

March 2021



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Labyrinth

BY MATT MATTHEWS

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

I took off my shoes before stepping onto the labyrinth.

I took my fat wallet out of my pocket, my keys, my phone, and stuck them in my shoes. I needed to lighten my load to curve around the path drawn on a massive canvas tarp covering the chapel floor. The path led to an empty circle at the center of the wider circle, like a holy flower, such simple, elegant curves.

Mindy Watts-Ellis created this Spirituality Center. A few activity stations line the walls. A journaling center. A place to pray prayers, to think thoughts. She has made the chapel an oasis. Her hand-made labyrinth is the big, beating heart of the room.

I left some things behind, but I carried some things with me. I didn't shed my clothes—my purple dress socks, black suit pants too thin for this climate, purple shirt, purple tie. A pastor's Lenten uniform. I carried with me the memory of ashes on my forehead, the gritty feel of sin rubbed into the skin of my skin with warm oil that might as well have been the grease of somebody's blood. I left my wedding ring on. I could have taken off my watch. My late mother gave it to me. I wear it and think of her. Sometimes the crown catches on the edge of my pocket and pops out when I reach for my phone and this heirloom watch stops dead, becoming a dead, tickless weight. My phone keeps perfect time, but I can't trust that unreliable watch. I laugh about it, and the laughing is the perfect way to remember Mom.

My mask has become part of my face and fits like a muzzle, chafing my ears, steaming my glasses, reminding me of contagion, the distances that separate us, the barriers behind which I often hide, the nearly 500,000 dead, and counting. I sometimes forget to wear it. I sometimes forget that it's on.

The pen that Johnnie Ebelein gave me was in my breast pocket. I could have left that in my shoe. She wanted me to have it to sign copies of my first novel.

continued on the next page

*The events of Holy Week
lead to the joy of Easter!*

We invite you to join us
throughout Holy Week.

Wednesday, March 24

Noon-1 PM Drive thru palm distribution in
alley

Palm Sunday, March 28

9 AM Online Worship

10:15 AM In-person Worship

Maundy Thursday, April 1

7 PM Live Stream and In-person
Worship

Good Friday, April 2

7 PM Online Worship
(We will be joining the Methodist Church.)

Easter Sunday, April 4

9 AM Online Worship

10:15 AM In-person Worship

Online worship and live stream
are available at
FirstPres.live.

We are now offering a limited capacity
in-person worship service with mask
wearing and distance observance.

Preregistration is required.

To attend worship in person call the
church office at 217 356-7238
by noon Friday.

Child care will be available Sunday
if requested upon registration.

It was her husband's. I had visited Al at the VA nursing center. I loved making him laugh. His generous smile covered his face and his whole body shook when he laughed. He'd want me to have it, she said. I carried it in my pocket when I preached his funeral. Nothing makes you feel like a novelist like a polished Montblanc.

A few steps into the labyrinth, I realized I should have shed these things. I should have left these encumbrances behind. One pares down for a spiritual journey. One travels light. I learned this by reading the desert fathers and mothers. But even they brought pen and paper and probably some dishes.

And my glasses. I didn't leave them behind in my shoe. My wife has worn glasses since she was six-years-old. Sometimes she accidentally sleeps with them on. I took my glasses off as I made my way slowly around, because I see well enough without them, but I kept them in my hand should I need to thread some needle or distinguish between a comma and a decimal point. This is important when it comes to negotiating salaries and such.

I took stock of the things I carried onto that canvas labyrinth, the lent in my pockets, the Tim O'Brien story in my head about the things our young soldiers carried in their heavy packs into the jungles of Vietnam. I carry a silver cross. Since I graduated seminary and Jeff Kellam gave it to me, it hangs on the chain around my neck. I never take it off, especially not for TSA agents, and I didn't take it off for this journey. I am a man burdened by clothes and glasses, the accoutrements of pandemic and convention, history, the weight of my vocation. Even naked, we bear scars. We carry memory as much as it carries us. These things tip the scale.

There's music piped into hidden speakers, piano music with lots of dissonance. It's ethereal, but repetitive and it began to grate on me. An image came to mind of a child testing her frustrated motor skills with an eraser rubbing a hole in the page of her homework. Nothing breaks a spiritual vibe like thoughts of homework.

Breathe, I told myself.

Let go.

Transcend.

On one wall, there's a small fountain trickling over smooth black stones. Cold, grey light illumines the room but dimmed incandescent bulbs add ambience, warm things up. The weather conspired to make the day particularly Lenten. A platter of sand and a tiny rake sit on a nearby table; patterns raked into the sand create the likeness of a sea swirling around an archipelago of small stones. I've imagined being shipwrecked on an island like that. The rake changes the shape of the current, and the one who sits long enough with the sand and the rake is changed, also, which is the point. Or, missing the point, he falls asleep on the soft chair with the soft music in the dull light of this empty room.

That's the danger of spiritual things. Not that it leads to sleep, but to dreams, a midnight of the soul. Only people who love God wrestle with God in the night. Only they know that special kind of pain. The wrestling begins in their dreams, and soon spills over into the rest of life, commencing in their commute, in the garden, rolling that heavy stone up that terrible hill again and again and again. The spiritual journey leads us to our knees in prayer, in service, in surrender. It's a sacred journey, a yellow brick road, a

stairway to heaven, a path of glowing coals, a bed of nails. The faithful have marked the path by setting their footprints in the concrete. The encouragements are like bread crumbs. Barbara was here. $DS+AS=4ever$. Drawn hearts are fixed in the concrete. Rainbows. Handprints. Paw prints. Shining suns and shooting stars. No one knows how to spell out danger or warning or woe. So, they draw a cross, which most of us mistake for a simpler version of a smiley face.

Lord have mercy.

At the corners of the canvas tarp are tea candles sitting on round mirrors. The candles aren't real. A battery makes the light shine, makes the flame flicker. And the green palm fronds aren't real, either. Just plastic. And the cloth bag with silver coins isn't real. The dime-store coins are plastic. And the crown of thorns is just for looks, and the communion chalice is empty. There's no bread, not even a plastic loaf, on the paten. One's faith journey often feels unreal, or surreal, or all-too-real. I just followed my purple socks on that canvas path, followed these curved lines carving a path around and around to an empty center. Real spiritual journeys cut into flesh and bone. Tears and blood are involved. I'm getting off easy in sock feet in this warm chapel.

But I'm game for adventure. I work in metaphor and sacrament. And I'm hopeful this journey might yield fruit as journeys are wont to do, relieved that flesh and bone and blood won't be involved.

Labyrinths were set in stone on cathedral floors. There's not one in Notre Dame, but there is in Chartres. The faithful have wound themselves into the center, and unwound themselves

back out saying prayers along the way, losing themselves, gaining Christ, shedding burdens in their mystic perambulation, following their feet. Some pilgrims have been known to crawl the journey. On hands and knees. Close to the ground. That doesn't guarantee the journey is more significant, only harder on the lower back and don't forget those knees. No matter how you travel, you won't get lost on a labyrinth. Walking in one direction, you come to the center. Turn around, and follow your steps in the other direction, you find your exit, or entrance, back into the world. It's not a maze. You can't get lost.

Unless—you get lost in your thoughts.

I did. I was verily swept away.

I looked down.

I took small steps, following my purple socks, winding in. I forget what I was thinking about, but I knew where my feet were. I knew where I was going.

I lost myself in prayer. A Billy Joel lyric slipped into my brain from the song Allentown about what's real, iron and coke and chromium steel. Reality is a big word. An economic word. Joe Friday had no idea what he was asking when he said, "Just the facts, ma'am." I slipped back into a prayer. Nothing is more real than prayer, and remember I am a professional.

I did not orchestrate these thoughts bouncing around my brain. I simply let them come, and I let them go. I was responsible for following my steps, that's all. That's real, too. In my prayers I didn't bother with big words, mostly just, Oh God. Oh God. I say, Yes, Lord. Yes. Very conversational. The air smells like jasmine and dirt and history and bread and night. It smells familiar. You smell things on labyrinths.

Jesus is walking with me. We're in step. It's evening. We're on the way to a garden. He's quiet, worn. I can't help him. I can't carry his load. I don't want to. I don't even want to carry my own. I blink. My purple socks lead the way. I'm following them. It's morning now. There is bright sun. I'm walking with Jesus again. I'm at the edge of a few pedestrians walking down an empty dirt road. It's warm and I am delighted to be walking through a warm day. Champaign, Illinois, is a million miles away from warm days in February. These companions are arguing religion. Jesus is setting them straight, talking about the Old Testament, reminding them of the stories and the stories about the stories. They are entranced. Jesus is happy. His steps are light, though His companions shuffle heavily. They're coming home from a crucifixion. His. I won't let them in on Jesus' secret. They don't recognize Him, but I do, my incognito Capital Letter Friend. I'm happy to be walking along. I'm wearing Bermuda shorts and red Nikes over my purple dress socks. The colors clash. They are clad in Bible clothes, their father's bathrobes, flip flops from the Dollar General. Our companions will recognize Him soon enough in Emmaus, their hearts burning strangely within their chests after He breaks the bread and disappears.

Who knew this labyrinth would take me down this road?

Walking the labyrinth in science fiction novels gets you from one world to the next. Characters jump dimensions. I know the feeling. My socked feet remained firmly on the path, but the scenes changed. I'm on the beach behind Frank Henry's house. We're twelve-years-old. We're rigging a sailboat, pulling lines through blocks, tying figure-eights, getting ready to

shove off into a nice breeze. Blink. I'm in a church. Blink. I'm with my dad and he's trudging through snow with much of his division, hands up, terrified, freezing, Germans with rifles pointing them to the road that will take them to prison camps. Blink. I'm sitting on a pew with my sons. Blink. I'm in tears. Blink. Blink. Blink.

It's a labyrinth, I remind myself. I'm safe.

Mindy was sitting in the hallway to welcome other guests. She was the hall monitor. But I was the only one in our Spirituality Center. I was alone with my Sunday thoughts. Alone with the people crowding through my imagination. I was marching with a defeated army. Walking with Jesus on ancient roads. Feet in the sand pushing a Laser sailboat into the harbor on a windy, warm day. If you follow the steps of the Shaker dance, turning, turning, we come our right. Tis a gift to be simple. I trust this dance. I trust the One who walks with me.

Not all paths are safe, but this one is. This path is safe. I kept walking, keeping my purple sock feet between the lines marking the path. Time had stopped but my walking had not. You keep moving on a labyrinth. It's not about speed, but progress. You keep inching forward.

Breathe.

Pray. Be. Listen.

Walk.

* * *

Come try out the labyrinth. Let me know where the journey takes you.

Face to Face



Samantha Nichols and Tyler Darnell with Flynn

Samantha, an ordained pastor in the Lutheran Church, recently accepted a position as Sunday School Coordinator at First Pres. She also works in pastoral care at Carle Hospital. Her husband, Tyler works as a technical service representative for a security camera company.

Here are their Face to Face responses.

Tell us a bit about yourselves.

Tyler grew up in Louisville and Samantha in Kansas City. We met in Chicago where Tyler was working as a community organizer for a political campaign and Samantha was in seminary.

What has been the highlight of your church experience?

Samantha: "I will say the church equipping me through the Bible to put faith in action."

Tyler: "Being Baptist until our marriage I have appreciated my new experience

with the liturgical calendar and the traditions."

What do you do in your free time?

We love being outdoors, walking, gardening. But, what we love most is board games. Currently we are into *Watergate* and *Seven Wonders Duel*. We didn't receive many household gifts for our wedding but we got a lot of board games.

What are your favorite bible characters?

Samantha: "There are many but I will say Esther and Moses. Esther is all about how God works behind the scenes for the good of those who love Him. Moses tells us of the continuing presence of God and reminds us of our call."

Tyler: "For me it is Paul, his conversion, his leadership and his teaching about how to be a Christian."

What advice would you give the church about how to best be the church?

Tyler: "For me, the church is about relationships with people. It's what the Christian life means to people and how we act on it."

Samantha: "It is all about loving our neighbor and pushing ourselves to do so even when it is challenging. And, I think living into our identity as Christians in a church that is open to change and always reforming."

This month's
Tuesday Night
Virtual Dessert
March 16th and 30th

For March 16th, the theme will be "Wearing of the Green" in honor of St. Paddy's Day on the 17th.

Wear green from the waist up and let's talk about your favorite food or dessert for celebrating that day. Do you have traditions? Corned Beef and Cabbage, Shepherd's Pie, Guinness Beef Stew, Soda Bread, Baily's Cheesecake or Green Beer?

Watch for the zoom link in the daily mailer.

See you at 7 PM on the 16th for conversation!!

Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth, Family

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR

MINDY@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH



CYF will be hosting a Spirituality Center in the church chapel for the season of Lent. Open House hours will be Sundays 11 AM-2:30 PM.

Come for some quiet reflection time and walk the labyrinth, take some sabbath rest in the gliders by the table-top water fountain and contemplate scripture, visit the prayer wall, the sand meditation garden, and create blessing cards for teachers, hospital workers, and assisted living staff at your own pace.

One household will be admitted at a time. Check in and temperature recordings will be necessary as well as face masks while in the building and chapel. Sanitizing wipes will be at each station for further protection between visitors.

We hope you will find it a blessing for this season of inward contemplation

and examination. We may have additional open hours during Holy Week.

Follow this link for a virtual version of the [Lenten Spirituality Center firstpres.church/lenet](https://firstpres.church/lenet).

An Update on Youth Sunday School

BY SAMANTHA NICHOLS, SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR
SAMANTHA@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

- Why did Jesus decide to ride a donkey into Jerusalem?
- Why do we celebrate communion?
- Why do you think some people didn't like Jesus?

These are just some of the questions we have wondered about together as an elementary Sunday School class.

We gather on Zoom every Sunday at 10:15 AM for a Bible story, conversation, and activity like looking at art inspired by the story or making cards for people who could use some comfort. Every other week, we are joined by **Mr. Connor** who leads us in song!

Our next unit is all about surprises. We'll read about the women at the tomb, Mary Magdalene finding her friend, and the walk to Emmaus.

While the elementary school class wonders about all those surprises, middle and high school students will continue to gather on Zoom at 1 PM for important conversations of their own. For our last unit, we talked about why we pray, explored new ways of praying, and wrote a prayer for Sunday morning worship. An important issue we discussed was the relationship between prayer and action. We'll be spending most of March talking about mental health.

Sunday School will not meet on Easter Sunday (April 4).

As always, thank you to our wonderful students for sharing their questions, ideas, and hopes for the world!

Finance

Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE
MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

Contributions

Contributions in February to the Operating Fund were \$29.6K more than in 2020 and \$25.0K above the budget at \$98.1K. The Year to Date total is above last year by \$50.1K and above the budgeted amount by \$33.3K. 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. Including all revenue sources at 16.7% through the year we have received 42.7% of the expected year's revenue.

Expenses

Year to Date expenses are \$4.0K above the budget at \$174.1K but less than in 2020 by \$19.8K. At 16.7% through the year we have experienced 17.1% of the expected year's expenses.

Balance

Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$224.6K which is \$163.0K more than at the end of February in 2020.

Paycheck Protection Program

The church's application for the second round of this Federal program was approved in February and the receipt of \$134,295 in funding has resulted in our strong financial position to start the year.

Restricted Funds

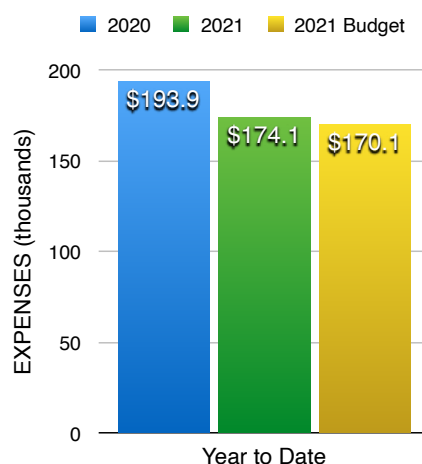
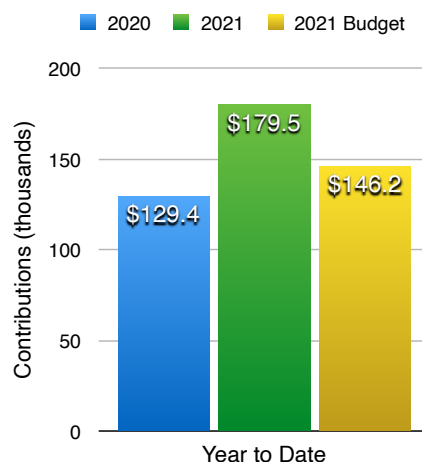
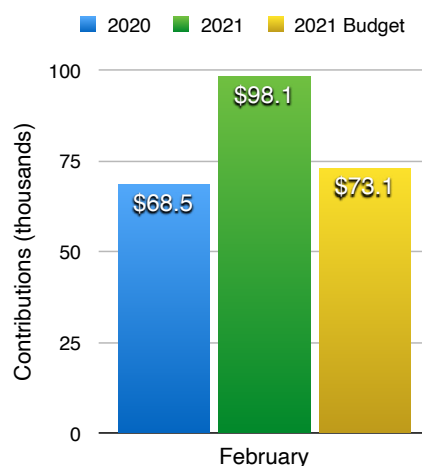
In addition to contributions to the operating fund there was \$12,441 donated in February to special offerings and

funds restricted to specific purposes such as missions supported by our church.

Session Motions from February Meeting

FINANCE

Motion: WHEREAS, we the Session, the governing body, of the First Presbyterian Church of Champaign ("the Church"), a religious corporation of Illinois, hereby unanimously consent that the following action be taken: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Session hereby consent, approve, and adopt the following resolution: RESOLVED, that the Church shall apply for and enter into a second round Paycheck Protection Program loan, provided for by the CARES Act, through Hickory Point Bank and Trust. RESOLVED, that **Mark Schoeffmann**, Chair of the Finance Committee and member of Session, is duly authorized to sign, on or after January 21, 2021, on behalf of the Church, all documents necessary and proper to effectuate the Paycheck Protection Program loan. APPROVED, by unanimous consent of Session at its meeting on February 18, 2021.





Joel 2:12, 13

"Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and He relents from sending calamity.

Jeremiah 24:7

I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart.

Jays & Concerns

We extend our sympathy to...

- to the family of **Nadeige Lumbu** whose father, Jean Lumbu died March 2, 2021 in Kinshasa after a short illness.
- to the family and friends of **Pat Failor** who died February 19, 2021. Pat has been a member of the church since February 1959.
- to the family and friends of **Dick Green** who died March 4, 2021. Dick has been a member of the church since October 1972.
- to the family and friends of **Adella Hodges** who died March 9, 2021. Adella has been a member of the church since November 1958.

A **Prayer List** is sent out weekly on Tuesdays. If you know of someone who would like to be included in that week's prayers, please contact the church office.

If you would like to receive the weekly email of prayer concerns, please email marcia@firstpres.church.

**Sunday
March 14**



**SPRING
FORWARD**

SET YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD!

Mission Updates

Cuban Church Asks Our Support

Leaders of the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba ask our help as they face what Cuban **Pastor Allison Infante Zamra** called “the most serious economic crisis in our modern history”. Presbyterian leaders met with about one hundred U.S. Cuba Partners through Zoom on March 4 and here is a summary.

The economic emergency fueled by the pandemic, loss of tourism, new US policy pressures and rising prices threatens the essential work of the Cuban Presbyterian church. Food, electricity, gasoline and medicines are scarce and costs surge beyond what most can afford.

“Prices have risen in some cases tenfold”, said **Pastor Carlos Emilio Ham**. He illustrated the severity of the situation by pointing out that electricity costs at the seminary for the month of January were as high as they were for the full year in 2020.

Cuban leaders pray that our churches remain united in faith, hope and prayer. They also point to need for careful communication given the increase in misinformation from both countries. When pressed, **Pastor Ludmilla Hernandez** with tears in her eyes admitted “yes, financial help is also needed”.

Financial priorities include paying pastors, maintaining communication both written and electronic between pastors and congregants, supporting basic needs of smaller congregations,

maintaining the national camp and conference center and the seminary. “The best way to coordinate support is through the Cuban synod which knows the most critical needs of our churches. Our buildings are closed but the basic work of the church goes on,” said Pastor Dora Arce Valentine. Crisis relief is needed in addition to the usual support that US partners have always provided.

Further pressed by US. Cuba Partner Network treasurer, **Bryan Beck**, Pastor Hernandez responded. “We need \$75,000 this year to meet our basic moral responsibilities.” Beck responded with a firm voice. “We can do this”, he said. “We need to do this promptly.” Beck added that US partners can also be helpful by funding minutes on pastors’ cell phones through Ding or CubaCell. “This can be done legally, directly and now. About \$35.00 per month will keep a pastor in communication with the flock. This is a big financial help for a Cuban pastor.”

We echo the words of Dr. Beck, “We can do this. We need to do this now”. We ask donations through First Presbyterian Church Champaign. Please include in the memo “Synod”. No gift is too small. We ask generosity as your heart and your situation and your prayers lead you.

Cuba Weekend

Mark your calendar now and plan to come together through Zoom for our eighth **Annual Cuba Forum** Saturday, May 1, at 10 AM. Then on Sunday, May 2 at 9 AM join us at worship (FirstPres.live) shared with our friends in Cuba. We will reconvene at 1 PM through Zoom with a tradition we have come to love, our *Cuba Two Step* featuring a Cuban salsa lesson and beautiful music of the Island.

Watch for details in our next newsletter.

Environmental Stewardship

BY PAT PHILLIPS
P.PHILLIPS42@SBCGLOBAL.NET

April opportunities for acting as caretakers of creation:

Saturday, April 10, is the date for a Household Hazardous Waste collection at the Market Place mall parking lot. Online registration opens on March 8, with this link <http://hhwevent.simplybook.me/>

Accepted items are chemical cleaners, oil-based paints (not latex), thinners, antifreeze, motor oil, gasoline and kerosene, weed killers, insecticides and pesticides, outdated medications, lead-acid batteries, and fluorescent lights.

Saturday, April 17, is a day for a lovely walk at 8 AM to clean up litter along State Street. Contact **Liz Miley** at ebmiley@aol.com for details about obtaining the necessary individual permit.

Thursday, April 22, is the 51st Earth Day, and the evening zoom gathering Wednesday, April 21, at 7 PM will focus on this.

Then on the Saturday after that, April 24, a Styrofoam recycling event will be held from 9 to 11 AM in Doxology Lane, between the church sanctuary and office buildings.

On Sunday, April 25, the worship service will celebrate Earth Day with words and song.

And any time, batteries can be recycled. It's very important to tape both ends of each battery, and these can be dropped off at church or taken to the Phillips' Recreation Center in Urbana.

A book with 5 star reviews that celebrates our earth is *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a botanist and member of the Potawatomi nation. The "braid" is woven from 3 strands—indigenous ways of knowing, scientific knowledge, and the bringing of them together.

And for visual enjoyment, there's the oneearthfilmfest.org with films for all ages which are free, with a suggested \$8 donation or a low rent. "Fantastic Fungi," the magic beneath the earth has incredible photography and graphics, and is only \$4.99 to rent.

ESL Update

BY JEANETTE PYNE
JEANETTE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Talking about Lunar New Year

新年快乐 (xīn nián kuài lè), 새해 복 많이 받으세요 (sae-hae bok mani ba-deuseyo), Chúc mừng năm mới (Chook moong num moi), all roughly translate as Happy New Year in Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese, respectively. About 1/4 of the world's population or over 2 billion people celebrate Lunar New Year each year!

During our third monthly Zoom Café Time on February 11th, we talked about how the Lunar New Year is celebrated in different Asian countries. Lunar New Year was February 12th and we are now in the year of the Ox according to the Zodiac calendar. The students, tutors, and First Pres members really enjoyed getting to know each other and learning about different holidays in other countries.

We will continue this Zoom Café Time on the second Thursday of every month at 10 AM. The next ones are on the following dates:

- March 11
- April 8
- May 13

Zoom Information:

Please email jeanette@firstpres.church for the Zoom meeting information.

First Pres members are welcome and invited to join us and get to know our tutors and students.



From top left to bottom right: Sholeh (Iran), Jeanette (ESL Director), Vern (tutor), Mike (tutor), Angelina (China), Jenny (China), Qi Li (China), Roza (Kyrgyzstan), Lisa (China), Jeannie (First Pres member), Grace (China), Yudisley (Colombia), George (Brazil), Michele (tutor), Anna (China), Patty (DRC), Chung (Korea), Eric (First Pres member), Miriam (tutor), Adele (China).

**Garden Speakers Series
How to Plant a Garden
for Pollinators
Thursday, March 18, 7 - 9 PM**

Online Event, Streaming on the Museum of the Grand Prairie Facebook and YouTube pages, 7 PM.

With the large amount of time everyone is spending at home these days, the theme for this year's Garden Speaker Series is "How-To at Home" with programs focusing on how to garden in various ways within your own home. We all know how important pollinators are but what can you do in your home garden to help?

Join Champaign County Master Gardener, **Jill Taylor** to learn all about how you can plant to attract beneficial pollinators at home. FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

24/7 for two straight weeks! Numbers at C-U at Austin's Place were double those of February 2020, and those at the C-U Men's Shelter numbers were 20% higher. Altogether, over 2000 nights of care were provided to 188 different people last month.

But there was also, as the popular YouTube site would say, "Some Good News!" Over 2700 separate donations came in from individuals, churches, organizations, and businesses in support of One Winter Night 2021! Nine new donors joined our "Hope Givers" initiative (\$40/month or \$480/year) to help sustain year-round emergency sheltering. With help from the Continuum for Service Providers to the Homeless, the Champaign Urbana Public Health Department held a "pop up" vaccination clinic on site for our friends!

Thank you for your generous support of the services we provide to the most vulnerable members of our community! With your help, we anticipate brighter days, renewed hope, and a positive future for C-U at Home!

Courage Connection is still collecting personal hygiene items. They are selling two of their houses but still operating in Champaign-Urbana. if you've been noticing in the news lately,

domestic violence arrests have been down not because it has gone away but because it has not been reported as readily while children are not in school and around their teachers and peers. Let us pray for the vulnerable.

Camp Carew work day invite – If anyone is interested in attending one of these work camps to get Camp Carew set up, please let **Rachel** know and she will get you the information. These dates are: Saturday, April 10 and then May 15, 2021.

If you are interested in attending a summer camp at Camp Carew, the brochure is out! Let **Mindy** know if you are interested.

From "The Heart of Missions"

CU at Home - We are so grateful to CU at Home for all the work they have done this winter. **Rick Williams**, Ministry Development Assistant, sent out this in the weekly newsletter:

Looking out the window this week to see the warm sunshine and our friends back out at the benches by "Frank's Garden" it's hard to believe that just two weeks ago our parking lot was full of slush and snow and we'd endured the longest stretch of extreme cold in recent memory!

February 2021 was a pretty brutal month for our friends. The average temperature was one of the lowest in local history. Our Emergency Shelters and Phoenix Daytime Center operated

The Heart of Missions Newsletter has been revived during this COVID-19 crisis. Our local and global mission agencies are having to make rapid changes due to shelter in place orders, as well as food and medical supply shortages. The newsletter helps summarize some of what has been in the mission news for our mission workers and agencies during the past week in case you missed it.

You can access The Heart of Missions on the church website under the SERVE tab at firstpres.church/heartofmissions



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
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302 West Church Street
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P: 217.356.7238

F: 217.356.7242

E: info@firstpres.church

www.firstpres.church

Sunday:

9 AM Worship*

10:15 AM In-Person Worship**

10:15 AM Sunday School and Adult Education***

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

**In-person Worship is offered for up to 50 people. You must preregister by contacting the church office by noon on Fridays of each week.

***All Sunday School and Adult Education opportunities are through Zoom.

Contact the church office for more information.

Pastors:

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

Staff:

George Almasi Facility Assistant
Brendan Barker..... Organist
Ritchie Drennen Facility Manager, Ext. 237
Patty Farthing..... Receptionist, Ext. 211
Robert Ferrer Audio-visual Technician
Marcia Franks Administrative Assistant, Ext. 210
Joe Grant..... Director of Music
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Samantha Nichols..... Sunday School Coordinator, Ext. 216
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