



God involves us in the work of the gospel in ways we do not always realize. Maybe it's through one or more of our gifts that gets developed, or maybe it's through a relationship or network that has developed over the years. This week one of those ways became clearer. One of our mission partners is the PC(USA) Theological Fund to which First Presbyterian has donated for many, many years. You may wonder why we give to the Theological Fund. The Theological Fund is administered by the Presbyterian Foundation and goes to support many of the PC(USA) seminaries in the United States to educate our pastors and other church leaders. It also is used to support our mission partners in the world like the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon. NEST offers sabbatical programs for pastors in the US who want to deepen their knowledge of churches in the Middle East, Islam and Christian-Muslim relations as well as educate pastors. There is a video about NEST and our work there at <https://www.presbyterianfoundation.org/near-east-school-of-theology-nest/>

The school website is <http://www.theonest.edu.lb/en/Home> Not much has been posted since COVID19 as might be expected.

However, if you've have been listening to the news this week, you know where this is going, don't you? The Theological Fund has kept us connected with our theological schools. We share news. I received an email letter from the President at NEST and Professor of Systematic Theology, George Sabra this past week following the explosion on the wharf in Beirut. <https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/spaceimages/details.php?id=PIA23692> You see, the part of Beirut that exploded affected quite a few Christians, including the seminary. He writes,

Dear Friends all over the world,

This is just a brief preliminary message about NEST. More will follow.

We thank God that no one was injured at NEST as a result of the huge explosion that devastated most of Beirut last night at around 6pm. There were not many people in the building, but those who were escaped unharmed. The damage to the building is extensive. All 8 eight floors above ground and two basements were hit. Glass windows, glass doors, glass panels inside the building, as well as many internal wooden doors were shattered. Never has NEST been hit so badly as yesterday, not even during the worst days of the 15-year war in Lebanon. Of course, we are not the only ones. The devastation in the rest of Beirut is vast.

Our wonderful team of employees and workers are cleaning the glass today, but we have no illusions about being able to replace the glass and the doors soon. There is great demand on glass panels and

repairmen in the city. We will be trying to cover the shattered windows and doors with nylon for the time being.

The cost of repairing the damage will be enormous. We do not have an estimate yet, but it will be in the thousands of dollars.

We appeal for your help.

Thank you for all your inquiries and messages of support. I may not be able to answer people individually right now, but I will do my best.

God bless you and keep you safe.

*George Sabra
President
Professor of Systematic Theology
Near East School of Theology
P.O. Box 13-5780 Chouran
Beirut 1102 2070, Lebanon*

In response to the tragedy Jim Berger shared an article from Christianity Today with our World Mission Committee by way of a Facebook post about the situation in Lebanon. You might be interested in this link:

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2020/august/lebanon-explosion-beirut-christians-ammonium-nitrate.html>

The World Mission Committee at First Presbyterian Church Champaign is the committee in our congregation that monitors and supports global mission and oddly this includes the Theological Fund. So, please pray with the World Mission Committee as they seek to respond to this tragedy and pray for the healing of all of our brothers and sisters in Beirut, Christians and Muslims.

Peace,

Rachel Matthews, Temporary Mission Coordinator

More Mission Announcements:

Faith in Action - Faith in Action is a volunteer caregiving ministry. It is a home and community-based outreach program targeting senior adults in the Piatt County area. ATTENTION: Piatt County Residents. Faith in Action has joined forces with Community Action Piatt County to provide an emergency food pantry on Mondays from 1pm - 3pm. If you are in need please call Faith in Action at 217-762-7575 ext 2 or Community Action at 217-762-2421 for a pickup time. Located at 1115 N. State St. Suite 220 Monticello, IL.

Coffee & Conversation Continues Café y Conversación Continúa



**Aug 6 de Agosto:
Café Justo: Conversations and Virtual Tour**

**Aug 13 de Agosto:
Pastor Ramon Garcia: Pastoring in a Pandemic**

**Aug 20 de Agosto:
Saulo Padilla y Kat Smith: Asylum and Hospitality**

**Aug 27 de Agosto:
Howard Henry and Lee Ann Grace: Three Decades of
Volunteering with Frontera de Cristo**

**Sept 3 de Septiembre:
The House That Love Built: A Conversation with
Author Sarah Jackson**

**Sept 10 de Septiembre:
Conversation with a Recent Deportee who Grew up in
Douglas and is Starting a New Life in Puerto Peñasco
(pending)**

**Sept 17 de Septiembre:
Clase de Cocina: Como Los Tamales Casi Dividio la Iglesia
Cooking Class: How Tamales Almost Divided the Church**

**Sept 24 de Septiembre:
Loteria de Frontera de Cristo: Play Virtual Mexican Bingo
with us: Have Fun and Learn About the Life and Ministry of
Frontera de Cristo**

**Email "conversation" to office@fronteradecristo.org
to get the Zoom link**

Courage Connection: If you or someone you love need help, please call Courage Connection's Domestic HOTLINE (217)384-4390 OR (877)384-4390

Jesus is the Way Prison Ministry – The Annual Celebration-Fundraising Banquet will be online this year on Friday, August 28, 2020 at 6-8pm. There are some things you can do to join in and take part:

- JOIN US in watching our FIRST EVER Facebook Live event at <https://www.facebook.com/Jesus-is-the-Way-Prison-Ministry-1594891964064517/> on Friday Aug. 28th at 6pm
- Hosting a watch party at your home or church on Friday Aug. 28th at 6pm
- Watch and share the LIVE feed on your Facebook page for your friends and family to view on Friday Aug. 28th at 6pm -- (This is a GREAT way to help not only spread the message of JITWPM BUT also share some amazing testimonies of how GOD is transforming lives for HIS glory and help encourage others to know they also can be set FREE)
- Donate silent auction service and/or products
- Host a "Drive-By" to support the evening and drop off monetary donations, items for our blessing room, non-perishable food for our food pantry, etc.
- Give a love offering to "JESUS IS THE WAY PRISON MINISTRY" to help meet any expenses of this special event and the continued daily costs to keep the ministry going forward

Friends of P.E.B. The High temperature in Pakistan this week was 108 degrees, the Low was 75 degrees. Did you know that heat affects learning? The schools in Pakistan do not have the air conditioning systems that we do in Champaign or even in the hotter parts of the U.S. Heat affects learning by bringing about lower test scores, decrease in memory and ability, lack of energy and loss of focus. Research shows, says a recent newsletter from PEB, that students' ability to learn starts dropping at 80.6 degree Fahrenheit. Staying hydrated with cool water is critical yet many of the children there drink tap water that is too hot to even touch. Water helps your brain think faster, be more focused, experience greater creativity, better able to balance your mood and emotions, have a better memory, reduces stress, removes toxins and delivers nutrients. Yet when your brain is depleted with 1 percent of water, you are likely to have a 5 percent decrease in cognitive/brain function. This is very informative information from the principals at PEB! Keep the children in your prayers during this hot season and think about ways you can support PEB.

Opportunity International: Check out their Survive to Thrive Rapid Response Fund campaign: <https://us.opportunity.org/project/COVID19>

On Facebook they write, "In a matter of months, COVID-19 has reversed global gains towards ending extreme poverty that took two decades to achieve, leaving an estimated 2 billion people at risk of abject poverty."

“With economic activity slowed down, and even shut down in some areas, families living on day-to-day income from their small business are unable to provide for their daily needs. We are committed to keeping our clients and partners afloat so they can survive this crisis, and every \$10 donated to our Rapid Response Fund will help one more person receive the crucial services they need.”

Salt and Light: From their Facebook page comes these opportunities –

Being in quarantine gave everyone time to clean out their homes and bring incredible items to our stores. Due to the inability to have volunteers for several months, we now need your help in processing these donations and stocking our shelves and racks!

We are looking for teams of 4-10 people to volunteer, processing household and clothing items. This is a great opportunity to get together your youth/small groups, book clubs, families, etc., to serve your community safely.

Contact Lisa Sheltra at lisa@saltandlightministry.org to schedule your group. Thank you in advance!

Another way to support our mission is to shop for groceries and thrift in our stores! 100% of the proceeds support our programs and services to local families.

In addition to thrift, our Urbana store also houses a full grocery store, where EVERYONE can shop. Follow us on our new grocery Facebook page, where you will find recipes, mission highlights, and weekly grocery specials.

Feeding your family with food from Salt & Light helps another local family feed theirs.

CU Folk and Roots Festival: Part of what it means to be a neighbor is to learn about and learn to appreciate the diversity of the rich cultures that people come from. The CU Folk and Roots Festival celebrates the music and arts of the people in our community. It helps promote community. So I wanted to let you know that the CU Folk and Roots Festival will happen this Fall but will happen online October 23-24. For more about this see <http://folkandroots.org/>


“We are not canceling the Festival—the show will go on,” explained Festival Director Cody Jensen. “We wish we could see festival friends and supporters back at our favorite Urbana venues, but everyone’s health and safety are most important.”

“Stay tuned for a list of the bands, workshops, storytellers, and other activities that the C-U Folk and Roots Festival will stream straight into your home on October 23-24.”

Now in its twelfth year, the C-U Folk and Roots Festival is a not-for-profit organization

dedicated to promoting accessible art forms and building community in East Central Illinois.


Meals on Wheels – Meals on Wheels from Family Services Senior Resource Center is a mission partner for Presbyterian Women. Anyone might be interested their service someday. Here is some information I found on it.

**Family Service**
Senior Resource Center

405 S. State Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels provides home delivered meals to people of any age who are having difficulty preparing nutritious meals for themselves. You can begin receiving hot, nutritious meals in just 2 business days.



Volunteers will deliver your meals to your door Monday through except for holidays observed by Family Service. You have the option of receiving a hot noon meal or you may add a cold sack supper to be delivered with the hot noon meal.

Your meals can be delivered 5 days a week or you can choose fewer days. We know that from time to time people need to cancel meal delivery for a particular day. If you notify us by noon the day before, we can cancel your meal for that day at no cost to you.

Who's Eligible?

- Those living in Champaign, Urbana, or Savoy
- Those with short-term needs due to pregnancy, injury, vacation of a caregiver, etc.
- Those with long-term needs due to physical or mental impediments to be able to shop or cook safely

What Does it Cost?

- Hot Noon Meal - \$6.95
- Hot Noon Meal with Sack Supper - \$9.70
- Modified meal prices are an additional \$1

How Will I be Billed?

Bills will be mailed the 10th of each month for the previous month's meals and are due upon receipt. Bills will be sent to the client's home unless other arrangements have been made.

Where are the Meals Prepared?

Meals are prepared by the staff at the Hendrick House at the University of Illinois for us every weekday and the response of our clients has been overwhelmingly positive.

The **Hot Noon Meal** includes an entrée, two sides, ½ pt. 2% milk, salad, dessert, bread, margarine

The **Sack Supper** includes 8 oz. of broth soup, a sandwich, and a piece of fresh fruit

A **Modified Meal** includes specially prepared items for those who need diabetic, low cholesterol, or low sodium items. It can also accommodate those who want to designate particular foods they do not want included in the meals.

Call the Senior Resource Center at 352-5100 for more information or to start your Meals on Wheels delivery.

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)
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 Better Together
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



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

302 W. Church Street
Champaign, IL 61820
217-356-7238
info@firstpres.church