

March 2018



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Arise We Will!

BY MATT MATTHEWS SENIOR PASTOR/HEAD OF STAFF
(matt@firstpres.church)

Dear Friends...

During my first 34 days as your pastor I have been ameeeting and aworking all day and into the night.

I've played some small role in 20 Saturday/Sunday services of worship, four funerals, fifteen meetings per week (that's 90 meetings and counting), and a handful of pastoral visits. I've met more people than I can remember, continuing to get the Anns mixed up with the Nancys. I've dropped some balls, probably hurt some feelings, and slipped some details. I've heard some of your hurts and frustrations. I've wept with laughter at your stories. I've eaten your Chinese food leftovers and I've used your gift cards to the Custard Cup. Besides helping bury your beloved dead, I'm beginning to help you plan your weddings. In our brief acquaintance, some of you have shared your dreams, your holy of holies. This is sacred stuff, I know. I'm treading on holy ground. Grace abounds.

I told you from the pulpit recently that it feels like I've been here forever. That's because the church has always been my home. As a young college student on semester breaks, I'd borrow my parents' church key and drive to the church where I'd have rambling, midnight talks with God in the dark sanctuary. The silence of that echoey place was proof of God's wry sense of humor and magisterial profundity.

I've made a few public missteps in my days with you, and more will be coming, I'm certain. At communion last week, the gifted elders serving the sacred meal to the saints sat, then stood, then sat again confused by my cue and miscues. Alas, the liturgy I know by heart is not precisely the liturgy you know and love. These bumps will smooth over. Right now it's badly-timed disco. Soon enough it'll all be glorious.

continued on next page

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday, March 25

8 & 9 AM Traditional Worship
11 AM Contemporary Worship

Maundy Thursday, March 29

7 PM Communion

Good Friday, March 30

12 noon Joint Worship/
First Methodist Church

Easter Sunday, April 1

8 & 9:30 AM Traditional Worship
11 AM Contemporary Worship

There is NO Sunday School on
Easter Sunday.

These words from our hymn Spirit have been floating through my thoughts this week:

*You call from tomorrow, You break ancient schemes,
From the bondage of sorrow, The captives dream dreams;
Our women see visions, Our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions, Your people arise.*

Arise we will. By the grace of God we will arise. Thank you for your patience with me. Thank you, too, for your prayers.

Judi Geistlinger asked a very good question of me at our first Session meeting. “What can we do for you,” she asked. I had to think for a moment. The answer is, I’d love for the whole congregation to make worship a top priority. Come and worship. Let’s listen to God’s word together. Let’s kneel, let’s sing, let’s pray our way into and beyond the coming season.

I can conceive of no better way to begin our new relationship as pastor and people than in worship seeking the face of God.

I can’t say this for certain, and I don’t have photographs, but I’m pretty sure God is smiling.

See you in worship.

PEACE/Matt Matthews

Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, FINANCE CHAIR
(mschoeffmann@mchsi.com)

Contributions

Contributions in February were \$5K less than in 2017 but \$3K above the budget at \$74K. The Year to Date total is below last year by \$27K but is above the budgeted amount by \$17K. These figures include prepaid pledges (those paid in the year prior to the budget year) that are prorated

over the year with 1/12 added to each month’s contributions.

Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$26K below budget at \$144K but above 2017 by \$10K. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$159K which is the same as at the end of February in 2017. This figure includes \$48K more in prepaid pledges than in 2017.

Memorial Fund

What happens to donations made to the church in a deceased members honor?

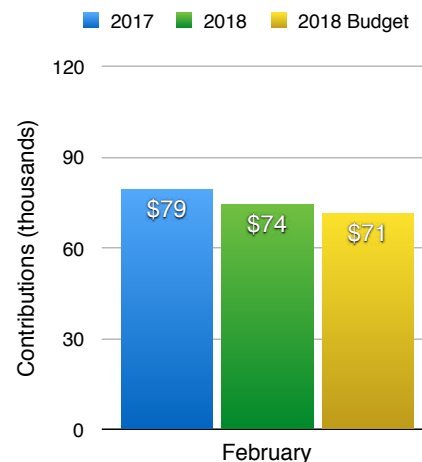
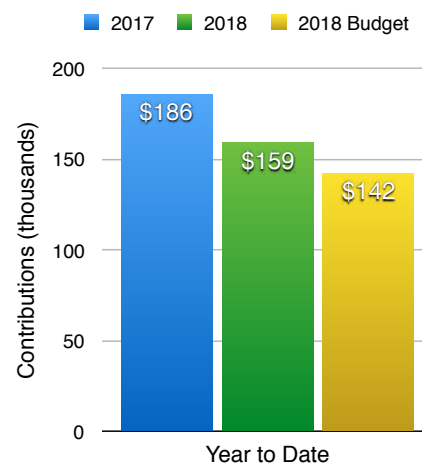
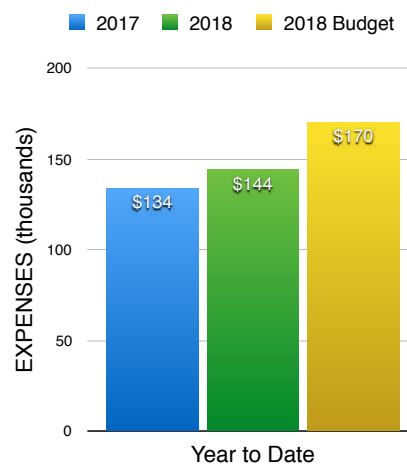
One of the many funds managed by the Finance Committee is the Memorial Fund. This Fund is comprised of donations made in memory of a deceased member of our church. Some of the donations are designated for a specific purpose but most are not. This leaves the decision of how to use these General Memorial Funds up to the Finance Committee and Session. However, when the amount of memorial donations is large, the pastors, with the advice of the Finance Committee, will consult with the family on how to utilize the funds.

The balance in the General Memorial Fund at the end of 2017 was \$33,543 and is the result of donations made in the honor of 24 members.

In the development of the 2018 Budget the Finance Committee recommended and the Session approved the expenditure of \$20,000 from the General Memorial Fund for Missions. These funds allow the church to continue to support our mission activities beyond what will be available from our limited income in 2018.

A donation given in the memory of a member of our congregation is a wonderful way to honor the member’s life. This is especially valuable to our church in

supporting existing programs in times of financial stress and in providing initial funding for new initiatives by the church. Thank you to all who have made these contributions.





Lent Offers Time for Growth

Many of us know our IQ (intelligence quotient), but what about our SQ (spiritual quotient)?

Lent is a good time to think about the quality of our spiritual life. Do we think about God often...or rarely? Do we pray often...or occasionally? How well do we know the Bible? The Commandments? The Beatitudes? The lives of biblical heroes and heroines?

During Lent, commit to spending more time in prayer. Also consider selecting a book of the Bible or a particular Bible character to study in-depth during this period.

Some people give up particular items or habits during Lent. If used wisely, this discipline can help us abandon things that have been interfering with our relationship with God.

2018 Church Officers

2020	2019	2018
Session Elders Moderator: Matt Matthews		
Judi Geistlinger	Celeste Kim	John Muirhead
Steve Tock	Bill Marble	Mark Schoeffmann
Karin Vermillion	Pat Metcalf	Eric Stickels
Tim Young	Cesar Mnyampara	Jeannie Snoeyink
	Gary Peterson	
	Ann Stout	
Community Mission Deacons Moderator: Mike Havey		
Barbara Clark	Nancy Brombaugh	Don Fischer
Steve Gritten	Barbara Fuller-Curry	Judy Gamble
		Kathy Havey
		Mike Havey
		Linda Olson
Congregational Care Deacons Moderator: Beth Hutchens		
Jean Brunson	Kathy Kinser	Jane Alsberg
Katharine Jones	Jeannie Murray	Amy Born
Pam Knox	Cathy Stickels	Beth Hutchens
Marge Olson		Nancy MacGregor
		Kurt Ruthmansdorfer
		Lola Ruthmansdorfer
		Joanne Walther
		Larry Walther

Jays & Concern

Congratulations to...

- **Olivier Mpanda and Laetitia Nkunku** on the birth of a son, Brael Mpanda Nkunku on February 25, 2018.

We extend our sympathy to...

- the family and friends of **Mary Ruth Garza** who died Monday, February 26, 2018. A Memorial Service will be held Saturday, March 17, 2018 at 11 AM in the church Sanctuary.
- the family and friends of **Betty Stewart** who died March 3, 2018. A Memorial Service will be held Saturday, March 10, at 11 AM at Morgan Memorial.

Our Church

Children, Youth & Family Update

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

School Shootings

These events have grown much too common in our nation. Many of us are asking the question, “What can I do to stop this from happening?” By all means, inform your political representatives about your concerns and advocate for changes to improve the safety of our children and pray for those whose lives have been irrevocably changed.

Beyond that, I hope you will consider being an important part of a young student’s life. The more caring adults that are involved as a positive influence in the lives of young people, the less students fall through the cracks or feel abandoned.

Consider joining our ministry teaching team for the Sunday School for the academic year or for a summer VBS or short series. Please prayerfully consider if you would be able to give two Sundays a month or more toward ministering to an age group of our children. Join as a chaperone for youth fellowship events or for a mission trip.

Contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** mindy@firstpres.church to become involved in our church ministry to children and youth. Consider volunteering for the DREAM program supported by our church. Contact **Tracy Dace** DREAMProject@gmail.com. Volunteer for a local PTA in a school near you. Become a regular classroom volunteer or consider being a mentor for the One to One program in both Champaign and Urbana schools. For Urbana Schools, send to thowley@usd116.org. For Champaign Schools, send to smithla@u4sd.

org. Find more information at cul101.org. Together we CAN make a difference!

Sunday School Notes

In February, elementary students studied the story of the Lost and Found parables. The Middle School class began a question series “Was Jesus of Nazareth God?,” “Did Jesus know he was God?,” and “If Jesus was God why did he have to die?”. The Middle School class also played a Bible Pictionary game and a Bible trivia game. The preschool explored the concept that ‘Jesus Made People Well.’ The High School class explored “Who is Jesus?”

March will turn the focus for the elementary classes to ‘Breakfast on the Beach,’ when Jesus appeared to his disciples after the resurrection on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The preschool will study Bible stories that reinforce sharing.

The Confirmation Class has been working on memorization of the Apostle’s Creed and scripture selections. They are in the process of discerning what they believe and writing their own faith statements. Each student has successfully been paired with a caring mentor. The class is now learning

about Presbyterian Polity, worship, and sacraments.

NO Confirmation Class
Sunday, March 18
Spring Break!

Youth Group

The next youth fellowship event will be at our church on March 11 from 6-7:30 PM. We will have a meal in the cafe and play some games in the gym. Ready for another round of Sardines?

Children’s Mission

The children made 20 Valentine gift bags for the clients of Faith in Action. The bags included handmade cards the children made, glass candle holders decorated by the children, toiletries, and small teddy bears. They were delivered February 12. The children are currently working on a banner for our sister church in Cuba.



Make a difference in a young person’s life...

Volunteer!

Pussy Willows, Daffodils and Relocation

BY BOB KIRBY

(rwk3213@gmail.com)

The white buds swell on the pussy willow and the daffodils reach toward the sun. Spring breaks out with garage sales, house cleaning and moves to new homes.

Your relocation ministry works collaboratively with others in our welcoming community to assist new Americans' transition to their first American homes. We are all a part of the team and the same human family.

Abdul and Larmina arrived in Champaign from Afghanistan last month. They came on a special visa available to those who were allies to the US military as interpreters. Sons **Shararaha and Shapur**, ages two and five are eagerly awaiting a sister to be born this month. With the support of several Christian churches, the Central Illinois Mosque and Islamic Center and others the Awad family has an affordable rental home and basic furnishings. Dad is seeking work and mom is scheduled for delivery. They have been welcomed by their neighbors. On Taara's birth more people will bring them newborn diapers, prepared meals and native foods.

Here are some opportunities to serve. Donate basic household items and furniture. Launder donated linens, repair and polish up donated furniture, drive your truck or ours, lift and push. Shop estate and garage sales and watch neighborhood networks for free items. Donate gift cards for Habitat Restore or Walmart or support any of the organizations involved in this work. Monetary contributions are always welcome. Mark your check New American Relocation.

Most of all, pray for peace and justice and for God's blessing on each of the 258 million migrants living in our world today.

Some Collaborators in Relocation Ministry

Central Illinois Mosque and Islamic Center
 CU-FAIR (Friends and Allies of Immigrants and Refugees)
 CU Immigration Forum
 ECIRMAC (East Central Illinois Refugee Mutual Assistance Center)
 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
 Grace Lutheran Church
 Hessel Park Reformed Christian Church
 First Presbyterian Church Champaign
 First Presbyterian Church Urbana
 Habitat ReStore
 Salt and Light
 Three Spinners
 St. Matthews Lutheran Church
 St. Patrick's Catholic Church
 St. Andrews Lutheran Church
 Universalist Unitarian Church
 Welcome Center – University YMCA

Recommendations for Relocation to Empty Apartment

Kitchen

- Set of dishes per person
- Set of silverware per person
- Drinking glass per person
- Set of mixing bowls
- Set of pots and pans
- Serving bowls
- Serving tray
- Rice cooker
- Microwave
- Tea kettle
- Set of cooking utensils
- Measuring Spoons/cups
- Set of sharp knives
- Can opener
- Cutting board
- 3 sets of kitchen towels
- 2 hot pads
- Tall kitchen trash can
- Sponges w/ scrubby side
- Small box of trash bags
- Paper towels

Bedroom

- Mattress (Q, Full or Twin) with mattress cover/pad
- Comforter or blanket per person
- Clothing iron
- Set of sheets per bed
- Pillowcase/pillow per person
- 25 hangers

- Bedside table lamp
- Plastic storage drawers for closet/dresser
- Small shelf unit for closet if available

Bath

- Bath towel/washcloth per person
- Small trash can
- Bath floor mat
- Shower curtain, liner and hook

Living Room-Dining Area

- Smaller sofa
- Small upholstered chair
- Small lamp table
- Floor lamp/table lamp
- Small dining table; chair per person
- Smaller area rugs

Cleaning Items

- Toilet brush
- Toilet paper
- Broom and dust pan
- Mop and bucket
- Laundry basket
- Vacuum cleaner

Cleaning products

- All purpose cleaner
- Scrubbing power (Comet/Soft Scrub)
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Glass cleaner
- Laundry detergent
- Dishwashing soap (for sink washing)
- Tub/shower cleaner (Scrubbing bubbles)
- Hand soap
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste

Other Items

- Pens/pencils
- Small tool kit...Hammer, phillips and straight screwdriver, pliers, smaller adjustable wrench
- Light bulbs
- Fan
- Collapsible shopping cart
- Extra blankets
- Sewing kit
- First aid kit

Things we cannot accept: large appliances, mattresses stored outside or in basements, soiled, ripped or returned; king mattresses, sofa beds, decorative items, gourmet cooking items, oversize furniture, mugs, water bottles, framed art.

**Outreach...Membership,
fellowship, hospitality**

“Meet the Matthews” is underway. Two homes have successfully hosted the gatherings. First at **Ann and Bill Stout’s** home on February 20 with 14 attending and then on March 1 at **Claudia and Bob Kirby’s** home with 11 attending.

Many more openings and homes are available thru May. To sign up visit firstpres.church/meetthematthews. Thanks to all that have offered their homes for this event.



One of the “Meet the Matthews” gatherings. Sign up at firstpres.church/meetthematthews to attend the next one.

Mark your calendars for the following planned events so far this Year:

- **Pastor Matt’s installation** is now set for April 8 at 4 PM at the church. All are invited and a lite meal will follow in Westminster.
- **An International Potluck** will be held in Centennial Hall on June 24. All are invited and asked to bring a dish for the serving line. More details to follow.
- **Sholem Fest** will take place August 19. Congregational picnic at 6 PM in Centennial Park followed by a swim party from 8-10 PM. Details to follow.

Also, listen to WPGU 107.1 for a recording by Pastor Matt inviting people to attend “The Gathering” on Sundays. This ad is sponsored by the Contemporary Service.

Please send any ideas that you may have for Outreach to amer_swede@yahoo.com.

**ECIRMAC Fundraiser
April 14, 2018**

Judy Gamble has made two African print quilts that will be part of the silent auction at the ECIRMAC banquet on Saturday, April 14, 2018. The quilts will be on display in Westminster Hall between the 9 and 11 AM services through March 24.

Also in Westminster are three rocking horses that can be painted and included in the ECIRMAC auction. If you would like to paint one, please return it to the church office by March 25.

Easter Flowers

Spring flowers will adorn our Sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Costs for the plants will be \$13 each. We will not be using Easter lilies this season, as **Pastor Matt Matthews** is highly allergic to these plants.

If you would like to donate a plant in honor or memory of someone, please make out your check to the church and mark “Spring flowers” in the memo section. Include a note who the plant is given for.

Annual Reports

Copies of the 2017 Annual Report are available in the kiosks at church or on the church website.

Set your clocks ahead
1 hour
this Sunday, March 11!



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

Pastors:

Matt Matthews Senior Pastor/Head of Staff, Ext 213
Eric Corbin..... Covenant Associate Pastor, Ext. 214

Staff:

Beth ChandlerOutreach Coordinator
Kristi Corbin Missions Coordinator, Ext. 219
Ritchie DrennenFacility Maintenance
Patty Farthing..... Receptionist, Ext. 211
Robert Ferrer..... Audio-visual Technician
Marcia FranksAdministrative Assistant, Ext. 210
Joe GrantDirector of Music
Blaise Pascal ...Asst Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext 216
Chris Penny Facilities Manager, Ext. 237
Ann Petry Accounting, Ext. 224
Andrea Pope.....Contemporary Worship Director
Jeanette Pyne.....ESL Coordinator, Ext 235
Richard Rossi Church Musician
Mindy Watts-Ellis .. Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

All staff email address are the person’s first name followed by @firstpres.church. For example, eric@firstpres.church.

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

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Sunday:

8 AM Contemplative Service

9 AM Traditional Service

9:15 AM Children’s Sunday School

10:10 AM Adult Education & High School Class

11 AM Contemporary Service

Saturday:

6 PM Praise & Prayer Gathering
(French-English Service) Centennial Hall