

June 2019



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

## The Stadium Road

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

We parked on the gravel lane at the cemetery  
and watched the blackbird minding his post  
on the gravestone that looked like a small light house.  
Rivulets of purple glinted through its black feathers

and sun splashed over the question mark swoop of his sleek body,  
shiny eyes watching over the  
granite names and dates of these saints,  
from whom their labors rest.

A robin lit on the adjacent obelisk,  
and the blackbird hopped nonchalantly into effortless flight,  
not to be bothered by such a worm-crazed,  
pretentiously breasted creature.

Watch over my friend, I wanted to tell them both,  
as we set out on foot to find where  
your ashes will soon be interred  
near the road, closest to the football stadium.

One autumn day Our Team  
will win games again,  
and old friends strolling by your grave  
will hear sixty thousand people

cheering.

international taste  
of  
First Pres  
june 23 4-7pm



Bring some food from your culture or  
country of origin to share.

"How good and pleasant it is when  
God's people live together in unity!"  
- Psalm 133:1

Story Telling

• Music •

Fellowship

www.firstpres.church  
302 W. Church, Champaign • 217-356-7238

## Say Yes

BY JUDI GEISTLINGER, WORSHIP CHAIR

JUDIGEISTLINGER@OUTLOOK.COM

First Presbyterian is in search for a new wedding coordinator. Wedding coordinators for churches are the ones who work out the details with the family, understanding wedding policies of the church, acting as liaison and in general functioning as a sounding board for wedding service coordination.

*Southern Living* magazine describes the role of a church wedding coordinator this way:

The wedding coordinator might be the first person a bride contacts after getting engaged. She oftentimes helps book the church, helps schedule the priest or pastor, and gives the couple a tour of the church if desired. During a tour, places such as where the bride room is and where your soon-to-be-husband and the groomsmen will gather before the ceremony are included in the tour. She'll also help figure out a timeline for the wedding day, schedule the rehearsal, and help put together all the elements of the ceremony including readings, music, and procession order.

Additionally, she'll know what décor elements the church already has (candelabras, candles, aisle runners, flower stands, etc.) and help to figure out what kind of rentals and floral arrangements needed. Brides will work with the wedding coordinator as a liaison with the photographer, videographer, florist, and all other day-of vendors. The church has certain guidelines for photography and videography during the ceremony, and the wedding coordinator will relay any pertinent information to them.

The church wedding coordinator will help the bride carry out wishes for the ceremony from the processional order to tutoring ushers on how to greet guests and where to seat them. She'll make sure the bride is out the door and on the way to a night of merriment at the rehearsal dinner as soon

as possible—with strict timeline for the next day's church festivities.

### The Wedding Day

While the bride is getting ready the morning of your wedding, she'll already be halfway through her church wedding coordinator checklist. She'll make sure the door is open for the florist, photographer, videographer, and any other vendor that will need to set up prior to the ceremony.

Once the wedding party gets to the church, the church wedding coordinator duties continue with ensuring the bride room is stocked with plenty of water and tissues. She'll see that the groom, groomsmen, and all other parties are in place. Once it's time for the ceremony to begin, she'll cue the music, the officiant, and everyone involved in the processional. She'll be there to help if any last minute issues arise.

Because First Pres' longtime wedding coordinator no longer has close ties to the church, we are in search of a new wedding coordinator. This position is paid, by the wedding couple, through a fee structure determined by the church.

If you are interested in this role, please contact **Nancy Martin** or **Judi Geistlinger** for further information.

This is a great time to join the **choir**. We do not rehearse on Wednesdays! Singers from middle school through 'very experienced' are welcome. Sunday rehearsal is at 8:15 AM.

# Congregational Life

## Face to Face



**Hector and Norma Osorio**

### What brought you to First Presbyterian?

We were raised Catholic and our son and daughter were baptized in the Catholic Church. We met good friends who were Presbyterian and began to worship with them and we felt good about Presbyterian worship. We had a Colombian Presbyterian pastor. When we moved to Champaign we visited a number of churches and read several church websites. We felt most comfortable and most welcomed here.

### What has been the highlight of your church experience?

We love Pastor Matt. He is very friendly and kind. All the people here are friendly.

### Tell me about your family? Your work?

Well we are both Colombian and grew up in different towns there. We met at the airport in Chicago. I (Hector) had gone there with a friend who was to meet someone from Colombia. Norma had also arrived from Colombia and we literally

ran into each other. We began to talk. I ended up driving her from the airport. We started meeting and were married three months later. In addition to our son and daughter we have seven grandchildren. Our daughter lives in Urbana. I worked at Vegetable Juices in Chicago for forty years in shipping and receiving and Norma's work has always been in childcare. Now we are available to care for our grandchildren here and participate in the life of the church.

### How can the church best be the church?

For us the church helps us be better Christians through worship with other people. We love meeting people and sharing our faith.

*The Osorios became members on February 10*

from around the planet. This is the perfect event for family and friends to hang out, prepare one of your favorite ethnic dishes and enjoy a meal. You will be surrounded by wonderful live music, games for the kids and inspirational stories.

When we held the first International Taste we were amazed at the variety of food and we expect no different this year. Please be thinking about a dish that you would like to share and join us in Centennial Hall on Sunday, June 23rd from 4-7 pm.

### Hospitality

*Letter Writing Ministry*

Several people in our church have been faithfully writing notes and letters to others to show our Christian Love. We would like to expand this program to more people. We will be writing to provide spiritual support for those in the congregation and to advocate for peace and justice issues identified by the Presbyterian Church USA.

Interested in this work? Contact **Bob Kirby** at [rwk3213@gmail.com](mailto:rwk3213@gmail.com)



**Bill Gamble and Gene Morgan** prepare gourmet scrambled eggs and hashbrowns for men's Tuesday bible study. Join us in Centennial Hall at 6:00 am to cook or 7:00 to eat and learn.

### Membership

Church pictorial directories have arrived!!!!!!!

Please pick up your Pictorial Directory at the Welcome Center beginning June 9. One directory will be available per family.

Someone at the center will note that you have picked up your directory.

## Nurturing

### Membership, Fellowship,

### Hospitality

BY GARY PETERSON, CHAIR  
[AMER\\_SWEDE@YAHOO.COM](mailto:AMER_SWEDE@YAHOO.COM)

### Fellowship

*International Taste of First Pres...June 23*  
Our church is very excited to once again host a variety of food with different flavors

## Men's Ministries

Presbyterian men pray together in the chapel on Fridays at 8:30 AM. Breakfast Bible Studies are offered Tuesdays at 7 AM and Thursdays at 7:30 AM.

# 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 May, the preschool studied ‘I take care of the Earth’ and the elementary classes learned the story of Peter and John healing a lame man. The last day of Sunday school for the academic year was May 12.



**Mark & Kathy Schoeffmann near the mulched area with sunflowers.**

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries would like to thank the following disciple builders 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.**

‘Bee’ sure to drop by the office and pick up a token of our thanks from the basket on Patty’s desk if you missed our thank you in worship on May 12.

On May 19, the Earth Care Sunday for our congregation, the children helped plant sunflowers in the mulched area just south of the sanctuary. Great big thanks to **Kathy and Mark Schoeffmann** who organized the seed plan and **Rachel Matthews** who helped escort the group of kids back

and forth. Many thanks to **Brandi Lowe, Noni Ledford, Noni’s friend, Jason Lowe, Naomi Rempe** for manning the exploratory stations in the café. The kids had a great time making corn plastic out of cornstarch and corn oil, making buttons, and playing with cornstarch based packing peanuts.

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. We will be transforming the chapel into an airport!

We had 8 youth and 6 adults travel to Taylorville on June 1st to assist with long term tornado recovery efforts after the December 1, 2018 tornado that struck the town. **Lizz Pippin,**

**Sabrina Hwu, Mindy Watts-Ellis, Dave McNattin, Dave Bauer, and Itch Jones** accompanied **Plamedi Lembelembe, Carter and Heather Lowe, Monique Masengu, Vasele and Fortunel Nana, Miriam Tutu, and Goelle Mboyo.** We worked to repair the garage of homeowner Randy by removing damaged siding, replacing a door, and preparing the surfaces for new siding. The team also worked hard to pick up scattered debris on the property located opposite the homeowner and placing it by the road for the city to remove. We enjoyed the hospitality of the First Presbyterian Church of Taylorville, a fellow church of our presbytery, that helped coordinate our efforts with Missions of Taylorville.

Many thanks to our environmental stewardship team for moving the adopt-a-highway time to 10 am to facilitate youth participation. We had three young people join the usual crew to help clean up our church campus and neighborhood street. The donuts and juice were a nice reward for a job well done!

### Youth Group

Thank you to everyone who has donated their time and money to our fundraisers for Triennium. We are excited to go and



**2019 Grad Celebration**

looking forward to the work of the Holy Spirit while we are there.



In May we wrapped up our Sunday School and Youth Group Year. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with our middle school and high school youth this past year. **Dionne Gooden, Celeste Kim, Thethe Kidimbu, Rachel Matthews, Matt Matthews, Sabrina Hwu, Jay Geistlinger, and Judi Geistlinger.** Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to our young people.



I would also like to thank Presbyterian Women, especially **Nancy Brombaugh, Diane Mortensen** and their work with the graduate reception. We had four students graduate **Jack Born, Destin Lembelembe, Rick Loma, and Grace Rispoli.** We were also honored to have **Molly McCranner** join us for the reception. It has been a pleasure to get to know our graduates over the past couple of years I have been working with the youth. I

especially got to know Rick and Destin on our 2017 trip to Hammond, LA; where we worked side by side to help families in flood recovery efforts. I am excited to see where this next chapter leads them in their faith journeys. Best wishes to all the 2019 graduates!

We are now looking ahead to the summer where we have a full schedule with a Stay and Serve event where we will partner with Mission Possible and go to Taylorville, IL to help in the tornado recovery efforts from the December 2018 tornado on June 2. We will also be helping the Environmental Committee at their June 8 Adopt-a-Highway pick up. June 12<sup>th</sup> there is a cookout at the Matthews for the students going to Triennium. As well as some summer fellowship for the high schoolers at Crystal Lake Pool on Tuesday, June 25 at 4:30 PM.

If you would like to get involved with our youth programming either as a helper or teacher on Sunday morning, a leader for youth group on Sunday night, help provide dinners for Sunday night youth group, or help with transportation let **Lizz Pippin** know! She can be reached by phone at 314-620-5901 or by email at [lizz@firstpres.church](mailto:lizz@firstpres.church).



## Neighbors Near and Far Vacation Bible School

June 9, 16, 23, 30  
1-3:30 PM  
for grades K-5

Jesus tells us to love our neighbors. Come learn more about how God wants us to treat our neighbors while learning about neighbors from Cuba, Indonesia, Malawi, and Pakistan.

There will be special guests, crafts, games, storytelling, snacks and more. Come on an adventure with us!

Register online at [www.firstpres.church](http://www.firstpres.church) or contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at [mindy@firstpres.church](mailto:mindy@firstpres.church). \$20 suggested donation per child with \$45 maximum per family.

# Finance

## Financial Update

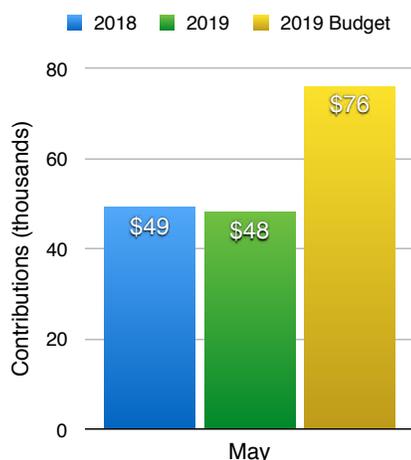
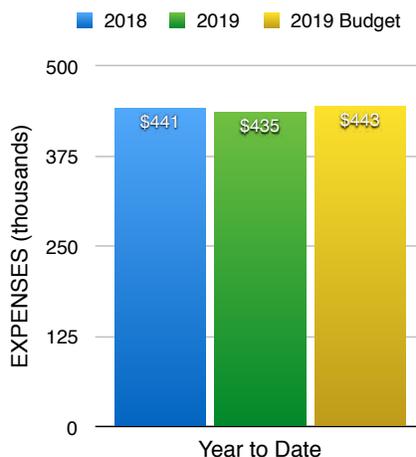
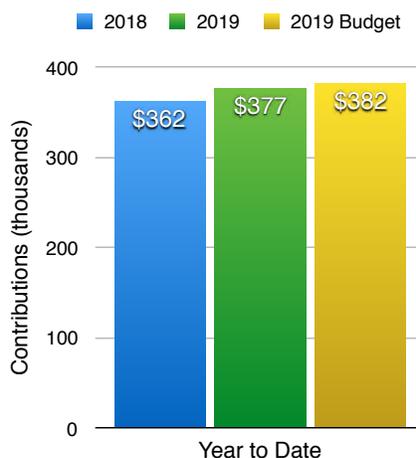
BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE  
MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

### Contributions

Contributions in May were \$1K less than in 2018 and \$28K below the budget at \$48K. The Year to Date total is above last year by \$15K but below the budgeted amount by \$5K. 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 41.7% through the year, we have received 46.4% of the expected 2019 revenue.

### Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$8K below the budget at \$435K and \$6K below 2018. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$43K which is \$9K less than at the end of May in 2018. This figure includes \$32K less in prepaid pledges than in 2018. At 41.7% through the year we have experienced 41.0% of the expected 2019 expenses.



## Southwest Farm Sale Update

The sale of a portion of our church's farm property at the corner of Curtis Road and Learning Lane is expected to be completed this month. This has been a long process involving the City of Champaign's review and approval but will result in an approximately 9 1/2 acre portion of our land being sold to Copper Creek Church for the construction of their building. Approval of the sale of this portion was granted by our congregation in 2017.

Part of the City approval process was the required preparation of legal plats and plans detailing the subdivision of our property and showing that the remaining parcel, that we retain ownership of, can

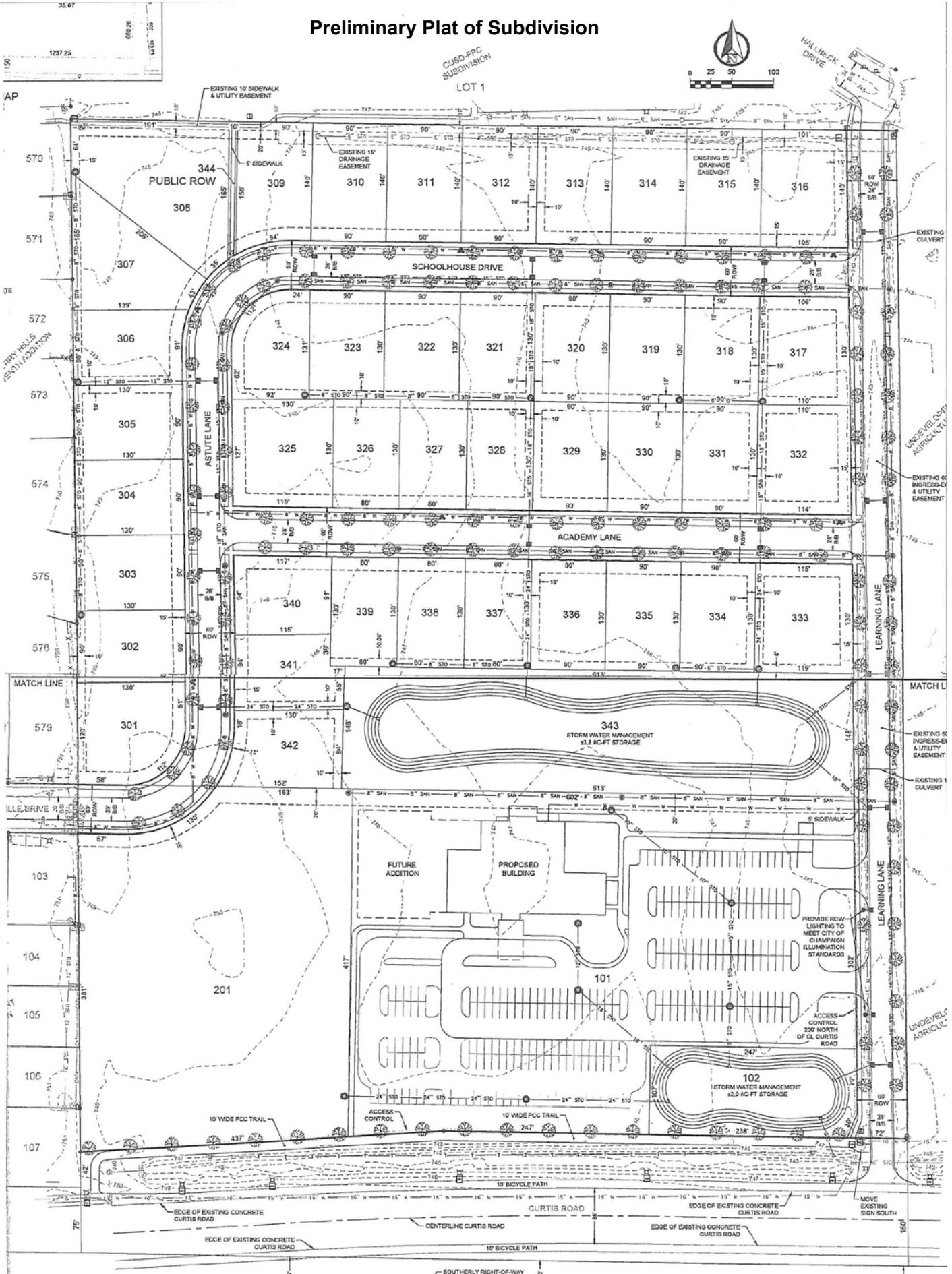
be developed to City standards, consistent with current zoning. The resulting plans prepared by the engineers for Copper Creek indicate that a 42 lot single family subdivision could be built to City standards on our remaining property. We are not required to develop the land in this way, but the City requires that a plan indicating an acceptable development on the subdivided lots be prepared. A scanned copy of the approved Preliminary Plat is included with this Newsletter (see following page). A larger version will be available for viewing in Westminster Hall.

A few weeks ago, an article in the *News-Gazette* described the City's Plan Commission approval of this document. The final approval was given by the Champaign City Council on May 21. All costs related to the engineering and legal work necessary to obtain this approval were paid by Copper Creek Church in accordance with our agreement. Any costs related to their building construction will also be borne by Copper Creek Church including utility and roadway construction required by the City.

The sale to Copper Creek Church will be in the amount of approximately \$570,000. The use of these funds has not yet been identified but will be determined by the Session.

Any questions regarding this sale can be directed to **Mark Schoeffmann**, Finance Chair.

Preliminary Plat of Subdivision





## Pray for Government Leaders

What can we do daily that has a positive effect on government leaders?

In First Timothy 2:1-2 God says, "I urge then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." Because God is all powerful we can pray for him to guide our leaders in their decisions and to protect them from destructive influences. Then we need to thank God for all the things he will do.

Christians must be people who spend time praying for government leaders.

## A Prayer-Filled Thanks!

**Midge Miller** has stepped down as chair of Prayer Ministry Team after almost ten years. This is her last prayer article. We thank Midge for her timely pieces that encouraged us to pray on a daily basis.

## Presbyterian Women’s Missions

**Refuge Center’s Children’s Corner:** Since the Refuge Center moved to their new location in Champaign Urbana Public Health District building in March 2019, PW Mission has worked to create a "Kids Corner."

Furniture, books, and wall decorations have been assembled to create a comfortable place for children when they visit the Center.

**Layettes:** Once again, PW is collecting items for the layette project for *empty tomb*. Your donations of new baby clothes and/or cash to purchase these items are much appreciated. Please leave your donations in the basket in the mission closet. Thank you.

Needed most at this time are the following:

- Undershirts/onesies 3 mo.-6 mo.
- Socks or booties
- Sleepers 3 mo.-6 mo.
- Bibs
- Receiving blankets
- Small infant toys & accessories
- Cash

## Jays & Concerns

*Congratulations to...*

- **the 2019 graduates.**

*Prayers for...*

- **Audrey Mfulama** who will be attending the Lux Summer Theological Institute for Youth June 16-30 at Monmouth College.

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

- **Don Fischer** who died June 2, 2019. A Memorial Service will be held Thursday, June 13, at 2 PM at the church.
- **Joe Garza** who died May 16, 2019.
- **Shirley Rittenhouse** who died May 17, 2019.

# Mission Updates

## Mission News

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS, INTERIM MISSION

COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

### Environmental – Green Team

#### *Solar Energy and You*

Grow Solar Urbana/Champaign is back! Offered by the Midwest Renewable Energy Association and community partners like Faith in Place, this program enables residents and business owners to secure significant discounts when installing solar. It is open to residents and businesses in Champaign and Piatt Counties, no matter which city or town.

All Solar Power Hours are free and open to the public. This free session teaches you the basics of solar. The dates and times for these sessions are:

June 4 - 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Anita Purves Nature Center  
1505 N. Broadway Ave., Urbana

June 6 - 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Habitat for Humanity  
119 E University Ave., Champaign

June 11 - 6:30 - 7:30 PM

UC Independent Media Center  
202 S. Broadway Suite 166, Urbana

June 13 - 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Sinai Temple  
104 Windsor Rd., Champaign

June 18 - 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Common Ground Food Co-op  
300 S. Broadway Suite 166, Urbana

June 22 - 2:00-3:00 PM

Muslim American Society  
2011 Brownfield Rd, Urbana

For more information, go to the web-site:  
<https://www.growsolar.org/solar-urbana-champaign/>

## ESL Program Update

BY JEANETTE PYNE, ESL COORDINATOR

JEANETTE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

### Wednesday Night Class

This semester the First Pres ESL Program piloted its first weekly night class. All of the students are beginners. On average, we had about 4-6 students attend each week with about 2-3 students per volunteer teacher. The students were a mix of immigrants and international visitors coming from Brazil, Cameroon, China, Guatemala, and Mexico. Due to the ESL Director's maternity leave, the ESL Advisory Committee decided to suspend the Wednesday night during the summer while considering whether or not to continue offering it in the Fall semester. We have seen that there is a need among the Spanish-speaking community for ESL night classes, and we would like to explore whether or not First Pres can fulfill this need in the future.

### End of the Year Parties

What better way to end the Spring semester than with a couple of parties? This May we celebrated our volunteer teachers and our graduates. We had a Teacher's Appreciation Party on May 21st, which was a potluck party. The students brought all sorts of wonderful food from their home countries, which we devoured eagerly. We played a fun quiz called "Baby Picture Quiz". The teachers had submitted their baby pictures to me, and I created a quiz where the students need to guess which baby picture belonged to which teacher. It was so entertaining. After

the "Baby Picture Quiz", the students and I passed out gifts to the teachers to thank them for volunteering with the First Pres ESL Program.

The volunteer teachers are essential to the First Pres ESL Program. Without them, the program would not exist. The students and I are so grateful that this wonderful program is made possible through the service of the volunteer teachers. Here is a list of the 20+ volunteer teachers that made this program possible this year: **Anne Mankin, Bonnie Ward, Chris Lukeman, Christie Roszkowski, Donna Reed, Eugenia Fitzgerald, Kathy Schoeffmann, Kim File, Linda Hemminger, Linda Sims, Lois Wilken, Mark Schoeffman, Mary Ellen Dorner, Michele Neill, Mike Havey, Miriam Chenault, Ron Baker, Russ Hanegan, Ruth Chung, Sharon Scott, Vern Snoeyink, and Xavier Traenkenschuch.**



From left to right: Christie (tutor), Pamella (volunteer assistant), Ouauel, Fang, Xavier (tutor), Hilda, Micaela, Vania.

On May 22, we had a graduation party for students who are leaving to either go back to their home country or to another part of the world. We do this every semester to celebrate the accomplishments of the students by passing out graduation certificates. It is a bittersweet party because we're so excited that these students are moving on to bigger and better things, but

sad to see them go.



Three of our students who graduated this semester. They are holding their graduation certificates. From left to right: Sayaka, Marcia, and Diem

It is a tradition that at every graduation party **Mike Havey** leads us in a farewell song called “We’ll Meet Again”. One of the verses summarizes well how we feel about students leaving the program:

*We'll meet again  
 Don't know where  
 Don't know when  
 But I know we'll meet again some sunny day  
 Keep smiling through  
 Just like you always do  
 'Till the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away...*

I told the students that this is not “good-bye”, but “see you later” and encouraged them to stay in touch with their ESL family.

**Prayer Requests/Praises**

Praise the Lord because he has provided enough volunteer teachers and assistants for the summer while Jeanette, the ESL Director, takes reduced hours for her maternity leave.

Pray that the Lord would give Jeanette, the ESL Director, and ESL Advisory Committee wisdom on how to proceed with the Wednesday night class in the Fall semester.



MISSION POSSIBLE 2019 – CAMP CAREW

May 13 – 17





**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@firstpres.church](mailto:info@firstpres.church)

[www.firstpres.church](http://www.firstpres.church)

**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 Drennen .....Facility Manager, Ext. 237

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

Robert Ferrer..... Audio-visual Technician

Marcia Franks .....Administrative Assistant, Ext. 210

Joe Grant .....Director of Music

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

Blaise Pascal .....CYF Connections Assistant, Ext. 216

Ann Petry ..... Accounting, Ext. 224

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

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

Richard Rossi..... Church Musician

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

All staff email addresses are the person's first name followed by  
[@firstpres.church](mailto:info@firstpres.church). For example, [eric@firstpres.church](mailto: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](mailto:marcia@firstpres.church).**