



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

The Heart of Mission
June 1, 2021

The month of May was so full of celebrations, endings, openings, plantings and graduations! We had the Cuba Salsa and celebrated Pentecost. Looking back I see there are a few loose ends to tie up. I will start with some fun educational mission some of us experienced this month.

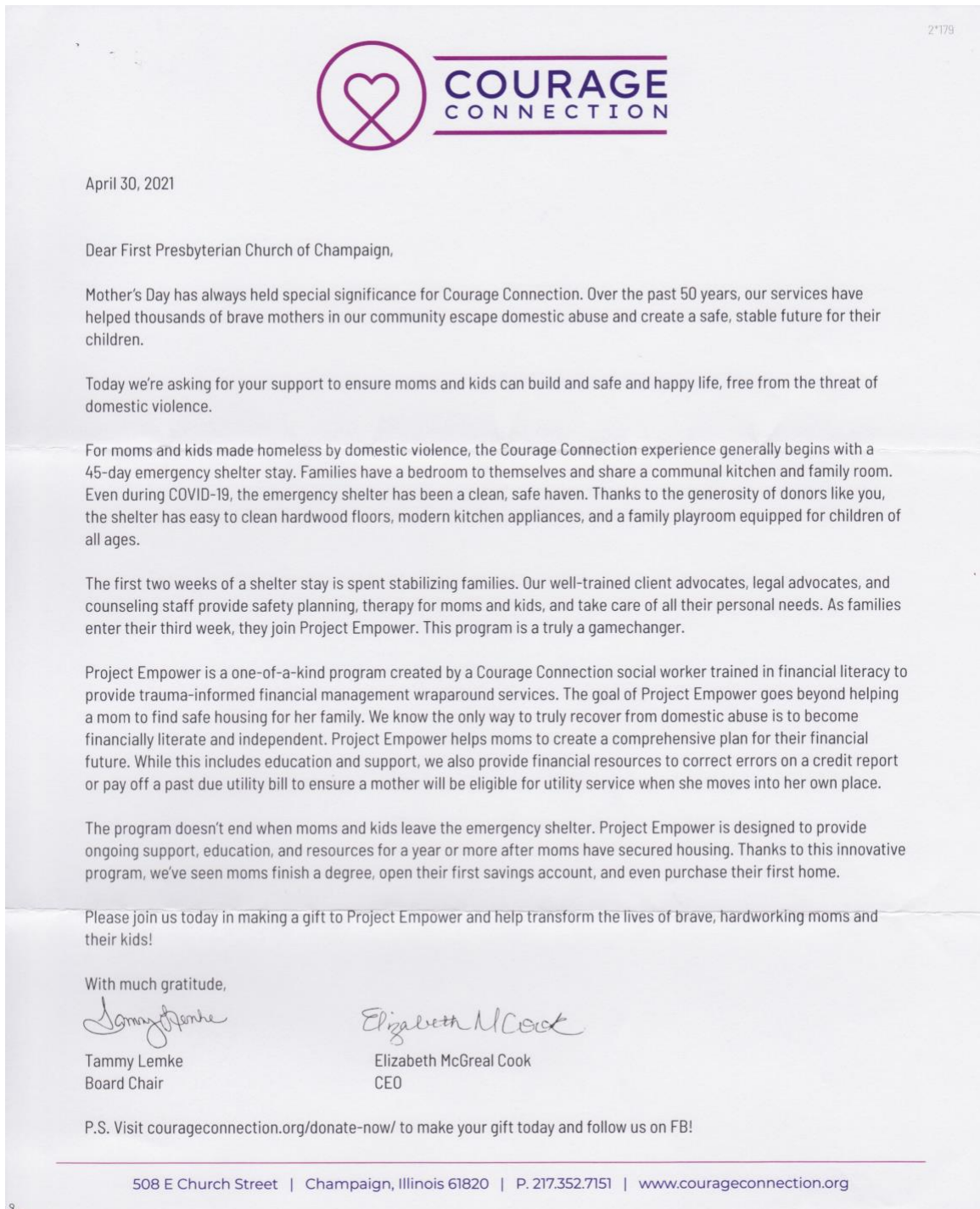


Education as the Pathway to Peace small group showed up to take cooking classes from Bunyaad Rugs and Friends of PEB to benefit our PEB schools and enjoy fellowship!



Courage Connection:

During May, a letter from Courage Connection came. It was very informative about how Courage Connection works and about a fundraiser they were having around Mother's Day. I've included the letter at the end. The fundraiser was Project Empower. We had too many competing events to highlight it. No worries, you can still give to Courage Connection!



April 30, 2021

Dear First Presbyterian Church of Champaign,

Mother's Day has always held special significance for Courage Connection. Over the past 50 years, our services have helped thousands of brave mothers in our community escape domestic abuse and create a safe, stable future for their children.

Today we're asking for your support to ensure moms and kids can build a safe and happy life, free from the threat of domestic violence.

For moms and kids made homeless by domestic violence, the Courage Connection experience generally begins with a 45-day emergency shelter stay. Families have a bedroom to themselves and share a communal kitchen and family room. Even during COVID-19, the emergency shelter has been a clean, safe haven. Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, the shelter has easy to clean hardwood floors, modern kitchen appliances, and a family playroom equipped for children of all ages.

The first two weeks of a shelter stay is spent stabilizing families. Our well-trained client advocates, legal advocates, and counseling staff provide safety planning, therapy for moms and kids, and take care of all their personal needs. As families enter their third week, they join Project Empower. This program is a truly a gamechanger.

Project Empower is a one-of-a-kind program created by a Courage Connection social worker trained in financial literacy to provide trauma-informed financial management wraparound services. The goal of Project Empower goes beyond helping a mom to find safe housing for her family. We know the only way to truly recover from domestic abuse is to become financially literate and independent. Project Empower helps moms to create a comprehensive plan for their financial future. While this includes education and support, we also provide financial resources to correct errors on a credit report or pay off a past due utility bill to ensure a mother will be eligible for utility service when she moves into her own place.

The program doesn't end when moms and kids leave the emergency shelter. Project Empower is designed to provide ongoing support, education, and resources for a year or more after moms have secured housing. Thanks to this innovative program, we've seen moms finish a degree, open their first savings account, and even purchase their first home.

Please join us today in making a gift to Project Empower and help transform the lives of brave, hardworking moms and their kids!

With much gratitude,

Tammy Lemke
Board Chair

Elizabeth McGreal Cook
CEO

P.S. Visit [courageconnection.org/donate-now/](https://www.courageconnection.org/donate-now/) to make your gift today and follow us on FB!

Empty Tomb Volunteer opportunity:

Empty Tomb has flower boxes that need to be planted. This would be an ideal group project. We had a group that helped some years ago. They are looking at next week to get everything organized and ready. If you are interested, please call or email Rachel right away.

Presbyterian Women install new officers June 3. Check the **PW News and Notes** for more information on the installation service. PW does a lot of mission in the church from Helping Hands to putting together Layettes for Empty Tomb and a whole host of service in between!

Traveling Mercies: Many of us are preparing to travel to see family and friends who we have not been able to see during the pandemic. Are there any special things we need to take with us on these journeys aside from getting vaccinated and wearing our masks when necessary to protect others? Yes, as you travel you are entering the mission field; remember who you are! You are a child of God. You have good news to share with the world! You have received the Holy Spirit! As such, travel with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things! (Gal. :22-23)

Peace,
Rev. 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

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



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