



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**



**The Heart of Mission
October 12, 2021**

We have a very close relationship with our sister church in Cuba, Iglesia Presbyteriana-Reformada Luyano. One thing we share with them is the daily devotional Su Voz. However, we have not been receiving the devotional directly to our email the last month and a half. The reason for this is complicated; the trouble had to do with the way we were receiving it. The bottom line is that Su Voz has not stopped but you will need to work a little harder to get it until I can work out the best way to have it emailed to you without it being unsubscribed so easily. If you will go to this url, <http://cubapartnersnetworksuvoz.blogspot.com/2021/> you will be able to get the daily devotional. If you save that url on your browser, you will make it even easier to get to without losing it. Meanwhile, I'd like to point out that Monday's Su Voz was particularly relevant for us during this stewardship season. (Thank you to Bob Kirby for pointing this out to me.) I have reprinted it here:

MONDAY, OCTOBER 11

A GIVING GOD

1 KINGS 3:3-15

If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him? (NIV)

Matthew 7:11

Solomon had a personal and reciprocal relation with God, as expressed in this passage through his offerings. Motivated by love, Solomon sacrificed thousands of offerings to the Lord; and that same night, God appeared to the young Solomon in a dream to give him something in exchange. And, as the text chosen for today says, "God let him choose."

Solomon's answer showed humility. As a new king who was trying to exercise his function, he felt young, not knowing what to do. Therefore, he asked for a understanding heart, which knew the difference between good and evil.

God, the great giver of gifts, was pleased with Solomon. This story demonstrates God's generosity, in that he not only gave Solomon what he asked for, but he also gave him what he asked for in abundance. Solomon came to be wiser than any other human. And God lavished additional gifts of riches and honor to Solomon. This description of God as the great giver coincides with other descriptions of generosity found in the Bible.

The great giver loves to give good gifts. Let us, then, cultivate these values of humility and genuine love in our relations with God.

***Prayer:** thank you God for your abundant generosity; I ask you that you open my eyes to see all the gifts you make for me daily, and that at times are difficult for me to see. Amen.*

Translation by John Walter

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Rachel Matthews

THANK YOU:

For your many gifts to the Free Little Pantry. The snacks we collected and that were not used for CROP Walk will be shared to the Free Little Pantry. The FLP is being used every day. We can be grateful it is filling a need in our neighborhood.

CROP Walk was well attended for such a rainy day. We will be collecting the final donation on Monday October 18, 5-7pm. I will be at the office if any of you need to drop off fundraising that you were not able to give directly to the online giving site. Church World Service is taking donations until the end of the year but our fundraising work will be done on the 18th. I will give you a report then or you can look online for the current totals

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/event/champaignil> . So far CROP has raised \$9620.05 in online donations and \$2625 in Facebook donations or reported cash and checks! And, actually, I believe the numbers will be much greater when it is all counted. Thank you so much for your gifts and energy. Another shout out to Sola Gratia for providing some fresh veggies for the walkers. Aren't we blessed to have such amazing agencies in Champaign Urbana that care for the earth, our bodies and our neighbors?!

ESL – Prayers for Jeanette Pyne as she settles with her family in her new home in Bloomington, IL. We will miss her. Prayers for the search committee as they look for a new director. Prayers for our tutors and students as they continue their studies!

Environmental Stewardship has several calendar reminders –

Thursday, October 14, 2021 - 3:30 - 4:30 Stephanie Jones (granddaughter of Katherine Jones) is a lawyer with the Environmental Defense Fund in Washington, DC and will meet with the

Environmental Stewardship Committee, invitees from Faith in Place and members of our congregation who are interested. We'll meet in the parlor at church. It will also be on Zoom so let us know if you need a link.

Saturday, October 30, 2021 - Adopt-A-Highway will start at 8:00 am at the church to clean up from Trunk and Treat and do our usual neighborhood walk to clean up neighborhood clutter. We could use some volunteers. We know, the 8:00am hour is early but it's designed to be out and about with as little traffic as possible. We want to keep everyone safe!

Late December or early January - Styrofoam pick-up - Date to be announced. Until then, Styrofoam is being collected in Westminster Hall at the south end near the coat rack.

TRUNK OR TREAT is back! – Sunday, OCTOBER 24, 5-6pm Come and enjoy this wonderful youth and neighborhood event. Trunk or Treat is back! 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 between October 1 and 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 to distribute the candies to the children. 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 this Sunday. 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.

Compassion, Peace and Justice invites you to attend a zoom webinar led by Ricardo Diaz, 6-7pm, and sponsored by the Education Justice Project. (Member ID: 880 6571 1896 Password: 18225) It's easy to be discouraged by the news on immigration and deportation these days. However, there are many inspiring organizations that are working to support immigrants, fight against deportations, and make our communities more welcoming. Here in Champaign-Urbana, Ricardo Diaz is a participant in many of these efforts. Ricardo will share both local and national efforts, including the new Champaign County Welcoming Plan and the results of the National Immigrant Integration Conference happening this month. He'll put our local efforts into a state-wide and nationwide context and describe how these efforts are successfully decreasing deportations and creating more welcoming communities. Ricardo is a principal at XPenn Consultants, which works with companies to create more inclusive

workplaces for Latino and Spanish-speaking employees and offers intercultural training. A native of Mexico, Ricardo moved to the U.S. at age 12. Among his volunteer efforts are serving as a board member of the C-U Immigration Forum and Champaign County Health Care Consumers; chairman of the board of the New American Welcome Center and for the Immigration Project ; and chairman of Urbana's Civilian Police Review Board.

And, if you are interested, CPJ is studying **Jesus and the Disinherited** by Howard Thurman. They will begin discussing the first chapter at their next Thursday evening meeting, November 4, 6:30 p.m. Consider these words by Thurman, **The Great Incarnate Words** by Howard Thurman, 1935.

*The word was Love,
Hate is the last great fortress of the weak...
Thou must not make division.*

*Thy mind, heart, soul, and strength must ever search
To find the way by which the road
To all men's need of thee must go.
This is the Highway of the Lord.*

Canaan Men's SAFE House wrote recently explaining that due to COVID concerns they are unable to host their annual Gospel Jazz Fest Benefit. SAFE House Ministry operates 100% from donor contributions through the Canaan Development Foundation. So, they are urging us to make donations by October 15 as if we were at the benefit.

CU at Home – In a recent newsletter from Rick Williams, the Ministry Development Assistant, shared some exciting news about addressing mental and physical health issues at the center,

We've been blessed for nearly a year now with the help of a team of caring medical professionals who have stepped up meet this challenge and bring health care services directly to our friends. On the third Thursday of each month, [Dr. Ashok Jagasia](#) and his crew provide a free health clinic here at our facilities. Dr. Jagasia is an Ear, Nose & Throat Specialist affiliated with the [Rush University Medical Center](#) in Chicago and [Christie Clinic](#) locally. He has over 22 years of experience in the medical field and has traveled throughout the world providing free health care to disadvantaged populations.

*This week, on-site health care services have been expanded to included a **telemedicine clinic** every Tuesday afternoon, providing our friends access to an even broader range of clinical services. Dozens of the people we serve have benefited from these opportunities to receive medical care in a familiar setting, provided by professionals who genuinely care about their well-being. We appreciate the compassion and dedication of "Dr. J" and his team!*

Mission Aviation Fellowship is inviting us to view a new movie called **Ends of the Earth**, to be in theaters October 18 and 21. A documentary exploring faith, passion and how hope emerges from tragedy, **Ends of the Earth** weaves together true stories of MAF pilots – past and present –

who strive with missionaries and local believers to take the gospel to the most remote places on earth. It will be in 700 theaters nationwide. Visit endsoftheearthmovie.com for more information.

Frontera de Cristo shared some news – *Our children's enrichment ministry is expanding! We are now working in partnership with DouglPrieta Trabaja to provide quality personalized educational, emotional, and spiritual support for 25 children (and their families) who have gotten left behind during the time of pandemic and are at risk of dropping out of school.*

In addition to the more traditional academic support, they participate in [DouglPrieta's permaculture program](#), cultivating food and learning to care for creation. Their families participate in workshops on domestic violence prevention and parental support.

Join us in gratitude for our wonderful Children's Enrichment team and in prayer as we seek to expand the ministry in partnership with the Lirio de los Valles Church and other organizations in different parts of the city.

Thank you for your prayers, words of encouragement, and [financial support](#) that help to sustain and expand our ministry with children and families, with persons in transit, with [coffee farmers addressing root causes of migration](#), and with persons in recovery.

*Peace,
Jocabel Gallegos and Mark Adams
Coordinators*

Friends of PEB – The three remaining schools yet to be returned to PEB were shown in a recent Memorandum of Understanding to still belong to the government, said Veda Gill in the September FOPEB newsletter. Since 1998, the government has returned 7/10 of the schools to the Presbyterian Church. The struggle continues and so do our prayers. There are still scholarships needed for the schools that are under PEB management so if you were thinking of supporting a student, please do!

Many of our mission agencies send newsletters and information. I cannot begin to put them all in this space or even on the bulletin board every time. If you are interested in reading more, or would like more information about an agency, please ask me about them. I can give you more information and point you to how to contact the agency. They all love mail and prayers and an audience to tell about their ministry.

We want to 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)
The new Caribbean Mission CoWorker who God is calling (Caribbean and Cuba)

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



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