

March 2019



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Lent Offers Time for Growth

ADAPTED FROM COMMUNICATION RESOURCES, THE NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER MARCH 2008

Most of us know our IQ (intelligence quotient), but what about our SQ (spiritual quotient)?

Lent is a good time to think about the quality of your spiritual life. Do you think about God often...or rarely? Do you pray often...or occasionally? How well do you know the Bible? The Commandments? The Beatitudes? The lives of biblical heroes and heroines?

During Lent, commit to spending more time in prayer. Also consider selecting a book of the Bible or a particular Bible character to study in-depth during this period.

Some people give up particular items or habits during Lent. If used wisely, this discipline can help you abandon things that have been interfering with your relationship with God.

Seek out devotions and books that can help strengthen your spiritual life.

Sandy Carr will be leading six-week study beginning Sunday, March 10, based on the book *Forgiveness* by Presbyterian pastor, Marjorie J. Thompson. The same class will be offered Wednesday mornings beginning March 13 at 9:30 AM.

During Lent, Sunday bulletins will include an insert of daily Lenten devotions for the coming week. Take the insert home and start the day by reading either privately or together as a family that day's devotion.

Increase your SQ this Lent!

High School youth will host a

Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, March 10

10-11 AM

Centennial Hall

Enjoy pancakes, bacon and
breakfast casserole.

Proceeds support High School youth
summer trip to Triennium.

Daylight saving time begins

Sunday, March 10.

Spring ahead one hour!

Mission Updates

Mission Possible

The Mission Possible trip this year is planned for May 13 through 18. We will be helping Camp Carew in Makanda (southern) Illinois to refurbish several of their buildings as well as building a Monarch Butterfly garden. Any level of expertise you may bring will be greatly appreciated. Carpentry, painting/staining or general picking up skills are all needed to make this a successful mission trip.

Adults of all ages are welcome to join us as we provide a much needed service to one of our own Presbyterian Camps. Join us on the afternoon of March 24 from 4-6 PM for a potluck in Centennial Hall for more details and your chance to hear more about it and maybe even join in.

Mission Possible will be joining the CYF ministry this year in a day of service in Taylorville, Illinois. Stay tuned for more details as we coordinate with the relief agencies who are putting together the relief and reconstruction efforts this spring and summer.

Benevolence Fund

The Benevolence Fund is in need of money. The church Benevolence Fund is an emergency fund, not currently part of the church budget, for active participants of our church who have found themselves short of funds to cover such things as rent or utilities. Donations are needed. Please indicate on your check or pew envelope "Benevolence Fund" if you would like to contribute.

First Pres ESL Updates

BY JEANETTE PYNE, ESL COORDINATOR
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Valentine's Day Party

One of the goals of the First Pres ESL Program is to acquaint the students with



From left to right: Yara, Andressa, Mike (tutor), Bonnie (tutor), and Raquel

American culture through lessons taught in their small groups as well as having parties to celebrate holidays. One holiday that we celebrated together in February was Valentine's Day. Though many cultures have a day for lovers, we emphasized that Valentine's Day in the US can be celebrated between friends, teachers, students, and family members.

On February 14, we celebrated together with food, music, and a challenging Valentine's Day trivia game. Prizes were given to the students who got the most correct answers. I always look for moments to teach my students new information and trivia quizzes are a fun way to do this. Did you know that teachers receive the most Valentine's Day cards each year? Students were given the opportunity to make Valentine's cards for their loved ones. Many chose to make Valentines for their children and spouses. Some made Valentines for their wonderful volunteer tutors.



From left to right: Diem, Vern (tutor), Rosalie, Wei Wen, Anne (tutor)

The Monday Red Class

In an effort to help you to get to know our First Pres ESL Program better, I will try to highlight one class each month in the newsletter. This is our Red class.

The Red class consists of low beginners who are eager to learn English quickly to be more independent, find a job, or complete everyday tasks more easily. They are from all around the world. In this picture, we have students from Democratic Republic of Congo, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Guatemala. **Kathy Schoeffmann**, an experienced volunteer tutor, usually teaches the Red class on Mondays and Wednesdays.



From left to right: Lupaka, Edgar, Rebecca, Adam, Hang, Micaela, Wei Wen, Sarah, and Kathy (tutor). Adam does not want his picture distributed, so I have concealed his face and identity.

Recently, they have been learning about feelings and adjectives to describe how they are feeling. It is important to be able to express how you are feeling and determine how someone else may be feeling.

Prayer Requests

- Pray that the Lord will grow the Wednesday night class, and we would be able to serve more people in providing quality English instruction.
- Pray for the Lord to provide more volunteer tutors for the summer and fall semesters.

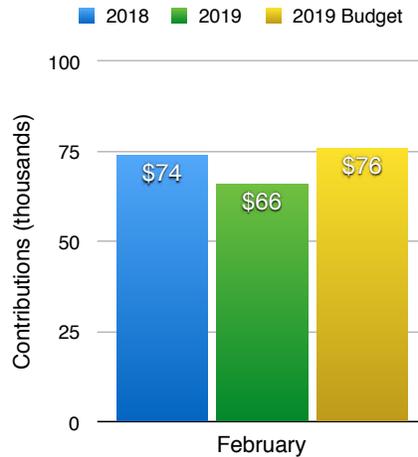
Financial Update

Finance Report

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR
 MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

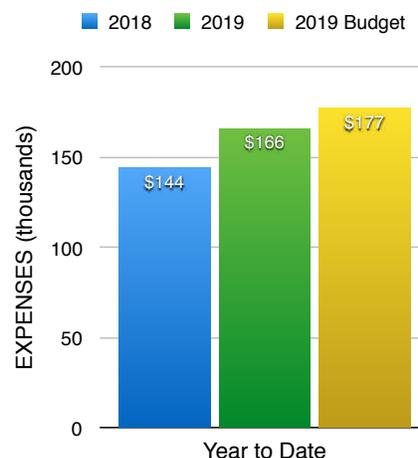
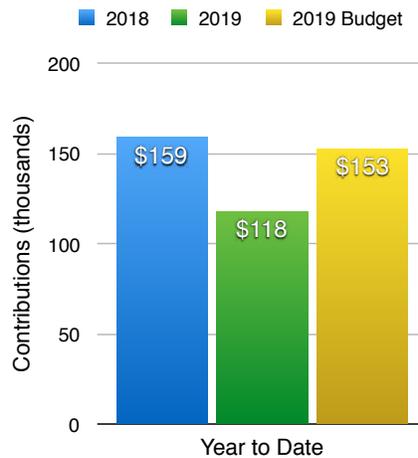
Contributions

Contributions in February were \$8K less than in 2018 and \$10K below the budget at \$66K. The Year to Date total is below last year by \$41K and below the budgeted amount by \$35K. These figures include prepaid pledges (those paid in the year prior to the budget year) that are prorated over the year with 1/12 added to each month's contributions. Including all revenue sources, at 16.7% through the year, we have received 20.6% of the expected 2019 revenue.



Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$11K below the budget at \$166K but more than in 2018 by \$22K. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$46K which is \$113K less than at the end of February in 2018. This figure includes \$32K less in prepaid pledges than in 2018. At 16.7% through the year we have experienced 15.6 % of the expected 2019 expenses.



Congregational Life

Nurturing

Membership, Fellowship,

Hospitality

BY GARY PETERSON, CHAIR

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Fellowship

The response to signing up for 7,8 or 9 dinners was very good. A total of 43 people signed up. The dinners will begin this month (March) and everyone who signed up will dine 3 times with different groups thru November.

Game night will resume this month. Look for announcements in the bulletin as to when these will occur in the coming months. In the past we have enjoyed board games and Euchre for a couple of hours in the evening in the café.

Pickle Ball continues to be enjoyed by a small group every Wednesday at 1 PM at the Savoy Recreation Center. It costs \$3.00 to play and all are invited to learn how to play this fun game. When warmer weather arrives, we will play at Hessel Park where no fee is charged. Rackets and balls are provided.

Hospitality and Membership

Be sure to welcome our new members that were introduced on February 22 during the 8 and 9 AM services. Their pictures and bios will be displayed in Westminster this month. (See names and bios on the right.)

During our February meeting we set the following dates and will be working with Outreach on these two great events. Mark your calendars for *International Taste of First Pres* on June 23 and *Sholem Fest Picnic and Swim Party* on August 11.

New Members

Michael Cervone was introduced to us at *The Taste of CU* last year. He loves our wonderful choir and decided to add his tenor voice. He was raised in Youngstown, OH. He is an IT Support Specialist and a Broadcast Radio Consultant. He is interested in music ministry and radio/sound ministry. Mike thinks the remake of *One Day at a Time* is spectacular. He and his family love to visit the beaches of North Carolina.

Michael Hogue is a manager and realtor. He was introduced to us by his husband **Bruce Rainey**. He is originally from Petit Jean AR. He has been involved with theater, WILL, book mentoring and neighborhood watch. He enjoyed helping with our booth at *The Taste of CU*. He enjoys yard work. He recently enjoyed the book "What Happened" by Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Bruce Rainey was raised a Presbyterian in Benton AR. He loves this church and its people. Bruce recently retired from Meijer where he had been since its opening. He is married to **Michael Hogue**. He likes to read and, in the past, has been involved in the Champaign Urbana Theater Company. He recently read and enjoyed "On the Basis of Sex" the bio of Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Charles Masengu was introduced to our congregation by a friend. We see him, his wife **Sylvie** and daughter **Monique** each Sunday. They also have a 10-month-old son, **Rehoboth**. Charles was raised a protestant in Kinshasa, Congo. He is active in the Sunday morning Bible Study. His favorite movie is *Apocalypse*.

Hector Osorio found us on the internet. He likes the atmosphere of the church and finds the people super friendly. He likes to read about history, religion and health. He is interested in the ESL program. He and Norma attended a bilingual Presbyterian church in the Ravenswood neighborhood of Chicago.

Norma Osorio likewise found us through the internet. She found the congregation kind and made her feel welcome. She is from Colombia. She likes to study English and to sew. She is married to **Hector**. She and Hector have two children.

Nancy Pippin was introduced to our congregation through her daughter and several friends. She is currently involved in teaching, Bible study and CASA. Nancy enjoys reading, needlework, knitting and walking. She loves that our church is involved in community outreach and appreciates multi-cultural activities. She is married to **Don** and they enjoy trivia. She and Don have three children.

Ouaouel Jacqueline Seyi was raised a Presbyterian in Bafia, Cameroon. She enjoys the Sunday morning Bible Study. She is anxious to find a way to serve in our church. Her favorite television program is *National Geographic*.

Spiritual Formation

BY BETTY HOLLISTER

B.HOLL@MEDIACOMBB.NET

The lectures for the Faith in the Real World series organized by **Peter Yau** were very well attended.

Lent starts March 6. Your Spiritual Formation team has planned a six-week study beginning Sunday, March 10, facilitated by **Sandy Carr** based on the book *Forgiveness* by Presbyterian pastor, Marjorie J. Thompson. One review on GoodReads said, "Thought provoking. A personal look at the concepts of justice, grace, restoration, reconciliation, repentance and forgiveness and how they have affected my life." The author said, "Forgiveness is the healing stream flowing out from the crucified Christ over a world that does not know how desperately it needs the healing." Enough said.

The same class will be offered on Wednesdays, beginning March 13, at 9:30 AM in the Parlor.

Please join us Sundays at 10:15 or Wednesdays at 9:30 in Mae Chapin Parlor. Books are \$10 and for sale in Westminster.

Stay tuned for more information about our TED talk series beginning late April.



Sylvie Dikizeyiko, Monique, Rehoboth and Charles Watchidila Masengu.

"The people are very friendly here."

Face-To-Face

What brought you to First Presbyterian?

My grandfather was a Presbyterian pastor and my parents are active in the Presbyterian Church. Sylvie grew up Catholic but loves our church.

What has been the highlight of your church experience?

The people here are very friendly. They make a real effort to meet you and talk to you even though language could be a barrier. We appreciate being included in the work of the congregation. We like to serve.

Tell me about your family? Your work?

Sylvie worked as a seamstress in Congo and now works at Menasha Packaging. I was an oil industry engineer and now work at Rantoul Foods. We are now four here in Champaign. Rehoboth is 10 months and Monique is in middle school. Sylvie has eight sisters and four brothers in Congo. Most of my family have now emigrated to North America and Europe. Monique loves school, art, music and her Sunday School class.

What are your favorite bible characters?

Adam and Eve (Charles). Abraham (Sylvie). David (Monique). Adam and Eve

began the human story and Abraham was the father of our faith. David trusted God despite all his weaknesses.

How can the church best be the church?

Live in harmony and unity with all people. Pray without ceasing. Tell the good news of Jesus Christ. Call more on the Holy Spirit.

Charles became a member of the congregation on February 3.



World Day of Prayer

Did you know that March 1st is World Day of Prayer? It is a day set aside for all people on earth to pray for our world. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) God's love for all people is so great that Jesus Christ died to pay for our sins and give us eternal life.

During the month of March let us pray for all people on earth.

1. Pray for leaders to have wisdom, justice and mercy.
2. Pray for those fleeing persecution or poverty to find a safe home.
3. Pray that we all will be more loving towards others in words and deeds.

Let's Celebrate!

Irene Lamkin is turning 100 years old, on March 13. Irene's family would like to honor her with an **Open House** Saturday, March 9, from 1-3 PM at Windsor Court in the Activity room. Please NO gifts.

If you can't go, send Irene a card. Irene's address is: 401 Burwash Ave R167, Savoy, Illinois 61874.

Can You Walk a Few Extra Steps?

Please **help us welcome** our visitors and members/guests who are mobility challenged. Consider parking in the metered spaces on Sunday mornings. Parking is free on weekends! Stretch those legs, and leave the church lot spaces for visitors and for those who need to be closer to the ramp door.

The U of I Black Chorus under the direction of **Dr. Ollie Watts Davis** will present *Landmark*, a **black sacred music symposium**, March 10, 2019 at 5 PM at Follinger Great Hall. Tickets available at Krannert Center ticket office (217.333.6280)

Jays & Concerns

We express our sympathy...

- To the family and friends of **Lois Allhands-Harpst** who died March 1, 2019. Mrs. Allhands-Harpst is the mother of **Claudia Kirby**. A Memorial Service will be held at the church Saturday, March 9, at 2 PM.
- To the family and friends of **Warren Rittenhouse** who died February 16, 2019. Warren is survived by his spouse, **Shirley Rittenhouse**.
- To the family and friends of **Lee Ann Wilder** who died February 7, 2019. Services will be held later this spring.

Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth & Family Update

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR OF CYF

mindy@firstpres.church

LIZZ PIPPEN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

LIZZ@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Sunday School Notes

There will NOT be Sunday school on March 17. Too many volunteer teachers will be absent for the first weekend of Spring Break week.

In February our preschool class focused on “I say thank you.” The elementary classes learned the story of Jesus healing the ten lepers, but only one returning to thank him. They also began to learn about Jesus feeding the 5,000. The Middle School class worked on their Bible skills and learned about Simon Peter and the Sadducees and Pharisees. The high school continued to study the lectionary texts through Feasting on the Word for youth.

In March the preschool class is learning “I take care of my body” and “Jesus is my Friend.” The elementary classes are continuing the unit of the Feeding of the 5,000 and will begin to learn the stories of Holy Week in ‘Jesus in Jerusalem.’ The Middle School will continue working on Bible skills, and study the Bible ancestors Mary and Martha and Judas Iscariot.

The third grade Bible class will be starting March 24 and finish April 7. Students will receive their Bibles on April 17.

Kathy Schoeffmann, Lauren Walsten and **Nancy Pippin** have volunteered to be the teaching team for this short course on basic Bible skills and learning the ten commandments.

Youth Group

All church Pancake Breakfast Sunday, March 10 10-11 AM in Centennial Hall.

Cost of the pancake breakfast is donation based and all proceeds go to the youth summer trip.

The Youth have been working hard to raise money for Triennium this summer and are excited about going. Last month the youth group met and studied the importance of worship and looked at different ways we worship God while also enjoying fellowship together.

During Lent, the middle school and high school students will meet together for a special Sunday evening study called *Just Eating*, which looks at how we practice our faith at the table. Through this study, we will examine how our faith is a foundation for a meaningful and healthy life not only for ourselves but for the earth and others in the world. We will talk about how eating is an invitation to experience God and to walk with others in the world.

In Sunday School the high schoolers will be studying how to put our faith into action during Lent. We will be using the Bible Project video series on the Gospel of Luke to explore the life of Jesus that leads us to the Cross and the Resurrection.



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CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

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Change Service Requested



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Sunday:

8 AM Contemplative Service

9 AM Traditional Service

10:15 AM Sunday School and Adult Education

11:15 AM Contemporary Service

Saturday:

6 PM Praise & Prayer Gathering

(French-English Service) Centennial Hall

Pastors:

Matt Matthews Senior Pastor/Head of Staff, Ext 213

Eric Corbin.....Associate Pastor, Ext. 214

Staff:

George Almasi.....Facility Assistant

Ritchie DrennenFacility Manager, Ext. 237

Patty Farthing..... Receptionist, Ext. 211

Robert Ferrer..... Audio-visual Technician

Marcia FranksAdministrative Assistant, Ext. 210

Joe GrantDirector of Music

Blaise PascalCYF Connections Assistant, Ext. 216

Ann Petry Accounting, Ext. 224

Lizz Pippin.....CYF Associate Director, Ext. 216

Jeanette Pyne.....ESL Coordinator, Ext. 235

Pierre TangChurch Musician/Children’s Choir Director

Mindy Watts-Ellis ..Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

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[@firstpres.church](mailto:info@firstpres.church). For example, eric@firstpres.church.

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