

October 2019



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Pause This Week and Share Kindness

BY MATT MATTHEWS

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

One summer afternoon, I was talking with **Patrick Jinks**, a chaplain friend, at the Greenville Memorial Hospital. He held up his hand stopping me mid-sentence, and leaned his head to one side peering beyond me. I turned. A bald little girl in a white, frilly dress sheepishly approached. It appeared she was being discharged. He got down on a knee and held out an arm. She stepped into his gentle embrace. She looked pale and fragile and radiantly happy. And they looked like old, old friends.

I don't know what this pediatric chaplain said to her. She laughed lightly. I don't know what she said to him. I wondered what battle she had been fighting upstairs on the fifth floor. I wondered how he had stood by her and her family's side. These two unlikely friends were confidants in a congested hospital hallway. Her parents and I watched over them, gave them space, protectively surrounded their communion so as to ward off the stream of people hustling to the elevators. It was the smallest, holiest pause in an otherwise busy, mundane day. I wonder if Patrick still remembers the moment I will never forget.

What kindnesses will you share this week? How will your embrace create sanctuary?

World Communion Celebrated This Sunday October 6

BY JUDI GEISTLINGER, CHAIR WORSHIP TEAM

judigeistlinger@outlook.com

The first Sunday in October is designated as World Communion Sunday, which celebrates our oneness in Christ with all our brothers and sisters around the world. We will have one combined service this Sunday at 9 AM, with music from our choir, our Gathering band, and the Elect of God. You might hear a variety of languages, representing members and friends in our own congregation whose first language is not English.

Come this Sunday, so we might be united in spirit with our brothers and sisters in Christ, who worship in small and large churches, in ornate buildings like ours, country churches as well as those who worship under tents. We will celebrate our communion in the bread of life and the cup of salvation. We will be mindful that across the globe: some will receive cubes of bread; some will tear from a common loaf; and some will receive a wafer. Elsewhere in the world: some will drink from a common chalice; some will dip a piece of bread into the cup; some will have individual cups. Some will use wine; we will offer juice. Some will offer both.

Come to church this World Communion Sunday prepared to participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion. As you receive the bread and cup, remember that you are part of the Church Universal, united in Christ across time and space.

Bob Nutt/Blytham Ltd Memorial Concert Virginia Theater Backstage Observations, September 28 2019

BY MATT MATTHEWS
MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Myth obscures the profile of storied people like Bob Nutt. Born at 8-pounds on July 5, 1943, he grew up with an older brother and sister on Washington and Tyler streets in Oswego, IL, lost his sister in a car accident when he was eleven, and came to the University of Illinois right out of high school in the fall of 1961. He pledged Phi Gamma Delta and possibly burned it down. He founded Blytham Ltd and discovered local bands like R.E.O. Speedwagon, One Eyed Jacks, Dan Fogelberg, Finchley Boys, and Michael McDonald. They had the musical goods and Bob arranged the transportation, stage outfits, music gear, and the all-important gig. So began the Champaign-Urbana rock music explosion.

The bands flew the nest or went back to college, while Bob remained, living close to the streets, walking everywhere around town, head down, dreaming of snatching the perfect venue for just one more deserving band. Dozens of grateful musicians in the springtime of their lives got their first few seconds of fame because "Uncle Bob" believed in their sound and helped them find their way to happy fans.

Bob died September 3, 2018.

* * *

After graduating Oswego High School in 1961, a young Robert Dean Nutt came to the University of Illinois. Stirred by what he heard on the radio and from the garages of local Buddy Holly wannabes, he founded a music booking company called Blytham LTD.

It is said that he discovered the telephone (he had a WATS-line!), and he used it masterfully to connect local bands with gigs all over the region. The local music scene electrified the Young Bob Nutt, and Bob Nutt had a hand in shaping that scene. He put Head East, The Finchley Boys, Michael McDonald, Ginger, and all sorts of great local bands on the road if not to fame, then to Bloomington, Carbondale, Chicago, and St. Louis.

Bob hired associates to help, including a 17-year-old freshman from Danville named Irving Azoff, who now manages bands like Fleetwood Mac and Journey.

Bob's star shown bright, but got tangled in trees in the early 1970s. Always living close to the streets (and bunking off-and-on on friends' couches), Bob wandered much of his adult life marching to the beat of different drummer.

About six years ago he landed at First Presbyterian Church in Champaign. He'd show up for worship every week, slipping in and out like a furtive ray of light. He came before dawn to the men's morning Bible studies, and to the noon Pakistan study group. He'd help cook. He'd make and serve the coffee. He'd help clean up. He routinely absconded with plastic bottles of our communion grape juice.

Sometimes in his final years it looked like Bob needed help; and when people brought food to him, he always found somebody else who needed it more. Once, near the end of his life when he looked so frail and so sick, a church member drove him home from a church event and suggested they stop by the emergency room at the hospital so that Bob could get checked out. He tried jumping out of the moving car.

He gave generously to others as if he'd never run out of anything. And while he wouldn't take and didn't want handouts,

he wouldn't turn down a pair of warm gloves in winter, or a Steak-and-Shake gift card anytime. He was a clean freak and salutatorian of his 8th grade class. He sang in his junior high school chorus; Mrs. Bell was the choir director. He was president of the Student Council in 12th grade and a member of the National Honor Society. He was kind, curious, and, as an adult, spectacularly complicated.

He was famously concerned about the plight of the poor. He worried, earnestly, about what "we" were going to do about Syria and the river of refugees from its civil war. Bob was known to walk in circles in the middle of the street and yell at the rain. He broke into at least one guy's car just to sleep in his back seat. He was a friend to the low and to the down-and-out.

We loved him at the church.

First Pres was honored to host a funeral after Bob's death. We regaled one another with Bob Nutt Stories. Enough people said, "We ought to have a Bob Nutt memorial concert" that it became a refrain.

In January, **David Dilley**, a bass player, brought a dozen doughnuts to a meeting with me to begin dreaming about such a concert. Drummer **Larry Fredrickson**, guitarist **Garrett Oostdyk**, and **Dave Whitford** joined us weeks later to form a core group that met monthly, then weekly, and the dream, actually, began to take flight, with others in the community chipping in with insight and expertise.

* * *

Bob grew up in the Presbyterian Church on Maple and Madison Streets in Oswego, IL. He started first grade in the church basement, because that's where first grade in Oswego was located.

He came to us at First Pres Champaign some years before he died and made a



serious dent in our status quo, leaving his fingerprints everywhere. He washed dishes after the men’s breakfast each week with **Itch Jones**, the retired baseball coach at U of I. They’d talk sports, of course.

Bob’s dad took him to the Aurora Seal-master Bearings fastpitch softball games when he was a kid, and washing dishes with Itch, Bob recounted the exploits of that nationally ranked team. They were national champions in 1959, ’61, ’65, and ’67. Bob could name the team line-up top to bottom.

Itch says that the U of I didn’t have a more devout sports fan than Bob Nutt. Every year Bob would say that this was the year U of I would produce winning seasons in football and men’s basketball.

For Bob, the winning season was always just around the corner. That was true for sports teams. It was true for bands and people, too.

Everybody deserved a chance to win. Every band deserved a shot at the spotlight. And every person deserved an advocate. Bob got thrown out of court once for standing up for one of our members at a trial. He hated injustice, and consistently raised his voice against it.

At his funeral last September, a church member, **Steve Gritten**, reminded us never to judge a book by its cover. Bob’s heart wasn’t rough or tattered; but on most days, Bob’s “cover” most certainly was.

Bob revitalized us, making First Pres a place of wider sanctuary and profounder love, a place less pretentious and, thank God, more humane.

“Happy are people who are hopeless, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.”

* * *

Bob discovered bands. He coached them, equipped them, secured paid gigs for them, kindled their excitement with his own excitement, and dared them to dream bigger than big. Bob also invented the six-string guitar and the four-door automobile. He discovered the Loch Ness Monster . . .

Not all we say about Bob Nutt—or about each other, for that matter—can be verified. There’s something about a life that’s bigger-than-life that takes on a profile of mist or of twilight the closer we look at it. Every life defies being pinned down on a timeline or neatly summed up.

Some of our Bob Nutt stories take on a new life every time they are told. And since he’s not here to defend himself, we might add a new twist to the tale like some people might add a new tattoo.

This we know. This much is true: Robert Dean Nutt was here. He was, by the grace of God, a gift from God. He added life to our lives. He loved a good song well played, and he especially loved a good band on a stage in front of a live audience.

Those 500 or so souls who came out to the Virginia Theatre last Saturday were part of an audience that Bob Nutt convened from beyond the grave.

And it was his best audience ever.

* * *

Employee Highlights

BY JEANNIE SNOEYINK, HUMAN RESOURCES
JEANNIE.SNOEYINK@GMAIL.COM

Getting to know Ritchie Drennen, Facility Manager

Many of you have seen **Ritchie Drennen** working around church for a number of years. He's our pleasant, courteous, helpful and hard-working Facilities Director. You may not know that he started his present job one year and two months ago, replacing **Chris Penny** who took another job.

Ritchie's primary duties include making sure that both of our buildings run as smoothly as possible and directing 4 other employees in their custodial roles.

Ritchie has a wonderful wife, **Mamie**, whom he met at his home church, Canaan Baptist Church. Other family members in his life are his two sisters, **Jamie** and **Jodi**, as well as his mother, **Carlene Turnock**.

Ritchie's great choice of a vacation spot is anywhere with his wife. He loves gardening but also loves watching racing. His favorite movie is "Top Gun" and he enjoys listening to Christian music. Two of his favorite desserts are coconut cream pie and butter pecan ice cream.

Ritchie wants us to know that he loves serving in the church and also helping others in their recovery from addictions. Ritchie is a remarkable person and we are blessed to have his presence in our church.

Getting to know Ann Petry, Church Treasurer and Bookkeeper

Although **Ann Petry** has been our church treasurer and bookkeeper for 4 years, she may be new to a lot of you. That's because she works diligently behind the scenes in her office in the education building. She answers questions very competently and in a timely fashion. Ann's duties include the church payroll, paying bills, and providing financial reports to staff and various committees.

Ann, together with her husband Greg, has four children and eight grandchildren. She loves visiting and spending time with her grandkids. Her hobbies include counted cross stitch and reading. She enjoys 70's music but also songs by George Gershwin. Ann's favorite desserts would match all of ours as she loves all desserts and would eat them as a main course if she could get away with it.

When Ann completed high school, she fondly remembers traveling with a group for five weeks in Europe where she was able to sightsee but also attend lectures on art and architecture. Her favorite vacation spot is Hawaii which she has visited twice. She loves Hawaii and would easily visit there again if given the opportunity.

If you visit our church office between the hours of 9 AM and 1 PM and see someone working behind the scenes that you haven't met before, say, "Hi", and introduce yourself. You may fortunately be meeting **Ann Petry**, our very competent treasurer and bookkeeper.

Cathedrals, Castles & Colonies

FEATURING THE EIU CHORAL ENSEMBLES
AND EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLES
RICHARD ROBERT ROSSI &
JULIANE SHARP, CONDUCTORS

From the Gothic cathedrals and the majestic castles of Europe to the shores of the Americas, the EIU Choral Ensembles and Collegium Musicum will perform a wide variety of works by English, French, German, Italian and American composers.

Church Musician **Richard R. Rossi** will co-conduct this presentation on Sunday, October 6, 2019 at 4 PM at the Doudna Fine Arts Center at Eastern University in Charleston, IL.

For tickets and information visit the Doudna Fine Arts Center Box office: M-F at 217.581.3110, dounatix@eiu.edu or check out their website at <http://www.eiu.edu/doudna/>

Congregational Life

Nurture

Membership, Hospitality & Fellowship

BY GARY PETERSON, CHAIR
AMER_SWEDE@YAHOO.COM

Thanks to all who helped in any way with the continental breakfast for the John Williams Adult Ed. Class and the Ice Cream Social that evening with the Activators. Exciting to have 80 plus at Adult Ed and 60 plus at the Ice Cream Social. Many thanks to those who brought fruit and ice cream toppings for this exciting and uplifting day.

Reminder, if you have not set up your 7,8 or 9 dinner for the final three months of September, October and November, now is the time to think about getting that done. If you have pictures or stories from past dinners, please get those to us.

Membership, Hospitality and Fellowship are always interested in adding new people to our group. If interested in one or more of these groups or have questions, please contact me at amer_swede@yahoo.com

Face to Face



Goelle, Solange and Gabriel Mboyo

What brought you to First Presbyterian Church?

Gabriel: Solange's grandfather and several uncles were Presbyterian Pastors. I grew up Catholic but she won me over. We've been married twenty-two years so I think that worked out well. We were invited here by friends.

What has been the highlight of your church experience?

Solange: We love worship. Gabriel preached some in Congo and loved doing it because you learn through teaching.

Tell me about your work?

Solange: I was a homemaker and Gabriel worked for the government's Department of Telecommunications. Before that he was a teacher. We actually met when Gabriel was teaching and I was his student. Now I work at Rantoul Foods and he works at Amazon. We have shifts that keep one of us always at home for Goelle.

What do you do in your free time?

Goelle: I love music and Netflix. Solange: We also like to sing together.

What are your favorite Bible characters?

We both like Paul. Paul gave his life to God and was a great evangelist and teacher. Gabriel has always liked teaching and evangelism. Goelle: I like the disciples because they followed Christ and I want to do the same.

What advice can you give on how to do church?

Gabriel: I would love to learn more about the theology, particularly from the Presbyterian perspective. I wonder if there are classes for that. Goelle: I hope we can become more diverse. I would like to meet young people from Spain and France and all around the world and worship with them. I also hope our youth group can take more trips.

Gabriel and Solange became members of our church this year. Goelle is in the eighth grade at Jefferson Middle School.

How Can We Be More Inviting?

Join our new Outreach Committee in dialogue as we discern God's will for our beloved congregation. Three focus groups are scheduled to brainstorm about intentional outreach to our international community.

Please attend one or more of three sessions to be held in Mae Chapin Parlor on Sunday, October 13, from 1-2:30 PM, Wednesday, October 16 from noon to 1:15 PM (bring your own lunch) and Tuesday, October 22 from 7 to 8:30 PM.

Fall Adult Ed

BY BETTY HOLLISTER, CHAIR SPIRITUAL FORMATION
B.HOLL@MCHSI.COM

Faith in the Real World: Join us in the Sanctuary, October 6, for the last session to hear how faith impacts professionals in our community. Our own John Muirhead will talk about immigration.

AfterWord: Stick around after the service, October 13, 20, and 27 to get in the “last word.” Join us in the parlor dining room for a bite to eat and a time to focus on the scripture of the day and discuss the sermon.

November Bible Study and Pre-Advent Activities. Pastor Matt will lead a Bible Study, Sunday mornings starting at 10:15 in Mae Chapin Parlor focusing on the Nativity scripture in Luke. A prayer walk with “pre-Advent” stations will also direct our thoughts toward Christianity’s Holy Season.

Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes: Judi Geistlinger will lead this Advent Study based on the book by Cynthia Campbell, who “reflects on the distinctive perspective of the birth of Jesus or the incarnation offered by each Gospel.” Join the discussions from 10:15 - 11:05 in the Parlor each Sunday morning in December to help you focus on faith this hectic holiday season. Books will be sold November 10 and 17 in Westminster.

Ten Commandments for Today: Can’t make Sunday morning classes? Here is an opportunity for Bible Study led by Cliff Dykstra on consecutive Wednesdays at 3 PM in Westminster Hall starting October 16. Dr. Dykstra will lead a discussion on the book by theologian William Barclay. Books will be sold October 6 and 13 in Westminster.

Keep checking the kiosk by the Welcome Center for the *Fall/Winter Small Groups* Brochure.

CROP HUNGER WALK

ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME



This year, our Confirmation Class is leading the church in the CROP Hunger Walk.

What is the CROP Hunger Walk?

CROP Hunger Walk is a 50 year old event that started with concerned youth in Bismarck, North Dakota in 1969, with the purpose of raising money to fight hunger locally, nationally and globally.

When is the walk?

Sunday, October 13, 2019, churches from across Champaign/Urbana will join together at 2 PM (registration at 1:30 PM) at Wesley United Methodist Church (1203 W. Green Street, Urbana) to walk three miles to combat hunger.

How can you participate?

1- By walking with our Confirmation Class on Sunday, October 13. A sign-up sheet will be available at church on Sunday, October 6, after both services. Children and youth under 18 will need to complete a consent form that is signed by a parent.

2- Donate to the CROP Walk with cash, a check made out to the church with “CROP Walk” in the memo or by donating on-line at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/champaignil/fpcc>.

It only takes \$50 to provide an entire month’s worth of food for a family who has been displaced. Let’s take this opportunity to join together as a congregation and as a community to fight hunger. Together, we can end hunger one step at a time.

Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth & Family Update

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

Worship Pew Partners

I hope you will consider being a pew partner for the academic year. We need more caring adults who are willing to have unaccompanied children sit with them in worship and guide the children through the worship hour. Pew Partners meet the children in the children's corner of Westminster Hall and invite 2 or 3 children to sit with them in the sanctuary. During worship, the Pew Partners encourage the children to participate in worship and help them understand what is occurring. At the end of worship, Pew Partners make sure that the children go back to the children's corner in Westminster Hall to meet their teachers. Please prayerfully consider if you would be able to give of your time ministering to our children in this way. Contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at mindy@firstpres.church to volunteer or for more information.

Sunday School

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries needs your HELP!!! We still need teachers, helpers, door greeters, and youth group leaders. Please contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at mindy@firstpres.church if you are interested in being part of our ministry team to these vibrant young people.

In September our preschool and Kindergarten class learned that God made animals and we are to care for them. The elementary classes learned about Abraham and Sarah. The Middle School learned about how we got the Bible. The Confirmation Class began by learning the origins of the early church, and the High School class learned what Canon means and how it pertains to the Bible.

The Austin Activators lead a program for our 1st-8th grade students September 15 with some energizers, a selection of scripture from Jonah, and had students decorate some bedsheets with messages about God's big, steady love.

October will feature the unit 'God provides food' for our preschool and Kindergarten Class. The elementary kids will study the call of the prophet Samuel, the Middle School Class will explore the questions "Why does the Bible contradict itself sometimes?," "Is the New Testament more important than the Old Testament?," and "Why are there so many versions of the Bible?." The Confirmation Class will continue studying the early church through the reformation, the sovereignty of God, and sin and human nature. The high school will study Genesis, Exodus, and the law of God.

Trunk or Treat

Mark your calendars for this year's Trunk-or-Treat community event October 27! Our event will begin with the decorated cars and candy open from 5-6 PM in the east side of our parking lot and a soup supper offered from 6-7 PM in Centennial Hall. This is a great opportunity to show Christian hospitality to our neighborhood families!

Would you like to volunteer to help with the Trunk or Treat event? Look for the sign-up sheets in Westminster Hall on a bulletin board soon. If you decorate your car, you can park in the church lot at 4:30 and set up.

Not the creative type, but willing to bring your car and pass out candy? Our youth can decorate your trunk for you with some materials the church owns. You can also make some soup or help serve at the soup supper. Hot soup should be brought to Centennial Hall in a crock pot by 5:30.

If you will be out of town and just want to donate candy, we will accept bags of candy individually wrapped by the manufacturer brought to the church office by October 25. Volunteers will also be needed to man the game stations, serve guests, set up, and clean up. You can always contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** directly to volunteer for any portion of the event at mindy@firstpres.church. The First United Methodist Church has partnered with us to have our events coincide to draw a larger part of the community.

Youth Group

LIZZ PIPPIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
LIZZ@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

In September, we kicked off youth group for the year. The middle school youth group meets on the first and third Sundays of the month. This month they will meet October 6 and 20. The middle school will be starting a series in October on being Salt and Light in the world.

The high school youth group meets on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, which means this month they will meet on October 13 and 27. The high schoolers will be looking at a series on what it means to be a community.

Both groups have spent time bonding and growing together as we fellowship with dinners and play games. We will also be helping out at Trunk or Treat and hope to see lots of people there!

If you can help with providing a main dish or a side for a dinner on Sunday evening or help with giving students a ride to youth group. Let **Lizz Pippin** know by calling the church or sending an email to lizz@firstpres.church.



Mark 10:49-52

...the disciples called to the blind man (Bar-timaeus)... Jesus is calling you...Jesus asked "what do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see". Jesus said "your faith has healed you" ...

What am I asking Jesus to do for me?

Jays & Concerns

All Saints Remembrance Planned

All Saints' Day in our Reformed tradition will have the emphasis on the on-going sanctification of the whole people of God. Rather than putting saints on pedestals as holy people set apart in glory, we give glory to God for the ordinary, holy lives of the believers in this and every age. It's an appropriate time to give thanks for members of the community of faith who have died in the past year. We will also pray that we may be counted among the company of the faithful in God's eternal realm.

Many churches celebrate All Saints Day with services of remembrance of saints. All Saints Day is celebrated on November 1. We will observe All Saints Sunday on the Sunday following November 1. It is a day to remember the "saints" by the New Testament meaning of "all Christian people of every time and place." It is a day to celebrate the communion of saints as we remember those who have died, both in our local congregations and throughout the Church universal. Please share any names to be remembered on November 3 with the church office by October 25.

Congratulations to...

- **Lisa Ainsworth**, who was recently ranked among the world's most influential researchers by Clarivate Analytics.

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

- **Louise Turpin** who died September 18, 2019.
- **Pat Summers** who died September 30, 2019.

Mission Updates

Mission News

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS,

TEMPORARY MISSION COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

As a Matthew 25 congregation, we are always looking for ways to serve God's kingdom here in Champaign. September allowed us to serve our community with music and remembering the homeless with our **Bob Nutt Concert** held at the Virginia Theater. So many of you spent hours planning this and volunteering at the event. We thank those of you who attended. The proceeds went to CU@HOME, one of our mission agencies.

And, a thank you to those who deliver food for *empty tomb*. We had a small and meaningful tea in appreciation for the staff and volunteers at *empty tomb* and the volunteers at First Presbyterian who shop and deliver food upon referral. One person buys food at Salt and Light for the food they deliver for *empty tomb*. That helps our community twice! We also learned from the staff how invaluable the cribs that Presbyterian Women (and others) donate. Other agencies make referrals to *empty tomb* for these cribs. "A crib is less expensive than a funeral," one person shared with me. Wow, that is perspective!

This month World Mission is sponsoring a **Fair Trade Rug Event** right in our own Westminster Hall, October 17-20. We will have a children's library corner on Thursday night as well as a demonstration of the rugs by the Bunyard Rug Makers and Ten Thousand Villages. Watch the bulletin for the schedule. We will be needing volunteers as greeters during the event since our church will be open to the public all of these days. We want our community to be welcomed warmly!

Please contact **Rachel Matthews**, the church office or go to <http://firstpres.church/rugeventgreeters> to sign up for a time.

October is a time we focus on so many things in the life of our church. With regards to Mission we focus on **World Communion**. As the Body of Christ we serve the whole world as the Universal Church...all saints, globally. What an important thing to remember in a time of polarization and tension. Our calling as reconcilers is clear! It is also a time that our local community remembers our sisters and brothers caught in the web of domestic violence.

Through our Community Mission Deacons, First Presbyterian Church supports **Courage Connection** as our local mission agency who helps those who are stepping out of that web. You know it takes an entire community dedicated to tolerance and reconciliation to breaking the power and control cycle. There is that word again: Reconciliation! As disciples of Jesus Christ, we seek to reconcile people to Christ through the power of love. We have a gift to share with our community!

Please remember the Bahamas through **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** (Hurricane Dorian). Remember our sister church in Luyano, Cuba and those who are studying Cuba this month and considering the possibility of going to visit them in the Spring. And, remember our mission coworkers from South Sudan, **Bob and Kristi Rice** will be with us October 27. And, **Jeff and Christi Boyd** from the Congo who will be with us November 4.

Thank you to everyone who supported the **Austin College Activators** in September. Austin College is one of our Presbyterian USA related colleges. Engaging our young

adults as we walk together in faith feels great! There are so many different ways to do that right here at First Presbyterian Champaign!

Mother Goose on the Loose

Salt & Light is proud to partner with *Mother Goose on the Loose*, a children's story time program from the Champaign Public Library. Each month on the first Tuesday from 10:15 to 10:45 AM, the Library's Mother Goose visits the Urbana location for a 30-minute story time with kids age 0-6. This is a fun time of stories and songs, made for kids and caregivers to share together, and every child gets a free book to take home.

MOTHER GOOSE ON THE LOOSE!

Join Us FOR STORYTIME!

Have and/or care for a child, ages birth to 6 years old? Join us for this event!

Every child gets a free book to take home.

DATES: 9/3, 10/1, 11/5, and 12/3
TIME: 10:15-10:45am
LOCATION: Classroom 2 Salt & Light Urbana
COST: FREE!

Salt & LIGHT

Green Team Update

BY CLEMMIE ACKERMANN,
MEMBER ENVIRONMENTAL TEAM
CLEMMIE1814@YAHOO.COM

Green Team Update

Are you overwhelmed with all the information out there about the environment? Where do I start? Can I make a difference? To answer the last question first – you absolutely can make a difference! As far as finding a place to start, let's start with The 4 R's. You've heard of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle but the new kid on the block is REFUSE. So, let's start there and ditch some single use items.

Our lives are full of stuff we don't need and single use items go from our hands to the trash and this has a huge environmental impact. Here are six single use items to refuse to use. By the way, consider using *Refuse to Use* as your new motto!

1) **Refuse plastic water bottles.** Most plastic bottles wind up in landfills and don't break down for hundreds of years. So get yourself a refillable water bottle and carry it with you whenever you can. Ask for tap water at restaurants and avoid imported bottled water.

2) **Refuse single serve coffee pods.** Oops! Guilty here and that's why this is sometimes so hard! It's so convenient when you're bleary eyed in the morning! There are reusable pods available but, from what I understand, the newest machines will not work with reusable pods. Most pods are not recyclable. Just brew your own coffee folks. Drip, cold, brew, instant, it doesn't matter. It's a lot less money and a lot less waste.

3) **Refuse disposable utensils.** They are usually made of plastic and are so unnecessary! Did you know that compostable utensils and dishware are easily available? Remember to ask your favorite restaurants NOT to include a disposable set with your take-out.

4) **Refuse Plastic bags.** Yes...we're still talking about plastic bags. Some sources say that 1,000 plastic bags are used every minute. It's hard to break old habits or start a new habit so start by putting cloth bags in your car and tape up notes to remind yourself to use them. Remember to take them to any store – they're not just for groceries.

5) **Refuse plastic straws.** Plastic straws account for 4% all the pollution on the planet. Tell your server at the restaurant that you don't want a plastic straw and talk to the management about making straws optional or switching to cardboard or paper straws. For yourself, indulge in a personal use metal, glass or silicone straw.

6) **Refuse styrofoam.** It's everywhere. For now, let's just say that styrofoam seems to last forever. Look for food packaging that has no styrofoam and avoid styrofoam fast food containers and "To Go" containers made of styrofoam.

Please consider these few ideas from your Environmental Stewardship Committee to help you make a difference with the environment!

Knowing Our Neighbors

BY ROBERT KIRBY
RWK3213@GMAIL.COM

"We are all Americans of the New World, and our most dangerous enemies are not each other, but the great wall of ignorance between us." – Juan González, *Harvest of Empire*

Harvest of Empire-The Untold Story of Latinos in America, a feature length documentary, explains why our Latin neighbors have been forced to migrate. This is a fascinating look at the outcome of US policy in Latin America and the Caribbean. We will gather with our downtown friends at New Covenant Fellowship, 124 West White St, to watch this together on Monday evening, November 18 at 7 PM.

Upcoming Earth Care Seminars

Sunday, October 6, Church families who have installed Geothermal and or Solar energy sources will discuss the installations -- which involved some creative problem solving in a couple of cases - and the results.

Sunday, October 13, Dr. George Cross, University of Illinois Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering will discuss "Electricity Grid Modernization: the Role of Electricity in Effectively Addressing Climate Change."

Both seminars will be held at 11 AM in the Chapel at First Presbyterian, Urbana. Enter the double doors on Orchard Street. A parking lot is available across Orchard from the entry. Late comers are welcome!

Love People and Conversation?

BY ROBERT KIRBY
RWK3213@GMAIL.COM

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2

International visitors to our community yearn for chances to converse in English, learn about America and form friendships. For those of us who do not attend Sunday School at 10:10 AM, why not hang out at one of our Westminster round tables and

enjoy our tea or coffee and informal conversation with international guests.

If you are interested in this idea please contact your Outreach Committee representative **Bob Kirby** rwk3213@gmail.com or 217-621-5915.

ESL Program Update

BY JEANETTE PYNE, ESL COORDINATOR

JEANETTE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH



From left to right: Vern Snoeyink, Yudisley Cabanzo, Patricia Zhong, Mike Havey, Jeanette Pyne

The Right Place at the Right Time

During the second week of September as we were practicing our fire drill, **Jim Rossow**—the vice president of news at the *News Gazette*—happened to be walking by as I was debriefing with the students on the corner of State and Church Streets. He stopped and asked **Ritchie Drennen** what was happening. Ritchie enthusiastically explained that we were doing a fire drill with people from 20 different countries. Since our students are from so many different countries that may have different procedures for fire safety, it is important to educate them on fire safety in the US. **Jim Rossow** suddenly became very interested in the First Pres ESL Program and told me he would be contacting me to feature the program in the *News Gazette*.

Later that week, I was contacted by **Jim Rossow** telling me that he wanted to feature the First Pres ESL Program on the front page of the *News Gazette*! This was more exposure than I was expecting. He was going to have one of his writers, **Deb Pressey**, contact me for an interview. She was very impressed with our program and was surprised that the tutors did not need to be fluent in the languages of the students to teach them English. She interviewed two of our tutors, **Mike Havey**

and **Vern Snoeyink**, **Pastor Matt Matthews**, and two of our students, **Yudisley Cabanzo** and **Patricia Zhong**.

The article was published on Sunday, September 29, 2019 on the front page of the *News Gazette*. The article can be found on the *News Gazette* website. **Deb Pressey** did a wonderful job of illustrating and describing our program. We could not ask for better exposure to the community. It really felt like the Lord orchestrated this. If we had not been outside of First Pres for the fire drill, **Jim Rossow** would have never found out about the First Pres ESL Program. Already, five people have gotten in contact with me about tutoring for the First Pres ESL Program because of the *News Gazette* article.

Prayer Requests

We are going to add a new morning class at the end of October. Pray that the Lord will provide some wonderful tutors by means of the article. If you are interested in learning more about how to volunteer tutor and positively impact a student's life, contact **Jeanette Pyne**, the ESL Coordinator, jeanette@firstpres.church.

Finance

Stewardship 2020

BY BYRON KEMPER
BYRONKEM@ILLINOIS.EDU

Stewardship 2020 will officially begin on Sunday, October 13, with a brief preview on October 6, culminating on Consecration Sunday, November 3. Pledge cards will be mailed out the week of October 13.

The theme for this year is “Why am I grateful?”. On October 13, 20, and 27, a member of the congregation will answer the question “What are three things about First Pres for which I am grateful?” in a Minute for Stewardship. In fact, we will be asking each member and friend of the congregation to answer that question.

We hope that Stewardship 2020 will encourage you to pause and reflect on the importance of the church in your life. Please bring your pledge card to church on November 3 or send it by mail to the church office (Attn: Marcia) or send the information by email to info@firstpres.church.

It is important to meet the deadline because the Finance Committee needs the pledge information in order to prepare a budget for approval by Session in November. For more on Stewardship, see the following article by **Dave Whitford**.

Valuing Gratefulness: How Grateful Are You!

BY DAVE WHITFORD
DAVE@WHITFORDCONSULTANTS.COM

As we approach our Church’s stewardship season, each of us will be asked to reflect and identify the three things associated with First Presbyterian Church for which we are most grateful. As I have reflected on the myriad blessings that my family and I have received from the Church, I have found it very difficult to narrow my

list to three. I suspect that you and your family may have also experienced my dilemma.

One approach to narrowing down your gratefulness choices is to place a value on the blessings showered upon us by our Church. In the view of some, a church is a building, a place of worship. However, I believe this definition is misdirected. Instead, I fervently believe that we, the members of the First Presbyterian Church of Champaign, are the Church. We worship together, support each other and rejoice in our faith. Truly we are blessed. As you consider the amount you will pledge for the coming year, please prayerfully reflect on the value of these blessings and give accordingly in order to support our Church’s programs and missions. We are the Church. Our church changes and empowers each of us so that we can and do make a difference in our community, our nation and the world.

Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE
MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

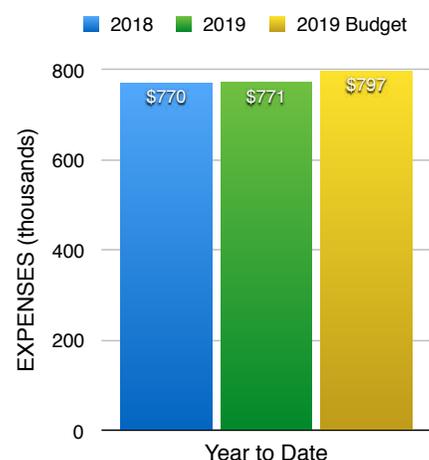
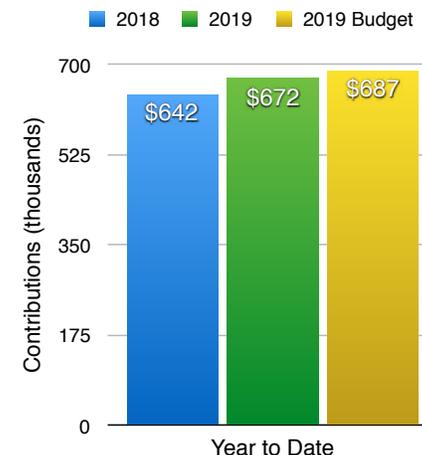
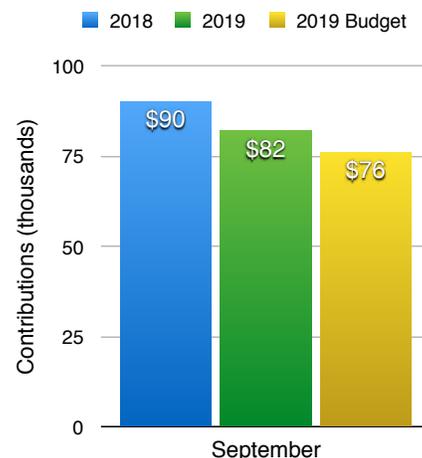
Contributions

Contributions in September were \$8K less than in 2018 but \$6K above the budget at \$82K. The Year to Date total is above last year by \$30K but below the budgeted amount by \$15K. 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 75% through the year, we have received 76% of the expected 2019 revenue.

Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$26K below the budget at \$771K but \$1K above 2018. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$11K which is \$9K better

than at the end of September in 2018. This figure includes \$32K less in prepaid pledges than in 2018. At 75% through the year we have experienced 72.6% of the expected 2019 expenses.





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

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..... Temporary 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
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.

302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

P: 217.356.7238

F: 217.356.7242

E: info@firstpres.church

www.firstpres.church

Sunday:

- 9 AM Traditional Service
- 10:15 AM Sunday School and Adult Education
- 11:15 AM Contemporary Service