

July 2017



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

Pastor's Pen

BY CHUCK CARLSON, INTERIM HEAD OF STAFF
(chuck@firstpres.church)

As we enter July I am aware of how quickly actual summer is upon us. The five Sundays of July feature VBS. Thanks to all of you who are volunteering to bring Christ's love and the gospel to 30 plus children each Sunday. I appreciate the time, prayer, effort and dedication **Mindy Watts-Ellis** is bringing to the CYF ministry.

I am grateful for answered prayer for staffing in CYF. **Blaise Pascal** began his role June 26 as our new Associate Director for CYF. Blaise hails from DRC via South Africa where he recently lived prior to coming to Champaign and speaks both French and English fluently. He and his wife **Thethe** have three children, **Ryan, Audrey, and Blessing**. The family joined our church a year ago and attend The Gathering Worship service. We welcome him to our staff and community.

Our Spiritual Formation Adult Education ministry is offering a wonderful selection of drop-in classes throughout the summer starting Sunday, July 2 and continuing each Sunday through August 27. Each class will be held in Mae Chapin during the 10:30-11:30 hour. I encourage you to attend as you are able and support the instructors and this ministry.

I have enjoyed volunteering each Monday morning for the DREAAM House outreach. The dream **Tracy Dace** has had to reach pre-school African-American boys and follow them through their school years is being fulfilled. Its success has been a blessing and we as a congregation have had an important role in providing seed money through the mission portion of F-150. DREAAM is now expanding to Rantoul and will start there July 17. Its outreach involves the Summer Jumpstart Program serving 5 year olds and its Summer Camps serving students entering 1st-3rd grade. This summer's schedule is running from June 12 through July 14.

Over the past several weeks our high school students were in Hammond, LA, June 4-10 volunteering in flood recovery efforts with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Mission Possible reported June 18th on their work trip to Camp Carew. We have hosted our mission co-workers **Jeff and Christi Boyd** who preached and joined us at the International Potluck June 25.

continued on next page

Gospel Jazz Fest

August 27

SAFE House benefit

in memory of
Willie Summerville

3-7 PM

Hessel Park

Pastor's Pen Continued

We are soliciting input from all of you as Session seeks to formulate a Sunday morning schedule that honors our commitment to adult spiritual formation, Sunday School and families, and worship. A survey has gone out and is also online at www.firstpres.church/sunday_schedule. Continue in prayer for the Pastor Nominating Committee. They are a committed group meeting weekly and prayerfully as they act on behalf of FPC in search for a new pastor.

Four of our congregation are meeting weekly for the 50 hours of Stephen Ministry training. The class will graduate in September and add four new Stephen Ministers to serve FPC. Eric has recently attended the Stephen Ministry Leadership week in St. Louis and is joining me in leading the weekly classes.

As you can see, God is moving among us and leading us into a variety of ministry endeavors. I am grateful for **John Muirhead** and those who support our Transportation ministry. They pick up families and kids every Sunday. The Saturday Prayer and Praise service requires their service as well. They need drivers and those willing to ride along. We continue to pray for God's provision for these ministry needs. Thanks to all of you who have felt God's nudge and given your time and service.

As for my schedule, I will join Betty in Montana during the month of August and return for the month of September through Sunday, October 15, which will be my last Sunday on the pastoral staff. The time is moving far too swiftly. I cannot tell you the blessing from God I have felt being a part of your lives the past eleven years. However, we still have a way to go together and there is plenty God continues to ask of us all.

I pray that your summer will bring rest and renewal, gatherings with family and friends, and safe travels as you come and go.

I like Paul's words which put all things in perspective and set us on the right path; "Owe no one anything, except to love one another" (*Romans 13:8*). Of course, each day we have to parse what that means for us, but that is the joy of following Christ. He leads the way.

You Are Invited

Sunday Morning Drop-In Classes for Adults
10:30-11:30 AM Mae Chapin Parlor

Each Sunday is a lesson from the Feasting on the Word Curriculum (PCUSA) and facilitated by members of the congregation. You are welcome to all or drop-in when you can. No sign up is needed. Materials will be provided each week.

Summer 2017 Schedule

Date Topic/ Scripture

- July 2 Compassionate Welcome & Hospitality
Matthew 10:40-42
- July 9 Discipleship & the Yoke of Jesus
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
- July 16 Parable of the Sower & a Fruitful Life
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
- July 23 Paradox in the Parable of the Weeds
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
- July 30 Powers & a Prevailing Love
Romans 8:26-39
- August 6 Celebrating in Feeding the Five Thousand
Matthew 14:13-21
- August 13 Stepping Out on Troubled Waters
Matthew 14:22-33
- August 20 Conflict & Reconciliation: Where God Is at Work
Genesis 45:1-15
- August 27 Moses' Unlikely Saviors
Exodus 1:8-2:10

A Glimpse Into Our Past

Great change to the area came with the construction of the railroad, with the first train arriving in West Urbana on July 25, 1854. This brought many new residents to the area, raising the county population to 6,565 by 1855. With the arrival of the railroad, church services were then held in the new depot. Trains did not run on Sunday.

Prayer Corner



A Praying Church

Today the church faces opposition from those who want to silence the message about Jesus Christ. When this happened to the church in Acts, Chapter 4, they prayed and "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak God's Word with fearless confidence." Acts 4:31 from "The Message."

When we pray together, we get the encouragement we need to speak God's word to the hurting people around us.

May each of us find a group at church with which to pray.

The Votes Are In!

The final count of votes are in--Kemmerer Village finished in 7th place with 15,442 votes and has been awarded a donation of a horse from Lexlin Gypsy Ranch.

Thanks to all who voted, offering support for the equine program at Kemmerer. The 20 organizations receiving the most votes will each select a horse.



Mark & Kathy Schoeffmann (pictured on the left) help hang siding at this year's Habitat InterFaith Build. Our church supported the project through volunteer efforts as well as financially.

Jays & Concerns

We extend our sympathy to...

- The family and friends of **Bob Brunson** who died June 10, 2017. A Memorial Service will be held July 22 at 11 AM.
- The family of **Melissa Leichter** on the recent death of her father, **Robert Savage**, in upstate New York.
- The family and friends of **Richard Joy** who died July 3, 2017.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

*Dale and Ginny Tutje
would like to invite you to join them
Saturday, August 19, 2017
in Westminster Hall
between 2 and 4 PM
to celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary and
Dale's 90th birthday.*

*RSVP to the church office
217.356.7238 or info@firstpres.church*

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Sunday School Update

BY MINDY WATTS-ELLIS, DIRECTOR OF CYF
(mindy@firstpres.church)

The children finished a unit of study on Daniel on June 25. They learned that Daniel and his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego chose God's way despite the ways of the people around them, including the powerful king. God was with Daniel and his friends and is with us too. We can dare to be like Daniel and stand for God's way too.

Vacation Bible School has started! We are exploring God's plan for us at SonSpark Labs! We are learning that God's plan is to make us, be with us, for us to know him, to save us, and to love us forever. All of this is discovered through cool experiments, Bible stories, fun games, creative crafts, and yummy snacks. SonSpark Labs will be in session July 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 1-3:30 PM. The Vacation Bible School program is for children in pre-school through completion of 6th grade.

Thank you to all of you who responded to the plea for help with VBS. We have a full slate of volunteers and a great bunch of kids!

Contact **Mindy Watts-Ellis** to sign up at mindy@firstpres.church or 356-7238.

Our children would like to thank the following volunteers who gave of their time and talent to make Sunday School morning program possible for the 2016-2017 school year. If you missed receiving the thank you gift passed out in worship on July 2, please stop by the church office to receive a token of our appreciation.

Academic year teaching team:

Beth Born
Grace Rispoli
Pam Hadley
Jane Seiler
Claudia Kirby
Marjorie Wixson
Simao Nhoca
Judy Hendrickson
Beryl Forewah
Thethe Makiese Kidimbu
Noni Ledford
Joyce Wittler
Melissa Leichter
Naomi Rempe
Jan Wittler
Cathy Stickels
Eric Stickels
Lizz Pippin
Sabrina Hwu
Betty Hollister

Occasional Helpers:

Laetitia Kyungu
Kai Leichter
Bob Kirby
Destin Lembelembe
Jonathan Mnyampara
Dann Musasa
Dave Bauer
Chuck Carlson
Betty Carlson
Kristi Corbin
Amy Born
Laura Walston
Ginny Waaler
Sue Fischer
John Muirhead
Carol Musasa
Ferdinand Lutete

Special thanks to our Go and Serve Trip chaperones:

Lizz Pippin
Mark Schoeffmann

We have a new Assistant Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries! We are happy to welcome **Blaise Pascal Mfulama Zamena** to our ministry team. Blaise has

been a member of our church for a year and is a regular attendee at the Gathering worship service. He has a background in engineering and teaching mathematics. He and his family are recent immigrants from South Africa. Blaise has a real heart for youth, and he is eager to offer more program options for our Middle School and High school students. Blaise will have regular office hours on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Be sure to greet him on Sunday and introduce yourself.

We are currently searching for a new Children's Choir Director. Help spread the word to possible candidates. Contact **Joe Grant** for more information or for a copy of the job description. A copy is also available on the church website.

Our Church

Financial Update

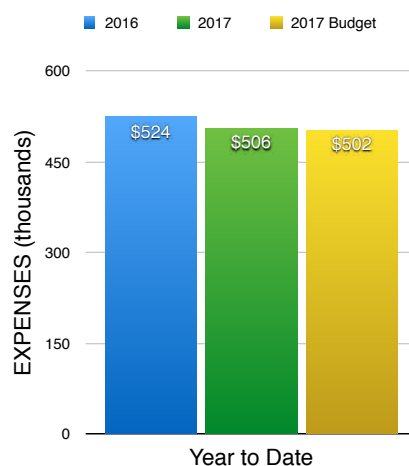
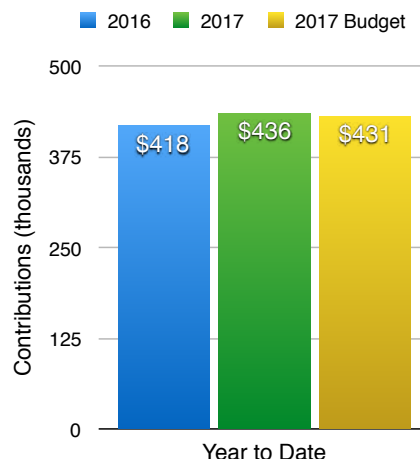
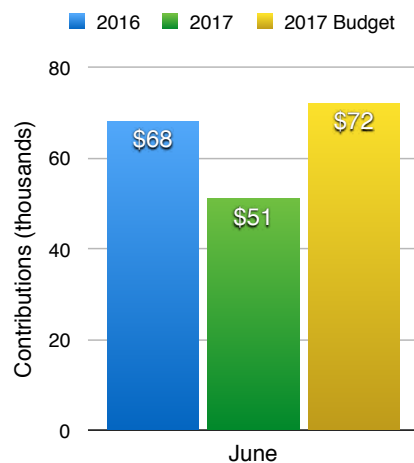
BY MARK SCHOEFFMANN, FINANCE CHAIR
(mschoeffmann@mchsi.com)

Contributions

Contributions in June were \$17K less than 2016 and \$21K below the budget at \$51K. Despite the dip in contributions the last two months, the Year to Date total continues positive in 2017. This exceeded last year by \$18K and the budgeted amount by \$5K. The increase in this year's contributions continue to offset the decrease in prepaid pledges (those paid in the year prior to the pledge year) for 2017 compared to 2016. These prepaid pledges are prorated over the year with 1/12 added to each month's contributions.

Expenses

Year-to-date expenses are \$4K above budget at \$506K but \$18K below 2016. Considering all sources, revenue exceeds expenses by \$31K which is \$31K more than at this time in 2016. This figure includes a \$29K transfer from other funds that was not made last year.



Dinners for 7, 8, or 9

BY GARY & LINDA PETERSON
(amer_swede@yahoo.com)

It is time to sign up 7, 8, or 9 Dinners. First Presbyterian has offered this fun activity in the past. This is a great opportunity for adult fellowship between our worshippers, neighbors and friends who might be interested in being a part of our church family.

Dinners will be scheduled four times per year: October-December, January-March, April-June, and July-September. Everyone will be placed in a group with other couples or singles for each of the dinners. Participants will rotate, so you will be with different people each time; although due to numbers, you may also be with some people twice.

Singles are welcome to participate as individuals, or if preferred, two people can sign up as a duo ...you'll be scheduled together for each meal (and for hosting).

Pending potential numbers, each couple or single will host one meal. You may plan a dinner, brunch, a cookout, or whatever. The host will provide the main course and beverage, and the others will bring a salad/bread, dessert, vegetable, appetizer, or whatever is needed as requested by the host. Please advise the host family if anyone has food or pet allergies.

You may sign up as a regular participant, or if you prefer, you may simply put your name on the substitute list. As part of the sub list, you might get a call from a host when someone in their group is unavailable. Individuals can be added to the substitute list as any time during the year. Anyone registering after the deadline will be placed on the substitute list.

Forms to sign up are available in Westminster Hall near the Welcome Center. Deadline for signing up is August 7. A schedule will be emailed to everyone, with dinners starting in October. It will be the host's responsibility to contact everyone in their group.

Looking forward to a time to dine with old and new friends.



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302 West Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Change Service Requested



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P: 217.356.7238

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E: info@firstpres.church

www.firstpres.church

Sunday:

8 and 9 AM Traditional Worship
9 AM Children and Youth Education
10:30 AM The Gathering (Contemporary Worship)
10:30 AM High School Youth Education

Saturday:

6 PM Praise & Prayer Gathering
(French-English Service) Centennial Hall

Pastors:

Chuck Carlson..... Interim Head Pastor, Ext. 213
Eric Corbin..... Covenant Associate Pastor, Ext. 214

Staff:

Kristi Corbin Missions Coordinator, Ext. 219
Ritchie Drennen Facility Maintenance
Patty Farthing..... Receptionist, Ext. 211
Robert Ferrer Audio-visual Technician
Marcia Franks Administrative Assistant, Ext. 210
Joe Grant Director of Music
Debra Miller..... ESL Coordinator, Ext. 235
Blaise Pascal ... Asst Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext 216
Chris Penny Facilities Manager, Ext. 237
Ann Petry Accounting, Ext. 224
Andrea Pope..... Contemporary Worship Director, Ext. 215
Richard Rossi Church Musician
Mindy Watts-Ellis .. Director Children, Youth & Family, Ext. 212

The newsletter is published monthly. Deadline is the last Monday of the month for the following month's publication. Send submissions to marcia@firstpres.church.