



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SUNDAY MORNING
SERVICE
10:00 AM
WELCOME
THE LAY OF THE CHURCH
STUDENTS ESPECIALLY
WELCOME



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FROM YOUR PASTOR

BY MATT MATTHEWS

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

I often say that the best thing the church can do to survive and thrive is to be the church. What should our mission be? Just be the church, I say. It's not rocket science.

But people often ask what I mean, and I get tongue-tied in my answer.

The document you're holding in your hand (or looking at on your screen) is a good example of what being church looks like. You can call this report a ministry snap-shot. These are both the ho-hum and extraordinary examples of what being church looked like in this place this last year. And these are the sorts of things we have done every year since our founding in 1850.

We plan services of worship. Our choir sings and we try to outdo them with our own warbling, glad voices. We host concerts. We think together, study together, pray together. We wonder out loud. We explore and experiment together. We disagree with each other sometimes. We fall down. We get up. We plant gardens. We care about each other and our environment. We are especially mindful of what Jesus calls the least of these. And so forth.

We humble our hearts in worship. We serve. We show up. We pray. We ask questions. We respect our doubts and doubters. We lay ourselves bare to the Spirit. We risk growth. We dare change. We delight in awe. We are pilgrims, penitents, dreamers, disciples of Jesus, attempting always to widen our circle of sacred friends. Et cetera.

We make plans. We adjust plans. We dive in. We help each other out. We succeed and fail and get in over our heads. We eat together. We give money, talent, and time. We include the church in our will, thereby giving beyond our lifetimes. We sacrifice. We are filled, and surprised, and swept away. We are bored. We wait. We are finicky. We are selfless. We are hopeful. We cry. We grieve. We wander. We belly laugh. We sing. And so on.

We do all of this and more to the glory of God, in hopes that God will transform what we try to do into something that is useful, even holy, for the world.

This way of living is the warp and woof of being church.

The writer of Colossians puts it this way:

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and

admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (*Colossians 3:12-17*, NRSVUE)

I'm glad I get to do church and be church with you. I'm glad Jesus has invited us to be part of his body, the church, in this aching, wonderful world. I'm glad Jesus walks with us. Isn't this wonderful? Aren't you glad?

Thank you for allowing me to share this journey with you.

And thanks be to God.



Baptism is an uplifting experience...Pastor Matt and James Gloe at James' baptism in August.

A Work of Love

BY JUDI GEISTLINGER, COMMISSIONED LAY PASTOR
JUDIGEISTLINGER@YHOTMAIL.COM

2022 brought a full year of my role as your commissioned lay pastor for worship, focusing on Advent and Lenten seasons in addition to planning and leading worship two Sundays a month.

During Lent 2022, **Mindy Watts-Ellis** shared her artistic gifts with the congregation on the chancel artwork, culminating in a bursting of red for Pentecost Sunday.

During Advent we focused on being ready for the light of Christ at Christmas.

This work is a work of love, and I am honored to hold this place while our APNC seeks a new associate pastor to lead us. I do still work full-time for the university, so you won't see me at the church much besides evening and weekends.

As we approach Lent, know that journeying towards the cross with Jesus is our focus. I pray you join us in the journey.

Thank you
to the congregation for
patience and prayers as we
search and seek...
Your Associate Pastor
Nominating Committee

Betty Hollister
Kevin Kim
Nancy Martin
Carol Penka
Bruce Rainey
Kathy Schoeffmann



ADMINISTRATION

Building & Grounds

BY TOM ULEN, CHAIR

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AND RITCHIE DRENNEN, FACILITY MANAGER

RITCHIE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

The Building & Grounds Committee has been busy this past year. I would like to thank the members of the committee – **Bill Ackermann, Gary Burgett, Ritchie Drennen, Bruce Farthing, and Gary Bowen** – for their expertise, judgment, and time they have spent in helping to keep a 150+-year church not looking her age. For all of us on the committee, it is a labor of love.

One of our projects this year has been to keep the lift into Centennial Hall and the elevator up to the Sanctuary operating. All of us have had issues with the lift, notwithstanding our diligent efforts to follow the instructions on its use. We believe that Champaign Mobility and we have it working well now.

Our ancient elevator continues to work without problems. That elevator uses an older technology that requires us to use both prayers and gimmicks (such as leaving the cab on the second floor at the end of every period of use) to keep it running. There are literally no spare parts available for that elevator. So, we are planning to install a new elevator later this year. We will keep you posted on the plans for that improvement.

In the coming months, Koné Elevators and Escalators will install wireless gateways in both the lift and the elevator. Those devices will allow anyone stuck in either device to



The newly renovated kitchen allowed us to provide a Thanksgiving dinner for our ELL students thanks to Gary Peterson and crew.

reach both Koné and the local fire department for rescue through installed wireless phones. Those phones are required by the Elevator Safety Division of the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal.

We have also signed a maintenance agreement with Koné that covers both the lift and the elevator. We are hopeful that this will significantly reduce our costs of dealing with scheduled maintenance and emergencies on those two devices.

One of the biggest projects that we began last year is the installation of a new heating system in the Sanctuary Building. Currently, both church buildings are heated by two boilers in the Christian Education Building. Those boilers heat water to boiling, and the steam is then collected and pumped throughout the CEB and

through tubes under Doxology Lane into the Sanctuary Building.

It is a very old and inefficient system. In fact, those who teach energy-use seminars for churches throughout the country use pictures of our boilers as the lead-in for their PowerPoint presentations on inefficient systems. Those boilers are about 40 percent efficient, meaning that of the natural gas energy that goes into heating the water in the boilers only 40 percent of that energy results in heat. In addition, the pipes under the alley between our buildings need expensive care on a regular basis.

So, with the help of Chris Rennels of Davis-Houk Mechanical, we plan to install modern hot-water boilers behind the kitchen in the basement of the Sanctuary Building in time for the Fall heating season. (Supply-side



Kitchen crew Jan Wittler, Patrice Myrick and Carol Pearson prepping for a church event.

We have also had changes in our facilities staff. **Ritchie Drennen** continues as our Facilities Manager. Ritchie is in the process of having his driver's license restored, for which we are all proud of him, and we look forward to his being able to drive his wife Mamie to a celebratory dinner.

Fred Foster continues to work at the church many nights of the week. **George Almasi** has retired from his job with us because of health problems; **Shane Redmon** provided us with several months of fine service before having to quit in order to attend to personal matters; and **Martice Chapple** has joined our staff. Martice works part-time for both DREAM and us and is a wonderful addition to our staff.

delays will prevent the many parts from arriving any earlier.) The new boilers will be 90-95 percent efficient. This means that we will be saving a lot of money on natural gas in the coming years. Centennial Hall will also receive air-conditioning.

You might well ask why we are not replacing the boilers in the CEB. The reason is cost. We would have to spend close to \$200,000 to replace all the windows in the building (because they let too much cold in and heat out) and to install duct work throughout the building to make installation of new boilers worthwhile.

We are installing an updated electrical system for the two buildings. Our service needs modernization to accept a new and improved security system and to run the new boilers in the Sanctuary Building. In addition, we are separating the electrical service between the two buildings, which will lead to cost savings. Davis Electric has already begun the project and

hopes to finish it by the beginning of Summer.

We are also in the process of installing a new security system for our two buildings. The current system has reached the limit of its ability to provide modern service and has also experienced some inefficiencies. We have, for example, had to disable the motion sensors in the Sanctuary Building because we did not have enough capacity to operate both motion sensors and door alarms.

Our new system, provided by MATCO, will have much greater capacity than the current system. For instance, our greeters on Sunday can all be equipped with lanyards with which they can signal a problem at any of our access points. The new security system should be finished this Spring.

Financial Update

BY ANN WEBBINK, CHAIR FINANCE
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Operating Funds

In 2022, total revenues for the operating fund were \$1,025,449 which was about 4.28% above the budgeted amount. This was \$120,329 less than 2021, but in 2021 we had PPP funds of \$134,000 from the government. Revenue for 2022 included \$900,412 in contributions compared to \$878,481 in 2021. Total expenses for 2022 were \$986,719 which was 3.45% less than budgeted and \$93,054 less than 2021. The net result was a positive balance of \$38,730 at the end of the year. This compared to a positive balance of \$66,005 last year. Contributions in 2022 met about 91% of the expenses for the year with other funds covering the remaining amount. In addition to contributions in pledges and plate offerings, we received \$87,907 from the Cannon fund which is \$12,413 less than 2021.

Other Contributions

In addition to generous giving in pledges and plate contributions, our congregation gave a total of \$110,200 in non-operating gifts and pass-through accounts. The non-operating gifts included \$27,400 in memorial gifts, \$12,760 in benevolence and \$10,640 in local mission giving. The pass-through accounts included Presbyterian disaster relief of \$19,920 and Christmas, Advent, and OGHS gifts of \$8830.

Endowment/Strategic Reserves

Total invested funds at the end of the year were \$2,754,842 compared to \$3,282,846 at the end of 2021. The invested funds include \$1,753,818 in strategic reserves and \$663,573 in permanent endowment funds.

2023 Budget

For 2023, projected total revenues are \$947,740. Pledges of \$750,000 are anticipated for 2023 which is 6.25% less than 2022. Expenses are budgeted at \$992,632 which is within \$6000 of the expenses for 2022. This results in a projected deficit of \$44,892 compared to a budgeted deficit of \$38,602 in 2022.

The projected deficit represents 2.6% of our strategic reserves. The budgeted level of spending allows for a 2% raise for the salaried staff who have been employed more than one year and for the continuation of our mission programs at last year's levels.

Overall Financial Health

This is difficult to predict due to the fluctuating stock market and the fact that the church has several major projects in the coming years including a new heating system for the sanctuary building and a replacement for the existing elevator. However, with our generous congregation and God's guidance, we have hope that our yearly budget deficits will be covered.

Thank You

Thanks to our generous membership we exceeded the pledge and plate contributions as well as other revenue contributions by \$42,110 resulting in a surplus of \$38,730 in 2022. God has entrusted much to our care; in fact, all that we have comes from God. Being faithful stewards of all our gifts is an essential part of our grateful response to God's amazing grace.

Session Approved Budget for 2023

Revenues	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
Pledges	\$800,000	\$801,692	\$750,000
Plate	68,000	98,721	88,000
Cannon Trust	80,000	87,907	70,000
Restricted Funds	15,750	15,750	14,750
Other	19,590	21,379	24,990
Total Revenues	\$983,340	\$1,025,449	947,740
Expenses			
Clergy	\$164,137	\$162,706	\$211,844
GA Per Capita	27,500	25,240	26,000
Staff Misc	5,900	5,958	5,900
Music	72,060	59,798	70,872
Contemporary Worship	15,710	11,795	0
Worship	40,410	38,824	45,325
Mission	128,242	127,426	129,193
Children/Youth	115,200	68,438	37,785
Adult Education	2,450	422	2,250
Office (Administration)	196,238	204,999	210,363
Building and Grounds	244,095	76,740	242,840
Congregational Care	1,000	0	400
Hospitality	9,000	4,373	9,860
Total Expenses	1,021,942	986,719	992,632
Revenue - Expenses	(\$38,602)	\$38,730	(\$44,892)

NARRATIVE BUDGET 2022

The Finance Team makes every effort to keep the congregation informed as to the budget by publishing a monthly report in the newsletter. This shows our contributions and expenses each month and how they compare to the same month in the previous year. However, the impact of our giving sometimes gets lost in the numbers. The generous giving of our congregation affects our church, the local community and the worldwide community.

In 2022, \$4500 was used for contract musicians. This allowed everyone to enjoy wonderful music Sundays as well as other special services. The sanctuary was filled with beautiful and inspiring sound each time. We are truly blessed to have the leadership of Joe, Sora and the choir each week.

Even though our Sunday School has greatly reduced numbers, the church still spent \$2596 on supplies, equipment and special events for our youth.

The local mission team spent \$33,550 for the church's partner agencies. These agencies included Canaan SAFE House, Canteen Run, Courage Connection, The Refugee Center, Empty Tomb, Faith in Action, Jesus is the Way, Restoration Urban Ministries, Salt and Light, DREAAM, and CU at Home. Just imagine the difference our gifts made in these ministries to our local community!

And, finally, the congregation's donations were used to fund worldwide projects. Our church provided an impressive \$17,799 to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance fund for Ukraine. The World Mission Committee was also able to donate \$9,192 in support of our mission co-workers in Indonesia, Congo, South Sudan and Mexico. \$4,600 was given to Friends of PEB at Sangla Hill in Pakistan.

Our special offerings including the Advent and Christmas offerings and OGHS totaled \$8,830. These funds were above and beyond regular pledges. These gifts have far reaching impacts. For example, this year the Advent Offering was given to Frontera de Cristo to support the mission of our coworkers on the border Mark Adams and Miriam Escobar.

This is just a small sample of how far our pledges and donations go to support people and communities at home and around the world. By investing your time, talent, and treasure in First Presbyterian Church, you help to nurture the communion of saints here who serve neighbors near and far. The ministries of the church don't happen only because we have a flush budget; they happen because we have a gracious God calling us to be a caring and generous congregation. God brings hope to the world in part through your generosity. Friends are being made and supported. Lives are enriched. The money you have invested here has brought joy and healing to our community and world.

Thank you all and most of all, thanks be to our gracious God!

Nominating Committee

BY MARY NICHOLAS, CHAIR

NICHOLAS.MARYM@GMAIL.COM

The Officer Nominating Committee worked together to find church members to serve for the next term. The committee included **Catherine Emanuel, Elizabeth Hutchens, Sallie Hutton, John Pickering, John Seiler, Vernon Snoeyink** and **Mary Nicholas**.

We are very pleased to welcome the church members who have agreed to serve in the important positions of Elder, Congregational Care Deacon and Community Mission Deacon.

Elders

The two Elders whose terms ended in 2022 are **Ann Stout** and **Celeste Kim**. Both Ann and Celeste have served with integrity, and we thank them for their commitment and dedication.

Ken Chapman will serve another term. **John Muirhead** will serve another term on a year-to-year basis. **Diane Mortensen** is a new Elder. **Trenna Thomas** is a new Elder

Congregational Care Deacons

Sue Fischer will serve another term. **Mary Jane Kelley** will serve another term. **Linda Sandquist** is new. **Annilee Shaul** is a new Congregational Care Deacon. **Gary Bowen** is a new Congregational Care Deacon.

Community Mission Deacons

Leslie Thomas will serve another term. **Lola Ruthmansdorfer** will serve another term. **Holly Nordheden** is a new Community Mission Deacon.

I want to thank the members of the Officer Nominating Committee for their hard work and diligence in finding church members willing to serve. And congratulations to all who have accepted this calling to do God's work and serve our church community in a very important way.

Church Officers/Nominating Committee

2025	2024	2023
Session Elders Moderator: Matt Matthews Ken Chapman Diane Mortensen Trenna Thomas	Mary Jane Kelley Mary Nicholas Ann Webbink Jan Wittler	Mary Gritten Carol Miles John Muirhead Steve Tock Tom Ulen
Community Mission Deacons Moderator: Leslie Thomas Holly Nordheden Lola Ruthmansdorfer Leslie Thomas	Jane Alsberg Grace Ashenfelter	Kathy Schoeffmann
Congregational Care Deacons Moderator: Linda Sandquist Gary Bowen Sue Fischer Mary Jane Kelley Linda Sandquist Annilee Shaul	Amy Born Nancy MacGregor Bill & Sherry Marble Eric & Cathy Stickels Tom & Julia Ulen	Jean Brunson Pam Knox Marge Olson
Church Officer Nominating Committee Claudia Kirby	Chair: Mary Nicholas Cathy Emanuel Sallie Hutton	Beth Hutchens Skip Pickering Vern Snoeyink

Human Relations

(aka Human Resources)

BY MARY NICHOLAS, CHAIR

NICHOLAS.MARYM@GMAIL.COM

This year the FPCC staff has been working tirelessly to keep our ministries running smoothly. With Covid and new variants, our goal is to continue to protect the staff and congregation with safety measures in place. Many meetings are done via Zoom, and when appropriate, meetings are done in person. Many are eager to attend services in person, while others prefer to worship from home. The staff has maintained high standards so that FPCC can continue ministering to God's people.

Your Human Relations Team has continued to focus on providing support and encouragement to the employees. Some things HR is responsible for include (but not limited to) overseeing the hiring process when necessary, evaluating the policy manual and making changes when needed. This may also include determining if there are needs or improvements that need to be made to help the employees perform their

duties. Our goal is to offer a positive and supportive work environment and show our appreciation to the employees.

There have been several changes that have occurred this past year. We have had to say goodbye to three CYF employees and wish them well in their new positions. **Samantha Nichols** has left to train as a Hospital Chaplain. **Mindy Watts-Ellis** and **Blaise Pascal Zamena** are now working at the Urbana School District.

Brenden Barker, our church organist finished his PhD DMA and has returned to Pennsylvania. We wish **Sam Haupt** God speed as he moves on to Los Angeles. We will miss all these wonderful employees, as they have contributed so much to our worship.

We are welcoming **Bryan Cline** who is now working with **Robert Ferrer** providing Audio and Tech Support. We are also pleased to introduce **Sora Shepard** who is our wonderful new organist. And we are eager to welcome **Carol Pearson** who has been hired to act as Kitchen Manager. Most recently, **Martice Chapple**,

who also works for DREAM, was hired as our new custodian.

We appreciate the people who serve on the Human Relations Team. They cheerfully and thoughtfully invest their time and energy into ensuring that things are working smoothly for our staff. They are: **Bill Marble**, **Jeannie Snoeyink**, **David Whitford**, **Ann Stout** and **Mary Nicholas** (who will serve as chair beginning in 2023). We would like to say a special thank you to **Bill Marble** who is stepping aside for now. He made such an impact and we appreciate his many years of service.

The committee wants to recognize **Ann Stout** for her dedication as the chair of the Human Relations committee. Her service through the years has been outstanding and we are so grateful she has agreed to continue to serve on the committee. Her insight and knowledge have provided guidance and stability to the church, the church staff and the session.

2023 Church Staff

Pastor:

Matt Matthews..... Senior Pastor/Head of Staff

Staff:

Martice Chapple..... Facility Assistant
 Ritchie Drennen..... Facility Manager
 Patty Farthing..... Office Assistant
 Fred Foster..... Evening Custodian
 Robert Ferrer..... Audio-visual Technician
 Marcia Franks..... Office Manager
 Judi Geistlinger..... Commissioned Lay Pastor

Joe Grant..... Director of Music
 Rachel Matthews..... Mission Coordinator/Parish Assoc.
 Ann Petry..... Accounting
 Sora Shepard..... Church Musician
 Val Smith..... English Language Learner Director
 Libby Sternhagen..... Bell Choir Director

CONNECT

Adult Spiritual Formation

BY KEN CHAPMAN, CHAIR

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In 2022 the Adult Spiritual Formation Committee focused on organizing lessons and discussions for adults during the Sunday School hour, which follows the 9 AM Worship Service.

Highlights included: Faith in the Real World talks by: photo-journalist **Stretch Ledford**, astronomer **Dave Leake**, climate researcher **Don Wuebbles**, **John Hecker** and our own **Jim Dey**, talks about community services by: **Kim Dahlings** from Habitat for Humanity, **Fiona Munro** from Sola Gratia Farm and **Lisa Sheltra** from Salt and Light, talks on the Refugee Center by **John Muirhead** and on the Southern Border Ministry by **Bob and Claudia Kirby**, discussions about Paul's letter to the Romans led by **Dave Bauer**, a Lenten Series: *24 Hours That Changed the World* by Adam Hamilton and **Carol Penka** helped us plan our summer reading. Goals of the ASF Committee for 2023 are to continue spiritual learning sessions for adults during the Sunday School hour and possibly to co-sponsor an in-depth small group Bible study such as Covenant.

Children, Youth, Family

BY MARY GRITTEN, CHAIR CYF

MARYHG3@SBCGLOBAL.NET

Personnel changes:

Samantha Nichols resigned as our Sunday School Coordinator in June of 2022. **Erika Motley** resigned as our Childcare Coordinator in June of

2022. **Mindy Watts-Ellis** resigned as Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries in August of 2022. **Blaise Pascal Zamena** resigned as the Connections Assistant in August of 2022.

Sunday School Winter/Spring

January of 2022 found us under a resurgence of a new variation (Omicron) of the COVID virus. Thus, CYF chose to suspend the Sunday school until conditions would show under 2,000 active daily cases in our region for two consecutive weeks and less than 8% daily positive COVID tests for our county. The Sunday School program resumed February 13th.

The elementary aged children were using *Growing in God's Love A Story Bible*. Stories from this book and the corresponding curriculum were used beginning in the fall of 2020 and continued into the Spring semester. At home materials were mailed to some families that requested it, and a new webpage was created called First Pres Kids that was password protected. This allowed us to post a video recording of the images of the *Growing in God's Love* story pages while reading the story aloud. We also posted at home lessons that corresponded to the in-person lessons we were hosting for each



Sunday School enjoyed meeting outdoors in West Side Park when weather allowed.

age group. The stories studied were *John the Baptist*, *Jesus Choosing the 12 Disciples*, *Joanna and Susannah*, *the Woman at the Well*, *The Rich Man*, *The Beatitudes*, *Salt and Light*, *the Lord's Prayer*, *Who is Jesus?*, *The Last Supper*, *Jesus death and resurrection*, *Creation*, stories of Paul, and prayer stations. We did not have a Bible Class for our 3rd Grade students, since there was only one child of that age currently enrolled.

Our middle school and high school students met starting February 13 and explored lectio divina, leadership and serving with their spiritual gifts, Revelation, Human Sexuality and Faith, Climate change and Pollution, Relationships with God and Peers, and Prayer stations.

Summer Education

Mindy led the intergenerational program "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" in Centennial Hall on July 10, 17, and 24th. This was based on the Fred Rogers television show. Participants of all ages sat at tables together and explored what our

neighborhoods look like, talked about welcoming strangers, reinforced that we are loved just the way we are, and contemplated how acts of kindness have a ripple effect.

Sunday School Mission

The children collected coins in fish banks for the One Great Hour of Sharing offering which was received by the church by way of the worship offering collection or dropping the fish banks off at the church office.

Children and adults were invited to help assemble Hygiene Kits for Church World Service on March 27 during the coffee hour. Forty-eight kits were completed and mailed to Ferncliff Camp for distribution.

Children's Music

Children's sing-along time was offered during the beginning of the elementary Sunday School hour every Sunday by **Joe Grant** in the spring semester. The children led the congregation in "Halle, Halle, halle" as a benediction on May 1.

Family Events

The "Fun in the Sun" event was held August 14 in Centennial Park. Although we were unable to hold a full potluck, CYF worked with the Nurture and Outreach committees to host a family carnival complete with popcorn, cotton candy, and Kona Ice as well as a ring toss, fishing game, ladder ball game, corn hole, bucket toss, and Goliath game. Children could play the games to earn tickets that were then exchanged for their choice of prizes. The pool time followed and was enjoyed by many.

Special Youth Events

Mindy served as the Presbytery registrar for Youth Triennium which was scheduled to take place in July. Unfortunately, the youth triennium was canceled due to COVID concerns in mid-March.

As an alternate plan, Mindy organized a trip to a Montreat youth conference June 12-18. Four youth attended the week; **Eleanor Laufengerg, Plamedi Lembelembe, Alex Mbungu, and Heather Lowe.**

The adult leaders were **Mindy Watts-Ellis** and **Brandi Lowe.**

The experience was shared with the congregation during the worship service on August 7.

Professional Development

Mindy Watts-Ellis, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry attended a national conference for the Association of Partners in Christian Education (APCE) February 8-12 in Chicago. Mindy continued a term of service on the APCE Communications and Resource Team. Mindy was also part of a cohort group organized by Union Presbyterian Seminary.

Sunday School Fall and Winter

A restructuring of the Sunday School program was required in the early fall with the lack of paid professionals for guidance. Many, many adults of the church stepped into the breach with offers to do small or large tasks to fulfill our goal of helping our children grow in their faith journeys. By the time the classes began in October there were at least 27 people who were contributing in one way or another. With time and experience there have been modifications to be more realistic and workable with specific situations.

It was decided that the children and their teachers would be invited and encouraged to attend the Second Sunday Brunches instead of their regular class, for instance. It was also decided that the donut holes that were taken to each classroom were no longer needed.

There are adult leaders in place for all age groups thru high school. Because the 2 older groups are quite small, as those young people respond to the pandemic impacts on their time and energy, they sometimes meet together.

The Child Care providers for the nursery were hired, and their salaries increased to reflect the State of Illinois requirements. **Patty Farthing** receives limitless thanks for her guidance.

A fun no-rehearsal Christmas pageant was organized by **Lizz Pippin** with support from her 6-8th grade small group.

If you ever wonder if our church members will step up to the plate in times of need, have no fear. You did and do.

Many thanks to the CYF Team CYF Committee: **Mary Gritten, Mary Lou Bauer, and Claudia Kirby.**

Sunday and organizing Volunteers: **Sabrina and Wen-mei Hwu, John Muirhead, Lizz Pippin, Olando Johnson, Celeste Kim, Lisa Ainsworth, Noni Ledford, Mary Lou Bauer, Thethe Kidimbu, Judy Hendrickson, Sarah Laufenberg, Jennifer Nelson, Naomi Rempe, Patrice Myrick, Clarisse Mushengezi, Jan Wittler, Dana and Liz Lamkin.** Also: **Blaise Zamana, Paty Kamenga, Bob Kirby, Claudia Kirby, Joe Grant, Sherry Marble, Elizabeth Hewins, Sue Fischer, Jane Seiler, Patty Farthing, Rachel Matthews, and Mary Gritten.**

Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Team (CPJMT)

BY BOB KIRBY, MODERATOR

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Statement of Faith and Purpose

“The Presbyterian Church commitment to justice is core to its identity and understanding as followers of Jesus Christ. Beginning with the ancient texts of the faith, God’s people have given both voice and witness to the prophet Micah’s calling to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.”

The Confessions of the church, especially the Confession of 1967 and A Brief Statement of Faith, challenge the church to follow Christ into a broken and fearful world:

- to pray without ceasing,
- to witness among all peoples
- to unmask idolatries in church and culture,
- to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
- and to work with others for justice, freedom and peace.

— A Brief Statement of Faith 10.4

The Book of Order also makes it clear that “the whole church gathers in worship and its corporate life for the purpose of being sent out into the world to engage in the reconciling, healing work of God through Jesus Christ. God sends the church in the power of the Holy Spirit to share with Christ in establishing God’s just, peaceable and loving rule in the world”. (W-7.4000)

Organization

The Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Team (CPJMT) is a small group guided by Micah 6:8 and Isaiah 6:8. We meet on second and fourth Wednesdays at 6:30 PM. Our time

together includes prayer, Bible study, fellowship, book discussion and information sharing. CPJMT is an open group welcoming all who are interested in joining regularly or on occasion.

We work with the leadership of the denomination in the PCUSA’s Presbyterian Mission Agency Compassion Peace and Justice Ministry. We support First Presbyterian Church’s efforts as a Matthew 25 congregation. Within our congregation, we report to the Small Groups Support Group.

2022

Our meetings include prayer, bible study and fellowship.

We have three areas of focus: the Matthew 25 pillar of dismantling structural racism, welcoming and affirming LGBTQ people in our congregation and building interfaith relationships.

During 2022 we studied *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman; hosted the DREAAM volunteer coordinator for prayer, bible study and discussion; shared a list of food businesses owned by local people of color with the congregation; hosted United Pride Center staff for a program on LGBTQ welcoming; sponsored a courageous conversation on Theological Perspectives on Reproductive Rights; offered a two part courageous conversation which included viewing the documentary “13th” followed by worship and discussion with Jesus is the Way Prison Ministry staff and board; attended the Bethel AME prayer meeting responding to gun violence; watched the film *Sons and Daughters of Thunder* about the historic Lane Seminary debates on abolition.

Offered a four-part training about providing safe spaces for our LGBTQ friends in Christ. This was provided by Powell Presbyterian Church in Powell, TN.

Team: **Sandy Carr, Miriam Chenault, Kate Cole, Tracy Dace, Mary Gritten, Bob Kirby** (moderator), **Claudia Kirby, Brandi Lowe** (scribe), **Bill Marble**, and **Rachel Matthews** (staff).

Congregational Care Deacons

BY AMY BORN, Co-MODERATOR

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As COVID eased, 2022 allowed 14 Care Deacons to regularly visit more than 20 of our home bound members on a regular basis. The number of members in need of this important ministry continues to grow, even as we grieve the many who have passed away. We give thanks for those deacons rotating off and welcome those coming on. Our current Care Deacons are **Amy Born, Jean Brunson, Gary Bowen, Sue Fisher, Mary Jane Kelley, Pam Knox, Linda Sandquist, Bill & Sherry Marble, Marge Olson, Annilee Shaul, and Eric and Cathy Stickels**. Praise be to God for their commitment and service.

We meet in Mae Chapin parlor, or via Zoom, the first Thursday of the month at 2:30 PM. We make monthly contact, be it by telephone, through the U.S. mail or preferably in person, with the people to whom we are assigned.

We provide quarterly Communion services at the Windsor of Savoy and in-home services with a pastor and care deacon. In December, we deliver Presbyterian Women cookies to those

we visit and contact the church if and when we have learned any new information that might require a visit by a pastor.

We want our home bound members and their families, to know that we value their memberships, even when they are no longer able to attend in person. May we take heart in what scripture tells us, "Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 3:13) We are called to "Be the Church" to those who are often unable to experience a relationship on a religious level with other than family members or the minister. Please notify the church if you know of someone who would benefit from this ministry or you have interest in becoming a Care Deacon.

Nurture/Outreach Team

BY JAN WITTLER, CO-CHAIR

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January began with putting the finishing touches on our new kitchen off Centennial Hall. February was spent meeting with the Health Dept. and finally receiving our permit to operate, not only for our church congregation but for the community. It gave us an opportunity to prepare some items for **John McCutchen** who performed at the church on February 20. Our committee also helped with greeting and other duties.

The first full use of the kitchen happened on April 27 as we hosted a Pancake and Sausage Supper in Centennial Hall. It was well attended. In May we hosted a Jazz Night with food and special drinks. Everyone enjoyed the evening.

Our next big event was "Fun in the

Sun" previously known as Sholem Fest. We had hot dogs, cotton candy and the snow cone truck plus games and swimming in the pool. The weather was a little iffy that day with rain coming later in the evening but for those who attended it was enjoyed. In September, we hosted an "International Taste of First Pres". It was held during "Welcome Week" sponsored by the University YMCA. The Health Dept. said we could not have people bringing food from their homes for the Taste, so at the last minute, we switched to preparing the food in our new kitchen which worked out well with the help we received from many.

October saw us helping with Trunk or Treat led by **Nicole Miller**. We hope that next year we can get back to serving soups and such. Very good attendance!!

Our big event in November was preparing the food for a Thanksgiving Luncheon with the ELL class. We had Turkey, potato, dressing, vegetable and pumpkin pie for everyone who attended. It was great working with Val Smith on this event.

Christmas Caroling in the neighborhood area around the church happened on December 11. Thanks to all who participated in the fun and heartfelt event.

Of course, we also want to thank all that have been involved in our 2nd Sunday Brunches. They began in June and were held every 2nd Sunday thru November. We have had many complements on the food but more importantly it has brought people together to build relationships that they have treasured.

In January it was decided that Nurture and Outreach should be

combined for now. **Jan Wittler** (Outreach) and **Mary Jane Kelly** (Nurture) were assigned to lead those positions. Others on this committee are **Robert Kirby, Greg Cozad, Tom Gilmore, Linda and Gary Peterson** and **Ginny Waaler**. **Pastors' Rachel and Matt** have helped us along the way. We look forward to **Bill Stout** and **Eric Stickels** joining us soon. The hope is to split the two again as we gain members.

Tom Gilmore still does a great job making sure we have coffee each Sunday. Cleanup is mainly done by the committee with outside help occasionally. We have supplemented our donuts with other treats on Easter and Christmas.

Linda Peterson takes care of our Membership duties. She does attendance and tracks newcomers and reports to the Pastors. Also lines up people to tear out attendance pads. She also does the monthly minutes for our meetings.

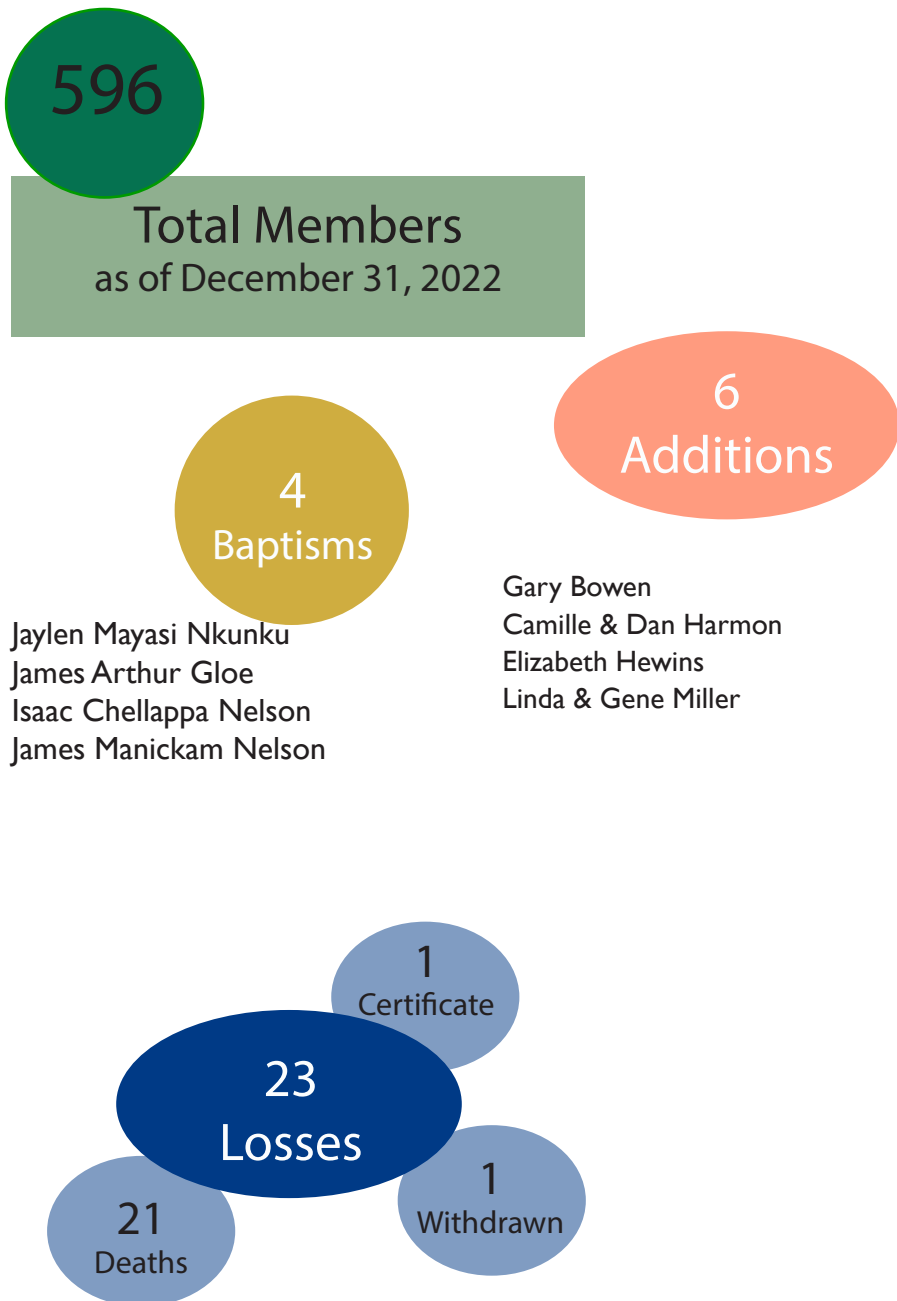
Ginny Waaler continues to recruit greeters for Sunday and other times when needed. We have discussed having exit greeters when people leave the church after a service. She also sends birthday cards to those age 85 plus.

Gary Peterson has been involved with the new kitchen committee since its inception. With the help of several on the committee, plus a few others, he has led the kitchen team. After interviewing, **Carol Pearson** was hired as Kitchen Manager by Gary and Pastor Matt. Pastor Rachel is helping with the kitchen also. We are coming up with pricing and rules and regulations for outside vendors to use the kitchen.

Greg Cozad will continue to help with coming up with ideas for kitchen use and church use in general. The committee strongly feels that opening the church to others, whether it be through food, concerts or other events, is the right approach in the coming years.

We are grateful for all the dedicated people who help advance Nurture/ Outreach at First Presbyterian Church.

Membership Report



Members Who Joined the Church Triumphant

Leland Andrews
John Dodson
Royce Hinton
Debra Miller
Gene Miller
Lorna Morgan
Jean Rowland
Bill Stallman
Barbara Suter
Rob Vermillion
Don Zimmerman (died 12.12.21 out of state)

Tom Buschbach
Bill Gamble
Irene Lamkin
Diane Miller
George Miller
Marilyn Parkhill
Jean Seibold
Edie Stotler
Jo Tummelson
Sam Weldon

SERVE

Mission Team

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS, MISSION COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

The Mission Team is a group of church staff and lay leadership who do mission work in some form through our church. The group may meet monthly to communicate, plan, and organize. During 2022, the Mission Team met sporadically as need arose.

Members of the team include:

Mission Team Session Elder, **John Muirhead**

Amateur Preachers, **John Muirhead**
Community Mission Deacons, **Leslie Thomas**

Cuba Partner Steering, **Bob Kirby**
Children Youth and Family, **Mindy Watts-Ellis** left in August and then **Mary Gritten** moderated the CYF committee.

ESL, **Jeanette Pyne** left in October and **Valerie Smith** became the new chair.

Environmental Stewardship, **Clemmie Ackermann**

Mission Possible (and Go and Serve) remained inactive.

Presbyterian Women, **Clemmie Ackermann** and **Brandi Lowe**

Transportation Ministry, **John Muirhead**. Transportation became

inactive in the Fall due to reduction of children in CYF

World Mission, co-moderators, **Jeannie Snoeyink** and **Sallie Hutton**

Mission Coordinator, **Rachel Matthews**, who reports for the Benevolence Committee.

The main tasks and responsibilities of the Mission Team are to:

- Establish a thoughtful mission vision and develop the ministry in

accordance with that vision

- Decide what mission projects to support and how to support it (fundraisers, designated funds, budget funds, requests to congregation for donations)
- Elevate the church's awareness of the biblical basis for missions, the need for community and world evangelism
- Increase congregational participation in missions
 - Stimulate prayer for missionaries and world missions including correspondence with missionaries
 - Ensure that pastors, staff and church leaders are empowered to participate in mission projects
 - Develop policy and procedures related to missions

Mission opportunities are promoted through the church newsletter, Sunday bulletin, social media, minute for mission during worship service, the Heart of Missions (currently through the Church wide Newsletter) and the Missions Kiosk in Westminster Hall. Any church member is welcome to join a mission committee, volunteer, or experience the power of Christian service.

During 2022 amid the pandemic the Mission Team members were hard at work through the committees they represented. **John Muirhead** remained chair. Amateur Preachers continued its work and continued working with a new group of preachers who were serving Windsor Savoy Retirement community in a 30 min. preaching and prayer service on Sunday morning.

Amateur Preachers

BY JOHN MUIRHEAD

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Amateur Preachers serve churches whose pastors are away for vacation, or other forms of leave by leading their Worship services.

Requests for our assistance in 2021 saw a return to providing this service as the COVID eased. We did not provide the service in 2020.

We did provide service to a number of churches including our own First Pres Champaign and Ashmore, Danville, Gibson City, Hoopeston, Paris, Paxton and Piper City. We provide an "Amateur Preacher" to give the sermon and lead worship services. In some of these visits we also provided our own liturgist.

In 2022, we continued to work with our Pastoral staff in providing a 10:15 service at the Windsor of Savoy. In all, 4 Amateur Preachers served 8 different churches a total of 10 times. Amateur Preachers also served at the Windsor of Savoy on 21 of the 50 Sundays that our church led worship services.

We would like to increase our number of Amateur Preachers for the coming year. Perhaps you have been thinking of a message you would like to share? You may also consider serving as a liturgist for an Amateur Preacher as a way of being introduced to this mission of our church. Please feel free to talk with one of the Pastors or contact **John Muirhead** (j.muirhead@comcast.net or cell phone 217.840-7768) to discuss Amateur Preachers.

Benevolence Report

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS, MISSION COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

The Benevolence Committee was formed in 2014 to act on financial requests to the church for emergency assistance. Benevolence Committee members for 2022 include **Sandy Carr, Naomi Rempe, Kathy Schoeffmann, Matt Matthews, and Rachel Matthews.**

The fund provides help only to those who have a significant relationship with First Pres. That includes members, regular guests at worship, employees, members of our small groups or regular participants in church activities. Normally, no gift may exceed \$500 and no family may receive more than one gift per calendar year. The Committee recognized this as low with regard to what rent costs and has been operating this year not to exceed \$750.

Applications are submitted and reviewed by the Benevolence Committee. Assistance is only available for what the committee sees as emergency relief that meets a basic need. This past year we had three requests. These were significant requests that required ongoing work with HR and the mission coordinator. The recipients have been very grateful. The account ended the 2022 year with \$5,621.12 some of which is already restricted to a specific case.

There were other requests made that were helped through the pastor's discretionary fund, a different account. Individual donations support the Benevolence Fund. Donations are always welcome and at times very much needed. Simply mark your check/ contribution "Benevolence Fund."

Community Mission Deacons

BY THE COMMUNITY MISSION DEACONS

Our mission deacons this year were **Itch Jones, Bruce Rainey, Kathy Schoeffmann, Leslie Thomas, Jane Alsberg, and Grace Ashenfelter.** **Leslie Thomas** was our moderator. We were aided by **Ritchie Drennen** who helped with our connection to Canaan SAFEhouse as well as assisted in keeping the Free Little Pantry stocked.



God is good!! The North boys brought shoes for DREAAM during the program's shoe drive for school-age youth.

We started out 2022 highlighting the following mission agencies to partner with Canaan SAFE House, Canteen Run, Courage Connection, The Refugee Center, Empty Tomb, Faith in Action, Jesus is the Way, Restoration Urban Ministries, Salt and Light, DREAAM, CU at Home, DREAAM Girls with Ideas. Several deacons also participated in various mission projects around the church.

We updated our mission agency assignments and focused our work

as deacons on the following agencies: Canaan SAFE House, Courage Connection, The Refugee Center, Jesus is the Way, Restoration Urban Ministries, Salt and Light, DREAAM, CU at Home and added Habitat for Humanity. We continue to evaluate our service in these agencies.

We celebrate the following highlights:

We partnered with Canaan SAFEhouse in teaching their Psychology 101 class and they graduated 2 individuals from their program. In August their Director **Raymond McCrary** spoke to the congregation during a Minute for Mission and showed a video and answered questions with other SAFEhouse alumni following the service.

We partnered with CYF in their OWL fundraiser which raised money for our youth who went to Montreat Youth Conference and the DREAAM Hope for the Future Drive.

In June we hosted a speaker from Habitat for Humanity, **Kim Gollings**, who spoke to the Faith in the Real World class, and added Habitat for Humanity as a mission partner. Four people helped with the finishing touches on a Habitat

build. We continue to partner with them in their move of their ReStore to a new building.

We partnered with CU at Home to create a temporary low barrier women's shelter in our Centennial Hall from January to April.

In September their executive director, **Melissa Courtwright** spoke to our congregation during a Minute for Mission and answered

questions following the service. We have continued to partner with CU at Home throughout 2022 as they have clarified their goals to become a mid-barrier shelter in 2023. They will be working with the new low barrier shelter Champaign Township in their old building and transition to a new facility. We will continue to support CU at Home's One Winter's Night and their move to a mid barrier shelter.

We partnered with CPMTJ to hear speakers from Jesus is the Way. In June their new Executive Director **Brian Zeifang** as well as three residents spoke and answered questions about prison ministry.

We partnered with The Refugee Center responding to the needs of 74 new Afghan refugees to our Champaign-Urbana community.

In October, we hosted a Minute for Missions speaker from Salt and Light, **Lisa Sheltra**. Following the service, she expanded on the history of this mission and answered questions. In December, we assisted Salt and Light with the purchase of new coolers since the current ones are beyond repair.

DREAAM has had a very active year especially the Summer program and After School program part of which is housed at First Presbyterian Church.

The Mission Deacons spent \$33,550 out of budgeted and restricted money on quarterly giving to local mission agency partnerships. Other restricted money was spent on local agency projects including the Afghan Refugees, DREAAM. In addition to that, the Pentecost Offering of \$925 was received. The PCUSA received 60% at \$555 and DREAAM, our local agency recipient, received 40% at \$370.

The Angel Tree offering went to Kemmerer Village this year even though it was a regional mission instead of local. The gifts for the children we gave to participated in a Christmas gift drive for the 200 children who live on campus and more than 100 foster children and their families. Kemmerer Village served over 1300 children in 2022.

With deep appreciation for their service, we said goodbye at the end of the year to **Bruce Rainey** and **Itch Jones**. We welcome **Holly Nordheden** on board to the mission deacons for 2023.

renewed every three years. We strive to enrich the spiritual lives of the people of both congregations.

Purpose

The purpose of our relationship is:

1. To create a partnership between our two churches embodying our Unity in Christ. The partnership is to be a three-year commitment renewable at the end of its term after evaluation by both churches.
2. To strive to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ in our families, our communities, our countries and the world.
3. To sensitize both church families to critical situations in our societies,



Cuba Partners

BY BOB KIRBY, MODERATOR
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A Church that Works in Unity for a
New Heaven and a New Earth
(Rev 2:1-5)

Champaign First Cuba Partners (Cuba Partners) are those who share actively in the covenant relationship between the people of First Presbyterian Church, Champaign and The Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba at Luyanó (loo-ya-NO). This is a session-to-session relationship

and cooperate in the projects to which the Church, as a part of the Body of Christ, can make a substantial contribution.

4. To explore various areas for joint mission.
5. To partner with each other as sister congregations in developing joint ministries with other Presbyterian churches in the United States and Cuba to encourage ourselves and others to follow Jesus.

Organization

Champaign Cuba Partners includes 67 people who have completed a study of Cuba. Most have traveled to our sister church. A meeting of the Champaign Cuba Partners is held when needed but at least yearly at which time a business meeting and election of steering committee members occurs combined with the Annual Cuba Forum. The Forum is an informational congregation-wide meeting. The Cuba Partners adopted by-laws calling for election of a five to seven-member rotating steering committee which then elects four officers. The Cuba Steering Committee meets monthly and reports to session and is a voting member of Mission Team and World Mission Committee.

At an international level, our congregation is a member of the Presbyterian Church USA Cuba Partners Network (CPN). This group works closely with the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba and mission co-workers to stand with Presbyterian entities in both the U.S.A. and Cuba.

Champaign First Cuba Partners also maintain an informal relationship with the Covenant Presbyterian Church in Austin, TX which also has a covenant relationship at Luyanó.

History

Twelve congregants made our first trip to Cuba October 14-22, 2010, to explore the possibility of partnership. This resulted in a covenant (hermanamiento) agreement between the sessions of our two churches signed in 2012 and renewed in 2015, 2018 and 2021. We have completed fourteen trips, including two trips to support Vacation Bible School, a youth focused trip and several smaller trips to honor celebrations of our Cuban congregation. We hosted Cubans in

Champaign on eight occasions.

2022

A continuing pandemic, travel restrictions and economic collapse in Cuba were all factors in the work of the Cuba Steering Committee. We maintained contact through Meta, WhatsApp and Zoom.

We Collaborated with the PC-USA Cuba Partners Network to raise funds for the Cuban church and to send supplies of food and medicine. We supported the work of the seminary in Matanzas and the national camp and conference center near Santa Clara. We charged the phones of **Pastor Daniel Izquierdo** and wife **Anaitza** when requested. As much of their work is now done distantly, phone contact has become an essential tool for their ministry. We carried requested items and budgeted resources to Luyanó.

The annual Cuba Forum and annual partners meeting was held on September 29. Mission co-workers **Villmarie Cintrón-Olivieri** and **José Manuel Capella-Pratts** led us in prayer and scripture study and then presented an overview of their roles as mission co-workers. They answered questions about life in Cuba today. The annual meeting of Cuba partners ended the forum with the election of **Bill Marble** to the committee. **Tracy Dace** and **Mary Lou Bauer** were thanked for their service of six years on the committee.

We celebrated our congregational partnership at worship services on May 1 and October 2. A delegation of **Rachel and Matt Matthews, Judi Geistlinger** and **Carol Miles** were in Havana from November 17-21 in honor of the 100th anniversary of our congregation at Luyanó. They have written a separate report of that trip.

Moving Forward

We will continue to focus on building relationships, deepening our understanding of the Cuban experience, and growing together in our faith with our Cuban sisters and brothers. We recognize that circumstances of daily living and travel have become more challenging for Cubans. We desire to learn and respond in a manner that is practical and sensitive to the evolving conditions. We seek mutuality in our relationship. We strive to maintain effective communication with the congregation at Luyanó and with other partners. We will also seek ways to broaden and deepen our communication within our congregation.

We are thankful for the ways our Cuban brothers and sisters embrace us as brothers and sisters (hermanos/as). We appreciate their example of open-hearted hospitality to us in all circumstances, their graciousness in care for one another, and their joyful, daily, practical expressions of confidence in God's goodness.

Cuba Steering Committee
Dave Bauer, Miriam Chenault, Bob Kirby (moderator), **Claudia Kirby** (secretary), **Bill Marble, Sherry Marble** (treasurer), **Rachel Matthews** (staff)

Environmental (Green Team)

BY COLETTA ACKERMANN, MODERATOR

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Committee Members: **Clemmie Ackermann, Dave Bauer, Nancy Brombaugh, Tanya Deckert, Ron Deering, Barb Fuller-Curry, Claudia Kirby, Sam Laufenberg, Rachel Matthews, Liz Miley, Pat Phillips, Ginny Waaler, Kathy Schoeffmann**

Committee Meetings: Meeting dates and times are monthly (except for August and December) on the third Monday of the month from 3:30 – 4:30 PM. The committee has met primarily via Zoom or had hybrid Zoom and in person meetings.

Committee Purpose: Responding to a Call from PCUSA to make environmental stewardship of God's creation a central mission of our congregation.

On-Going Activities

- Adopt-a-Highway
- Earth Day Celebration
- Earth Care Congregation Recertification
- Education
- Bulletin Boards
- Garden – Native plant garden
- Advocacy
- Styrofoam Collection & Recycling
- Eyeglass and Cases Collection & Recycling
- Battery Collection & Recycling
- Plastic Medicine Bottle Collection
- Communicating environmentally focused community activities to the congregation.
- Our committee meetings changed times to better accommodate members. We now meet by Zoom and in

person once a month on the 3rd Monday from 3:30 – 4:30.

Goals for 2022

- Continue to replace LED lights
- Install 2nd water cooler/bottle filler as supplies allow
- Sponsor a movie night and open it to church and community
- Connect with other church environmental teams – host a “meet and greet” as allowed by CDC guidelines
- Highlight the Environmental Stewardship Committee and their work within the congregation
- Increase congregational participation in environmental activities
- Plant peace garden, pollinator plants and maintain native plants

New Activities and Initiatives

- Attended Faith in Place Green Team virtual kick-off celebration
- Water cooler and bottle filler installed in Westminster Hall.
- Two ESC members consulted with a woman from Calvary Baptist Church. The church is creating a Green Team and were interested in hearing what we had been doing.
- Two members of the church youth group worked with **Rachel Matthews** to create our new bulletin board for February “Love the Earth”. In April, the bulletin board topic was Electric Cars done

by **Clemmie Ackermann**. Fall, the bulletin board was “Fall into the Habit of Recycling” created by **Julie Shult** and **Nancy Brombaugh** and the winter board was a “Green Christmas” theme created by **Pat Phillips** and **Nancy Brombaugh**.

- New 3 year Adopt-A-Highway contract signed with City of Champaign Public Works. March 2022 thru March 2025.
- To highlight our Adopt-A-Highway program, over 3 Sundays, ESC committee members wore orange safety vests and acted as greeters for Sunday Services.
- A display board and poster were set up to highlight Adopt-A-Highway, sign up new participants and sign waivers and safety rules forms for the new city contract. 33 individuals signed up.
- April 9, 2022 Adopt-A-Highway held with 23 participants. A new record for our group. An additional date on 11/5 was planned but had to be canceled due to the weather.
- Sunday Earth Day services planned and held on April 24
- **Fiona Monroe**, the Outreach and Education Coordinator from Sola Gratia Farms, spoke at the Church



Members of Environmental Team had help from youth planting this year's pollinator garden.

Earth Day. Three Sunday School lessons were focused on Creation Care

- Native plant garden is doing well. Pollinator garden was planted but did not do well this year.

- TED talk with Katherine Hayhoe was shown at the May ESC meeting

- In cooperation with Faith in Place and their Green Team Summit, a Watch Party was held in September to view a keynote presentation by Katherine Hayhoe. **Cindy Shepard** from Faith in Place moderated the event with 24 people in attendance from and 4 local churches being represented.

- By invitation members of our congregation and ESC attended 2 seminars hosted by the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana.

- The Spiritual Formation Committee for the church, sponsored **Don Wuebbles**, a Nobel Laureate and Professor at the University of Illinois who spoke on environmental issues and answered questions from the audience.

- A "Minute for Mission" was presented in November to highlight the Environmental Stewardship's "Green Christmas" event.

- During part of November and December, the ESC committee distributed surveys directed at the church membership. The surveys were collated and shared with the committee.

- At the same time, the committee held a "Green Christmas" event. If church members were willing to fill out the survey, their name was placed into a drawing for "Green Christmas Stockings". The stockings were made by **Sherry Marble** from from all cotton materials and filled with products that supported the environment. Informational sheets were included with the stockings about how these items supported the environment.

QUESTIONNAIRE

26 questionnaires returned

Are you aware of the Environmental Stewardship Committee at First Pres?

Yes 18 No

Where do you get information about the committee's projects? (Circle all that apply)

Church Newsletter -18

Bulletin Announcements-15

Bulletin Board in Westminster

Hall-16

Announcements from the pulpit-20

Have you helped with Adopt-A-Highway?

Yes -7 No-15

Do you think this is a worthwhile activity?

Yes-20 No ?-1

What projects or activities would you like to see the Environmental Stewardship Committee do in the future?

help with boneyard clean-up

more education

plant trees/

collection of recyclables

recycling Styrofoam

organizing action to contact

representatives

projects for Christmas ideas

for reusing bottles, papers, etc.

more with Adopt-A-Highway

field trip to a nature preserve

or nature center

have a local environmental

organization present and give advice to the committee or the congregation (Prairie Rivers Network or Land Conservation Foundation

presentation from Illini Recycling

presentation from the group that

organizes the electronic recycling event

Have you brought any of the following to the church for recycling?

6_Eyeglasses 1 person said they take them to another drop off point

20_Styrofoam

11_Medicine bottles

12_Batteries

Have you seen the Bulletin Board that has Earth Care information?

Yes-25 No-1

Do you think this is a worthwhile source of information?

Yes-16 No

What topics on the environment would interest you?

global warming

climate change

more ways to recycle

what happens to what we recycle

land conservation

habitat conservation

carbon catching

wildlife preserves

water conservation

any & all easy ways to do my part

electric cars

large group buy for solar panels

water availability

waste

implementing solar conversion

trees

birds

How would you prefer to see the topics presented? Circle all that apply.

14-On the bulletin board?

18-Speakers?

16-Articles in the newsletter?

5-Classes on a particular topic?

One write-in answer – online and on Facebook



ELL students and tutors enjoyed a fall visit to Curtis Orchard.

English Language Learners (ELL)

BY VAL SMITH, DIRECTOR

VAL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now! Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:3-6

I am grateful for the partnership between the church and the English Language outreach to both English language learners (ELL) in the local and international community. Despite the challenges, the Lord has enabled us to express His love through the ELL program.

I. 2022 Goals Fulfilled

- Provide a supportive environment for learning English in the context of a caring community. Many students have expressed their appreciation for the classes in a

variety of different ways. Students may go back to their home countries, but they often stay connected through our zoom classes.

- Continue to provide volunteer training in language teaching, cross cultural competencies,

SLOP principles, and tutoring opportunities.

Five of our tutors attended the Institute for Cross Cultural Training from Wheaton College on zoom. Tutors continue to share their expertise with each other. New volunteers received online/in-person training and opportunities to observe classes. Several of the volunteers trained last summer are now leading zoom classes. All of our tutors received English language training last spring.

- Transition to 'in-person' classes while retaining online classes. Spring 2022 was the beginning of 'in-person' classes twice a week at the church. During the summer, there was a combination of zoom and in-person classes. The focus for the Fall of 2022 was to increase the number of in-person classes on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings by offering fewer online morning classes. The combination of zoom and in-person allows students the option of classes four days a week, although most students attend one or two classes a week. Students who do not participate in morning classes may

attend evening classes on zoom.

- Seek to meet the needs of students and their families in flexible and creative ways including one-on-one tutoring on and off-site and matching tutor interest to student's specific purposes.

Several tutors provided extra opportunities for students with specialized needs.

- Purchase curriculum with online access to improve the instruction of the ELL Program.

Venture 1, 2, and 3 presentation tools were purchased for online classes. IXL licenses for interested students and tutors were provided for online instruction and practice and for in-person classes, if requested.

- Utilize technology in instruction to increase student computer literacy and English vocabulary as needed for online instruction.

Limited technology instruction is offered, but continues to be a challenge for everyone.

- Continue recruiting new tutors

The Immigration Project (U of I) and the Refugee Center provided interested tutors for the program. Two U of I (Immigration Project) students are teaching the PEACH (Parents/English And CHildren) group on Wednesday mornings. The evening classes include tutors referred by the Refugee Center who trained this summer and more volunteers from the Immigration Project. We also had a new volunteer from the church.

- Collaborate with community partners to meet the English language needs of students.

Other collaborators are Project Read (Parkland College) and Easy English Fellowship (FPCC)

- Continue to make the ELL Program accessible to the communities who need it most.

Efforts to involve those students with transportation, childcare, and work situation challenges were made. Some bus tokens were provided for those persons in need. The church van/volunteer was used for the fall field trip.

- Restart 'in-person' events including shared events with FPCC. Students participated with CYF and DREAAM for the summer picnic. FPCC hosted International Taste in partnership with the Campus YMCA. Curtis Orchard was the destination for the fall outing. The Thanksgiving Dinner was reinstituted. Mark Adams presented to all the ELL students and also to several families who attended the follow up evening missions dinner. A couple of students attended the December Tea and one family came to Music Sunday in December.

- Continue to communicate with FPCC on a regular basis. The Adult ELL Director communicates with FPCC via several avenues including monthly newsletters, annual reports, advisory meetings, mission committee meetings, meetings with **Rachel Matthews**, office and maintenance staff, staff meetings, and attendance at church services and events.

- Evaluate and identify effective and efficient procedures

Part of efficient operations is organizing resources. An unused file in the office area has provided more

space for our main curriculum. Other resources were streamlined for easier access to tutors. Effective procedures already in place were tweaked including new links on the website for registration, centralizing information for tutors in Google Classroom, and delegating some responsibilities to students who want to volunteer.

- Evaluate priorities and problem solve to improve the ELL Program. A major area for setting priorities has been in managing all the tasks involved in providing the English outreach. Tutor feedback, input from the advisory board, and church staff has helped solve issues for the improvement of the ELL Program.

2. New Pilot

- During the Fall of 2022 the PEACH (Parents/English And CHildren) initiative was piloted. Parents with small children often have limited access to English instruction. To stay in compliance with child care regulations, parents remain with their children during the class. The children play while the parents receive instruction. The class was greatly appreciated by the parents who need not only English but also a social outlet.

- Several of the parents and older children participated in a special class on election day. The school districts were closed and activities were planned for the children in the same room while their parents received instruction.

- All ELL students joined a Christmas holiday celebration in the chapel. The PEACH class attended the first half of the celebration before returning to their own classroom.

3. 2022 Budget Expenditures

ELL Program expenditures focused on special tutor training, curriculum, and the events described above. The director also attended the TESOL conference in Pittsburgh, PA. All of the budget was used and some restrictive funds were accessed as well. Memorial gifts in memory of **Debra Miller** were received. These funds have not yet been used.

4. Goals for 2023

Most goals from 2023 will remain the same. Challenges that continue are as follows: technology for some students on zoom, transportation, and relationship opportunities with church members. Prayers for wisdom are needed for the purchase of new technology, management of time and resources, and effective communication with everyone involved.

Presbyterian Women

BY CLEMMIE ACKERMANN, MODERATOR
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The Purpose of Presbyterian Women
Forgiven and freed by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit to:

- Nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study
- Support the mission of the church worldwide
- Work for justice and peace and
- Build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and
- Witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom

We strive to accomplish the above in a variety of different ways

Circle Meetings

Meet the 4th Thursday of the month September thru May. This year's study has been Celebrating Sabbath. All Circles meet in Mae Chapin Parlor in person and by Zoom.

The Circle of Joy meets at 10:30 AM in person in Mae Chapin Parlor and by Zoom and is led by **Kathy Schoeffmann** and **Brandi Lowe**.

The Circle of Faith meets at 1 PM in the afternoon and is led by **Julie Shult** and **Claudia Kirby**.

The Circle of Peace meets at 7 PM. **Linda Peterson** is the communicator for the group and other leadership roles are shared by the Circle members.

Women's Gatherings

Three events are held during the year in September, December and May with different speakers and topics. **Sabrina Hwu** is presently serving as program chair.

With COVID restrictions easing, the Gatherings have increased in person attendance with our December event having 52 people present in the audience plus the 17 students. We have invited other churches to attend and have had several members from Westminster Presbyterian Church join. We would like to increase attendance by inviting both men and women to the events.

May 2022 – **Judi Geistlinger** spoke about her journey to become a lay minister. This service is traditionally the time new officers are installed

September 2022 – **Laura Aull**

Johnston from Westminster Presbyterian spoke on "Sabbath: Hearing and Answering God's Call"

December 2022 – Uni High Madrigals was the featured program

Financial Support

This year, Presbyterian Women supported the following:

- Purchase of layettes and cribs for newborns for distribution by Empty Tomb
- Staff Appreciation luncheon
- Purchase of dishwasher for Mae Chapin kitchen
- Contribution to the church benevolence fund in support of George
- Table for Centennial Hall purchased
- Pledge of \$1500 paid to National PW Mission
- Pledge of \$150 paid the Presbytery
- PW Least Coin Offering \$30.99
- PW Birthday Offering \$254.50
- PW Thank Offering \$656.00

Presbyterian Women also supported (through cash donations and/or through personal service): Memorial Receptions, Celebration for Graduates, Christmas Cookies for home bound members and Helping Hands (meals delivered to members).

The Knifty Knitters group sent 30 sets of hats and scarves to all the children at Kemmerer Village, provided our Cuba sister church with knitting yarn and other supplies, provides handmade prayer shawls and supported an Environmental Stewardship project by providing handmade 11 dish cloths for their "Green Stockings" project.

Transportation

BY JOHN MUIRHEAD

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Our transportation program for Sunday School was coordinated by **Blaise Pascal** for the Spring Semester. As we entered the summer

months with no Sunday School, we no longer provided regular Sunday morning transportation. Transportation became inactive in the Fall due to reduction of children in CYF.

The Church van was used for special events including our Go and Serve trip to Montreat; an ELL field trip to the Curtis Apple Orchard; and providing transportation to the University High School Madrigal Choir who performed at our church. The van was available to the DREAM program as a backup as needed.

World Mission

BY SALLIE HUTTON, CO-MODERATOR

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JEANNIE SNOEYINK, CO-MODERATOR

JEANNIE.SNOEYINK@GMAIL.COM

The World Mission Committee Members consist of **Sallie Hutton** and **Jeannie Snoeyink**, co-chairs; **Jim Berger**, **Marv Brombaugh**, **Bob Kirby**, **Audry Kukasomo**, **Steve Gritten**, and **Ann Stout**. The Committee Advisor is **Rachel Matthews**

The World Mission Team is involved in mission activities outside of our own Champaign/Urbana area. Two such somewhat local projects are Kemmerer Village and Life Line Pilots, which was started by our own church member, **Wanda Whitsitt**. **Steve Gritten** has been our liaison with Kemmerer Village for many years and **Marv Brombaugh** is our liaison with Life Line Pilots.

This has been a productive year for the World Mission Committee with the ability to visit mission co-workers both on zoom and in person and with

the generosity of our church members to provide monetary aid to Ukraine's misplaced population as well as U.S./ Mexican border misplaced people in crisis situations.

We give thanks to the wonderful support of our church members in our committee's two main projects for the year. The Raindrop offering for Presbyterian Disaster Aid, "Lifting Up Ukraine" was moved up from July to April in order to send direct aid to Ukraine. Our congregation provided an impressive \$17,799 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for the Ukraine. Our Advent offering for Frontera de Cristo on our Mexican border has not been finalized but as of December 31, church member donations total \$995 and World Mission has been able to donate an additional \$1094.

In February, we were able to have a zoom presentation from **Veda Gill** who was the Presbyterian Education Board Pakistan Executive Director.

Our World Mission Co-worker,

Mark Adams was able to visit with our congregation at the beginning of December as he is presently on sabbatical and visiting his supporting churches.

Our World Mission Team had a dinner with him on Sunday, December 4, prepared by **Rachel Matthews**. Mark was able to visit our various church programs on Monday and Tuesday. Tuesday evening about 60 of our church members enjoyed coffee and dessert while listening to a very informative presentation by Mark about the work of Frontera de Cristo on our U.S./Mexican border.

This year, for the first time, the Presbyterian church USA decided that all funds for our PCUSA mission co-workers would go to the PCUSA Missionary Fund and not be sent directly to each mission co-worker. Our World Mission Committee was able to donate \$9,192 to this fund that supports our mission co-workers, **Farsijana Adeney-Risakottta** in Indonesia, **Jeff and Christi Boyd**

in the Congo, **Bob and Kristi Rice** in South Sudan, and the Adams in Mexico. All of them do essential work in showing God's love to people in their respective countries.

We sincerely thank all of our church members for their generosity in this year's Raindrop and Advent offerings. We welcome any interested church member to join our committee. World Missions also supports the U.S. and World Projects shown.

World Mission Additional Project Amounts

Presbytery of SE Illinois Mission Support	\$1000.
Pres. World Mission: Presbyterian Disaster Relief	\$2,170
Marion Medical	\$1,970
Camp Carew/Kemmerer Village	\$5,040
Lifeline Pilots	\$1,070
Missionary Aviation Fellowship	\$1,070
Friends of PEB Sangla Hill	\$4,600
Opportunity International	\$1,520
Theological Education Fund (for seminary student support)	\$5,850

WORSHIP

Worship

BY CAROL MILES, CHAIR

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This has been our second year of transition in many areas and that includes worship. The 9 AM service has been evolving throughout 2022--the year has been filled with "new" beginnings of "old" traditions. And finally we are back to a new normal.

On Sunday mornings we are singing hymns and prayers, and welcoming each other with nods, smiles, hugs and handshakes.

Attendees at worship include loyal members, guests, and online participants.

Streaming of the Sunday service has continued and improved over time with only an occasional glitch. Every regular worship service is streamed. The live broadcasts go to both YouTube and Facebook and can be accessed from the church website. A saved version can be seen any time at the worship link on the church website. An important addition is a volunteer "online convener" who watches as the service is broadcast and notes successes and glitches.

Additional aids at Sunday services are a French translator and a sign language interpreter.

The Gathering Service was reinstated in 2022, but was paused in September. The Gathering Band then played hymns at the 9 AM traditional service. In November the Gathering Service was put on indefinite hold.

When the year started we were using self-serve pre-packaged individual

communion elements. On World Communion Sunday in October we began passing and serving regular communion elements.

Our tradition of special services has continued. Lent included a Maundy Thursday service, and Good Friday was shared and hosted by our Methodist neighbors. The Christmas season brought a Longest Night service (December 21) and candlelight Christmas Eve services. Some Sunday services become special too. We celebrated Cuba Sunday with our sister church in Luyano, and Music Sundays are greatly enjoyed by the congregation.

Music

BY JOE GRANT, CONDUCTOR/DIRECTOR

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The music program, which includes the Chancel Choir, Bell Choir and organist/pianist continued to actively support the programs and worship of First Presbyterian Church. With the graduation and awarding of his doctorate, **Brendan Barker** concluded two years of service with us. We were fortunate to be able to hire an excellent replacement, **Sora Shepard**. Sora began her work on July 17, and has proven to be a superb pianist and a budding organist. She also provides excellent work with the weekly rehearsals of the Chancel Choir.

Chancel Choir continued to provide music for the regular weekly services and produced the traditional Christmas and Spring Music Sundays. The Gathering Band played

in numerous traditional services throughout the summer as well. It is currently on indefinite hiatus until further consideration is given to the Gathering service itself. Bell choir performed regularly in services and highlighted the Christmas Music Sunday as well as the "Pageant" a week later.

We gave considerable assistance to the UI Choral Music program by hosting several events throughout the year. This assistance also produced a growing means of outreach to our local community. The various programs included: Oratorio retreat and rehearsal, January; a series of Bach Lunches in February, March and April; a daylong workshop for young women conductors on April 22; **Brendan Barker's** doctoral recital, which included over 100 musicians; and a concert of the UI Chamber Singers just prior to their tour of Sweden and Estonia.

The Christmas season was kicked off with an outstanding performance of the Springfield Bell choir.

We were unable to find a suitable replacement for the leader of the Children's music. In lieu of that, I have been meeting with the youngest Sunday School class to provide some musical experiences in singing and learning hymns.

We were able to purchase 30 new chairs to be used in the choir area of the chancel and the choir room. This was accomplished through hard work by the Worship Committee and the donations of our membership. It has made a big difference in the comfort of the choir and the overall look of the sanctuary.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Congregational Meeting January 16, 2022

Moderator: Pastor Matt Matthews; Quorum: Yes

Pastor Matt opened the meeting and addressed the congregation (live). Judi Geistlinger addressed the Zoom/ online congregational viewers, explaining how the meeting would proceed.

Linda Peterson presented the slate of new nominees for Elders and Deacons.

Session

Mary Jane Kelley
Mary Nicholas
Ann Webbink
Jan Wittler

Mission Deacons

Jane Alsberg
Grace Ashenfelter

Congregational Care Deacons

Amy Born
Pam Knox
Nancy MacGregor
Bill Marble
Sherry Marble
Cathy Stickels
Eric Stickels
Julia Ulen
Tom Ulen

Congregational Nominating Committee

Cathy Emanuel
Sally Hutton
Skip Pickering

Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

Betty Hollister
Kevin Kim
Nancy Martin
Carol Penka
Bruce Rainey
Kathy Schoeffmann

Pastor Matt Matthews asked if there were nominees from the floor. A member moved to have the nominations closed from the floor. Motion was second, and approved.

Unanimous yes for slate of nominees. Pastor Matt Matthews asked whether the congregation approved of the nomination slate. Unanimous yes was received.

Pastor Matt Matthews moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. Pastor Matt Matthews closed in prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Celeste Kim (clerk)

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation
First Presbyterian Church of Champaign, Illinois
Sunday, March 6, 2022**

Pastor Matt Matthews opened the meeting with a brief prayer. Following, he announced that Grace Ashenfelter would serve as secretary pro-tem.

Pastor Matthews stated the purpose of this meeting: to hear reports and to review terms of his call. Following his brief comments on the reports within the "Annual Report 2021," Pastor Matthews called for questions. There were none.

Pastor Matthews then asked Mark Schoeffmann to proceed as chair of the meeting.

Mark led a brief discussion on the budget announcing that all programs are still intact despite a lower budget. He then reviewed the terms of call indicating that the three percent increase is reflected in professional expense as Pastor Matthews requested. Mark Schoeffmann asked for comments and/or questions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to accept the terms of call. Tom Ulen so moved and Judi Geistlinger seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was closed in prayer, ending at 10:24 a.m.

Grace Ashenfelter
Secretary pro-tem

**Congregational Meeting Minutes
To approve slated church officers
Sunday, November 6, 2022**

Quorum: Yes

Moderator: Matt Matthews

Matt Matthews opened the meeting in prayer.

Matt Matthews invited Elder Mary Nicholas to present the slate of nominees.

Elder

Ken Chapman
Diane Mortensen
John Muirhead (year to year)
Trenna Thomas

Congregational Care Deacons

Gary Bowen
Sue Fischer
Mary Jane Kelley
Linda Sandquist
Annilee Shaul

Community Mission Deacons

Holly Nordheden
Lola Ruthmanskorfer
Leslie Thomas

Matt Matthews invited the congregation to offer nominations. No nominations were presented.

Motion: Motion was made to call the congregational meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Matt Matthews made a motion to approve slated officers. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Celeste Kim (clerk)