

November 2024



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Praise God, Who Gives Us Joy and Inspires Us!

BY BETH WAGNER

BETH@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

My family loves to windsurf! A significant part of learning to windsurf actually happens before we even get in the water and onto the board. We knew where to stand on the board, pull the sail up, and balance ourselves while turning. All this preparation was essential for us to be ready to sail. Being comfortable with what we were doing began with this preparation and, of course, having a great sail from start to finish.

Stewardship, like windsurfing, is a journey that starts with understanding. It's not about guilt or obligation; it's about discovering the joy in giving and reaching our true capacity for generosity. Starting from a place of wonder and awe opens the door to finding delight and satisfaction in sharing and in our practice of stewardship.

Stewardship is not about us; it's about God. It's about recognizing that we respond to God's actions, not trying to earn God's favor. God has already blessed and provided for us, and our role as faithful stewards is to acknowledge and honor God's gifts.

First Presbyterian is a blessed congregation. This year's stewardship season begins on November 10. It is a shortened two-week period during which you will receive one mailer (with a pledge card) and several moments of stewardship focusing on abundant joy and overflowing generosity. This year, we will examine what your generosity provides as a percentage of our budget.

Did you know that 40% of our budget for next year supports worshiping God? Wow! That speaks volumes about where we believe First Presbyterian's priorities lie. We allocate 32% of our budget to maintaining our historic building, which is probably unsurprising. Additionally, 14% is designated for local and global missions, reinforcing our beliefs. The rest of our budget is divided among spiritual formation, outreach, and congregational connections.

When I look at our 2025 budget, I see a church that clearly understands who they are and whose they are. WOW! Praise God, who gives us joy and inspires us with overflowing generosity.



November Coffeeshop Office
Hours Mondays 10-12 noon

Beth is headed back to Cafe Kopi in downtown Champaign on Mondays during November. Cafe Kopi is closing in December after 30 years in downtown Champaign...enjoy one last cup of coffee!

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. Blest be the tie that binds.

Trunk or Treat 2024

Children's age-appropriate books were distributed with smiles along with candy and "Happy Halloween." Hot soup was enjoyed on a warm day blessed by clear skies.

Thanks to all the folks who came out for fellowship and welcomed young families from our neighborhood. A special thanks to the leadership of the **Miller family** and to our outreach and nurture committees.



We invite the congregation to gather with the ELL classes
for the following Thanksgiving Luncheon.

Food provided by members of the classes and the Nurture Committee.





**Room for All:
A Service of
Lessons & Carols
Sunday, December 15
9 AM**

For Music Sunday, the music department invites you to a beautiful, reflective service that weaves together scripture, poetry, and carols to tell the timeless Christmas story in a fresh way.

Through readings and music, we'll explore the theme of making room in our hearts and lives for Christ and others. Christmas hymns and choral anthems will invite the congregation to celebrate the joy, hope, and meaning of the season.

Come and experience the wonder of Christmas as we journey through the story of Christ's birth with love, joy, and community.

Youth Bible Club with DREAM

It's back! Our Wednesday Bible Club with DREAMers started October 30. The DREAM middle school youth and staff join us on our campus downstairs in Centennial Hall from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Between opening and closing rituals, we will have a fun activity related to a Bible story and eat a meal together. We will share stories, open our lives to each other and be glad. Will you join a list of people interested in serving? Can you help out on our kitchen team or serve as a table partner? Table partners greet our guests and facilitate conversation with prepared questions while eating with DREAM tweens and staff.

We have two Wednesdays remaining for this year...November 13th and December 11th. For more information, contact **Peter Yau** pmyau@illinois.edu (217-621-0448) with questions or to sign up to help in the kitchen, or **Holly Ewan Nordheden** hnordheden@gmail.com (217-621-3450) with questions or to sign up to serve as a table partner.

Children's Mission

This quilt was created by loving hands as a gift to Crisis Nursery from the children of First Church. The children of the church showed their work to the congregation on October 27.



We are compiling a booklet of the interviews from the church history research for the history book, *Heritage Vision and Mission*. If you would be interested in receiving a copy at a cost of \$10, please contact the church office (info@firstpres.church) or Nancy Martin nemartin81@hotmail.com

First Presbyterian Church *Historical Interviews, 1998-1999*

First Presbyterian Church of Champaign collected interviews with several long-term members of the congregation twenty-five years ago.

At the time, plans were in progress to recognize the establishment of the Church, in 1850, with special "Celebrate 150" worship services, social gatherings, and a history book. With the help of many people writing, editing, and gathering information, *Heritage, Vision, and Mission* was published in 2005.

This booklet contains the early drafts of interviews which were transcribed from cassette tapes.

Some of the memories appeared in the book while others were omitted for space and narrative demands.

These transcripts, typed on a typewriter, are rough, but legible. The church is making them available at cost to members and friends. We may one day park these historical documents on the church webpage, as we believe the history (and love) they capture are worth preserving.

Enjoy reading these glimpses of informal Church history from old friends.

<u>Subject of Interview</u>	<u>Date of Interview</u>	<u>Interviewed By</u>
1. Jim Andrews	May 3, 1999	Bertha Jean Berger
2. Frank & Betty Burns	January, 1999	Nancy Eisner Martin
3. Stan & Carol Bush	May 16, 1998	Mary Kent Twardock
4. Mildred Chester	May 3, 1999	Bertha Jean Berger
5. Don Clegg	May 28, 1998	Mary Kent Twardock
6. Julia Harris Dodds	May 12, 1999	Bertha Jean Berger
7. Dick & Jo Foley	June 2, 1999	Barbara McDonnell
8. French Fraker	June 11, 1999	Bertha Jean Berger
9. Bob & Jo Gray	January 6, 1999	Nancy Eisner Martin
10. George Grubb	June 5, 1999	Mary Kent Twardock
11. J. William Hendrix	November, 1998	Virginia Hendrix
12. Lillian Kellerhals	June 23, 1998	Virginia Hendrix
13. Wendel Kent	January, 1999 letter to his sister Mary	Kent Twardock
14. John Mittendorf (w/daughter Sue)	May, 1998	Mary Kent Twardock
15. Jack Richmond	October, 1998	Virginia Hendrix
16. Jean Smith	November, 1998	Virginia Hendrix
17. Ken Trigger	June 1, 1999	Bertha Jean Berger
18. Hurshal Tummelson	June 14, 1999	Bertha Jean Berger
19. Mary Willis Reimers	May 11, 1999	Bertha Jean Berger
20. Twardock Party	December 1998	Mary Kent Twardock
Jim & Leland Andrews		Mal Nygren
Mimi Cozad		Ginny & Dale Tutje
Fran & Roger Haughey		Mary & Bob Twardock
Liz & George Miley		Wanda & Don Whitsitt
21. Genealogical Society Talk by Bill Froom - 1989(?)		
22. New Life Movement/ Fisherman's Club - date unknown		

Face to Face with Marty & Darrell Carlson



What brought you to First Presbyterian Church?

We were looking for a change from what had been our long-term congregation. We researched our options attended some churches and settled on First Presbyterian-Champaign. We had been primed I guess by the fact that our children had once been in the youth club here and that some of our grandchildren were baptized here.

What has been the highlight of your church experience?

We have been most impressed by the welcome we received, the people we have met and just the friendliness of the environment. Our choice to come here has also been affirmed by the community outreach we do and the diversity of the congregation. Marty has loved meeting the boys and staff from DREAM and caring for Omraam in the nursery. Darrell likes his work on the Building and Grounds Committee.

Tell me about your family? Your work?

We have four sons and eight grandchildren. Three of our four sets of grandchildren live locally. We are finally fully retired now. Marty is an advanced practice nurse who did both clinical work and teaching. Darrell was a lieutenant in the Champaign Fire Department for thirty-one years. His one day on and two off work schedule allowed him to develop a home construction business on the side from which he recently retired.

What do you do in your free time?

We spend a lot of our time cheering on our grandchildren who are heavily invested in sports during all seasons of the year. We try not to miss their games. We also enjoy time with family at our lake home in Southern Illinois.

What are your favorite Bible characters?

We will say the Apostle Paul. He is a good example of forgiveness and reconciliation.

What advice can give on how to be the church? Or, how can the church best be the church?

We agree that a congregation should be welcoming and nurturing and offer many small group opportunities to serve and feed the faith. We have all that here.

2nd Sunday Brunch November 10th

Come, enjoy brunch Centennial Hall

We will have a variety of brunch items along with some special sweet treats. Enjoy food and fellowship right after the 9 AM service.

Donations appreciated!

Volunteers are needed to help with the brunches. If interested, please contact Carol Ann Green, (cadgreen@comcast.net), Gary Peterson (amer_swede@yahoo.com) or the church office.

Some Good Reading from Joe Lundy

The Cross and the Lynching Tree by James Cone - This is a powerful book linking the death of Christ to the history of lynching in the U.S. that also asks why we have avoided this connection. A good read, but it can be a bit tough.

On Repentance and Repair by Danya Ruttenberg - A book looking at what repentance really is. I haven't gotten too far into it but so far it seems compelling.

Hosea Tradition for Crisis by Walter Brueggemann - A book about Hosea and what traditions the prophet stood on. I am hoping it will help with our Bible study!



We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love.

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives.

Compassion, Peace and Justice Ministry Team

Compassion Peace and Justice Ministry Team (CPJMT) is guided by our congregation's commitment to the three interconnected pillars of the Matthew 25 initiative: *Building Congregational Vitality, Dismantling Structural Racism and Eradicating Systemic Poverty*. Our current energy is concentrated on building our relationship with DREAM Opportunity Center. Our continuing agenda includes attention to reparations, gender equity, immigration and criminal justice.

CPJMT meets monthly. Meetings include prayer, devotions, education and lively discussion about how we can be better disciples of Christ in community and making the world a little better. Learn more about our PC(USA) commitment [here](#). Join the movement.

Sunday Hospitality Table



Many of us enjoy a cup of tea or coffee after Sunday Worship. Some go for the donut holes and lemonade. Setting up and taking down the hospitality table is easy, and it is fun. The only requirement is a smile. Directions are posted and someone is there to help when help is needed. Join a list of those who can help from time to time by signing up [here](#).

Jays & Concerns

We express sympathy to...

- to the family and friends of **Ralph E. "Pete" Fletcher** who died October 13.
- to the family and friends of **Beverly Cottrell** who died October 22. A Celebration of Life (open house) will be held Sunday, November 3, from 2-4 PM at the Champaign Country Club.
- The Memorial Service for **Stuart Jenkins** will be this Saturday, November 2, at 2 PM at the church.

The Heart of Mission

Guests from Puerto Rico Inform and Inspire



After leading a compelling devotion, lifelong Presbyterians shared their ministry at the 11th Annual Cuba Forum on October 5. Music videos and slide shows of Cuban life were shared followed by conversation during lunch.

On World Communion Sunday **Rev. José Manuel** preached from *Hebrews 1:1-4 and 2:5-12*. Vilmarie later led an interactive discussion about hope. **Elder Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri and the Rev. José Manuel Capella-Pratts** serve with Presbyterian World Mission as Regional Liaisons for the Caribbean Region working alongside partners in the Republic of Cuba, Dominican Republic, the Republic of Haiti, and the Caribbean and North American Council for Mission (CANACOM). They have served the PC(USA) at the local congregation, presbytery, synod, General Assembly. Married for 27 years, Vilmarie and José Manuel bask in their life together enjoying music, reading, technology, all things “Star Wars” and “Star Trek”, sketching and watercolors, often relaxing over a good cup of Puerto Rican coffee.

To support their ministry you can donate [here](#).

For additional photos go [here](#).

English Language Learners (ELL)

BY **BONNIE WARD**, DIRECTOR
 BONNIE@FIRSTPRES.CHURCH

The ELL program continues to grow and interest is high. We currently have 91 students enrolled, and about 20 on our waiting list. Not all students come every day, so we still have room in the Cafe.

We have taken on two new teachers which has been a huge boost. We often have teachers who are traveling or sick or going south, so having back ups is a big help. We have one other new potential teacher who is learning the ropes before she takes on her own class.

We look forward to a Halloween party on October 30. We will also partner with the church like last year for our Thanksgiving Potluck on November 20 (see page 3 of this issue). I hope many of you will be able to join us. It is a great opportunity to welcome newcomers to our community, share Thanksgiving traditions with them, and have the chance to try foods from other countries!

We will also do something special for Christmas before we break for the holidays. We will finish classes on December 18 and resume classes on January 21.

Thank you for your support of this well-loved program.

2024 Angel Tree

BY **JANE ALSBERG**, CHAIR COMMUNITY MISSION DEACONS
 JANE.ALSBERG@GMAIL.COM

The 2024 Angel Tree is coming soon to First Presbyterian Church! Once again CMDs have chosen Kemmerer Village to be the recipient of our Angel Tree offering. Christmas is a time of wonder, a time to dream and a time of hope with the coming of the Christ child. With each ornament, you have the ability to give a child that special Christmas joy and hope. Ornaments will highlight a child and include his or her special wish. Our Angel Tree will go up early this year (November 10) as our gifts need to be delivered to Kemmerer village the first week of December.

Green Team Updates

The Earth Care Team of the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana is hosting an Earth Care seminar series on the topic *Threats to Trees from Herbicide Drift in Illinois* November 3 and 10 at 10:45 AM in their Chapel.

November 3

Pesticides and Plant Damage in Illinois Natural Areas **Thomas Benson**, Principal Research Scientist and the Critical Trends Assessment Program Coordinator, at Illinois Natural History Survey.

November 10

Long-Term Impacts of Herbicide Drift on Trees and Plants **Kim Erndt-Pitcher**, Director of Ecological Health at Prairie Rivers Network.

Finance

Financial Update

BY ANN WEBBINK, FINANCE TEAM
ANWEB2@YAHOO.COM

Contributions

Total September contributions: \$49K from plate and pledge plus \$10.3K from prepaid= \$59.3K. This is \$0.9K less than last year and \$6.1K under budget. Total contributions YTD, including prorated prepaid pledges: \$ 576.6 K which is \$37.9K less than last year and \$12K under budget. At 75% of the year, we have 77.4% of the budgeted contributions, including all prepaid contributions.

Expenses

September expenses were \$76.5 K, which is \$4.1K less than last year and \$3.5K under budget. Expenses YTD are \$728.8K, which is \$11.5K more than last year and \$8.8K over budget. At 75% of the year, we have spent 76% of the budget.

Balance YTD

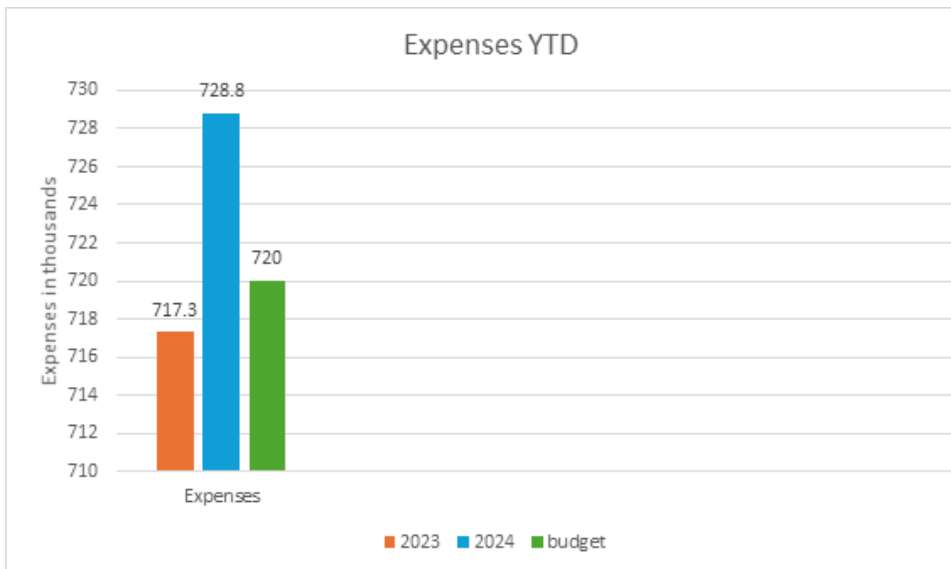
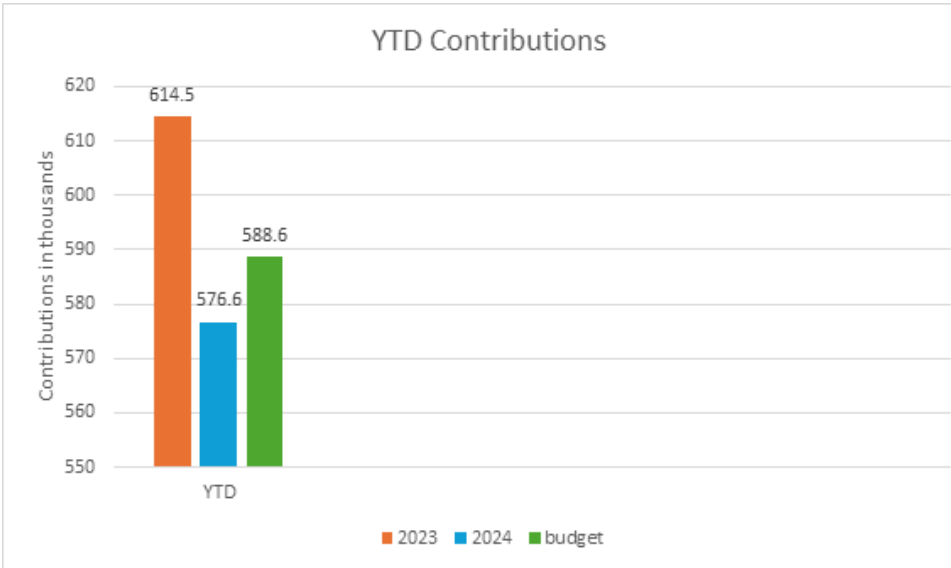
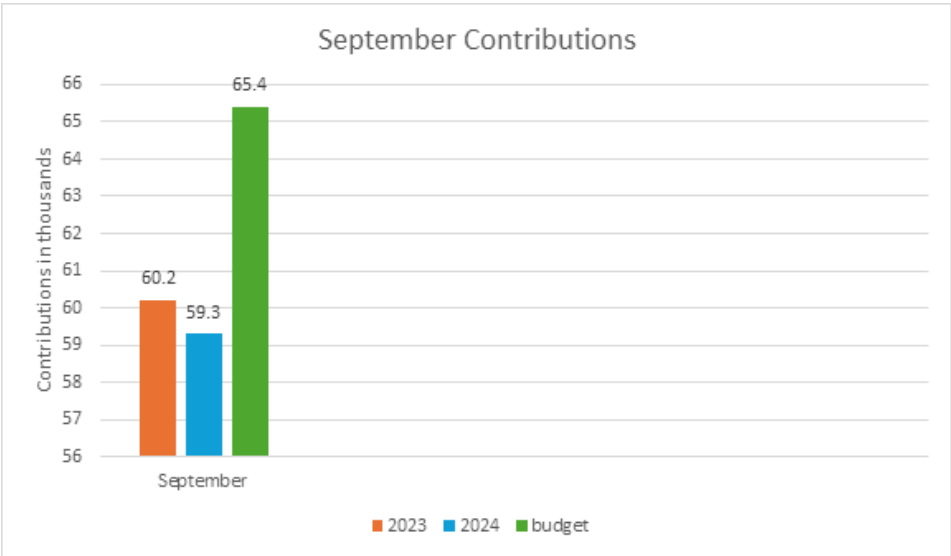
Expenses exceeded revenue from all sources by \$60.7K, which is \$46.8K more than last year at the same time.

Session Designated Funds

\$1,438,186 which is \$313,153 less than last month.

Summary of Restricted Accounts

\$2217 was given to various funds this month, including \$700 to the benevolence fund.





**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

E: info@firstpres.church

www.firstpres.church

Sunday:

9 AM Worship

10 AM Coffee and Fellowship

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

Contact the church office for more information.

Pastors:

Beth Wagner..... Interim Pastor/Head of Staff
Joseph Lundy..... Associate Pastor for Discipleship

Staff:

Martice Chapple..... Facility Assistant
Ritchie Drennen..... Facility Manager
Patty Farthing..... Office Assistant
Robert Ferrer..... Audio-visual Technician
Fred Foster..... Evening Custodian
Marcia Franks..... Office Administrator
Ann Petry..... Accounting
Matthew Shepard..... Director of Music
Sora Shepard..... Organist/Pianist
Bonnie Ward..... English Language Learner Director

Staff email addresses are the person's first name followed by @firstpres.church For example, beth@firstpres.church

Church Office hours:

Mon-Thurs 8:30 AM - 2 PM

Friday 8:30 AM - noon

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.