

January 2016



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Pastor's Pen

BY CHUCK CARLSON, INTERIM HEAD PASTOR

(chuck.carlson@firstchurchchampaign.org)

We enter the New Year amidst looming questions. What will the coming year bring to our church? How will the nations of the world work together as we face the challenge of ISIS and terrorism? Who will this nation choose as its new president and congressional leaders? The questions go on and on.

Our questions lead in one of two directions. One is the road of anxiety and fear. This path takes us away from God. Anxiety and fear never produce good outcomes. They are bad bedfellows.

The other takes us on the road of faith and trust. It leads us into the heart of God's omniscient eye where we cannot be moved from the abiding love and security of God's presence. The Psalmist puts it this way, "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people..." (*Psalms 125:2*) From this center we engage the world that God calls us through Christ to join him and serve. Faith takes the first step even if we do not see the blueprint of God's design while continuing trust holds us steady as we go.

And so we discipline ourselves each day to stay centered upon the person of Christ whose Spirit indwells us. Daily we are reminded that "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (*Psalms 127:1*). We can't do God's work alone, but we can allow God to do God's work through us.

Our spiritual relationship with Christ is deeply connected to our passion for doing ministry through ESL, CYF, our partnership with Cuba, Sangla Hill Girls School in Pakistan, the embracement and inclusion of our Congolese and other immigrant neighbors, and our commitment to Compassion, Peace, and Justice as well as our outreach via Courageous Conversations.

Martin Luther King, Jr. reminds us that "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" Our Community Mission Deacons partner with local community agencies to offer support and participation with people's basic needs through hands on activities and monetary gifts. World Mission supports the work of our missionaries around the world in places like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, the Caribbean and others.

continued on next page

Email/Phone Scams

At least two church members have recently had their email accounts compromised, resulting in fraudulent emails going out purportedly from the members. These emails had requests for money to be sent, allegedly to the person to help with travel issues after being robbed. You may have received counterfeit emails from these members or from others, as this is a fairly common scam. You can read more about it at www.snopes.com/fraud/distress/family.asp.

The bottom line is that you should always attempt to contact by a different method the person supposedly sending the email (or phone call, as is sometimes the case). Or, you can check in with the church office to see if we have heard about any such need. It is unfortunate that we have to be leery of such requests for help, but we must do so in order to be able to help when genuinely needed.

You can learn about other email scams (often known as "phishing scams") at security.illinois.edu/content/phishing. The Federal Trade Commission also provides a helpful page with information about a variety of different scams at www.consumer.ftc.gov/scam-alerts.

Additionally, there are a number of telephone scams, including ones where the caller pretends to be from the IRS and demands payment. To read more about this, go to www.irs.gov and search for "phone scam."

We hope this information will help you to stay safe!

Pastor's Pen continued

Our spirits are fed each week with beautiful worship and music. Come Saturday evenings and join with the Congolese in praise and worship or steal away and participate with Andrea Pope and the worship band in 'The Gathering' at 10:30. Find your place at the traditional worship services at 8 and 9. Allow the worship of God to feed your soul and keep you centered. As we enter the unknown in 2016 we know that we will experience finite disappointments. But through Christ, we will never lose infinite hope. God has blessed us with tremendous resources, most of all each of you who give so much of yourselves in love and ministry to this community.

The greatest resource of all is Christ's love in us, the hope of glory. Whatever befalls us, may we not eat "the bread of anxious toil". We are in this together, with Christ in the center, holding us up. This ministry is his, not ours. He simply invites us into a relationship to join him in his work. And so our Psalmist is wise; "It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved" (*Psalms 127:1-2*).

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Savoy United Methodist Church, 3002 Old Church Road, (corner of Old Church & Duncan Road), will host a Spaghetti Supper Fundraiser to support Partnering Against Homelessness/Canteen Run. 5-7 PM on Saturday, January 30, 2016. Invite your family, neighbors and friends!

Cash donations appreciated!

Pastor Nominating Committee

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

We took a two-week break for Christmas and the New Year. On December 21, we posted at the PCUSA website our job announcement, our description of our church, and the anticipated duties and most desirable characteristics of our next pastor/head of staff. (If you would like to see our job announcement and supporting document, we have placed several copies in the Church Library and will soon be posting it to a "Pastor Search" tab on the Church's website.)

The Church Leadership Connection ran a match between the personal information forms (PIFs) on file and our ministry information form (MIF) and within a day returned 25 potential candidates. Over the next week and a half we have had another 10 or so self-referrals. We are very pleased and encouraged by these responses. We have also had several promising referrals from members of the congregation. And we are reaching out to other contacts around the country so as to cast as wide a net as we can.

Beginning this month, we are going to be reading the PIFs that have been and will be submitted to us. Our goal is to identify a group of candidates with whom to have interviews and about whom we would be eager to learn more.

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 welcome your suggestions of candidates, but we would ask you to contact those candidates and ask them to view our MIF at PCUSA (or, soon, on our website) and submit their PIFs to us at pnc.fppc@gmail.com.

We also ask for your continued patience and prayers for our discernment and judgment in this wonderful, daunting 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.

Stewardship & Generosity 2016

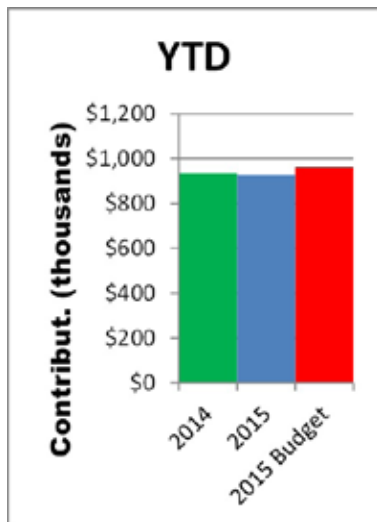
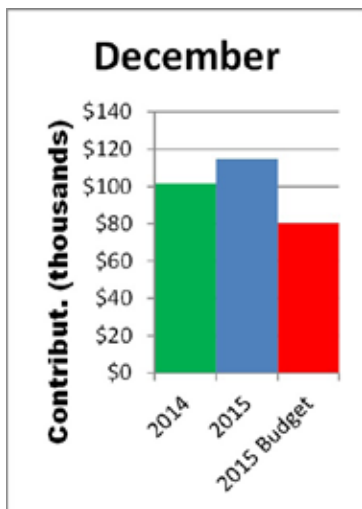
BY BYRON KEMPER, FINANCE CHAIR
(byronkem@life.illinois.edu)

We kicked off our Stewardship/Generosity campaign for 2016 with an ambitious goal of increasing our pledged contributions by 10%. The response of the congregation was wonderful. Total pledged contributions for 2016 were \$807,701 from 197 pledging units compared to \$764,216 from 206 pledging units for 2015. The average pledge for 2016 of \$4,100 was about 10% higher than the average pledge for 2015 – right at our goal of a 10% increase.

Nevertheless, since the number of pledging families decreased in 2016, we were \$29,000 short of the amount of pledges required to fund all the requests from our programs. In December, Session agreed to \$29,000 of reductions in the requested amounts to bring us to our target of contributions equal to 89% of budgeted expenses. Reductions that were made generally brought the budget item to or above 2015 levels. The one exception was our ESL program for which reductions were made that are expected to be made up by free will contributions from participants in ESL classes who are able and willing to contribute. Our church will still provide over 80% of the financial support for the ESL program.

While short of our pledge goal by 3% in 2016, it is important to keep in mind that our total projected revenue for 2016 including estimates for non-pledged contributions and other income is about \$1,030,000. Thanks to the generosity of present and past members, our church is truly blessed financially and can do wondrous things in the name of Jesus. Next month: 2015 review.

Monthly report. Contributions in December were \$13,500 greater in 2015 than in 2014, but year to date trailed 2014 by \$7,500. Contributions year to date trailed the projected contributions in the budget by \$33,000.



F150 Update

BY JENNETTE MOLINE
(jamoline@comcast.net)

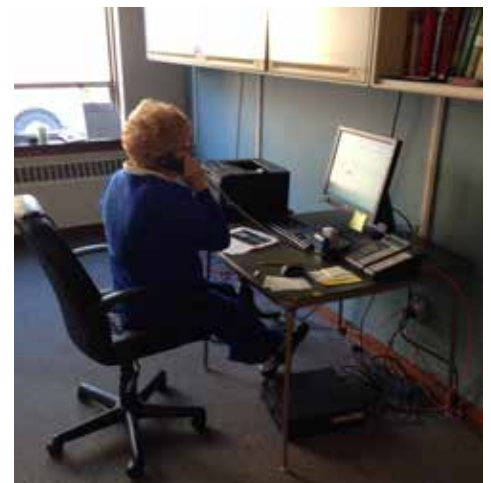
Progress since last month on Phase 1 Expenditures items:

- Hatter’s Organ Repair was on site December 9th and 10th to install the last of the “offset chests” for the tall organ pipes and to re-install the corrected software enabling the pipes to be played from the console.
 - o After test-playing the pipes for the first time, about 30% of them were found to be playing non-stop, or “ciphering”.
 - o This is normal, but will require Hatter’s to return for an estimated two week-long voicing session in January. During this session Hatter’s will find and fix all the ciphers in preparation for final voicing by the expert, Gerry Orring.
- MATCO began installing fire sprinkler piping in the church December 18. The current installation schedule is:
 - o January 4, 2016 – start installation at the first floor (Westminster Hall level)
 - o January 18 – start installation at the second floor (Sanctuary level)
 - o February 5 – end installation
 - o Week of February 8 – testing, inspections, fire alarm system modification
- Mid-Illinois Concrete and Davis-Houk Mechanical are complete with their work adding the new 6” water service and backflow preventer to the property. This work provides a water source and backflow protection for the church building new fire sprinkler system.
 - o Mid-Illinois Concrete has passed City of Champaign inspection for repairing / replacing City paving which was disturbed.
 - o Davis-Houk Mechanical passed City of Champaign initial inspection for back-flow preventer check valves operation.
- The F150 committee is pursuing options

- for the exterior signage.
- Brush Architects (Mary Brush) is underway developing construction documents for the stained glass windows and frames restoration work.
 - o The largest sanctuary window (center window of the three on the east wall) will be restored first.
- The technology upgrade project is complete.
- The F150 committee believes it is prudent to wait until the stained glass windows restoration work is complete before the plaster repair project is undertaken.

Session Notes

- Approved rehabilitation of the church office;
- Approved the Director of Children, Youth & Families be a full-time position;
- Approved the proposed Outreach plan;
- Approved use of space in the ESL office for 4 hours per week by East Central Illinois Refugee Mutual Assistance Center;
- Approved the formation of a committee to plan a celebration for the 150th anniversary of the church.



Office renovations are underway...card tables have replaced some desks for now.

Prayer Corner



Begin Now

As we start a new year, 2016, let us become more like Jesus. in connection with God, our Father. Mark 1:35 in "The Message" reads, "While it was still night, way before dawn, he (Jesus) got up and went out to a secluded spot and prayed."

We too can make coming to God in prayer a daily habit.

Now is a good time to begin.

2016 Church Officers

The following list shows the church officers along with their year of retirement.

| 2018 | 2017 | 2016 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Session Elders | Moderator: Chuck Carlson | |
| John Muirhead | Kristi Carlson | Byron Kemper |
| Mark Schoeffmann | Betty Hollister | Bill Marble |
| Eric Stickels | Claudia Kirby | Bill Metcalf |
| Jeannie Snoeyink | Marc Miller | Lori Schaap |
| Community Mission Deacons | Moderator: Sandy Carr | |
| Judy Gamble | Cliff Dykstra | Sandy Carr |
| Kathy Havey | Dana Dykstra | Martha Henderson |
| Mike Havey | Don Fischer | Judy Hendrickson |
| Jeannette Moline | Mary Gritten | Remy Manongo |
| Alan Moore | Steve Gritten | |
| Vern Snoeyink | Linda Olson | |
| Congregational Care Deacons | Moderator: Beth Hutchens | |
| Jane Alsberg | Miriam Chenault | Barb Barker |
| Amy Born | Kristie Cozad | Sue Fischer |
| Beth Hutchens | Karen Kaplan | Katharine Jones |
| Nancy MacGregor | Mamily Masweke | Liz Miley |
| Kurt Ruthmansdorfer | Lola Milandu | Nicole Miller |
| Lola Ruthmansdorfer | Julia Ulen | |
| Bob Tichenor | | |
| Linda Tichenor | | |
| Joanne Walther | | |
| Larry Walther | | |
| Mary Wood | | |

Jays & Concerns

We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of...

- **Lois Seibold** who died December 29, 2015;
- **Steve Corten** who died December 29, 2015.

● Congratulations to **Marianne and Ken Kellerhals** who who celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary in January. Marianne and Ken met while on a hayrack ride between our church and the Methodist Church.

● Many thanks to those that contributed towards the **poinsettias** throughout the holiday season. A complete listing of donors along with who the donation was for was in the December 24 and 27 programs.

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Christmas Craft Night

Parents enjoyed a night out while kids ate dinner at the church and made some fabulous gifts for their family.



Bake Sale

Every year, FPCC youth group gets together to bake as many cookies as they can in one day. On December 12 students baked 10 different types of cookies in the Centennial Hall Kitchen. These cookies were for sale in Westminster hall during all 3 services on December 13! Our sale this year raised \$750. These cookie sales will help future Go & Serve Trips for the youth. Thank you for your generosity to all who purchased some yummy treats for the Christmas season. And thank you to all the awesome students and adults who put in their time and hard work to bake all those cookies!

Middle School Youth

Every Sunday from 5-6:30 PM. If you need a ride in the church van, sign up at the Welcome Center on Sunday morning or email **Ms. Kristen** (kristen.plemons@firstchurchchampaign.org)

We Need Help!

Youth Ministry can't happen without parents! Each of you can play a vital role in making First Pres Youth a ministry a place where students are loved and experience the unending love of Jesus! We would love your help as we continue to shape our Youth Group into a ministry that serves your 6-12th grade students and your family as a whole! If you are curious how to get involved, email kristen.plemons@first-churchchampaign.org

2016-2017 CYF Calendar Mailing
Be on the lookout in early January for the 2016-2017 CYF Event Calendar in the mail! This will include save the dates for all upcoming major events and programs for your child and your family to participate in, or volunteer for!

Christmas Eve Family Service

This year for the family service on Christmas Eve, **Julia Hartman** who is our fabulous kid's choir director, organized a great performance from our kids. Preschool-8th graders had a part in the service and got to sing some of our Christmas favorites. **Andrea Pope** and *The Gathering* band were also a special part of this year's service as we celebrated the birth of the Christ Child.

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 Families in this way, please email John Muirhead at j.muirhead@comcast.net for more information.

Dinners for Youth Group

If you are a parent of a middle schooler or just looking for a way to serve, the middle school youth group needs volunteers to provide meals each Sunday evening as they meet in fellowship. If you would like to sign up to bring a dinner on Sunday evening, look for the sign up sheet in Westminster or contact **Kristen Plemons** (kristen.plemons@firstchurchchampaign.org).

Your Church At Work

Benevolence Fund: Opportunity to Share

“Caring for those in need through no fault of their own is integral to the Gospel. After the Good Samaritan picks up the wounded man, takes him to an inn, and pays for his expenses, Jesus says, ‘Go and do likewise.’ True Christian behavior is defined by James as, ‘looking out for orphans and widows in their distress.’ Jesus tells us that when we care for a hungry or thirsty person, it is as though we are caring for Him, ‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to drink, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.’ The Benevolence Fund is a modest effort to answer this call for our brothers and sisters as emergency needs arise for them.” (Benevolence Fund Policies and Procedures).

Would you like a way to donate to those in an emergency who are associated in some way with our church? The Benevolence Fund, approved by the Finance Committee and Session in 2014, helps those who have a significant relationship with our local church and are experiencing times of distress. The fund is only for emergency relief to serve a basic need. It is a grant program, not a lending program.

A committee of three members, plus a Pastor and the Missions Coordinator, review applications submitted by those requesting assistance. The three voting church members determine the outcome of the application. This fund is not a line item in the regular operating budget, but a restricted fund filled only by special donations. Your donations will keep the fund working.

If you would like to donate, please write a check to the church with Benevolence Fund written in the memo.

Knifty Knitters Donate Items

The Knifty Knitters, a group of Presbyterian Women who knit items for those in need, donated a large number of hats, gloves, and scarves to Kemmerer Village at the December Gathering. (KV serves children through residential treatment and foster care). Other beautiful knitted items are being distributed in the C-U area this winter, with the first distribution site being our church’s ESL program and on an “as needed” basis through our Transportation Team.

Amateur Preachers... An Opportunity to Serve

Amateur Preachers serve by preaching in pulpits in our surrounding area where there is need due to a lack of a pastor for any reason. We would like to increase our number of Amateur Preachers for the coming year. We encourage you to consider joining this mission of our church.

Please feel free to contact **John Muirhead** (j.muirhead@comcast.net or phone 398-1048) to discuss Amateur Preachers.

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

-Read about The DREAM House in the national PCUSA Online News! Go to pcusa.org/news and search for “DREAM” to read an article about the exciting pilot program led by Tracy Dace. The DREAM House is supported in part by funding from the Forward 150 Mission Fund.

-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



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

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.