

2021-2022 Cumberland Presbyterian Women's Scholarship Recipient



Sierra Nicole Keenan is the 2021-2022 Cumberland Presbyterian Women's Ministry Bethel University Scholarship Recipient. A native of McKenzie, TN, Sierra is the daughter of Thomas and Charro Keenan and sister to three brothers, Michael, Josh, and Joseph.

Sierra graduated from McKenzie High School in 2019. Enrolling at Bethel University in the Fall of 2019, Sierra is majoring in Psychology. She hopes to one day make an impact in the lives of children with her degree. She is also an active member of the Bethel University Renaissance Choir.

She is a member of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in McKenzie. The youth group, under Rev. Garrett Burns, was a big part of her life. She is also active in the West Tennessee Presbytery Church camps and in the Summer College

Fellowship at the Milan Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Sierra recalls attending the women's ministry group, "Sharing Sisters," with her mom. She tells the story, "I have been going since I was 11 and we usually always had a pot-luck for every meeting. Me, being a picky eater, I had my mom bring chips and salsa to almost every meeting. That way I had something to eat while I was there. The other ladies there would take turns bringing chicken tenders and rolls so that I would have more to eat."

Sierra admits, "I enjoyed all of the women in my church allowing me to act like I was a grown up and attend the women's ministry convention with them. The conventions were fun, but I must admit that as a kid I thought the hotel pools were the best part!"

Sierra continued, "Attending the Women's Luncheon was a very cool thing for me to experience. Seeing all of those spiritually, strong-willed women was very empowering to me. I was always excited to see who got the Cumberland Presbyterian Women's ministry scholarship. Knowing all those women were being supported to make a difference in the world with their degree was an experience I will never forget. Now knowing that they chose to support me brings so much joy to my heart."

Ms. Keenan concludes, "Words cannot express the gratitude I have for being the recipient of this scholarship. I am thankful for what the church has meant to me in my life, and I look forward to representing the women in the Cumberland Presbyterian church by continuing to participate in the life of the church."

This scholarship was established in 1976 in recognition of the service given by Beverly St. John, as the first director of Cumberland Presbyterian Women. It is awarded annually in the amount of \$2,000. It is awarded first to a young woman attending Bethel University who is planning to go into full-time Christian ministry, the field of Christian education, music ministry or other related fields. If there is not an eligible candidate, then it is awarded to a Cumberland Presbyterian woman at the university who needs financial assistance.

It is the hope and dream of Women's Ministry that more dedicated and capable young women will consider a vocation related to the church. This scholarship is designed to encourage young women in their pursuit of ordained ministry as well as other positions in the church. The first scholarship was awarded in 1977 to Mary Lin Hudson, who is Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics at Memphis Theological Seminary. Other recipients are now serving as pastors, counselors, chaplains, and other fields of ministry. If you would like to make a donation to this scholarship endowment, you can do that online or by sending your church payable to Missions Ministry Team to 8207 Traditional Place, Cordova, TN 38106. Be sure to indicate on your church that it is for the Women's Ministry/Bethel University Scholarship Endowment.

