

August 2020



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Allow Yourself to Laugh

SHARED BY MATT MATTHEWS

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Dear Friends,

Rev. Gulley gives us permission to run his essay in our newsletter. There's plenty to think about. Allow yourself to laugh when you read this. And to think.

Bless you all,

Matt Matthews

First Presbyterian Church Champaign

A (cool) congregation of the PC(USA)

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WWW.MattMatthewsCreative.Com

Philip Gulley is a Quaker pastor, writer, and speaker from Danville, Indiana. Gulley has written 22 books, including the Harmony series recounting life in the eccentric Quaker community of Harmony, Indiana and the best-selling Porch Talk essay series. Gulley's memoir, I Love You, Miss Huddleston: And Other Inappropriate Longings of My Indiana Childhood, was a finalist for the Thurber Prize for American Humor.

We've been babysitting our granddaughter Madeline this summer, while her mother and father work. Her other grandparents attend a conservative Baptist church and have made some effort to bring Madeline around to their way of thinking, so I've taught Madeline to say, "That's crazy talk," anytime her other grandparents talk to her about religion. But it doesn't seem to be working, because the other church gives her candy, which is unfair. I mean, what kid can resist that? I'd become a Jehovah's Witness if they passed out Tootsie Rolls. Fortunately, Madeline spends the night at our house a couple times a month and we read her bedtime stories about Eugene Debs and Rosa Parks in an effort to properly educate her.

Like all grandfathers, I think my granddaughter is exceptionally bright. But in other ways, she's still a 5 year-old girl, prone to the same characteristics of all young children. She was with us the other day and wanted to go swimming at Mike and Rita Goss's house, but we couldn't take her and she cried and flung herself around

continued on the next page

Coping in COVID Times

Getting Out of the House – Travel

Claudia & Bob Kirby

During our time of sheltering, Claudia and I find relief in covid safe travel adventures. We enjoy leisurely drives through the country side. Homer Lake, Kickapoo and Kennekuk to the east; Lake of the Woods, River Bend and Allerton to the west and Arthur to the Southwest are favorites. There are few cars to speed you up and the drives are comfortably short. Be sure to stop at the tiny Amish produce stand just this side of Atwood.

The green corn stands tall and the flatland rolls just a little. The plants at the road sides are beginning to develop those beautiful calming shades of yellow and brown and gold which will deepen further in fall while yellow and blue flowers are still in summer display.

Another big travel adventure is to Urbana each Saturday morning to shop at Salt and Light. The 8 AM hour is reserved for the high risk, but even later there are few shoppers. Masks are mandatory for shoppers, employees and volunteers and the carts and shelves are clean. We can quickly find 80% of our grocery needs, save money and help one of our local mission partners all in about 30 minutes. We are happy to shop for you and bring groceries to your door if you give us your list on Friday afternoon.

Please send your suggestions for *Coping in Covid Times* to Marcia for our next newsletter.

the room and collapsed on the floor in a crumpled, soggy heap. It reminded me of myself last week when I wanted pizza for supper and Joan made me eat spinach and asparagus instead.

We've been thinking about the traits and characteristics of grown-up people. We defined a grown-up as someone who is consciously aware of their feelings and takes responsibility for their decisions and actions. Let's add to our list by saying grown-up people exhibit control of their emotions. They are able to govern their responses, acting thoughtfully and appropriately even in, perhaps especially in, moments of resentment and anger.

I've been thinking about anger this week. Some weeks I think about joy and beauty and goodness, but this week I've been thinking about anger. When I was young, I was taught that anger was wrong, that it was destructive, and the ruination of many a good person. I was taught to be calm, to quickly forgive, to never bear a grudge. This was easy to do, because nothing grievously wrong had ever been done to me. I was a white male in a culture that prized both whites and males. I came from a middle class family in a culture that valued the middle class. I was Christian in a nation often referred to as a Christian nation. So when I was advised by my parents and my pastors and my teachers not to be angry, it was easy to take their advice, since I had nothing to be angry about. And because life was wonderful and fair and blessed for me, I assumed it was that way for everyone. I wondered how anyone could be angry, and when I would meet an angry person, I would think to myself, "What do they have to be angry about?"

I was down at the farm this past Wednesday evening and drove through the country to a little town for supper. The town has a population of 728, all of them white according to the United States Census Bureau. Not one black, not one Hispanic, not one Asian. Five townsmen were seated in the bar complaining

about black people, blaming their problems on the Black Lives Matter movement. I wondered if they even know any black people. I almost asked them that, but since there were five of them and only one of me, I decided to practice Quaker silence. But the young waiter, who looked like he'd been baling hay all summer, was having none of it. The more they talked, the angrier he became. Finally, he said, "I don't want to hear that nonsense. Knock it off or leave." Much to my surprise, they knocked it off and changed the subject. Both the men and the waiter were angry, but the men used their anger for ill, and the waiter used his anger for good.

Lyman Abbott, the pastor of the Congregational Church in Terre Haute during the Civil War, once said, "Do not teach your children never to be angry; teach them how to be angry." A good measure of our morality is what makes us angry. If we're angry because our sense of privilege and entitlement has been violated, that's a good indication our anger is inappropriate, harmful, and even hateful. But if we're angry because someone at the bottom of the ladder has been kicked down even lower, that means we still have a conscience, that our sense of morality has not been corrupted and corroded by privilege. Indeed, sometimes being angry is the holiest emotion we can have.

Grown-up people know how to be angry. They know which situations and circumstances merit their anger, and which do not. They use anger to further the cause of justice. Jesus did this. When the moneychangers had taken over the one area of the Temple reserved for Gentiles, the one court set aside for the outsiders, he took whip in hand and drove them out. That is anger in the cause of justice. When people gather in cities and towns across America to decry the abuse of Black people, that is anger in the cause of justice. When a black man is assaulted at Lake Monroe and the county prosecutor receives over 30,000 emails and 10,000 phone calls demanding action, that is anger in the cause of justice.

Do not teach your children never to be angry. Teach them how to be angry.

When Joan and I married, her mother told us never to go to bed mad. Maybe someone gave you that advice too. But I like Phyllis Diller's advice, who said, "Never go to bed mad. Stay up and fight."

When the sun of justice has set and the day has darkened and we are weary, we nevertheless need to stay up and fight.

Friends, what will you stay up and fight for this week?

Request from Presbytery

The Presbytery Committee on Representation is asking for your help! They are in the process of revamping and re-energizing the process for filling committee positions of the Presbytery. They are developing new and improved committee descriptions to better capture the nature of the work and time requirement. The work of the Presbytery is constantly changing – Zoom meetings rather than in-person meetings, sharing documents and files electronically rather than just in paper format, ways to serve that are not just on weekdays, etc.

At this time, they are looking for names and contact information of elders (not just those currently serving) that might be interested, gifted, willing and able to serve the Presbytery.

After they have gathered information, Presbytery reps will be reaching out to the elders with additional information in the hopes of engaging them in some aspect of the work of the Presbytery.

If interested, please contact the church office by August 15. We will send you a form to complete for the Presbytery.

Employee Highlights

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

As most of you have experienced, we have a fantastic staff here at First Presbyterian Church. Some staff members are well known to you by the roles they play in our church while others function more behind the scenes. Regardless, many of us do not know much about their personal lives. This month HR is featuring behind the scenes information that **Jeanette Pyne**, ESL (English as a Second Language) Director and **Mindy Watts-Ellis**, Director of CYF (Children, Youth and Family), now share with all of you.

Jeanette Pyne joined our church staff in October of 2017 as ESL Director. She leads, develops, and maintains a wonderful program for people in our community who wish to learn English. She has continued the training of a great group of tutors both from our church and also from the wider community. She further developed a curriculum that works very well and has figured out a way for tutors and students to continue to meet on Zoom during these times of COVID 19. Our ESL Program has created a family community that cares for each other as well as one that learns from each other. Jeanette's goal is for our ESL program to be the best version it can possibly be.

Jeanette and her husband Ben were blessed by the arrival of their delightful son Judah, just over one year ago. She sometimes shares darling pictures of Judah on Facebook. In her spare time Jeanette watches some TV shows but her favorite hobby is learning new things and that's why she loves listening to podcasts and audiobooks, while at the same time accomplishing other tasks. Her favorite podcast is "Stuff You Should Know", which provides an overview about information on various topics ranging from "how to compost" to "what is the KGB?" Currently Jeanette is listening to an audiobook titled *An African American and Latinx History of the United States*. Her favorite movie is "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy that she

feels has great acting, music and story line. Her favorite band is "Tim Be Told", an Indie band with Asian American musicians.

Jeanette had a favorite vacation several years ago when Ben and she were able to vacation with friends on Thailand's Ko Tao Island, enjoying a wonderful beach, along with great food and entertainment.

An interesting fact that Jeanette thinks many of you may not realize is that she is half Taiwanese and half Caucasian. She grew up in Schaumburg, IL with her parents and her younger sister where they celebrated their Taiwanese and American holidays and enjoyed both Chinese and American foods. She didn't realize that there were people in the U.S. that weren't exposed to Asian food until she met Ben who had grown up without tofu and any other Asian foods. Now Jeanette looks for any tasty recipe and they both enjoy Indian, American, Mexican, and Chinese cuisines. However, if you want to tempt Jeanette, all you need to do is offer her mint chocolate chip ice cream or some dark chocolate.

Melinda (Mindy) Watts-Ellis joined our staff in August of 2016. She has become such an integral part of our church that it's hard for us to remember that she has only been with us for 4 years. As Director of CYF, we now see her and her faithful companion JIP, in conversation with Pastor Matt every Sunday. Besides this, she develops and implements the educational, fellowship, and volunteer service programming opportunities for the children and youth of our church. She is in charge of all aspects of Sunday School and the designing of a youth fellowship program, planning the summer extended mission experience and mission trip, implementing vacation Bible school and overseeing child care.

Mindy lives with her husband, Jamie, who is the Natural Areas Coordinator for U of I, her daughter Autumn, who will be graduating from Parkland this fall, and her son Isaac, who will be a senior at Urbana High School this coming year. Perhaps some of

you remember her 2 featured cats, Snowy and KohKoh, and then of course JIP.

Mindy's artistic life is amazingly rich. She loves to dance and is studying blues dancing, swing dancing, salsa dancing and Black Sheep tribal belly dancing. She likes to sew clothing and costumes. She enjoys reading with a particular emphasis on murder mysteries. This leads right into her acting career with the Champaign Urbana Theater Company Murder Mystery Improvisation group that performs regionally. In this, she has been a murderer, a suspect, and has been murdered by our own **Karin Vermillion**, a fellow actress in the group. Mindy has written a plot that the group should debut when Covid 19 is less active. She trained at the U of I as a visual artist with a BFA in 1996. She painted a mural for the University of Michigan in Alice Lloyd Hall in 2002 that is designated with her named plaque next to it. And then there are her puppetry skills that have culminated this year with her companion JIP. To top this all off, she enjoys participating in living history events with her family. They all have a special interest in the time period of the French and Indian War.

Mindy loves a wide variety of music and particularly enjoys listening to WEFT locally because of the great genres of music that are played throughout the week as she is always guaranteed to hear something new and different. She likes a lot of movies but often quotes things from "The Princess Bride".

Mindy has many phenomenal gifts to share with our church and community. However, with our more limited talents, if we wish to tempt Mindy, all we have to do is bake her some fudgy brownies and get them to her when they are still warm from the oven.

Organist Search

BY KARIN VERMILLION, ORGANIST SEARCH TEAM
KARINVERMILLION@GMAIL.COM

FPCC will greatly miss **Richard Rossi**, but we wish him all the best as he moves on to his next calling. In order to fill his position, an Organist Search Committee has been formed, consisting of **Joe Grant, Ann Webbink, Mike Havey, and Karin Vermillion**. With guidance from the HR Committee, this group has crafted an updated job description and is currently examining methods of advertising the position.

If you have any questions or input for the committee, please contact either **Ann Webbink** (anweb2@yahoo.com) or **Karin Vermillion** (karinvermillion@gmail.com).

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom!

BY ERIC CORBIN, ASSOCIATE PASTOR
ERIC@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Do you remember the car commercial with the line Zoom, Zoom, Zoom? That word has a different understanding for many of these days. Zoom, Zoom, Zoom – many of us spend much of our time on Zoom lately. In the month of July, our church hosted 77 Zoom meetings, with a total of 578 participants in those meetings, for a total of 33,492 minutes of meeting time for participants! And those numbers don't include ESL classes, which are also meeting online. We are adapting to this medium, and I am grateful for all those continuing the ministries of God through this congregation in this new way! Many thanks to **Lizz Pippin** for all of her help in organizing Zoom meetings in the last few months. With her departure, **Marcia Franks** will be taking on primary responsibility for scheduling Zoom meetings for our congregation. If you need a Zoom meeting set up for your committee or group, please email zoom@firstpres.church and Marcia will help get you going. (Using this address for Zoom will help us to organize our Zoom requests, and for me to jump in to help when Marcia

is unavailable.) If you need the link to an existing Zoom meeting, please use that same address (zoom@firstpres.church). Our church calendar has not been quite consistent with actual meetings lately, but Marcia is working to resolve that, so check firstpres.church/calendar for the schedule of meetings. Please note that we do not post Zoom links on our website to help keep our meetings secure.

Often, our Zoom meetings are operating without what Zoom calls a "host." The host has special abilities to mute participants, control screen sharing, remove someone from the meeting (if necessary), and a few other miscellaneous tasks. We are shifting to a new strategy regarding hosts for meetings. If you are the organizer of the meeting, you or someone you delegate can have access to the host controls on an ongoing basis. If you wish to have such access, please email zoom@firstpres.church and we'll get you set up.

Please make sure you are clicking on the correct link for the meeting scheduled at the time. Meeting links will look very similar, but clicking on the wrong link can interfere with other meetings. The meeting name will be displayed when you connect, so if the meeting name isn't correct, check to make sure you have the correct link. If you have any questions about the link, email zoom@firstpres.church.

Thanks so much for learning something new! If you haven't jumped in to a Zoom meeting yet, give it a try. It's pretty easy – after installing the app, you just click a link sent to you for the meeting, and you're in. Let us know if you need assistance! I look forward to seeing you on Zoom!

Worship News

BY JUDI GEISTLINGER, WORSHIP CHAIR
JUDIGEISTLINGER@HOTMAIL.COM

Online Greeters Needed

As you may have noticed during our recent online broadcasts, several church members have recorded greetings and maybe the Call to Worship to be included

in our Sunday morning worship broadcast. We would love to see and hear from YOU.

Those of you with smart phones or a computer with a webcam and microphone can record yourself. If you are willing, just let **Judi Geistlinger** or **Pastor Eric** know and we can walk you through the steps of recording and sending to Pastor Eric for inclusion in our broadcast.

Crafty Types Needed

We would love to have some new banners or drapes to go in front of our banners to aid our visual experience for Sunday worship. We are grateful to **Mindy Watts-Ellis, Rachel Matthews** and **Dave and Suzanne McNattin** for their work in making the lovely banners we have now. We would love to have more, or shapes to add to the green banners we have.

Confirmation Sunday

Throughout this last academic year and over the summer, confirmands have been meeting in person (with snacks) and online (via Zoom) preparing for the step of claiming faith for themselves. Our students are wrapping up their preparations and will be confirmed on Sunday, August 16, during our online worship experience. You will not want to miss meeting and hearing from these wonderful students.

Preparing for In-person Worship

Your Worship Committee has been thinking through details about how to return to in-person worship when the time is deemed safe. We do know that masks will be required, no congregational singing or reciting will be able to happen, and we will keep our distance physically whilst in the sanctuary.

Look for details as they are ready.

Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth & Family Update

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

The confirmation class of 2019-2020 has completed its course of study over Zoom this summer and is ready to be received into membership by the congregation! Our confirmation class will be leading worship for August 16. Joining the church are **Emily Young, Heather Lowe, Cecilia Vermillion, Monique Masengu, and Ellie Laufenberg**. We will welcome **Monique Masengu** by baptism into the faith. Please be sure to tune in to the online worship to share in this special occasion in their faith journeys! There will be a small, socially distanced front lawn luncheon at the church for the

confirmands and teachers only on Sunday, August 16, to celebrate. Many thanks to the leadership team of **Eric Corbin, Judi Geistlinger, and Kathy Schoeffmann**.

Our stay-at-home vacation Bible School has concluded for the summer, but you can still share the website with grandkids and neighbors who might appreciate a virtual travel experience along with craft and game suggestions. The website is firstpres.church/vbs

Sunday School will not resume in person in September as it normally would. We are exploring options for mailing packets to each home and offering a Zoom time to converse and do some virtual activities together. If you are interested in being an online Zoom leader for a small group

of children to share Bible stories and prayers, please contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at mindy@firstpres.church or **Karin Vermillion** at karinvermillion@gmail.com. We are also exploring the idea of setting up neighborhood groups to meet at a nearby park or other outdoor space while the weather allows for some in person interaction for our young disciples and their families. If you are willing to be a "host" for a neighborhood gathering group, please contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** mindy@firstpres.church or **Karin Vermillion** at karinvermillion@gmail.com.

Enjoy God's Work With Help from Members of our Environmental Team



Peace Garden/Pollinator Pocket



Story Garden

Finance

Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE

MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

Contributions

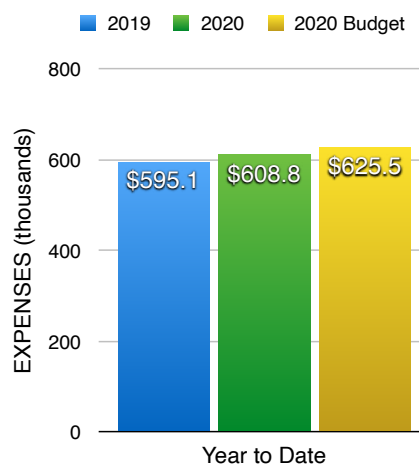
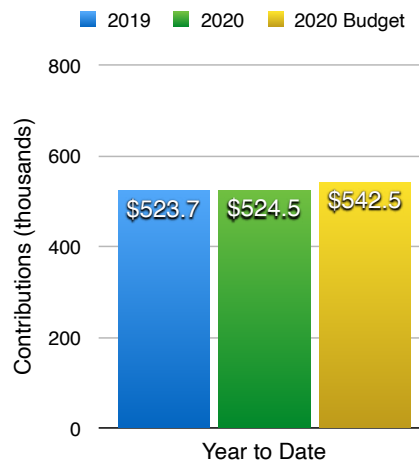
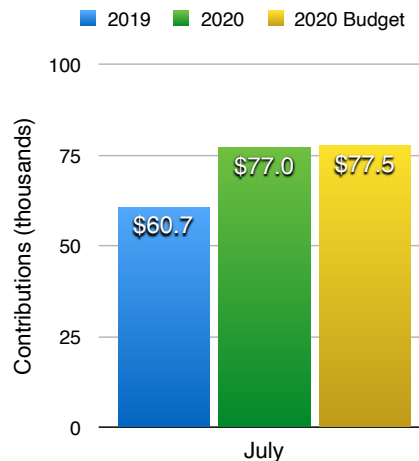
Contributions in July to the Operating Fund were \$16.3K more than in 2019 but \$0.5K below the budget at \$77.0K. The Year to Date total is above last year by \$0.8K but below the budgeted amount by \$18.0K. These figures include prepaid pledges (those paid in the year prior to the budget year) that are prorated over the year with 1/12 added to each month's contributions. Including all revenue sources, at 58.3% through the year, we have received 64.0% of the expected 2020 revenue.

Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$16.7K below the budget at \$608.8K but more than in 2019 by \$13.7K. At 58.3% through the year we have experienced 56.8% of the expected 2020 expenses.

Balance

Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$185.8K which is \$151.8K better than at the end of July in 2019. This figure includes \$61.9K more in prepaid pledges than in 2019 and \$134.2K from the Federal Paycheck Protection Program established by the Federal CARES Act.



What are you most grateful for at First Pres?

Here are some of the responses...

Mission

- Excellent community outreach and ministry
- All the work the "church" does through mission – local and world
- Connects me to fellow Presbys in following thru in mission and other programs
- Church opens to community organizations that need a place to meet – Young Lives, Rug Event, etc.
- ...especially all the outreach our church does
- Presbyterian women – thankful for all our mission
- Compassionate consideration of others
- The different opportunities to serve, especially habitat and mission possible
- Liaisons with community missions, Christian fellowship
- We stand with the vulnerable friends of our community
- Empty tomb ministry
- MISSIONS!!!
- Mission opportunities
- Broad and diverse mission activities
- Missions – Domestic and International
- Opportunity to serve others
- Our commitment to others – Mission
- Community involvement



Nehemiah 8:10:

The joy of the Lord is your strength.

Proverbs 15:15:

All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast.

Jeremiah 31:13:

I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.

2 Chronicles 16:9:

The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.

Helping Hands

BY CLEMMIE ACKERMANN, CHAIR

COLETTA.ACKERMANN@GMAIL.COM

The Presbyterian Women at First Presbyterian has a committee called "Helping Hands". The committee's goal is to check with people in the congregation that might need help with meals or errands for a period of time due to personal or other family events. Examples might be:

- Meals needed after surgery or during an illness
- Help with meals while family is visiting for a funeral service.
- Assistance with grocery or pharmacy pick-ups.

One of our biggest challenges is knowing about those who might need our services. Please help us out by passing on referrals to Marcia or Patty in the church office or to **Clemmie Ackermann** at coletta.ackermann@gmail.com or at 217-377-7901. The other members of this committee are **Lola Ruthmansdorfer**, **Claudia Kirby** and **Marty Edwards**.



Joys & Concerns

Congratulations to...

- **Parfait Lukau and Nadeige Lumbu** who welcomed a son, **Omraam Lukau**, July 13, 2020. He has an older brother, **Paraclet Lukau**, and sister, **Kermelis Lukau**.

We extend our sympathy to...

- the family and friends of **Louise Allen** who died July 28. Arrangements are pending. In recent years, Mrs. Allen had joined the Philo Presbyterian Church.
- the family and friends of **Vivian Terrill** who died July 24, 2020. Arrangements are pending.
- the family and friends of **Bill Thompson** who died August 1. A graveside service was held August 5, 2020.

Mission Updates

ESL News

BY JEANETTE PYNE, ESL COORDINATOR

JEANETTE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Teaching ESL During a Pandemic

Just like much of what happened with the church, Champaign-Urbana, the US and the world, the First Pres ESL Program discontinued in-person classes in March 2020. We quickly transitioned to online instruction via Zoom to meet the needs of our students.

Such a drastic and abrupt transition meant that it was an adjustment for the tutors and students. Nevertheless, once the summer session began, it seemed like we had found our bearings with using Zoom to teach. Summer session was from June 15th to July 30th. During this time, we had 10 tutors, myself included, and about 40 students registered for summer class. In contrast, in our face-to-face lessons during the summer when we are not in a pandemic, we would normally only have about 15 students who come to class each day. Our class attendance has actually increased online in the pandemic.

One benefit of teaching online is that we have been able to be more flexible with when we offer class, which allows us to schedule class at times when the students are free. Each student is registered for at least 2 classes each week, and we have been able to add a few new students to our online program. Another benefit is that our classes are smaller. Each tutor has anywhere from 2-6 students attending their classes, so they get more attention and specialized instruction.

Online Registration for Class

Currently, our online classes are full, but prospective students can attend a virtual ESL Information Meeting where they can learn more about the program, ask

questions, sign-up on the waiting list, and complete a short interview with Jeanette. They will need to attend one of the online ESL Information Meetings through Zoom on the following days:

- Saturday, August 8th at 9 AM
- Saturday, August 22nd at 9 AM

In order to attend the ESL Information Meeting, students will need to download Zoom and send Jeanette Pyne, the ESL Coordinator, an email to receive the link, meeting ID, and password for the meeting. Jeanette's email is jeanette@firstpres.church. They must email Jeanette for this information to get into the meeting.

Need for More Tutors

Demand is still high for ESL instruction even if it is online. If you are interested in volunteering with the First Pres ESL Program, contact the ESL Coordinator, **Jeanette Pyne**, at jeanette@firstpres.church.

**Have you cleaned out paper files?
Do you have papers that
need to be shredded?
This is for you!**

SHRED DAY - SAFE AND SECURE

**Drop your shredding
by Prospect Bank**

**Wednesday August 26
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

Cuba Partnership Update

BY NANCY PIPPIN, SECRETARY

CUBA PARTNERSHIP STEERING COMMITTEE

NANCYPIPPIN@YAHOO.COM

Thursday, July 23, we met to catch up on current happenings in Cuba and specifically ways to support the brothers and sisters of Luyanó.

Our newest items about Cuba were learning that the government sees the COVID crisis, coupled with more stringent sanctions from the USA and further limiting of remittances to Cuba, to be as devastating to the island as the loss from the economic pullout of the USSR in the 1990's. The Cubans, especially those in urban areas, encounter shortages of basic food stuffs and other supplies. Additionally, the government is allowing the opening of "Dollar Stores". This isn't our favorites Dollar Tree or Dollar General! No! These stores permit purchases in U.S. dollars as

The Heart of Missions Newsletter has been revived during this COVID-19 crisis. Our local and global mission agencies are having to make rapid changes due to shelter in place orders, as well as food and medical supply shortages. The newsletter helps summarize some of what has been in the mission news for our mission workers and agencies during the past week in case you missed it.

You can access The Heart of Missions on the church website under the SERVE tab at firstpres.church/heartofmissions



Mission Possible

Thank you to Bill Gamble, Dave McNattin and Itch Jones for updating our receptionist area to meet COVID requirements

currency. This is a very big change. Also, restaurants can now accept government food cards.

The Covid-19 pandemic appears to be under control on the island at this time. However, the Presbyterian Church in Cuba (IPRC) has requested we refrain from travel to our sister congregations until October at the earliest. Any plans would be contingent on conditions in the sending and receiving countries.

Our First Pres Cuba Partner's trip planned for the spring was cancelled due to the pandemic. We do not plan to travel until spring 2021 at the earliest. Cancelled

travel plans mean that funds and supplies, such as water filters, that we and other Cuba Partner groups typically bring along as part of our travel were not distributed. While unable to get supplies to our sister churches, an opportunity opened up for the PCUSA Cuba Partners Network (PCUSA-CPN) to collect funds and send them to the IPRC in June. These are being used where the IPRC determines they are most urgently needed. Many of our First Pres Cuba Partners contributed to that fund and First Pres office staff quickly processed the contributions. The IPRC, PCUSA-CPN and the First Pres Steering Committee send their thanks to all who helped make that possible.

Based the success of the June effort, the PCUSA-CPN is organizing another effort to send funds. This time there will be the opportunity to designate funds to the sister churches or projects in Cuba. If you would like more information, please contact the Steering Committee.

Specifically, we would ask you to pray for the church in Luyanó, access to the supply chain to Cuba of basic needs (powdered milk, oil and meat). Pray for materials to maintain pure water systems. In all things we see how God provides a way to see hope and His hand as we trust and do His Will!



**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 Drennen Facility Manager, Ext. 237
Patty Farthing..... Receptionist, Ext. 211
Robert Ferrer Audio-visual Technician
Marcia Franks Administrative Assistant, Ext. 210
Joe Grant..... Director of Music
Rachel Matthews Temporary Mission Coordinator, Ext. 219
Blaise Pascal..... CYF Connections Assistant, Ext. 216
Ann Petry..... Accounting, Ext. 224
Jeanette Pyne..... ESL Coordinator, Ext. 235
Mindy Watts-Ellis..... Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

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

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.