

August 2025



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

175th Anniversary 1850-2025

Plans are underway for the 175th Anniversary Celebration of First Presbyterian Church. We are organizing various events on Sundays from September 14 through October 12.

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| September 14 | Tours of historic downtown churches |
| September 21 | Photos of past activities, members and pastors will be on display |
| September 28 | Tours of our historic church, ice cream social from 2-4 PM to which other local PCUSA churches will be invited |
| October 5 | World-wide Communion Sunday |
| October 12 | Previous pastors recognized and those attending may be asked to play a role in worship. Bagpipes are an expected feature. The service will be followed by a reception in Westminster Hall and the Mae Chapin dining room. |

If you have pictures that celebrate events at the church and would like to share them on the bulletin board, send or take them to Marcia in the church office by August 15. Please include the name of the event, the year if possible, and again, if possible, names of people in the picture. Pictures will be returned to you. Please put your name and return information on the back of the pictures.

Please contact **Nancy Martin**, chairman, at nemartin81@hotmail.com or text 217-359-0753 or contact **Carol Ann Green** at cadgreen@comcast.net or text 217-621-4933 if you are interested in helping with the celebration of our historical church.

2nd Sunday Brunch August 10th

**Come, enjoy brunch
Centennial Hall**

**We will have a variety of
brunch items along with
some special sweet treats.
Enjoy food and fellowship
right after the 9 AM service.**

Donations appreciated!

**Volunteers are needed to help
with the brunches. If interested,
please contact Carol Ann Green,
(cadgreen@comcast.net), Gary
Peterson (amer_swede@yahoo.com) or the church office.**

Renaissance Story – Old St. Patrick's Church

As we celebrate the birth of First Presbyterian Church Champaign in 1850, we think of St. Patrick's Church of Chicago chartered in 1846. Both churches are the oldest in their cities.

Old St. Patrick's declined to only four members when two incredibly optimistic priests accepted the challenge of renaissance. The church is now home to a membership of more than 3,000 households and innumerable friends.

[Here is fifty-nine-minute documentary of St. Pat's story.](#)

What lessons might we learn from the renaissance story of St. Pat's?

Send your comments to info@firstpres.church and we will share them with our congregation.

International Family Game Time

Mark your calendar now for International **Family Game Time**, Tuesday, September 16 from 4:30-6 PM.

We will welcome the community for a time of fellowship and laughter. To help with this popular *Welcoming America Week* activity contact info@firstpres.church.

Spreading God's Love

The Outreach Team would like to thank all who participated in the *Because You Matter* Act of Kindness Campaign.

You spread God's love and helped establish the "kindom" of God here on earth. Remember kindness isn't tied to a calendar. We are always called to be God's hands and feet. The Act of Kindness cards and suggestion sheets are still available in the kiosk beside the Welcome Center. Let's continue to preach the Gospel by our actions.

Reaching Out to Welcome In

We have siblings in Christ who want to worship in person on Saturdays and Sundays but have no transportation. Would you join a list of volunteers who might offer a ride from time to time?

Need some help around the house? Remember that we have young people looking for hourly work. info@firstpres.church

Next Step

Our next step towards our mission vision with New Beginnings is asking all church members to participate in the small discernment groups to determine our church future. Everyone's voice needs to be heard.

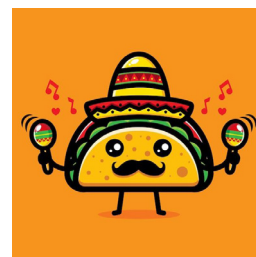
There will be four sessions starting after the church orientation on the evening of October 3. Sign-up opportunities begin August 3.

Taco Tuesday continues 4:30-5:30 PM Guido's

Join Pastor Beth for Taco Tuesday August 19 and 26!

Maybe it's the heat, but we will change Coffee Shop Office hours to Taco Tuesdays. Join me at Guido's Bar and Grill, 2 E Main, for their ½ price tacos. I'll be dining from 4:30-5:30.

Email me at beth@firstpres.church so I can get a big enough table.



New Church, New Way 1001 New Worshiping Communities

The fastest growing congregations in our denomination are in 1001 New Worshiping Communities. Our own African Bethesda Fellowship is in the process of formally joining the movement.

[What is new church new way?](#)

Hearing Assistance During Worship

With our return to the sanctuary, we have access to our hearing assistant loop. This technology allows people with hearing aids equipped with **T-Coil technology** to hear the service through their hearing aids. If you know you have T-coil technology, plan to turn on the T-coil via your phone on Sunday morning. You may have to ask your audiologist if you have this technology and how to turn it on.

Let Pastor Beth know about your experience.

Please take this information to your audiologist or hearing aid specialist



1st Presbyterian Church in Champaign, Il. is equipped with a Hearing Loop. To receive the signal directly in a hearing aid, a dedicated program with a T-coil is required. For RITE or open-tube fit BTE instruments & near normal low frequency hearing, program a "T" only setting and an MT setting for closed mold fittings. Please ask your patient if a gain adjustment of the T-coil is needed at a follow-up appointment.



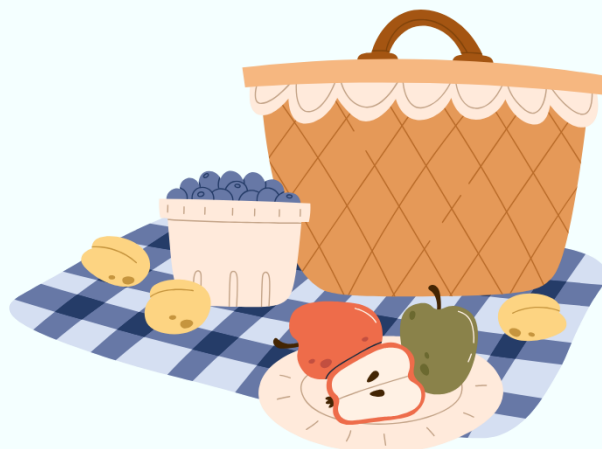
Annual Summer Picnic

Hosted by the Interfaith Alliance of Champaign County

Sunday, September 7, 4-6:00pm

Crystal Lake Park, Urbana

Large Pavillion, accessible from Park Street



The Heart of Mission

CU Days at Douglass Park

Join us in the park on Saturday, August 9 from 11 AM to 5 PM for fun and fellowship. We will be on Fifth Street at a table playing games with children and inviting people to join us in worship at First Pres. There will be many other fun activities and food to purchase.

Important Notice. Free school supplies will be available at 11. Supplies will be distributed then and will be gone soon thereafter.

There is no limit to the number of First Pres saints who can come out to the park and have fun. We would however like a small group always helping at our table. The first shift will include setting up and the final shift will include breaking down. You can sign with [Sign Up Genius](#) or contact the church office at info@firstpres.church.



Generous July

It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20:35

We are a blessing to others through the generosity of our congregation. Thank you for your support of the Raindrop Project! Funds raised will go toward the purchase of a much-needed security system at The Refugee Center. Please continue to pray for the safety of their clients and staff.

In your giving we were able to witness surprise and joy as we delivered your tangible offerings to eight families.

Partnering with our Champaign Park District we were able to contribute school supplies for families needing help in our community. May this be a great start to the school year for our youth.

Thanks be to God,
Your Mission Team.



Cuba Study Registration Deadline

Monday, August 4, is the final day to register for our annual Cuba Study. Contact Bob at 217-621-5915 or at rwk3213@gmail.com to register.

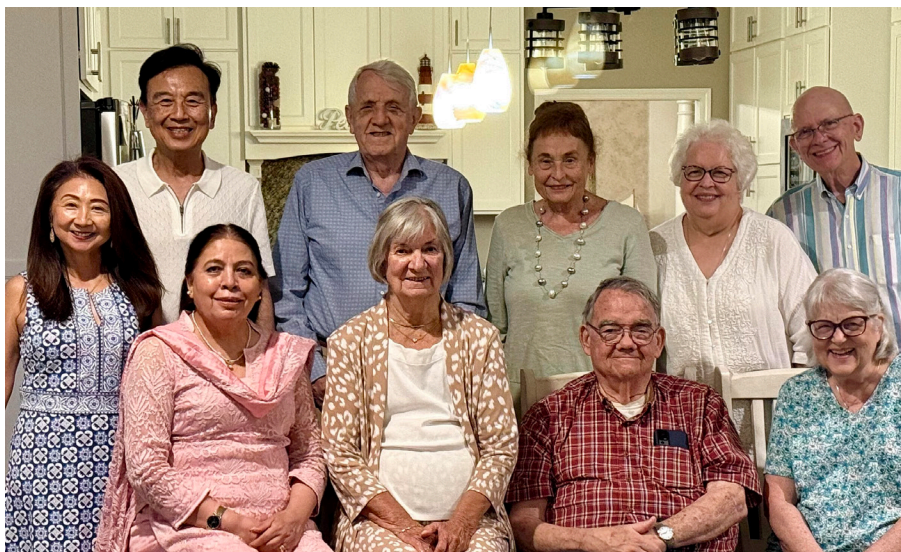
The study is a prerequisite to visit Cuba next March. We will learn about the people, the history, the culture and the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba. We will meet Monday evenings from August 25 to September 29 in person and on Zoom.

Thanks for Your Welcome and Support!

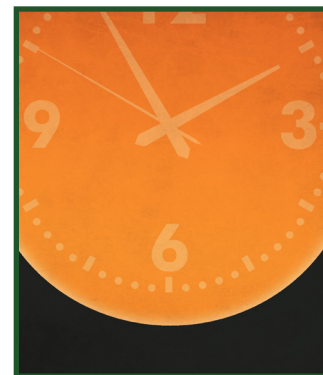
Your warm welcome to **Veda Gil**, Executive Director of PEB Pakistan, was great. She so appreciated your gratifying response to her and the work that Presbyterian Education Board - Pakistan is doing on her visit the last week of July.

Our World Mission Team supports nine students at Sangla Hill School with ten others in the congregation supporting girls and boys at Sangla Hill.

The scores for the Matriculation Examination 2025 just came in, We are thrilled to celebrate the incredible achievement of **Maryam Sultanm**, a brilliant student for CG Higher Secondary Sangla Higher Secondary School Sangla Hill. Maryam was the top student among the PEB scoring 1146 out of 1200. The average score of all Pakistan students is 40% and the PEB students average 80%.



Veda Gil and members of the Mission Team and spouses enjoyed dinner during her recent visit hosted by Sabrina and Wen-Mei Hwu at their home.



Church Office Hours

The church office is open:

Mon-Thurs 8:30 AM - 2 PM

Friday 8:30 AM - noon

Contact the church office during these hours at 217.356.7238.

You can also send an email to info@firstpres.church.

PC(USA) Stands for the Most Vulnerable Among Us

The heart of leadership is lifting up others instead of pushing them down.

Read [more](#) of the recent statement by our Stated Clerk and Executive Director The **Rev. Jihyun Oh**.

Sales Tax Exemption Reminder...

Please remember that the church is a non-profit tax exempt organization when purchasing for a church program or event. The church office can provide you with a copy of the Illinois Sales Tax Exempt Certificate which is acceptable by most vendors. When purchasing from Sam's Club for an event at the church, you can borrow one of the staff's cards for Sam's which notes the tax exemption. If purchasing from Amazon, send the link(s) to Patty Farthing (patty@firstpres.church). She can purchase using the church's account that has both tax exemption and Prime (free shipping).



Doing a New Thing

Verse of the day...

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." - Isaiah 43:19

Voice of the day...

The most damaging phrase in the language is, "It's always been done that way." - Grace Hopper

Prayer of the day...

God, help us to notice your forward-moving spirit and give us the courage to join in your new and transformative work.
- Sojourners

Sharing Our Lives Together

We have wonderful fellowship at First Pres. Sharing important life events we lift each other in voice and prayer. Keep us informed by contacting us at info@firstpres.church.

Congratulations to **Keny Mayele**. A child of the church, he has successfully completed his examination to join the United States Air Force and is expecting orders soon.

Men's Bible Study

On Tuesday August 4, 2025 the Mens Bible Study will resume. We will meet in Mae Chapin Parlor at 8:00 a.m. Our study, probably for awhile, will be Hebrews. We are going to try a new author for the study. We will be using Max Lucado's study guide.

As always, we do not necessarily follow along with the text. We discuss, debate, and have a wonderful time. But best of all we have a loving friendship of men.

Please join us for coffee, donuts, and best of all, love, discussion, fellowship, and Bible study. If interested, please call or email;

Bill Marble (217.621.7882; Mrbill1205@gmail.com)

Jays & Concerns

We express sympathy to...

- to the family and friends of **Mimi Cozad** who died July 2, 2025. Mimi has been a member of the church since April 1964.
- to the family of **Linda and Mike Olson** on the death of Linda's mother Mary Tauber.

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. Blest be the tie that binds.

Finance

Financial Update

BY ANN WEBBINK, FINANCE TEAM
ANWEB2@YAHOO.COM

Contributions

Total June contributions: \$50.1K from plate and pledge plus \$7.9K from prepaid= \$58K This is \$22.1K less than last year and \$7.1K under budget. Total contributions YTD, including prorated prepaid pledges: \$ 417.3K which is \$26.2K less than last year and \$26.7K over budget. At 50% of the year, we have 59.5% of the budgeted contributions, including all prepaid contributions.

Expenses

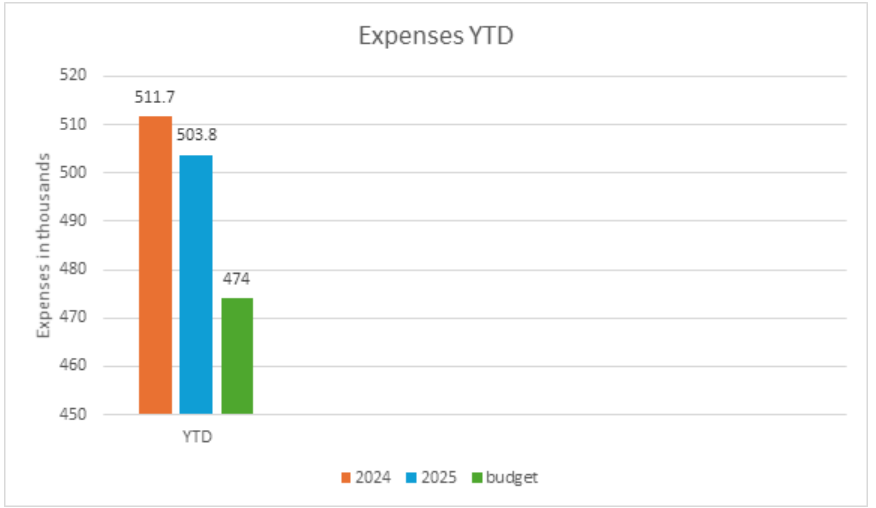
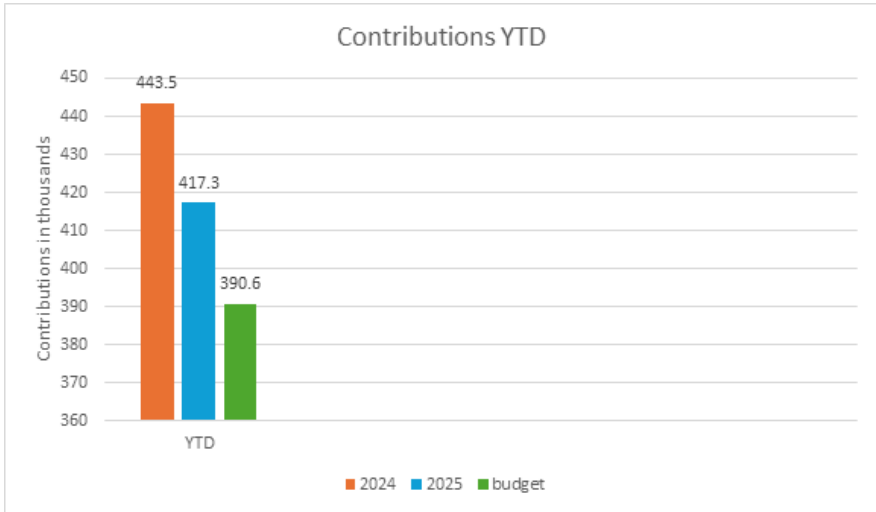
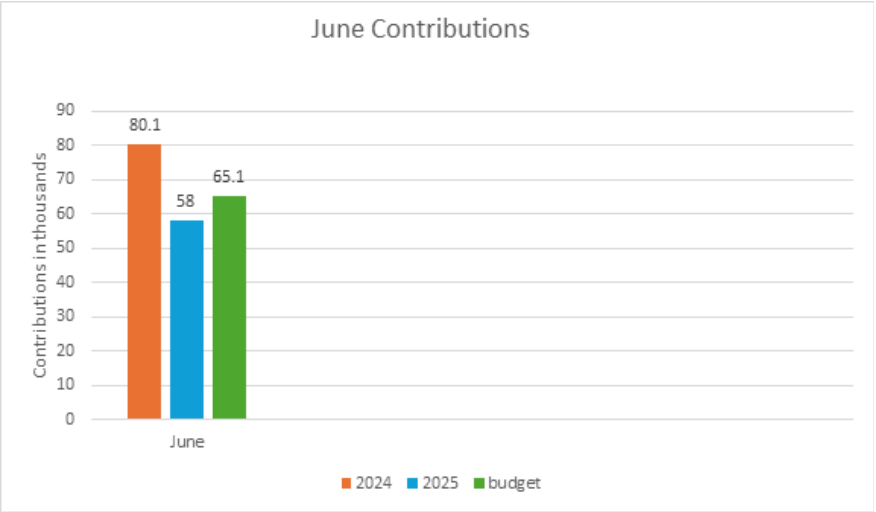
June expenses were \$62.1K, which is \$13.2K less than last year and \$16.9K under budget. Expenses YTD are \$503.8K, which is \$7.9K less than last year and \$29.8K over budget. At 50% of the year, we have spent 53.2% of the budget.

Balance YTD

Expenses exceeded revenue by \$3.8K in June Session Designated Funds: \$1,095,858 which is \$32.6K more than last month.

Summary of Restricted Accounts

The Pentecost offering was \$1205, \$200 was donated to DREAAM and \$105 to ELL.





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CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



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302 West Church Street
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P: 217.356.7238

E: info@firstpres.church

www.firstpres.church

Sunday:

9 AM Worship

10 AM Coffee and Fellowship

10:10 AM Sunday School/Adult Discussions

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

Contact the church office for more information.

Pastors:

Beth Wagner..... Interim Pastor/Head of Staff
Joseph Lundy..... Associate Pastor for Discipleship

Staff:

Ritchie DrennenFacility Manager
Patty Farthing..... Office Assistant
Robert FerrerAudio-visual Technician
Fred Foster Evening Custodian
Marcia Franks Office Administrator
Jace Kim..... Summer Music Director/Pianist
Jill Stewart..... Accounting
Bonnie Ward..... English Language Learner Director

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

Church Office hours:

Mon-Thurs 8:30 AM - 2 PM

Friday 8:30 AM - noon

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.