



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

**The Heart of Mission**  
November 24, 2020



Thank you! These young men from DREAM are grateful to FPCC for purchasing this computer cart for their virtual learning work here at the church.

Holidays, holy days, are days set apart for special focus. They pass us by on the calendar like posts fencing off time. Those of us living in learning communities and those living close to the earth feel the passage of time acutely. There is a time for all things as Ecclesiastes says. This Thanksgiving Day has unique challenges. Many schools and universities have had shortened schedules this year due to the pandemic so our students are ending their semester this week and next. Others are caught in the land of virtual learning which has no beginning and end, no physical space. Many people are not able to be with family so making a day of thanks is difficult. And, for many of us who identify as white, as our white fragility is owned (as our recent study on the subject has encouraged us to do), we realize indigenous peoples never really owned this

Thanksgiving Day fence post to begin with. Do we dare celebrate? Yes, there are still things to be acknowledge and be grateful for. The psalmist urges all creatures to give thanks to their Creator. Add your thanks to the prayer from the late W. Sibley Towner in his book Prayers that Sing And Stir the Heart, Union Presbyterian Seminary, 2018.

*The landscape of our lives is strewn with your blessings, O God. We acknowledge them.*

*a Bible full of a rich legacy of insights about you and your work in the world;*

*a whole library full of books through which we are allowed to enter into fellowship with our fathers and mothers in the faith;*

*teachers and colleagues who push us, anger us, love us, and never leave us alone to creep off into fruitless corners;*

*fellow students in the prime of their physical and mental powers, beautiful in their persons, and eager for all that we can share together of our faith.*

*For so remarkable a landscape in which to walk day by day, we give you our thanks, O Lord. Help us to stick together and not get lost amid the blessings.*

*In Jesus name we prayer. AMEN.*

One last NOTE about holidays: This week listen to Pianist Leslie Thomas at our Wednesday Night Gathering Nov. 25 (tomorrow) at 7pm for a wonderful concert; a perfect prelude to Thanksgiving!

And, on Thursday Dec. 3, the Austin College A Capella Choir along with students, faculty and staff in Sherman, TX will be streaming on Facebook and YouTube at 7pm a Service of Lessons and Carols, Traditional Scripture Readings and Christmas Hymns and will be available afterward for viewing at any time. | [www.facebook.com/austincollege](http://www.facebook.com/austincollege) or [www.youtube.com/austincollege](http://www.youtube.com/austincollege)

Happy Thanksgiving and may your Advent Season be one of renewal and hope,

Rachel Matthews, Mission Coordinator

### **Our Mission Agency Announcements**

**Community Mission Deacons:** Dec.1, 4:30pm zoom, (combined Nov/Dec meeting)

**Advent Offering:** World Mission has designated the Advent Offering for the month of December to go toward Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (67%) and Luyano Congregation in Cuba (33%). There will be an online giving page beginning in December.

**Angel Tree:** The Community Mission Deacons hosts an Angel Tree every year for our community mission agencies. Although we will not have an actual tree for you to take an angel tag off of and replace with a gift, we are going to collect \$25 gift cards from Salt & Light, Target or Walmart for our mission agencies. You can identify which you would like your gift card to go to. Bring your gift cards or items to the church office Tuesday or Wednesday mornings before December 15 so we can deliver them to the agencies before Christmas.

Our agencies are

CU at HOME

CANAAN S.A.F.E. HOUSE

COURAGE CONNECTION

DREAAM

eEMPTY TOMB, INC

FAITH IN ACTION

JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY

THE REFUGEE CENTER

RESTORATION URBAN MINISTRY

SALT & LIGHT (for their staff)

Also for CANTEEN RUN we will be collecting gift cards or in kind items: large to 3x-l winter shirts, GLOVES, socks, LARGE-2 X-L MEN'S UNDERWEAR, coats, hats.

### **CU at Home:**

- Would you join us in prayer for **anyone in our community who is currently in quarantine due to having COVID or having been exposed to someone with COVID?** We pray for health for all those affected; both for physical health but also mental health.
- Please pray for **all of friends without an address that they would use the services available to them; including the shelters to stay out of the elements as the weather turns colder.**
- Would you also pray for **a friend who was recently arrested and will have an upcoming court date?** We pray that maybe this setback will be the catalyst for change in his life!
- BONUS PRAYER REQUEST: Please pray for our One Winter Night 2021 season which launched on October 19th, 2020! If you are interested in getting involved this year, please email me at [rob@cauthome.us](mailto:rob@cauthome.us) :)
- Praise the Lord for the **ability to have both the men's and women's shelter open for a full year (10/31/19-10/31/20)!** Over 630 different men and over 130 different women came through the doors in the past year!

- Thank you God for our friends at Champaign Asphalt and Duce Construction who are offering to match donations dollar for dollar up to \$25,000 now through December 1st! Visit [www.cuathome.us](http://www.cuathome.us) and have your gift DOUBLED today!
- Praise to Jesus for one of our ladies at the women's shelter who, after being in the shelter for a year, is now HOUSED!!!

## ESL Café Time

**What?** We miss seeing you and catching up like we did in person! This will be a monthly café time on Zoom for us to see our friends and tutors from other classes. We will be split into small groups so that we can discuss and catch up. This is a great opportunity to practice speaking in English. Bring your favorite hot drink and a snack to café



time.

**When?** Second Thursday of every month at 10 am. The first one is December 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am. The next café times are:

- January 14<sup>th</sup> at 10am
- February 11<sup>th</sup> at 10am
- March 11<sup>th</sup> at 10am
- April 8<sup>th</sup> at 10am
- May 13<sup>th</sup> at 10am

### Zoom Information:

Please email [jeanette@firstpres.church](mailto:jeanette@firstpres.church) for the Zoom meeting information.

**Faith in Place:** Just a reminder to our Green Team and all those interested in God's Creation: Join us at *Light the Way*, Faith in Place's first ever virtual Annual Celebration and Fundraiser! **Tuesday Dec. 8th | 7:00-8:00pm CT** Join at 6:45pm CT for the Pre-Party with [DJ Antonio Cesar](#).

At *Light the Way*, we will celebrate the resilience of our Green Teams and share highlights from 2020 when we reimagined what justice-focused environmental work looks like in the midst of a pandemic. At the event, we will raise funds for 2021, and celebrate with a very special announcement about the future of Faith in Place! To register log into <https://www.faithinplace.org/>

**Opportunity International:** Here are some recent updates:

1. Opportunity CEO Atul Tandon, recently named [Transformational Leader of the Year](#) by *Life & News*, offered his take on innovative solutions and leadership in the latest *Authority Magazine's "Social Impact Investors"* segment.
2. [Join us on December 2nd](#) for a lunch-and-learn to hear what's next for children as schools start to reopen in developing countries.
3. Our partner in Ghana, Sinapi Aba Savings and Loans, was named the "[Best Bank for Women Entrepreneurs](#)" by the International Finance Corporation!
4. Tune in to an [in-depth conversation](#) with Opportunity leaders to hear how COVID-19 is impacting our collective progress toward the end of extreme poverty.

**Friends of PEB** celebrates your generosity. They shared this thanks for scholarships from students. Now is the time for the PEB Scholarship Challenge for 1000 children.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyWODxKfhTk&feature=youtu.be>

**Salt & Light Ministry** will be participating in GivingTuesday on December 1 and we need your help!

By joining the GivingTuesday movement, you're proving that in times of uncertainty, generosity can bring the whole world together.

Here is how you can get ready to give:

1. **FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM.** We will be posting updates, stories, and videos, leading up to Giving Tuesday, which is also the last day of our fall fundraising campaign.
2. **GIVE.** You don't have to wait until Giving Tuesday to help us reach our \$80,000 fall fundraising goal! Click on the donate link at the bottom of this email or [HERE](#) to donate securely. Write "fall fundraiser" in the notes section so that we know to add your donation to this specific campaign.
3. **SPREAD THE WORD.** Encourage your friends and family to join you in creating a real impact on December 1 by sharing what our mission means to you and why you support our organization. Make sure to use hashtag #GivingTuesday and tag us so we can share!

**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)

Jo Ella Holman (Caribbean and Cuba) – And, for the mission coworker you are preparing to take her place.

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

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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



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