

The Heart Of Missions

MONTHLY MISSIONS NEWSLETTER | FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN DECEMBER 2017

Angel Tree With a Twist

Our unique Angel Tree meets the needs of our community through our partner CMD agencies who efficiently serve their target populations.

Submitted by: Kristi Corbin, Missions Coordinator

When you go to Westminster Hall and you see the sweet little tree with the angel flying on top, know that many lives are being touched by our congregation's generosity.

This year's tree is in the same spirit as last year's: to support agencies who help our community. I have listed items on ornaments that agencies have reported to me are significantly needed.

These items may support children directly (as in pacifiers and diapers) or indirectly (by helping residents have basic needs met while they work to overcome challenges and return to parenting).

I hope you find the tree a tangible way to help others this Christmas and a way to share in the joy of the season. I will be hand delivering our donations the week before Christmas. ~Did I mention that I love my job?

Place your Angel Tree gifts on the table provided beside the tree. This saves your back and helps organize.



Missions Events

- Angel Tree: Until December 18
- ESL:
Monday-Thursday Until Dec. 19
- Compassion Peace and Justice:
Second Monday of the Month at
5:30pm in Mae Chapin
- Cuba Study: Wednesdays at 6:30 at
the home of Bob and Claudia Kirby
- Mission Team:
Second Tuesdays of the Month at
Noon in Westminster Hall
- World Mission and Community
Mission Deacons meetings are
cancelled this month

A New Face in ESL

We welcome Jeanette Pyne to our FPCC staff.

After Debra resigned from her position as ESL Coordinator in order to pursue her calling to teach in the schools, the ESL search committee was pleased to interview and hire Jeanette Pyne. Jeanette began Coordinating our English as a Second Language Program in October of this year. She has experience teaching ESL and recently earned her Master's degree in Teaching ESL from the U of I. She submitted the following for the Heart of Missions this month.



I love Christ and desire to show that love to people from other countries; therefore, I was delighted to start working with the program. The ESL program is a wonderful place where students can learn English as well as fellowship with each other. Students and volunteer tutors have been so welcoming and encouraging. Thus, after only one month of running the program, I feel quite at home in the ESL program.

Before Thanksgiving, the ESL program hosted a Thanksgiving Potluck Party. The students and tutors brought so much food that many of the students took some food home with them! The students and tutors talked, played games, and learned about Thanksgiving traditions. The party ended with everyone sharing what they are thankful for. The ESL program is truly a blessing to everyone involved.

Interested in visiting or finding out about volunteering?

Contact Jeanette Pyne at jeanette@firstpres.church



October 2017

First Presbyterian Church
302 W. Church St.
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Friends:

For many of us, the Fall season is shaped by the ordinary joys of children returning to school, church programs starting up after summer respite, and on the horizon, the anticipated joys of holiday planning and Thanksgiving. Amidst these reliable markers of the season I write simply to say thank you, for making Presbyterian Disaster Assistance a priority out of many opportunities to give and serve. Your gift is deeply needed and greatly appreciated, and I am privileged to speak this word of gratitude on behalf of those for whom your generosity brings renewed hope and joy in the wake of disaster and its aftermath.

Throughout south Texas and parts of Florida, children's back-to-school rituals were abruptly halted by the winds and floods of back-to-back Category 4 hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Some schools won't reopen this year at all, and many children, their houses ruined and family livelihood impacted, will try to find a place to learn hundreds of miles from home. As we plan harvest festivals, massive flooding and landslides has put at risk the farming livelihood of people in Sierra Leone and Bangladesh, and drought has gripped South Sudan and neighboring countries in relentless famine. An early onset of fire season in the drought-stricken west has brought an extra layer of anxiety and responsibility to communities seeking resilience and recovery. And yet...into these hard situations and many more, you have stepped with your prayers, your gifts, and your time, because your ordinary days are shaped by an awareness of the extraordinary love of God, who calls us to bring hope out of chaos. As the book of James tells us, *every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.* (James 1:17).

Your gift of \$2,680.50 for DR000194 Disaster Relief--Atlantic Regional Hurricanes - Irma and \$2,680.50 for DR000169 Disaster Relief--US Hurricane Response - Harvey is perfect, a blessing from God above in a moment where it is most needed here below. It is a privilege to serve together in a Church that makes such giving reliable, and provides constant faithful partnership to brothers and sisters across the world and here at home shadowed by the challenges and changes brought by disaster and war.

In Christ's peace,



The Rev. Dr. Laurie A Kraus
Director, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

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www.pcusa.org/pda

Our **Advent Offering** this year goes to a CMD supported community agency, Salt & Light. Salt & Light recently opened a location in Urbana, complete with a thrift shop, a full grocery store and coffee shop! The funds we raise will help stock their grocery shelves and feed the hungry. Salt & Light is unique, in that it is built upon the premise of non-toxic charity. Their goal is to enable people to lift themselves out of poverty, while providing dignity to the individual. Thus, while Salt & Light does help individuals in an extreme emergency with food needs, individuals generally purchase items in their grocery store with cash or with credits earned through volunteering at are nonprofits. Salt & Light also provide financial literacy classes, job training and a computer lab to enable job searches. Check out their website, they are looking to grow in even more exciting ways!

saltandlightministry.org/programs

Every year during this time, we turn our eyes toward Bethlehem and anticipate the birth of Jesus Christ. Through Him we receive the indescribable gift of God's grace. This year, we take time during the Advent and Christmas season to consider the gratitude we feel. It's out of this gratitude that we turn to support church leaders who dedicate their lives in service to Christ and the church. It's out of youthful wonder that students at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges look forward to a life of faith, worship, and Christian leadership.

With Christ at the center this holiday season, we can follow in his example of servant leadership by serving our brothers and sisters in faith. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we are able to support those in our community and give them the gift of hope.



Our Christmas Joy offering will be received on Christmas Eve.

UPDATES

- The CU Men's Emergency Shelter opened on November 20th. Our church has representation on the board, as Kristi Corbin is a board member. Exciting developments have included the addition of a washer and dryer to launder bedclothes and a donated refrigerator! These amenities have greatly enhanced the program. The program is still in need of church groups to take snacks responsibilities for a week at a time. They can either provide funds to purchase shelf stable snacks, or can physically provide the snacks themselves. In addition, volunteers are needed to help sanitize the mattresses twice per week. Would you like to volunteer? Contact the associate pastor of Faith United Methodist Church. His name is Rev. Corey Blackwell and his email address is cory@champaignfaith.org. To refer someone who is homeless, let them know that the shelter is at New Covenant Church, nightly registration starts at 8:30pm, and up to 30 men can sleep there per night.
- The FPCC Missions SAFE House psychology class continues to meet this fall. Kristi is exploring with SAFE House staff how to proceed with classes in the coming year with the upcoming retirement of Brother Green, who has served as the head of SAFE House for almost two decades.
- It is not too late to apply to be a Young Adult Volunteer! To learn more about the YAV program or to complete an application, go to youngadultvolunteers.org and follow [@yavprogram](#) on social media.
- We are now in our final year of funding from the Forward 150 Mission Fund. The DREAM House project led by our former mission coordinator, Tracy Dace, was recently approved to receive \$20,000 for the third year in a row from the fund. Tracy's innovative program helps boys from preschool age to elementary age, with plans to support the children with programs all the way to college. The major goal of the program is educational success. The program is showing promising results in both educational and social-emotional growth.
- The installation of a Mission Kiosk in Westminster Hall has been approved by Mission Team and Building and Grounds. The Kiosk will consist of a touch screen monitor that is accessible to those standing or those in wheelchairs, a small computer housed unseen on the back of the monitor that will allow Kristi to update the presentations on the monitor regularly, a new board on which to hang posters and flyers, and a freestanding brochure display. It is Kristi's hope that we can have the kiosk up and running in January. If you have any stories, videos, links, etc. you would like to submit for possible inclusion in the technology portion of the kiosk, please send them as soon as you can to kristi@firstpres.church. If you have an updated brochure for your committee or a small display poster advertising your committee, please let Kristi know.

UPCOMING MISSIONS DEADLINE

JANUARY 4, 2018

If you are a head of a missions committee, please send your annual report to Kristi Corbin by this date. Her email is now: kristi@firstpres.church.

