

February 2016



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Pastor's Pen

BY CHUCK CARLSON, INTERIM HEAD PASTOR

(chuck.carlson@firstchurchchampaign.org)

January slid by awfully fast as life in the church community continues at an active pace. We are all trying to find our way through the challenges of being a multi-cultural congregation. Integrating our cultures and working together, be it in our CYF ministry Sunday morning or youth group Sunday evening, our worship Sunday morning as well as working together on committee assignments, commands spiritual, emotional, and personal maturity.

I looked up several passages where the scripture speaks of maturity. Paul tells the fractured and in-fighting community in Corinth to grow up. He writes, "Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose" (1 Cor. 1:10). A short moment later he tells them, "Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom" (2:6).

To the Philippians Paul writes, "Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you" (3:15). To the Colossians Paul encourages the people to stand "mature and fully assured in everything God wills" (4:12). And to the Ephesians, while emphasizing our gifts and differences within the church, Paul lets us know that all is to be used "until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ" (4:13).

It looks like maturity has a lot to do with how well we get along and commit to work together. Though we are gifted differently (differences are God's idea) what is important is our awareness of Christ's call and ministry. This is what we have in common, all of us unified in the mind and purpose Jesus. As individuals and a community of faith the measure of our maturity is Christ Himself.

That is a tall order in which we fall short. Each of us sees life in different ways and through different lenses, all of which may threaten our

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Peace & Joy Concert March 6



Jean René Balekita and Bomoyi will perform in the sanctuary at 3 PM on Sunday, March 6. Donations will be accepted to support the group with 10% of net proceeds going to rebuild over 700 Presbyterian schools, train teachers and provide basic classroom supplies. (buildcongoschools.org)

This is a Christian professional musical ensemble featuring Congolese rumba with flavors of gospel, jazz and African rhythms. Bomoyi means "life" in the native language of Lingala. In addition to Lingala they sing in English, French, Kikongo, Swahili and Tshiluba. Well known in Congo **Jean René Balekita and Bomoyi** have recently gained enthusiastic audiences locally.

Musicians serve our congregation in Saturday and Sunday worship and as volunteers in our Children, Youth and Family program. They invite you to their concert on March 6.

Pastor's Pen continued

unity. Differences have a way of either making us stronger or destroying group coherence. As Christians we can submit to Christ and his way or do it our way. The latter does not end well.

As sociologist and author Robert Bellah rightly observes, "The body needs different members to be whole" (Healthy Congregations). How are the differences our new brothers and sisters from other countries bringing a blessing to all of us? In what ways may they be helping us to be more whole? How are we enabling them to be more whole? It is always mutual. However, there is a tension between differences and sameness. In *1 Corinthians 1* and *2* Paul asserts that there can be no living organism apart from many different parts. He notes that if the body were all eye there would be no hearing. The only thing needing to be the same is each of us being loyal to Christ who is the head of the body.

Christ asks a lot of us, but he also grants the means to achieve what he asks. We have the unity of the Holy Spirit given us to bind us together in love. Through it all love is the aim.

Barbara Jordon frames it well. "You would be well to pursue your causes with vigor, while remembering that you are not a spokesperson for God and remembering that God might well choose to bless an opposing point of view for reasons that have not yet been revealed to you" (*Healthy Congregations*, p.27).

This is all something to think about as we continue to embrace one another and find a path together which honors God and will bring blessings to us.

Pastor Nominating Committee

BOB KIRBY (rwk3213@gmail.com),
PAM KNOX (poknox@aol.com), AND
TOM ULEN (thomas.ulen@gmail.com)

We have resumed our work after a break for Christmas and the New Year. The principal business of the committee in January has been the reading, evaluation, and discussion of the personal information forms (PIFs) that we received in late December. Altogether, we have read slightly more than 40 of those forms. Approximately 25 of them were sent to us by the PC(USA) Church Leadership Connection as being likely candidates. Those candidates do not know that we are evaluating them. Another 15 PIFs have come to us as self-referrals from ministers who have seen our ministry information form (MIF), are interested in our position, and believe themselves to be a match with our church.

We have now read all those forms, watched and listened to sermons, and discussed them extensively. We believe that we have identified approximately 10 very promising candidates about whom we are eager to learn more. And it is possible that our re-reading and deeper investigations of several of the PIFs about which we were not initially enthusiastic will yield even more "thumbs up" candidates. Our next steps will be to make reference calls, conduct interviews, and make visits.

We have also placed on-line and print ads for our position in *Presbyterians Today* and *Presbyterian Outlook*. We have written to prominent Presbyterian ministers in the Midwest, the East, and the South asking for them to refer any promising candidates to us. We have followed up several promising suggestions from members of the congregation. Finally, on January 24 we requested that the Church Leadership Connection identify another batch of PIFs that match our criteria and received, on January 25, another 15 suggestions.

We are happy to talk with any of you about the process, although we must maintain confidentiality about the candidates whom we are considering. We continue to welcome your suggestions of candidates, but we would ask you to contact those candidates and ask them to view our MIF at PC(USA) or on our church website under the "Pastor Search" tab. Please ask them, if they are interested to submit their PIFs to us at pnc.fppc@gmail.com or to contact Bob or Tom for further information.

In all these matters, we rely on God's help, practice patience, and place our trust in His guidance.

We also ask for your continued patience and prayers for our discernment and judgment in this exciting search.

Musafiri Amani, Emily Beach, Harry Bremer, Tracy Dace, Beth Hutchens, Sabrina Hwu, Wen-mei Hwu, Robert Kirby, Pam Knox, Bill Metcalf, Carol Miles, Levi Morgan, Eric Stickels, Tom Ulen, Karin Vermillion.

Review of 2015

BY BYRON KEMPER, FINANCE CHAIR
(byronkem@life.illinois.edu)

Operating Budget: As presented in Table 1, revenue was lower than projected in the budget and expenses were slightly higher. Expenses were impacted by Rick's retirement and turnover of other staff. Projected pledged contributions were substantially overestimated in the budget which was partially compensated by greater than expected non-pledge contributions. The net result was a deficit of nearly \$68,000 which reduced our cumulative carryover from \$51,664 to a negative \$16,633 (Table 2).

Church Assets: Church assets as of the end of 2015 compared to 2014 are shown in Table 2. The various components contributing to the amounts in the Cash and Investments categories are shown below.

Investment Portfolio with Busey Wealth Management (BWM): The market was relatively flat in 2015 and this was reflected in a \$24,400 (1.3%) investment loss in our BWM investment pool. During 2015, contributions of \$4,004 were received, endowments distributions of \$17,338 were made, and fees of \$14,323 were paid, resulting in the final balance of \$1,875,565 compared to \$1,927,624 at the end of 2014.

Forward 150: At the end of 2015, contributions of about \$1,376,000 had been received, which is nearly 70% of the total amount pledged for 3 years in just the first year. Total expenses were \$762,540 with major expenses for the organ, technology, and electrical upgrades. About \$113,000 has been transferred to Missions which is included in expenditures.

Restricted Contributions: Somewhat lost in our financial discussions are restricted contributions, i.e. special contributions or contributions for specified uses. A rough estimate is that \$83,000 in such contributions were made in 2015. This included \$53,000 for a variety of specific and general missions, \$17,000 in memory of members who passed away, and \$10,000 for our Music Fund.

January Contributions: Contributions for 2016 that were prepaid in 2015 were \$136,983 compared to \$129,611 in 2015. Prepaid contributions are prorated over 12 months for these reports. Contributions for January in 2016 (5 Sundays) were about \$11,000 more than in 2015 (4 Sundays) and close to the projected amount in the budget. A pretty good start to 2016.

Table 1. 2015 Operating Budget

	Actual	Budgeted
Contributions	\$933,682.	\$961,000.
Total Revenue	\$1,020,232.	\$1,039,800.
Expenses	\$1,088,064.	\$1,082,916.
Balance	(\$67,832.)	(\$43,116.)

Table 2. Church Assets – End of Year

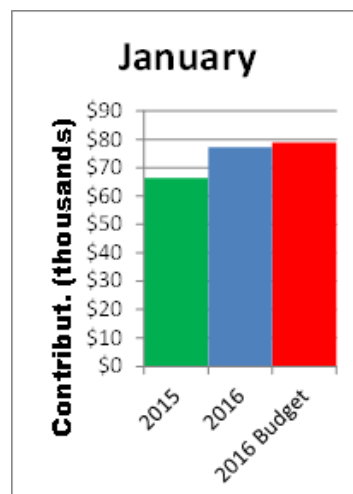
	2014	2015
Cash	\$776,217.	\$925,075.
Investments	\$1,927,624.	\$1,875,565.
Property ¹	\$300,000.	\$300,000.
Cash		
F-150 ² Contributions	\$438,668.	\$585,591.
Prepaid Pledges ³	\$129,611.	\$136,983.
Operating Carryover	\$51,664.	(\$16,633.)
Restricted Endow. Cash	\$21,572.	\$25,208.
Restricted Designated	\$51,564.	\$79,263.
Restricted Mission	\$84,473.	\$115,623.
Payroll/Med. Plan	(\$1,336.)	(\$968.)
Investments		
Reserve Funds ⁴	\$1,235,510.	\$1,210,335.
Permanent Endow.	\$543,205.	\$543,205.
Endowment Earnings	\$69,953.	\$44,667.
F-150 ² Funds	\$78,955.	\$77,359.

¹SW Champaign property presently rented for farming. Value listed at \$10,000/acre as farmland, but eventually expected to be valued 3 to 4 times higher for development

²Forward 150 capital/program campaign

³Contributions made toward pledges for the next year

⁴Session Designated Fund



F150 Update

BY JENNETTE MOLINE
(jamoline@comcast.net)

Progress since last month on Phase 1 Expenditures items:

- Hatter’s Organ Repair has returned for a four-week stint to make the final adjustments to the renovated organ. This work includes such tasks as:
 - valve-by-valve adjustments to the 2,000 magnets of the rebuilt organ pipe chests
 - finding and fixing air leaks causing ciphering (pipes sounding all the time)
 - tuning and minor voice regulation
- After Hatter’s Organ Repair is satisfied they have made all the necessary adjustments and **Richard Rossi** has had time to get used to playing the pipes and digital organ simultaneously, Rodgers Organ voicing expert **Gerry Oehring** will perform final adjustments to the digital organ.
- MATCO has begun installation of fire sprinkler piping. The basement piping is done with exception of a few major pipes that communicate between building levels. Piping installation will continue throughout January and early February.
 - Testing, inspections and fire alarm system modifications will follow as soon as all the pipes are installed and hooked to one another and safety switches are installed on the pipes.
- Brush Architects has completed construction documents and received a bid for what is being called “Phase 1 Work” for the stained glass windows and frames restoration. “Phase 1 Work” refers to the center window of the three on the east sanctuary wall. The F150 committee is reviewing the bid.

**Annual Meeting
of the Congregation**
Sunday, February 21, 2016
10 AM Sanctuary

If you chaired a committee/team this past year, please have your Annual Reports in to the church office by February 12.

A copy of the 2014 report can be found on the church website.

Your Personal Church Directory Just a Few Clicks Away!

Church Community Builder is the online portal to community here at First Presbyterian Church. With Community Builder you can look up the latest contact information on a member. (It’s a Church Directory that never goes out of date!)

There is also the option to join a group that represents an area in which you serve. You can even use Community Builder to send an email to a member if you don't know their email address.

If you would like to start using Community Builder, click the 'Community Builder Login/ Sign-Up' at the top of the FPCC webpage (right underneath the service times). After you log in or sign-up, take a couple of minutes to ensure that your profile is correct. If something doesn't look quite right, just make the necessary changes. You can edit our own profile. The added benefit is that we all play a role in accurate and updated information.

Tax Prep for Seniors/ Low Income Families

Tax returns aide for seniors and low income people will start February 1 (through April 15) at Stevick Center on Main in Champaign.

Requirements for the returns: government photo ID of all adults, social security cards for all people (including children), and if possible, copy of 2014 returns. All returns are done electronically.

There is no charge for this service. Hours are 9 AM-3 PM Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Email **Harry Bremer** hlbremer@yahoo.com with questions.



ALL MEN INVITED...
Jonah, Joel, Amos with Bill, Dave, Bob, Harry, Jim, Steve, Bill, Paul and Bill.
Join us for hot coffee, eggs, bacon, sausage, potatoes and cinnamon rolls each Tuesday from 7-8 AM.

Prayer Corner



Thoughts for Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day, a time when thoughts turn to love. But what is love? Is it a box of chocolates, or a pretty valentine? Is it a red rose, or maybe a dozen? Is it a peck on the cheek, a fond embrace, or a big bear hug?

Well, sometimes love is known in those ways. But love, real love, is how we relate to God and one another if life is what it ought to be - beautiful!

Jays & Concerns



Audry Kukosama reported to Fort Leonard Wood on January 6 to begin 10 weeks of basic training after which he will do 20 more weeks of specialty training in Virginia.

Since immigrating to the United States from The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Audry completed preparatory course work at Parkland College and will enroll in the University of Illinois this fall. He will

serve in the National Guard, study physics and work part time.

Audry is a member of our congregation and a former member of our staff. He welcomes our prayers saying, "It's my pleasure to serve this country that welcomed me and my family."

Grieving in a Forward Direction

presented by **Don Follis**,
director of Pastor-to-Pastor Initiatives

Grief is around us all the time. From losing a family member, a job, a marriage, a relationship, health, or a dream, life is full of pain and sorrow. Grief stops us in our tracks. And yet we can still move forward. In fact, the Bible encourages grieving. The *Psalms* are full of laments; Jesus wept; and the Apostle Paul instructs us to mourn with those who mourn.

Join us Saturday, February 20, from 8:30 AM to 12 NOON as we explore the emotions and seasons of grief. The seminar includes group interaction and participation. While the seminar is offered at no set charge by Pastor-to-Pastor Initiatives, a freewill offering will be collected.

To register for the grief seminar, send your RSVP to donfollis@gmail.com.

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Parent's Nite Out February 12

Only one month into the New Year and most parents are ready for a break! Are you ready for a night off from dinner duty? On Friday, February 12, we are hosting a Parent's Night out here at First Presbyterian. Drop off your kiddo (birth-5th grade only) from 5-8 PM for some dinner and fun! Parents can use this time for a date night of their own or simply to grocery shop in peace! Whatever your reason, take advantage of this night off. To register, email Kristen.plemons@first-churchchampaign.org

To register your student please email kristen.plemons@firstchurchchampaign.org by February 8.

Easter

This year Easter seems to be coming up especially early! So here is an early reminder that on March 27 for Easter Sunday there will be no Sunday School. We want to give kids a special opportunity to experience worship with their families on this important holiday. This also allows our amazing Sunday School Teachers to worship with their families. The nursery will be open on Easter Sunday.

Ash Wednesday, February 10, marks the beginning of Lent. You are invited to come that evening to the Chapel any time between 5-7 PM for the imposition of ashes and a contemplative experience.

Children's Choir To Sing February 14

Our Children's Choir will be performing at the 9 and 10:30 AM services on Sunday, February 14. We are excited to hear what new songs our youth have been hard at work on for the last several weeks.

Fire Up February 25-28

Fire Up is a weekend just for students in high school. The weekend begins on Friday evening with a worship time and a presentation by the weekend guest speaker. Activities on Saturday include, worship and music, small groups, student and adult seminars, afternoon recreation, and an evening of worship. The conference concludes on Sunday morning after a time of worship and a final message from the speaker. Fire-Up is held at Troy United Methodist Church in Troy, IL.

Transportation Team

Are you looking for a way to support our Children, Youth and Families but haven't quite found the best place to volunteer? Have you considered becoming one of the drivers or ride along adults who serve on the transportation team? These dedicated individuals help get families to church on Sundays, get students to youth group on Sunday nights, and help kids get to various midweek events. If you are interested in serving Family Ministry in this way, please email **John Muirhead** at j.muirhead@comcast.net for more information.

Courageous Conversation

Refugee Crisis

Panel discussion with Q & A

Tuesday, March 1 6:30-8 PM Sanctuary

followed by light refreshments in Westminster Hall

Your Church At Work

25 Years!

Yes, **Mission Possible** will have served our Lord this summer for the 25th time. The group has worked at 24 different camps in many states. This year, we will return to Camp Wyoming, Wyoming, Iowa, May 22-28. The cost is \$100 for room and board. Your talents are needed! You say, "I can't do anything;" where is the "I will try, Lord?"

Work requests from the camp include:

- Make outfits for the camp's programs
- Paint cabins and bunk beds
- Construct a wall and shelves
- Replace windows
- Install air conditioning units

Hear more about this trip on February 21. The potluck will be in Centennial Hall at 4 PM. The committee will provide meat dishes; bring a dish to share along with your table setting.

If any questions, contact anyone on the committee: **Gene Morgan, Bill Gamble, Jim Andrews, Dave McNattin, or Harry or Charlene Bremer.**

Our Dominican Republic Connection

BY ANN STOUT, MODERATOR WORLD MISSIONS
(mrsas2003@gmail.com)

The World Missions Ministry of FPCC is using its portion of the Forward 150 Mission funds to help fund schools that are focused on poor children in the Dominican Republic. We are partnering with Opportunity International, the oldest and largest Christian microenterprise organization in the world, to help provide education to poor children in the DR.

How much do you know about the DR?

Where in the world is the Dominican Republic?

The DR occupies about 2/3 of the island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean

What other country occupies a part of Hispaniola?
Haiti

Is the population of the DR greater or less than that of Illinois?

Population of the DR is a little over 10 million (Illinois has almost 13 million)

What is the median household income of people in the DR?

Median household income lies in the range of \$86.00 - \$172.00 per month (in Illinois the median household income is a little over \$57,000.00 per year)

What does the DR look like?

The terrain is mostly rugged highlands and mountains and valleys with a lot of coastline and beaches

Name one significant historical event attached to the DR.

Columbus landed here in 1492 after sailing the ocean blue

Interested in visiting the DR? Join us on an informational, insightful trip to visit schools funded by Opportunity International in the Dominican Republic. We can see first hand how schools and their students benefit from their partnership with OI.

Presbyterian Women Partnering with DREAM

On February 14 and 21 PW is collecting monetary donations or healthy snack item donations to support DREAM House, a program aimed at helping at-risk boys in our area succeed. For more information, check out the flyers in the kiosks.

Classifieds

-Work Wanted. Mature woman who was a nurse in Congo seeks opportunity to care for elderly or disabled person. Does not drive. Respond to 217-356-7238

-Responsible experienced woman seeks light house keeping work. Has transportation. Respond to 217-356-7238

-Presbyterian Mission Yearbook As of January 1, 2016, the 120-year old Presbyterian Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study is available exclusively online. You can visit the website or choose to receive the yearbook day by day via email or RSS feed. <http://www.presbyterian-mission.org/yearbook>

-Crisis Nursery is in immediate need of:

- Clorox
- Wipes
- Hand Soap
- Lysol Spray
- Fitted Crib Size Sheets
- Newborn Pacifiers
- Healthy Snacks

Gift cards to Target, Meijer, Schnucks and County Market

www.crisisnursery.net



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Change Service Requested



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302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

P: 217.356.7238

F: 217.356.7242

E: info@firstchurchchampaign.org

www.firstchurchchampaign.org

Sunday:

- 8 and 9 AM Traditional Worship
- 9 AM Children and Youth Education
- 10:30 AM The Gathering
(Contemporary Worship)

Saturday:

- 6 PM Praise & Prayer Gathering
(French-English Service) in Chapel

Pastors:

- Chuck Carlson..... Interim Head Pastor
- Eric Corbin.....Covenant Associate Pastor

Staff:

- Kristi CorbinMission Coordinator
- Ritchie Drennen Facility Maintenance
- Patty Farthing..... Receptionist
- Marcia Franks Administrative Assistant
- Joe Grant Choir Director
- Julia Hartman Children/Youth Music Coordinator
- Daudet Ilunga..... Associate Director CYF
- Chris Penny Facilities Manager
- Ann Petry Accounting
- Kristen Plemons.. Interim Director Children, Youth & Family
- Andrea Pope..... Contemporary Worship Director
- Richard Rossi..... Church Musician
- Linda SimsESL Coordinator

The newsletter is published monthly. Deadline is the last Monday of the month for the following month's publication. Send submissions to marcia.franks@firstchurchchampaign.org.