

August 2022



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Fun In the Sun Centennial Park & Sholem Pool

August 14 6-10 pm

**Join the Nurture/Outreach
Committee for hot dogs,
popcorn, cotton candy and
snacks @ 6 pm with lawn and
carnival games.**

**Then at 8 pm....change into
your swim suit and enjoy the
pool and water features for a
private pool party.**

**(Volunteers still needed for
games, food and swimming.)**

(No rain date this year!)

2nd SUNDAY BRUNCH

August 14th

10:10 AM

**Come and enjoy brunch
Centennial Hall
2nd Sunday of each month**

We will have an array of brunch items each month prepared in our new kitchen by volunteers led by trained cooks. Select from different hot dishes, meats, fruits, pastries and beverages each month. Enjoy the fellowship right after the 9 AM service.

Donations are appreciated to help cover the costs.

Volunteers are needed to help with the brunches for the remainder of the year. If interested, please contact Jan Wittler, Gary Peterson or the church office.

Worship News

We are excited to announce the August worship services will be blended services at 9 AM with **Sora Shepard**, our new church musician, and our Gathering Band led by **Kelsey Stremplewski**.

We look forward to these offerings of music in our joint service of worship.

Consider Celebrating Communion Like a Child

The following was shared by the daughter of Jo Foley after the home communion visit by Pastor Matt...

Run down the aisle. It is ok to run down the aisle for communion. In fact shouldn't we all be running to feast with Christ? Next time, don't walk to communion – run.

Take communion with a stuffed animal. This should be acceptable, as long as the stuff animal is served communion as well. Kids understand that everyone is welcomed to the table. Human and teddy bear alike.

Drink every drop. It is critical that every drop of grape juice and morsel of bread is consumed at communion. Who cares if people are waiting behind you to move back to their pews, you do not leave that table until you have been able to take every last moment with Christ.

Ask for a “big piece.” Why settle for just a little bit of Christ? Don't we all want a “big piece” of Christ?

Dunk the whole piece into the cup. If you get to dip the bread into the juice, soak that bread and be sure to not worry about drips or stains.

Seek out the leftovers. The bread of Life is too good to discard in the trash or fed to the birds. That is why we eat all the bread after worship.

Being shy is okay. Kids understand that it is an honor to be at the table of God and they do not demand a place but know that it is a treat to be there. Being shy to kids is like being humble to adults. Humility at the table of God? Great idea.

Laugh. Partaking in the banquet of God is a joyful event! Smile, laugh and if you need to, put a rubber crocodile on your head and make the pastor laugh with you.

Express thanks. One thumbs up at the meal is something, but two thumbs up is great.

Save some for later. Putting bread into your pocket seems like a reasonable way to take Christ into the world.

Face to Face With Dan & Camille Harmon



"We were welcomed!"

What brought you to First Presbyterian Church?

During the pandemic when we could not worship live, we listened to Pastor Matt's sermon on the radio. We felt immediately connected. We then noticed his spots on the radio and after a brief investigation we decided to come to First Pres. And we are glad we did. It's been almost a year.

What has been the highlight of your church experience?

We were impressed by the warm welcoming we received. People were keeping us in the pews after worship to greet us.

Tell us about your work and your family.

We both have lived most of our lives in Urbana. Both of us are Urbana High graduates and we are both retired. Dan's work included serving as an Investigator and Inspector with the Urbana Fire Department and work in real estate. Camille's career was in nursing from intensive care to case management. She developed the first Alzheimer's Disease unit in Central Illinois. We have a son who is a professor at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, NC.

What do you do in your free time?

Dan loves his "car cave" where he maintains a collection of antique autos. "I have been into cars since I was twelve." Camille walks each morning and loves her garden where she cares for the birds and the bees. She spends a great amount of time reading.

What advice can you give on how to be the church? Or, how can the church best be the church?

We sought a congregation of people who cared less about themselves and their buildings and more about others beyond their walls. We found that here.

Thank You But We Still Need Your Help...

Nurture wants to thank those that have helped with coffee making and cleanup and assisting with the 2nd Sunday Buffets. We are still in need of volunteers for those positions in the upcoming months.

If you have enjoyed the coffee or the Buffet, we have a signup sheet at the Welcome Center for coffee and you can email Gary Peterson amer_swede@yahoo.com if you would like to help with 2nd Sunday Brunches.

Thanks so much!!!

Matthew 25 – Dismantling Structural Racism

But what can I do?

1. Check out businesses owned by people of color.

El Progreso Tienda Y Carniceria https://www.smilepolitely.com/food/el_progreso_a_south-of-the-border_grocer/ 1202 N. Cunningham, Urbana is owned by **Alex, Arnaldo and Ángel Corado**, immigrants from Guatemala. This is a Latin/African grocery which also offers prepared foods. On weekends they offer slow cooked barbacoa, fresh pico de gallo with the best tortillas this side of Chicago.

2. Watch the adult film, *Mudbound* (Netflix) or the TV series *Queen Sugar* (Hulu).

3. Read the *New York Times* best seller, *The New Jim Crow-Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color Blindness* by Michelle Alexander.

4. Make your donation to DREAAM a monthly one.

Compassion Peace and Justice Ministry Team is an open small group. You are welcome.

We would love to have you serve as a
liturgist on Sunday morning!
If interested, please contact **Carol Miles**.

The Heart of Mission

DREAM Is Absolutely Amazing!

Amy Blomberg, principal of Broadmeadow Elementary School, Rantoul exclaimed, "DREAM is amazing! I think the strong partnership between the DREAM staff and the staff at Broadmeadow is key to our success. The summer program has been so engaging and hands-on. The students and parents have said that this has been the best summer yet and all of the kids are so sad the program has to end."

The five-week summer program at Broadmeadows ended July 15. Eighty-five first through fifth graders engaged weekly themes ranging from learning about plants and gardening to planets and constellations to theater and writing and performing plays to food and nutrition and exercise. Each week ended with a field trip connected to the learning. One DREAMer was so excited and said, "I stayed up all night for this moment!"

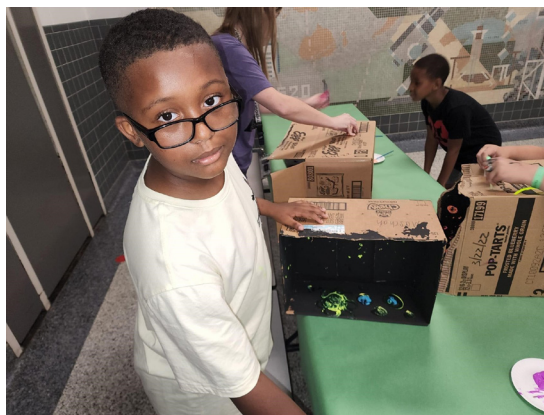
DREAM is grateful to First Pres for its generous gifts of time, space and dollars. Support for the Kappa Kappa Gamma Flower Sale raised \$6,000 to support our early childhood education efforts. (Check out the pots outside the church...these came from DREAM's flower sale. Many thanks to our night guy **Fred Foster** for keeping the flowers watered during this dry summer!)



The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies. Gertrude Jekyll



There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children. Nelson Mandela



Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up. Pablo Picasso



Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Psalm 127:3

A vibrant poster for a 'Back to School Shoe Drive'. The background is a bright blue with a white torn-paper effect in the center where the text is located. Various school-related items are scattered around: a pair of black and white sneakers at the top, a pair of white sneakers on the left, a pair of blue crocs on the right, a pair of black Nike sneakers at the bottom left, and a pair of pink sandals with white flowers at the bottom right. Large, colorful letters 'A', 'L', 'C', and 'B' are placed around the central text. School supplies like pencils, a pencil sharpener, and a paper airplane are also included. The central text reads 'Back to SCHOOL SHOE DRIVE' in a playful, bold font. Below this, a paragraph explains the drive in honor of Tracy Dace's 50th birthday, with a goal of collecting 500 pairs of shoes by August 12, 2022. It provides instructions on where to drop off shoes and how to contact DREAM for more information. The DREAM logo is in the bottom right corner.

**Back to
SCHOOL
SHOE DRIVE**

**In honor of our Founder, Tracy Dace's
50th birthday in August, DREAM is
hosting a Back to School Shoe Drive.
Our goal is to collect 500 pairs of new,
school-aged children's shoes
by **August 12, 2022.****

**Drop shoes off or ship to DREAM at
First Presbyterian Church
302 W. Church St., Champaign 61820
Contact jacqueline@dream.org or
visit dream.org for more information.**

DREAM
Driven to Reach Excellence and
Academic Achievement for Males

Winter in Havana

Ready for some winter sun, warm smiles and fellowship? Interested in enriching your life and growing your faith? Join your First Pres friends for our congregational trip to our sister congregation in Havana in February.

A prerequisite for travel is attendance at two introductory overview meetings this fall. Those who remain interested in the trip will have opportunity for several subsequent preparatory sessions. Contact **Rachel Matthews** (rachel@firstpres.church) now to reserve your place in our fall Cuba Study.

The Republic of Cuba

The Special Period 1992-2000

BY BOB KIRBY, CUBA PARTNERS

Cubans remember the “special period” as a decade of suffering. The economic crisis was created by the dissolution of the Soviet Union on which Cubans had become dependent. Loss of almost 100% of oil imports resulted in an energy crisis. Loss of subsidized food imports led to famine. The average Cuban lost 20 pounds. Vitamin deficiencies were common. Medication was unavailable. The situation worsened when Cuban Americans organized through their Cuban American National Foundation were able to secure two important political objectives that tightened the US Embargo. The Torricelli Act of 1992 forbid subsidiaries of US companies abroad to trade with Cuba even if those foreign countries allowed trade with the Island. It authorized the US president to stop US foreign aid to any country conducting business in Cuba and gave the president the power to give assistance to Cuban dissidents. The Helms Burton Act of 1996 allows

American citizens to sue foreign corporations who profit from trade or investments from properties that were expropriated by the Castro government after 1959.

The Cuban people were not strangers to austerity. Despite hours standing in line for food rations and power outages lasting longer than power services, life went on. Tourism increased. The government necessarily eased restrictions on the church which was providing support to the suffering. Cuba became a secular instead of an atheist state. Christians gained the right to join the communist party and the remnant Presbyterian church began to grow.

The Cuban sense of humor helped lift spirits. Here are a few enduring colloquial expressions. A refrigerator is called a “coconut” because the only thing in it is water. Steak is called “Jesus Christ” because everyone talks about it but no one has ever seen it.

Later in the decade of the Special Period Cuba found new trading partners in China, Venezuela and Bolivia and the economy improved, at least for a while.

Next Month: The Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba

Environmental News

BY PAT PHILLIPS

P.PHILLIPS42@SBCGLOBAL.NET



The bottom line is this. To care about climate change, you only need to be one thing, and that's a person living on planet Earth who wants a better future. Chances are, you're already that person—and so is everyone else you know. Dr. Katherine Hayhoe, author of *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World*.

She will be the keynote speaker at the **Green Team Summit**, which will take place September 11 – 14, 2022, in Hybrid format, with watch parties in Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. Register at <https://www.greenteamsummit.org>.

And watch for our party Sunday, September 11 from 5-6:30 PM. At the summit presenters from different faiths and spiritual practices will share different ways to interweave with environmental care, justice, and community healing.

One of our “interweavings” is cleaning up trash in our church neighborhood. The next Adopt-a-Highway will be at 8 AM on Saturday, November 5, after Halloween.

English as Second Language News

BY VAL SMITH, DIRECTOR
VAL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Notes from students like “your friendly attitude makes me feel warm” or “your teaching style has left a deep impression on me” encourage our hearts that we are fulfilling our mission statement of providing a warm welcome and competent English instruction to our students.

that they are not alone. God's presence is with us wherever we go and in whatever challenges we face. As one student said good-bye to us this week, she stated that she was not only thankful for our classes, but also for assurance of God's care for her when her mother passed away. Ultimately, our outreach meets the needs of the whole

person, including their spiritual needs.

Each week, we become aware of individual needs and just like Jesus our tutors minister individually. Because of very limited English, one of our newcomers from Brazil was having difficulty benefitting

from our online instruction. She also has three children and nowhere to take them during our ‘in-person’ classes. So, we opened up a family room and one of our tutors has been working with her individually while her

A devotional from one of our volunteers reminded me that we have an important message to pass along to our students. In Joshua 1:9, God said to Joshua: “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” The devotional goes on to say that their church began a ministry to those who needed English instruction. In listening to the students, they discovered the difficulty for people leaving all they have known including country, family and friends. As God assured Joshua, we can also assure students



children entertain themselves nearby. This past week, the tutor was teaching the mother about school supplies. She immediately thought of the mother's eleven-year-old son sitting in the room. She thought, “Why not include him?” Both the mother and son learned more quickly together.

In the last few weeks of classes, we welcomed four new students. One of them was the brother of a current visiting student and another one is a permanent resident who is seeking to improve his English for employment. James, a student volunteer from the University of Illinois, has provided excellent instruction for them. In addition, an employer from the CU area brought two people from Ukraine in to attend classes.

Our summer session is over and classes will begin again in September. Thanks are extended to our summer 2022 volunteers including Joselle, Sara, Eddie, Kuhu, James, Lois, Tim, Raeann, Russ, Christie, Mary Ellen, Sharon, Vern, Mike, Michele, and Laura. God bless you all!



Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth, Family

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR
MINDY@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Fun in the Sun Event

August 14 at 6 PM in Centennial Park at the north pavilion. Swimming in Sholem Pool at 8 PM. Join us for hot dogs, snacks, and treats at 6 PM with lawn games and carnival style games. Then, change into your swimming suit and enjoy the water features of Sholem Pool from 8-10 PM for our private pool party. We need volunteers to monitor the games. Contact Mindy at mindy@firstpres.church to volunteer.

Back to School Blessing adapted from ideas! for Church Leaders

Our public schools resume August 18-19

We pray for all children—for their playfulness, for their curiosity and for their joyfulness. We pray, as they go beyond the boundaries of home, that they will find strong and true friendships. We pray especially for those called to lead and to care for them. Grant O God that our children and the adults who minister with them might grow in your love.

We pray for all young people, for the ways they test boundaries and question authority. We pray, O God that they will continue to develop and to use the gifts you have given them. We pray for those called to teach, to lead, to coach, and to mentor our young people. Grant your wisdom and generous spirit to these youth and adults as they commit to grow righteously in this complex and too often dangerous world.

We pray for all college students, for the questions they are facing about their future. We pray for those called to lead and to care for them—for professors, counselors, administrators, and advisors. Nurture all students and leaders, O God, in communities of fellowship and protect them from isolation and loneliness. Grant your courage to these young adults and adults as they engage in critical learning and discovery for the stewardship of our world.

We pray for all those who teach and lead, O God. Inspire them with creativity and commitment. Give them energy to continue teaching and bringing forth the best from their students. Help us to appreciate their efforts and to treat them with respect. Provide opportunities, O God, for their refreshment and renewal.

We pray for all adults as they endeavor to live faithful lives in their homes and in their workplaces. We pray for all who are parents, stepparents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents of children, youth, and young adults. Help them to find the time to sit and to listen to their young people. Give them hearts and minds filled with patience, understanding and wisdom. Enable them to share your wisdom and love, O God, in word and by example.

We pray for all those who learn—children, youth, young adults and adults. Keep them from being discouraged when facing the trials of the day. Instill in them a desire to grow in wisdom and understanding. Grant them the discipline of study and the ability to concentrate. We pray for all of us as learners, O God. We know

that we never stop learning about your love and faithfulness. We thank you, O God our creator, for teaching us through your word and through your son, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.

Sunday School Resumes September 11

We need transportation and teaching teams

Do you delight in the energy and enthusiasm of children? Do you find that their curiosity about God and faith inspires your curiosity too? Then consider joining the children, youth, and family ministry team of volunteers!

We need drivers to pick up some children so that they can attend our worship and Sunday school programs. We need caring adults to share Bible stories and lead an activity with children and youth of different ages. There will be two training sessions for new and returning volunteers August 21 and 28 in the Parlor. If teaching isn't your style, we need help preparing supplies during the week for lessons. On the next page is a table that outlines some of the ways you can become involved in nurturing the youngest disciples among us.

Contact **Mindy** at mindy@firstpres.church or call 217-356-7238 to become involved in CYF ministry. Call **Blaise Zamena** to become a driver in our transportation team at 217-308-8960 or email him at Blaise@firstpres.church.



CYF Volunteer Ministry

Title	Description	Time Commitment	Requirements
Preschool Sunday School Teacher	Serve on a team. Choose classroom activities. Set up prepared materials. Lead the group of children through the lesson activities. Clean up.	Midweek- one hour Sunday- one and a half hours	Training session Background check
Elementary Sunday School Teacher	Serve on a team. Choose a classroom activity. Set up the prepared materials. Lead the children to the classroom. Lead the group of children through the lesson activity. Clean up.	Midweek- one hour Sunday- one and a half hours	Training session Background check
Sunday School Helper	Serve on a team. Lead the children to the classroom. Assist the group of children and teacher. Assist with clean up.	Sunday- one and a half hours	Training session Background check
Middle School Sunday School Teacher	Serve on a team. Review the classroom lesson. Set up the prepared materials. Lead the group of children through the lesson activity. Clean up.	Midweek-one hour Sunday- one and a half hours	Training session Background check
Confirmation Teacher	Help teach the confirmation class. Choose lessons with staff, lead retreat activities, support mentors.	Same as above, plus occasional hours for two retreats	Same as above
High School/ Young Adult Sunday School teacher	Serve on a team. Choose a classroom lesson. Set up the prepared materials. Lead the group of children through the lesson activity. Clean up.	Midweek-one hour Sunday- one and a half hours	Training session Background check
Mission Trip Chaperone	Assist the youth leader for driving, meals and activities	One week in summer	Background check, training session, possible van endorsement
Van Driver	Drive the church van and help maintain child safety.	Sunday one-two hours	Background check, Driver's test
CYF Ministry Committee	Serve on the decision making team for children, youth, and family programming for FPCC	Two hours once a month	Dedication to faith education
Special Event Helper	Purchase goods, volunteer, cook	Two hours for single event	Willingness to help
Pew Partner	Guide unaccompanied children through worship, sit beside them	Sunday one hour	Friendly and patient

Finance

Financial Update

BY ANN WEBBINK, FINANCE TEAM
ANWEB2@YAHOO.COM

Contributions

Total June contributions: \$45.7K from plate and pledge plus \$10.2K from prepaid= \$55.9K

This is \$19.1K less than last year and \$16.4K under budget

Total contributions YTD: \$450.8K which is \$25.1 less than last year and \$16.8K over budget.

At 50% of the year we have 58.99% of the budgeted contributions.

Expenses

June expenses were \$83.1 K which is \$5.9K less than last year and \$2.1K under budget.

Expenses YTD were \$543.1K which is \$11.86 less than last year and \$31.9 over budget.

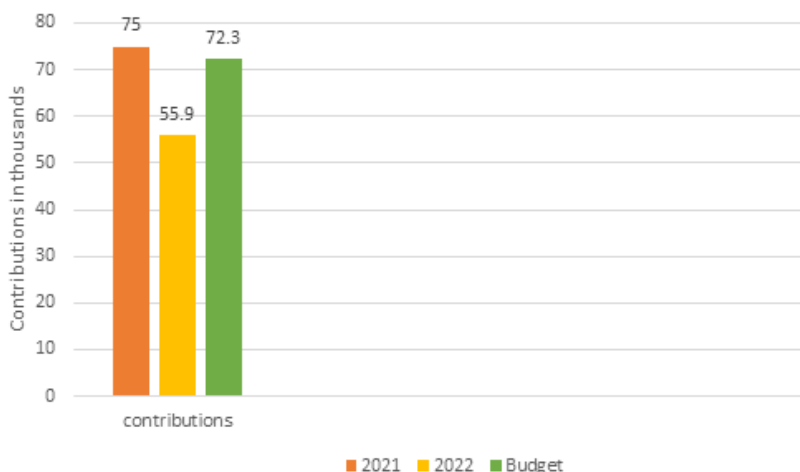
At 50% of the year we have spent 53.14% of the budget.

Balance YTD

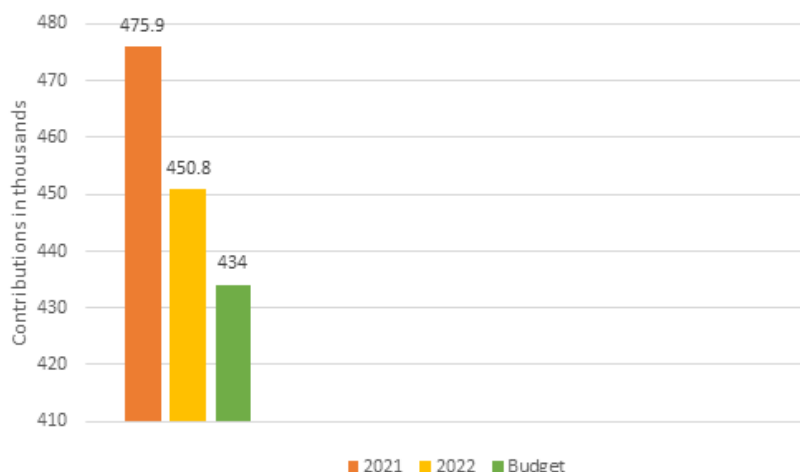
Revenue exceeds expenses by \$11.5K which is \$94.9K less than last year.

Summary of Restricted Accounts: \$6744.54 was donated to various funds in June.

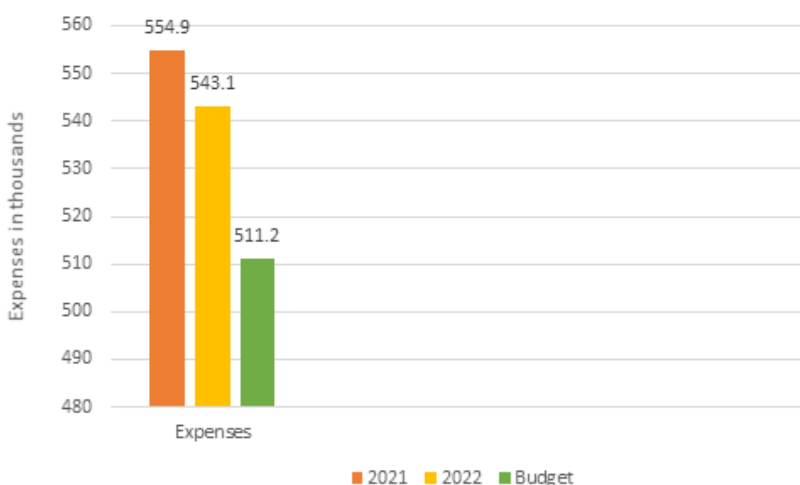
June Contributions



Contributions YTD



Expenses YTD





Psalm 143:5 I remember the days of old. I ponder all of your great works and think about what You have done. "Lord, your past works in my life remind me who You are. Remembering keeps me grounded in truth. Please help me to bring them to mind often and continue to thank You for them."

Psalm 30:18 The Lord must wait for you to come to Him so that He can show you His love and compassion. For the Lord is a faithful God. Blessed are those who wait for His help. "Father, I am trusting You for the process. I'm believing that You will get me where I need to go to do the impossible in my life. All you ask me to do is to dream big, pray big, and watch You work."

1 Thessalonians 5:17 Never stop praying. "May your spirit remind me often to pray, and May You hear my requests and answer them according to your will".

Sharing Their Gifts



"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

Gabriel and Solange Mboyo share their gifts by leading French language worship Saturday evenings (except second Saturdays) in Centennial Hall from 6 to 8 PM.

Jays & Concerns

We will celebrate the life of these devoted church saints in August..

- **Bill Gamble** on Saturday, August 13, at 11 AM;
- **Wanda Tuchel** on Sunday, August 14, at 1 PM;
- **Barbara Suter** on Friday, August 19, at 1 PM.

All services will be held in the church Sanctuary.

If you or a loved one is in the hospital or in need of a pastoral visit, please let the church office know.

Our pastor, staff, and hospital visitors keep this information confidential.

Your church wants to be in touch.

Bless be the tie that binds.

Happy birthday to...

- **Marilyn Hunter Shimkus** who celebrates her 100th birthday August 29.



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Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



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Sunday:

- 9 AM Worship/Sanctuary
- 10:15 AM Sunday School (resumes September 11)
- 11:15 AM The Gathering/Chapel (blended with
9 AM service in August)

Online Worship is also available at 9 AM on Sunday mornings thru
YouTube, Facebook, and our church website. Go to FirstPres.Live.

Pastor:

Matt Matthews.....Senior Pastor/Head of Staff, Ext 213

Staff:

Ritchie DrennenFacility Manager, Ext. 237
Patty Farthing.....Office Assistant, Ext. 211
Robert FerrerAudio-visual Technician
Fred FosterEvening Custodian
Marcia FranksOffice Administrator, Ext. 210
Judi Geistlinger.....Commissioned Lay Pastor
Jason Gordon.....Technology Support
Joe Grant.....Director of Music
Rachel Matthews Mission Coordinator/Parish Associate, Ext. 219
Blaise Pascal.....CYF Connections Assistant, Ext. 216
Ann Petry.....Accounting, Ext. 224
Shane Redmon.....Facility Assistant
Val SmithESL Director, Ext. 235
Libby Sternhagen.....Bell Choir Director
Kelsey Stremplewski.....Director Contemporary Worship Band
Mindy Watts-Ellis.....Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

Staff email addresses are the person's first name followed by @
firstpres.church. For example, matt@firstpres.church.

The newsletter is published monthly.
Deadline is the third Monday of the month for the following month's edition.
Send submissions to marcia@firstpres.church.