

June 2022

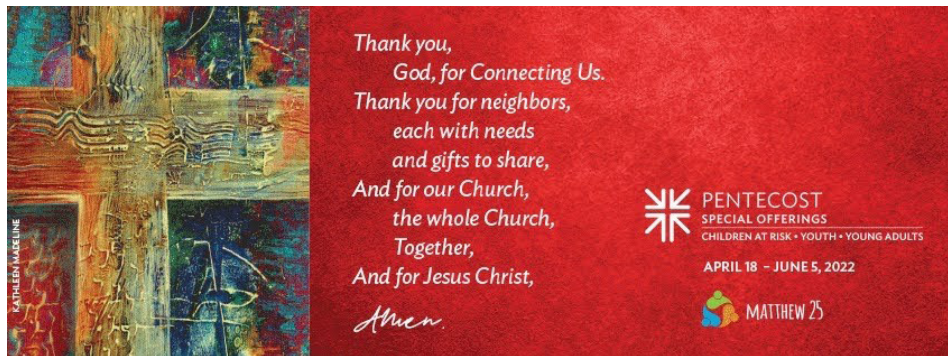


# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

## Pentecost Offering on June 5<sup>th</sup> to Support DREAM

BY RACHEL MATTHEWS, MISSION COORDINATOR

RACHEL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH



Driven to Reach Excellence and Academic Achievement for Males is an organization whose offices are housed in our church and who we have seen a lot of these past couple of years in our building during the afternoons. DREAM is a community impact, nonprofit organization with mission to prioritize academic achievement, health and well-being of boys and young men with a secondary focus on all children including girls.

The impact of DREAM reaches Champaign, Rantoul and Urbana. It is an opportunity pipeline of hope to disrupt the "school to prison" pipeline. It is a community-school-church partnership. It is prevention/early intervention focused. It is culturally responsive and trauma-informed. It is funded by us as well as so many others including, United Way, Champaign Country Mental Health Board, City of Champaign, and three state agencies.

This year First Presbyterian Church contributes quarterly to the work of DREAM in our mission budget. In addition, 40% of what we collect for the PC(USA) Pentecost Offering will go to DREAM. And, the CYF OWL Fundraiser will not only fund the CYF trip to Montreat but the extra will go to fund DREAM's Hope for the Future focus.

What is DREAM's Hope for the Future focus:

DREAM's programmatic vision of violence prevention and hope building. It is a proposed program model/framework to further address inequalities, child well-being, and mental health among Black children and parents in Champaign

continued on the next page

INTRODUCING!!  
2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY BRUNCH  
10:10 AM

Come and enjoy brunch  
Centennial Hall  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month  
beginning June 12<sup>th</sup>

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.

County. The design is a 3-tiered, evidence-based system of programs and services that are accessible, coordinated, culturally-responsive, and youth-centered. The initiative of data, evaluation, and sustainability driven. It will reach, teach, empower 300 individuals (250 children and 50 adults) in Champaign, Urbana, and Rantoul. Through this program, DREAAM will collaborate with two lead community partners: Not On My Watch Organization (Rantoul) and Bradley Learning Center (Urbana)

Please support this year's PC(USA) Pentecost Offering and DREAAM.

For more information on DREAAM's plans for this summer, see the following article.

## Five Hundred DREAAMers In Nine Summer Programs

DREAAM will serve five hundred children through nine different summer programs.

1. Champaign Kindergarten Jumpstart Camp (boys and girls) - Hands-on literacy, math & social skills programming
2. Rantoul Kindergarten Jumpstart Camp (boys and girls) - Hands-on literacy, math & social skills programming
3. Rising 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> Boys & Girls @ UniPlace in Champaign - Sports, science, engineering, field trips, & fun!
4. Rising 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> Boys & Girls - Freedom School - Literacy & social justice program for African American children.
5. Rising 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> Boys & Girls - Broadmeadow Rantoul - A summer camp of sports, science, engineering, field trips, & fun!
6. Rising 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Boys in Champaign

- Sports, health, college visits & hands-on activities!
- 7. Rising 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Girls in Champaign - Empowerment, art, field trips & college visits.
- 8. Rising Freshman Boys and Girls - Rantoul - Sports, health, & hands-on activities!
- 9. Saturday Workshops with Banks Bridgewater Lewis Fine Arts Academy.

We are always looking for volunteers! If you would like to volunteer for any of these programs, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Sam Horsch at [samhorsch@dreaam.org](mailto:samhorsch@dreaam.org).

### Flower Sale Great Success

All of us at DREAAM would like to thank all the First Pres members who shopped at the Kappa Kappa Gamma Flower Sale in mid-May. All the proceeds benefit DREAAM, so your support of that event is a great help to us!

Stay tuned for the donation total from the Flower Sale proceeds in a future newsletter. And thanks to all of you at First Pres for your continuing prayers and other support for DREAAM.

### Face to Face

With Mary Nicholas

### What brought you to First Presbyterian Church?

My parents brought me when I was in the third grade. I am still here and will be for the duration.

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

There are many. Jim and I were married here. Our children were raised here. I love singing in the choir. Each Sunday from the choir loft I have the immense joy of seeing our beautiful stained-glass windows lit up by the rising sun.



**Mary is a ruling elder serving our Human Resources Committee.**

### Tell me about your family and your work.

Well, we owned several steak restaurants which kept us busy for some years. I worked in administrative positions at Parkland and the University of Illinois. We have four children and a granddaughter. We love them all dearly.

### What do you do in your free time?

Pass time with our granddaughter, read, and listen to music. I spend winters looking forward to the spring so I can be in the garden.

### What are your favorite Bible characters?

One of the scriptures I go to for support is the story of Jesus healing the man blind from birth in John 9. It was not sin but disability that blinded the man. So, I will say that John is my favorite character.

### How can the church best be the church?

Our congregation is a helping one with hands and feet in the community. Our mission is to make and support disciples who go into the world to serve humbly and generously. I think that is how we are the church.

## Snippets from Your Pastor/Love in Action

BY MATT MATTHEWS

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

A friend told me about an exchange he had with a friend. Conversation somehow got to face masks, Covid, and Trump. He said he was no fan of Trump. She thought Trump had hung the moon. They sparred a bit, and then they laughed. They agreed they'd never agree on that. But—and here's the kicker—they still loved each other anyway.

Mutual forbearance. That's what that's called. And that is one of the "foundations" of Presbyterian polity. Theologically and constitutionally, we believe that sometimes we must agree to disagree. This is how our PCUSA Book of Order puts it:

[W]e . . . believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which men [people] of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other. (From the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, 1788).

My late friend Johnnie Underwood would add this: "And we can disagree without being disagreeable."

BUT, loving each other by exercising mutual forbearance is increasingly difficult. "America has a scorn problem," says By Tish Harrison Warren, an Anglican priest who reflects on matters of faith for the NY Times.

A Scientific American report on political polarization noted that Americans increasingly hold "a basic abhorrence for their opponents — an 'othering' in which a group conceives

of its rivals as wholly alien in every way." It continues, "This toxic form of polarization has fundamentally altered political discourse, public civility and even the way politicians govern." A 2019 study by Pew said, "55 percent of Republicans say Democrats are 'more immoral' when compared with other Americans; 47 percent of Democrats say the same about Republicans."

We find one another repugnant — not just wrong but bad. Our rhetoric casts the arguments of others as profound moral failings.<sup>[1]</sup>

We despise people who don't think like us. If we cannot be neighbors and have conversations with one another about the day's hot topics, then we cannot practice democracy.

Mutual forbearance. Being good neighbors. Agreeing to disagree. Growing closer and deeper. This communion leads to answers, to the possibility of friendship, and to a more hopeful tomorrow.

If Jesus is the vine and we are the branches, then we belong together, we live together, we grow together.

In light of the recent shootings in our country, if we don't know how to put love into gear, we probably aren't thinking very hard. These are some ways we can put the walk into the talk of love. Yes, love is the answer, but we are the agents of God's love in this place. As disciples of Jesus, we are the hands and feet of God's love. Consider loving the world in this way:

1. Support public education. I pray the Buffalo shooter had great teachers in school, a great system of academic and socio-emotional support. But maybe he didn't. Maybe he was a tough kid and got pushed to the margins. Maybe there wasn't a teacher or a coach or a school nurse who could make the positive difference for him. All education is good, of course. But public education touches most of our kids. Not every family can homeschool, and most parents cannot afford sending their kids to private school. Public education must succeed in our county. Tutor kids. Coach soccer. Support local public schools.

2. Support mental health. We can help (1) raise awareness about the challenges those living with mental health and addiction issues face. We can (2) work to reduce the stigma many experience. When people have mental health needs, there are fewer a fewer affordable places they can go. Support mental health.

3. Have a conversation about gun violence. What's the answer, or answers? Should we ban assault weapons? Why didn't the NY "red-flag law" work? Let's get beyond the heated rhetoric that "Guns don't kill people, people kill people." Let's move on. Let's go deeper. These conversations are important for both our nation and our community. Gun violence, after all, has found its way to Champaign County in a big way. A Journal of Pediatrics study found that the number of young people carrying a handgun was 41 percent higher during



the years 2015 to 2019, than in the period 2002 to 2006.<sup>[2]</sup> Is this a good thing? Let's talk about guns.

4. We can talk about race. If you are black, Asian, Jewish, immigrant, transgender, gay, lesbian, or queer you are at a significantly higher risk of being subject to a hate crime perpetrated by a young, white male. What are we doing to stand against hateful rhetoric like "replacement theory"? All of us need to talk about race, white people especially.

5. We can support our very own DREAM House. DREAM seeks to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by replacing it with an opportunity pipeline stocked with caring mentors, a great after school program, and summer activities designed to help kids do well academically and to thrive emotionally. We are building a community of support around vulnerable children and youth. On Tuesday evening there was no parking here because Centennial Hall was filled with DREAMers and families learning about an upcoming basketball program. Good news is happening in DREAM, and your church supports it.

\*\*\*

If we think that loving the world only means having occasional warm thoughts about others, that's short-sighted. Love is the answer, and that means we put the pedal to the metal and get going. If we don't know how to put love into gear, we probably aren't thinking very hard.

Our hope and help is Jesus. Jesus says abide in me. The branch can't make it without the vine. The disciple can't make it without the teacher. Love

can't make it when it is cut off from its source. Abide in me, Jesus says. Walk humbly and closely.

Dare to love the world in the name and manner of Jesus, our Lord. We can do it. We must do it. And with God's help, we will.

<sup>[1]</sup> *America Has a Scorn Problem*, Rev. Tish Harrison Warren, May 15, 2022, NY Times opinion.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/column/tish-harrison-warren>

<sup>[2]</sup> Editorial, The News-Gazette, Champaign, IL, Wed. May 18, 2022, p. A-4.

**Presbyterian Women's  
Spring Gathering  
Thursday, June 2  
12 noon  
Westminster Hall**

**All are invited to hear  
Commissioned Lay Pastor  
Judi Geistlinger  
share her journey.**

**Don't eat alone; join us!**

**Lunch - Food, Fun & Faith  
Wednesday, June 1, at 11:30 Centennial Hall**

**Dinner - Soul Food  
Wednesday, June 8, 5:30 at the home of Sallie Hutton**

**Call the church office to make reservations.**

# The Heart of Mission

## The Refugee Center

BY KATHY SCHOEFFMANN  
KSCHOEFFMANN@YAHOO.COM

Imagine fleeing your homeland with nothing more than the clothes on your back. When you arrive in your new country, everything is unfamiliar including the people, language, food, housing, and transportation. When you disembark at Willard Airport, you're exhausted and everything is confusing, but a small group of people greet and welcome you to Champaign/Urbana, your new home. Miraculously, there is someone who speaks your language and assures you they and others will help you resettle into your new homeland.

This is how the incredibly hard-working Resettlement Team at The Refugee Center assists refugees from many countries, but most recently those from Afghanistan. They spend countless hours interpreting, transporting, filing public benefits applications, and completing the mountains of paperwork to manage each case. The refugees are trying to learn English, but as we know, that is not a quick process. To complicate matters, many landlords only want rent payment by check. So staff at the center are teaching these non-English speakers how to write checks in English!

The refugees are hard-working, want to pay their own way and support their families, but there are many barriers. We can help by making a monetary donation to The Refugee Center, (<https://www.therefugeecenter-cu.org>) donating gift cards (Walmart, Target and Meijer, etc) for food and other essentials, donating an adult-size bicycle for transportation to work, or

volunteering at the Refugee Center. (see "Get Involved" on their website) Thank you so very much for your continued support of refugees through The Refugee Center.

## Environmental News

BY PAT PHILLIPS  
P.PHILLIPS42@SBCGLOBAL.NET



Environmental Stewardship Committee members join **Fiona Monroe** after her presentation about Sola Gratia Farm on Earth Day Sunday, April 24. The mission of the Farm blesses many more than visit the Farmers' Markets.

Many enthusiastic volunteers turned out on April 9 to clean up State Street and areas around the church. The next date for this activity is June 11!

Do you know anyone who thinks climate change doesn't really matter? There's a great TED talk online, "How to Talk About Climate Change" by Katherine Hayhoe, author of *Saving Us*, A climate scientist's case for hope and healing in a divided world.

## Thank You!

Your Generosity Is Overwhelming!

BY STEVE GRITTEN  
STEVE.GRITTEN@SBCGLOBAL.NET

Thanks to all who have prayed for and supported our efforts to help the citizens of Ukraine fleeing the country as well as those who are trying to exit with great difficulty.

Through your generosity, we have collected over \$17,000, which is being used to fund the Presbyterian Disaster Fund's (PDF's) work in Ukraine and neighboring countries to provide food, clothing, housing and transportation during these trying times. PDF is working with several local churches in that area to meet these needs. PDF has developed relationships through several years of work with these involved countries on other situations in the past.

We selected PDF because they are not creating and managing a new infrastructure. By working and financially supporting the work of the local churches, we are assured that our contributions are targeting those individuals with the greatest need in a very timely process. Those of you with the financial resources are encouraged to continue your support to the PDF as the war in Ukraine wages on.

## The Republic of Cuba

Che Guevara

BY BOB KIRBY, CUBA PARTNERS

RWK3213@GMAIL.COM

Ernesto (Che) Guevara (1928-1967) is celebrated in Cuba and reviled by Cuban Americans. He was born in Argentina to an upper middle-class family of Irish and Spanish descent. Even in his youth he was saddened by the poverty, hunger, disease and inequities he saw. His compassion for the poor was deepened by a motorcycle trip throughout Latin America immortalized in *The Motorcycle Diaries*. A physician and intellectual he studied Marx and became convinced that socialism was necessary to relieve human suffering and that socialism could be achieved only by revolution.

Guevara met Raúl and Fidel Castro in Mexico City and joined them in continuing the July 26th Movement designed to overthrow the Batista dictatorship in Cuba. He was second in command as 81 Cuban rebels on the yacht, *Granma*, entered Cuba in 1956. A ruthless commander in the revolution, Guevara is said to have taken joy in the firing squad execution of resisting Cubans.

On seizing power in 1959 Fidel empowered Guevara who initiated economic reforms and established educational programs raising literacy from 77% to 99% of the population. Guevara traveled the world developing Cuban relationships in Eastern Europe and Africa. His relationship with the Soviet Union was integral in Cuba's housing of nuclear missiles in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. In 1965, Guevara exported his revolutionary ideology by leading Cuban soldiers in Congo. In 1967 he led of a band of revolutionaries

in Bolivia where he was killed. The location of his remains was a mystery until 1997 when they were located and returned to Cuba. A mausoleum and a bronze statue were erected, and he was buried with full military honors. An eternal flame was lit by Fidel Castro himself.

How does history judge Che's life? It depends on the writer. To some he was a hero and a champion of the dispossessed. To others he was a savage killer.

Next Month *The Bay of Pigs*

## Matthew 25 – I Was In Prison

BY BOB KIRBY, COMPASSION, PEACE & JUSTICE

RWK3213@GMAIL.COM

"I was in prison, and you came to visit me ... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." (*Matthew 25:36, 40*)

If Jesus were on earth today, would we find Him in the prisons, talking and dining with criminals and outcasts? Of course, we would. He would be working "to seek and to save the lost!" He would be calling out our system of incarceration in the name of peace and justice.

The United States leads all nations for incarcerating people. We have the most people incarcerated and the highest rate of incarceration. Yes, more than China or Russia or Rwanda. With 4% of world's population we have 16% of all incarcerated individuals. An African American male has a 1 in 25 chance of serving prison time.

While the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution ended bondage and involuntary servitude in 1865, it excepted those convicted of crimes. That exception is where the story of mass incarceration began, and it continues today.

Join us for exploration of this timely topic then hear stories of dedicated Christians who are working for change.

## Two Sessions

1. Thursday June 2, 5:30-8:30 PM in Mae Chapin Parlor (zoom option at 6 PM). We will have food and drinks beginning at 5:30 followed by a viewing and discussion of "13<sup>th</sup>". This is a documentary about incarceration and its effect on families and communities.

2. Thursday, June 9 from 6:30-8:00 PM in Mae Chapin Parlor with a zoom option. Beverage and light snacks will be offered. We will host staff and clients from Jesus Is the Way Prison Ministry who will share their stories and perspectives. Jesus Is The Way is one of our congregation's mission partners.

Please RSVP before May 31. Obtain a zoom link if needed. Email [marcia@firstpres.church](mailto:marcia@firstpres.church).



## English as Second Language News

BY VAL SMITH, DIRECTOR  
VAL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

One day, two disciples asked Jesus where he was staying. Jesus invited them to come and see. Later, one of them, Andrew, told Peter and brought him to Jesus. Jesus found Philip and Philip found Nathanael. It is the same with the English classes for multilingual learners. One person tells another, we find some, while others find us.

Recently, a former student brought his friend. We put the new student's picture on our bulletin board with two of his friends, former students. Then one day one of the former students visited and was delighted to see his picture on the board and enjoyed talking with his former tutors.

On another occasion, my husband and I met one of my former students working at a restaurant in town. We invited her mother to come to classes and she came. What a thrill to hear her say at one of the zoom classes "I did it! I did it!" She overcame some computer barriers and is now able to access more resources and is even asking for lots of homework!

Just as Jesus spoke to many at a time, He also took time to find the ones like Zacheus and Matthew who needed more personal care and attention. Some of our groups at times may be one or just a few. The extra attention has allowed us to help students with individual needs such as writing a resume, targeting work vocabulary, and practicing pronunciation.

I remember Pastor Evan Welsh, a former pastor of Ward Presbyterian

Church in Detroit, a staunch advocate for national and foreign missions of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and the college chaplain at Wheaton College where I attended. He emphasized the importance of a personal invitation. It is the same for encouraging participation in English classes. Getting to know people and inviting them personally is the key.

To use another analogy, it's similar to a human chain reaching out into the ocean for a person floundering in the waves. You at First Presbyterian are part of the hands reaching out to those persons who are struggling with language barriers. You have welcomed people from other places into your fellowship and they have blessed and inspired us all. A prime example is the celebration of **Jose Pukata and his wife Emilie's** fortieth wedding anniversary!



Jose Pukata and his wife Emilie Parre along with Matt Matthews.

Our spring 'in-person' and zoom classes will soon draw to a close. On Thursday, May 19 students will have a social time and receive participation certificates at our farewell gathering.



Bonnie Ward, one of the tutors, invited all the students and tutors to her house for an end of the year potluck. Thank you to Kurt Ruthmansdorfer for driving the group in the church van!



Kathy Schoeffmann met with her zoom class 'in person' at Japan House Gardens.

### Want to get more involved?

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, our summer classes will begin. Please invite those who would benefit from the classes to email **Val Smith** or bring them to the church to meet us. ([val@firstpres.church](mailto:val@firstpres.church)). Thanks again for making friends with English language learners!

# Children, Youth & Family

## Children, Youth, Family

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR

MINDY@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

### Montreat Youth Conference

Please pray for our group of youth and adults as we travel to Montreat, NC June 11-18 for a time of worship, small groups, recreation, and keynote speakers. The theme is "More Than Enough." The group will be commissioned at the 9 AM worship service on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Those registered to attend are **Ellie Laufenberg, Heather Lowe, Alex Mbungu, Plamedi Lembelembe, Brandi Lowe,** and **Mindy Watts-Ellis.**

### Staring Contest Fundraiser

Many thanks to all of you "who" contributed in April and May to our Montreat youth conference trip and DREAM Hope for the Future program. We raised close to \$3,000.00 with your help!

### God go with you, Samantha!

We will miss you. **Samantha Nichols** will have her last day with us as our Sunday School Coordinator on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to tell her how much her time with us has been meaningful to you. Samantha is moving to Minnesota to pursue her certification in chaplaincy.

### Family Fellowship

Be sure to mark your calendar to stay after worship on June 12<sup>th</sup> for a fellowship brunch in Centennial Hall.



## Sunday School Update

BY SAMANTHA NICHOLS, SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

SAMANTHA@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

"You are a beloved child of God."

Standing together in West Side Park, Sunday School students and volunteers said these words to one another while tossing a ball of yarn around the circle until we were all connected. These words and the web of yarn served as reminders of what we had just learned in our last story of the year: we are all members of the body of Christ. We are connected. We are a community. Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God for our wonderful Sunday School program made up of curious students and compassionate volunteers.

I am so grateful for the parents who trust us to nurture the faith of their children and youth. I am so grateful for the students who show up ready to learn and grow. I am so grateful for the volunteers who teach important lessons, keep everyone safe, and build important relationships with their students.

This year was full of twists and turns as we figured out the safest way to offer in-person classes. These twists and turns meant we had to adapt and be flexible. We met outdoors, we met indoors with masks, we took a long break when Covid-19 case numbers spiked, and we returned to indoor classes only when those numbers went down again.

We worked together as a team to navigate the pandemic, teach important lessons, and learn together about what it means to be a follower of Christ.

Thank you, teachers and classroom helpers, for everything you did this year to create a safe, welcoming, and fun learning environment for our students.

Remember: you are a beloved child of God, a member of Christ's Body, a person with all kinds of gifts who so graciously shares them with our children and youth. Thank you.





## Honoring Our Graduates

We are proud to recognize the following graduates whose information was submitted to us as affiliates of our church, and to all the graduates known and loved by our church family and friends. We applaud the hard work and dedication required to reach personal education goals. We pray that God will go with you as you face new goals and challenges ahead.

**Brendan Barker** graduated from the University of Illinois with a DMA in Choral Music and Conducting. He was our church organist.

**Beth Born** graduated from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering. She will be moving to Dallas, TX at the end of June, where she will be working in Research and Development for Frito Lay, a division of PepsiCo. Beth is the daughter of **Amy and Tim Born**.

**Beth Geistlinger Briggs** graduated from Illinois State University with a Master's degree in Athletic Training. Beth is the daughter of **Jay and Judi Geistlinger**.

**Audry Kukosama** graduated from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering. He is a church member and currently works at Kraft.

**Erika Motley** graduated from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor's of Interdisciplinary Health Sciences. Erika has been our Church Childcare Coordinator for several years, and had her last day with us on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Erika will be moving to Chicago for the University of Illinois at Chicago's Masters of Nursing program.

**Karin Vermillion** graduated from the University of Illinois Chicago with a Doctorate of Nursing Practice, with a specialty in Family Practice. Karin is currently working at the UIC College

of Nursing Office of Practice and Community Partnerships and studying for the board exam. Future plans may include teaching at the university and/or practicing in primary care.

**Ian Evensen** is graduating from University Laboratory High School. Ian is the son of **David Evensen and Ensung Kim**. Ian will attend Northwestern University in the fall.

**Henry Laufenburg** is graduating from University Laboratory High School. Henry is the son of **Mark and Sarah Laufenburg**. Henry plans to attend Princeton University in the fall with a concentration in electrical engineering.

**Sam Laufenburg** is graduating from Academy High School. Sam is the son of **Mark and Sarah Laufenburg**. Sam plans to take a gap year before continuing his education at Colorado State University with a concentration in Natural Resource Management.

**Keny Mayele** is graduating from Centennial High School. Keny is the son of **Eric Masika Mayele and Carine Moanda**. Keny plans to enter the workforce.

**Richard Miller** is graduating from Academy High School. Richard is the son of **Nicole and Marc Miller**. Richard will attend Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa in the fall.

**Samantha Musasa** is graduating from Saint Thomas More High School. Samantha is the daughter of **Carol Gonolola and Michael Musasa**.

**Hannah Stickels** is graduating from Centennial High School. Hannah is the daughter of **Eric and Cathy Stickels**. Hannah will attend the University of Illinois with a major in business this fall.

**Miriam Tutu** graduated from Urbana High School last December. Miriam is the daughter of **Leivine Bukamo**. Miriam will attend Eastern Illinois University with a major in Computer Science.

**Maisie Wixson** is graduating from Centennial High School. Maisie is the daughter of **Marjorie Worthington and Chris Wixson**.

**Katie Young** is graduating from Mahomet-Seymour High School. Katie is the daughter of **Julie and Tim Young**. Katie will attend the University of Illinois with a major in graphic design this fall.

**Emma Sandquist** is graduating from Clayton High School in Clayton, MO. Emma is the granddaughter of **Linda Sandquist**. She will attend the University of Colorado at Boulder in the fall.

**Graham Noble** is graduating from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Engineering. Graham is the grandson of **Marty and Harold Edwards**. Graham will be employed by Northrop Grumman Corporation.

**Taylor Edwards** is graduating from Pittsburg State University- Pittsburg, KS with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. Taylor is the granddaughter of **Marty and Harold Edwards**. Taylor will pursue an elementary school teaching position.

**Adam Stanhope** is graduating from John Hersey High School. Adam is the grandson of **Kathy and Mark Schoeffmann**. Adam will attend the University of Illinois and major in Urban Studies and Planning.

**Colin Stanhope** is graduating from John Hersey High School. Colin is the grandson of **Kathy and Mark Schoeffmann**. Colin will be attending the University of Illinois and major in Political Science.

**James Waaler**, grandson of **Ginny and Jack Waaler**, is graduating from the Naval Academy.

**Abby Mortensen**, granddaughter of **Diane Mortensen**, is graduating from the University of Illinois.





# Finance

## Financial Update

BY ANN WEBBINK, FINANCE TEAM  
ANWEB2@YAHOO.COM

### Contributions

Total April contributions: \$65.3K from pledge and plate plus \$10.2K from prepaid = \$75.5K. Total contributions YTD: \$350.8K which is \$ 50.2K more than last year at this time. Contributions YTD = 49.8% of the budgeted amount (This figure includes the prepaid pledges.) Cannon income of \$23.3K has been received in April.

### Expenses

April expenses of \$103.8K were \$18.6K over the budgeted amount per month and \$4.9K more than last April. YTD total expenses of \$384.8K were \$16.4K more than last year at this time. At 33.3% of the year, we have spent 37.7% of the budget

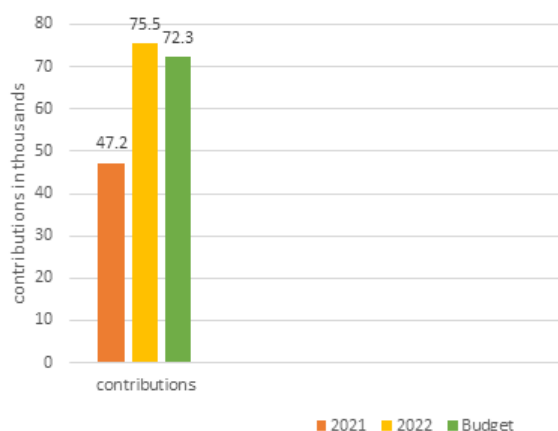
### Balance YTD

Revenue exceeds expenses by \$82.3K which is \$95.2K less than last year. ( This figure includes prepaid pledges.)

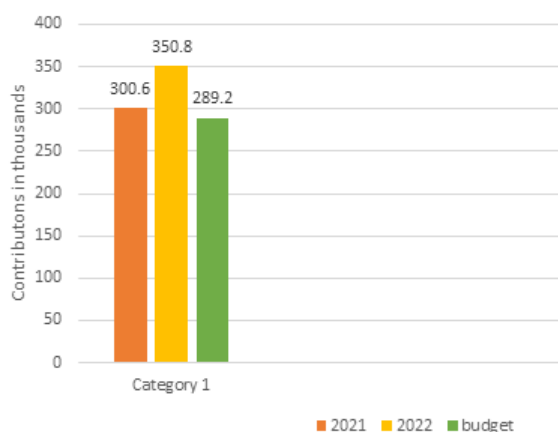
### Restricted Funds

\$16.8K was donated to various funds in April. This included \$7.8K for PDA assistance to Ukraine and \$1.9K for OGHS.

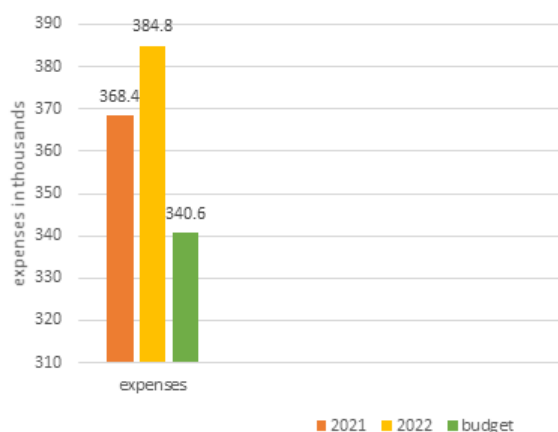
April Contributions



Contributions YTD



Expenses YTD





“To pray is the greatest thing we can do and do it well there must be calmness, time, and deliberation. ...We must learn anew the worth of prayer, enter anew the school of prayer”. Edward Mckendree Bounds We trust God is always working behind the scene.

John 5:17: In his defense, Jesus said to them “My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I too am working”.

Lamentations 3:22-23: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies ever come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Philippians 1:6: And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

## *Jays & Concerns*

### **French Worship**

**Worship in the French language is available now in-person Saturday evenings in Centennial Hall from 6-8 PM. Solange and Gabriel Mboyo invite you to attend. They also request prayers as they answer this call to service.**

*We celebrate...*

- the birth of **Joshua Zagabe** on May 18, 2022 to parents **Thomas Muderhwa Zagabe** and **Nelly Musafiri Neema**.

*We extend sympathy to...*

- the family and friends of **Bill Gamble** who died May 23, 2022. Arrangements are pending.
- the family of **Fred Foster**, our night custodian, whose niece was tragically killed in Decatur.

**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.**





**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 West Church Street  
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 West Church Street  
Champaign, IL 61820

**P:** 217.356.7238

**F:** 217.356.7242

**E:** [info@firstpres.church](mailto:info@firstpres.church)

[www.firstpres.church](http://www.firstpres.church)

**Sunday:**

9 AM Worship/Sanctuary

10:15 AM Sunday School

11:15 AM The Gathering/Chapel

Online Worship is also available at 9 AM on Sunday mornings thru  
YouTube, Facebook, and our church website. Go to [FirstPres.Live](http://FirstPres.Live).

Contact the church office for more information.

**Pastor:**

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

**Staff:**

George Almasi ..... Facility Assistant  
Ritchie Drennen ..... Facility Manager, Ext. 237  
Patty Farthing..... Office Assistant, Ext. 211  
Robert Ferrer ..... Audio-visual Technician  
Fred Foster ..... Evening Custodian  
Marcia Franks ..... Office Administrator, Ext. 210  
Judi Geistlinger..... Commissioned Lay Pastor  
Jason Gordon..... Technology Support  
Joe Grant..... Director of Music  
Sam Haupt ..... Director Contemporary Worship Band  
Rachel Matthews Mission Coordinator/Parish Associate, Ext. 219  
Samantha Nichols..... Sunday School Coordinator, Ext. 216  
Blaise Pascal..... CYF Connections Assistant, Ext. 216  
Ann Petry..... Accounting, Ext. 224  
Val Smith ..... ESL Director, Ext. 235  
Libby Sternhagen..... Bell Choir Director  
Mindy Watts-Ellis..... Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

Most of the staff email addresses are the person's first name  
followed by [@firstpres.church](mailto:@firstpres.church). For example, [matt@firstpres.church](mailto: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](mailto:marcia@firstpres.church).