



The Heart of Mission

First Presbyterian Church Champaign

March 27, 2020

It has only been a week since the last Heart of Missions went out; however, our mission partners are faithfully trying to get information to their supporters. “It only takes a spark to keep the fire going,” as the song says. You will notice the stained glass windows above from our sanctuary. As you leave the sanctuary, looking at these windows, you enter the mission field. Friends, may they remind you of the good news and intercessions you have to share in your neighborhood! I begin this newsletter with News from around Champaign-Urbana and follow with more global news from our PC(USA) mission coworkers and other world missions we support here at First Presbyterian Church Champaign.

Peace to you all,

Rachel Matthews, Temporary Mission Coordinator

First Presbyterian Church Champaign

NEWS AROUND CHAMPAIGN URBANA

I invite you to friend all of the agencies on Facebook and check out their latest posts. I have gathered information from several of their newsletters and posts. Two agencies that I have not heard from this week but we still want to keep

in our prayers are **EMPTY TOMB, INC** and **JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY**.

CANAAN S.A.F.E. HOUSE

On March 19 the men of Canaan S.A.F.E. house helped The Vineyard Church with their Hope Center food pantry drive drop offs. We rejoice with them that they could offer help in the midst of this crisis.

CANTEEN RUN - Reminder that Canteen Run has a website for more information. <http://www.cucanteenrun.org/>

COURAGE CONNECTION

From their website: *Due to the spread of COVID-19, we are no longer accepting in-kind donations without being approved by the phone first. This decision took effect on Friday, March 13th and will remain in effect until further notice. Please do not bring donations to either location. We are grateful for your support and partnership. However, your health and safety, as well as the safety of others, is more important to us. A great way to help is to consider mailing us gift cards from local restaurants and grocery stores. It's a good way to help the community and the residents of Courage Connection. Monetary donations are always needed and welcomed.*

*Please remember if you or someone you love are in need of help, you may call **Courage Connection's 24-hour Domestic Violence HOTLINE 1-877-384-4390**, we are open, and are able to provide assistance. If you are in danger please call 911. For those that are in need of shelter, if you have not been feeling well or have signs of illness, please tell the advocate assisting you. Disclosing this information will allow us the opportunity to take the proper precautions to ensure everyone's safety and health. courageconnection.org*

CU at HOME

Thank you for joining us in prayer!

Each Thursday is a special day of prayer for our ministry. Would you consider fasting in some way (from food, television, or the computer) and praying during that time for C-U at Home? The work that we do is founded on prayer! Below is a list of this week's current prayers and praises.

As a reminder, the services we provide to our friends without an address are deemed "essential services" and we remain committed to serving those in need during this COVID-19 situation. Our Phoenix Drop-In Center hours have EXPANDED and we are now open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm and Sat/Sun 1pm-4pm.

Our men's emergency shelter remains operational and is serving 50 men/night on average!

Each weekday we are also taking time at 10am to pause with our staff, volunteers, and friends to pray specifically for the needs of the day. Would you consider joining us in spirit during that 10am time slot and pray? THANK YOU!

Prayer

- Would you join us in prayer for our community, state, and national leaders that God would give them wisdom during this uncertain time around our nation? We pray God's peace, comfort, and guidance on all those in positions of leadership!
- Please pray for an overwhelming sense of patience and grace to envelop our staff and our friends on the street as we work together to keep each other safe and healthy.
- Would you also pray for a friend who has relapsed but is currently back in treatment and wanting to make a positive change in his life?

Praise

- Thank you God for all of our friends without an address who continue to step up BIG and help out with cleaning and sanitizing around the Phoenix every hour! What a blessing!
- Praise the Lord for the men, women, and family in our transitional housing program who continue to thrive, gain employment, and save money even during this crazy time!
- Praise to Jesus for community partners like the Champaign Park District who have opened the doors of the Douglass Center Gym for us to use as a temporary home for the men's shelter. "Six feet of spacing" is a little too big for our facility but the Park District stepped up and allowed us to use the gym free of charge!

DREAAM

DREAAM youth and children are at sheltering at home with the rest of us. And, DREAAM is using this time to partner and work with other agencies like Courage Connection and Head Start to help the needs of the youth and children of DREAAM and their families. The bandwidth this week has been burning! Check out their Facebook page because they posted some activities for children to do while they are at home.

FAITH IN ACTION

We are partnering with *Faith in Action*, Piattran, County Market, JTA Foods, Kirby RX, Lynn's Family Pharmacy, and Walgreens to provide food and medicine to those in Piatt county over the age of 65.

On March 24, we had our first successful grocery shopping day Monday and today we had our first prescription deliveries. Both went very smooth. Thank you to Piattran and Piatt County Services for Seniors and our AWESOME volunteers for getting everyone's orders out and delivered.

Please, if you know any senior in the county that could use this service, have them contact us at 217-762-7575 ext 2 or ext 1. We are ready to help.

Please read the attached flyer and call with any questions! 217-762-7575 ext 1 or 2.
#COVID19 #Seniors #stayhealthy



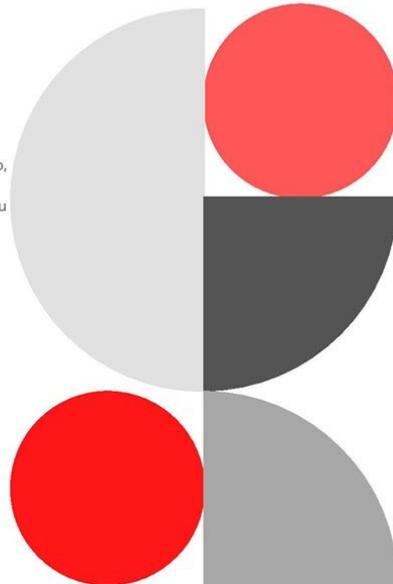
Grocery and Medication Delivery- 65+

Piatt County Faith in Action, Piatt County Services for Seniors, and Piattran have teamed up with County Market in Monticello, JTA in Bement, Walgreen's Pharmacy, Kirby Pharmacy, and Lynn's Pharmacy to bring you what you need to all of Piatt County.

- 1. Must be 65 or older
- 2. Orders must be placed by 11 am to Leanne or Megan
- 3. No alcohol or tobacco products

From now until March 31*

Please contact Leanne or Megan at
217-762-7575 ext 1 or 2
for more information



THE REFUGEE CENTER

Due to concerns about COVID-19, The Refugee Center will only see clients by appointment. Please call 217-344-8455 to leave a message. A staff member will return your call. We are working by

computer and telephone as much as possible over the next several weeks. Thank you for your cooperation.

RESTORATION URBAN MINISTRY

Although Bible studies were cancelled due to the Shelter in Place order, R.U.M has kept their spirits high with a live online concert with Fred Hamon through Connected Church and Navarrow Wright.

SALT & LIGHT

Shop at Salt and Light First

Salt and Light has about 80% of what you may need for groceries at a good price and in an uncrowded environment. Shopping there helps to feed and employ those who lack food security.

Location is 1819 S. Philo Rd., Urbana. Hours are Monday to Saturday from 8:00-6:00. Elderly and other high risk shoppers have reserved time from 9:00-10:00. Sunday hours are 11:00 to 5:00.

Beginning March 21st and ending when restrictions are lifted:

- *Our Champaign location will remain closed,*
- *Our Urbana grocery store will be open with limited hours. Monday through Saturday 8am-6pm. Sunday 11am to 5pm.*
- *8am-10am shopping, Monday through Saturday, will be reserved for senior citizens and at-risk individuals.*
- *Donations of goods will be accepted Monday through Saturday, 8am to 6pm, at the back of our Urbana store. There are bins located outside for your convenience. Self serve only at this time. No donations of goods can be accepted inside the store.*
- *No outside volunteers.*
- *Computer lab will be closed.*

This is a critical time for our mission and for those we serve. You can help by bringing your donation of goods during the designated times above, shopping for groceries with us, and donating online at <https://donate.onecause.com/saltandlight2020>.

Our PC(USA) Mission CoWorkers

First Presbyterian Church Champaign specifically supports several Mission Coworkers

You can read more about them or find emails to connect directly with them at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mission-connections/>. You can also try to friend them on Facebook. This is where I get the most up-to-date information.

Mark Adams and Miriam Maidonado Escobar (Mexico) -

Frontera de Cristo

March 24 at 1:15 AM ·

While the border has not been fully closed and is open to essential travel, families fleeing extreme violence and seeking asylum is not considered essential travel by our government and thus the border has been closed to those seeking to petition at ports of entry through the legal process for at least 30 days.

The good news is that our partners at the CAME (Centro de Atención Para Migrantes) are able to provide gospel hospitality to the families who were next in line to petition and were staying in the tent by the port of entry. Two men will remain in the tent to make sure that the tent is not vandalized and the Migrant Resource Center will continue to provide them support under the increased hygiene and physical distancing policies.

Another piece of good news is that the Episcopal Church in Douglas (one of two in Douglas that provides meals for the families seeking asylum) contacted us and wanted to know how they could continue providing meals. We shared with them that the community here in AP (Agua Prieta) would provide the meals until the border and virus situation abated. They said can we at least provide money to participate with our sisters and brothers in AP. The leader had just lost her husband and said: "We had fifty wonderful years and it is hard, but my husband would not want me just to sit around and cry all the time. "

It is heartening that even in such an uncertain time and a time of loss, so many people keep asking the question: "How do we love our neighbor as ourselves?"

Pics: The Tent at the Port of Entry; Team from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (Hilda, Dennis and Pastor Rosa) at MRC (Migrant Resource Center) bringing lunch (before the virus and border closure to asylum families).

Farsijana Adeney-Risakotta (Indonesia) - In addition to being a PC(USA) mission coworker, Farsijana works at Duta Wacana Christian University preparing Christian leaders to serve the church in the world's largest Muslim country. Farsijana teaches students, especially women, about social entrepreneurship. She and her husband Bernie, a retired mission coworker, are committed to justice and peace, and share their home as a center for hospitality and creative reconciliation with the community. The university has been affected by Covid-19 as we all have. In order to protect the students and employees, the university issued a work from home policy starting March 24, 2020. The university facebook page has pictures posted of them sanitizing the university buildings.

Mission Coworkers in Africa: Although I have not heard from either of our mission coworker couples in Africa in quite some time, I have been keeping up with the BBC news. The reports are the same as they are all over the world. Governments have restricted travel and the cases of Covid-19 are rising as are deaths related to the virus. Please keep our mission coworkers in your prayers: **Jeff and Christi Boyd (Central Africa) and Bob and Kristi Rice (South Sudan).**

Jo Ella Holman (Carribbean) and (Cuba Partner Network) - Last week I shared that Jo Ella Holman had returned home to the United States but things change rapidly.



She has now decided to stay in the Dominican Republic. Wednesday she wrote on Facebook,

*Friends and family,
I decided not to return to the U.S. at this time and am supported in that decision by my World Mission colleagues, my colleagues in the church partner in the DR and by my family. We are all in agreement that the risks of traveling*

to and being in the U.S. are greater at the present time than is staying where I am. I realize it may be for quite awhile. I am set up in my apartment in the DR with what I need and have access to supplies and food. And, importantly, I have good neighbors and we are looking out for one another.

After several days of reflection, prayer and conversations with many friends, family and colleagues, I am at peace that this is where God would have me be at this moment, continuing to accompany this people and these communities of faith even as they accompany me in remaining here.

To me, this is partnership-in-mission—mutual solidarity and service together for our common good. It is a common witness to reflect the values of God's reign, our "kinship" one with another. I pray that I will receive the grace to do my small part in this corner of the world, even at a distance. I know my mission colleagues who have chosen to go to their home areas will also do what they are able to do within those communities and the wider Church, also witnessing to the God of Life and Love. And I know that you, too, in the place God has planted you, will also find ways to show God's love.

My prayers are with all of you as I ask your prayers for me and the people and churches of the Caribbean as we all seek to meet this crisis in ways that bring honor and glory to God.

"The building is closed, but the Church is alive in our homes."

Kemmerer Village (and Camp Carew)

We keep Kemmerer Village in our prayers. This is a tough time for their young people. Chaplain Joel Jackle-Hugh shared recently, "Right now Kemmerer Village is on a light lock down. With school not being in session the residents mostly stay in their cottages with no off-campus trips. Recreational activities are still occurring through out the week but they are limited to small groups. I am still leading Youth Group on Wednesdays and worship on Sundays only because it's more of a sealed environment. Also, all kids that can go home went home during this pandemic but most of the kids still on campus are foster kids with no other place to go.

"For the foster care side, most caseworkers are office bound. Caseworkers can only video chat their foster families and must do this 1x per week. Caseworkers are also isolating themselves in their various offices and not having large group meetings. Parent/Child visits are also occurring via video chat.

"DCFS is constantly changing the guidelines for the pandemic so it has been a challenge to try to keep up.

Lifeline Pilots

Lifeline Pilots continue to fly cancer patients to and from treatment centers in our region. Like them on Facebook to see some of the ongoing work and videos they are sharing. There are even some neat activities for children and families cooped up because of COVID 19! <https://lifelinepilots.org/>

Marion Medical Mission, Marion, IL

Just yesterday on their Facebook page, Marion Medical Mission posted how they are continuing ministry to Africa. Malawi struggles with more than COVID 19 right now:

Northern Malawi has been hit by devastating floods, destroying homes and crops. Thousands are starving. Within 3 days of the request, MMM delivered 850 bags of maize, feeding 1700 families for a month! Join us! Feed 2 families for a month for \$30.
<http://ow.ly/jQJn50yWpPt>

Mission Aviation Fellowship

Jeannie Snoeyink heard from Ken and Nancy from MAF -

Good to hear from you! We are also under a “stay at home order” in Idaho. So I am now working from home and have set up an office in our spare bedroom. Nancy and I are doing well as we isolate for an unknown period of time. I’m diving into a project I have been wanting to do for years. I’m developing Inside-Out Safety eLearning courses that can be taken by our MAF overseas staff via the internet. This has become important, as many countries MAF serves in, are requiring our staff to have Human Factor training once a year. The Inside-Out Safety eLearning courses will meet this need and keep the airplanes flying.

I was scheduled to head to Brazil in April, but that obviously has been canceled along with all work related travel, at least through May. As you can imagine the pandemic has had a profound impact on MAF operations around the world. Most MAF flight field operations have been drastically cut back as many countries try to stop the spread of the virus. Most headquarters staff here in Idaho are working from home. Only staff essential to keep overseas operations are going into the office. All flight and maintenance training at Headquarters has also stopped. Once this crisis passes, I am sure MAF will be very busy flying again.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support! Nancy and I appreciate it.

May God’s peace, that passes all understanding, be with you in these unrepresented times,

Kent & Nancy

From MAF Facebook page:

There's a weird tension around the world right now. In Idaho (where our headquarters are), our Governor just ordered a 21 day shelter-in-place, much like many other states around the country. So, working from home will be our temporary new normal.

So, how do you balance life coming to a halt while also still moving? I've been shooting off emails, posting on our social platforms (we're even running our Plane Maintenance campaign), messaging my team about projects like life is normal. Yet, I look outside my house and it's quiet. You might be feeling the same way. There's a tension of life standing still while life is moving. Weird.

Many of you, of your friends, of your family might be feeling a little heavy, a little worried, or that weird tension. As I look outside, amidst the quiet sidewalks that are normally busy with people walking to the nearby restaurants, coffee shops, and parks, I see past a budding tree in my front yard. And it's a gentle reminder that God is still Who He says He is. That during this pandemic, nature is still worshipping Him.

One of my favorite worship songs over the last few years is "So Will I (100 Billion X)" by Hillsong United. Honestly, there's not one line in that song that doesn't resonate to some part of me, but two lines seem to speak to this feeling - "All nature and science follow the sound of Your voice." As we are in this weird tension of life, nature still follows what God created. Spring is coming. Flowers and trees are blooming. Animals are migrating. There's some normal in the abnormal.

Be encouraged today. Find your budding tree, your thing that shows that God is still on the Throne (because He absolutely is), that He is still in control (because He absolutely is). And while you're at it, look up James 4:8. It's applicable, and might give you a good laugh.

-Nathan

[#iflyMAF](#) [#75YearsofMAF](#) [#COVID19](#) [#CoronaVirus](#)

Opportunity International

From OI Facebook page:

Like all of our brothers and sisters around the world, we are in an unprecedented season as we face COVID-19. As we continue to pray for our clients and partners in the field and prepare them and ourselves here at home, please know that we are also thinking of and praying for each of you and your families. Your safety and well-being are foremost in our thoughts.

As always, we remain in close contact with our partners and programs in the field. We know that each country is handling the situation differently—to learn more about what steps we're taking, please visit <https://bit.ly/2UiMvh8>



Friends of Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan



Now more than ever it is important for our community to stay connected! One step that FOPEB (Friends of Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan) is taking is to have our Mission Representative, Veda Gill, reach out LIVE to our supporters on a regular basis with her inspirational messages, as well as share her stories that bind us all to this call to serve. We will share more about this as we receive the information.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS):

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA)

Every year at Easter First Presbyterian Church Champaign receives the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. You might remember this one as the one where children collect money in the fish banks which are collected on Sunday Morning. Of course, all people can participate in this offering. Part of what OGHS goes to is the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program. Good news during this pandemic is the response of the PDA can be found in an article on the PC(USA) Mission Agency website. I've included excerpts below:

This week, [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance \(PDA\)](#) announced it has pulled more than \$2 million out of reserves it uses to supplement unsupported or under-supported disaster responses – a fund fortified in part by gifts to [One Great Hour of Sharing](#) – to help aid response to the coronavirus pandemic. The funds will be divided between international response and grants to mid councils (synods and presbyteries) and their congregations to support work in response to and impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

PDA will first consider requests for emergency grants, which can be made through mid councils, for approval by April 10. Then it will begin considering applications for short- and long-term recovery grants, also through mid-councils, which will begin to be distributed in early May. Like any

other disaster, recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 will be long-term, and PDA is planning for that.

Emergency grants are available to support congregations, presbytery partners, and trusted community partners. Priorities for the grants include:

- The immediate unmet needs of those at risk due to the impact of COVID-19, such as feeding, housing, and/or access to healthcare
- Congregations and/or communities that have historically been marginalized
- The emergent or unmet needs of refugees, asylum seekers or other vulnerable immigrant populations due to the impact of COVID-19
- Congregations or partners at risk of suspending a vital service to vulnerable members of the community
- Programs and initiatives that support the well-being of faith leaders.

Short- and long-term recovery criteria include:

- Support to mid councils in the most severely impacted states
- Communities unfairly disadvantaged due to discrimination and/or limited or no access to recovery resources
- Support for refugees or asylum seekers who may be negatively impacted due to limited or no access to other recovery resources
- Support for developing new approaches and activities with refugees and asylum seekers due to COVID-19 policies and related constraints
- Support for activities and programs that address the underlying systemic and structural forces contributing to the unjust impact of COVID-19 on certain congregations and/or communities
- Support for activities/programs focused on long-term sustainable solutions and designed to mitigate the adverse impact of a future event.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/pda-ready-to-make-covid-19-grants-thanks-to-one-great-hour-of-sharing/>



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 W. Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820
217-356-7238

info@firstpres.church