



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

The Heart of Missions: First Edition: March 2015

## Welcome

From Kristi Corbin, Mission Coordinator

*It is my hope that you find The Heart of Missions a meaningful way to connect to the church's Mission work. May you be inspired and energized as you serve God through First Presbyterian Church. It is an honor to serve alongside you.*



## Why I Go on Mission Possible Trips

By Charlene Bremer

I felt the call when Mission Possible first began in 1992. Eighteen of us went to Sitka, Alaska, to help at Sheldon Jackson College. We went not knowing what to expect, not knowing many people, and not even knowing what we could do.

I chose to work in bathrooms. In reality, this was plumbing work under the building, but I did not know how to do any of this. I was shown how to work with copper pipe, use a blowtorch, solder, and paste. I learned a lot.

Cultural events: Dale Tutje likes ice cream. The island ran out of such during the week. Only Dale would know when the boat was coming in with such. That evening, he led his "flock" through town to the ice cream store. Another evening, we experienced a cultural event, watching an authentic native Indian blanket dance. On another half-day, we rented the College's boat, and toured the island. We saw many mature bald eagles. Near the college was a raptor recovery center, where we learned about the work that was being done to the injured birds.

*To serve with Mission Possible  
May 17-23 at Pinecrest Camp and  
Conference Center in Tennessee,  
please contact Gene Morgan at  
352-0936 or email him at  
[morgan.gene@sbcglobal.net](mailto:morgan.gene@sbcglobal.net)*

Mission Possible is a time to work, a time to play, and a time to learn about others. We learn/teach new skills with each other, using our God-given talents. Each trip saves a camp thousands of dollars in labor for the work we perform.

I have gone on Mission Possible since it started, and have enjoyed everything. I have worked on the committee, shared with others, worked at camps, learned new skills, and enjoyed it all!

Order homemade pies at the Pie and Cake Sale on March 22 and March 29 in Westminster Hall. Pies will be available at the church on April 2nd at 7 pm and April 5th all morning. Proceeds support the Go and Serve mission trip to Cuba in July.

# ESL: Learning From Each Other

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By: Jan Sabey, ESL Coordinator

Did you know that . . .

. . . the capital and largest city of Azerbaijan is Baku? It is located 92 feet below sea level very near the Caspian Sea. It is a major oil-producing area. . . Baba Marta is a holiday in Bulgaria, celebrated on March 1? On that day everyone wears an amulet made of red and white threads to remind them that and to celebrate that spring is coming.



Friends From Around the World

These are a few of the many kinds of things we learn when some of our ESL students choose to practice their English by giving short presentations. We have watched a video about dragon dancing in China, learned a popular game from South Korea using short wooden sticks which are thrown (similar to dice) to guide movement on a board. We have learned some tai chi movements, looked at pictures of favorite Japanese fast foods, heard a beautiful Brazilian song of love and peace, and seen and heard narrations of many, many beautiful and interesting places from around the world – the home countries of our students.

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Our ESL classes are filled with learning but certainly not limited to learning just English. Currently our students come from about 16 different countries. They bring their questions about American culture and their desire to learn American English. They also bring the memories and mementos of their home countries and delight in sharing those with their classmates and tutors.

The weekday ESL classes continue to meet on Monday and Wednesday mornings and Monday through Thursday afternoons. Attendance varies day by day and week by week. We've had as many as 35 students during an afternoon session and as few as 2 students in a morning session. However, whether we are many or few, the students and tutors come together to tackle vocabulary building and conversational skills. Often these efforts present humorous moments and wide-ranging tangents.

For example, recently while discussing the words for different parts of an apartment building, a student asked if it would be fun to slide down the trash chute. Clearly, there was some more discussion to clarify the word "trash" and "chute". This led to a wider vocabulary lesson about several meanings of the word "chute" and its homonym "shoot".

These are a few glimpses of our ESL program. We are always looking for more folks to join our tutoring team.

Please contact Jan Sabey at [jan.sabey@firstchurchchampaign.org](mailto:jan.sabey@firstchurchchampaign.org) for more information about our program.

I often hear tutors comment that students raise questions that make the tutors pause and think about how much we take our own understanding of our culture and of English for granted. Idioms confuse. How strange the instruction to "Get on the ball and get this done" must seem to a new English learner.

# Dinner with the Boyds

By: Ann Stout

February 20th: It was cold that night -- I mean REALLY cold. As Bill and I walked down Neil Street toward the Boyd's hotel, I began to wish that I were back in my warm, cozy home. After all, I met the Boyds two years ago when they were here last. Isn't once enough? (Of course not!!) We arrived a couple of minutes early and waited in the lobby. When we saw Jeff and Christi coming around the corner, their smiles and greeting were so heartwarming that I actually forgot how cold I was.

We walked across the street to the restaurant where we met Liz, Betty, and Chuck and we were seated in the middle of the room. It was a little noisier than I would have liked but we just raised our voices a little and we managed just fine. So I asked each person who was at the dinner what impressed them the most about their visit with the Boyds and here are some of the highlights:

Christi has a huge commitment to improving the cultural practices that discriminate against women. One example is the tradition regarding identifying legal heirs in some African countries. Often, when a man dies, his family of origin is entitled to take all of his belongings (including house and furniture) leaving the widow and children with nothing. Slowly, women are being educated about how they can ensure their rights of inheritance. This work requires an enormous amount of patience because change happens very slowly.

***The Boyds are two of several PCUSA Mission Co-Workers our church supports. They are serving in the Democratic Republic of Congo.***

We are impressed with their true discernment in ferreting out root causes of systemic problems holding people back followed by their real commitment to helping people cope with issues and bringing about real change when it is called for. The Boyds have a deep investment to learning about the people they work with, an understanding of what the people want for a future, and they want to be a voice for them so they may reach that future.



## Fundraisers at Partner Agencies

- **April 23-25** Run for Salt and Light in the 2015 Illinois Marathon. Sign up at [saltandlightministry.org](http://saltandlightministry.org)
- **May 2 at 6 pm** ECIRMAC (Refugee Assistance Center) Fundraising Banquet with Silent Auction. Tickets are \$65 each and available at the Center (302 South Birch, Urbana). RSVP by April 23.



Would you like to submit a story for future editions of *The Heart of Missions*? Would you like your missions activity publicized in this publication? Please send your submission to Kristi Corbin [kristi.corbin@firstchurchchampaign.org](mailto:kristi.corbin@firstchurchchampaign.org).

Matthew 25: 31-40 (The Message Paraphrase)

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what’s coming to you in this kingdom. It’s been ready for you since the world’s foundation. And here’s why:

I was hungry and you fed me,  
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,  
I was homeless and you gave me a room,  
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,  
I was sick and you stopped to visit,  
I was in prison and you came to me.’

“Then those ‘sheep’ are going to say, ‘Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?’

Then the King will say, ‘I’m telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.’