

October 2021



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Sunday
October 24

**TRUNK
OR
TREAT**

5-6 PM Church Parking Lot

CARS, CANDY, COSTUMES

see how you can participate on page 5

Faith in the Real World

Our fall "Faith in the Real World" series continues at 10:15 AM in the Sanctuary.

October 10 – Jazz Quartet

During the Sunday School hour, Matthew Storie and friends will play. The idea was that we'd have music while we enjoyed coffee, tea, and donuts. Thanks to Covid concerns, we're nixing the food and drink, but not the song!

October 17 – Ken Chapman

A member of our congregation and science groupie, "How I've Changed My Mind".

October 24 – Fall Y'All

This morning we will take a break from the series and celebrate Fall. Join us at 10:10 AM in the alley for apple and pumpkin treats hosted by your Nurture Committee

October 31 – Spiritual Formation

The committee leads a discussion of All Saints Day, what it is, how did it come to be, what it means to those that mourn.

Coming Soon - Date TBD

Betty Hollister will lead a discussion of a talk by Kate Bowler, "Everything Happens for a Reason (and other lies I've loved)."

And more to follow in November and December.

Spots of Time

BY KEN TRAVERS

KTRAVERS@UIUC.EDU

*There are in our existence
spots of time,
That with distinct pre-eminence retain
A renovating virtue*
(Wordsworth)

It's an occupational hazard of aging—those unpredictable and memorable moments of life that keep us going. 'Spots of time', the poet calls them. Movements of the Holy Spirit, the prophet might say. In my case, when I was a college freshman, it 'just happened' that the Billy Graham era was at its peak. Graham had carried out massive rallies, in the United States and internationally. Consistent with their large scale strategy, they had produced video accounts of the major events. (Some broadcasts are still available.) At any rate, in the fall of 1952, in the basement of a Baptist Church local to the campus of University of British Columbia, I responded to Graham's call to commit my life to Jesus Christ. Whatever that entailed for an 18 year old. Spots of time.

The early years

It would be wildly delusional for me to claim that from then on my life remained, 'whiter than snow'. As a church here observed, 'Satan's biggest lie is that he doesn't exist'. And while this is not the time or place to explore the intricacies of demoniacs, I'll add the truism from my own experience: 'Satan doesn't need target practice'.

My first calling was to teach. So I trundled back to the north country of British Columbia, close geographically to my home town in the pristine valley of Mt. Robson, highest peak in the Canadian Rockies. It was there

in the historic gold mining country of the Cariboo that I began my career. "And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche"(Chaucer).

At the high school I was hired as a mathematics teacher, then was appointed boys counselor. Thanks to technology, half a century later, several of my then students, now themselves grandparents, still keep in touch, 'Through many dangers, toils and snares'. (Amazing Grace)
Spots of time.

A treasure in the field

It was an exciting and scary time. On Sundays I listened to the radio broadcast of Charles E. Fuller's Old Fashioned Revival Hour. Occasionally Fuller 'just happened' to mention his intention to found a seminary in Pasadena. He envisioned it as 'The Cal Tech Seminary of the west'. (The California institute of Technology is also in Pasadena.) So to my surprise, and doubtless the wonderment of my parents and colleagues (not to mention my students), in the summer of 1959 I quit my job, which I loved dearly, and ventured south. A pale imitation of Abraham, to be sure. Spots of time.

Technology prevails

The 1950s and 60s were heady times. The Soviets had launched Sputnik. Consequently the U. S. directed massive levels of funding to Federal Agencies such as the National Science Foundation to revitalize research and development in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM acronym had not yet appeared in the national psyche.

Coincidences

It seems that in the preaching of the gospel, Billy Graham's campaigns were the harbinger of large scale

movements of the Holy Spirit. Southern California was truly a hotbed of evangelistic initiatives. In Los Angeles, the Saturday evening city-wide Youth for Christ rallies left me in awe.

Fuller Seminary was far more than I could have imagined. The faculty were distinguished scholars, most with impressive stacks of their own published works. Of particular mention was the class of internationally known E. J. Carnell, past president of Fuller who was working on a manuscript in apologetics. For each session he'd hand out freshly typed pages. Before word processing, of course.

It 'just happened' that there is a historical relationship between Fuller and Presbyterianism. I didn't then know of the Presbyterian Church (USA). In Canada, the United Church had evolved from the merger of Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Methodists. The resulting denomination seemed to be unaware of the vital history of its triumvirate of Spirit-led roots.

At Fuller, it was quickly apparent that the 'mother church' (my own term, totally absent from Fuller vocabulary) was the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood. A very large congregation with a correspondingly sizable Christian Education Department. The Director was the legendary Henrietta Meares who herself taught the college Sunday Class of about 500 students. Among the noteworthy who celebrated Meares' leadership were Bill Bright, President of Campus Crusade for Christ (Cru) and Jim Rayburn, Founder of Young Life. Again, new worlds. Spots of time.

Back at the University of Illinois, in the '50s and '60s, the campus was influenced by ongoing evangelical, if

not 'fervor' then at least enthusiasm. Wesley church had three morning services with a full choir at two of them. The McKinley Presbyterian Foundation had two—with standing room only. The fraternities and sororities reportedly made reservations for worship to meet their membership requirements. I arrived for grad school still somewhat in a daze from Southern California atmospherics. At McKinley, on my first Sunday, Pastor James Hine preached on, 'Happiness is when somebody knows your name.'

Coincidences are God's way
of acting anonymously.
Coincidences are spots of time

*Ah yes, the mysteries of life.
How dull if it all were plausible,
predictable. As the preacher says,
Having faith in God is far better than
being certain about God.
Faith can take us to higher realms
than certainty can ever reach.*

(Craig Barnes, National Presbyterian Church. Barnes is now President of Princeton Seminary)

Welcome to the Staff Judi!

BY ANN STOUT, CO-CHAIR HUMAN RESOURCE TEAM
MRSAS2003@GMAIL.COM

Although **Judi Geistlinger** is a familiar face here at First Pres, her role here has changed recently. Judi has been hired to temporarily "fill in" some of the pastoral responsibilities left vacant when **Eric Corbin** accepted a call in Woodstock, IL. Judi, a Commissioned Lay Pastor, is now assisting with the planning (selecting liturgy and hymns) and participating in the Sunday morning worship services. She will also be preaching periodically on Sunday mornings in addition to her preaching duties at the Windsor of Savoy. You can welcome her the next time you see her by giving her a pat on the back or an elbow bump to say "Welcome"!

Rachel Matthews (also a familiar face) has also accepted some of the "vacant" pastoral duties on a temporary basis. In addition to her Mission responsibilities, Rachel will be assisting with the leadership of the Congregational Care Deacons and will be available for other pastoral care duties which may include an occasional funeral, and hospital or home visits.

We are so grateful for the gifts that these two women bring to the church and we are confident that the ministry of FPCC will continue seamlessly due in part to their dedicated service to God and to the church.

**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 con-
fidential. Your church
wants to be in touch.**

**Bless be the
tie that binds.**

Finance

Financial Update

BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, CHAIR FINANCE
 MSCHOEFFMANN@MCHSI.COM

Contributions

Contributions in September to the Operating Fund were \$25.6K more than in 2020 but \$6.8K less than the budget at \$64.3K. The Year to Date total is above last year by \$12.1K but below the budgeted amount by \$24.3K.

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 75% through the year we have received 78.4% of the expected year's revenue.

Expenses

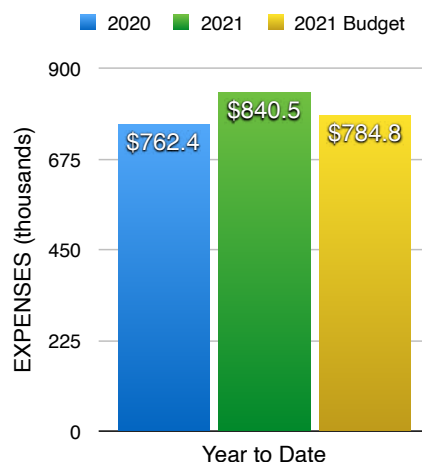
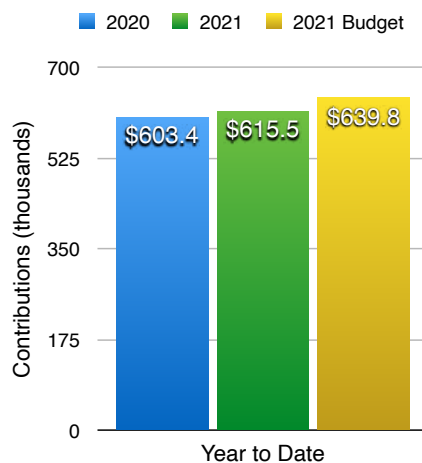
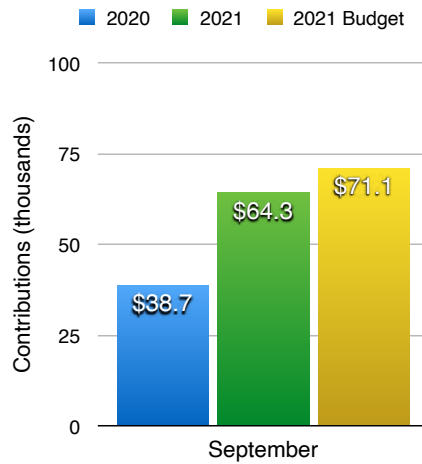
Year to Date expenses are \$55.7K above the budget at \$840.5K and more than in 2020 by \$78.1K. At 75% through the year we have experienced 80.3% of the expected year's expenses.

Balance

Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$13.9K which is \$72.0K less than at the end of September in 2020.

Restricted Funds

In addition to contributions to the operating fund there was \$5,078 donated last month to special offerings and funds restricted to specific purposes such as missions supported by our church.



Our refurbished front doors are a welcoming sight each Sunday!



Children, Youth & Family

Children, Youth, Family

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

Trunk or Treat is back! Sunday October 24 from 5-6 PM we will open our church parking lot to the children of the community for fun treats and decorations. This is a great opportunity to show Christian hospitality to our neighborhood families! However, we will not have the soup supper that normally occurs the same evening. Donations of prepackaged individually wrapped candies are needed. Bring the purchased bags of candies to the church office anytime before October 22.

Additional safety measures this year will be to have cars park in every other spot to allow more distance, and all volunteers will wear masks to cover their nose and mouth. Volunteers passing out candies will wear vinyl gloves. This will reduce the amount of touch contact among the children.

Would you like to volunteer to help with the Trunk or Treat event? Look for the sign-up sheets in Westminster Hall on a bulletin board soon. We would love to have a great display of cars decorated to put some fun back into the community neighborhood. Contact Ms. Mindy at mindy@firstpres.church to add your name to the list of those bringing a decorated car. If you decorate your car, you can park in the church lot at 4:30 and set up. Not the creative type, but willing to bring your car and pass out candy? Our youth can decorate your trunk for you with some materials the church owns.

Mission & Fellowship Opportunities
November 7 will be a fellowship outing to Hardy's Reindeer Ranch in Rantoul

to enjoy the corn maze and possibly a reindeer tour. We will gather at the church parking lot at 1:30 PM and car pool/caravan up to the Ranch.

Youth Triennium is coming! Once every three years the Prebyterian Church USA sponsors a nation-wide gathering of high school youth to worship and learn together. Our presbytery sends a delegation of youth each time to participate in this one of a kind event. The next one takes place July 24-27 of 2022 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

I would love to see all of our eligible youth take part in this inspiring event. Our estimate for youth interested in coming is due by November 5, so let Ms. Mindy know if you would like to attend Triennium. Registration opens in February for a firm commitment. We will begin fundraising in December. Here is a link to highlights from the last triennium. [Youth Triennium 2019 video](#)
Here is the website for the triennium 2022. [Youth Triennium 2022](#)

Sunday School Update

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

In the 18th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says, "...where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." This verse comes to mind as I reflect on our first full month of Sunday School. Without question, God has been present with us as we gather at West Side Park to learn about God, deepen our faith, and grow as disciples. I have seen God at work in the interesting ideas shared and insightful questions asked by Sunday School students of all ages. Thank you so much to the wonderful teachers and helpers who have created warm and welcoming spaces for our students to learn and wonder.

This month, our elementary school students will conclude their study of Exodus while our middle and high school students finish their exploration of Paul's theology and biblical letters. Our elementary school students will spend the rest of October learning about Elijah while our youth focus on the many gifts they have to offer our community.

Classes gather in Westminster Hall before heading over to the park at 10:15 AM. Classes return to the alley by 11:05 AM for snack and pick-up. In the event of bad weather, classes will meet in the cafe and gym. We will use an air purifier in the cafe and open windows in both spaces. Masks are required whenever we are indoors. All adult volunteers have been vaccinated against Covid-19.

If your family is not comfortable with attending in-person classes, we can send you materials to assist with Sunday School at home. These materials include questions for conversations, activity ideas, and some resources to carry out those activities. You can also find recordings of the Bible stories on the Firstpres.church/kids webpage. The password is F!irstpreskids. Currently, these at-home and online resources are only for the elementary school class. Please let me know if you'd like to receive these materials! Faith formation can happen in all kinds of ways and all kinds of places.

We still need teachers and helpers to make sure our program is sustainable. Please reflect on whether or not you'd be able to serve in our program. It's not too late to get involved!

God is absolutely at work through our students, teachers, and helpers. Thanks be to God for their open hearts!



“Hope runs through Scripture and is at the epicenter of the gospel.” “God understands our world”.

Jeremiah 32:17 Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.

Psalms 103:2 Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all His benefits: 103:4 Who redeemed thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; 103:8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy; 103:17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children’s children.



Joys & Concerns

We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of...

- **Don Eberly** who was the partner of **Sallie Hutton**. Don died September 9, 2021.
- **Les Etheridge** who died September 24, 2021. **Les** is survived by his wife, **Jan Holmes**.
- **Steve Nichols** who died September 23, 2021.
- **Bill Schowengerdt** who died September 25, 2021. **Bill** is survived by his wife, **Cathy**.
- **Ron Short** who died September 26, 2021. **Ron** is survived by his wife, **Ceanne**.

Thanks to our friends from CMI who donated cheese and peanut butter crackers, travel toothbrushes and toothpaste, hand wipes in small packages, travel deodorant, small bags of chips, and travel hand sanitizers to our Free Little Pantry. We appreciate their willingness to give back to the community!

Mission Updates

The Heart of Missions Newsletter has been revived. Our local and global mission agencies have made changes due to COVID restrictions, 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

“Par for the Course”



Thanks to **Bruce Farthing** and his golfing buddies for participating in this year’s 28th Annual Kemmerer Village Charity Golf Outing held on September 10 at The Oak Terrance Golf Course in Pana, IL.

This is “par for the course” and just one of the many ways that our church continues to support the mission of Kemmerer Village to help children and families deal with the stress and turmoil in their lives!

News from the Green Team

BY PAT PHILLIPS
P.PHILLIPS42@SBCGLOBAL.NET

Lisa Ainsworth and Andrew Leakey, in response to a question asked at their presentation at church September 26, about how an individual can contribute to a solution to the climate change crisis, recommended an online check of one’s carbon footprint. A good place to start: <https://www.nature.org/carbon-footprint-calculator>

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) that are generated by our actions. The average carbon footprint for a person in the United States is 16 tons, one of the highest rates in the world. Globally, the average is closer to 4 tons. To have the best chance of avoiding a 2 degree celsius rise in global temperatures, the average global carbon footprint per year needs to drop under 2 tons by 2050.

Lowering individual carbon footprints from 16 tons to 2 tons doesn’t happen overnight! By making small changes to our actions, like eating less meat, combining errands into one gas-using outing, adjusting thermostats up in summer and down in winter, buying produce in bulk rather than wrapped in plastic, avoiding plastic bags, we can start making a big difference.

The weekly opportunity to recycle Styrofoam in Westminster Hall is a great success!

Stephanie Jones is an Attorney in Climate Risk and Financial Regulations, for the Environmental Defense Fund. On a visit to her grandmother **Katharine Jones**, she has offered to meet in person and zoom for an hour on October 14 from 3:30 – 4:30. The Green Team invites anyone who is interested as well as other Green teams to participate in this hybrid meeting.

The next **Adopt-a-Highway** will be October 30, starting at 8 AM, a pretty time for a walk.



Thanks to all who braved the rain and participated in this year’s CROP Walk!



You're Invited



DREAM
Driven to Reach Excellence and
Academic Achievement for Males

**Dream
BIG**

FALL FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, OCT. 16, 2021
NOON - 3PM
PHILLIPS RECREATION CENTER
505 W. STOUGHTON, URBANA

Pumpkin decorating | Games | Music by
The Vine Street Syncopators | Raffles
Art & Performances by our DREAMers
Surprises | Food trucks | Silent Auction
Photo booth | And much more!

Proceeds from the event will help fund our new DREAM Beginners Pre-Kindergarten Program, which will be piloted beginning November 1, 2021. This program will provide multi-generational education and socio-emotional developmental opportunities to impact both the child and the guardian.

DREAM could use more pumpkins for the pumpkin decorating, as well as sweet treats for our guests. If you are willing to help, please contact **Jacqueline Jasek** at jacqueline@dream.org or 217.530-0110.

The Republic of Cuba

Early Colonialism 1522-1868

BY BOB KIRBY, CUBA PARTNERS

RWK3213@GMAIL.COM

When Spanish conquerors found little gold and silver in Cuba they turned their attention to Mexico and Peru. For almost 300 years Cuba was merely a stopping point between Spain and Spanish America. Most wealth from gold and silver bypassed Cuba. Havana provided a deep water harbor for shipments from Spanish America to Europe. It became a major military port and ship building center.

Cuba's economy was concentrated in agriculture to support Spanish fleets providing cedar and mahogany for ship building, furniture for Spanish homes and food for the Spanish fleets - yams, corn, beans and yucca. Large cattle ranches flourished and beef, pork, leather and hides were exported.

Early Cuban trade was allowed only with Spain although other countries could offer less expensive products and better markets for Cuban goods. Spain's control was threatened but not broken by pirates on the seas, by political instability in Europe and occasional slave revolts.

By 1700 tobacco replaced leather and hides as the dominant economic sector. Soon after, the sugar market emerged. Both agrarian businesses required slave labor. The slave trade to Cuba, primarily from West Africa, lasted three centuries. Almost a million people were enslaved before slavery was abolished in 1886. Beginning in 1837 Chinese contract workers were also imported for field work resulting in a residual Chinese population in Cuba today.

Political control, wealth and power in Cuba was maintained by the Spanish born Peninsulares at the expense of the Cuban born Creoles. By 1850 sugar was king in Cuba. Fifty percent was purchased by the United States. Sugar was not indigenous to the Caribbean. Originally from the Pacific it was cultivated in Spain by Arabs and then shipped to Cuba and beyond.

Wealthy Cubans gained political influence gradually and became more and more connected to the US. The United States infused wealth to build railroads, highways and larger and larger

sugar mills. Opulent wealth, built on the backs of African slaves, was concentrated in the hands of a small number of Cuban planters mostly Peninsulares. Others were left behind, not only slaves and indentured servants but an increasing number of small farmers and small business owners.

Next month:
Cuban Wars for Independence

It's Fall Y'All

There's a special feeling that comes with the season of fall and we are going to celebrate it! Stop by for our apple and pumpkin treats.

Date
Oct. 24th 10:10 AM
Doxology Lane
Champaign
First Pres

Sponsored by
Your Nurture Committee



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

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.

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 DrennenFacility Manager, Ext. 237
Patty Farthing.....Receptionist, Ext. 211
Robert FerrerAudio-visual Technician
Marcia Franks Administrative Assistant, Ext. 210
Judi Geistlinger..... Commissioned Lay Pastor
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
Mindy Watts-Ellis.....Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

All staff email addresses are the person's first name followed by @firstpres.church. For example, matt@firstpres.church.

The newsletter is published monthly. Deadline is the last Monday of the month for the following month's edition. Send submissions to marcia@firstpres.church.