

# August 2018



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

### New Worship Schedule begins September 9

The Sunday morning schedule will be adjusted beginning September 9 to allow a dedicated block of time for the Sunday School and Adult Education from 10:15 to 11:05 AM.

Beginning September 9, 2018, the Contemporary (The Gathering) worship service time will move to 11:15 AM.

#### Fall Schedule September 9

- 8:00-8:45 Contemplative Worship
- 9:00-10:00 Traditional Worship
- 10:00-10:10 Fellowship
- 10:15-11:05 Sunday School and Adult Education
- 11:15-12:15 Contemporary Worship

This schedule will be reviewed by the Session in early 2019.

### A Profound Faith

BY MATT MATTHEWS (MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH)

Friends,

The following prayer was written by Hassan Barnaba Dehqani-Tafti after the murder of his son. I first found this prayer when I produced a radio show in Richmond, VA, when I was in seminary. A religious news source sent our studio an interview with Dr. Ken Bailey, a Presbyterian New Testament professor in the Middle East. Ken spoke of his friend Hassan's profound faith, and then read this prayer that Hassan prayed at his son's funeral. I was stunned then. I am stunned now. I aspire to have as generous a faith as this, by the grace of God. But I'm not there yet. May this feed you as it has long fed me.

*A Father's Prayer Upon the Murder  
of His Son*

by Hassan Barnaba Dehqani-Tafti  
former Episcopal Bishop of Tehran, Iran

*O God we remember not only Baharam but also his murderers. Not because they killed him in the prime of his youth and made our hearts bleed and our tears flow, not because that with this savage act they have brought further disgrace on the name of our country among the civilized nations of the world, but because of their crime we now follow in thy footsteps more closely in the way of sacrifice.*

*The terrible fire of this calamity burns up all selfishness and possessiveness in us. Its flame reveals the depth of depravity and meanness and suspicion...the dimension of hatred and the measure of sinfulness in human nature. It makes obvious as never before our need to trust in God's love as shown in the cross of Jesus and his resurrection.*

*Love which makes us free from hate towards our persecutors, love which brings patience, forbearance, courage, loyalty, humility, generosity, greatness of heart. Love which more than ever deepens our trust in God's final victory and his eternal designs for the church and for the world. Love which teaches us how to prepare ourselves to face our own day of death.*

*O God, Baharam's blood has multiplied the fruits of the spirit in the soil of our souls, so when the murderers stand before thee on the day of judgment, remember the fruit of the spirit by which they have enriched our lives and FORGIVE.*

## How To Apologize

**(Better)** REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION  
BY MARGARET RENKL (JUNE 4, 2018: NEW YORK  
TIMES EDITORIAL) CONTRIBUTING WRITER

NASHVILLE — A kid can pick up some handy information in Catholic school. The words to heartening songs. An understanding that human worth is inherent, unyoked to public accolades. The power of service over the power of self-gratification. A kid can pick up some not-so-handly information in Catholic school, too, but let's save that discussion for another essay.

One of the most useful things Catholic school taught me is the fundamental structure of apology. Whether or not you accept the notion of original sin in its most literal sense — I don't — it's impossible not to notice that we're all born with a powerful inclination for fault and failure. We lie. We

treat others unkindly. We nurture wrong-headed notions because they make us feel a little bit better about our imperfect selves. Roman Catholic catechism calls this tendency "the sinful condition," but here in the 21st century, it's more usefully known as being born a human being. We live in the Age of Outrage, a time when any public act of poor judgment is met with public fury. (Think of the case, just last week, of **Roseanne Barr's** racist tweet.) That first round of fury is followed swiftly by more fury as new voices defend the pilloried one. Tweet something stupid, and it must follow as the night the day that Twitter will erupt with partisan howls on every possible side, right on up to the aggrieved tweeter in chief, who is clearly thriving in the Age of Outrage.

One problem with the electronic whipping post is that people, no matter how patently flawed themselves, are disinclined to allow a flawed but truly remorseful person the room it takes to reform. A much bigger problem, though, lies with the offenders themselves, whose apologies ring hollow because they almost always involve some variety of self-justification.

To be fair, a social media feed or press release is hardly a window to the soul. But among the higher profile cases, there is plenty to suggest that almost no one in public life knows what it means to be truly remorseful. Or at least how to express remorse.

Here is what Ms. Barr said about her tweet last week: "It was 2 in the morning and I was Ambien tweeting." (Sanofi, the maker of Ambien, posted its own tweet to set the record straight: "While all pharmaceutical treatments have side effects," it read, "racism is not a known side effect of any Sanofi medication.")

Here is what the "Today Show" host **Matt Lauer** said about his #MeToo scandal: "Some of what is being said about me is untrue or mischaracterized, but there is enough truth in these stories to make me feel embarrassed and ashamed."

Here is what the NBC journalist **Brian Williams** initially said in a 2015 interview with Mr. Lauer, after being caught in a monstrous, oft-told lie: "I am sorry for what happened." As though the lie had simply befallen him, independent of his own volition.

When the Food Network fired celebrity chef **Paula Deen** for using a racist epithet, Ms. Deen told Mr. Lauer — yes, him again — she was sorry for the epithet but was not herself a racist. "Would I have fired me? Knowing me? No." (No word on whether she would have fired Mr. Lauer.) To their credit, these public figures all issued much more comprehensive and seemingly heartfelt apologies later on, although Ms. Barr appeared to retract hers following an outpouring of support from conservatives, including the president. ("You guys make me feel like fighting back," she tweeted. "I will examine all of my options carefully.")

If you are a Catholic of a certain age, you grew up reciting the *Act of Contrition* every day, and you thereby learned some things about remorse. (Maybe you learned only the language of remorse, but still: "We are what we pretend to be," as **Kurt Vonnegut** observed.)

"O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin."

A child who learns these words learns that an apology consists of four parts:

- 1) Genuine remorse (not "I don't remember it that way" but "I am truly, wholeheartedly sorry.")
- 2) The expectation of unpleasant but entirely deserved consequences (not "I wouldn't have fired me" but "I'm seeking help to confront my racism.")
- 3) A resolution not to commit the same error again (not "I'm not as bad as some of these stories suggest" but "I'm much worse than I ever imagined, and I plan

to devote the rest of my life to making amends.”)

4) A sincere effort to avoid the circumstances that led to the error in the first place (not “I won’t take Ambien any more” but “I will no longer hang out on-line with racists.”)

The moral imperative of the Act of Contrition has its limitations, of course, starting with the question of who gets to decide what might offend God. (“You can safely assume that you’ve created God in your own image,” Anne Lamott famously pointed out, “when it turns out that God hates all the same people you do.”) And God knows the world is still waiting for the Catholic Church to apologize for some criminal errors of its own. The prayer is nevertheless a good basic template for something that no longer seems basic at all: knowing how to clean up a mess of your own making.

When a person causes egregious offense, the appropriate response isn’t damage control. The appropriate response is a genuine apology — not because you might get your TV show back but because to acknowledge a mistake is to participate fully in the human community. We all mess up. We all see through blinders. We all say hurtful things. We all nurture prejudices we don’t recognize in ourselves.

It isn’t necessary to think of these tendencies as being part of a sinful nature to understand that they are endemic to human life. Even a full-throated apology won’t erase a colossal mistake. We will never make ourselves perfect. But we can try to make ourselves better, and the culture we live in, too.

## Endowments and Perpetual Giving

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

First Presbyterian Church has a long history and has made an important impact on our community and on the lives of many.

For our long-time members and others who have become part of our Church family more recently, the Church has had a major influence in our spiritual lives, has supported us and given us direction. How do we satisfy our desire to return support to the church in response to how it has supported us and deepened our faith over the years? We respond with our time and talents by participating in it’s missions, education programs and worship. We also respond with our resources in our annual financial giving.

There is another way we can respond and have a long lasting impact on the future of First Presbyterian Church. Participation in the Church’s Endowment Fund can provide perpetual support and long term stability to the role our congregation plays in our community in living the word of Christ. Gifts to the Fund can be for a specified purpose, with the income or principle used as specified by the donor. In most cases, the gifts are set aside and invested to be used for future needs of the Church.

We currently have approximately \$543,000 in 11 different endowment funds. In order to simplify future giving the Session has recommended that 6 categories be created:

- Property Improvement
- Missions

- Young Christians
- Spiritual Growth
- Worship and Music
- General

There are many ways of making a gift to the Endowment Fund:

- Gift of Cash, Securities or Other Assets
- Life Insurance Policies
- Bequest in Will
- Charitable Trusts

These gifts can provide tax benefits to the giver as well as providing long term benefits to the Church. It is wise to confer with your tax advisor when considering options.

Would you like to contribute to the future financial stability of our Church and continuation of God’s work in our community? Your gift does make a difference! A gift now or as part of your estate plan means a great deal. Please prayerfully consider how you might participate in the Endowment Fund of First Presbyterian Church. Gifts of any size are greatly appreciated and have the potential of benefiting many generations of our Church.

If you need additional information or would like to discuss this further, talk to one of the pastors or **Mark Schoeffmann**, Finance Chair.



Church staff and friends made good use of the turquoise picnic table while supporting the DREAM BBQ fundraiser.

**Face to Face**



**John and Jane Seiler**

**What brought you to First Presbyterian Church?**

We have been Presbyterian for generations. John’s great-grandfather was a charter member of the Presbyterian church in Pana, IL and Jane’s great-grandparents founded the Presbyterian church in Creston, NE. We visited this congregation when visiting son Dave and his family before we moved here ourselves and we have loved it here ever since.

**What has been the highlight of your church experience?**

We have done and loved about everything, but our greatest passion, and much of our energy, has been in serving our youth. We take the vows we make at a Baptism seriously when it comes to raising up our children and youth.

**Tell me about your family and how you spend your time?**

Well, we have three children and families. They live in Champaign, Springfield and Tupelo, MS. We have six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**How do you spend your time?**

We volunteer at the United Way, Illinois Alumni Association and we enjoy Illinois

sports and other activities at the U of I. We are now three generations of UI graduates and we appreciate what Illinois did for us so we are loyal in that regard. Of course we also try to be generous to First Presbyterian. We do almost everything at church together so this has been wonderful for us as a couple.

**Who are your favorite Bible characters?**

Paul. I love his letters (John). I think David because the Psalms are very meaningful to me (Jane).

**What advice can you give on how to do church?**

You must take time for fellowship, to meet and get to know people so you can help them as they help you get through the difficult things in life. And, you must be active in the church by your presence beyond Sunday worship – although that is the most important.

**Outreach**

BY BETH CHANDLER, OUTREACH COORDINATOR  
BETH@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

**Thank You!**

Thank you to everyone who joined us for a beautiful Saturday in the Park! Members from First Pres got to know our neighbors in West Side Park on July 7.

We passed out information about our church’s missions; Children, Youth, and Family programs; and the Gathering. We also had a great time playing games like croquet and bags. We look forward to this event next summer!

**Taste of CU**

On August 17 and 18, First Pres will participate in this year’s Taste of Champaign-Urbana, one of our community’s biggest events of the summer. Be sure to stop by our booth and visit or grab a seat at our turquoise table.

We’re also looking for friendly folks to work a shift at our booth on Friday or Saturday. No special skills are required, just

a friendly face! Sign up at the Welcome Center in Westminster or contact **Gary Peterson** at [amer\\_swede@yahoo.com](mailto:amer_swede@yahoo.com).

**Sholem Fest**

Food, fun, and fellowship! First Pres will end the summer with a church-wide picnic and pool party on Sunday, August 19, at Sholem Aquatic Center. The picnic will begin at 6 PM in nearby Centennial Park.

Please bring a food dish to share; chicken and hotdogs will be provided. Swimming will begin at 8 PM after the pool closes to the public. Join us for some poolside fellowship if you’re not interested in swimming. Family and friends are welcome at this free event!

**Hearts, Hands, & Voices:  
A Community Together  
Sunday, September 16**

Want to be a part of something BIG in our church community? Don’t Miss Hearts, Hands & Voices: A Community Together on Sunday, September 16 at 10:15 AM.

This event brings together leadership from a variety of ministries across our church. The goal is intergenerational church-wide participation – we want to fellowship together and serve our community together! Your abilities are desired, no matter what those are. We’ll experience creative worship, sing uplifting music, and share a meal together. Most importantly, we’ll use our hands (and hearts) to help local mission partners in our community. The hope is that we’ll leave with a feeling of joy and a strong sense of community.

Look for more details in the coming weeks! Contact **Ann Stout** at [mrsas2003@gmail.com](mailto:mrsas2003@gmail.com) with questions, if you desire to serve in some official volunteer leadership role, or if you have a pop-up tent you can loan for this event.



## Power of Group Prayer

Why spend time coming together to pray as a group when we could pray separately at home? Jesus' answer is found in Matthew 18:19-20. "Again I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Jesus is speaking to us. He is looking forward to the time when he will be with us by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit, when Spirit filled believers will pray according to God's will and their requests will be answered.

Remember that Jesus encourages us to meet together for prayer even in a small group.

## Belated Thanks from Ginny and Dale Tutje

*We are still getting settled in our new surroundings at the Windsor of Savoy. We spent our first night here on Sunday, July 1. Our daughters, Debbie and Dawn, were a tremendous help! Since we are uncertain about when our condo will be put on the market, numerous questions need to be dealt with. We still plan on getting back to Arizona from January through March.*

*Ginny and I have appreciated your love as a congregation throughout the years. The attendance by so many of you at our celebration of our 65 years of marriage and my 90<sup>th</sup> birthday a year ago was "overwhelming!"*

*Again, thank you!!!*

*Affectionately,*

*Ginny & Dale Tutje*

*P.S. If any wish to visit us, please phone first.*

## *Joys & Concern*

*We extend our sympathies to...*

- The family and friends of **Stanley Bush** who died August 1, 2018;
- The family and friends of **Tom Phillips** who died July 14, 2018;
- The family and friends of **Sharon Rapp Harshbarger** who died July 11, 2018;
- The family and friends of former member, **Judy Ruzicka**, who died recently in West Lafayette, Indiana.

*Congratulations to...*

- **Patricia Pukuta** and her husband, **Chris**, on the birth of a daughter, Believe, on Wednesday, August 1.

# Children, Youth & Family

## Children, Youth & Family Update

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

### Pew Partners

With the new Sunday morning schedule beginning on September 9, the children ages five and older are encouraged to remain for a full worship service. All ages are welcome for a full service, and child care is an option in the education building for children under age five. Families are invited to worship together. Worship boxes will still be provided to help occupy restless fingers and minds in the 9 AM service. The 11:15 service will still have a children's area to the right of the main seating.

There are some children who would benefit from a pew partner or pew family. These are children who attend our church with their siblings, but often without their parents. A pew partner will invite children to sit next to them in worship, help answer whispered questions about what is happening in worship, help guide them through worship (when to stand, sit, pray, sing), and build a relationship with the children. If you would be interested in serving as a pew partner, please contact Mindy at mindy@firstpres.church. Pew Partners will receive training and some resources to help guide children through worship.

We will all be enriched by the energy and presence of our youngest congregants while they learn the rhythms and flow of worship from those around them. Let us all do our best to make our little ones feel welcome and loved.

### Sunday School

Sunday School will resume September 9 in the 10:15-11:05 AM hour. We still need teachers and helpers for the preschool and

Middle school age groups. We also need a kindergarten teacher to help Claudia as a partner. If you are interested in joining our teaching team to minister to children, contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** at mindy@firstpres.church. Volunteer training for the Sunday school team will be August 19 from 10-11 AM.

### Family Outing

Come join us at Centennial Park Pavilion across from Sholem Pool for a picnic on August 19 at 6 PM. Swimming will follow at Sholem Pool from 8-10 PM.

We will have a small family carnival of games in the alley and sunken patio on August 26 from 10-11 AM. Invite your friends for some fun and tell them about our great programs!

Mark your calendars for September 16 to participate in 'Hearts, Hands, and Voices: A Community Together.' An event to fill your heart, put your hands to work, and lift your voice for the sake of God's love in our midst. It will take place following the 9 AM service in Centennial Hall.

### Vacation Bible School

Thank you to all of you who volunteered your time to contribute to vacation Bible school! We had a total of 58 kids register for the program. We topped off the successful series of Sundays with a visit from the Champaign Fire Department engine #151 crew of Matt, Chip, and Kevin and Officer Wells from the Champaign Police Department. The children presented our community heroes with thank you cards and special treats to share with their co-workers. These kids are ready to go out and be God's heroes in the world with heart, courage, wisdom, hope, power, and humility. They are ready to "Do good, seek peace, and go after it!"



## Spiritual Formation

Come one, Come all!

Education Hour is about to become a reality! While the kids are enjoying Sunday School, the Spiritual Formation team hopes you will find some study that will continue your spiritual development through the church.

Sunday, August 26, between services, we hope you will peruse the many small groups and bible study classes, which will be offered this fall. Some of the varied opportunities include: Bible studies over breakfast, *Presbyterian 101* led by **Judi Geistlinger**, *Easy English Fellowship* led by **Judy Gamble** and **Bob Kirby**, *One Blood: Parting Words to the Church on Race* led by **Betty Hollister** and **Rittchell Yau** starting in October, GK Chesterton's *Advent and Christmas Wisdom* led by **Peter Yau** during Advent as well as weekly *Feasting on the Word* most Sundays during the Education hour, at 10:15 Sundays.

Look for the catalog of opportunism to see topics/days and times that work for you. We hope you will choose something to keep your faith growing. Questions about any classes, call the church office.

### Fall Schedule September 9

8:00-8:45 Contemplative Worship

9:00-10:00 Traditional Worship

10:00-10:10 Fellowship

10:15-11:05 Sunday School/Adult Education

11:15-12:15 Contemporary Worship

## Annual Fundraisers

Mark your calendars to celebrate and financially support these local ministries

### Jesus is the Way Prison Ministries Banquet

Friday, August 24, 2018

6-8 PM (doors open at 5:30)

Laborer's Local 703 Hall, 108 East Anthony Drive, Urbana, IL

Proceeds and contributions go towards the rehabilitation of paroled inmates. The ministry teaches them all that is necessary to become solid wage earning, Christian and productive citizens of our state. Jesus is the Way Prison Ministries is the only half-way house institution in the state of Illinois that has a Christian base. This is the 41<sup>st</sup> year of the ministry.

### SAFE House Gospel & Jazz Fest

Sunday, August 26 3-7 PM Hessel Park

Looking for volunteers to help at the prayer tent. To sign-up to volunteer at either the prayer tent or as additional help, contact the Canaan Administrative Office at 217.367.2158.



**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 Chandler .....Outreach Coordinator  
Kristi Corbin ..... Missions Coordinator, Ext. 219  
Ritchie Drennen .....Facility Maintenance  
Patty Farthing..... Receptionist, Ext. 211  
Robert Ferrer..... Audio-visual Technician  
Marcia Franks .....Administrative Assistant, Ext. 210  
Joe Grant .....Director of Music  
Blaise Pascal ...Asst Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext 216  
Ann Petry ..... Accounting, Ext. 224  
Andrea Pope..... Contemporary Worship Director, Ext 215  
Jeanette Pyne.....ESL Coordinator, Ext 235  
Mindy Watts-Ellis ..Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

All staff email addresses are the person’s first name followed by @firstpres.church. 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.**

302 West Church Street  
Champaign, IL 61820

**P:** 217.356.7238

**F:** 217.356.7242

**E:** info@firstpres.church

www.firstpres.church

**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