



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN



Agua Prieta

The Heart of Mission

February 2, 2021

The **Community Mission Deacons** met last week and welcomed their new deacons on board and set their giving priorities. The big event locally on our horizon is the **CU at Home One Winter Night THIS WEEK**, Friday Feb. 5. Pay attention to the local news which is covering it and keep them in your prayers. People all around town will be sleeping in boxes to create awareness of our friends without an address. Matt and I sent a video to them in support of all they do for our community.

Our Mission Team will meet with World Mission and Community Mission Deacons for an educational zoom retreat on Feb. 9 at 4:30pm.

Keep in your prayers our friends at **S.A.F.E. House**. Members there have been fighting the COVID 19 virus.

If you are looking for some hands on mission work to do, **the kitchen committee** is looking for people to put the kitchen back together. We can hardly wait to use it! Contact Gary Peterson.

Friends of PEB in Pakistan's introduced their new Executive Director **Laurie Gift Harris** in



December.

She was able to zoom with our Pakistan group and Veda Gill during one of our recent Wednesdays. We welcome her energy and experience with non-profits!

The CEO of **Opportunity International**, Atul Tandon, wrote on what we learned from 2020 and what we can look forward to in 2021. It is a terrific assessment of the devastation the pandemic has brought to the poorest of humanity but also the resilience of humanity.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=rm&zx=jw11qafxa7vu#inbox/FMfcgxwLsJwTDdrqWHTPgzfSfjVFSSnG>

Two quotes he shared from J.R.R. Tolkien seemed especially profound for our time:

"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us." – J.R.R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring

And

"The world is indeed full of peril, and in it there are many dark places; but still there is much that is fair, and though in all lands love is now mingled with grief, it grows perhaps the greater." – J.R.R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring

The Cuba Steering Committee has been planning the CUBA Forum, Cuba Sunday and the Two Step Dance, May 1 and May 2. Save those dates! And, save these dates for the CPN Virtual Gathering: September 24 and 25, 2021. Those of us who attended by zoom last year saw many friends from Cuba and other parts of the United States who we know and love. Since we cannot travel, this is the next best thing.

Frontera de Cristo sent a new newsletter introducing their new conversations dates for February. Included was a video talking about their coffee coop – Café Justo.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9wmMSv3SoY&index=1&list=PLIF2Qii5YwBBKzsd8pneH3Y8b7l4Muhyr>

The photo at the top of today's newsletter is from Frontera de Cristo in Aqua Prieta and shows how the coffee orders (and our Raindrop Offering last year) helped provide bags of groceries to families there.



Coffee, Conversation, & Compassion
New conversations starting Feb 11 at 5 pm MST
(4pm Pacific, 6pm Central, 7pm Eastern)

February 11—Town Hall Conversation
with Coordinators Jocabed Gallegos and Mark Adams
(an update of existing ministries and an introduction of new ministries)

February 18—Devastation in the Borderlands
An Interview with John Kurc, professional photographer who has documented the construction of the border wall and its destruction of God's creation

February 25—A Pilgrimage of Remembrance
A Conversation with the School Sisters of Notre Dame:
Honoring those who have died while crossing the border

Join the Zoom conversation:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85158343162>
Send email to office@fronteradecristo.org to receive updates

The PC(USA) is announcing Advocacy Days. <https://advocacydays.org/> Don't forget our denomination has activities and mission opportunities going on all the time outside of our local congregation. We are a connectional church filled with diversity and far reaching arms.



The United Way of Illinois is doing a 21-week Equity Challenge. This week's focus is "Understanding and Reflecting on Bias." They shared a PBS video looking at racial bias in millennials., <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily-videos/how-unconscious-race-bias-affects-millennials/>

And, in a University News, June 4, 2020 interview by Craig Chamberlain with U of I Professor Travis Dixon, *whose research deals with the prevalence and impact of racial and other stereotypes in the mass media, he notes,*

"Society, including the media, keeps teaching us to degrade one another through stereotypes – just like going outside and engaging in physical activity can make us dirty. We must continuously "bathe" ourselves in positive intergroup contact, diverse experiences and mindfulness to make us cleaner." <https://news.illinois.edu/view/6367/809383>

I thought, isn't that partly why we have a confession of sin each week in worship followed by a reading of scripture and sermon. And, isn't that why we pray and study new things in small groups. Let's keep each other on track in supporting God's diverse creation.

Peace,

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)
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)
Theological Education Fund
Young Adult Volunteers

Here in Champaign – Urbana:

CU at Home
CANAAAN S.A.F.E. HOUSE
CANTEEN RUN
COURAGE CONNECTION
DREAAM
eEMPTY TOMB, INC
FAITH IN ACTION
JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY
THE REFUGEE CENTER
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
FPCC Mission Team, World Mission and Community Mission Deacons



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 W. Church Street

Champaign, IL 61820

217-356-7238

info@firstpres.church