

May 2022



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

## Out of Tombs Comes New Life

BY MATT MATTHEWS

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

The eve of Easter, 16 April 2007, marked the anniversary of the terrible massacre at Virginia Tech.

We all had some connection to people on that campus on that day. You had an especially close connection in **Austin Cloyd**.

Austin lived in Champaign, and, at 18, was a freshman international studies major at Tech. She moved to Blacksburg for her senior year in high school; her father, **C. Bryan Cloyd**, was a professor of accounting and information systems at Tech. She was a member of the First United Methodist Church across State Street.

Her pastor then, **Rev. Terry Harter**, described Cloyd as a “very delightful, intelligent, warm young lady” and an athlete who played basketball and volleyball in high school. But it was church mission trips that showed just how caring and faithful she was, he said.

When I moved here, I was told about the Women’s Shelter at the Methodist Church called “Austin’s Place.” Some of you volunteered there. Why that name, I asked? Sandy Carr told me about that name, about that young woman, about that legacy. I grew up on the coast in Virginia and felt a tie to this young Hokie.

On April 15<sup>th</sup> of this year, the CU @ Home-sponsored overflow woman’s shelter hosted its final night for the season in our church’s Centennial Hall. Austin Cloyd sat with those women that night. She comforted them. Her legacy lives. And you have played a small, small part.

Out of tombs comes new life.

## May Music

Mark your calendars  
for the upcoming  
music events

**Sunday, May 1, 9 AM**  
**Spring Music Sunday**

**Haydn Missa Brevis; Chancel  
Choir, chamber orchestra and  
organ.**

**Saturday, May 7, 7:30 PM**  
**Brendan Barker Choral  
Concert**

**A varied concert capped off  
by an oratorio with full  
orchestra and choir based  
on the Israelites’ passage  
through the Red Sea,  
composed by Johann Hummel.**

**Wednesday, May 25, 5 PM**  
**Jazz@Church & State**

See next page for full details.



## First Pres Champaign presents . . . Jazz @ Church & State

**Wednesday, May 25, 5-7 PM come for an evening of Jazz and hors d'oeuvres. "Simply This," a rockin' quintet of musical PhD's, provide the tunes. Your church friends are providing hors d'oeuvres, iced tea, and coffee. We have limited off street parking and are within walking distance to downtown restaurants for those interested in a late dinner. There is no cover charge or ticket cost, but donations are encouraged and accepted, with 10% of proceeds going to support efforts to relieve suffering in Ukraine.**

**Why are we doing this? Because we want to grow the church by welcoming neighbors through our door. Preaching may not draw a crowd, but music and food can. If you don't welcome them, who will? It takes a congregation. That's you! Please attend so that you can meet our neighbors that they might find a winsome welcome at First.**

**Questions? Want to underwrite the show? Call Skip Pickering or the church office.**

## Coffee With St. Paul in the Parlor

Join us for a two-week *Forum/Discussion* of Paul's strong views in founding and establishing Christian congregations, the ground-rules, so to speak. (*Romans 1:1-7*). The class, sponsored by the Spiritual Formation Committee and led by **Dave Bauer**, will be held after the 9 AM Worship on Sundays May 8 and 15, 2022 in Mae Chapin Parlor.

We will hear and consider Paul's guidance for us and others to "grow in faith." (Especially, *Romans 1:8-17*.)

<sup>16</sup>For I am not ashamed of the gospel: It is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup>For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." (See: *Habakkuk 2:4*, Old Testament) RSV

## Presbyterian Legends

[Lucy Craft Laney](#)



Lucy Craft Laney 1854-1933, nurtured in the Washington Avenue Presbyterian in Macon, Georgia became an esteemed educator and founder of the Haines Institute. For more info click the link "Lucy Craft Laney" above.

## Snippets from Your Pastor

BY MATT MATTHEWS

MATT@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

The word “never” is overused. And, often, we don’t think when we say it.

Before I had kids, I used to say, “I’m never going to say to my kids the things my father said to me.” After I became an actual father, I sometimes opened my mouth and my father’s words would tumble out, long after he had died, and it was like he was standing next to me, speaking from inside of me, laughing from just behind my shoulder.

When my kids slept late on Saturday, I’d find myself playfully asking, “What are you gonna do, sleep all day?” And when we’d serve something at dinner that they weren’t so sure about, I’d say, “It’ll put hair on your chest.” And when we’d hold hands and pray over that slow food at those family meals, sometimes—sometimes—my dad’s prayer would form on my own lips.

Pardon our sins, O Lord, and make us truly grateful for these and all our many blessings, in Christ’s name we pray. AMEN.

So much for “never.”

\* \* \*

We throw that word around.

It feels like summer is never going to get here. The little boy says, “Gross. I’ll never get married.” The teenager says, “I’ll never fit in.” The salesman says, “You’ll never find a better deal.” You never listen to me. I’ll never understand. I’m never going to eat raw oysters; I said that for years until one late afternoon this fall in a waterfront pub in Baltimore . . .

If we use it without thinking, “Never” can be a word that leaves no room for possibility, no room for surprise, no room for God’s grace.

You can see why Mary Magdalene would be in a “never” frame of mind as she walked to Jesus’ grave. And we don’t hold this against her. We understand. “I’ll never get over this pain. I’ll never heal from this shock. I’ll never feel anything but grief. I’ll never be happy. I’m never going to see him again.”

And we understand. We understand Mary’s frame of mind.

We’ve been there.

I called Cousin Tom the other day and I got his voice mail. There’s something I love about his message, and it has nothing to do with Tom. At the end of it, you hear Consuelo giggle.

As you know, Cousin Consuelo, Tom’s beloved wife, died last month. You prayed for her when she was sick; and you prayed for Tom and the rest of the family upon her sad death. And Rachel and I are grateful. (We leave Wednesday for New Mexico to see him and to inter her ashes.)

We miss Consuelo terribly. And her death confronts us with some hard “nevers.” We’ll never again eat her Mexican cooking. We’ll never again hug her neck. She’ll never bust me for my bad Spanish. She’ll never razz my sons. She won’t be around to coax the best out of us. She is not here to boil an argument down to its essentials. She’ll never make us laugh again.

You understand where I’m coming from.

So does Mary Magdalene.

So do the Ukrainians. So do the Russians, for that matter. So does the rest of the world. The good. The bad. The ugly. We’ve all carried heavy burdens. We’ve said “never” before. And, worse, we’ve believed it.

\* \* \*

**Pat Phillips** has planted some powerful words in my mind this Lent. She and our Spiritual Formation Team continue to lead us through probing discussions and lots of “aha” learning moments in adult Sunday school. We are growing in our faith because of their inspired teaching.

Pat dusted off Frederick Buechner’s words about the resurrection. “Resurrection means the worst thing is never the last thing.”

The problem with the word “never” is that insists on inserting a period that is premature. Sometimes the word “never” announces an ending when God intends only a pause.

Mary Magdalene was in an understandable “never” frame of mind. And that’s okay. When we are confronted with life’s “nevers,” a natural reaction is to grieve. She was grieving. She was grieving mightily. Nothing says “never” quite like a cemetery, and the smell of an open grave, and the lonely sound of distant birds.

The resurrection reminds us that our “never” moments are precisely the moments we should pause and ask God, “Where are you, O God? What’s up?” When we trudge through these “never” moments, this is precisely the time we pray. We inquire from God. We listen for God. We beseech God: “What are you up to? What would you have us to ponder? How would you have to learn, to grow, to hope? We know in



our heads that all is not lost. We know that when you shut a door, you open a window. We know that these ending-moments are, for you, often moments for your grace to abound. But where? How? Open us, O God. Open our eyes."

Whenever the word "never" is on our lips, these questions and questions like them, perhaps, could be on our mind. "O God, with you, all things are possible. Where are we to find possibility in these ashes? Where are we to find life from these tombs? Love from this hate? Color from this dark? Hope and healing from this hurt?"

Clara Scott said it in 1895, and people of faith before and since have joined the chorus. When we are stuck, angry, shocked, hurting, and standing at the edge of "never" we pray—

Open my eyes, that I may see  
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;  
Open my eyes, illumine me,  
Spirit divine!

\* \* \*

I'm not saying we should never say "never." I am saying we should think before we speak. Sometimes the word "never" is the perfect word. And this is what Mary Magdalene discovered looking for Jesus' dead body. The words from Jesus and from scripture must have come to her like a wave.

Never will God forsake us. God's love never ceases; God's mercies never come to an end (*Lamentation 3:22*). Though we may be unfaithful to God, God never breaks God's covenant with us (*Judges 2:1*). God's deliverance never ends (*Isaiah 51:6*). God revives parched places, and God's waters never fail (*Isaiah 58:11*). "I am the bread of life," Jesus said. "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be

thirsty" (*John 6:35*). I will not leave you orphaned, Jesus says (*John 14*). "I am with you always, even to the close of the age" (*Matthew 28*). God's love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends (*1 Corinthians 13:4-8*).

\* \* \*

Even in her never-frame-of-mind, Mary came face to face with this never-ending love. Her eyes were opened. Mary was undone at the tomb. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher).

The word "never" evaporated from her lips, and was replaced by other words, perhaps by the word Alleluia. "Resurrection means the worst thing is never the last thing." Mary Magdalene learned then what we now know: Never are we beyond God's healing touch. For nothing in all creation will

be able to separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Alleluia, indeed.

## Inclusion Confusion and Acronyms

Our world seems to be changing so quickly and in so many ways. Are you confused about what LGBTQ+ plus means? Do you have questions and aren't sure who to ask?

Join Compassion, Peace & Justice on Zoom May 5 from 6:30-8 PM. **Nicole Frydman** from the UP (Uniting Pride <https://www.unitingpride.org/who-we-are>) Center will join us for a chat about LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency. She will help us gain some deeper understanding around gender identity and sexual orientation, including terminology, inclusive language, and affirming behavior. There will be time to ask any and all questions. We hope you join us in this timely and informative chat.

Contact **Brandi Lowe** or the church office for the zoom link.



Vocal ensemble prepares to raise voices in celebration during the Centennial Worship Service of our sister church in Havana, Cuba.

## Face to Face with Jan Wittler



Jan Wittler stands in front of the memorial garden plaque honoring the life of her father, Charles Ray (Charlie) Wittler. She is a ruling elder who serves on our Outreach/Nurture Committee.

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

I attended Sunday School here as a child but later relocated to Oregon. When I returned to Champaign to be closer to **Charlie Wittler**, my father and **Joyce**, his wife, I started attending First Presbyterian again and helping Joyce with Sunday school. Everyone was so welcoming.

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

Fellowship and the sense of belonging has been a highlight for me. The way the church embraced my family was very special. I look forward to working in the kitchen preparing meals for our gatherings. I also love helping at Sunday School and getting to know the children.

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

I am a medical office assistant at Christie Clinic. I now have a son, daughter-in-law, and grand dog living with me in Champaign. We are in the process of closing on a home where we will be living together. Pray for us on this one. I also have two sisters. One lives in Champaign and the other lives in Southern Illinois.

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

I love to cook and am always looking for new recipes to try. I also like to refurbish old furniture and give it a new look and a new home! I learned a lot of wood working techniques from my father, who made toys and furniture as a hobby.

#### What are your favorite Bible characters?

My favorite character would be Job because he never lost his faith in God no matter what he went through. I feel we all have gone through difficult times, and I think of Job and I know I will never lose my faith in God.

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

Reaching out to the community I feel is such a positive thing for both the church and the surrounding towns.



#### Don't Miss It!

Flower Sale May 13 & 14

Spring blooms are starting to open here in Champaign, and with those blossoms comes exciting news! The Kappa Kappa Gamma Alumnae Association Flower Sale is just a couple short weeks away, and DREAAM has once again been chosen as the recipient of the proceeds from the sale!

The Flower Sale will take place at Indian Acres Swimming Club (1 Arrow Road) in Champaign on Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 5 PM and Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to noon.

There will be a wide variety of gorgeous flowers, plants, and herbs to choose from including impatiens, geraniums, hanging baskets, and patio gardens.

Mark your calendar now and for more information, contact Jacqueline Jasek at [jacqueline@dreaam.org](mailto:jacqueline@dreaam.org) or (219) 808-5308.

#### In a small group, you are noticed...

**Although most churches try to ensure that every member feels valued, this isn't always possible when people interact once a week. Small groups make you part of a tighter community of friends – who will notice immediately if you aren't around or aren't acting like yourself. When you're part of a small group, people know your name, care about you, and are willing and able to support you when it's needed most. Join a Small Group.**

**You will find more information in the kiosk near the Welcome Center in Westminster Hall which is brought to you by Small Group Support Team.**

# Children, Youth & Family

## Children, Youth, Family

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR  
MINDY@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

### Graduate Recognition

This month we would like to acknowledge those affiliated with our congregation who will be graduating from high school or college. If you know of a graduate to recognize affiliated with the congregation please send their name, a photograph of the graduate, and a brief description about their next plans to pursue by May 15 to Ms. Mindy or to Diane Mortensen. There will be a reception for our graduates on May 22 in Westminster Hall following the 9 AM worship service.

### Family Fellowship Opportunities

Help plant the church pollinator pocket. Each growing season our pocket of sunflowers brightens our alleyway and provides needed habitat for our local pollinator insects. Join us in the alley of Doxology Lane May 15<sup>th</sup>. **Kathy and Mark Schoeffmann** will lead us. Stay tuned for details to come in the CYF weekly update e-newsletter.

The Nurture Committee will be holding Sunday brunches regularly on the second Sunday of the month at the church starting June 12. We hope your family will be able to join us in Centennial Hall and enjoy the benefits of our newly remodeled kitchen!

### Montreat Meeting

There will be a meeting for participants and parents for the Montreat Youth Conference trip May 1<sup>st</sup> during the education hour in room 206 of the

education building. Please bring proof of your child's medical insurance coverage.

## Sunday School Update

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

### Sunday School Update

Thank you, thank you, thank you to our wonderful Sunday School families and volunteers. Together we have navigated all kinds of twists and turns, grown in faith, and practiced being disciples. As all three classes explore their final units for the year, we look ahead to a celebration of the Sunday School year in West Side Park:

**WHEN:** Sunday, May 22 during the usual Sunday School hour (10:15 AM)

**WHERE:** West Side Park

**WHO:** All are welcome!

**WHAT:** Bible story, songs, and fun activities

Our story time will be interactive and fun, inviting all participants to help share the message that we are all a part of the Body of Christ! Get ready to stomp your feet, clap your hands, and sing!

### A Message from the Sunday School Coordinator, Samantha Nichols

*Dear Siblings in Christ,*

*Whether we've been online, outside, or in the classroom, I have loved every minute of serving as your Sunday School Coordinator. It has been a wonderful experience to serve alongside some amazing volunteers and learn with enthusiastic and*

*insightful students of all ages. And so, I am sad to share that my last day serving in this role is June 22.*

*In addition to my role as Sunday School Coordinator, I have also been serving as a chaplain at Carle Hospital. Through my work at the hospital, I have discerned a call to chaplaincy and will be moving to Minnesota at the beginning of July to begin a chaplain residency at Mayo Clinic. Completing this residency will allow me to pursue board certification and work full time as a hospital chaplain. I am excited for this next step even as I feel sad about leaving the wonderful community here at First Presbyterian.*

*I am so grateful to have worked with the wonderful volunteers who make our Sunday School program possible. I have learned from each and every one of you and know our students have benefitted from your caring presence in the classroom. I leave the church each Sunday with a smile on my face thanks to our hilarious, thoughtful, and curious students.*

*Thank you, First Presbyterian, for welcoming this Lutheran pastor into your community and thank you for supporting the Sunday School program in all kinds of ways. You are all in my prayers!*

*Samantha*



# The Heart of Mission

## Habitat for Humanity

BY JANE ALSBERG, COMMUNITY MISSION DEACON  
JANE.ALSBERG@GMAIL.COM

I'm thrilled to announce that First Presbyterian is now partnering with Habitat for Humanity - recently approved to be one of our local missions. I've met with **Kim Gollings**, their community development director, and am impressed with her enthusiasm, compassion, and commitment to bring affordable housing and dignity of ownership to deserving individuals through a "hand up" as opposed to a "hand out".

Kim says Habitat would gratefully receive any help First Presbyterian could offer. One way we could help is to volunteer to spend one Saturday helping with a build. They will have several Saturdays in June available for inside work. I'd love to hear from anyone who would be interested in this.

Of course, there are lots of ways we as a church can help. Kim would love to come and talk to us as a group (hopefully sometime in May). I'm sure she can offer much more in depth information than I can at this time.

Please email me ([jane.alsberg@gmail.com](mailto:jane.alsberg@gmail.com)) if you think you would like to be part of a Habitat build - truly a life changing event for the person gaining homeownership for the first time, but for the volunteers as well.

## Humbled by the Generosity of our Church Family

As of 4/25/2022, you have been a part of helping us raise \$16,471 to help Ukraine as they continue to be in an upheaval. Your prayers are still needed. The FPCC World Mission Team wishes to thank you once again for your caring of our neighbors in need. All monies will go to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to be dispersed as needed.

## The Impact of Your Volunteer Time at Salt & Light

At Salt & Light, every day, our mission is sharing the love of God by fighting poverty, with opportunities that empower people for lasting change. This means that a daily part of our work consists of building a system of opportunity for those in need in our community. There are many possible ways of building systems of equality, reciprocity, and opportunity, but the one we have chosen is a retail-based community-development model—non-profit grocery and thrift stores. Our stores are meant to be an open model; we serve the entire community, which makes this a big undertaking! As a donation-supported non-profit with limited financial resources, we rely every day on the efforts of volunteers.

Running our stores is a lot of hard work. Each day there are groceries to be stocked and shelved, and donations to be priced and processed. Customers need helped, messes need cleaned, phones need answered, data needs processed, and trucks need

unloaded. Each week, over 100 pieces of furniture and around 40,000 pounds of recyclable clothing move through our stores. Volunteers are the fuel that makes all this happen. While our amazing, dedicated staff works hard each day to make Salt & Light the best it can be, we literally could not operate for a single day without the efforts of community volunteers who come through our doors to sort, stack, stock, stage, and sacrifice their time to make Champaign-Urbana a better place. Their work makes opportunity possible for people in poverty to have their needs met with dignity and grace.

However, working toward a mission like that—sharing the love of God—can't be done solely by accomplishing tasks. Our primary way of sharing God's love, fighting poverty, and supporting lasting change, is through building relationships with the people who come through our doors. Even if every task involved in running the store accomplished itself by magic, it would not be possible to build a community of love, equality, and opportunity without the time and presence of volunteers. Community can only be built as we all labor side by side in the pursuit of a shared cause; every volunteer who works with us here at Salt & Light not only blesses us with the results of their work, but makes us richer and stronger with the gift of their presence. There's no substitute for the role that volunteers play in making Salt & Light what it is—and if you haven't experienced it, we hope you will. There is always room for one more.

## The Republic of Cuba

Fidel Castro 1926-2016

BY BOB KIRBY, CUBA PARTNERS

RWK3213@GMAIL.COM

“Charismatic, rebellious, opportunistic, athletic, driven, violent, philanderer” are words commonly used to describe Fidel Castro. At six feet three in stature, he was an accomplished athlete particularly in baseball, a skilled debater and a voracious reader. Born to a wealthy family Fidel demonstrated his rebellious nature at age 13 when he led a strike of workers on his father’s sugar plantation. Studying law at the University of Havana he worked with student protesters and demonstrated his willingness to use force to gain power at times engaging in armed violence in the cause of social justice. His growing Marxist leanings were fed as he saw the opulent, exclusive lifestyle of Americans in Cuba while Cubans suffered in poverty.

In 1955 Castro led what is a proud historic remembrance for Cubans today. The July 26th Movement (M-26-7) is posted on buildings across Cuba to remember an early effort in the battle for Cuban autonomy from “imperialism”. A band of Castro led rebels in hopes of sparking wider efforts to topple the dictatorship of Batista attacked a military barracks at Moncada in Eastern Cuba. The effort failed. Castro was arrested and sentenced to fifteen years in prison. He was thought later not a threat and released. He fled to Mexico with brother Raúl to reorganize.

After meeting Argentine born socialist activist Che Guevara in Mexico and purchasing a barely sea worthy yacht, The Granma, the Castro brothers, Che and an additional small group

of dissidents returned to Cuba fleeing to the mountains in the East to ignite a growing guerilla war that would overthrow the US supported dictatorship of Batista and lead to Fidel’s triumphant entrance to Havana in 1959.

The longest-serving non-royal head of state in the 20th and 21st centuries, Castro polarized opinion throughout the world. His supporters viewed him as a champion of socialism and anti-imperialism whose revolutionary government advanced economic and social justice while securing Cuba’s independence from US hegemony. His detractors saw him as an egotistic maniac focused more on his own power than in the welfare of the Cuban people.

During his political dominance of the Island between 1959 and 2008 Cuba realized advances in education and health care. Cuba sent health care workers to countries in Africa and South America and established political relationships with Russia, China and throughout Latin America. Goals of an effective economy, freedom of expression and the elimination of racism remained works in progress. Fidel died in 2016 at the age of 90.

Next month: Che Guevara

## Environmental News

BY PAT PHILLIPS

P.PHILLIPS42@SBCGLOBAL.NET

The **Champaign County Climate Coalition** (C4) is announcing a community-wide Earth Day celebration that will highlight resources and stewardship opportunities throughout East-central Illinois. Earth Day

for Everyone will take place from Thursday, April 22 through Sunday, May 2, 2021.

Small-group volunteer opportunities, independent activities, virtual programming and YouTube videos will offer a variety of ways to participate while maintaining COVID safety. The Earth Day for Everyone public Facebook page will act as the information hub for activities and resources <https://www.facebook.com/EarthDay4Everyone>.

### Check out a super TED talk!

**Katharine Hayhoe** is known as a “Rock Star” in the climate world for her ability to talk to just about anyone about global warming. And she’s a U of I Alumna!

[https://www.ted.com/talks/katharine\\_hayhoe\\_the\\_most\\_important\\_thing\\_you\\_can\\_do\\_to\\_fight\\_climate\\_change\\_talk\\_about\\_it?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/katharine_hayhoe_the_most_important_thing_you_can_do_to_fight_climate_change_talk_about_it?language=en)

You might then want to check out her book, published last year, *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist’s Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World*.

**Sola Gratia Farm** will have its biggest fundraiser of the year, benefiting both them and us!

It’s the **Spring Plant Sale** May 6 – 15, at the Farm, 2200 South Philo Road in Urbana. There will be nearly 150 different varieties of organically grown vegetable and herbs from the farm plus annual and perennial flowers and hanging baskets from a local nursery. Perfect time to get a garden started and/or buy beautiful plants for Mother’s Day!



A Resolution from  
First Presbyterian Church  
Champaign, Illinois, USA

Upon the Centennial Anniversary of the  
**Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada en Luyanó**  
Havana, Cuba

Whereas, Jesus Christ is Head of the Church;

Whereas, Christ calls into being and equips the Church for service;

Whereas, Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word, alone ruling, calling, teaching, and using the Church as he wills;

Whereas, Christ gives the Church its life, unity, and mission;

Whereas, Christ Is the Church's Hope;

Whereas, Christ Is the Foundation of the Church;

Whereas, the Church Is the Body of Christ, and Christ gives to the Church all the gifts necessary to be his body;

Whereas, for a century, the Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Luyanó has been devoted to Christ's teaching, faithful to Christ's call, diligent in Christ's mission;

Whereas the Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Luyanó has been a compassionate, servant-minded neighbor to people near and far, offering clean water and good food, worship, education, hospitality, and nurture;

Whereas Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Luyanó has generously welcomed members and friends from First Presbyterian Church in Champaign, and from other churches around the world; and First Presbyterian Church in Champaign and Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Luyanó have forged a rich partnership—an hermanamiento—and that this relationship, we pray, enlivens both our congregations, delights God, and bears witness to the world of what unity in Jesus Christ looks like;

Therefore, be it resolved that, upon the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Luyanó, we, the Session, Members, and Friends of First Presbyterian Church in Champaign thank God for the ministry, long-suffering witness, and steady-faithfulness of the Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada en Luyanó; we further pray that the partnership between our congregations will grow in the name of the One who invites us to follow.

To the Glory of God!

Signed by the Session  
First Presbyterian Church  
Champaign, Illinois, USA

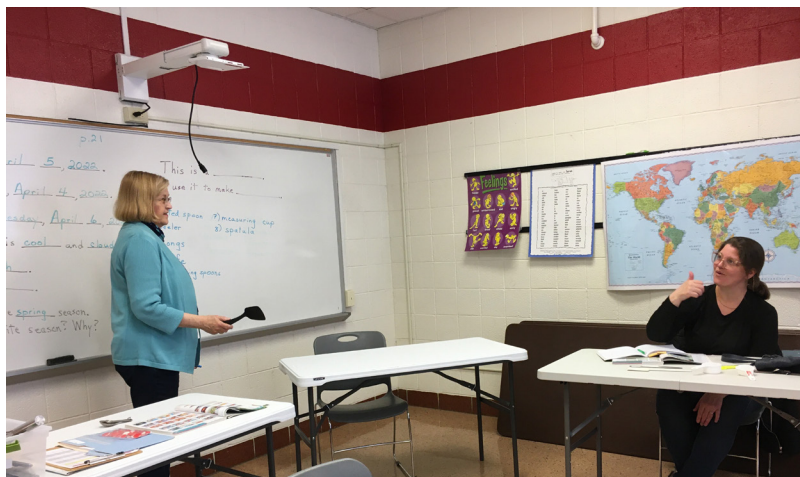
Rev. William P. "Matt" Matthews, moderator

*Matt Matthews*  
*Ann Stout* *Janet Witter* *Steven J. Lock*  
*Ann Webbink* *John McQuirk* *Kenneth Chapman*  
*Mary Nicholas* *Mary Gretten*  
*Wendy Jane Kelley* *Shonda S. Allen*  
*Carol Miles* *Celia Brin*

## English as Second Language News

BY VAL SMITH, DIRECTOR  
VAL@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

Welcome back, 'in-person tutors'! For the past month we have had 'in person classes' at church on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-11 AM. We appreciate the service of **Lois Wilken, Sharen Scott, Mary Ellen Dorner, Christie Roszkowski, Bonna Ward, Donna Reed, Vern Snoeyink, Rob Baker, Patricia Ferrer, Ritchie Drenan** and his team who make the 'in-person' outreach possible. Our zoom tutors are continuing as well, including **Bob Kirby** who is substituting.



Students come for a variety of reasons including friendship, social interaction, and English skills for future job opportunities. Emails with students

readers about coral. One of our winter zoom students was accepted to the University of Illinois and in appreciation has donated a beautiful balloon display for the Cuban Celebration Sunday. Thank you, Ha!



Thanks again to all of you for your vision to reach out to our neighbors with God's story of hope.



The students are a joy to teach, always engaged, and so appreciative of the tutors. Each student is provided with a notebook of informative class materials. In addition, the students have access to the ESL chromebooks and Google Classroom in some classes. Students often bring their devices to class for google translate and taking notes.

wanting to join come regularly and we have not turned anyone away. Some of our students are permanent residents, while others are visiting. All are welcome and encouraged to come. Recently, new students from Congo and Afghanistan have joined us.

Thanks to Bridget who donated a wonderful set of easy English



# Finance

## Financial Update

BY ANN WEBBINK, FINANCE TEAM  
ANWEB2@YAHOO.COM

### Contributions

Total March contributions: \$92.2K from pledge and plate plus \$10.2K from prepaid = \$102.4K Total contributions YTD: \$275.2K which is \$21.8 more than last year at this time Contributions YTD = 42.29% of the budgeted amount (This figure includes the prepaid pledges) No Cannon money has been received in March

### Expenses

March expenses of \$105.4K were \$20.2K over the budgeted amount per month and \$5K more than last March. YTD total expenses of \$281K were \$6.5K more than last year at this time. At 25% of the year, we have spent 27.5% of the budget

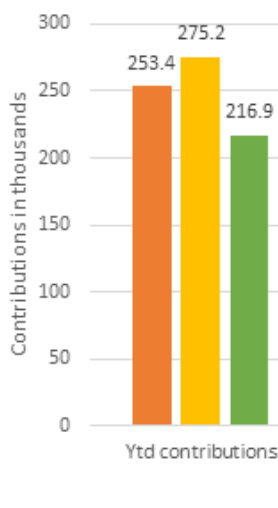
### Balance YTD

Revenue exceeds expenses by \$95.7K which is \$115.7K less than last year. ( This figure includes prepaid pledges.)

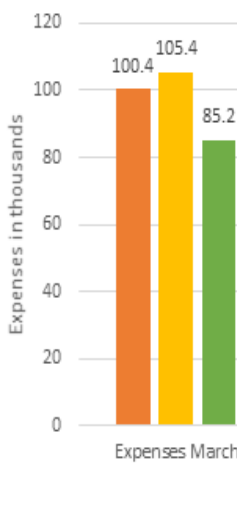
### Restricted Funds

\$19496 was donated to various funds in March. This included \$9631 for PDA assistance to Ukraine. There is a deficit of \$478 in the McCutcheon fund.

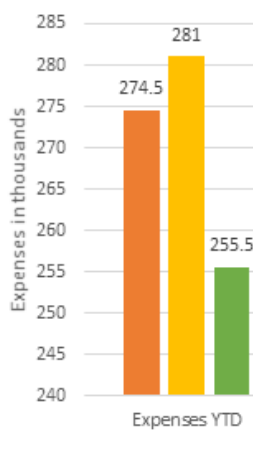
YTD Contributions March 2022



Expenses March 2022



Expenses YTD







From Henri Nouwen's

"Lenten Reflections and Meditations":

"To pray for one another is, first of all, to acknowledge, in the presence of God, that we belong to each other as children of the same God."

"When you pray with hope, you turn yourself toward a God who will bring forth his promises; it is enough to know that He is a faithful God."

"You are my beloved child, on you my favor rests."

"A person who prays is one who stands with his hands open to the world. He knows that God will show Himself in the nature which surrounds him, in the people he meets, in the situations he runs into."

Colossians 1:9-16 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ...

## Easy English Fellowship

Easy English Fellowship is for English learners at all levels. We share our lives together, praying, singing, and reading God's word. You need not be affiliated with First Presbyterian Church to participate. You are invited to join us from 10:10-11 AM in room 204 or on Zoom. Childcare is provided.

## French Language 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.

**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.**

## Jays & Concerns

*We celebrate...*

- the baptism of **Jaylen Nkunku**, son of **Chris Nkunku and Patriica Pukuta**, on April 10, 2022.
- Session received 3 new members on April 3, 2022:  
**Daniel and Camille Harmon Elizabeth Hewins**
- the 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of **Jose Pukuta and Emilie Sudika** on May 1, 2022.

*We extend sympathy to...*

- the family and friends of **Irene Lamkin** who died Tuesday, April 26, 2022, in Rushville.
- the family of **Itch and Sue Jones** on the death of Itch's brother, **R.A. Jones**;
- **Ginny Tutje** whose sister-in-law **Marjorie Nebelsick** died April 20, 2022 in South Dakota;
- the family of **Mike Fisher** who died recently. Mike served in the past as a substitute organist/pianist at our church.



**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  
Brendan Barker..... Organist  
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).**