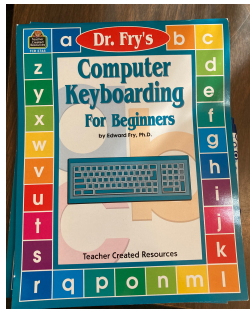




**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN**

**The Heart of Mission  
October 26, 2021**



**SAFE house** got some new books this week for their Lifeskills computer class that they are taking these days. Thank you, First Presbyterian, once again for what the Raindrop Offering is doing for them. I continue volunteering by teaching their Psychology 101 class. Such a rewarding experience!.

**Courage Connection**, our local domestic violence shelter, was in the news this week on WILL. The month of October is traditionally Domestic Violence Awareness Month. We want to remember that Courage Connection has been there and is still operating through the pandemic with all the special challenges that has brought to families at risk for domestic violence. The shelter always need full size shampoos and body wash, baby wash and diapers.

**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!

**Just to repeat the rescheduled event: Trunk or Treat is happening! Sunday October 31st at 4pm-5pm** we will open our church parking lot to the children of the community for fun treats and decorations. Hope you can make it. We can still accept more decorated cars! Contact Ms. Mindy at [mindy@firstpres.church](mailto: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 3:30 and set up. Not the creative type, but willing to bring your car and pass out candy? You can decorate your trunk with some materials the church owns. This is a great opportunity to show Christian hospitality to our neighborhood families!

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.

**C-U at Home kicks off several fundraising campaigns.** Rick Williams, the CU at Home Ministry Development Assistant, writes,

*Hello, Friends! Many of us have dealt with ups and downs during this past year, and many of us have had to lean heavily on family and friends to press through the constant barrage of uncertainty and turmoil.*

*Imagine enduring those ups and downs with no support system to lean on. Or without a sustainable income or with the hindrance of substance abuse or mental health issues. What a blessing it is for those who fall into that category to have a place like [C-U at Home](#) to come to and find hope!*

*It is no secret that this past year has been tough on us all. Still, there is always good to be found even in hard times. The men's and women's shelters are running smoothly and the Phoenix daytime drop-in center is providing resources and friendship to all in need. It's time to kick off the giving campaign for [One Winter Night 2022](#), coming up on **Friday, February 4**.*

*You may wonder, "Why should I give now?" [C-U at Home](#) is all about lifting people up, encouraging them to take the next step, holding on tight to someone in the depths of despair, and celebrating each day that brings a friend closer to a restored life. I would like to call on all of us to help lift up, encourage, hold tight, and celebrate this mission with a gift to kick off the [OWN 2022](#) season.*

*To help get things started, I am offering **\$15,000 as a "dollar for dollar" matching gift!** Now through Halloween, I will match every gift up to \$15,000! Please join me in supporting [C-U at Home](#) today to see your gift **DOUBLED!***

**What an amazing blessing!** To respond to this challenge, go to our [website](#), click on the **blue Donate button**, and designate your gift to [OWN 2022](#). Checks can be sent to **PO Box 8816 Champaign 61826**. Thank you!

**Canteen Run** wrote,

*1 Corinthians 12:27 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. Do you know all the hurt the homeless go through. I've noticed a couple not look at the homeless,, I saw a student who kicked one of our friends cup. (he didn't know I was there), when he saw me he apologized. I read about a church in a book that said that the homeless aren't welcomed there. You can't know what their thinking. Take a walk in their shoes, (I bet that's where it comes from).*

*We need:*

*Men's underwear sizes med-3xl*

*Volunteer coordinator*

*Someone to drive, this has to be approved by The Salvation Army, or try going to [app.better impact](http://app.betterimpact.org). \login.*

*We have a gmail account, it is [cucanteenrun@gmail.com](mailto:cucanteenrun@gmail.com). We have a Facebook account, please like us, or a Twitter account, Canteen Run@canteenrun.*

First Presbyterian Church Champaign received a special invitation this week from First Presbyterian Church Charleston to attend a special study they are having Wednesday, December 1 at 6:30 in their sanctuary. Rev. Mary Wright says, "I wanted to reach out and invite you to a conversation with Dr. Ryan P. Burge, author of "The Nones: Where They Come From and Where They are Going." This book is readily available through Amazon, and helps us understand why Americans are choosing to express that they are not affiliated with any religion. It is a fast growing group! The last chapter is entitled "What We Can Change and What We Cannot." First Presbyterian Church, Charleston is located on the corner of Madison and 7th Street. Our parking lot is at the back of the church along Madison. The elevator is located at the entrance that is marked with a large yellow sign. Mask wearing and "love" distancing are practiced!"

The success of our mission committees and other service activities at First has to do with the many small groups at First Presbyterian Church. In light of our small group ministry here, Sallie Hutton wrote this piece:

#### **SMALL GROUPS MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

*In August/September we rolled out all of the Small Groups identified in in our church for you to see and join. We identified about 35 groups. WOW!*

*With the August/September effort, several people stepped forward to join a group. Each person added a special talent and helped groups grow stronger. These groups are always welcoming new member so take the opportunity to explore your special desires or expand into new territories and come enjoy and learn. Join a group.*

*The "Small Groups Leaders Support Group" is here to provide encouragement; help with group "hiccups"; how-to's and glitches. Use us – email [Sallie.hutton@gmail.com](mailto:Sallie.hutton@gmail.com) 217-356-5765.*

*For your information – small Group Brochures are in the kiosk in Westminster Hall.*

***No one Can whistle a symphony; it takes an orchestra.***

Looking ahead to the **Angel Tree** in December: The **Community Mission Deacons** voted to encourage giving gifts to children at Kemmerer Village for the Angel Tree as well as camp scholarships to Camp Carew for them if people did not want to purchase and wrap gifts. The **Advent Offering** will go to funds for Afghan families resettlement. We will have more information about this next month.

Turning now to World Mission, here is the link again for all **CUBA PARTNERS** who want to read the wonderful devotional from Cuba, **Su Voz**

<http://cubapartnersnetworksuvoz.blogspot.com/2021/>

Haiti has been in the news a lot lately. So, First Presbyterian World Mission sent extra support to Haiti this past month. Coincidentally, the Presbyterian Mission Agency published an article about Haiti the day before the meeting. I am reprinting it here because it is so helpful to understand the Presbyterian presence in Haiti. Cindy Corell mentioned in the article is not a direct mission coworker with us but because we support Presbyterian global missions, we are supporting this ministry indirectly. Doesn't it feel great to know we do make a difference? I am so grateful for people like Cindy.

October 18, 2021 **On Between Two Pulpits, mission co-worker Cindy Corell discusses kidnappings, earthquakes — and Haiti's remarkable people** by Mike Ferguson | *Presbyterian News Service*



Cindy Corell

LOUISVILLE — Even as she's been working stateside during the pandemic, mission co-corker Cindy Corell continues to walk alongside her Haitian partners. As [Monday's Between Two Pulpits broadcast made clear](#), Corell's heart is very much in Haiti, especially following [Saturday's kidnapping of 12 adults and five children connected with a U.S. missionary organization](#).

"It speaks to the security crisis in Haiti. Kidnapping is a lucrative industry," Corell told Between Two Pulpits hosts Bryce Wiebe and Lauren Rogers. Wiebe is director of [Special Offerings](#) and the [Presbyterian Giving Catalog](#), and Rogers is project manager for digital fundraising. "It's not the first time American citizens have been kidnapped," Corell said, "but it's the first time we've had a particularly compelling story make headlines across the world."

For young people in Haiti, which has been plagued in the past few months [by an earthquake](#) and [by the assassination of its president](#), "there are no jobs, and their purchasing power has gone out the window." People 25 and under comprise about half of Haiti's nearly 11.6 million people, Corell noted.

"What fills in for a job? Gang activity," Corell said. The church has traditionally been immune to threats of violence and kidnapping because spirituality, especially Christianity, is held in high esteem there, Corell said. But now, "a vanload of foreigners driving through, it just looked like an opportunity," she told Wiebe and Rogers. "So many things in Haiti snowball. You have a totally chaotic and horrifying situation."

“I am in deep prayer for these folks who have just been kidnapped. I hope there is a resolution that brings everyone back,” Corell said. “But this is an everyday experience for the mothers of Haiti. They fear when their children go to school. They deal with everyday stresses of living in a tough situation.”

It is “kinship around the harm that we invite the world to see and engage and be a means of grace within,” said Wiebe, who has traveled to Haiti and worked with Corell there. “I know that’s what our partners have asked from us.”

Asked how she might preach on Sunday’s lectionary gospel passage found in [Mark 10:46-52](#), the account of Jesus healing the eyesight of Bartimaeus, Corell had this insight: The people of Haiti have long sought a Haitian-led solution to their political and economic challenges. Even though Haiti began as the first-ever Black republic, “it’s never been allowed to be in charge of its own destiny,” Corell said. “No one has ever said, ‘What do you want from us?’”

But that was exactly what Jesus asked Bartimaeus, she said: “What do you want me to do for you?”

“I think this is one of the most powerful parts in Scripture,” Corell said. “Jesus wants to know what he can do for each of his children. The people of Haiti are just saying, ‘Listen to us ... We will trust us with our destiny.’ If I were preaching on Sunday, I would talk about this precious connection [between Jesus and Bartimaeus] and how the story ends. He regains his sight and follows Jesus along the way.”

“He doesn’t become a shoe cobbler. He follows Jesus,” Corell said. “That response creates relationship.”

One of Corell’s longtime partners in Haiti, [Fabienne Jean](#), often tells people she doesn’t want them as partners. Instead, she wants them as a friend.

Corell said she still marvels at the trust given her by people in Haiti.

“People will ask my opinion about things. When I am wrong, they will tell me I’m wrong,” Corell said. “I am a white American who represents a large church and a lot of partners and friends. It would be easy for them to say, ‘We need to keep her happy.’ At [FONDAMA](#), [a network of farmer organizations where Jean works as executive director] I heard one time, ‘That’s the dumbest idea I’ve ever heard.’ They knew I wouldn’t get mad and storm out, but it takes time [to reach that point in a relationship].”

“This is a place,” Wiebe said of Haiti, “where our faith teaches us is due honor.”

It was Frederick Douglass who once said that Haiti was never forgiven for being Black, Corell said. “It is nuanced and complex,” Corell said, adding that Simón Bolívar, who played a crucial role in the South American independence movement, once visited Haiti “to learn how to bring freedom to his people.”

Ever since the Aug. 14 earthquake rocked Haiti's southern, less populated region, FONDAMA and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance have of course been responding. However, "criminal activity has really slowed a lot of the response," Corell said. Donations to PDA, which can be made [here](#), will go toward mid-term and long-term response, Corell said.

But when gangs slowed help following the earthquake, "guess who brought the aid?" Corell said. It was Haitians helping Haitians. "They gathered food and produce. Local markets offered food," Corell said. "People got on their hands and knees to dig their neighbors out, and it happens every day."

Asked by Rogers about her hope for the Church, Corell said it's that "we listen closely to Scripture and follow the spirit of the New Testament" and that we "look to and love one another and see within the other ourselves. Jesus is a great promoter of that kind of reflective theology," where one finds grace, mercy and love.

She also prays "we can find the energy to push for that mutuality we need and truly follow Jesus. The people of Haiti do this well. My faith grows when I am with the people of Haiti. Let's keep it simple. Let's steep in it like a teabag, and I think we will all come out of it better."



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**<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/my-faith-grows-when-i-am-with-the-people-of-haiti/>**

***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.***

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Rachel Matthews

**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

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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