

## Normal is Just a Setting on the Dryer

by Vonda McFadden, Board President

I pray you are doing well and staying healthy in these challenging times.

As have all of you, Family Promise of Cowlitz County has faced some challenges over the past months as we have done our best to navigate the pandemic. Doubtless, all the decisions we've made have not been perfect, but we have tried to do the very best for our families and our volunteers.

As we have made these many decisions, we've tried to do so with a sense of care while striving to gain some semblance of "normalcy." We often hear that people can't wait to "get back to normal." I heard someone say at one point though, that "normal is just a setting on the dryer."

In reality we all have our own idea of normal, even if it is a setting on the dryer. We want our families to find their own sense of normal. The board, staff and our amazing volunteers work every day to bring hope to the families in our program. I hope each and every-

one of you know how much you are appreciated.

It is through your generosity, your compassion and your amazing cooking skills that our guest families are thriving in our program. It is through the hard work of so many that they and others are finding that "new normal."

---

*"It is through your generosity, your compassion and your amazing cooking skills that our guests are thriving in our program."*

---

The board continues to work to support our staff and volunteers to continue the hard work of aiding those families needing assistance in Cowlitz County. The work is deeply satisfying when we see the impact we are having.

I know there are challenges to overcome for all of us. I am hopeful that we will one day find that normal is relative and we'll all share in the goodness of God's creation. As we continue working toward our goal for every child to have a home,

**I am thankful for your continued support and look forward to continuing to work alongside you.**



### In this issue:

**How it Happens: To Sell or Not to Sell? & Help for Landlords**  
page 2

**Help Us Move In**  
page 3

**Who's In The House & September Churches**  
page 4

**NWAB Donors & Financial Update**  
page 5

**Boundless! Give More 24! & Many Hands, Light Work**  
page 6

**Volunteer Training & Volunteer Spotlight**  
page 7

**Gifts & Gratitude: Our Donors**  
page 8

**Volunteers: The Family (Promise) Jewels &**



# How It Happens: *Part II. To Sell or Not to Sell?*

by Sara Wallace, Case Manager

We continue our series on how families lose housing. If you have questions, comments, or an idea for a story in this series, please reach out to us at the family center!

One way a family can become homeless even with the eviction moratorium in place is if the landlord sells the property. Sometimes landlords sell out of fear of foreclosure due to loss of rental income. The eviction moratorium has put pressure on smaller landlords, who are unable to directly access Covid rental relief funds for properties they don't personally occupy, and some are selling their rental(s) to recoup losses.

If the owner sells the property, the tenant must vacate. This gets around a key purpose of the eviction moratorium—protecting tenants from being evicted for nonpayment of rent. With the real estate market at a record high, the sale of these units may well recover back rent. The local market values of real estate are rising so fast that some homeowners received a 2021 assessment showing a 60% increase over their last assessment. If a landlord realizes this market value increase, they can recover all of the back rent plus a hefty profit. While this seems sensible on the surface, it can lead to some undesirable effects.

This option is a permanent fix to a temporary problem, as the saying goes, that may have negative consequences. For one thing,

*“This option is a permanent fix to a temporary problem that may have negative effects.”*

many small property owners use these units for retirement income or assets for their children and grandchildren. Once the property is sold, not only is that now limited, but also one of two things will happen: It will be occupied by the new owner (less likely), reducing the rental housing stock; or (more likely) it will be remodeled (or not) and rented out at a much higher price point, reducing the already vanishing stock of affordable rentals and raising rents in an increasingly unaffordable housing market where demand far outstrips supply.

Recently, we've been seeing landlords intimidate renters, who often don't know their rights, into leaving a rental even though they could legally stay. These displaced tenants then enter a rental market with a 0.5% vacancy rate and more than likely either have to leave the area altogether or become homeless.

Regardless of their income, it's nearly impossible to find a rental.

However, there is a win-win option where the landlord keeps their property and the family stays housed. If the tenant and landlord apply for COVID rental assistance funding, not only will the tenant stay housed, but the owner will recover all or most of their back rent—and possibly a few months of future rent—and secures their investment in a skyrocketing real estate and rental market.

*If you would like to know how to access help with your rental, more information is below.*



Covid relief bills have granted over \$50 billion to go toward rent relief. Lower Columbia CAP is distributing \$6 million dollars of these funds for Cowlitz County residents.

The application must involve both tenant and the landlord. Tenants must formally declare that they are unable to make payment to get government assistance, which is then funneled to landlords. Landlords have to verify that the renter's

declaration is true. There are several different programs that can help with back and future rent, utilities, and mortgage payments.

The process is now streamlined so you can expect a response typically in a matter of days. The rent does need to be late. You cannot apply for assistance with current rents paid. Once approved they will contact your landlord and utility companies to notify that the funds are guaranteed. To apply you can visit <https://lowercolumbiacap.org/>. Click on Housing, Apply for COVID19 Financial Assistance; or call Lower Columbia CAP at 360-425-3430.

If you have questions or need help accessing this resource, you can also call Sara at 360-703-3131.



## Prevention is the Next Step!

We're so excited to announce that our Affiliate has received a two-year matching "challenge" grant to create a program to prevent children from experiencing homelessness! The Help Us Move In (HUMI) "Homeless No More" Challenge grant asks us to raise \$10K for homelessness prevention and shelter diversion, then HUMI matches that with \$10K, and then we ask the community to match that \$20K. This happens in year 1 (2021-22) and then again in year 2 (2022-23). This brings us to a total of \$40K per year for a solid start to our formal prevention program.

One family from one of our partners kicked things off with a leadership gift of \$1000. Once we have raised the other \$9K, we can begin actually serving families in danger of losing their housing.

If you would like to help us reach the \$10K goal, you can go to our website, click on the gold Donate button, and select HUMI. You can prevent a child from experiencing homelessness.

How is the funding used? One hundred percent goes to preventing families from having to enter shelter. Direct assistance will account for 80% of the funding, and the other 20% can go to case manage-

ment.

Just as in our Shelter program, case management is quintessential to the long-term stability and well-being of the family. We will work to identify and address the problems that caused the family's instability in the first place, and continue working with them even after the crisis is over.

Also paramount are our community partnerships. Many families in crisis are unfamiliar with the resources in the community that can help them become and remain stable. We have well-developed relationships with numerous agencies that can help with various needs, including some foundational life skills such as budgeting, being a good renter, parenting, and employment skills (including resume writing, interviewing skills, and training to get a better job so you're not always just scraping by).

We'll partner with agencies on getting together the cash needed to keep the family in housing. We don't have to pay the whole thing ourselves; we can work across several agencies to put together the needed funds, making all of us more efficient and effective with our funding!

As with our Shelter program graduates, our goal is for families we help to remain stably housed. To help assure the best outcomes possible, we provide case management for each applicant family. This will include two critical life-skills classes (Rent Well and household budgeting) and landlord-tenant negotiation when needed. We aim to develop positive relationships with landlords to help renters stay stably housed and to help our graduates have an advantage in a nearly nonexistent market.

**DONATE TODAY!**

## What's the difference between "homelessness prevention" and "shelter diversion?"

Homelessness prevention is keeping a family in the home they already have; shelter diversion is when it's already determined that they will lose their home, but we step in to help them get into another place without ever having to come into shelter.

The reason this is so important is because the triple trauma of homelessness damages children on every level.

- Trauma 1, losing housing, is traumatic because of losing nearly everything they own, all sense of home, familiarity and safety.
- Trauma 2, being homeless, is traumatic because of the chaos, uncertainty, lack of safety and security, and everyday struggle for the basic needs of survival.

- Trauma 3 is coming into shelter. This may sound like it should be a relief, but think for a moment what it would feel like to have to go into a shelter. It's an unfamiliar place with other families you don't know and rules that may be nothing like what you have done in your own home.

These traumas destroy children's social lives, sense of security, mental health, and even physical health. People with just two childhood traumas are more than 50% more likely to die of all causes than the general population—no matter how well things turn out in the end. Preventing this is absolutely paramount to having a healthy, well-functioning adult in the future.





## Who's In The House?

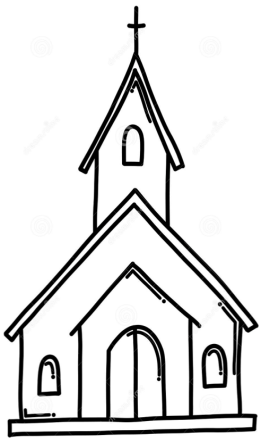
New Guest Family!

Emily, Maxwell, and Jaxon (2) joined us in August and are doing very well.

Maxwell has started working and Emily is planning to finish her schooling.

Karrie, Danny, Meila, and Braden are also doing well. Karrie and Danny are both working. Braden just celebrated his 3rd birthday and Meila has gone back to school.

## September Host Churches



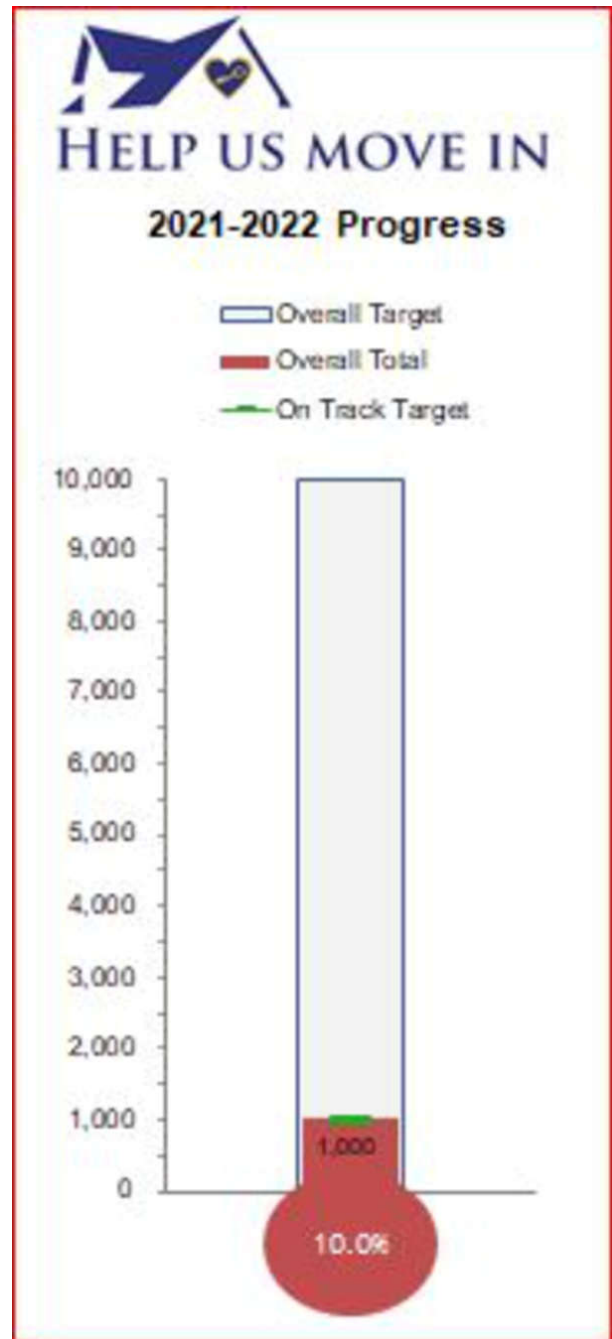
The remaining host Churches for September are:

- 9/5-9/11: LV Nazarene & Bethany Lutheran
- 9/12-9/18: FPCC Board & Staff
- 9/19-9/25: LV First Christian & Kalama Ward
- 9/26-10/2:

KUMPC

& LV UMC

The guests really look forward to your gracious meals. Thanks for your continued support.



Family Promise of Cowlitz  
County proudly partners with



United Way of Cowlitz  
& Wahkiakum Counties



## Thank You to Those Who Contributed to Make "Night Without A Bed" Successful

Mary & Art Birkmeyer  
*in memory of Katie Frei*  
 Mary & Art Birkmeyer  
*in memory of Sue Sari*  
 Gail Chase  
*in memory of Alissa Brech*  
 Richard & Mary Martinsen  
*in honor of Katie Frei*  
 Barbara Purcell  
*in honor of Kay Purcell*  
 Kay Purcell  
*in honor of Joyce Purcell*  
 John Roche  
*in memory of Sue Sari*  
 Shirley Stewart  
*in honor of Sara Wallace*  
 Joel & Janice Stixrud  
*in memory of Katie Frei*  
 Pamela Torgerson  
*in memory of Annette Despain*  
 Sara Nicole Wallace  
*in honor of family, friends  
 & community partners*

Anonymous  
 Ron & Alice Bakke  
 Marilyn B Becchetti  
 Patricia Cisneros  
 Laura Countouriotis  
 Geraldine Craig  
 Jamie Craig  
 Mike Davidson  
 Dave Engebo  
 Bob & Kathy Erickson  
 Bob & Diane Falkenstein  
 Jim Fitzsimmons  
 Dan Frei  
 Amanda Gibson  
 Kay Gunter  
 Kevin Hastings  
 Chuck & Cree Ann Henderson  
 Bill Hundley  
 Joan Huston  
 Teri & Mike Karnofski  
 Kristine Keogh Forte  
 Brad Larsen  
 Jessie Lasko  
 Nancy Lundquist  
 Donna & Joe MacKenzie

Dave & Peggy Martin  
 Tom & Vonda McFadden  
 Cathy McPhedran  
 Kay Naff  
 Ron Naff  
 New Song Worship Center  
 Peter & Shirlee O'Connor  
 Diane & Steve Pond  
 Don Powell  
 Jim & Debbie Raclawski  
 Andie Rugg  
 David Rugg  
 Julie Rugg  
 Ashley Rusk  
 Karl Salzsieder  
 Steven & Patty Sheridan  
 Debra Shuren  
 Claudia Sobczuk  
 Emily Sobczuk  
 Mike Stephenson  
 Larry & Debbie Studebaker  
 Pati Tracy  
 Gary Trump  
 Lisa Vance  
 JoAnn Workman  
 Thomas Wyman  
 Allison Yancey

### Extra Extra!



Want to hear about something specific in this newsletter? Drop us a line—or a whole draft!  
[Editor@FamilyPromiseOfCowlitzCo.org](mailto:Editor@FamilyPromiseOfCowlitzCo.org)

## Financial Update

2021 Annual Budget: **\$167,976.00**

2021 Contributions: **\$70,139.09**

2021 Avg Contributions: **\$8,767.39**

2021 Volunteer hours: **660 hours**

Thank you for your support of our work for families enduring homelessness. Their path home is paved by your kindness.

**DONATE TODAY!**





## Help Us Become “Boundless” During Give More 24!

On Thursday, September 23, Give More 24! will bring together our entire region for 24 hours of “Boundless” generosity. Family Promise will participate again this year.

This year’s theme is Boundless – as in the generosity that southwest Washingtonians have demonstrated in the past few years. Last year’s Give More 24! brought almost \$16,000 of much-needed operating funds to Family Promise of Cowlitz County. We hope to top that this year.

It has been a tough year financially for most nonprofits, and we’re no exception. Our income has been \$5,000 per month under that needed to meet our full budget for 2021, and Give More 24! is an opportunity to help close that gap.

The Community Foundation for Southwest Washington’s goal for 2021 is \$3 million in 24 hours. They believe this is easily attainable after raising over \$2M in 2020.

Watch for Give More 24! opportunities beginning Monday, September 20, and see the emails about Give More 24! we’re sending to all our supporters. Learn more at <https://www.givemore24.org/>.

Together, we have the potential to make one incredible impact.



**MANY HANDS** MAKE LIGHT WORK

*“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.”*

– Paul, 1 Cor 12:4-6

Family Promise is a complex operation, and our community is full of many types of talent. We need YOUR God-given gift to help us carry out our mission.

- Do you like to write? We would love for people to help us write articles for the newsletter!
- Are you a good proofreader or editor? Everyone likes a second pair of eyes on what they write before it gets published!
- Do you like to tinker and incite others to tinker too? We need a small group to help us maintain our facilities (minor repairs, arranging for major ones, helping us when we need to move stuff around, etc.).

If you’re interested, please contact the Day Center.

## Special Fundraising Causes

We have also begun raising matching funds for our homelessness prevention/shelter diversion fund and for our remodel to accommodate two more guest families at the family center (formerly “day center” – but it’s not just for days anymore!). To support those efforts, specify “HUMI” or “expansion” on your donation. You can also split your donation between either of these and general operating funds by designating a percentage for each.

**\*\* Thank you for all the ways you help us strengthen the community by helping families become housed and stable!\*\***





## Annual Volunteer Training

It's time for our annual volunteer host training. These trainings are required for all volunteers who have guest contact. If it's truly not possible to attend on the day of the Zoom meeting, please let us know so the absence is excused, and you will have access to the recording.

### **Volunteer Hosts need to complete:**

*Part I:* Virtual Volunteer Training (about 45 minutes); on your own time any time before Part II.

*Part II:* Saturday, September 25, 9 – 10:15 a.m. via Zoom:

Please check in with your Coordinator or Lisa at the family center to get the links to each of these.

### **Volunteer Coordinator Training:**

In addition to the Volunteer Host Training, Coordinators can choose whichever of the following times works best for them:

- Monday, September 27 at 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 29 at 1 p.m.

Both sessions will cover the same training and will be taught on Zoom. Please contact Lisa Staudinger at the family center (360-703-3131) for the link.



Family Promise volunteer Chris Shaw grew up in Scottsdale, Arizona and moved to Cowlitz County 17 years ago because his wife did not want to live in the desert anymore. The Shaws currently reside in the Carrolls area. He is active in the Kalama Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints where he is the Elder's Quorum President in charge of Men's Ministry, among other responsibilities.

Chris was hooked on the idea of helping families experiencing homelessness find sustainable housing while attending a Family Promise informational meeting during the time the Cowlitz County Affiliate was being organized. Chris even went so far as to chair the FPCC Board during 2019, although he readily admits "I'm not good in meetings." He gratefully passed that position on Pr. Dave Martin after one year. However, give Chris a project to complete and he will tackle it with abandon: organizing helpers, and applying his many talents diligently to see things to completion. He worked tirelessly on developing and remodeling the Day Center and helped paint the beautiful tree and kite mural in the hallway.

Georgia Green, FPCC coordinator for the Kalama Ward stated, "Chris genuinely cares about people, and is an incredible leader and teacher". She says she can't say enough good things about him and believes he shows "a great deal of compassion for people." Lisa Staudinger, FPCC Executive Director, says "Chris was a lifesaver for us when the COVID shutdown happened. He brought ideas, equipment and know-how to get the necessary changes made."



Chris loves Family Promise because it gives regular people the opportunity to serve others where they feel comfortable. He says once they taste the sweetness of serving others, they will look for more opportunities to do good. He also appreciates being able to meet wonderful people from other churches, making great friends and working as a team to make things better.

***Thank you, Chris, for all your effort and hard work to support Family Promise of Cowlitz County.***

## Gifts & Gratitude

**Your prayers and donations are like oxygen and blood to us.**

We operate almost entirely on your donations; we are not a “fee-for-service” organization and don’t have government funding for our operations.



A very special thanks to our very special supporters. Your support makes everything possible for our guests and clients!

## Business Donors

**In the last year, these businesses and organizations have supported us and the community through their donations. Please support them and thank them for their support.**

Community Foundation for SW WA  
Davis & Associates, CPAs, PS  
High Cascades Agency  
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the  
NW Community Giving Campaign  
Kroger  
Longview Century Club  
Luggage of Love  
Mike Burchett, Media Consultation  
Minuteman Press  
Network for Good  
PEO Sisterhood Chapter IL  
Performance Sheet Metal, Inc.  
Redwood Toxicology, Inc

## Financial Donors

**These donors’ gifts in July and August offer families facing homelessness**

Nancy Althof	David Hoffman
Anonymous	Immaculate Heart of
Karla Bean	Mary Catholic Church
Daryl Berg	Susan Jackson
Jill Buccola	Jackie Keller
Karen Cooper	Ruth Kimmel
Suzanne Cowan	Donna MacKenzie
Frances Crosby	Pr. Dave Martin
Barbara Davis	Louise McAuliffe
Wendy Droke	Rev. Vonda McFadden
Ruth Earnest	Gavin and Jeanne Mills
East Hills Alliance	Ron Naff
Church	Network for Good
Emmanuel Lutheran	New Song Worship
Church	Center
Marlys Erickson	Northlake Church
Bob Erickson	PayPal Giving Fund
Greg Filer	Eugene Pistorese
First Baptist Church of	Doug Radke
Longview	Renewal City Church
First Christian Church	Rose Valley Friends
Dan Frei	Church
Pr. Brian Gomes	Karl Salzsieder
Grace Bible Fellowship	J. Chris Shaw
Margaret Graham	Claudia Sobczuk
John Gross	Danielle Trimble
Trudi Gross	Mary Wingate
Amy Hamilton	United Way of Cowlitz
Howard Hammond	and Wahkiakum
Chuck Henderson	Counties
Sarah Hines	

## In-Kind Donors

**By donating everyday items to Family Promise, these donors in July and August made a difference in the lives of families experiencing homelessness who are working hard to regain sustainable independence.**

Teresa Nelson  
Paula Zerby





## Volunteers are the Family (Promise) Jewels

by Ann Williamson & Marlys Ericksen

The birthstone for June is the pearl. Pearls have been associated with wisdom and for being precious. Historically they have been used to adorn clothing, used for artistic paints, create cosmetics and medicines. There is even a parable of the pearl in Matthew 13: 45-46. As I read more, some interesting facts about pearls emerged:

- Pearls are unique among gemstones as they do not arise from the earth but the sea.
- Pearls require no special cutting or polishing or cutting by humans to maximize their beauty—they come to us complete and lustrous, created by God.
- They always in style.
- Pearls were discovered by people in search of for food.
- Natural pearls are among the rarest of gems

Pearls develop when grit is surrounded by the mollusk’s living tissue—the pearl is a result of the application of self to a rough situation.

We found key connections between pearls and our Family Promise volunteers, did you see them? Our volunteers are:

- Each volunteer is unique and precious.
- They require no special polishing to expose their beauty.
- They are ALWAYS in style.
- Volunteers are discovered by guests in search of food and hospitality.
- They are complete, lustrous, and created perfectly by God.
- Volunteering is a gift of self by a person with grit!

## Wanted: Former members of your congregations Leadership!



Church Council, Council of Elders, Church Board, Board of Trustees, Meeting, Parish Council, Session . . . whatever your denomination calls them, they’re your highly valued leaders!

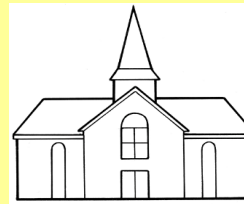
And you know that one you’re going to miss a lot now that they’re not on your Church Parish Council Board Meeting Session of Elder Trustees? We want them!

We are asking you to talk to one or two of these leaders about whether they would consider joining the Family Promise of Cowlitz County Board of Directors. If they are interested, they can contact us directly at [Director@FamilyPromiseOfCowlitzCo.org](mailto:Director@FamilyPromiseOfCowlitzCo.org), [PastorVonda@gmail.com](mailto:PastorVonda@gmail.com), or 360-703-3131. Or you can give us their contact information and we’ll take it from there.

### Are you interested in sitting on our Board?

We’d like to talk with you, too! Previous Board experience helpful but not required.

Our Board term starts in November and is a three-year commitment. People of color, women, young people, and those with lived experience of housing insecurity or homelessness are especially encouraged to apply.



## OUR AWESOME PARTNER CONGREGATIONS

- Abundant Life Church of the Nazarene
- Bethany Lutheran Church East Hills/The Grove Alliance Church
- Emmanuel Lutheran Church
- Evangel Christian Fellowship
- Exodus Christian Fellowship
- First Christian Church of Longview
- Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
- Grace Bible Fellowship
- Immaculate Heart Roman Catholic Church
- Kalama Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Kelso First Baptist Church
- Kelso United Methodist Presbyterian Church
- Kelso Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Lake Sacajawea Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- Longview Church of the Nazarene
- Longview Presbyterian Church
- Longview United Methodist Church
- Mint Valley Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- New Song Worship Center
- Northlake Church
- Renewal City Church
- Rose Valley Friends Church
- St. Paul Lutheran Church
- St. Rose Roman Catholic Church
- Trinity Lutheran Church

# At Your Service

## Board of Directors

<a href="#">Pr. Vonda McFadden</a>	President
<a href="#">Karl Salzsieder</a>	Vice President
<a href="#">Linda Davis</a>	Treasurer
<a href="#">Dan Frei</a>	Interim Secretary
<a href="#">Pr. Dave Martin</a>	At-Large
<a href="#">Ron Naff</a>	At-Large
<a href="#">Leticia Casarez</a>	At-Large
<a href="#">Pam Torgerson</a>	At-Large

## Day Center Staff

<a href="#">Lisa Staudinger</a>	Executive Director
<a href="#">Sarah Wallace</a>	Guest Support Assistant
<a href="#">Jamie Craig</a>	Administrative Assistant

**Email Newsletter Editor:** [Steve Sheridan](#)  
**Print Newsletter Editor:** [Richard Shuren](#)

## Day Center Address

215 Academy Street, Kelso, WA 98626

## Day Center Hours

8 a.m. — 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

## Day Center Office Phone

360-703-3131

Visit our website at:

[www.fpcowlitz.org](http://www.fpcowlitz.org) (Cowlitz County)

[www.familypromise.org](http://www.familypromise.org) (National Organization)

Or on Facebook at:

[www.FaceBook.com/FamilyPromiseCowlitzCounty](http://www.FaceBook.com/FamilyPromiseCowlitzCounty)

Copyright © 2021 Family Promise of Cowlitz County,  
All rights reserved.

«City», «State» «Zip»

«Street»

«i»?Name»

Kelso, WA 98626

P.O. Box 1152

