



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN



The Heart of Mission

May 11, 2021



Living the “DREAM” – Sunday, May 23, 2021

Tracy Dace, a passionate advocate for at-risk youth had just relocated to Champaign, Illinois, to start a doctoral program in special education at the University of Illinois when he found his heart calling him back into the community and, eventually, through the doors of a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) congregation.

As Tracy was working in schools, after-school programs, a juvenile detention center and the county jail, he had an opportunity to build relationships with African American males.

“These boys and young men were brilliant, with so much promise and potential, and yet they also had experienced trauma,” he said. “I saw the opportunity to think about using a pipeline approach to prevent them from developing behavioral issues that can derail their lives, to strengthen their academic skills and disrupt generational poverty. That was the beginning of DREAAM.”

[DREAAM](#) — which stands for Driven to Reach Excellence and Academic Achievement for Males — was Tracy’s brainchild. It is a program designed to invest in African American males at risk and to walk alongside them and their families from the ages of five through 24. Tracy’s vision and mission began to align after attending the PC(USA)’s 2013 Big Tent event in Louisville.

“It was at Big Tent that I found a greater calling on our faith and our denomination. I saw people who looked like me. I saw worship done in a contemporary and multicultural way, and I heard and witnessed leaders who promoted racial justice and transformation within Presbyterianism. This larger church that I felt I could be a part of helped me to better appreciate our local expression of church.”

Tracy took his idea for DREAAM to the mission committee at First Presbyterian Church. The church, upon hearing Dace’s presentation, also made the connection with the denomination’s larger goals — especially as they are now expressed in the PC(USA)’s [Matthew 25](#) initiative — and supported him with seed money to get the project off the ground.

DREAAM is also supported in part with gifts to the [Pentecost Offering](#). Forty percent of the Pentecost Offering is retained by congregations for local ministries, while the remaining 60% is used to support children-at-risk, youth and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Gifts to the Pentecost Offering make a real difference. “Our young people are not only our future, but they are also our present,” said the Rev. Dr. Alonzo Johnson, coordinator of the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People. “It is incumbent upon us as people of faith to make sure we are nurturing our young people in the faith and also nurturing them with our love. The Church is going to have to find ways to be vital to young people because they really need that right now.”

Let’s build God’s house by laying down a strong foundation of faith. Please give generously.

First Presbyterian Church Champaign’s Pentecost Offering will be taken up on May 23. 40% will stay local with DREAAM and will include both the boys and the girls who are with the DREAAM community.

Let us pray~

Teach us, as your children, God, and by your children, too. Gather us all in your house, that we might share all that we have with one another. Amen.

Our Mission Co-workers, Bob and Kristi Rice, will be speaking tomorrow, Wednesday night, May 12, 7pm, at our regular zoom gathering. Bob and Kristi will lead a discussion on their work in South

Sudan which has continued despite the pandemic! They have been working online just as we have. Bring your questions to ask them about the joys and challenges of the work they do.

The Pakistani group is gathering on May 16, 23, and 30 at 3pm in Westminster Fellowship Hall to view the PEB/Bunyaad Rug Cooking Benefit classes as a group. Anyone is welcome to join us, but you must sign up with us. We are taking donations for PEB because we would not be using individual registrations and this is a benefit for PEB scholarships. Contact Sallie if you wish to join the Pakistan group in person at Westminster Hall. (We are social distancing and using safety protocols.)

Peace,
Rev. Dr. Rachel Matthews, Mission Coordinator

We want to keep 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

We want to keep 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

CANAAN 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