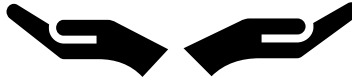




**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**



The Heart of Mission

January 5, 2021

The word “mission” comes from the Latin word “missionem” meaning “the act of sending” or “mittere,” meaning “to send.” As Christians, we are being sent into the world to serve our Lord. The Matthew 25 commitment the session took last year reminds us this work means being engaged in

- [Building congregational vitality](#) by challenging people and congregations to deepen their faith and get actively and joyfully engaged with their community and the world.
- [Dismantling structural racism](#) by advocating and acting to break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.
- [Eradicating systemic poverty](#) by working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.

Want to know more? Learn more here:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/become-a-matthew-25-church/>

Serving the poor is complicated, though. We can hurt people we love by creating unhealthy dependencies and wounding embarrassments without even knowing it. I am rereading **Toxic Charity** by Robert Lupton who in his first chapter gives us a blueprint for what he calls “compassionate service.” This blueprint can help us avoid shaming our neighbor or exploiting the poor with unhealthy dependencies or charitable power trips as we try to serve. The oath for compassionate service is a helpful map as we enter 2021. As we move from the crisis of pandemic to the work of rebuilding, there will be a lot of demand this year for love, for giving, for teaching, for listening, for serving, for compassion, maybe even more than last year. Can we be intentional about our helping? Can we build relationships instead of doing our duty? Can we hold justice, mercy and loving kindness in the right balance? What do you think about taking on this oath as a resolution? If it makes you uncomfortable, why? If it excites you, why? Is this year an opportunity for you to learn more about mission, about what is helpful and what is not? Working through these questions with others is part of the work on this journey. Who will you work with? Let’s work together.

The Oath for Compassionate Service

- Never do for the poor what they have (or could have) the capacity to do for themselves.

- Limit one-way giving to emergency situations.
- Strive to empower the poor through employment, lending, and investing, using grants sparingly to reinforce achievements.
- Subordinate self-interests to the needs of those being served.
- Listen closely to those you seek to help, especially to what is not being said—unspoken feelings may contain essential clues to effective service.
- Above all, do no harm. (Lupton, Robert D.. Toxic Charity (pp. 8-10). HarperOne. Kindle Edition.)

Happy New Year,

Rev. Dr. Rachel Matthews, Mission Coordinator

Let us keep all our mission partners in our prayers, those who are waiting to go back to their place of ministry and those who are able to work where they are. Listen for God’s call to you in their ministry.

Our PC(USA) Mission CoWorkers:

Mark Adams and Miriam Maidonado Escobar (Mexico)

Farsijanna Adeney-Risakotta (Indonesia)

Jeff and Christi Boyd (Central Africa)

Jo Ella Holman (Caribbean and Cuba) – And, for the mission coworker you are preparing to take her place.

Bob and Kristi Rice (South Sudan)

Our regional and global mission partners:

Kemmerer Village (and Camp Carew)

Lifeline Pilots

Marion Medical Mission

Mission Aviation Fellowship

Opportunity International

Friends of Presbyterian Education Board in Pakistan Presbyterian Cuba Partnership

Special Offerings of the PC(USA)

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JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY
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RESTORATION URBAN MINISTRY
SALT & LIGHT

Here at First Presbyterian Church

FPCC Amateur Preachers
FPCC Environmental Committee working with Faith in Place
FPCC Presbyterian Women
FPCC ESL
FPCC Children, Youth and Families
FPCC Mission Possible/Go and Serve



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