

May 2019



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Another Miracle on the Emmaus Road

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Late on Easter afternoon, instead of a nap, Rachel and I went for a walk around nearby Hessel Park. Resurrection was in the air. Spring was springing, trees had budded, and the park was filled with people who seemed to be infinitely glad to be outdoors.

We walked around and around the park and I thought of Cleopas—no kidding. I thought about Cleopas and his friend walking on that road on that Sunday after the crucifixion with heavy feet. They were mourning the loss of Jesus and walking right beside them, having a conversation, was none other than Jesus, whom they did not recognize. They were still sore from that brutal, previous week. Now, even in new dawn and new day, they did not see the risen Lord walking right next to them.

My feet were heavy, too, but not with sadness. I was tired from Holy Week, yes. Holy Week is weighted with a special kind of profundity for Christians, and, as it does every single year, it wore me completely out. But I was not sad, like Cleopas. My feet were heavy simply because I was tired. We walked around Hessel Park in golden light with tired feet but a soaring spirit. Resurrection was in the air.

I reveled in watching people in the park. I didn't know any of these people, so I made lots of presumptions as I walked around watching them. Who was related to whom, I could only guess. But I wondered about their stories as I smiled at them and said hello.

A black man with a beautiful grey dog on a red leash walked with a white woman hand-in-hand; it was their children, I presumed, who walked ahead of them, looking back every now and then, then gleefully zooming ahead down the winding path.

An extended crowd of family, or church, or friends crowded around a picnic in the grassy field under the big trees. A father and son kicked a soccer ball. The grills were loaded with smoking food. I was full but the smell made me hungry anyway. They spoke another language—I guessed Spanish, but that was a guess. Their laughter was a language I've heard before, and in every tongue laughter means the same thing.

Children cavorted around on the playground swings and climbing bars. Adults sat on benches watching them. People wore shorts and shirt sleeves. Some had

*We invite you
to be our guest on*

Sunday, May 12

*9:00 a.m.
as our Sanctuary Choir*

presents

*Mozart's
Missa Brevis in C*

*Only one traditional service
that day.*

*Contemporary Service will be
held at 11:15 a.m.*

tattoos, some had pale skin longing for a little sun; some had skin the color of coffee, of caramel, of camelia flowers. Their hair was wild, tamed, yellow and red and brown and curled and straight. Sounds of laughter floated above birdsong. I smiled and nodded and said hello to everyone we walked past.

Everywhere I looked I saw Jesus.

Jesus playing with the children. Jesus working on his backhand on the tennis court. Jesus at the grill in the field flipping burgers. Jesus with a baby on his hip.

The LORD is risen. (He is risen, indeed.)

“Earth’s crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.”
(Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

* * *

I don’t always take off my shoes, but Jesus is everywhere.

And that doesn’t mean there’s no suffering in the world. And that doesn’t mean there’s not work for us to do. But because Jesus is everywhere and every common bush afire with God, there is beauty and hope and—I’m choosing my words carefully here—glory.

One man walking on the trail around Hessel Park in the opposite direction of me and Rachel looked troubled. As he made his circuit and we made ours, we passed several times. He looked like he was hurting, and hurting badly. While some sat on benches in the shade or in the sun in what seemed to me like bliss, that man seemed confused and troubled. The image of God was etched in the lines of his young face, but he looked like he was maybe hard to love. At night I might say he looked dangerous.

Jesus walks with us down every pathway, but some of those paths take us to the valley of the shadow of death. Even there, of

course, there is beauty, but there is brokenness, too.

At the Interfaith Alliance of Champaign County, Ousmane Sawadago, the Iman from the mosque and Islamic center, read a statement during our introductions. This was unusual. Our group gathers monthly to learn about ways to better serve our community. Ousmane cleared his throat, looked at his cell phone, and read a statement that he wrote. It was written for his Christian brothers and sisters in light of the terrible Easter bombings in Sri Lanka. Trembling, he spoke of sorrow and of condolence and of love.

Ousmane is a faithful Muslim, but I heard and saw Jesus in his words and on his face on Wednesday. The transcendent God shows up in the most unexpected of places.

So does evil. Evil shows up, too. And when it does, we cannot simply look away and think happy thoughts. Like Jesus, we must confront evil with love and with grit.

Hannah Beech reported in the New York Times (Ap 25, 2019) that

“Zaharan Hashim, a radical Muslim preacher accused of masterminding the Easter Sunday attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka, never hid his hatred . . .

“He was influential, very attractive, very smart in his speeches, even though what he was saying about jihad was crazy,” said Marzook Ahamed Lebbe, a former [Kattankudy] politician and member of a local Islamic federation. “We all underestimated him. We never thought he would do what he said.”

But he did. Right before our eyes. Too many people did and said nothing while he preached hate against folk who were different than him.

Jesus walks with us everywhere. Jesus was blown to smithereens on Sunday in Sri Lanka even though here in Champaign he had just climbed out of the grave.

A local Methodist church is on the verge of splitting over the issue of how to welcome and love gay and lesbian members. The person who spoke to me about it said it’s hard to be faithful.

I remembered my walk in Hessel Park days before. Jesus was there. And just as certainly, Jesus was with me and her as she communicated with tired eyes how hard it is sometimes to be the church.

Jesus walks with us into Rosecrance as we face alcohol rehab for the fourth time.

Jesus walks with police officials as they seek to reform policing.

Jesus walks with communities like Danville, Illinois, which seem beset by degrading poverty and senseless violence.

Jesus sits with a husband and wife of seventy years who sit together quietly in a nursing home, holding each other’s hands, weeping.

Jesus walks with us no matter where our Emmaus Road takes us.

* * *

When they arrived for the night, it appeared Jesus would walk on. But Cleopas said, “Stay with us. It’s late. We’re all tired and hungry.” Jesus did stay with them, and at dinner, when he broke bread they recognized him. And later, as they talked about the journey home, they said “weren’t our hearts burning within us on the road” as he talked to us about the scriptures. Jesus had been with them all along down that dusty Emmaus Road, but only in the breaking of bread did they recognize him. I think we know what Luke is saying here.

By God’s grace, Jesus accepts our invitations to stay awhile and break bread with us—even us. Jesus is open to our hospitality, if we but offer it.

And, invited or not, by the amazing grace of God, Jesus shows up. In the picket lines of the state house. In the food lines in Havana. In the movie lines at the cineplex.

Every day is the day, and every journey is the journey where Jesus shows up. Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly. That's the sort of thing he whispers to us. Jesus is smiling that smile of his, his way of showing encouragement to us, inviting us to be brave, to make a positive difference.

Glory, light, love, and grace all around. Jesus walking with us . . . It's just another miracle on the Emmaus Road.

Thanksgiving

BY JUDI GEISTLINGER, WORSHIP CHAIR
 JUDGEISTLINGER@OUTLOOK.COM

I am filled with thanksgiving for my church family, for the simple family meal we shared, for breaking bread together around tables on Maundy Thursday.

As I reflect, I am profoundly grateful. I am in awe of how an idea shared became a reality of more than I could envision.

Thank you to our new Liturgical Arts team (small but mighty and so FUN to work with) who transformed our space into something beautiful and welcoming and perfect for Maundy Thursday.

Thank you to the myriad soup makers who chopped and cooked and delivered our delicious dinner, despite some crock pot accidents...oh my thank you so very much! We had plenty of food because of your generosity.

Thank you to the worship committee who threw themselves fully into this service, baking gluten free communion bread, making soup, leading song, cleaning up and leading us in a deeply meaningful worship service.

Thank you to our church family for joining together on a rainy, cool spring evening for such a memorable meal. And last but certainly not least is to my Covenant Bible study group, for, well, for everything.

As I left around 8 PM, our cleaning crew was putting the final touches on the kitchen, putting everything to right, and I am so grateful for this fresh crew coming in after dinner.

I know our amazing custodial staff will re-transform Centennial Hall for worship for Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Thank you.

I feel so blessed for each and every one of you. I will treasure the memories of seeing you all sharing dinner together and breaking bread, serving one another. My heart is full on Good Friday with treasured memories of all the faces of my beloved church family gathered together.

*In gratitude,
 Judi*

"Bee" the Change! Earth Day Celebration May 19

BY CLEMMIE ACKERMANN, GREEN TEAM MEMBER
 COLETTA.ACKERMANN@GMAIL.COM

The "Green Team", otherwise known as the Environmental Stewardship Committee, would like you to know about their plans and issue an invitation for our church's Earth Day Celebration!

"Bee" the change you want to see!

Pollinator Pocket Garden

To carry out our mission to be an Earth Care Congregation and to celebrate Earth Day, On May 11, the "Green Team" will be planting a pollinator pocket garden on the south side of the Education Building. With the help of **Tim Bartlett**, a variety of native plants have been selected and purchased for planting. This garden will also have a bird bath – a symbol of life sustaining water. The garden will take time to develop but our goal is for it to be seen and copied. Walk by and watch it grow!

Earth Day Celebration -May 19

The Sunday School will be making posters, planting annuals in the large pots by

the Story Garden and planting sunflower and zinnia seeds in the church's Pollinator Garden.

At 10:15, a special presentation will be given by **Maggie Dougherty-Roberts**. Maggie is a Champaign County Master Gardener and Master Naturalist. She established a pollinator garden at the Robeson Meadows subdivision and has been maintaining and expanding it for the last 8 years. She would like to help people understand and value areas enhanced with pollinator friendly native plants, and is hoping to see more neighborhoods collaborate on such environmentally friendly spaces. Location: Parlor.

Look for more news about the "Green Team" in future newsletters. Curious about what we do or want to help? Email **Kathy Schoeffmann** at: kschoeffmann@yahoo.com.

Congregational Life

Face to Face



Nancy Pippin

When I leave worship I feel encouraged and ready to go, lifted up.

What brought you to First Presbyterian Church?

Donald and I grew up in a conservative church. But we had some Presbyterian friends with whom we attended some Presbyterian functions. Later, our daughter Lizz connected with a Presbyterian campus ministry and then when she became active here at First Pres I was drawn in. I had to adapt to different ideas about baptism and communion and other things but I love it here.

What has been the highlight of your church experience?

When I leave worship here I feel encouraged and ready to go, lifted up. I don't leave church heavy with guilt and self doubt. I love the fellowship and sharing and the sense of community I find here.

Tell me about your family. Your work.

Don and I have three daughters and three grandchildren and we love our time with them. I taught special education for over thirty years but am now retired and can do what I want. I find joy in many places. I attend the Bible Study Fellowship and our own Covenant Bible Study. I am a pew

partner for "my" two little girls and I help out in third grade Sunday School class. In my free time I garden.

What are your favorite Bible characters?

I have many. Ruth because of her love and determination to follow God and Esther because every girl needs a Cinderella story. I see myself in David and often I behave like Jonah.

What advice can you give on how to be the church?

Pray. Yes, definitely, pray to discern God's will and then go where he leads.

Nancy became a member of our congregation on February 3, 2019.

Nurturing

Membership, Fellowship,

Hospitality

BY GARY PETERSON, CHAIR
AMER_SWEDE@YAHOO.COM

During the month of May, Nurturing will be working on some fun summer time events. First is the *Taste of First Pres* on June 23. Next will be *Sholem Fest* on August 11. Then the following weekend will be our booth at the *Taste of C-U* on August 16 and 17.

Make sure to mark your calendars for these events to attend or helping out. As Pastor Matt mentioned during the Good Friday Service, we would like to have an *Ice Cream Social* with the Methodist Church. That will probably happen in July. More info will be coming in the June newsletter and Sunday bulletins.

The Turquoise Table is out and ready for use. Please think about using the table for your gathering times at church. The more we can be visible to passers by, the more we will show our hospitality to the community.

Spiritual Formation

BY BETTY HOLLISTER, CO-CHAIR
B.HOLL@MEDIACOMBB.NET

No spring or summer slow-down for your Spiritual Formation Team. Be sure to watch the bulletin for updates, but here is a tentative line up for adult education hour classes from 10:15-11:05 each Sunday morning in the Parlor.

May 5: **Joe Grant** prepared us for Music Sunday with an explanation of the role of a Catholic Mass in worship services.

May 12: Music Sunday and 9 AM Worship Time; no Adult Classes

May 19: Celebration of Earth Day with **Maggie Dougherty-Roberts**.

May 26: Resume TED Talks.

June, July, and August schedules aren't firm yet, but we are excited to announce that **Joe Grant** will offer four more music-related classes this summer. Don't be surprised if your favorite "singing pastor" pops in to help.

Fall will see the return of *Faith in the Real World*. This series is back by popular demand, so stay tuned for details.

Just know that your team is working hard to offer you a variety of classes and topics to inspire you on your faith journeys.

Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth & Family Update

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR OF CYF

mindy@firstpres.church

LIZZ PIPPIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

LIZZ@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Sunday School Notes

In April the preschool class learned “Jesus is Alive!” The elementary grades studied the “Women at the Tomb.” The Middle School learned about Mary Magdalene, Thomas the disciple, and continued to work on their Bible skills with a Family Feud style game. The high school continued to study the gospel according to Luke and the spiritual discipline of prayer and its many forms. The Middle School and High School classes had the opportunity to try a moving meditation prayer by walking a labyrinth that was highlighted with symbols of Jesus’ Holy Week journey.

Students **Hazel Leakey, Blessing Ngal-amulumbe, David Kabongo,** and **Allison Young** received their Bibles on April 14.

In May, the preschool will be studying ‘I take care of the Earth’ and the elementary classes will be learning the story of Peter and John healing a lame man. The last day of Sunday School for the academic year is May 12.

May 19 will be Earth Care Sunday for our congregation. Can you help with kids’ activities for planting seeds in the church yard and other activities in the cafe that day after worship?

The Environmental Stewardship Committee is hard at work planning a native plant garden for along the south wall of the office wing facing Church street. Planting of over 240 seedlings will happen. They are

reserving annual seeds of sunflower varieties and zinnias for the children to help plant in the mulch area just south of the sanctuary. **Kathy and Mark Shoeffmann** will help organize the seed plan and would like to have one group of children at a time come out to help. The other children can be in the cafe doing other activities while they wait their turn.

CYF is planning to have three activity options at three stations in the café. One station will be making corn plastic out of cornstarch and corn oil, and learning about the compostable plastic flatware that our church has purchased. One station will make posters about the importance of pollinators and planting flowers for them. One station will be playing with cornstarch based packing peanuts.

Please let Mindy know at mindy@firstpres.church if you are available and willing to help! This is a great educational opportunity for our children to learn more about how our decisions impact God’s world around us.

Artful Worship June 2. Bring your family to The Gathering worship at 11:15 AM on June 2 to experience an art-filled worship experience in Centennial Hall.



Vacation Bible School will be June 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 1-3:30 PM. Our theme is *Neighbors Near and Far*. We will be

learning what Jesus says about loving our neighbors, who our neighbors should be, who is invited, and how we should show that love. We will focus on four countries to whom we have ties through mission and partnerships; Pakistan, Cuba, Indonesia, and Malawi. Special guests with ties to these countries will be invited to tell us more about our neighbors. We will need volunteers for crafts, games, storytelling, snack, and music. We will also need ‘travel guides’ to lead groups of kids to each station. Contact Mindy at mindy@firstpres.church to volunteer.

Youth Group

The last fundraiser for **Triennium Youth Summer trip** starts May 19. We will be doing an envelope fundraiser May 19, 26, and June 2. Stop by the bulletin board starting May 19 to learn a little about the students going to Triennium this summer.

This past month the Middle School and High School youth group have been looking at *Just Eating* a study that looks at our faith at the table. We wrapped up the series by looking at how Jesus ate and what life was like in New Testament times. The last regular meeting of the year for youth group will be May 12 when we will have an end of the year party. Over the summer we will meet a few times for special events. Parents keep an eye on your inbox and mailbox for more details!

A Great Opportunity for 6th-12th Graders This Summer

Try out one week at Camp Carew! There is still time to register. Enjoy swimming, canoeing, kayaking, archery, hiking, plus time for Christian fellowship and study along the shores of Little Grassy Lake near Carbondale. It is located within a Fish and Wildlife National Refuge setting.

The camp is moderately priced at \$250 for the entire week. Financial assistance available if needed. The two general camp dates are: June 16 to the 22 and July 7 to 13. There are additional camps during June and July for horseback riding, photography, plus high adventure for Senior Highs.

Complete information is available at Campcarew.org.

You may also call **Steve Gritten** from our church who is a Board Member of the Camp. His phone is 217-369-0749. His email is Steve.Gritten@sbcglobal.net

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries would like to thank the following disciples who gave their time and talent during the church education hour to nurture our children this academic year.

Lisa Ainsworth, Laurie Dey, David Evensen, Jay Geistlinger, Dionne Gooden, Mary Gritten, Judy Hendrickson, Sabrina Hwu, Celeste Kim, Ensung Kim, Sarah Laufenburg, Andrew Leakey, Noni Ledford, Rachel Matthews, Thethe Mfulama, George Miley, Lizz Pippin, Nancy Pippin, Naomi Rempe, Grace Rispoli, Kathy Schoeffmann, Karin Vermilion, Rob Vermilion, Laura Walsten, and Joyce Wittler.

Thank you so much!

Finance

Financial Update

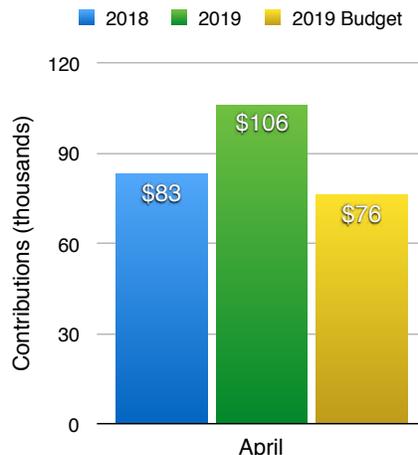
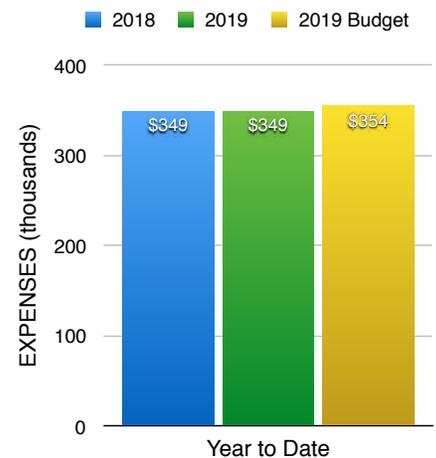
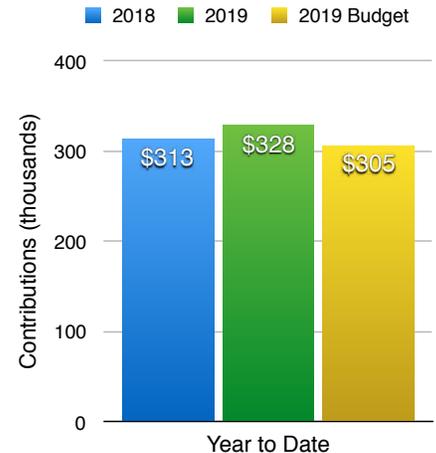
BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE
MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

Contributions

Contributions in April were \$23K more than in 2018 and \$30K above the budget at \$106K. The Year to Date total is above last year by \$15K and above the budgeted amount by \$23K. 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 33.3% through the year, we have received 42.4% of the expected 2019 revenue.

Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$5K below the budget at \$349K and the same as in 2018. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$87K which is \$18K less than at the end of April in 2018. This figure includes \$32K less in prepaid pledges than in 2018. At 33.3% through the year we have experienced 32.8 % of the expected 2019 expenses.





Pray for Mind Control

Do we realize the importance of mind control? The apostle Paul did when he wrote, "Finally, brothers/sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things." (Philippians 4:8)

Our choices, ideas, desires are all shaped by the exposure of our minds to other minds through TV, conversation, newspapers, magazines and other forms of mass communication. Our thoughts eventually determine speech and action.

In today's world we see growing violence and prejudice.

As Christians we need to be aware of the importance of controlling what influences our minds, filling them with Scripture plus that which is loving and beautiful. We need the Holy Spirit's control to share the love and peace of Jesus Christ.

Jays & Concerns

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

- **Virginia Erickson** whose husband Keith died on April 26, 2019;
- **Howard Hobbs** died April 23, 2019. A *Celebration of Life* will be held at the end of May.
- **Georganne Marty** died April 16, 2019;
- **Max Reid** died May 5, 2019. A Memorial Service will be held Friday, May 10, at 11 AM at Morgan Memorial.
- Former member **John Severns** died April 3, 2019. A *Celebration of Life* will be held this summer.

Graduation Celebration

May 26 (during coffee hour)
honoring High School and College graduates

If you know of someone graduating,
we would love to honor them.
Send a picture and a few sentences
about what they will be doing after graduation to
Diane Mortensen at cmimort@aol.com

Mission Updates

Mission News

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS, INTERIM MISSION

COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

May Plus Summer Camp

I was looking on the website for our Presbytery's summer camp, Camp Carew. Who did I see but a picture of our own Mission Possible group from a few Springs ago who had gone to help prepare our camp. This May 12-18, 2019 adults from First Presbyterian will be working again to prepare Camp Carew for summer camp. There are all sort of jobs for people to do from painting to shoveling. Perhaps you have an interest in doing something. Contact **Dave McNattin**.

There is something for everyone at Camp Crew this Spring and Summer. Maybe you have a child or a grandchild who would love to spend a week at Summer camp. Maybe you went as a child and would just like to drive down and enjoy the woods. Check out their website at <http://camp-carew.org/>

Here is a little something about Camp Carew from their website in case you are unfamiliar:

Camp Carew provides a setting in which the Christian faith can be experienced in fellowship with others.

We seek to help people deepen their awareness of God, each other, and the natural world by providing a camp program and a setting in which personal growth can take place.

Our goal is that campers will strengthen their own sense of personal worth as well as their relationship to Jesus Christ and to others.

Activities at Camp Carew are directed toward Christian community. Through group living in the small unit, campers

and leaders are challenged to work, plan, play, study, sing, and worship together.

Camp Carew is a mission of the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is accredited by the American Camp Association. It is also a member of the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association.

Established in 1952, the camp is nestled in the beautiful woods of Little Grassy Lake inside the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge. Camp Carew is built on sixty acres nine miles south of Carbondale, Illinois.

Serving the World – World Mission

As I sat in the World Mission meeting, I thought of how huge our work is. I thought how these eight people were impacting the whole world. We don't usually think about how a church committee meeting makes a difference globally but it does.

In one hour these eight people prayed together, and studied faith and immigration issues together. They looked at a report from the Office of General Assembly called "Response to Historic Low Admission Ceiling." Christians can help be advocates for the refugees who are in our country but also those who are caught between a war and being allowed in to another country to live.

The committee discussed how the PC(USA) is encouraging an increase in our advocacy for refugees with our government but also struggled with the difficulty of not knowing the repercussions of our own government if we did this. We read letters from our mission co-worker, one of which was from Mark Adams who wrote about his experience on our Southern Border. Look up oga.pcusa.org/sec-

[tion/mid-council-ministries/immigration/refugees/](#)

There are regional and world missions that this committee looks at every month and determines how you can help the world. Would you like to serve in such a capacity? Let **Lizz Pippin** or me know. Christ's mission to the world happens because of you!

The Seventh Annual Cuba Forum was held on Saturday May 4. **Ellen Moodie**, Professor and Associate Department Head of Anthropology at the University of Illinois shared her thoughts about life in Cuba comparing that with life in El Salvador where she has conducted research for



Cuba Forum guests share stories.

some time. The audience also heard a report about the most recent congregational trip from **Rachel and Matt Matthews, Judi Geistlinger and Robert Ferrer.**

Mary Lou Bauer, Tracy Dace and Carol Miles were elected to second terms on the Cuba Executive Committee.

CUBA Two-Step

We were dancing with our sister church Luyano Presbyterian Church in Havana, Cuba. We weren't actually in Cuba, we were there in Spirit May 4 and 5. With the reclosing of the borders in Cuba, life will

be harder than it already is in Cuba. We want to keep them in our prayers.

Following a powerful morning worship extolling peace, unity and love among all nations, Cuba Sunday continued with Cuban Two Step in the afternoon and early evening. A salsa dance lesson by **Yuri Sohn** (Step 1) was followed by an authentic Cuban dinner prepared by the **Yaus**



and their team and a silent auction let by **Tim and Betsy Bartlett** and their team (Step 2). The work teams were dedicated and enjoyed the fellowship of working together. **Matilde Stone** offered a prayer for Cuba in Spanish. Proceeds will go to the session at the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba at Luyanó. Pastor Daniel Izquierdo from our sister church offered the following greeting.

Dear sisters and brothers in First PC Champaign,
With joy and gratitude we give thanks to our risen Lord for the mutual bonds that bind us together in faith and mission, as a visible expression of the one body of Christ. Our partnership had brought us together in different ways and in beautiful exchange trips, strengthening friendship and mutual understanding. We are grateful for your gracious ways in supporting different outreach programs our congregation is involved with. Together we learn, we love, we laugh. If there is any possible invitation I can dare to make, I will encourage you to be part of the evening programs. Taste the dancing and the cooking, at a Cuban style. Know that there is more of that here in the not so far Havana. Despite the terrible situation between our two governments, we remain as bridges of hope, building relationships and approaching each other no matter what. That's a powerful testimony to the world. May God bless you abundantly this Sunday as we worship together. May God bless His people always.

Three people from First Presbyterian will be attending the Cuba Partner Network meeting in June in New Orleans. There we will have face to face meetings with people across the United States and from Cuba who will be able to share news from our sisters and brothers there.

Want to know more? Want to go to Cuba to visit our sisters and brothers there?

Contact **Lizz Pippin**, lizz@firstpres.church.

Pentecost Offering
 On June 9 the church will celebrate its birthday – Pentecost that day when the Early Christians were touched by wind and fire, went out into the streets and were able to preach the Word

of God in many different languages. The

Holy Spirit is alive and ready to change the world with each new day.

On June 9 we will take up an offering which will unite us with the PC(USA) churchwide effort to inspire young people and allow them to share their faith with the church and world. The PC(USA) Pentecost Offering supports Young Adult Volunteers, Ministries with Youth, and Children at risk. And, 40% stays right here in our local congregation. Again this year, the offering will be split between our Children, Youth and Families program and DREAM House, the amounts and proportions have varied from year to year.

Watch out for flyers and information about this important offering. And, if you want to get involved in hands on work with mission or with our Children, Youth and Family Ministry let your Mission Team or staff know. We will be glad to connect you!

Immediate Needs

Our supported agencies have communicated some immediate needs. Perhaps you can help?

Canteen Run: travel size toiletries, new socks, individually wrapped snack items (can be dropped off at missions table basket and the deacon will deliver)

Courage Connection: toilet paper, paper towels and cleaning supplies. First Presbyterian Community Mission Deacons needs a volunteer to help us maintain our connection with their needs.

Their website gives a lot of information about them:

Courage Connection is the oldest Domestic Violence service provider in North America, serving Champaign-Urbana since 1971. While our agency has been known under several organizational names including A Woman's Place and Center for Women in Transition, our current nameplate of Courage Connection unifies our mission of providing a continuum of services so that individuals and families can achieve SAFETY, SUPPORT and SUCCESS.



And, on their website you will find they are in the middle of a Mother's Day Card fundraiser.

Crisis Nursery: Celebration for all the volunteers they currently have! They welcome monetary donations so they can fill in the gaps!

Jesus is the Way has several pressing needs for resident rooms: Twin sheet sets – fitted & flat, fans, lamps, bath mats, non-skid rugs, alarm clocks, funds to buy paint to repaint residents' walls, toiletries, paper goods, and canned food for meals. (Please deliver to Jesus is the Way Prison Ministry in Rantoul or contact **Rachel Matthews** for help).

ESL Program Update

BY JEANETTE PYNE, ESL COORDINATOR

JEANETTE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Field Trip to Schnucks

One of the principles of good language teaching is to make learning as authentic and meaningful as possible. Therefore, field trips are an important part of our lesson plans. For example, during the Food

Unit, tutors took their classes to local coffee shops in downtown Champaign to practice reading the menu and ordering coffee.

On April 3, the First Pres ESL Program took a field trip to the Schnucks in Champaign. The tutors and students were divided into their level groups and they walked through the grocery store talking about various topics ranging from weights and

is usually **Vern Snoeyink**, and he teaches almost every day. He has been tutoring with the First Pres ESL Program for a long time. Recently, they have been learning about weather, the environment, and the Illinois Marathon. We have been discussing tornado safety and had a tornado drill to practice what to do in the event of a tornado warning. Many of our students do not have tornadoes in their home countries, so this was vital information for living in Illinois.



Ron (tutor) is explaining produce to Roza, Sarah, Minju, and Marcia (students from left to right)

measurements, how to navigate the deli section, ordering a cake, how to read food labels, etc. Most of the topics had already been covered in class, but being in the grocery store transformed the abstract information taught in the classroom to concrete application. A few students even practiced checking out and bought items!

The Orange Class

The Orange class consists of high beginner and low intermediate learners of English, who have various reasons for learning English. They are from all around the world. In this picture, we have students from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Brazil, Korea, Belarus, Albania, and Japan. The tutor for this class



From left to right and top to bottom: Gisele, Gabriel, Joe, Juliana, Vern (tutor), Pali, Maryna, Sarah, Andressa, Young Eun, and Sayana. Joe does not want his picture distributed, so I have concealed his face and identity.



Michele and Vern (tutors) are explaining twist ties to Maryna, Gem, and Hannah (students from left to right)



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

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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

Rachel Matthews.....Interim Missions Coordinator, Ext. 219

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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