

June 2017



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Pastor's Pen

BY CHUCK CARLSON, INTERIM HEAD OF STAFF
(chuck@firstpres.church)

My article this month comprises the message that I shared on behalf of FPC and our partnership together when we worshipped with the Luyano congregation in Havana on Sunday, April 23. Our partnership is between our congregations. Praying for each other is important and a part of our commitment as brothers and sisters in Christ to one another.

Chuck

Congratulations On 100 Years---Some Reflections

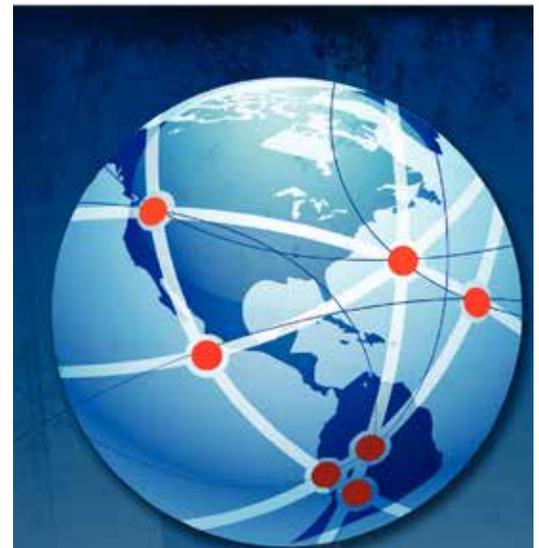
As we reflect upon this significant 100th anniversary celebration with you our focus immediately turns to God. For 100 years this has been God's ministry. All ministry is initiated by God's Holy Spirit. We sing it in the words of that great hymn, "The Church's One Foundation"; "The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord; She is his new creation by water and the word; From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride; With his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died".

God through Jesus Christ invites us to participate in what God is doing in God's reconciling work in the world through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We are in Cuba with you today to honor your faithfulness to Christ's work by which you have and are continuing to glorify God.

Paul's prayer for the Philippians expresses our prayer; "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now". And we also join with Paul in saying what is true for you and us; "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 2:3-6).

We do not stand among each other identified and defined simply by being U.S. citizens nor you as Cubans. We are here to share life in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The purpose of our Partnership Agreement is to "embody our unity in Christ", "to strive to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ in our families, our communities, our countries and the world", "to sensitize both church families to critical situations in our societies, and cooperate in the projects to which the Church, as a part

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International Potluck

June 25, 2017

4 PM Centennial Hall

Food...bring a dish to share that represents your cultural heritage.

Games...have fun with new friends while playing games.

Live Music...hear bands play music from around the world plus learn or teach new dance moves.

Pastor's Pen Continued

of the Body of Christ, can make a substantial contribution”, and “to explore various areas for joint mission.”

We are privileged to be your guests, recognizing and deeply grateful for the sacrifice of time and resources you make to accommodate us. You continue to show us the hospitality of Christ, demonstrating the importance and power of what it means to be in relationship with Christ and each other. I believe it is true that all ministry emerges out of relationship.

So thank you for showing us the face of Christ, demonstrating the reality of Paul's words to the Galatians; “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

May the blessing of God and the peace of Christ be with you.

Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, FINANCE CHAIR
(mschoeffmann@mchsi.com)

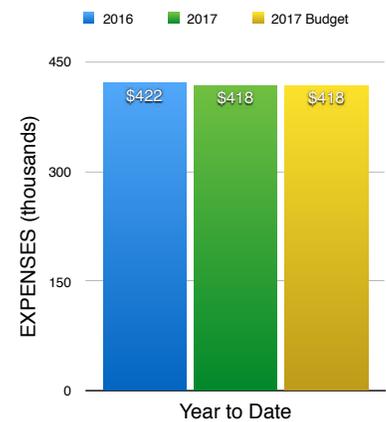
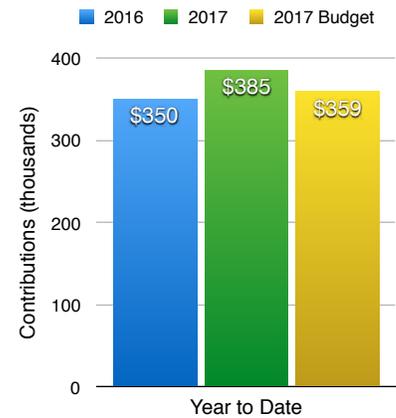
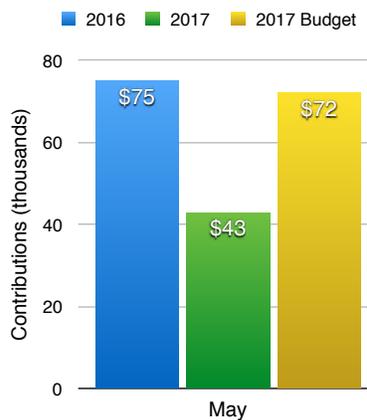
Contributions

Contributions in May were \$32K less than 2016 and \$29K below the budget at \$43K. Despite this dip in contributions this past month, the Year to Date total continues positive in 2017. This exceeded last year

by \$35K and the budgeted amount by \$26K. The increase in this year's contributions continue to offset the decrease in prepaid pledges (those paid in the year prior to the pledge year) for 2017 compared to 2016. These prepaid pledges are prorated over the year with 1/12 added to each month's contributions.

Expenses

Year to Date expenses are right at budget at \$418K and \$4K below 2016. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$74K and by \$31K more than at this time in 2016. This figure includes a \$29K transfer from other funds that was not made last year.



DREAAM House

DREAAM House is in need of gift cards to local grocery stores or financial help in providing swim passes for the boys.

Gift cards may be dropped off at the church office or you can simply write a check to the church marked “DREAAM.” The DREAAM House staff will purchase the gift cards or swim passes.

Thanks for your continuing generosity!

A Glimpse Into Our Past

The eight charter members of First Presbyterian Church were met with a number of obstacles, such as finding a place to worship and just getting to church. Worship was first held at the courthouse in Urbana. The eight adults, with their 14 young children, lived along dirt trails 6 to 15 miles from Urbana. Rain or snowy weather made the trails difficult or even impassable.

Prayer Corner



Filled to Speak

We have just celebrated Pentecost when “all of them (the disciples) were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:4) While Jews from all over the known world were in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, God gave the Spirit in a new permanent way. He then enabled the disciples to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus in the native languages of all those listening. They would return to their countries and tell others.

God still uses people to tell about Jesus. Pray to be used this way by God.

Fruits of Generosity

The guest house just behind our church at Luyanó, Havana, Cuba is near completion. There are four rooms, each with a complete bath. The rooms can be rented to sleep up to three per room or rented as conference rooms.

Your generous support for at our Salsa Lesson event helped with final touches such as furniture and window treatments.



As Cuba moves to a single monetary system, rental income from the guest house will help sustain the ministries of the church.

Our Guest Speaker from May Courageous Conversation Sends Thanks!

Greetings from Wheaton...

I just wanted to thank you for allowing us to be with all of you. Joan and I were blessed in many ways, as we listened to all of you about your various involvements. May your tribe increase!

We enjoyed a nice morning, relaxing and then driving around the Illinois campus before heading home. A good time all around.

Thank you, too, for your generous honorarium.

*Take care,
Danny Carroll*

Jays & Concerns

Congratulations to...

- **Joyce Nkama & Guelord Malanda** on the birth of daughter, **Hope Julina**, on May 25, 2017.

We extend our sympathy to...

- The family and friends of **Joann Hower** who died May 14, 2017;
- The family and friends of **Dave Shaul** who died May 22, 2017;
- **Dale Montanelli** whose mother, **Marguerite Sodemann**, recently died. A Memorial Service will be held July 1, 2017 at 2 PM in the chapel.
- The family and friends of **Bob Brunson** who died June 10, 2017. A Memorial Service will be held at a later date.

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Sunday School News

The children will be studying Pentecost June 4th and learning about Daniel June 11, 18, and 25. We still need volunteers to help with these dates! If we do not get enough adults we will have to cancel Sunday school and join worship instead.

Family Trip to Miller Park Zoo June 18

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries invites you to enjoy an afternoon with your family in fellowship with other church members. Pack a picnic lunch, and meet in the church parking lot to car pool at 10:30 AM. You may also choose to meet us in Miller Park at 11:30 AM.

We will eat lunch at Miller Park just outside the zoo entrance before enjoying our time with the animals. We will return to Champaign by 5 PM. This is a great way to spend some time with dad on Father's day!

Send **Mindy Watts-Ellis** an email to add your name to the list of those going by June 14. We need to make one payment for the whole group to get the discount rate, so we will be collecting the admission and carousel fee from participants on or before June 14. You may pay by check or cash.

If paying with cash, please provide the list of names going on the trip with the payment. Write checks out to First Presbyterian Church and put 'zoo' in the memo line.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is coming in July! Come explore God's plan for you at Son-Spark Labs! We will learn that God's plan is to make us, be with us, for us to know him, to save us, and to love us forever. All of this is discovered through cool experi-

ments, Bible stories, fun games, creative crafts, and yummy snacks.

We need YOU to make it happen! Son-Spark Labs will be in session July 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 1-3:30 PM. The vacation Bible school program is for children in preschool through completion of 6th grade.

What can I do to help? You can volunteer to help lead an activity center, be an actor or song leader for the opening assembly, help decorate the chapel to transform it into a science lab, or prepare snacks for the children.

These are the volunteer leader spots needed: Opening assemblies 2 actors, one tech person, one song leader, 2 adults to lead the preschool/Kindergarten classroom, 2 adult game leaders, 2 adult craft leaders, 2 adult snack preparers, and 3 Bible story tellers. Contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** to sign up at mindy@firstpres.church or 356-7238.

If you can't be here, is there still a way to help? Of course! You can help decorate the rooms. You can donate supplies. You can help prepare materials during the week for the activities. Contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at mindy@firstpres.church or call 356-7238 to let us know what you would like to bring.

Supply wish list:

- 18 gauge color craft wire
- 16 gauge craft wire
- 24 gauge beading wire
- Bell wire
- Needle nose pliers
- Wood barrel beads with large holes
- Jump rings
- 4 inch square plain white gift boxes
- Ball chain and ball chain connectors
- Foam glue
- Paper towel tubes
- Metal nuts (as in nuts and bolts)
- 2 liter soda bottles (empty, rinsed with label removed)
- Plastic caps (spray paint cap size or similar)

- Jar of jelly beans
- Ping pong balls
- Package of drinking straws
- 4 small blanket throws (can be borrowed and returned)
- 2 brooms

Snack supplies:

- July 2-** undecorated cupcakes, yellow frosting, candy corn
- July 9-** sandwich bread, cream cheese, fresh veggies, heart shaped cookie cutters
- July 16-** graham crackers, fruit leather (in wide rolls), cream cheese
- July 23-** pineapple juice, apples, pretzel sticks, cheese cubes
- July 30-** English muffins, pizza sauce, square cheese slices, heart shaped cookie cutters, small pepperoni

Go & Serve Success!

The Go and Serve trip was a success in Hammond, LA. Our youth arrived safely and were busy restoring a home for a family in need on Monday morning. They worked Tuesday and Wednesday with another church group on the same house and have made a lot of progress.

Our group enjoyed meeting the two families whose homes they were restoring. **Shawn and Kelly Primeaux**, a couple from the host church, generously invited our team to their home for dinner on Wednesday evening. The other group began the installation of flooring while our group took some time off Thursday to explore the City of New Orleans by street car and visit the zoo.

They put in one more day of hard work on Friday before their departure Saturday to return to Champaign-Urbana. Trip participants were **Elizabeth Pippin, Mark Schoeffmann, Dann Musasa, Jonathan Mnyampara, Destin Lembelembe, and Rick Loma**.

Prayers for a good week of hard work, new relationships, growth in Christ, and a safe return were appreciated.

Happening in the C-U Community

Conversation Partner: A New Program in C-U

BY BOB KIRBY, RWK3213@GMAIL.COM

Would you like to meet an adult neighbor from a different country to learn about their culture and life? Do you enjoy making friends? Do you have a full calendar with limited availability. Is English your native language? Then, you might want to be a Conversation Partner.

Conversation Partners talk with an adult English learner weekly for an hour. You will meet with your partner in a public place like a coffee shop or public library.

The program will work with learners who are active in local congregations such as ours. You would be matched to a learner in our congregation and work out the meeting schedule.

Learners will be able to converse in English, and be able to make friends while practicing English with the encouragement of a native speaker.

Community volunteers and I will match you to someone of similar interests when possible, provide an orientation for you and give you some conversation starters. We will also be available monthly if you want to share your joys and concerns.

The first new conversation partner orientation will be Monday, July 10 at 6:30 PM at the Champaign Public Library. Please email **Bob Kirby**, for more information. rwk323@gmail.com

How Did You Get Here? Asylum Seekers

While most of our African friends are Permanent Legal Residents (green card) or United States Citizens, others are asylum seekers. "When people flee their own country and seek sanctuary in another country, they apply for asylum – the right to be recognized as a refugee and receive legal protection and material assistance. An asylum seeker must demonstrate that his or her fear of persecution in his or her home country is well-founded."¹

An asylum seeker must prove eligibility for refugee status meaning there is not protection in the country of citizenship because of race, nationality, religion, political opinion or membership in a particular group. An asylum seeker may not work and does not receive government cash benefits (eg food stamps). When an application for asylum has not been acted on by our State Department in 150 days, a temporary work permit is given. Should the applicant receive refugee status then public support is available as for every other refugee. Permanent legal resident status is possible one year after refugee status is recognized. Citizenship is possible four years later. If refugee status is not awarded then the applicant does not have status under immigration law and is subject to deportation.

Because of the trauma of persecution and necessity to flee, the long period without work status, ineligibility for public benefits and the risk of deportation, asylum seekers are among the most vulnerable in our community.

¹<http://www.unrefugees.org/what-is-a-refugee/>

Gospel Jazz Fest August 27

SAFE House benefit

in memory of

Willie Summerville

3-7 PM

Hessel Park



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CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



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Debra Miller..... ESL Coordinator, Ext. 235
Chris Penny Facilities Manager, Ext. 237
Ann Petry Accounting, Ext. 224
Andrea Pope..... Contemporary Worship Director, Ext. 215
Richard Rossi Church Musician
Mindy Watts-Ellis .. Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

Sunday:

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

Saturday:

6 PM Praise & Prayer Gathering
(French-English Service) Centennial Hall

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