

# August 2019



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN



### **A Report From the Field: Worship at San Gabriel Presbyterian Church (Georgetown, TX) While on Vacation, Sunday, July 28, 2019**

BY MATT MATTHEWS  
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I love Sunday mornings sitting in a pew in the moments before worship. My pew wasn't a pew this week, and the vibe's a little different without an actual pew, but it's close enough. My amply padded chair sat in a long arch of chairs that sliced across a room the length of a roller rink. The architect may, indeed, have had a multipurpose room in mind when he devised these plans, but nixed them when he discovered this community was known for its retirement homes not young families seeking a place to play church league basketball.

Up front behind the chancel, upon the cactus colored walls, hung a rough-hewn cedar cross crafted by an area artist, a stunning and possibly accurate connection to the surrounding hill country dotted with such windblown trees.

At the ends of the room, Jesus' life shone through two bright, colored stained-glass windows. The faces of the characters, however, represented nothing of the diversity of the wider Austin community much less the family of God. On one wall, the children gathered around a smiling Jesus look veritably Scandinavian, perhaps the children of IKEA engineers. And baby Jesus on the opposite wall is the old-school baby on the Gerber baby-food jar; his mom is an Italian film star. At least the choice of wood fit, I thought. Too bad the windows are so astonishingly unrepresentative.

Regardless of the pale faces, the windows are colorful, otherwise, and primary hues warmed the room. So, too, did the pianist's haunting and well-played rift on Amazing Grace, whose lyric was written, need I say it, by a former slave trader.

Our gathering song, *In Christ Alone*, was led joyfully from the chancel by three good singers and the congregation seemed to sing along, never mind the cavernous space that swallowed their sound. The man sitting behind me, a minister's son, sang great harmony; I felt like a rock star singing near him. The lyrics oozed into cringe-worthy 'Me Theology' about how I am 'his' and Jesus is 'mine,' which sounds a little like bragging to me. Confidence, I realize, often may be construed as arrogance. I like more humility and gratitude, mystery and awe in my hymns. Further, to claim Jesus as "mine" feels too exclusive nomenclature to describe the one who came to heal the whole world. Additionally, there was a lot

**continued on the next page**

Please join us Sunday, August 11, 2019 for

## Sholem Fest

6 PM Picnic at Centennial Park  
8 PM Swimming at Sholem Pool

Main dish provided.

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.  
Bring lawn chairs!

of Jesus' blood in this song, satisfying the wrath of a just (?) God. Despite its singability, the lyrics troubled me.

*What A Friend We Have In Jesus*—that old chestnut of an opening hymn—continued the 'me' theme by reducing the sovereign God to offering me personal solace. This is true, of course, but might sound snarky to the curious worshipper who might have slipped in to check out the Presbyterian tribe. I feel completely part of the insiders' club, but I like worship that feels, well, bigger and less exclusive. As we sang, I prayed that all would feel the friendship of God in Jesus, which is why I choose this song, with reservation, from time to time when crafting services of worship.

The excellent prayer of confession—printed for all of us to read together—was the first place my "neighbors" were mentioned and I was glad to be led in a prayer that beseeched God to help me become a better neighbor to all people. This piece of the liturgy was probably lifted out of a prayer book, which lent a feeling of familiarity and timelessness. Barbara Brown Taylor once said that if we preach something new, we are probably wrong—because we preach from a tradition. I am a traditionalist in this sense.

The passing of the peace was a friendly time to wander round and shake hands with immediate neighbors who seemed glad, not obligated, to share the peace of Christ. I was glad the regulars didn't ignore me to shake the hands of their friends. I was treated like a charter member.

*How Great Thou Art* offered as a solo after the reading of the Psalm caused me to glance around to make sure I wasn't in a revival tent. Yes, God is great, and this cloying hymn's solid theology underscores that greatness, but I found myself hungering for more refreshing hymnody with which our new hymnal is chock full.

A line of children were led into worship for the deftly crafted Children's sermon. Joyce Gill spoke easily with the children

who were variously in left field but generally polite. She used knock-knock jokes (who's there?) cleverly to remind us that God is always there. It was blessedly brief and focused (when you pray, God's always there listening), and the children were glad to be released and lined up to be marched back out to Sunday school rooms.

I was sorry to see the children go, as a vitality left the room with them. I believe worship is something we do together, and to leave out the children feels wrong. I looked to my left at the window of Jesus welcoming the children and thought he'd agree. We belong together when we pray and praise, and kids only grow into the adult-ish parts of worship when they can practice it over years. And, frankly, because what we do in worship is so absolutely counter cultural, they need all the practice they can get. We all do.

We remaining adults were treated to a well-delivered, thoughtfully prepared sermon that had a beginning, middle, and end. Since I don't get to hear preachers preach often, I relish such opportunities. Bill Peterson seemed more focused on his flock than his notes; sometimes I feel like the preacher is simply reading a manuscript where I can overhear it, instead of talking to me.

I would have preferred the reverend using less 'father' language for God and more parent, creator, and mother-father language. Again, I was thinking about those first-time visitors unfamiliar with the landscape of Reformed worship who might be weirded out by the idea that God is the bearded, old man living in clouds. We all know the God of the cosmos doesn't have genitalia. Since this is true, why do we insist on using mainly gender specific language? (I am often guilty of this lapse.)

I don't mean to split hairs. It simply would have been a shame had a congregant tuned-out an otherwise solid sermon because it used genderized, off-putting language. (Brian Wren's rephrasing of the Doxology used later in response to the offering was a perfect example of how

language about God can be Biblical, fresh, and expansive, eschewing gender specificity. There's a wide array of words to talk about God.)

The pastor led the whole service in a vital, caring manner. He was smooth in a non-slippery way. He seemed an authentic shepherd grateful to be with his flock. I liked being with him. What I'm talking about is 'trust,' and what I felt led me to a feeling that I was in a safe place and the church wasn't selling snake oil. If I were to return, I would need to meet pastor and people face to face and get to know them. Ginny Barksdale opined that ministry is relationship, relationship, relationship, and I have always believed her. This service of worship and the pastor's leadership was a good introduction.

The final hymn—a paraphrase of words attributed to St. Francis of Assisi—reminded me that it's not all about me. Make me an instrument of God's peace so that others may experience God's grace. I was encouraged to be selfless in the manner of Jesus. That was a pretty cool, outwardly-thinking way to be sent out into the world hungry for God's Good News and joy.

—Matt Matthews

## Illinois Conference of Churches Supports Recent Statements from National Council of Churches

*The Leadership Team of the Illinois Conference of Churches has signed onto to the following statement from the National Council of Churches. The ICC is the ecumenical body of the state of Illinois with 13 member Christian denominations.*

The National Council of Churches opposes the Justice Department's decision to reinstate the federal death penalty and to schedule the execution of five persons. We affirm our longstanding view that the

death penalty is both a violation of the dignity and worth of human beings and has also proven to be ineffective as a deterrent (see the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Social Creed and our statement of September 13, 1968).

Additionally, the pervasiveness of systemic racism and classism intrinsic within the criminal legal process means the death penalty is neither fair nor just. In fact, we know that hundreds of people who have been sentenced to death — or actually executed by the state — have been determined to be innocent. In a time when states are ceasing this abominable practice, it is abhorrent that the federal government would seek to revive it.

Our Christian faith is clear that life and the dignity of human personhood are sacred gifts of God and as such shall not be violated.

Institutionalized killing contributes to the brutalization of society. Such a final and heinous decision should not be left to the discretion of flawed humans and broken systems. Furthermore, society is served better by a system of restorative justice: as all are made in the image of God, we stand firm in our belief as Christians that all can be redeemed.

Learn more at:  
[www.illinoisconferenceofchurches.org](http://www.illinoisconferenceofchurches.org)

*The Illinois Conference of Churches adopted the following statement of the National Council of Churches. May it guide our prayers.*

“Thus says the Lord of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.” *Zechariah 7:9-10 NRSV*

The National Council of Churches urges the Trump administration not to go forward with the widely publicized raids that are intended to round up and deport thousands of families and individuals. Indeed, these raids may very well take place while millions of Christians are attending Sunday services. The raids have struck fear and dread into the hearts of count-

less people who are living peaceful and productive lives in our nation.

These unnecessary acts of “enforcement” terrorize children, women, and men who live in our communities. It is unconscionable and immoral. We see these threatened deportations as part of a program of extreme intimidation and harm, and we urge the U.S. government not to move ahead with these raids.

This is a moment in which God is calling the Church to do all it can to stand with those who have sought refuge within our borders and to resist these measures and show compassion toward persons threatened with deportation. Many of the congregations associated with the NCC are praying for those impacted and are prepared to act in ways that protect threatened persons.

Since the earliest times in which Christians gathered together, churches have been places of sanctuary in which persons in danger of harm from an oppressive government can find safety and protection. We urge all churches to be places of sanctuary for those in danger today.

People of faith cannot turn a blind eye this weekend and we must rely upon the strength of God, revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, to accept the freedom and power to resist evil, injustice, and oppression.

To learn more about the sanctuary movement: <https://www.sanctuarynotdeportation.org>. For those facing raids, we are reminded of our scriptures which teach us:

O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you,  
 and accomplished for those who take refuge in you,  
 in the sight of everyone!  
 In the shelter of your presence you hide them  
 from human plots;  
 you hold them safe under your shelter  
 from contentious tongues.

*-Psalm 31:19-20 NRSV*

## Worship Change Coming September 1

Some 20 years ago, our Session elected to hold a third service (beyond the 9 and 10:30 services) due to space constraints at the 9 AM service. The 8 AM service was born, with a contemplative feel and limited music.

Recently, several long-time “regulars” at the 8 AM service came to the Worship Committee to suggest we fold the 8 AM service into the 9 AM service. They noted that at a recent joint service of worship how the energy level was higher and our potential of church growth was greater when we are together. They feared our lower attendance numbers at both the 8 AM and 9 AM service sometimes felt anemic and didn’t accurately reveal to visitors and potential new members the true vitality of our congregation.

The Worship Committee after lengthy discussion concurs and recommended to Session for an extended evaluation of combining our energies into one traditional service at 9 AM, with coffee hour and Sunday School for all ages following, then The Gathering Contemporary service at 11:15. Our first Sunday together will be September 1, 2019.

Several of us on the Worship Committee attend the 8 AM service and have loved it. I personally love the piano music that Richard Rossi brings and am asking that this be included in the 9 AM service on a regular rotation.

We do understand that worship time changes do alter people’s schedules and routines. Some of you, we know, have Sunday jobs. Change is nearly never fun. We feel the energy and power in numbers will bring a new and renewed vitality to worship that will be well worth the effort, and encourage congregational growth.

Join me, please, in praying that God will continue to guide our steps.

In His Service,

Judi Geistlinger, Moderator,  
 Worship Committee  
 on behalf of the Session

# Congregational Life

## Face to Face



Ron & Lucia Deering

*Focus on being disciples both within the congregation and outside it.*

### What brought you to First Presbyterian?

Ron and family moved to Champaign from Louisville, KY to join Christie Clinic. They were Presbyterians looking for a church. On recommendations from new friends they attended services at First Presbyterian and decided to join the congregation. Lucia grew up Romanian Eastern Orthodox. She enjoys attending services and being part of First Presbyterian along side Ron.

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

Our marriage at Hope Presbyterian in Springfield is one of our highlights. Ron enjoyed very much chairing the Community Mission Deacons Committee and the opportunity to interact with various organizations like Jesus Is The Way Prison Ministry and *empty tomb* to name a few.

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

We are both retired. Lucia has been in the profession of pharmacy and Ron in pediatrics and medical administration. This is the second marriage for both of us. We share a total of four grown children and nine grandchildren.

### What do you do in your free time?

We are enjoying opportunities to volunteer in various community organizations such as Soup Kitchen by Lucia and prairie restoration as an East Central Illinois Master Naturalist. We have fun going to Krannert Center, Virginia Theater, attending college sports and getting together with our friends. We like to travel to see new places and family as much as we can. Also we take advantage of the wonderful courses offered by OLLI.

### What advice can you give the church on how to do church?

Always focus on being disciples within and outside our own congregation, tending to our flock and those beyond. Provide opportunities for service and fellowship. Work on communication.

### Who is your favorite bible character?

Mary Magdalene ( Lucia). She was courageous and compassionate and the most loyal of disciples. She was there at the crucifixion, empty tomb and resurrection. While others were hiding in fear, she was there.

Ron serves on session with liaison responsibility to Adult Spiritual Formation.

## Music at First Pres

While the choir is on their August “vacation,” plans are underway for the upcoming fall. One immediate need is to fill the position of Children’s Choir Director. With Pierre’s departure that position is open and waiting for just the right applicant. If you, or someone you know have the skills and personality for this lively group, please inform them of the position.

The choir meets on Sunday morning from 11-11:30 AM immediately following Sunday School. Anyone interested should contact **Joe Grant** at joegrant@illinois.edu or joe@firstpres.church. For a

complete job description, visit the church website at <https://www.firstpres.church/childrens-choir-director/>

## Adult Education

The Spiritual Formation Team is grateful to **Pat Phillips** for presenting the TED Talks and to **Joe Grant, Richard Rossi,** and **Leslie Thomas** for the Hymn Sings.

Adult Education Classes will also be “on hiatus” for the month of August. We will return in September with Peter Yau’s “Faith in the Real World” Guest Lecture series back by popular demand.

Watch the bulletins for updates. If you have a suggestion for a book study or any other type of adult education class, please contact **Betty Hollister** (b.holl@mediacombb.net)

## Nurture

### Fellowship, Hospitality,

### Membership

BY GARY PETERSON, CHAIR

AMER\_SWEDE@YAHOO.COM

### Church events in August. See you there!

Sunday, August 11  
Fellowship – Sholem Fest  
Church Picnic and Swim Party

Come join us for our annual picnic in the Centennial Park Pavilion and swim party at the Sholem Aquatic Center. Bring a covered dish or dessert as the festivities begin at 6 PM with fried chicken and hot dogs being furnished by the Fellowship Committee. We will also furnish lemonade and ice water plus have plates, napkins and service ware available. At 8 PM the Hospitality Committee has rented the Sholem Pool for a private pool party for

all to enjoy. Come and swim or stay and watch until 10 PM. Please provide your own towels. Bring lawn chairs!

Friday, August 16 and  
Saturday, August 17  
Hospitality – Taste of C-U in  
West Side Park

This year we will again show our hospitality by having a booth at the Taste of C-U in West Side Park. Sign up sheets will be available at the Welcome Center beginning Sunday, August 11. Please consider signing up for a two- hour shift either Friday from 4-10 PM or Saturday from 11 AM until 9 PM. In the past this has been a great way to introduce our church to the community and showcase our missions.

Membership – New Members

In July we welcomed four regular attendees into Membership. Please welcome **Rosalie Balanda, Rachel Rose, Gabriel Mboyo and Solange Bosomba**. Please consider inviting a neighbor or friend to one of our church services.

Saturday September 28. **Senior High “Youth Club” Alumni** (1965-1985) are having a reunion! We’re meeting for dinner at 5 PM in The Café (the old 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Youth Lounge), then walking over to the Bob Nutt Memorial Concert at The Virginia Theatre. This concert is being underwritten by First Pres. Learn more about the concert at Facebook/bobnuttconcert. Tickets for the concert must be purchased through the Virginia Theatre box office (\$15 and \$25). **Carol Arnould** is the registrar for the Youth Club event (caarnould@yahoo.com). Please notify her if you plan to attend and/or want learn more about the reunion. When you respond provide her with your email. Please spread the word and reserve your place at this event.

# Finance

## Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE  
MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

### Contributions

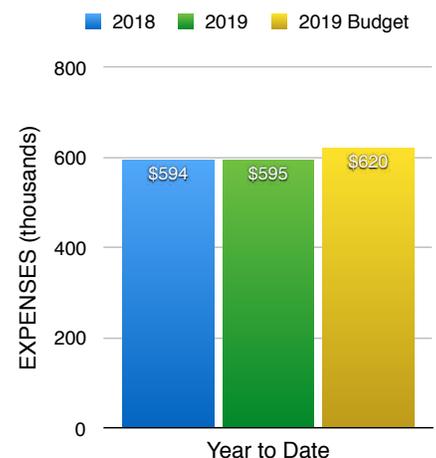
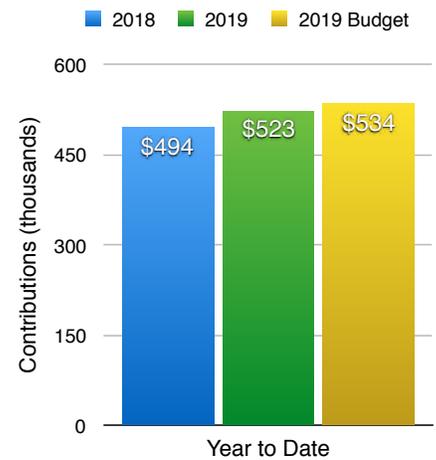
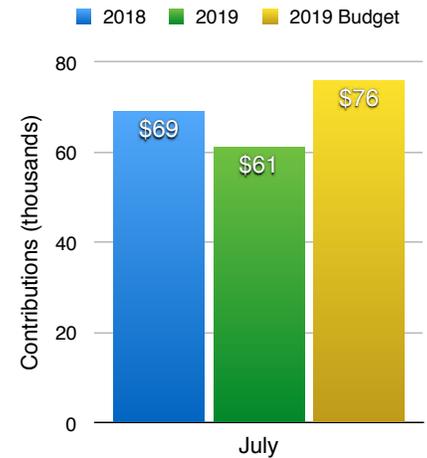
Contributions in July were \$8K less than in 2018 and \$15K below the budget at \$61K. The Year to Date total is above last year by \$29K but below the budgeted amount by \$11K. These figures include prepaid pledges (those paid in the year prior to the budget year) that are prorated over the year with 1/12 added to each month’s contributions. Including all revenue sources, at 58.3% through the year, we have received 61.1% of the expected 2019 revenue.

### Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$25K below the budget at \$595K but \$1K above 2018. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$34K which is \$3K more than at the end of July in 2018. This figure includes \$32K less in prepaid pledges than in 2018. At 58.3% through the year we have experienced 56% of the expected 2019 expenses.

## Southwest Farm Property Sale Update

The sale of a 9.49 acre portion of our property in southwest Champaign, netting the Church \$567,848, was completed on July 11th. Construction of Copper Creek Church’s building on this site is underway. This completes the transaction approved by our congregation in 2017. Session will determine the use of these funds that have been placed in our investment account.



## Nomination Committee Needs Your Input

The Congregation’s Nominating Committee invites your recommendations for the offices of Deacon (Community Mission Deacon and Congregational Care Deacon), and Elder (member of the Session)

Highlights of the responsibilities of each office follows. Please return this form to the church office (302 West Church, Champaign, IL 61820, place in the box in Westminster Hall, or drop in the offering plate.

Please feel free to recommend yourself and as many others as you wish.

Person(s) nominated:

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Recommended for (circle choice{s}) 3-year term

- Community Mission Deacon
- Congregational Care Deacon
- Elder (Session)

Helpful information about your recommendation, such as special skills, training, employment, community involvement.

Recommended by (optional):

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

All new officers are expected to participate in:

- Officer training
- Ordination and installation
- Serving of communion
- Attend monthly meetings
- Pray for the people and ministries of the church
- Attend church functions

### Community Mission Deacons (CMD)

- Assist FPC Champaign in the development of an on-going missions ministry within the C-U area
- Develop outreach priorities and budgets
- Serve as a FPCC liaison with one of our partnering agencies (2 hours/month)
- Interpret this partnership ministry to our congregation
- Participate in definition and implementation of CMD ministry at monthly meetings.
- Provide feedback to CMD regarding agency needs

### Congregational Care Deacons (CCD)

- Make monthly contact with a few assigned homebound members of the church
- Participate in at-home and residential facility communion services with pastors quarterly
- Provide mutual support for one another and participate in continuing education opportunities
- Send cards to acknowledge significant occasions

### Session/Elders

This governing body of the church establishes and administers policies for the First Presbyterian Church of Champaign. The Session meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7 PM for about 90 minutes.

- Responsible for congregational spiritual growth and strategic planning
- Elders chair a team of the church, which meets monthly. (Requires approximately 2 hours/month)

# Children, Youth & Family

## Children, Youth & Family Update

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR OF CYF  
mindy@firstpres.church

### Presbyterian Youth Triennium

Our youth attended the Youth Triennium at Purdue University July 16-20. Adult leaders were **Mindy Watts-Ellis, Matt Matthews, and Rachel Matthews**. Youth attending from our church were **Carter Lowe, Destin Lembeleme, Emilio Kabakele, Audrey Mfulama, Miriam Tutu, Sephora Mayele, and Kenny Mayele**. **Isaac Ellis** from First Presbyterian Church in Urbana also joined our group. There were a total of 32 people from our presbytery of Southeastern Illinois delegation. **Keith Harris** from McKinley Presbyterian Church was our delegation leader. We gave a presentation in worship on July 21 at the 9 AM service. If you missed out, the written version of the shared message is available on the church website. The livestream of the 9 AM service is also available on the church website at Worship July 21. The videos that were shared can be viewed through the website as well, the Triennium promotion video Triennium Promo video and the video created by me of our delegation. Many thanks to all who supported the fundraising efforts of these youth. You made this experience possible!

### Baptism

We welcomed a new little one into our fold Sunday August 4, 2019 at the 9 AM worship service. **Believe Nkunku** was baptized. Be sure to welcome Believe and greet her family.

### Family Fellowship

Don't forget to attend Sholem Fest August 11! See the promo with more details in this newsletter. The picnic is first, followed by some free time for games, and topped off with swim time in the pool! Invite your friends.

### School is Coming

The school year is fast approaching! If your family needs help in obtaining school supplies for this fall, sign up for the Free Wave Event hosted by Dream Girls Academy August 16 from 5-7 PM. Preregistration is required. Registered children will receive a backpack full of school supplies and be able to swim for free at the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center. Go on facebook to register at <https://www.facebook.com/events/597608177382820/>.

We will have a special prayer and blessing for those students returning to school in worship on August 11. Champaign schools begin August 15, Parkland College begins August 19, and Urbana begins August 22.

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries needs your HELP!!! Our academic year is about to start, and with it begins our Sunday School and youth programs. We have many children eager to return to learn God's word while participating in fun activities, but we can't have programs without adult volunteer leaders. We need teachers, helpers, door greeters, and youth group leaders. Please contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at [mindy@firstpres.church](mailto:mindy@firstpres.church) if you are interested in being part of our ministry team to these vibrant young people. Our first training will be held August 25 from 10-11 AM in the chapel.

### Employment Opportunity

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries is seeking three part-time child care workers to serve in the nursery and toddler rooms for Sunday mornings to begin in August. All applicants must be legally eligible to work in the United States, fill out an application for employment, and supply the names and contact information of two references. Potential employees must consent to a background check. Inquiries can be made to **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at [mindy@firstpres.church](mailto:mindy@firstpres.church). We are still accepting applications until all positions are filled.

### Youth Group

LIZZ PIPPIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
[LIZZ@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH](mailto:LIZZ@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH)

Thank you to everyone who helped make Triennium awesome! I am sorry to have missed this event, as I was on my own adventure in Cuba that you can read more about in the newsletter. I have heard so many stories about small groups and worship events. I hope you enjoyed the report of the trip the Sunday after they returned. I would also encourage you to talk with our teens who went. They would love to tell you their stories.

While Triennium was a big event for us; it wasn't the only activity we did in July. Earlier in the month the middle schoolers had their opportunity to fellowship together at the pool. Eight of our middle schoolers gathers for an evening of swimming and fellowship. In this coming month we are planning to say "see you later" to our graduated seniors as they get ready for college. We are happy that a couple of them will be close by with us in town and excited for those that are going further away for their new experiences. Please, pray for these students as they begin a new adventure.

The youth are also looking forward to helping First Presbyterian Church in Urbana to help their Twice is Nice Thrift shop set up for its annual garage sale followed by Taste of C-U. Hope to see you all there!

If you would like to be involved with the Sunday evening youth group as we prepare for it to start in September let me know! I can be reached by email at [lizz@firstpres.church](mailto:lizz@firstpres.church) or by phone at 314-620-5901.



**Psalm 11:1:  
Lord, teach me to pray.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:17:  
Pray without ceasing.**

**Prayer is the exercise of drawing on the Grace of God. The Bible idea of prayer is that we get to know God, Himself. In prayer, we are talking and listening to God, knowing that we are in His hands.**

## Thank You!

The following is from Audrey Mfulama thanking the congregation for sending her to the Lux Theological Institute at Monmouth College this past June.

*Dear First Presbyterian Church,*

*Firstly, I would like to thank you for this wonderful opportunity you have given me to go and participate in the summer Lux Theological Institute for Youth. Thanks also to everyone that kept me in their prayers during those two weeks. I had the chance to learn about things that I didn't know before and also look at things in a different perspective. I had fun being surrounded with my peers and doing different activities like a poverty simulation challenge. In the poverty simulation challenge, we were divided into groups and everyone within the group had a role to serve. As a household living in poverty we were given a certain amount of money to survive the month, including having to pay endless bills. That experience made me realize how hard is it for families who live from paycheck to paycheck to be able to survive as sometimes they have to choose between paying the bills or going to bed hungry.*

*Throughout those two weeks I learned a lot about hunger and how it affects children's ability to perform well at school, and how it can have a big impact on their mental health, and I am so thankful for the opportunity.*

*Sincerely, Audrey*

## Jays & Concerns

*We rejoice with...*

- **Patricia Pukuta and Chris Nkumku** on the baptism of their daughter, **Believe M. Nkunku** on Sunday, August 4, 2019.

*Congratulations to...*

- **Jennifer Grill and Grant Vente** who will be married at the church on Saturday, August 10, 2019.

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

- **Larry Wingate** who died July 17, 2019. Mr. Wingate has been a member of the church since August 1993.

# Mission Updates

## Mission News

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS,

TEMPORARY MISSION COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Thank you's from our Mission Partners and Prayers for Mission Partners:

**Presbyterian Camp Carew** is grateful to First Presbyterian Church for a donation of \$668.75 and its continued support of the camping facilities for children, youth and adults of the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois.

Lisa C. Wilson, Executive Director of **The Refugee Center** thanks First Presbyterian Church for the generous donation of \$1000. So far this quarter they have assisted over 345 unduplicated individuals (59 families), 25 of which were totally new to the agency. The immigrant/refugee/asylee population continues to grow even as the state fiscal situation remains limited.

Annette Fisher, Mission Coordinator from **Lifeline Pilots** thanks First Presbyterian for the recent gift of \$267.50. The need for free air transportation in our region for children and adults with medical and humanitarian needs grows each year.

Michael A. Havera, Director of Development and Fundraising at **Kemmerer Village** thanks you for \$843.75 In addition to a summer enrichment program, "Today we are helping 30 children between the ages of 12 to 19 on our campus. We are also overseeing the care of almost 200 children in our Foster Care Program between infancy and age 21.... Your kindness and generosity are truly appreciated!"

**MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship)** would like to thank First Presbyterian Church for the recent donation of \$267.50

and would like us to remember the people of Mozambique as they continue to recover and rebuild after massive flooding brought on by Cyclone Idai back in March and Cyclone Kenneth in April. Remember Papuans in Sentani who lost homes and loved ones due to the flooding and landslides. Ask the Lord to draw more pilots and mechanics to serve on the mission field with MAF. Continue to pray about the Ebola outbreak in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Margie Trimble, Executive Director of the **Friends of PEB** in Pakistan thanks First Presbyterian Church for recently hosting Veda and for the commitment to the children of Pakistan. First Presbyterian Church donated \$1250 toward student scholarships during her visit.

Tom Logan, President of **Marion Medical Mission** thanks First Presbyterian for the recent donation of \$492.50. The Well Program in Malawi is self help program in which everything is purchased, made, and administered in Africa by Africans. The rural poor can know how to maintain and afford to maintain these wells.

Michael Ujcich, Development and Outreach Director of **Courage Connection** says, "Thank you for your congregation's unending support since 2011. Your prayers along with your financial support continue to ensure Courage Connection can continue to offer safety, support and success in our Community."

**Community Mission Deacons and Salt & Light** want to thank you to all who donated for Raindrop "Back to School" Project last month. We collected \$1714 for backpacks and school supplies as well as collected in-kind donations of 7 backpacks and a large basket full collection of

pencils, wipes, and other smaller school supplies.

### Calendar Highlights from our Community and World Mission Partners:

August 23, 6-8 PM, Jesus Is the Way Prison Ministry Fundraising Banquet, Laborer's International Union Hall, Champaign, IL  
First Presbyterian has a number of seats at the banquet to share if you would like to attend. Anything you donate during the dinner will go directly to Jesus is the Way mission. Contact **Steve Gritten**.

August 25, 3 PM, Canaan SAFE House Gospel Jazz Benefit: "Stronger Together" at Hessel Park, 1400 Grandview St., Champaign, IL

September 6, 2019 - Kemmerer Village Annual Charity Golf Outing, call 217-226-2130 to sponsor or play!

September 18, 5:30-6:30 PM Rosecrance Garden at Harrison in Rockford, IL; "Honoring Recovery" - an event to award academic scholarships and unveil the newly installed commemorative bricks. (Call 815-387-5608 to ask about commemorative bricks to honor a sober anniversary or pay tribute to a loved one.)

## Classes at Salt & Light

Salt & Light will be offering the following two classes during the month of September. Both are free and open to the public.

- Work Life**--a 6-session class that presents key principles for us to grasp God's plans for us, our unique skills and abilities, and find meaningful employment. This class covers how to search for a job, put together a resume, prepare for job interviews, and understand workplace expectations. It will meet Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 PM, September 5 – October 10, at Salt & Light Urbana. Sign up to attend at [www.saltandlightministry.org](http://www.saltandlightministry.org), or come in to our Computer Technology Lab for assistance.

- Computer Basics**--a one-hour class that covers basic everyday computer usage, including how to use a keyboard and mouse, navigating the internet, and using email. There will be two identical sessions of this class, one on Thursday, September 5 and one on Thursday, September 19, both 6:30 - 7:30 PM, in the Computer Technology Lab at Salt & Light Urbana. Sign up to attend at [www.saltandlightministry.org](http://www.saltandlightministry.org), or come in to our Lab for assistance.

As always, the Computer Technology Labs at both locations are free and open for anyone to use. There are no time limits on computer usage and no fees for services, and both labs are staffed with a lab monitor to provide assistance during open hours. Open times vary daily, so please give us a call at 355-5654 to check availability.

## We Celebrate With Luyanó

LIZZ PIPPIN, CHAIR CUBA PARTNERS

LIZZ@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

We are excited to announce that **Daniel Izquierdo**, the pastor at Iglesia Reformada Presbiteriana en Luyanó was recently married. His wife, Anatiza is from Matanza where she worked in hospitality. She is bubbly and outgoing and excited about being in Luyanó. They also recently announced they are expecting and we are excited for their growing family.



## Luyanó Vacation Bible School



July 15-23 I traveled to Cuba for my fourth visit and second Escuela Biblica Verano or as we would know it Vacation Bible School. I was joined by my mom, **Nancy Pippin**, who was on her first visit. It is always a wonderful experience to spend time with our brothers and sisters in Luyanó. We spent two days with the adults, young adults and teens. Followed by three days with elementary aged students. We had 35 kids attend each of the three days.

We learned songs, dances, made crafts and talked about what it means to be like Christ with classes focusing on *Philippians 2:1-5*. We also had some time to explore the city with some of our hosts. If you have not been to Cuba or if it has been a while I would encourage you to join us for the study starting in September and consider joining us for the 2020 trip. If you are interested in learning more about Cuba contact **Lizz Pippin** at [lizz@firstpres.church](mailto:lizz@firstpres.church) or **Rachel Matthews** at [rachel@firstpres.church](mailto:rachel@firstpres.church).



When **Matt and Rachel** attended the Cuba Partner Network meeting this Summer, they were able to meet two PCUSA Mission Coworkers, **Jo Ella Holman** from the Caribbean and **Josey Saez** from Cuba.



**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 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..... Temporary 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. 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](mailto:marcia@firstpres.church).**