Co-Chair Fundraising</i>
Joseph Mansfield	<i>Member</i>
Rev. Jackie Matisse	<i>Chair Body, Mind, Spirit</i>
Linda Rabolt	<i>Executive Director</i>

FPWC STAFF

Danielle August	<i>HCRP (N-Z) Case Manager</i>
Jesse Bischoff	<i>Office Manager/Marketing</i>
Mischelle Dvorak	<i>Shelter Case Manager</i>
Doug Gilham	<i>HCRP (A-M) Case Manager</i>
Andrew Rabolt	<i>Weekend Manager/Statistics</i>
Nichole Richardson	<i>Program Manager</i>
Linda Rabolt	<i>Executive Director</i>



Family Promise of Warren County has been blessed with a long lasting partnership with JBM Packaging. The employees have supported FPWC through fundraisers at holiday time and their community garden for almost 10 years!

We were happy to host Michelle Werner with a tour of our new facility and accepted their donation from their Valentine's Day fundraiser which will be dedicated to the new FPWC playground.

THANK YOU JBM!

open the doors to our new facility and to once again be relational with our volunteers and our families. Our Day Center will once again be brimming with the aroma of good meals, and we will once again hear happy voices and laughter. We will, with the help of our many volunteers, help families to be whole again. WE will indeed be whole again.

I ask your prayers as we enter this exciting time in

the history of Family Promise of Warren County. I ask that if this pulls at your heartstrings, that you act upon this and join us in this endeavor as so many others have. Everyone has something to give. Read to a child. Listen to a tired mother. Make a child's tummy happy with a good meal. All of this is what we do best.

To every time, there is a season and a purpose under heaven.

Try It You'll Like It

This new initiative is off to a great start, but we still have dates to fill!

Try It You'll Like It is a great way for your business, organization, club, or congregation to get a taste of what volunteering with our families is like. On the weeks of Casseroles of Hope, August 11, August 25, and October 27, volunteers are needed to serve the casserole, provide a salad/dessert, enjoy fellowship time with the families and stay overnight. This is great for folks who work all day and don't have time to make a hot meal as it is already provided!!

A Family Promise of Warren County "seasoned" volunteer or "Ambassador" will guide you through the expectations for a good volunteer experience approximately 3 weeks prior to the date that you choose and support you that entire evening. And you will be offered a tour and training prior to your experience.



We feel certain that if you *Try It, You'll Like It* and even come back another time! For more information on this program, scan the QR code!



Or visit our website at familypromisewarren.org/tryityoulllikeit, or contact Linda at 513-934-5250, or email at linda@ihnwc.org.

Thank you for your consideration of *Try It You'll Like It!* For more information on Casseroles of Hope visit their website at casserolesofhope.org.

Stories of Promise

by Brittney
Graduated Client



Hi my name is Brittney and I have a 3 year son named MiKHi.

We came to Family Promise of Warren County after a housing situation out of our control made us homeless. Family Promise crossed our path at the right time. I was at my lowest and didn't feel loved. They gave us, not only a place to stay, but also made us feel safe and secure.

My Father passed away shortly after we entered shelter. The staff and the volunteers were so wonderful. The food box included love cards from some amazing people and they really encouraged me through my tough situation. When I see Family Promise I see God's Promise.

My son and I are doing very well and we have been very blessed. With the help of my work we were even able to give back at Christmas time and donated hats, gloves, and scarves to Family Promise. We just renewed our lease! It has been a year since Family Promise helped us get our

own place! In our home we are safe, protected and secured thanks to Family Promise.

Thank you to everyone who gave us food, activities, and loved us through our time in shelter! We would not be where we are without people like you!



COHHIO NEWS CLIPS

Higher rents and a reduction in pandemic assistance caused a spike in homelessness in Ohio over the past year, according to a group advocating for more affordable housing around the state... Amy Riegel, executive director of the coalition, said rents began to rise during the pandemic and the average cost of a two-bedroom apartment in the state rose 18% from 2021 to 2023. "The lack of affordable housing is the primary cause of homelessness, and the shortage of affordable housing has been growing steadily for years," Riegel said, citing state data showing over 700,000 Ohioans now spend over half their household income on rent.

"I just want to say thank you! Thank you a million times! I am so grateful for all of the help, love and prayers we have recieved.

I would never have imagined a shelter being filled with so many loving, supportive, most of all, kind people. I am so very thankful to have been blessed with all of you. Your kind words, your food, your shelter, your gifts, and most of all accepting us on short notice. You truly made this part of our journey safe and easy. Thank you for being there for us when it felt like there was no one but God. For that, I pray God continues to bless you and that you continue to help mothers like me.

Although I am moving forward in my journey, I can't help but feel I wouldn't have come this far without your help. In a time of need you all were there. I will be sure to NEVER forget all you have done for my son and I."

-Ciara

Are you receiving our E-Newsletter?

This newsletter keeps you up to date on the most recent improvements to our new building! To sign up for this, visit our web-page at www.familypromisewarren.org/e-newsletter or send your email to jesse@ihnwc.org.



Many thanks to Judge Joseph W. Kirby and the Warren County Juvenile Court for doing a FABULOUS job in organizing coats and other winter wear for the FPWC Coats for a Cause room. Your hard work and dedication to detail are very much appreciated and will touch the lives of many!

FPWC Campus Update

by Linda Rabolt
FPWC Executive Director



WE ARE ALMOST THERE!!

Under the expertise, care and guidance of Todd Rockstroh and Tom Ludeke, the Family Promise facility at 600 Cincinnati Avenue became transformed from the former Shaker Inn Motel to the new Family Promise facility which will house families in Warren County in a place of dignity.

The staff moved in on December 15, 2023, and began the HUGE task of unpacking. We thank the community for the many donations that have filled our shelves in anticipation of the arrival of our guest families.

We still have a few things to do to be fully operational. We are installing a cooktop with a fully operational fire suppression system. There is outdoor lighting that will be installed. Our door locks for both our families and staff are the next

steps. And we need to clean and tidy all the rooms as we welcome our guest families.

As we move forward in our journey, we will need many volunteers to walk alongside of us. What is your talent to share? Do you enjoy outside work? We certainly have bushes to trim and weeds to pull! Do you enjoy painting and doing touch up work? There will always be a need for this. How about cleaning? Would you and your canasta club or bowling team or bible study want to give a few hours a month to sweep floors or wash windows or other tasks to keep this new facility looking great??

My mother always said, many hands make light work. Please call Jesse at 513-934-5250 or email her at jesse@ihnwc.org if you would like to share your time and talents with FPWC. And thanks so much for your kind consideration!!



Host Recruitment & Retention

by Jennifer Fry & Mary Joseph
Co-Chairs



Springtime Gratitude: "Volunteers Warm Hearts with Hot Meals"

As the flowers begin to bloom and the days grow longer, there's a warmth in the air that extends far beyond the sun's rays. It's the warmth of community, compassion, and kindness, radiating from you, our dedicated volunteers. This spring, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who has generously given your time, energy, and resources to support Family Promise. Your commitment to serving those in need has truly made a difference in the lives of homeless families, providing not just nourishment for their bodies but also hope for their spirits.

With the transition from winter's chill to spring's gentle breeze, your efforts have ensured that our shelter remains a place of comfort and refuge for those experiencing

homelessness. Your dedication to preparing and serving hot meals has brought sustenance and solace to those in the program. Every meal served is a testament to the power of community coming together to uplift one another. Whether you're chopping vegetables, stirring pots, or simply offering a smile and a kind word, your contributions have created a supportive environment where individuals and families can find stability and support during difficult times.

As we embrace the spirit of renewal that spring brings, let us also reflect on the renewal of hope that your volunteerism inspires. Your selfless acts of kindness remind us that even in the midst of life's challenges, there is always an opportunity to make a positive impact and to spread warmth to those in need.

In 2024, we are piloting a program called "Try it! You'll like it!" If you know of an organization that

might be interested in supporting Family Promise through a meal, but doesn't know where to start, contact the office and speak to Linda or Nichole about this program. We have several weeks this year where meals are being provided by Casseroles of Hope, but we need volunteers to help heat and serve the meals, provide a salad or desert, play with the children afterward, while their parents get ready for the next day, and stay overnight. I know you'll find you not only like it, but you will love supporting these families and providing hope and grace to them in a time of need.

As we put the cold of winter behind us and welcome the blossoming and warmth of spring, we extend our deepest thanks to each and every one of our volunteers. Your generosity and compassion have shown the light of kindness to our families, and for that, we are truly grateful.

Host & Support Churches

Heritage Presbyterian Church
 St. Susanna Church
 Axis Church
 Compass Christian Church
 Grace Baptist Church
 Open Table Church
 Crossroads Church
 Lebanon Presbyterian Church
 Lebanon Community Methodist Church
 Pleasant Plain Presbyterian
 St. Patrick's Episcopal Church
 Lakeveiw UCC
 Tru Kingdom Ministries
 Advent
 Nexus Church
 The Church of Jesus Christ of
 Latter-Day Saints
 Resurrection Lutheran Church
 Bethany UCC
 Sycamore Presbyterian Church
 Our Lady of Sorrows
 Monroe United Methodist
 One Community Church
 The River Church
 First Church of God
 Red Lion United Methodist Church
 Covenant Presbyterian Church
 Springboro United Church of Christ
 Pilgrim South
 Living Water Lutheran Church
 Cobblestone Community Church
 New Freedom Church
 Lifehouse Church
 King of Kings Lutheran Church
 Casseroles of Hope
 Lebanon Elks Lodge #422
 Summit United Methodist Church
 Crossroads Church

If you have questions on how to become a host or support congregation, business or organization, do not hesitate to contact Linda Rabolt at (513) 934-5250

"May God bless every one of you! Without Family Promise of Warren County and its volunteers, I don't know where my family would be. Thank you for everything!"

-Jessica & Maverick

Coordinator Corner

by Jackie Schauer
King of Kings Lutheran Church

King of Kings church family has many fond memories of serving the homeless approximately 16 years ago.....the organization was Interfaith Hospitality Network, now Family Promise.

Volunteers would show up at church to set up bedrooms with partitions, comfortable cots, clean sheets and warm blankets. The families would stay for one week. Fortunately, we have a facility that provides the families with hot showers each evening. Our volunteers purchased food, prepared delicious meals, organized activities including haircuts, played games with much laughter, prayer, listening ears and sometimes tears.

Proverbs 14:31 emphasizes compassion, generosity and love to the needy because this honors both man and God!

We are very happy to be reconnected with Family Promise. Post COVID has brought many

changes but we firmly believe God has a plan as Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us "I know the plan I have for you! Plans to take care of you, not to abandon to give you Hope and a Future".

Volunteers served the last week of October 2023. This time we changed things up a bit. We tried getting entire families involved by asking families to pray specifically for individuals as well as children and adults to draw pictures of hope and notes of encouragement to be presented with the meals each evening This personal touch was well received. We look forward to serving again in May 2024, continuously encouraging more King of Kings families to serve, teaching the younger generation how to extend compassion through acts of kindness, empathy and support to the less fortunate. Thank you for this opportunity to love as Christ loves us!



1. How long have you been a member of the staff of FPWC? What is your position?

I was a Housing Coordinator/Sr. Case Manager at a domestic violence shelter for eight years prior to coming to Family Promise of Warren County a few months ago. I am the Case Manager for shelter guests. I meet with our guests daily to go over their case plan, budgeting, housing, employment, resources/referrals and provide supportive listening.

2. What do you enjoy most about being on the FPWC team?

The encouragement, empowerment and motivation that staff projects everyday. Knowing that we are able to assist Clients and Guests with the combined knowledge of the team.

3. What do you love most about your current position?

The guests that come into shelter are defeated by homelessness and I am able to see the changes in them as they take the steps towards becoming self-sustaining.

4. Tell us a little about your family.

My Son was born one day after the 4th of July and is in construction. My daughter was born on Christmas day and is a Lead Relationship Banker. I have two grandchildren who are 12 and 13 years old; they spend the summers with us getting spoiled and staying up all night.

5. What is something about you, a fun fact, that not many people know?

I am related to Antonín Leopold Dvořák. He was a Czech composer who is known for his “New World” Symphony.



Staff Spotlight

getting to know

Mischelle Dvorak-Merrell
Shelter Case Manager

Board Spotlight



getting to know

Michael Hoelscher

1. How long have you been a board member of FPWC?

I was asked to join the board in the summer of 2023.

2. What do you enjoy most about being a board member?

I have really come to appreciate the collaborative working atmosphere between and among the board members. With such a diverse group, we are able to share and embrace multiple viewpoints. The solutions come very easy when everyone’s contributions are valued and sought.

3. Why did you join the FPWC board?

I know it sounds trite, but I joined because I wanted to help others. I cannot imagine being homeless, because my own home is truly my refuge. Every person should feel similarly safe and nurtured in their own home. I want to help others experience this feeling of safety.

4. What is your current occupation?

I have worked in the Hospitality industry (hotels) since 1990. Currently, I oversee the Sales, Marketing, and eCommerce efforts of 10 separate hotels located in Texas, Florida, Tennessee, Oklahoma, North Dakota, and Ohio.

5. What do you love most about FPWC?

In addition to the collaboration between the board members and staff, I love that we have expanded our reach with the purchase of the Shaker Inn and can now house families in a even more nurturing environment than before. It is exceptionally gratifying to have joined the board at this time and I cannot wait to see what the future brings.

6. What’s something about you (a fun fact) that not many people know?

Hmmmm. I love classic cars, but I possess zero mechanical aptitude to keep them running. Over the last few years, I have gotten into quilting and have produced 8 for family and friends. My goal for this year is four more.

“Times are tough for everyone right now. I can’t tell you how much it means to my daughter and I to have such an amazing support system through all the troubles we have faced and are still facing. I don’t know your story and you don’t know mine which makes things easier when everything you do comes from a place of love. My daughter and I could be anywhere and in situations that might be dangerous without you. People like you make a difference. Thank you for doing for my daughter and myself what I cannot right now.”

-The “B” family



Many thanks to Subaru of Kings Auto Mall for donating shoes and socks through Operation Warm for their Subaru Loves to Help Campaign. We are so blessed to be able to provide these necessities to families experiencing homelessness!



2024 Events You Won't Want to Miss!

Featured



- **April 17, 2024:** Ribbon Tying
- **April 21-27, 2024:** Volunteer Appreciation Week
- **May 26, 2024:** Deadline for Run4Home 5K & Kid's Fun Run sponsorship
- **June 14, 2024:** Last day to be guaranteed a Run4Home t-shirt
- **July 4, 2024:** Run4Home 5K & Kid's Fun Run – Armco Park -- 8:30 AM
- **July 27, 2024:** Christmas in July. An event by invitation

for past guests and families

- **October 6, 2024:** Second Annual Food and Fundraiser – Manor House
- **November 3, 2024:** Time for Change Fundraiser
- **November 3, 2024:** Sponsorships open to adopt a family for Christmas.
- **December 24, 2024:** Santa delivers gifts to all current and former FPWC shelter families



Upcoming Events cont. on next page...

Upcoming

Ribbon Tying



On Wednesday, April 17, from 4pm to 6pm, Family Promise of Warren County will hold the Ribbon Tying Ceremony and celebrate the upcoming opening of our new facility located at 600 Cincinnati Avenue, Lebanon. The actual Ribbon Tying (tying the community together) will be at 4:30pm. This event is open to our cherished volunteers and supporters and will include a welcome from our Executive Director, Linda Rabolt and FPWC Board President, Carol Spicer. There will be tours as well as light refreshments. We hope that you will join us for this exciting event! For more information see our webpage at familypromisewarren.org.

SCAN QR CODE TO RSVP!
Deadline: April 12th



FPWC Celebrates our Volunteers

One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a boy hurriedly picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, “Young man, what are you doing?” The boy replied, “Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up, and the tide is going out.

If I don’t throw them back, they will die.”

The man laughed to himself and said, “Don’t you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can’t make any difference!”

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish and threw it into the surf. Then smiling at the man, he said...

“I made a difference to that one.”

-Anonymous

The week of April 21-27 is set aside for Volunteer Appreciation Week. In 2024, the theme of Volunteer Appreciation Week is “Celebrate Service”.





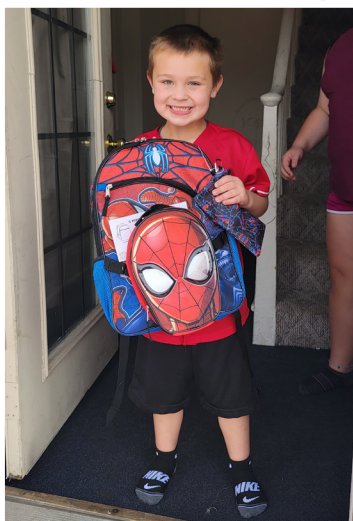
On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff, and the families that we serve, I have the privilege to thank each and every one of our volunteers for the service that you provide. For each meal that you provide and each tummy that you make happy, we thank you! For each book that is read to a child, each craft that you share and each ball that you throw with a child, we thank you! For each night that you spend, we thank you!

For spending time landscaping, cleaning, providing donations, and praying, we thank you! For all that you do, we know that you make a difference, and WE THANK YOU!

Run4Home 5K & Kid's Fun Run

We are so excited to hold the 18th Annual Run4Home on July 4 at 8:30 a.m. at Shelter 33 at Armco Park. This is a great way to begin the Independence Day holiday! We will be working with Brunning Endurance again this year as the timing company. Medals will be given to first and second place male/female in each age category as well as overall male/female winners. There will be water available mid race and a copious food table at the end of the race for all participants. In addition to the walk/run, there will be a ¼ mile long Kids' Fun Run with all children receiving a participation medal, water at the end of their run and goodies to celebrate their finish!

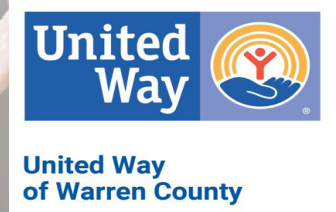
The proceeds of the 2024 Run4Home 5K and Kids' Fun Run will benefit Christmas in July as well as the playground and storybook garden path at the new Family Promise of Warren County facility! To sign up for the Run4Home go to brunningendurance.com/upcoming-events or check out familypromisewarren.org for an entry form. We look forward to seeing you on July 4!



Christmas in July

Christmas in July will be held on July 27, 2024. This program is one of the most important programs that Family Promise of Warren County provides. It is important for children to be fully prepared for the first day of school. This means that children not only have school supplies and backpacks but that they have haircuts, new shoes, socks, undergarments, clothing and even a fall jacket. Christmas in July, under the leadership of Jennifer Keezer, will assure that the children who were in shelter and are currently in shelter are provided with all that they need to successfully begin the school year.

In addition to their school and clothing needs, the families will be treated to a fun atmosphere of crafts, games, Christmas dinner and there will also be a visit from Santa himself who by the way, vacations in Ohio every year! Your financial support of this program is greatly appreciated! Thank you!



Did you know in 2023 FPWC shelter program assisted:

- 28 families
- 87 individuals
- 53 children
- 34 children under 6
- 1876 referrals*

*every referral was assisted appropriately and may not have required the shelter program to achieve success.

Amy Riegel, executive director of COHHIO, said rents began to rise during the pandemic and the average cost of a two-bedroom apartment in the state rose 18% from 2021 to 2023.

Thank you to all the many volunteers at our host and support churches for providing meals, fellowship, hospitality and unconditional love to our families. If you would like to get involved, please contact Linda Rabolt, Executive Director, at 513-934-5250 or linda@ihnwc.org. For more information about FPWC go to www.familypromisewarren.org.