



THE HEART OF MISSION

April 21, 2020

Mission During Shelter in Place

At the Heart of Mission is the love of Christ which we celebrated together in virtual communion during Palm Sunday and again on Maundy Thursday. The love of Christ abounds even while we are

sheltered at home. Different ones of you at FPCC are answering the call for prayer, for food delivery, for making masks and for connecting to those who feel understandably isolated through telephone calls, emails, cards and even trying new things together such as zoom bible studies and social checking in. That is the focus of this week's newsletter.

Peace to you all,

Rachel Matthews, Temporary Mission Coordinator
First Presbyterian Church Champaign



Food delivery: Some of you have found that you are unable to deliver food because of CDC restrictions on age. Only ages 18-59 are able to deliver food, work in our food pantries or distribute at schools for CU Better Together. Financial giving and prayer has been your gift. Some of our younger members have been able to step up to the call. Since they are still under 60 (if just barely!), Jay and Judi Geistlinger responded to a call to deliver food to immigrants in our community for CUFair.

Last Saturday morning, they dropped off groceries for our families, one from Guatemala and Afghanistan; their gracious recipient who qualified for the food invited them to join his family for breakfast. Alas in this time of social distancing they were unable to accept. In their shopping spree, we scored some much needed toilet paper and soap for our immigrant families, as well as staples of beans, rice and fruits and vegetables.



Making Masks: This week, Judi and Jay Geistlinger are adding masks for each member of the immigrant family, provided by master mask-maker Miriam Chenault.

And other members of FPCC are making masks. The Presbyterian Women Circle of Joy answered a call for volunteers to make masks for the Krannert Center Costume shop staff who joined forces with University of Illinois scientists and engineers and local medical personnel. Becky Grant is sewing masks for her guild.

Administration: A large part of mission work is organizing and administering resources that are given so work has gone on in this area even if through email and phone calls. This administrative gift by our members is vital in getting the financial aid flowing to the places who need it the most. Because of this work the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund of the Presbyterian Church (USA) granted \$2500 to go to The Refugee Center and \$2500 to CU at Home to help our most vulnerable population affected by COVID 19.

Prayers: Our Pakistan small group met online with Veda Gill from **Presbyterian Education Board** over Zoom. They are studying *The Despicable Missionary* which describes the life of a young Christian girl in Pakistan and how education at Sangla Hill (We support PEB schools in Sangla Hill!) helped her learn how to be loving despite cultural suffering. Veda shared her personal experience and led the group in a closing prayer. She has asked us to keep **Friends of PEB** in our prayers as they go through unexpected staffing changes as well as the children of the PEB schools at home and saddled with more school expenses than ever due to COVID 19.

Lifeline Pilots asked for prayers in their April newsletter. *"Our staff continue to work tirelessly for LifeLine Pilots. While we have shifted to working remotely, our Mission Coordinators are available to help those in need. Most medical appointments have been canceled, so flights for passengers are limited at this time. However, the Air Care Alliance (ACA) was contacted by **Be The Match** for assistance with moving life-saving bone marrow for blood cancer patients in need of a transplant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the coordination of the ACA, LifeLine Pilots and many other volunteer pilot organizations (VPO) are working with the ACA to facilitate the transportation of bone marrow as needed. These flights will require little contact with others, which make them safer than flying passengers at this time. If you are interested in participating in this effort, please contact Mission Coordinator Annette Fisher at missions@lifelinepilots.org."*

Earth Day Interfaith Climate Prayer: The Presbyterian Hunger Program (for which **One Great Hour of Sharing** supports) has reminded us that hunger issues are intimately connected with the health of the earth. Reports are circulating that social systems of injustice are part of the reason people of color are more at risk for being negatively affected by COVID 19. We are called to be good stewards of the earth and our neighbor. Let us start with prayer which has the power to help us repent and do what is right to the earth and all living beings on it.

We Hold the Earth

We hold siblings who suffer from storms and droughts intensified by climate change.

We hold all species that suffer. We hold world leaders delegated to make decisions for life.

We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions.

We pray for right actions for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community.

We pray that love and wisdom might inspire my actions and our actions as communities. . . so that we may, with integrity, look into the eyes of siblings and all beings and truthfully say, we are doing our part to care for them and the future of the children.

May love transform us and our world with new steps toward life

The CU Community works together:



In last week's newsletter, I reported that the United Way, Community Foundation of East Central Illinois, Stone Creek Church, Vineyard Church, The Y and other churches community wide have come together to help our school families in need.

Jeff Scott from the Stephens Family Y who is communicating for the community wide involvement in CU Better Together says, "Things continue to proceed nicely. Ricky (Stonecreek Church) and his team packed and distributed over 400 bags this week. Thanks again to them for their leadership and their example in this effort! Mike and his team at Vineyard have done an amazing job this week. They have 1000 bags of groceries ready for distribution starting Monday in Champaign. Donations continue to flow in. The United Way started us with \$65,000 and as of today we have raised an

additional \$50,000. Remember, in order to sustain this effort, we will need a total of over \$250,000. We are off to a great start! We also had great donations from Meier and Up Close Printing to help with tents, tables, signs and more.

As a reminder, there are a number of links that you can publish to your members and followers in order to help.

To help at Stone Creek: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0e4ea4aa2cabfd0-food>.

Churches and organizations who want to help at The Vineyard Church (Champaign Schools) sign up by following this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0e4ea4aa2cabfd0-sample1>

Individuals who want to help at The Vineyard Church (Champaign Schools) sign up by following this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0e4ea4aa2cabfd0-sample>

The community can contribute financially to CU Better Together by following this link:

<https://www.uwayhelps.org/civCRM/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=13>

This is the link to the United Way's general page regarding CU Better Together.

<https://www.uwayhelps.org/blog/CUBetterTogether>

Let us keep all our mission partners in our prayers:

Our PC(USA) Mission CoWorkers

Mark Adams and Miriam Maidonado Escobar (Mexico)
Farsijanna Adeney-Risakotta (Indonesia)
Jeff and Christi Boyd (Central Africa)
Jo Ella Holman (Caribbean and Cuba)
Bob and Kristi Rice (South Sudan)

Kemmerer Village (and Camp Carew)

Lifeline Pilots

Marion Medical Mission

Mission Aviation Fellowship

Opportunity International Opportunity International

Friends of Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan

Presbyterian Cuba Partnership

Special Offerings of the PC(USA)

Theological Education Fund

Young Adult Volunteers

Here in Champaign - Urbana

CU at Home
CANAAN S.A.F.E. HOUSE
CANTEEN RUN
COURAGE CONNECTION
DREAAM
eEMPTY TOMB, INC
FAITH IN ACTION
JESUS IS THE PRISON MINISTRY
THE REFUGEE CENTER
RESTORATION URBAN MINISTRY
SALT & LIGHT

FPCC Environmental Committee working with Faith in Place

FPCC Presbyterian Women

FPCC ESL

FPCC Children, Youth and Families



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 W. Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820
217-356-7238
info@firstpres.church

