



The CHIMES

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights

January/February 2021

Choose love. Be the light. Change the world.

From the Pastor **Brave New World**

by Rev. Alex Lang, Head of Staff

I don't know about you, but as we find ourselves in a new year, I am more than happy to leave 2020 in the rearview mirror. It seems that the writers of *Back to the Future* knew what they were talking about when Doc says to Marty McFly, "Whatever happens Marty, don't go to 2020!" I don't know about you, but I'm hoping that 2021 will be a vast improvement over last year. This is why, to begin 2021, rather than looking backward, I want to look forward.

We find ourselves on the cusp of a revolution. It is estimated that the next two decades will bring about some of the most incredible technological innovations ever produced by the human mind. Some are predicting that these discoveries will be so dramatic that they will alter the course of human progress indefinitely. They will alter the landscape of how the world functions. From biomedical innovation to artificial intelligence to the colonization of other planets, what used to be science fiction is about to become a reality. I will spend five weeks talking about what these various advancements will entail and how each revolution will impact us as Christians.

I have entitled this series **Brave New World**, named for the famous book by Aldous Huxley. If you've never read *Brave New World*, it was published in 1932 and is a stunningly prophetic novel. Set in the year 2540, the novel anticipates huge scientific advancements in reproductive technology, sleep-learning, psychological manipulation and classical conditioning that all combine to make a dystopian society. What I find to be so fascinating is that a lot of what Huxley imagines in his novel about the future of the human race will become reality in the next two decades.


This particular series is important for us because I have noticed that Christians often have a tough time talking about these issues. The Christian religion is steeped in

ancient modalities, ancient ways of thinking that do not blend well with a modern world where science dominates our worldview. This tension means that Christianity is not particularly well positioned to deal with these technological revolutions and their implications for us as humans.

This is not to say that Christianity does not have anything to offer in this new future that will soon be upon us. In fact, quite the opposite. My goal is to show how the Christian faith still offers important theological, ethical and philosophical considerations of how to best deal with these



innovations.

Each sermon will start with an innovation that will fundamentally change our world. We will consider this innovation from a number of different angles, drawing out the ethical implications: How will this innovation help us? How will it harm us? How does it challenge the presuppositions of the Christian faith? Then we will turn this innovation around and see what the Christian faith has to offer. How does Christianity provide a perspective that could benefit our society as we interact with this new technology? As we explore each of these innovations, I think you will see that Christianity has an important role play in this Brave New World. 

Pastoral Care in a Pandemic

Rev. Judy Hockenberry, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care

As most of you know, I have served as a minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) for over thirty years. If you feel as



though I'm repeating myself you are probably right! It's hard for me to believe that those years have come and gone! Pastoral care has always been one of my strong suits. It is a privilege to stand with people in the midst of joy and sorrow. When Ken and I served as co-pastors in Louisville, KY, we used to

“race” each other to see who would get to hold the new baby first! I have always felt that sitting with a person who is near death is an extremely holy place to be.

In March of this year, my “ministry of presence” was shut down along with most other things in our world. I couldn't go to rehab centers and retirement communities to visit with people. I couldn't pray with those in memory care units or sit with them while their conversation wandered over years past. I couldn't show up at 6:00 a.m. in the surgery bay to pray with you before surgery. I did make a few home visits, but many of you were uncomfortable with that and to be honest, it made me a little nervous, too!

Finding ways to be present in a pandemic has been quite a learning curve. I often wonder whether what I can offer now is enough. I talk with colleagues about creative ways to be present. I have made visits in retirement communities and hospitals with Face Time. I have had long and painful conversations over the phone. I have written devotions as a way to hand hope out to each of you. I have ministered through text and email. I have even seen a few individuals in my office with our masks on!

The most important thing to me, as your pastor, is for you to know that I am here for you. In fact, TC, Alex, and I are all here for you in the best ways we know how to be present. Please tell us what you need. Please reach out to us. Please know that we continue to be bound together by the presence of God and the immense and unconditional love we are shown every day from the God who calls us “Beloved”! 📍

Blanket Drive

Beginning **January 18 through the month of February**, PW we will be collecting for the Blanket Drive. This year, it will be a virtual collection. The goal of Church World Services (CWS) is to build a world where there is enough for all. By providing a donation of \$10, CWS can provide a blanket as a vital and powerful resource for someone needing a little support, warmth, and encouragement. Please help those facing crisis by donating to the Blanket Drive. Checks may be made out to First Presbyterian Church (indicate Blanket Drive in the memo) and sent to the church. You may also donate online (select Blanket Drive from the drop down menu on the Give page). Please be generous! Questions? Contact Val Schuffler at valerie901p@gmail.com or 847-392-8545. 📍



Parents' Day Out into 2021

Parents' Day Out (PDO) is excited to be able to say we are entering our 43rd year of serving the First Presbyterian congregation and the community. The COVID-19 virus has demanded that PDO change many ways of operations in order to open our doors during the pandemic that has changed, so much, for so many. We have reduced our class sizes and are not using the building as we have in years prior to keep the PDO students in our own area. PDO does not allow parents in the building during drop off or pick up and health-screening protocol is followed each day. Everyone is wearing facemasks in the program and the children have adapted to this regulation much faster than we thought possible.

PDO has continued to change with the needs of our church and community. We are providing parents that need to work from home, a safe environment to bring their child. We are helping those older siblings that are learning from home a chance to do so without younger siblings in the area, even if just for a few hours. We are looking forward to all of the good that will come to us all in 2021 and to keeping all in the PDO community safe and healthy. 📍



New Secure Mailbox

For your convenience, we have installed a new, secure mailbox by Door 9. Please use this mailbox for items that need to be dropped off for the church staff. This mailbox will be checked and emptied on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. 📍

Flowers For Worship

We have all enjoyed the beautiful touch of flowers in worship even though we view them from far away. The Presbyterian Women Flower Committee wishes to thank all those who have faithfully contributed. Consider contributing to the PW flower fund so that we may all enjoy the beautiful touch they add each Sunday! Suggested donation is \$25. See below for two ways to donate. If giving online, when prompted to select a fund, select “*Sunday Flowers PW*” from the drop down. **Important:** In the “Optional Memo” line both online, or on a personal check, please add date requested and details of dedication. 📌

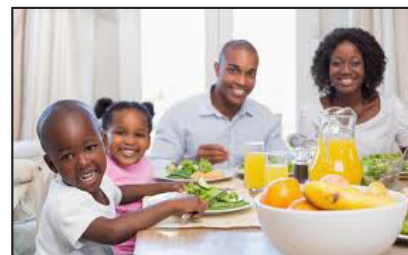


Thank You!

A Basket Full of Thanks!

You have brought a huge smile to the many families of the Christopher House and Firman House communities with your generous donations to the food drive. In total, we collected \$1,255, which was split between the two organizations. Through your donations, families could have a very special holiday and much needed food and supplies during this difficult time. Gift cards were given to the families and Christopher House provided each family a turkey along with the gift cards. Over 4,100 individuals benefitted from these donations. We are very grateful!

– Kathy Doering & Barb Larson 📌



How to Give Online or by Check

For all of the programs on this page and many others, you can give either online or by check.

To Donate Online – on the church’s website:

1. Go to www.firstpresab.org.
2. Click on “**GIVE**” which is the top line of the website.
3. Click on the blue **GIVE NOW** button.
4. Type in the amount, then choose the name of the fund under “Select a fund” add a memo and your email.
5. Click **CONTINUE**.
6. If you’re not logged in, it will ask you to log in, or continue as a guest. If you log in, your payment info will be saved to make it easier to give next time.
7. Fill out your Payment Details and click **GIVE**.

To Donate by Check – send a check to the Church Office made out to FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH and write the name of the fund to which you are donating in the memo.

Mail your check to:

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights,
302 North Dunton Ave., Arlington Heights, IL 60004 📌

Giving

Support the Ministries and Missions of First Presbyterian Church

At First Pres, we are centered on building the kingdom of God in our community and across the globe. Three simple phrases guide our work: **Choose love. Be the light. Change the world.**

Will you help?

GIVE NOW.

Thank You From Firman House

Your kind and generous contributions made it possible for many girls and boys to have much needed hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves to keep them warm this winter. The contributions given to the church through monetary donations were used this year to purchase these items and were delivered to Firman House in December. Thank you so much for your kindness! – Kathy Doering. 📌



Christopher House Thrive Fund Thank You

Christopher House sends their sincere thanks to all of you who so generously contributed to the Christopher House Thrive Fund during the holidays. These funds will be a huge help to families who face economic hardships because of the pandemic. When they struggle to pay their rent or utility bills because of job loss, the Thrive Fund can get them through those hard times. Thank you! 📌

Adult Education

Just Jesus

Wednesdays January 6-February 10, 2021

7:00-8:00pm via Zoom

Contacts: Rev. Alex Lang, Dr. Donald Kaasch


The Jesus of history and the Jesus of the Christian religion are often two very different people. In this class, Rev. Lang and Donald Kaasch will be comparing the traditional thinking behind Jesus with the information about Jesus produced by scholars of religious history. Sometimes these two sources align, often they diverge. The question we will be exploring is where is the truth? Can we ever know the real Jesus? How do we as Christians reconcile the different competing theories of who Jesus is and what does that mean for our faith? Join us as we work our way through the weeds to discover just Jesus!

Testimony: Remembering; Reclaiming; Rearticulating our Reformed Faith

Thursdays January 7-February 11, 2021


7:00-8:00pm via Zoom

Contact: Judy Hockenberry

This class is an opportunity to gather together and explore who God is and who we are so that our lives embody the liberating love and grace of Jesus Christ. 

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering provides Presbyterians a way to share God's love with neighbors in need around the world. As a congregation, we participate annually in this offering beginning on Ash Wednesday and running through Easter.

This special offering supports Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Presbyterian Hunger Fund, and Self Development of People. It touches people next door and around our world. As you are planning your giving for the first quarter of 2021, please include One Great Hour of Sharing. 

Wednesday, February 17

through Sunday, April 4

Third Annual Community Food Drive and Lunch

On Monday, January 18, Stone Catchers will host the Third Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service Community Food Drive and Lunch. Join Stone Catchers as they address hunger in our community. This year we will host a drive-thru food and household goods drive. In addition, we will serve a hot lunch to Journeys clients currently staying at two local hotels.



Get involved by bringing your donations of food or household goods to the church on Sunday, January 17, or Monday, January 18, from 9:00 am – noon. Volunteers will be available to provide a safe and contactless drop-off.

The following items are most in need:

- Beef Stew
- Cereal
- Fruit
- Jelly
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Meat Products such as Chicken, Hash, Ham
- Pasta
- Peanut Butter
- Potatoes
- Rice
- Soup
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Vegetables
- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper
- Kleenex
- Cleaning Products

If you have questions, please contact Michele Holifield at micheleholifield@firstpresab.org or Katy Allen at katyallen@firstpresab.org

**DRIVE - THRU
FOOD
DONATION
Event**

**Martin Luther King, Jr.
DAY OF SERVICE**

Sunday,
January 17
&
Monday,
January 18
9am - 12noon

Drive-Up. Donate. Help Others.

First Presbyterian Church
Dunton Avenue
benefiting Wheeling Township Food Pantry

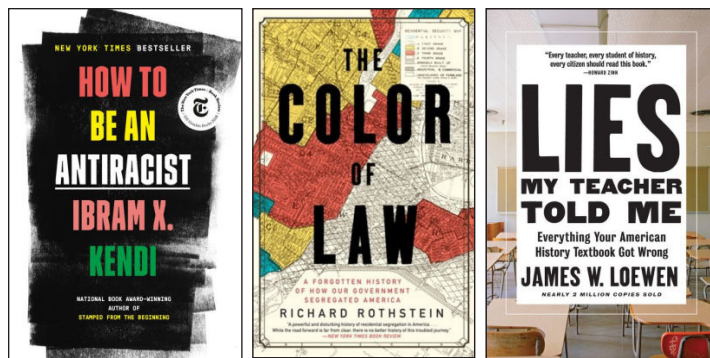
2021 MLK EVENTS

Anti-Racist Reading List and Lending Library

First Pres would like to offer you the opportunity to continue learning about racism in our society and how we can work towards more just communities.

How the Lending Library Works:

- Look through the list of books available for lending to you.
- We have multiple copies of each title available - consider reading together with a friend.
- Send an email to Michele Holifield at micheleholifield@firstpresah.org to arrange pick-up of the book you would like to borrow.
- When you are finished reading return the book to First Pres.

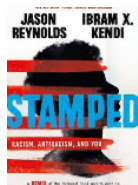


Borrow one of these titles, or many more from our large collection in our Lending Library.



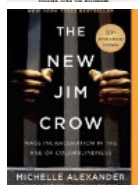
Stamped From the Beginning

Ibram X. Kendi



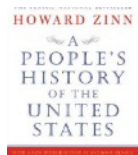
Stamped

Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi



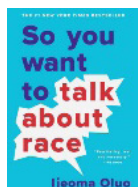
The New Jim Crow

Michelle Alexander



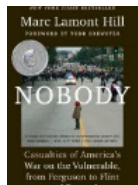
A People's History of the United States

Howard Zinn



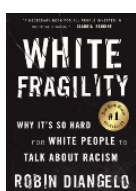
So You Want to Talk About Race

Ijeoma Oluo



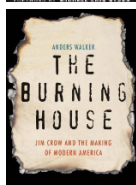
Nobody

Marc Lamont Hill



White Fragility

Robin DiAngelo



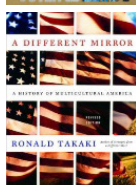
The Burning House

Anders Walker



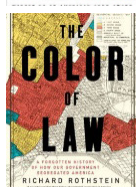
Blackballed

Darryl Pinckney



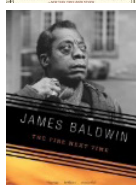
A Different Mirror

Ronald Takaki



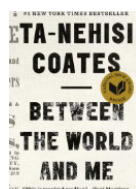
The Color of Law

Richard Rothstein



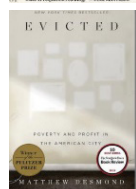
The Fire Next Time

James Baldwin



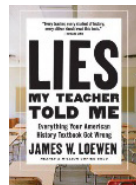
Between the World and Me

Ta-Nehisi Coates



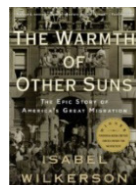
Evicted

Matthew Desmond



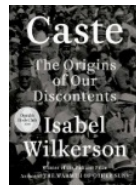
Lies My Teacher Told Me

James W. Loewen



The Warmth of Other Suns

Isabel Wilkerson



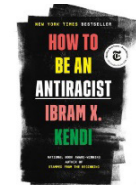
Caste

Isabel Wilkerson



The Condemnation of Blackness

Khalil Gibran Muhammad



How to Be an Antiracist

Ibram X. Kendi

Presbyterian Women Program

Through the Eye of a Camera

Travel the world capturing stories of faith with award-winning videographer, Tim Frakes. The February Presbyterian Women's Gathering Program will be held via Zoom on **February 24 at 9:00 am**. Hear about a women's church group in 1891 who became the first 15 women in Illinois to vote and much more. Tim has worked with Rick Steves and has produced stories with PBS and the Chicago Sunday Evening Club. All are welcome to view this program. Send your reservation by February 22 to Betty Launer at blauner2@comcast.net. The Zoom link will be sent on February 23. 📎



Presbyterian Women Circle Meetings January & February

Morning Circles 1, 2, 3

Start the new year out right and join us on Zoom **January 20 and February 17 at 9:00 am** to have a lively discussion on our study *Into the Light*. Have your morning cup of coffee or tea and discuss January's lesson, "Lamenting Life" and February's lesson, "Lament Over the City". This is a social time to share news and fellowship and see each other in person. Also, don't miss the Gathering, "Through The Eye of a Camera," a videographer's stories from around the world! The gathering will take place via Zoom on **February 24 at 9:00 am**. Mark it on your calendar!



Calendar

- January 19, 5:00 pm** Almost Everything: Notes on Hope - Evening Circle 7
- January 20, 9:00 am** Into the Light, Lamenting Life - Morning Circles 1, 2 & 3
- February 16, 5:00 pm** Almost Everything: Notes on Hope - Evening Circle 7
- February 17, 9:00 am** Into the Light, Lament Over the City - Morning Circles 1, 2 & 3
- February 24, 9:00 am** Through the Eye of a Camera - Morning Circles 1, 2 & 3

Evening Circle 7

Join Circle 7 on **January 19 and February 16 at 5:00 pm** via Zoom. The discussion will be on *Almost Everything: Notes on Hope* by Anne Lamott. Add a little fun at home and enjoy your late cup of coffee or tea and relax as you join in the fun and fellowship! 📎

Children's Ministries

by Katy Allen, Director of Children's Ministries

"Virtual" Kids Connect

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES RECAP

Staying Connected with Kids Connect

A small but dedicated group of kindergartners – 5th graders have enjoyed getting together on Zoom each Wednesday night for virtual Kids Connect. We've had a lot of fun engaging our creative sides in a variety of ways by creating masterpieces, building sculptures, and practicing geometry, just to name a few. Supplies are provided weeks in advance so that kids have all the materials they need for each night's activity. To the right are some examples of some of the projects we've done so far this year!

Sunday School – Our Journey

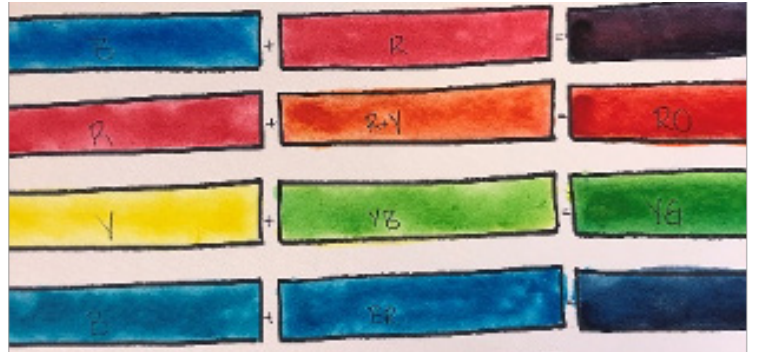
All programs at First Pres underwent a transition this fall in order to be responsible and responsive in the midst of our current health crisis, but to also continue meeting the needs of our different audiences. Children's Ministries took Sunday school online for preschoolers – 5th graders.

Our preschoolers, led by our preschool teaching team, share a song, a Bible story, and a short discussion each Sunday morning. It has been incredibly rewarding to see our 3- and 4-year-olds learning and growing!

Kindergartners – 5th graders meet each Sunday, too, for an opening discussion or question, followed by the day's Bible story and questions, and wrapping up with an activity or two. We have continued to learn and grow, too, and are making the most of a challenging situation. Sunday school might look different this year, but we still have lots of fun while learning about God, ourselves, and our world!

The Gifts of December

During a time when connections are more important than ever, Children's Ministries has worked hard to stay connected to First Pres families and friends. One example of this is the **Christmas coloring book** that was mailed in early December to every child in preschool – 5th grade. The coloring book included art from Illustrated Ministry and our graphic designer, Laurie Ruhlin. Both pictures and scripture brought the story of Jesus' birth alive in inviting pictures to color. Families were also offered an opportunity to create a **keepsake angel ornament**. Supply kits and detailed instructions were available for families to pick up. Children's Ministries hopes that these activities helped to brighten the dark December days and provide families the opportunity to spend time together. **We're looking forward to offering new activities in the New Year!** 📖



↑ Crafts, sculptures and a color chart created by our Kids Connect group.

← Sunday School storytime over Zoom.



The gifts of December, our Coloring Book and Angel Ornament ↓

PADS Update

by Michele Holifield

We didn't plan on having a mantra for our First Pres PADS Program this year. But as we navigated the challenges and changes to the PADS process this past year, it was helpful and reassuring to have this simple reminder: Just keep feeding people.

First Pres has had a long-standing relationship with Journeys, the nonprofit organization that oversees the PADS program in northwest suburban Cook County. For the past 33 years, many devoted and dedicated First Pres volunteers have made it possible to operate our weekly site, providing food and shelter for the homeless in our community. As 2020 began, we continued, as usual, to operate our Tuesday night site.


Then, COVID happened.

At first, we were able to keep our site open, adapting with social distancing guidelines like serving food from the kitchen and adjusting the sleeping areas. Then, when all PADS sites needed to shut down, we opened Fellowship Hall as a daily warming site where we offered coffee, snacks, and lunch. In April, we adapted again when Journeys secured two local hotels, The Red Roof Inn and Comfort Inn in Arlington Heights, to house PADS guests. We started providing individual meals each week, packing bags for breakfast and lunch, ordering dinners from local restaurants,

and delivering coffee once a week, thanks to a generous donation from Starbucks.

We continued this process throughout the summer and into the fall, adding in a monthly Summer Suppers meal. This yearly program is separate from PADS and is focused on feeding anyone in our community who is hungry and in need. Utilizing our church parking lot, we operated a drive-thru format to deliver individually-packaged meals and fresh produce once a month through September. Since October, we've continued our weekly meal and coffee deliveries at the hotels, but have switched from packing individual breakfasts and lunches to providing a weekly breakfast and lunch box for a portion of the hotel guests.

None of this would have been possible without the support of our First Pres community who have faithfully donated food, sponsored meals, packed bags and boxes, and made hotel deliveries every week for the past nine months. While it's often easy to dwell on the negative aspects of this past year, being able to continue serving our PADS guests has truly been a bright spot. Because of your continued support, our PADS program has been able to "just keep feeding people" throughout 2020 and into 2021.

If you are not already involved with our meals ministry or would like more information on the PADS program, please contact the PADS Food Team at padsfood@firstpresah.org. 

Thank you VOLUNTEERS!

- Kristi Adrowski
- Amanda and Greg Agami
- Kurt and Mary Ahlers
- Bob and Nancy Ahrens
- Betsy and Mark Allen
- Katy and May Allen
- TC and Ellen Anderson
- Richard and Betty Arnold
- Deb Artman
- Nancy Ashe
- Anders and Adam Benson
- Dave and Linda Berkow
- Wendy and Bruce Blanck
- Dick Breeden
- Lee and Dawn Bruce
- Kelly Campbell
- Dan, Laura, and Mikayla Carlson
- Tom and Susan Carroll
- Cerniglia Family
- Curt and Lori Chandler
- Courtney Childs
- Bill and Jo Christian
- Liza, Bob, Spencer, and Jack Churchill
- Chris Conroy
- Erin Cooney
- Sally Costello
- Ben Couture
- Kelly, Bailey, and Reagan Dean
- Kathy and Hayden Dieringer
- Bill and Cathy Dillon
- Sam and Jan Dix
- Karen Felch
- Cathy Felix
- Paula Fendius
- Sharon Ferdinand
- Kris Ford
- Jim and Marilyn Graves
- Ed and Cathy Harding
- Bob and Alison Harrald
- Don and Lois Hartung
- Amy Hempleman
- Susan Henderson
- Kim and David Hogan
- Ian Hogan
- Don and Ruth Howard
- Michele, Susannah, and Charlie Holifield
- Megan Howe
- Amy Huchthausen
- Karen Hughes
- Don and Nancy Johnson
- Bob and Dianne Kappus
- Jim and Ingrid Kaufman
- Lauren Kelleher
- Marty Kraybill
- Tom Krigas
- Landwehr Family
- Connie Landwehr
- Betty Launer
- Sharon LeFevre
- Richard and Marilyn Levinsky
- Rob and Nancy Lincoln
- Kristin Lindstrom
- Laura Liston
- Leah Lorenzo
- Mollie and Amy Lumsden
- Bob and MaryLou Mamoyac
- Joe and Katie Marr
- Larry, Cathy, and Grace Martin
- Jeff and Carrie Martinka
- Jim and Mary Mayer
- Matt McCormick
- Cathy Mataloni
- Menninga Family
- Michalczyk Family
- Pam Miller
- Jim and Jeri Monroe
- Donna Myers
- Jan Niemeyer
- Patty Noble
- Earl and Gloria Oak
- Pam Orals
- Mark, Phyllis, Alex, and Matt Orzechowski
- Tom and Nancy Pardo
- Steve Provancal
- Laura Puckett
- Eric Reiswig
- Patricia Richard
- Jan and Sandy Richardson
- Helen Ross
- Katy Rossi
- Debbie Rowells
- Amy Schaeztien
- Susan Schuffler
- Ed Slivovsky
- Amy Sonderegger
- Fran and Ross Spencer
- Frank and Jody Stanhope
- Shantelle Thomas
- Bill and Liz Thompson
- JoAnn Thompson
- Sara Thornton
- Jane Treppa
- Danielle Voyles
- Marc and Katie Washco
- Amy Welzenbach
- Bruce and Nancy Williams
- Al and Karen Wilson
- Chuck, Patty, and Jackson Yedor

Session Highlights June – November Meetings

by Laura Carlson, Clerk of Session

We have been reminded during this Season of Advent that this year has been like no other. I agree unequivocally! I joined Session at First Pres in January 2020, with the expectation that my role and responsibilities would be like those at my previous church where I had also served on Session. My time here has paralleled my prior experience in many ways; however, I could not have imagined the differences I would encounter and so soon after accepting God's call. For starters, I began my first term on Session at First Pres as Clerk of Session. This position was fitting in many ways yet daunting in others. When I was asked to serve as Clerk, I did what we all do when God calls us into action. I prayed, I talked to my husband, I shared with our young daughter what this volunteer position would mean for our family's "free time," and I prayed some more. I was humbled, honored, and nervous. I thought God would guide me, my personal and professional background would inform me, and my brothers and sisters on Session would walk alongside me as I accepted this new role. God continues to guide me, my background informs me, and my brothers and sisters on Session have walked alongside me and at times carried me through. I am incredibly grateful.

I imagine you have already guessed the second reason this was a year like no other! Yes, COVID-19. On day 62, Session, along with everyone else in the state of Illinois, was under a Stay-at-Home order.

As I reflect on the highlights of 2020, I am in awe of what we accomplished during this pandemic. We worked together as we navigated new ways to conduct business, exchange discourse, and maintain effective and meaningful communication with this congregation. Sadly, we had to cancel many things, including in-person, indoor worship, along with other programs near and dear to each of us. My heart broke each time we had to make those difficult decisions. However, even in the complexities of a pandemic with Stay-at-Home orders, social distancing, and masks, we celebrated knowing that we are united in Christ, we accomplished a lot, and we kept each other safe while doing it!

The New Year is approaching quickly, but for many of us, 2021 will not come fast enough. For the year that was like no other, we remember those things that will help us overcome new challenges and we rejoice in the moments that we cherish moving forward. We hold tight to God's love and celebrate that we are united by Christ Jesus our Savior. I have witnessed how our family at First Pres has worked together to help each other through these challenging times. As leaders of First Pres, I believe Session will bring many

new ways that we as a congregation and community, can choose love, be the light, and change the world! We pray for God to wrap His arms around each of us in love, restore our faith, and help us share the Good News of Jesus. Let us move forward in 2021 with renewed strength and hope and with remembrance that God's grace will lead us home. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (*Jeremiah 29:11 NIV*)

Recall, earlier this year and again in May, I shared some of the things Session did. Below, are some of Session's highlights from our June through November meetings. As leaders of First Pres, we remain committed to our responsibilities for the overall health and direction of this church. We pray with and for our community as we seek to lead our congregation forward faithfully in 2021. We ask for your continued patience and for your prayers.

From the June 8, 2020 Meeting:

- Session approved inviting consultant Susan Czolgosz to give a presentation of the CAT results to congregation via Zoom on Saturday, May 30, from 9:30am – 12:00pm. Session also approved posting Susan's Executive Summary of CAT results on the First Pres website.
- The graduate photo op in May expressed congratulations to our graduates; it was successful and a great outreach opportunity. Youth Ministries is proud of all graduates.
- Giving is on pace with last year, which speaks to the strength and commitment of our congregational spirit.
- Session approved a Juneteenth Service of Remembrance on Friday, June 19, 2020, at 7:00pm in the West parking lot; it was very well attended.
- Session approved the following statement on the web page of First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights: "*We stand for inclusivity, and we stand with all those affected by bigotry, injustice, and systemic racism. We hold fast to the truth that all of us are beloved children of God. We see you. We hear you. We stand with you!*"
- Session approved two Summer Intern positions: Pastoral Intern – Thomas Parrish and Media and Communications Intern – Conor Stanley.
- The Mission Committee donated \$500 each to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund, Greater Chicago Food Bank, and the Kenneth Young Center. \$500 was also donated to Congo schools.
- The Mission Committee donated \$175 to Salute, Inc. for their virtual Running Without A Finish Line fundraiser (\$25 entry fee for each committee member).

Session notes continues on next page

- Children's Ministries invited families to sign up to tend the Loaves and Fishes Garden.
- Adult Education Committee welcomed three new members. They are Bob Wendling, Liz Moses, and Sarah Beth Speciale-Peddicord.
- Women's Retreat that was planned for Saturday, May 2, at the East Bank Club in Chicago has been cancelled, but tentatively rescheduled for Spring 2021.
- A video version of "God's Honest Truth, Silver Linings: Positive Outcome in Difficult Circumstances", was broadcasted on May 6 at 7:00pm, which shared the positive impact of the COVID-19 on parishioners.
- New classes in meditation are being led by Bob Wendling and Liz Moses on the Church web. The first class was Wednesday, May 13, at 7:00pm.
- Vegetables from the Loaves & Fishes garden are being used for our Produce Market that provides free veggies to community members on Wednesday nights from 6:30 – 7:30.
- The Congregational and Community Life Committee invited all First Pres to participate in a scavenger hunt.
- Session approved the creation of a COVID Response Team/Task Force which would include three elders along with a trustee. Michele Holifield would serve as staff member.

From the July 13, 2020 Meeting:

- Session approved the Trustees' plan for construction/ expansion of the chancel area.
- Session approved outdoor services planned for July 17 and August 14, 2020.
- The Worship, Music and Sacraments Committee reviewed results from the reopening church survey and recommended indoor worship service remain closed for now. Session agreed.
- The Mission Committee collected \$3,909 for the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering.
- The Mission Committee collected \$1,025 which will be donated to WINGS to purchase school supplies. A big "shout-out" to the Deacons for donating \$500. Thank you!
- Session approved a virtual book club, led by Judy, for the book *Just Mercy*.
- The Mission Committee is discussing the possibility of a new mission with a group called YMEN (Young Men's Educational Network). This group was started in 1996 in North Lawndale, Chicago, by Mike Trout.
- Mission and Children's Ministries have partnered to distribute vegetables from Loaves & Fishes Garden on Wednesdays for those in need.
- Virtual Mission Factory and Vacation Bible School Home Edition were held July 5-9.
- Electronic Family Sunday School lessons are being offered on alternating Sundays in June and July.

From the August 10, 2020 Meeting:

- Session approved up to \$14,000 of a non-budgeted expense request for a Panasonic high-end camera kit to be used for film making and event recordings.
- Session approved outdoor worship from September 13 – November 1 at 10:00am, in conjunction with a livestream service.

From the September 14, 2020 Meeting:

- Session approved the COVID Task Force recommendations. These recommendations were mailed and emailed to the First Pres community on September 23.
- The Trustees reported that the solar panels were moving forward.
- Administration and Finance Committee reported that giving is down a little, but spending is down, too. Overall satisfied with operations, especially given we are within \$2,000 of last year.
- Kids Connect kick-off was on Wednesday, September 16, at 6:30pm. The kids will be meeting virtually on Zoom.
- Preschool through 5th grade Sunday School is meeting virtually on Zoom starting Sunday, September 20.
- A new feature has been added to our online worship - A Kid's Eye View. This is a short interview recorded over Zoom asking kids fun and poignant questions.
- Bible Sunday for our 3rd and 8th graders will be October 25. Katy and TC will personally deliver bibles to the students the weekend before and a picture will be taken of each student to incorporate into a slideshow that will be shown on the 25th.
- Children's Ministries with Youth Ministries will be hosting a "Trunk-or-Treat" event in the parking lot on Saturday, October 31.
- The Stewardship Committee planned a taco food truck and donut food truck after the October 13 outdoor service.

From the October 12, 2020 Meeting:

Session reviewed, approved, and welcomed all incoming officers.

Deacons three-year term:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| • Liza Churchill | • David Hogan |
| • Beth Drost | • Connie Landwehr |
| • Therese Haines | • Pam Miller |
| • Doug Hiskes | • Bill Thompson |

Elders

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Administration and Finance – Marilynn Graves | • Children's Ministries – Laura Grochocki |
| • Adult Education – Sarah Beth Speciale-Peddicord | • Mission – Kim Hogan |
| • Children's Ministries – Amy Lumsden | • Nominating – Tom Pardo |
| | • Youth Ministries – Marc Wascho |

- Deacons approved \$2,000 for funding a request to assist our PADS program. The funds are granted in lieu of the prior approval for outdoor chairs/cart which was no longer required. The PADS funds will be utilized to expand the weekly food boxes being delivered.
- The Personnel Committee decided on the 2021 Benefits offering to eligible staff, reviewed the 2020 budget in preparation for 2021 planning and approved the return-to-work policy for staff upon personal travel return from a designated hotspot. Performance reviews also were completed by the Personnel Committee.
- Session approved The COVID Task Force recommendations for limiting the duration of funeral or wedding services to 45 minutes.
- Preschool - 5th Grade Sunday School is meeting online.
- PDO is off to a great start with no COVID cases to date.
- Communications Committee is working with Sara Gorsky on updates to the website.
- Visioning Committee has been working with consultant Susan Czolgosz on strategic plans for 2021 and forward.
- Adult Education Committee formed FIDE, which is a collaboration among First Pres and the Presbyterian churches of Libertyville, Lake Forest, and Deerfield that is designed to provide a commonly shared online Adult Education. FIDE has agreed to present a weekly Advent class with each of the member churches being responsible for one week's program.
- Adult Education Committee offered the following lineup for Adult Sunday School: Pastor Judy will lead sessions on "A Christian Struggle with Suffering, Grief and Hope" on Sundays at 9:00am. Her classes will run from October 4 to November 8. Following Judy, Dr. Don Kaasch will lead classes on "The Babylonian Exile" from November 15 through December 20.
- Adult Education Committee offered the following lineup for Engage and Encounter: Michele Holifield will lead a five week series (skipping Thanksgiving week) entitled "The Power of Restorative Justice in Our Communities and Our Lives" on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm via Zoom. After the holidays, Pastor Alex and Don Kaasch will lead classes during January and February.

From the November 9, 2020 Meeting:

- Session approved a COVID-19 Task Force recommendation that going forward we follow the guidelines for COVID-19 as stipulated by the Illinois Department of Public Health. These recommendations were emailed to the First Pres community on November 14.
- Mike Noble, chair of Capital Campaign Committee, provided an update on Chapel upgrade that Session will vote on in December.
- The Trustees reported that the solar panels are waiting village approval before installation.
- The Mission Committee decided that 25% of the Peace & Global Witness offering that stays with First Pres will be donated to Stone Catchers.
- First Pres will once again offer volunteering opportunities to work with Meals on Wheels during the month of December delivering meals to homebound individuals. The new "contactless" pick-up/drop-off procedures will be shared in the sign-up and if people feel comfortable, they can sign-up to deliver meals.
- Mission Committee's 2020 End of the Year Giving was agreed to as follows:
 - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance - \$5,000
 - Presbyterian Women - \$2,400
 - Inclusive Collective - \$2,000
 - Chalice House - \$2,000
 - Concerns of Police Survivors - \$2,000
 - Chicago Survivors - \$2,000
 - Congo Schools - \$500
- Children's and Youth Ministries held the Trunk-or-Treat event on Halloween. A fun and safe time was had by all!
- Children's Ministries has put together some at home activities for families to explore and share what they are grateful for during the month of November. These are simple ideas that will hopefully get families reminiscing, talking and feeling grateful this holiday season.
- Youth programs (Confirmation Class, MSYG, and HSYG) are continuing with a hybrid model (half Zoom, half in person) until the weather turns too cold and then we will reevaluate.
- Mission Trips for summer of 2021 are going to be day trips or at home mission trip packets again depending on where we are with the pandemic and safety.
- The Wise and Sage Thanksgiving Dinner was cancelled due to recommended Stay-at-Home order from Governor Pritzker.
- The Congregational and Community Life Committee was planning an Advent Wreath Drive Through but had to cancel due to recommended Stay-at-Home order from Governor Pritzker.
- Stewardship Committee mailed the 2021 pledge cards. Reported YTD giving is trending slightly behind 2019.
- Bob Churchill will take over for Kate Ingemunson on the Endowment committee.
- The Worship Music and Sacrament Committee reported that the opening of the Concert Series will be a virtual concert on November 6 at 4:00pm. 🎧

The CHIMES

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**We are praying for these and many
other members in our congregation.**



SYMPATHY

Please join in extending sympathy to:

Dan and Laura Carlson and family, on the death of
Laura's father, Fred W. Langer

Jim Doering and family, on the death of Jim's twin
brother, John Doering

Carol Frieberg, on the death of her mother,
Mary Carol Frieberg

The Makeever family, on the death of *Pat Makeever*

Jan Niemeyer, on the death of her sister,
Dr. Peggy Garrett

The Perenchio family, on the death of
their son, Max

Ray and Janet Powers, on the death of
Janet's brother, Gary McCabe

Ray and Janet Powers, on the death of
Janet's aunt, Elizabeth Postell

The Truskowski family, on the death of
Jewell Truskowski

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Myrtle Jessogne, on the birth of her great-great-grandson, Rhett Austin Haneger