

February 2020



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

What's Up At First Pres?

BY BYRON KEMPER, FINANCE
BYRONKEM@ILLINOIS.EDU

A staff member noted the letter with the year-end financial statement reported the church had an operating deficit for 2019 and raised the issue of how the church dealt with the deficit.

I consulted with **Mark Schoeffmann**, Finance Committee Chair, about the deficit issue. The deficit (or surplus) each year is added to an account called the "Operating Fund Balance". The present negative balance in this account is due to operating fund deficits accumulated over the past several years and results in a cash reduction of equal amount in the Church's bank account. If annual deficits continue, eventually the bank cash amount will be reduced below that required to pay expenses each month. There are two ways to reduce the deficit in the Operating Fund Balance. One way would be to run operating surpluses in future years. The second way is to transfer money to our bank account from our reserve fund called the "Session Designated Fund", the funds of which are part of the church's investment portfolio. At the beginning of 2020, the cumulative deficit in the Operating Fund Balance account was \$113,004.84, which is about 7% of the amount in the Session Designated Fund.

If you have any questions at all about the church or its programs, send them to info@firstpres.church with "What's up" in the subject line before February 21, and look for the answers in the next newsletter.

Home

BY MATT MATTHEWS
MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

*Isaiah 9:1-4, Matthew 4:12-23
From the Pulpit of First Presbyterian Church, Champaign, IL
January 26, 2020*

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. Jesus left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali . . . As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him. (*Matthew 4:12-23*)

Where is your home?

Is home where you live, or where you're from? Is home a state of mind? Billy Joel sings about having a New York State of Mind. Jimmy Buffet sings about a place called Margaritaville.

Where is your home?

When you go "home" for the holidays, where do you go? Some say home is where the heart is, or where your family is. To a large degree, my home is where my sons are, and, of course, where my wife is. (And my dog, Casey.)

When I write, I return to a setting on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. I never lived there, but I've spent a lot of time there. The Parramore roots of my family have been rooted there since 1622. In my writing, I make up towns there, like Rooksville or Evidence Gap, which are a lot like the real towns of Cape Charles and Quinby. The novel that I'm currently dabbling in takes place on the ocean side of the shore in an old town much like Accomack. The shore is my imaginary home.

To a large degree, home is where I was born and grew up: Hampton, Virginia. Home is sailing on the harbor there, from Fort Monroe to the Newport

continued on the next page

News Point. Home is the sunny days of my childhood walking on the sandbars, rowing Indian River Creek, playing football on Watson Field. Home is High's Ice Cream, long walks on Chesapeake Boulevard, visiting with the Wythe Girls, hanging with the friends I grew up with.

Where is your home?

Here in Matthew's Gospel, Matthew is teaching his readers by way of sacred geography. In this context, place matters. Jesus left the home in which he grew up, Nazareth, and traveled some 30-miles east as scripture puts it to "make his home" in Capernaum, a fishing village by the Sea of Galilee.

The place is significant. Capernaum and the surrounding territory—Zebulun and Naphtali—had been part of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This is where the Assyrians first attacked Israel. The tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali were the first tribes of the ten northern tribes to be decimated, to be carted off into exile. It is here the sheep of Israel were scattered. This very ground had been watered with their blood. Under these skies they cried out to God. And Jesus has now come to restore what was so long and so badly broken.

Matthew wants his readers to think historically. He quotes from the chapters (7-12) of the prophet Isaiah known as the "Book of Emmanuel" in which Isaiah writes to a wayward people about a time of future hope: But there'll be no darkness for those who were in trouble. Earlier, [God] did bring the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali into disrepute, but the time is coming when he'll make that whole area glorious (The Message).

This time of hope that Isaiah had written about hundreds of years before has dawned. This day has dawned in Jesus. Matthew is saying all of this by simply reporting that Jesus went to make his home in Capernaum, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. Jesus has come to gather the

scattered flock from the point from which they were scattered.

Jesus has left his home to make a home for his people. "Repent," he says. "Repent" means "turn." Turn towards home. He preached, and healed, and told people about the good news of this home—this kingdom of heaven—not made with hands, but made by God for the people of God, for the scattered, the battered, the lost.

It is there from his home base in Capernaum that Jesus began calling disciples to help him. That he called twelve perhaps gets us thinking about how God in Jesus Christ would restore all twelve tribes of Israel. Peter, Andrew, James, and John will immediately drop what they are doing to follow.

We modern-day disciples are called, too. We may follow less immediately and, perhaps, less enthusiastically, but Jesus left his home to make a home in our midst. Jesus invites us to make a home with God at the center. He invites us to make a home where strangers are welcome, where neighbors are loved, where the neighborhood includes everybody, where everyone is encouraged, where a community of shalom is nurtured.

No matter where we live, this is the home we are called to build. This is the kind of welcome we are called to extend. This is what Jesus preached and lived. This is the work his followers are called to do.

Where is your home?

My truest home is right here, in the church. My first home was Community Presbyterian Church in Hampton. My home now is here at First Pres Champaign. My home is Faith Presbyterian Church in Cape Coral. My home is Knox Presbyterian Church in Naperville. My home is the place wherever Christ's arms are reaching out to welcome people who have once been scattered, battered, lost. My home is the church in which all God's

children are welcome, nurtured, and celebrated. My home is the church where we hold hands to praise the God who calls us to serve, to love, to heal.

Jesus left his home to make his home in our midst.

Friends, welcome home.

**The Annual Meeting
of the Congregation
will be held
Sunday, February 16,
immediately
following the
9 AM service.**

Songs of Love
featuring the EIU Choral Ensembles

The aura of romance will be in the air when Eastern's Choral Ensembles present a "tour de force" celebrating the majesty of love under the conduction of **Richard Robert Rossi** and **Juliane Sharp**.

For tickets and information visit
doudnatix@eiu.edu.

Congregational Life

Worship

BY JUDI GEISTLINGER, WORSHIP CHAIR
 JUDGEISTLINGER@OUTLOOK.COM

Communion Preparers Needed

Thanks to **Dave McNattin** who has served our congregation as communion coordinator for the last twenty years and is stepping back from coordination. The Worship Committee is seeking a couple of people to serve as communion preparers to do the set-up for services on the first Sunday of the month at the 9 AM service. Please contact **Judi Geistlinger** (judgeistlinger@outlook.com or 217-493-5462) if you are willing to serve in this manner.

Ash Wednesday Service

Mark your calendars for Ash Wednesday, February 26 as we mark the start of Lent. Imposition of ashes with quiet meditation will be offered from 5-7 PM that evening in the Chapel.

Adult Ed

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

Faith in the Real World series continues in February. Join us in the Sanctuary these Sunday mornings to hear how faith impacts professionals in our community. Come and be inspired.

- February 9 Jean René Balekita
- February 16 Leland Andrews
- February 23 Rev. David Bauer

Lenten Study in the Parlor Sunday mornings at 10:15 AM beginning March

1-April 5. We will study *Lent in Plain Sight* (A devotion through ten objects) by Jill Duffied. Books available at \$10 each.

Obituary Writing (and Grief) Seminar In Lieu of Flowers . . .

Join **Matt Matthews** for three Tuesdays from 3:00 to 4:30, March 10, 17, and 24 and explore together writing an obituary.

You—or somebody you love—will have to do it sooner or later, so let's check this off your to-do list. Let's use this exercise to think theologically about grief. What or who are you mourning? How are you doing since your most recent loss? You might be thinking, "It's too soon for me to meet with a group and talk about this stuff." Or, "I've handled my loss and there's absolutely no use dredging up old feelings." Matt invites you to reconsider.

The group will share whatever they like about recent or old losses. We'll ask, "What did Jesus mean when he said, 'Come unto me all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest.?' " (Matthew 11:28). Did Jesus know what he was talking about when he said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted"? Do you wonder, when will comfort come? Is there really such a thing as closure? We'll ponder this line from Henri Nouwen, "Time doesn't heal all wounds, it deepens them." As we explore these angles of grief, mourning, and loss, we'll end up holding a rough draft of our own obituary, remembering the wisdom of the ages: The eternal God is our dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms (*Deuteronomy 33:27*).

Contact the church office to register or for more information on all classes.

What are you most grateful for at First Pres? Here are some of the responses...

- Our congregation as a whole
- Friends
- Becoming members in late 1950's—in Tolono – transferring to Champaign early 1990's
- Our membership/closeness to church raising our children

Building and Grounds

- I am grateful for our beautiful downtown church
- Elevator
- A wonderful building where we can all come to worship our Lord
- For this beautiful building we have to worship in
- Traditional architecture and décor
- Place to worship God
- The sanctuary where I feel the spirit moving everytime I am there.
- The beauty of our upper room – wonderful place to pray and feel we belong
- Even love our old buildings

Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth & Family Update

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

Sunday School

February will bring the unit 'God Made all kinds of friends' and 'I pray' for the preschool and Kindergarten class. The elementary kids will study the story of the Woman at the Well and the parables of the two houses. The Middle School will explore questions about prayer and its purpose. The Confirmation Class will study the Word of God and our Response to it, the Book of Confessions, and begin working on their faith statements. The High School will be studying the book of Esther and begin exploring the New Testament.

Valentine Bags for Faith In Action

Join us February 9 for creating Valentine gift bags for Faith in Action clients in Westminster Hall from 10:15-11:05 AM. We will partner adults with kids to work together to decorate bags, create cards, and stuff the bags with little gifts to spread God's love to lonely individuals in our community. Faith in Action is an agency supported by the mission of our church and is run by OSF. They primarily serve seniors who have mobility issues and who often feel socially isolated.

Youth Group

LIZZ PIPPIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
LIZZ@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

In January we hosted our annual Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend Winter Retreat. We had seven students attend. We had a lock-in at the church where we talked about the leadership of Dr. King and what it means to be great in the kingdom of

heaven. We spent the day of service at Salt and Light. We learned more about the program and then helped in the sorting area. The youth had a ton of fun during the weekend.

This month we had a Super Bowl party at church with yummy food and fellowship. Lots of laughs were had all around. We will have youth group again on February 16.

And So It Begins



Work has begun on the kitchen renovation in Centennial Hall. During construction many groups that met in Centennial Hall have relocated.

Sunday

11:15 AM Gathering Service has moved to the Chapel.

Monday

AA group has moved to the Chapel.

Tuesday

Men's Breakfast has moved to the Parlor.

Thursday

YoungLives has moved to the Café.

Check for additional listings and locations on "This Week", the church website or contact the church office. Renovations should be completed sometime this Spring.

Can You Drive?

We need you Sunday mornings for our Sunday morning pick up.

For more information about requirements please contact **John Muirhead** at j.muirhead@comcast.net



Do we all need a heart checkup? I do.

1 Samuel:16:7...The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

The bottom line of biblical Christianity is having a heart for God.

Jays & Concerns

The Interfaith Alliance of Champaign County invites you to

The People's Supper

Saturday, February 29 6-8 PM

University YMCA, 1001 South Wright Street-Champaign

Gather for an evening of good food and table conversations designed to build more bridges across our faith communities in Champaign County.

No registration required!

The main dish and drinks will be provided.

Participants are invited to bring a labeled vegetarian dish or dessert.

For more information visit

<https://oii.illinois.edu/diversityed/interfaith/illinois-interfaith-conference>

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

- **Bertha Jean Berger** who died February 1, 2020. A service for Mrs. Berger will be held Thursday, February 20, at 11 AM at the church.

Congratulations to...

- **Steve Tock** for receiving United Way's "The Spirit of Caring" award.

Mission Updates

Mission News

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS,

TEMPORARY MISSION COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Mission Kiosk

Check it out! This month there is a wonderful article from the Mission Aviation Fellowship about “paying attention” in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is amazing what skills God can use to bridge relationships with our neighbors!

SAFEHouse Concert

Put the date on your calendar!

February 23, 2020

First United Methodist Church

More information to follow.

FREE One-hour Computer Basics Class

February 27, 6:30 PM at Salt & Light, Urbana. Sign up at www.saltandlightministry.org/sign-up-for-classes.

Refugee Center Fundraiser

The Refugee Center (formerly ECIRMAC) will hold its thirteenth Annual Fundraising Banquet on Saturday, March 7, 2020 at 6 PM at the I-Hotel. Ticket pricing: \$80 per person or \$600 per Table of Eight. Contact the Center at 344-8455 or **John Muirhead** at 398-1048.

ESL Program Update

BY JEANETTE PYNE, ESL COORDINATOR

JEANETTE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Celebrating Lunar New Year

恭喜发财红包拿来 (Gongxi facai hongbao ná lái) in English means Happy New Year, give me the lucky red envelope. On January 25th, billions of people around the world celebrated the Lunar New Year with their families. For Chinese people, giving lucky money in red envelopes to children in the family is a tradition. This year is the year of the Rat and on January 23rd, two of our students, **Wenyng** and



Wenyng teaching us how to say “Happy New Year” in Chinese.

Yingying, gave a presentation during our café time about Chinese Lunar New Year. They both did a fantastic job as they talked about traditional foods eaten during this time, legends about the monster Nian, and the story about the rat and how it won the race against all the other animals of the Zodiac calendar. Apparently, the rat hitched a ride on the ox’s back while he was crossing a river; thus, allowing the rat to get to the finish line before everyone else. This is why the rat is the beginning of the Zodiac calendar.



Yingying talking about the different traditional foods and their symbolism.

The other students who celebrate Lunar New Year also brought in traditional food

to share with everyone in the program. We love having our students share about their cultures with us and encourage them to do so, either with food or presentations. We want the ESL Program to be a place of learning for everyone. Happy Lunar New Year!

Thank You!

We recently received a Chinese wall hanging which we have hung in the café on the second floor of the educational building. Thank you for this gift! Take a look at it the next time you are upstairs.

The Chinese symbols are the words to *Philippians 4:6-7*, “Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” We believe the artist is Zhang Jing-yi.

Green Team Update

BY CLEMMIE ACKERMANN, MEMBER

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

COLETTA.ACKERMANN@GMAIL.COM



**Did you know?
Earth Day
is around the
corner.**

Wednesday, April 22, 2020 is the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day with our official church celebration planned for Sunday, April 26. The Green Team is making plans and hoping everyone will get involved in small and big ways.

To get started, here are some Earth Day Facts.

- US Senator Gaylord Nelson proposed “Earth Day” as a way to focus on the environment.
- On April 22, 1970, 20 million people came out to support the first Earth Day
- Earth Day went global in 1990 with 200 million people in 141 countries joining in the activities
- In 2016, more than 1 billion people in almost 200 countries participated in Earth Day.
- In 2020, the Earth Day Network’s goal is to mobilize a billion people world wide.
- To get more information, visit earthday.org website

For your calendar

Church Events

- Styrofoam Sunday – April 26
8:30 – 11:30
Start saving your Styrofoam at home now!
- Earth Day Celebration – April 26

Community Events

- Free Great Backyard Bird Count activities February 15
9 AM – 5 PM

- Visit urbanaparks.org for more information

Stay tuned, more details coming your way!

Eyeglasses Collection Box

Your Green Team is starting another new initiative. With this one, we will be collaborating with the Lions of Illinois Foundation (LIF) and their “Eyeglass Collections & Recycling” program.

Who receives these eyeglasses?

According to their website, LIF has distributed more than 5,000,000 glasses since 1994! “These recycled eyeglasses are given to people in need, with the help of various medical missionaries, in Central and South America and across the globe. When the eyeglasses arrive in these countries, doctors and technicians conduct free eye exams and provide a free pair of prescription eyeglasses that are as close as possible to that person’s sight needs.”

What can be donated?

Any type of eyeglasses and visual aid is welcome. The program can use sunglasses, telescopic, magnifying, and prescription eyeglasses. Eyeglass cases cannot be redistributed due to sanitary issues and health guidelines.

Please look for the Lions Club Collection box on the table to the left of the Mission Kiosk in Westminster Hall and remember cases cannot be donated.

Thank you for supporting another Green Team project!

Snippets from Matt's Cuba Journal/Winter 2019

As winter continues, I invite you to think about the warmer climes of Cuba.

For the next few months I thought I'd share with you passages from the journal I kept while in Havana last year while visiting our Sister Church, the Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Luyano. The church is located at the edge of downtown Havana. Our delegation from First Presbyterian Church Champaign (**Rachel Matthews, Robert Ferrer, Judi Geistlinger**, and I) stayed on the Luyano campus and were treated like beloved family. We were verily treasured. This brotherhood/sisterhood, what our Cuban hosts call a "hermanamiento," is a special bond that is difficult to describe. I want you to know this by taking a trip to Cuba with another team from First Pres.

In the meantime, here are snippets from my journal. These abbreviated notes come without explanation; I think you'll be able to follow.

Come with me!

Matt

Yaimi's Sunday School Class

Our travel team's dining room off the sanctuary was transformed into Yaimi's class of 13 chattering children. Yaimi taught them in rapid-fire Spanish. Her words tumbled on top of one another. I could understand few of them: nombre, mira, ahora, familia, tambien. I could make out few others. She said entonces a lot. Entonces this, entonces that.

Our quiet dining room echoed with the children's voices. At junctures in Yaimi's stream of words, hands would shoot up. These grade school children were eager to be called upon and they seemed articulate and able to hold their own with their teacher. They were polite

but not shy. Yaimi sat at the end of the table like a general at an important briefing, leaving no doubt who was in charge.

Late comers tricked into class to a hail of salutations that got Yaimi off track only momentarily. Kids vied for the attention that she doled out attentively with smiles, but only briefly. Her teaching seemed to be comprised mainly of questions.

I think the discussion—all in Spanish, of course—became focused on the beatitudes. Possibly Mateo Cinco. The children dutifully opened their Bibles. She returned to questioning them. From time to time she'd ask something that forced their hands up, up, up. They were dying for her to call them. Their eyes pleaded. The selected one would read the prescribed verses. I recognized some of the words, but as I read "pure in heart" in English in my Mateo cinco, I worried they might be in Marco. I hoped I was following along.

Blessed are those who can't speak the language for one day they will get the hang of it.

Yaimi stood and ended class with a little speech that began with the words "practicar compassion." The kids had grown restless and seemed ready to practicar salsa.

A Day in the life

Prior to breakfast, I traipsed around the Luyano campus trying without success to capture some pictures taking advantage of morning light. The light was summery and golden but my pictures turned out flat and uninteresting.

Breakfast was not. As usual, we relished fresh pineapple, guava, bananas, frothy fruit drinks, small shots of hot café, breakfast 'hotdogs', an egg scramble, bread, cold water, and hot sweet milk.

Conversation wasn't so great because I had to sit next to Daniel. Ha, ha. He's getting

pretty good at 'busting' me. I've been treating him with kid gloves. The gloves will come off at lunch. In my world, joking and a hand on the shoulder means familiarity, friendship, and love. Hermanamiento.

We piled onto the bus—our rickety, old friend—for a 30-minute drive to Santa Maria del Mar. Robert was the first soul into the ocean. I was the last. We bobbed around as white as fish bellies in seldom used swim trunks. The deeper water was blue. At the beach, turquoise waves broke into pearl foam. Midway between the beach and the horizon the blues blended into a color I cannot describe, and in midwinter could hardly believe.

Katerine and Norco are our friendly hosts. Katerine and her twins are moving soon to England. I told her she would miss her Cuba sun and Cuba warm. There's an ocean in England and the same sun, but there is no scene comparable to this. Cambridge is filled with wonders, but not Cuba's.

At the Restaurante Costarenas a hundred yards from the beach, we sat outdoors beneath a high tarp. By now, our pink skin needed protection from the bright sun. Katerine, Robert, and I ordered cervezas nacionales. Norco ordered a coke. Judi and Rachel ordered rum and cokes; when the drinks appeared with ice in them, they became immediately alarmed and asked the waiter to take the ice out; nothing poses as egregious a threat to intestinal health as a cube of local ice. Amiably, he returned the drinks sans ice but with more rum. Soon Judi and Rachel were laughing loudly and talking with their hands like native Cubans.

The waiter thought my and Rachel's pizza was to be an appetizer for the table and the paella was for everyone, which is why we ended up with two whole pizzas and six paellas, a heck of a lunch for just six of us.

I used Judi's Spanish-English dictionary to

shape nonsense sentences, which amused Norco and Katerine. I liked hearing them laugh and watching their faces twist up with delighted smiles. Maybe they were being polite. "Dessert with sugar in a plates," I said, "to bring happiness to the peoples of the world." And, "I stamp (sellar) a jungle (selva) with a traffic light (semaforo)." They didn't know what I was talking about and nobody cared. The laughter seemed meaning enough.

Towards the end of lunch two men approached with congas and a nylon stringed guitar. They regaled us with an impromptu concert. Nothing quickens one's pulse like music, especially music well-played, as this was. Spanish speakers in the small crowd of diners—there were maybe ten of them—laughed at the same times. Those of us who didn't speak Spanish missed the joke, and I told Katrine when we walked to the van later that I wondered if the singers had been making fun of us gringos. On the contrary, she said. They were singing about America.

I blushed with shame.

I dozed on the bus to the chatter of the others. When we returned to Luyano, we retreated to showers and naps. Marilyn, we were told, would take us to Old Havana tonight.

We spilled out of our rooms to the patio for reading and conversation. Oswaldo ("not Lee Harvey," he insisted), Vladimir, Marilyn, Daniel, Hector, and Rosita's husband all dropped by for afternoon salutations. As the afternoon eased towards evening, we watched the old women in white shirts congregate in the compound for Tai Chi. We talked about joining them, and then we did. We stood up and formed a ragged line behind them. We stretched, massaged our faces with our finger tips, touched our toes (or tried), stood on our toes, pointed our toes, and bent our necks and arms in every direction. The women were flexible and could stand on one foot like flamencos, which is to say they were

perfectly balanced. These gentle contortions relaxed me, though made me feel a little like a beached whale as I was the most awkward of our nimble group. At least I was a relaxed beached whale.

These centering movements took us to another good dinner—this time shrimp creole, salad, baked plantains, and a creamy yellow soup. Daniel arrived late with a six pack of cold Bucanero Cervezas. Cheers!

Friday evening was a letdown, one for which, I guess, we were due. Everything else all week had been so amazing. You can't have one amazing experience after another forever. Carlos faithfully dropped us off at the Iglesia San Francisco in the heart of Old Town Havana. Marilyn, our faithful guide from Luyano, took us through dark alleys until we stepped out onto the wide plaza. We watched a street band play a song, strolled in a circle, sat down at tables on the plaza and tried ordering dessert but they only sold booze, so we got up, walked around in another circle, then found ourselves in a chic second story restaurante that, to our happiness, served ice cream and flan. The cigar smokers in the small club shared their secondhand smoke. The piped-in muzak was too loud and lacked the soul of the tunes outside. Even in the third world one can be beset by first world problems.

We did devotionals back at the church. Sitting on the patio in perfect weather refreshed me. The stray cats moaned their discontent, however. Maybe one was in heat. Maybe one wasn't thrilled with our interpretation of Hebrews.

To be continued...

Calling All Cuba Partners - Invitation to Visit Luyano Presbyterian

Matt and Rachel Matthews and Lizz Pippin will be visiting our sister church, Luyano Presbyterian Church in Havana, Cuba, May 25-June 1. Anyone who has previously attended a Cuba Study can go.

If you want to go, we will need an RSVP soon to set up a couple of informational travel meetings, get copies of your passport page and get a solid number of participants so we can purchase tickets.

If you have not attended a Cuba Study before but really want to go, contact **Rachel Matthews** to explore a possible Cuba study group.

Finance

Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE
MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

Contributions

Contributions in January were \$15.2K more than in 2019 but \$17.8K below the budget at \$59.7K. These figures include prepaid pledges (those paid in the year prior to the budget year) that are pro-rated over the year with 1/12 added to each month's contributions. Including all revenue sources, including prepaid pledges, at the conclusion of January we have received 21.1% of the expected 2020 revenue.

Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$5.1K above the budget at \$94.5K and \$26.9K above 2019. At 8.3% through the year we have experienced 8.8% of the expected 2020 expenses.

Balance

Considering all sources, revenue for the year exceeds expenses by \$123.4K. This is \$37.9K better than at this time last year and is due to \$61.9K more in prepaid pledges this year.

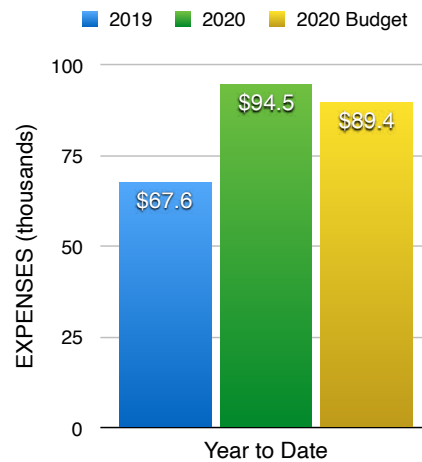
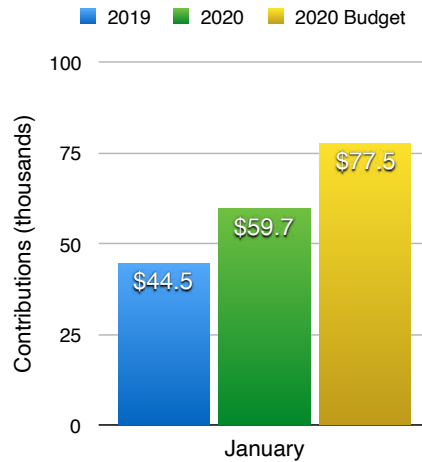
Stewardship 2020 Update

BY BYRON KEMPER,
2020 STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR
BYRONKEM@ILLINOIS.EDU

Thank you to all who have prayerfully considered your financial commitments to our Church and have submitted your pledges for 2020. As of February 3, our pledge total was \$815,982 with 189 pledging units (individuals and families).

The good news is the amount and number of pledge units is higher than for 2019 so that each has increased in both 2019 and 2020 after successive declines in 2017 and 2018. The bad news is that we are still \$24,018 short of the goal in our 2020 budget for pledges. If you planned to pledge, but it fell through the cracks, there is still time. Just let Marcia in the office know. If you have already pledged, please prayerfully consider if you can increase your pledge to help us close the gap.

Complete pledge information will be helpful for the Finance Committee and Session as they consider adjusting the budget based on the pledged amounts.





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

www.firstpres.church

Sunday:

9 AM Worship

10:15 AM Sunday School and Adult Education

11:15 AM Worship

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 FerrerAudio-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.