



The CHIMES

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights

January 2022

♥ Choose love. 🏰 Be the light. 🌍 Change the world.

From the Pastor **TOP 5 Things you need to know about God**

by Rev. Alex Lang, Head of Staff

As we begin the New Year, we are doing a series that I'm calling Top 5. This is a series that we will return to at various times in the future. This series is designed to answer the top 5 things you should know about a certain topic in the Christian faith. The first iteration of this series will be what every Christian should know about God.

The reason why this series is important is because everyone possesses a different understanding of what and who God is. Although Christians often assume their fellow believers are all on the same page, I can tell you as a pastor who speaks with lots of different people, this assumption is not true in the least. Depending on how you grew up and depending on your interactions with organized religion, you can think of God in a multiplicity of different ways.

Some people think of God like Michelangelo's painting in the Sistine Chapel—a white dude with a beard up in the sky. Other people think of God as being more like Santa Claus, watching your every move and keeping track of when you've been naughty and nice. Still others think of God like a chess player who's moving the pieces of our lives around to execute a larger plan for the universe. Perhaps you see God as kind and loving, while your relative sees God as harsh and vengeful. The list goes on.

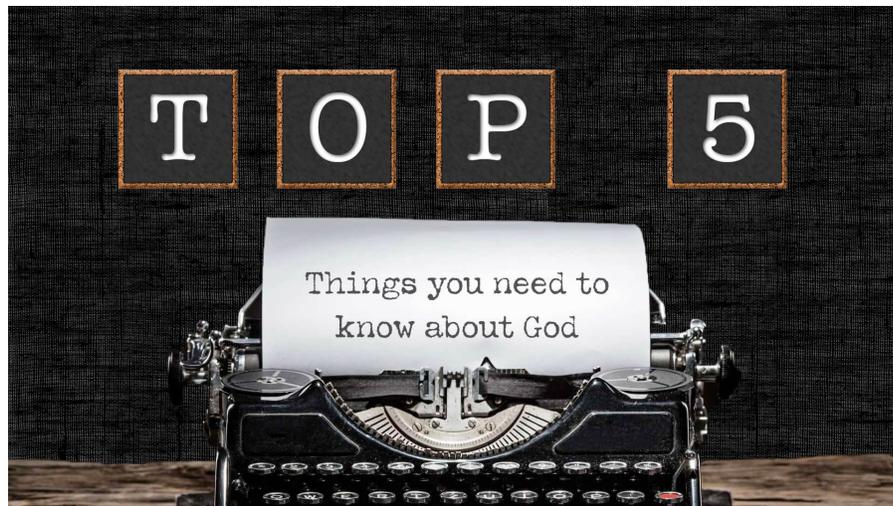
The goal of this series is to address the common perceptions and misperceptions

that are associated with the God of Christianity. The reason I want to spend time on this is because these misperceptions are causing people to leave the church and, often times, those misperceptions are perpetuated by Christians themselves. Furthermore, these misperceptions prevent us from experiencing the fullness of what it means to be a Christian

and the fullness of what it means to experience God.

Be prepared because this series will challenge many of your previously held assumptions. Although through these five sermons you will hear many familiar ideas, what will happen is I will be connecting them together in a

way that we've never done before. My hope is that you will walk away from this series with a deeper appreciation for why approaching the Christian God in a very specific way is necessary to our belief system and how the Christian God differs from what you may have assumed to be true about our God. It's going to be a great series so I hope you come ready to learn and grow in your faith journey!



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January Worship Theme



The premise of this series is something we will come back to over and over again, which is *what are the top 5 things you should know about a certain topic in the Christian faith?* In our first iteration we are going to talk about common misconceptions about God. These misconceptions cause people to leave the church because God doesn't make sense to them. Furthermore, these misconceptions prevent us from experiencing the fullness of what it means to be a Christian and the fullness of what it means to experience God.



January 2 | #5 God is Love

Scriptures: Luke 15:11-24; 1 John 4:7-12
 🎵 9:00 am – Compass 🎵 10:30 am – Chancel Choir

January 9 | #4 God Does not Cause Our Suffering

Scriptures: Matthew 19:16-30; 2 Samuel 21:1-6, 14
 Holy Communion
 🎵 9:00 am – Compass 🎵 10:30 am – Chancel Choir

January 16 | #3 God's Plan is Redemption

Scriptures: Genesis 41:1-16, 25-40;
 39:1-4, 6b-7, 10-15, 19-20
 🎵 9:00 am – Compass 🎵 10:30 am – Chancel Choir

January 23 | #2 Prayer Doesn't Change God

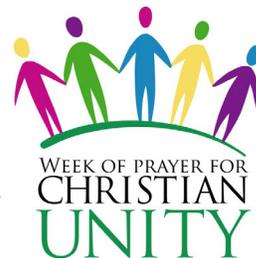
Scriptures: Genesis 18:20-33; Mark 5:24b-34
 🎵 9:00 am – Compass 🎵 10:30 am – Chancel Choir

January 30 | #1 God is Everything

Scriptures: Exodus 3:13-15, Psalm 33:6-9
 🎵 9:00 am – Compass 🎵 10:30 am – Chancel Choir & First Pres Brass

Beginning January 2

Submit prayer requests during worship, online or at the office then join us in the Sanctuary starting January 18 for the Week of *Prayer for Christian Unity* to take a quiet moment to reflect and pray for our world, our church, our loved ones, and all who need to be lifted in prayer.



Wednesdays @ Noon

Wednesday, January 5, 12:10 pm-12:45 pm

Andrew Orals, violin; Chris Urban, organ

We welcome violinist, Andrew Orals, who is a member of First Presbyterian. He is a graduate of Lake Zurich High School and a sophomore at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he is studying Computer Science and Music.



Wednesday, February 2, 12:10 pm-12:45 pm

Dr. Derek Nickels, organ

Derek E. Nickels is Director of Music at the Church of the Holy Comforter (Episcopal), in Kenilworth, IL, and has performed recitals across the United States. He holds Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degrees in organ performance from Arizona State University and a Bachelor of Music degree from Southern Methodist University.



Taizé Service

Sunday, January 23, 5:00 pm

Come to the Sanctuary to experience a service of prayer, music, candlelight, and contemplation as we observe the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*.



Taizé Prayer & Music



Donate throughout January
Thermal Glove and Sock Drive

Join **The Bridge** as they sponsor a glove and sock drive in the month of January. Donated items will be given to the **Night Ministry in Chicago** to provide warmth for the homeless.



Sign-up throughout January
Restaurant Walk

Our popular Restaurant Walk program returns for a second session, meeting at **Javier's**. Sign-up throughout January with meals taking place in February. Come to meet some new faces and support a local restaurant.



Wednesday, January 5, 12:10 pm

Wednesdays @ Noon

Andrew Orals, violin; Christopher Urban, organ



Wednesday, January 5, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Family Night Returns

Family Night returns for our Winter/Spring session. This free program includes dinner, adult education, mentoring classes, and programs for youth & children.



Friday, January 7, 7:00 pm - Saturday, January 8, 7:00 am

Jan's Jam

Event for middle school through college-aged youth is in remembrance of Jan Munz, a strong supporter of our youth program. An overnight event via bus where we visit many fun, local hotspots for laser tag, roller skating, trampoline time, gaming, & more!



Saturday, January 8, 9:30 am

Undecorate the Church

All are invited to join the effort to take down the wonderful decorations and put them away for next year. Gather in the Narthex.



Sunday, January 16 – Monday, January 17

Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Day of Service

Stone Catchers will be collecting nonperishable food to donate to local food pantries in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. You may drop donations off on Sunday during regular church hours or on Monday by pulling up to Door 1 on Dunton Avenue.



Tuesday, January 18 – Tuesday, January 25

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Join Christians around the world in observing the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Starting Sunday, January 2, submit prayer requests in worship, online, or at the church office. Come to the Sanctuary January 18 - 23 to pray over the submitted requests.



Sunday, January 23, 5:00 pm

Taize Service

Come to the Sanctuary to experience a service of prayer, music, candlelight, and contemplation as we observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Family NIGHT

Family Night returns from our break for the holidays on Wednesday, January 5. We look forward to seeing you there.

Weekly Schedule

Dinner for all ages

6:00 - 7:00 pm

Fellowship Hall, enter through Door 4, 7, or 8

Children's Choir (K-5th grade)

6:30 - 7:00 pm | Sanctuary

Classes & Programs

7:00 - 8:00 pm



Adult Education

GOD TALK: HOW OTHER FAITHS TALK ABOUT GOD

Wednesdays, January 5 - 26

7:00 pm / Sanctuary / *Contact: Alex Lang*

Read more about this class on page 10.

Career Planning Course

Wednesdays, February 2, 9, 16, 23, and March 9

7:00 pm / Room 102-104 /

Contact: CTR@firstpresah.org



This five-week class covers the most important cornerstones of your job search or career journey, including self-assessment, budgeting, resume building, marketing, networking, interview preparation, and negotiations. Whether you're on the hunt for a new job or seeking a change in your career path, you don't have to face these challenges alone. Sign up now! Register by January 31.

Children And Youth

Kids Connect (K-5) and MSYG (Middle School)



Restaurant Walk Returns!

SIGN-UP SUNDAY MORNINGS OR ONLINE

Our popular Restaurant Walk program returns for a second session, meeting at Javier's. Come to meet some new friends and support a local restaurant. Sign-up on Sunday morning or with the QR code below.

MEALTIMES

Tuesday, February 1, 6:00 pm

Thursday, February 10, 6:00 pm

Sunday, February 13, 12:00 pm

Saturday, February 19, 12:00 pm

Sunday, February 20, 6:00 pm
(this session is perfect for those dropping youth off for youth group)

Sunday, February 27, 12:00 pm



Scan to Sign up for Restaurant Walk



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Join us January 18-23

The Biblical text is Matthew 2:1-12, the story of the Magi and the Bethlehem star.

The Star is meant to bring hope, an indication of God’s loving presence for all humanity. Commentators have traditionally seen in the figures of the Magi a symbol of the diversity of peoples known at that time, and a sign of the universality of the divine call which appears in the light of the star shining from the east, and in the Magi’s eager search for the new-born king, all humanity’s hunger for truth, goodness, and beauty. The Magi reveal to us the unity of all nations desired by God. The COVID-19 global pandemic, the ensuing economic crisis, and the failure of political, economic and social structures to protect the weakest and most vulnerable, have underlined the global need for a light to shine in the darkness.

After encountering the Savior and worshipping him together, the Magi return to their countries by a different way, having been warned in a dream. Similarly, the communion we share in our prayer together must inspire us to return to our lives, our churches and our world by new ways. Serving the Gospel today requires a commitment to defending human dignity, especially in the poorest, the weakest and those marginalized. Churches need to cooperate to provide relief to the afflicted, to welcome the

displaced, to relieve the burdened, and to build a just and honest society, to work together to build a future in which all human beings can experience life, peace, justice, and love.

After all the hubbub of the holidays, take a quiet moment to reflect and pray for our world, our church, our loved ones, and all who need to be lifted up in prayer.

There are three ways for you to submit a prayer request.

1. Cards will be available in the pews, place in offering plate.
2. Use the tear-off card below and return to the office
3. Online - firstpresah.org/prayer

Please submit prayer requests by January 18

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE SANCTUARY TO PRAY THE FOLLOWING DATES/TIMES. PLEASE ENTER THROUGH THE ST. JAMES ENTRANCE.

- Tuesday, January 18, 9:00 am – 8:00 pm
- Wednesday, January 19, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
- Thursday, January 20, 9:00 am – 8:00 pm
- Friday, January 21, 9:00 am – 8:00 pm
- Saturday, January 22, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Be sure to join us on Sunday, January 23 at 5:00 pm for a Taize service of prayer, music, candlelight, and contemplation to end our observance of the week of prayer.



As we observe the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* with Christians all over the world, we ask that you submit prayer requests. You can address a specific concern or, if you wish, simply to be remembered. **Join us in the Sanctuary January 18-23 to pray for our friends.**



*Jesus assures us:
 “Ask, and ye shall receive;
 Seek, and ye shall find;
 Knock, and it shall be opened.”
 We ask, seek, knock through our prayers*

Prayer for: _____

Please remember me/us. _____

Specific concern or request: _____

Place card in offering plate or turn in to church office before Tuesday, January 18.

Men's Monday Morning Bible Study Christmas Breakfast Recap

Every Monday at 8:00 am, the Men's Monday Morning Bible Study meets in the church Parlor. There's a bowl on the table into which each throws a few dollars. That is deposited with the church and supports Scout Troop 32. Each year, typically the first Saturday in December, Men's Monday Morning Bible Study hosts a Christmas breakfast. It's the best of all worlds – family members cook, the Scouts serve, and we enjoy. This year's turnout was especially large because the entire congregation was included. Following the breakfast there was a sing along led by Ken Hockenberry with Chris Urban on the piano. Please think about joining us next year.



CAROLS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Chancel Choir, Chancel Handbell Choir, Men's Chorus and orchestra provided a wonderful concert on December 12, of seasonal favorites to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This year, the concert shared carols from around the world. Music from Scotland, Ireland, England, Spain, France, Italy, Russia, Ukraine, Austria the Caribbean and the United States was presented.

Join us for the next concert when Organ Fest Goes to the Movies on February 13.



Praise and Thanksgiving

A Spirit of Thanksgiving was Alive and Well on Sunday Afternoon, November 21

The evening started with Praise and Thanksgiving, a rousing program of music for brass and organ at 4:00 pm. This concert was made possible by the talents of our own member musicians: Eric Allen & Colin Stanhope, trumpet; Courtney Lewis, Phil Lewis & Joan Morrone, horn; Kevin Carroll and Todd Smith, trombone; Pam Orals, piano; and Adam Stanhope, percussion.



Then the evening moved on to the Wise & Sage Dinner for those 60+ hosted by our youth. In all, ninety-six people attended the dinner that was hosted by twenty-two youth, four college students and eight adults. In all we served six turkeys (twenty-four pounds each) with all the fixings!



Children's Ministries

The season of Advent was one of anticipation and excitement for the children of First Pres. We were delighted to participate in the traditional hanging of the greens and to help adorn the Sanctuary with greens and candles on the first Sunday of Advent. It was so fun to enter the Sanctuary with arms full and eyes wide!

We also enjoyed exploring a variety of nativity sets and noticed how similar and yet unique each scene is. Children's Ministries was given the gift of a number of beautiful nativity sets a few years ago, and each year they are treasured by our Sunday school children during Advent. Our K-5th graders continued this year's theme of practicing by learning about the Advent themes of practicing courage, trust, patience, and love.

Our preschoolers were eager to learn about the birth of Jesus each week during Advent. What fun it is to introduce our 3 & 4-year-olds to the themes of hope, peace, joy, & love.

Parenting class in February

Children's Ministries and First Pres PDO & Preschool are teaming up to offer four workshops for parents of children of all ages. Two workshops will deal specifically with issues related to babies and toddlers, and two will focus on issues relevant to parents of elementaries, tweens, and teens.

We are excited to welcome experts in their fields to share insights, answer questions, and help parents navigate the ups and downs of parenting. Classes will be held Wednesday evenings during the education hour of Family Night beginning February 2, 7:00-8:00 pm. All are welcome.

For more information, please contact Katy Allen at katyallen@firstpresah.org.

Nursery Returning to Red Room

Beginning on Sunday, January 2, our Sunday morning nursery care will return to the Red Room, located on the main floor of the CE Wing. Nursery care is available from 8:45 am - 11:45 am on Sunday mornings.

Youth Ministries Jan's Jam - Jan 7

The Youth Ministries annual Jan's Jam is coming up, from Friday, January 7, at 7:00 pm through Saturday, January 8, at 7:00 am. Youth from 6th grade through college will be invited to participate in this Bus Lock In, where we go to several different fun locations throughout the evening. Past years have included K1 Speed, trampoline parks, skating rinks, laser tag, GameWorks, The Main Event, and much more. Make sure to mark your calendars and be on the lookout for more information as this amazing event gets closer! Contact *TC Anderson* with questions.

Parents' Day Out

We gearing up for winter activities in our PDO, Preschool and K-Club classrooms. Cold days mean more time in the Imagination Room, formerly Paradise Pictures! The Imagination Room is normally full of activities that encourage dramatic play. We have a train table, workbenches with tools, Legos and building blocks, kitchen sets and dress up clothes. In January, we transform the Imagination Room into a "grocery store" complete with empty food containers and boxes collected by staff over the past few months. Children take turns shopping with play carts, attending the cash register and providing cash from our "bank teller". In February, we turn our grocery store into Pet Land. Children can shop and care for pretend pets, items pets need and work in our Vet Clinic!



FIRST PRES
PDO & Preschool



Q: What are the top items needed and requested by the homeless during the winter months?

A: Warm gloves and socks!

Here in the midwest, we all know how cold the months of January and February are.

Knowing this, The Bridge will be sponsoring a church-wide service project to collect warm gloves and socks throughout the month of January.

All gloves and socks will be delivered and donated to The Night Ministry in Chicago.

The Night Ministry compassionately provides housing, health care, outreach, spiritual care, and social services to adults and youth who struggle with homelessness, poverty, and loneliness. They accept individuals as they are and offer support as they seek to improve their lives. They invite others to join this hope-filled work.

Won't you help us continue the work of The Night Ministry by donating some warm gloves and/or socks?



HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR PURCHASES.

Cold Weather Gloves - Amazon

The type of gloves suggested are cold weather gloves that are weather resistant. Large sizes are suggested. Brands to consider buying are Columbia or Patagonia.

Here is a link and picture you might also consider using to purchase.



Thermal Wool Socks - Amazon

The type of socks suggested are thick thermal wool socks. Large sizes are suggested.

Brands to consider buying are Patagonia or Smart Wool. Here is a link and picture you might also consider using to purchase.



Any and all donations would be greatly appreciated. There will be a large blue barrel outside the Parlor each Sunday in January. Please use it to drop off your donations. There will be a large sign on it with the logo of **The Night Ministry**. Thank you in advance for your donations.

MLK Day of Service

On Monday, January 17, Stone Catchers will host the Fourth Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service Community Food and Household Essentials Drive. The MLK Day of Service is an annual event held nationally to encourage communities to take action to build the beloved community of Dr. King's dream. MLK Day is the only federal holiday also designated as a national day of service to encourage all to volunteer to improve their community.

You can get involved by participating in the drive-thru **Community Drive on Monday, January 17, from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm**. Drop off your non-perishable food and paper good donations at the front steps of the church. Volunteers will be on Dunton Avenue to receive your donations and unload them from your car. Walk-up donations are also welcomed. In addition to collecting items on Monday, January 17, donations can be dropped off in the lobby on Sunday, January 16, during worship services. All donations will go to local food pantries.



WHEN DECIDING WHAT TO DONATE, HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL HINTS:

- Household items such as paper towels, toilet paper, dish detergent are not eligible for purchase with a Link card
- Consider pop-top lids – sometimes people do not have a can opener
- Olive oil, garlic, salt, pepper and other spices can transform a meal
- Remember items like Hamburger Helper are only good if you have ground beef
- Baking mixes that require only water are good
- Coffee is a luxury
- Sugar and flour are always needed
- Kraft Mac and Cheese requires milk and butter – consider Velveeta that comes with the sauce

Questions about MLK Day of Service? Contact Michele Holifield at micheleholifield@firstpresab.org or Katy Allen at katyallen@firstpresab.org.

Tuck Away Christmas

January 8, 9:30 am

We have so many of you to thank for decorating our church so beautifully in November. Special thanks to Deb Artman, Pam Miller and Marty Kraybill. Now come one, come all and have fun taking all the decorations down and tucking them away for next Christmas. We need many hands to help once again to make the job light! Come join us on January 8 at 9:30 am in the Parlor. WE NEED YOUR HELP.



All Church Book Drive for Children & Youth

Give the gift of reading by donating a NEW Children's or Young Adult book to the Children's Ministries Book Drive to support Bernie's Book Bank. The benefits of reading go beyond ABC's and 123's. Reading impacts children for the rest of their lives. Confidence soars. Knowledge expands. Vocabulary grows. Offer a child a book and you've given them the gift of a lifetime!



Amazon Wish List



During the month of February, Children's Ministries will gladly accept your donation on Sunday mornings before and after worship in the Narthex, and Wednesday evenings at Family Night. Books will be donated to Bernie's Book Bank in conjunction with our Service Saturday event on February 26. Visit our Amazon Wish List to get started.

Christopher House says Thank You!

Once again we send a sincere thank you to the members of our congregation who generously supported the hundreds of families through the Christopher House Thrive Fund. Because of you, we were able to raise \$1,470 to ensure these families had a very merry Christmas. These gift cards and gifts help our families who are struggling pay their rent or utility bills and still provide a special Christmas for their children. You have made a big difference in a lot of lives!

Blanket Drive

On our cold nights in January and February, it is wonderful to have a warm house and a cozy blanket to wrap yourself in. Not everyone is lucky to have that warmth and comfort. During the months of **January and February**, PW will be **collecting for the Blanket Drive**. This year it will be both an online and in person 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 of AH (indicate Blanket Drive in the memo). You may also donate online, select BLANKET DRIVE on the dropdown menu.

Please be generous! Questions? Contact Val Schuffler at valerie901p@gmail.com

News From Family Forward (Faith Community Homes)

We have a new name! We are Family Forward but the same organization that we were before. Sara Hart has been the director for the last few years.

Family Forward is a charitable nonprofit organization empowering low-income families to reach for their dreams, create stable households and a better life. This will allow them to contribute to a stronger community in the process.



Starting in September, Circle 2 of PW was providing necessary items that are not included in vouchers provided for groceries by dropping them off on Corinne's porch each month. September was a collection of boxes of Kleenex, October was sanitary pump hand soap, and November was toilet paper. We are most grateful for all these donations since COVID does not allow us to collect as we did. Best of all, we were able to collect \$600 in Aldi gift cards for December and bring a note of joy to make Christmas brighter for these families! Thank You! Corinne Peterson

Engage & ENCOUNTER

During the month of January, we have a number of wonderful Adult Education opportunities.

1 The first one is our **Sunday morning Adult Ed** led by SarahBeth Speciale, First Pres member and chair for Community Life & Education, for a series of classes on Hope. Every Sunday from 9:00-10:00 am, SarahBeth will be leading a class based on the PC(USA) curriculum entitled **Follow Me: Practice Spiritual Disciplines**. Christian hope is found in the ever-present God, who is always with us. Our hope comes from and is Jesus Christ. SarahBeth will be using the Follow Me curriculum to explore what the Bible says about Hearing Hope, Seeing Hope, Offering and Receiving Hope, and Proclaiming Hope. Class meets Sundays, January 2 - January 30 (no class January 16) in the Boardroom. All are welcome!

2 Our second class is a compliment to our January sermon series, **TOP 5**. Since every Sunday we will be talking about how the Christian faith thinks about God, on Wednesdays during the Engage and Encounter education hour from 7:00-8:00 pm, we will be learning about how other faiths think about God. This class, entitled **God Talk: How Other Faiths Talk About God**, will have guest speakers come to our church to discuss their faith.

Each week there will different focus: January 5 we will hear from Rabbi Poupko about how Judaism conceives of God. January 12 we will hear from Jaini Mody, a

Sunday Morning Adult Education Class

HOPE

Sundays, January 2 - 30

9:00 am / Boardroom / SarahBeth Speciale

Wednesday Evening Adult Education Class

GOD TALK: HOW OTHER FAITHS TALK ABOUT GOD

Wednesdays, January 5 - 26

7:00 pm / Sanctuary / Alex Lang and Guest Speakers

practitioner of Hinduism about the Hindu perspective on believing in multiple gods at the same time. On January 19, Jonathan Thomas, a scholar in the Mormon faith, will speak to us about the historical roots of Mormonism and their conception of God. Finally, on January 26, Imam El-Amin will join us to talk about the various ways that Muslims understand God.

Each class will be chalk full of information about these other faiths and will be conducted in an interview style between Rev. Lang and the speaker. Each class will leave time for questions from the audience and an opportunity for deeper discussion around issues the group feel is important. Again, all are welcome and no prior knowledge of any of these religions are required. Come and learn how other faiths talk about God!

| | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| January 5 | Rabbi Poupko | Judaism |
| January 12 | Jaini Mody | Hinduism |
| January 19 | Jonathan Thomas | Mormonism |
| January 26 | Imam El-Amin | Islam |

One Book, One Church

Coming in February – One Book One Church In honor of Black History Month, Stone Catchers will sponsor a community reading of the book **Stamped from the Beginning** by Ibram X. Kendi. This book will help us to continue our discussions about race and how we work towards building a more just community.



Stone Catchers chose this book because there are editions of the book written for adults, youth and children. This is a book your entire family can read together. All three versions will be available for pre-order and delivery by MLK Day.

Watch for information in early January to order your copy. You can start reading early and watch for events in February to allow for discussion and action after reading this thoughtful look at history of race in the United States.

Stewardship Update



Like Santa's Helpers; the Stewardship committee is working feverishly on the 2022 Giving campaign.

We are excited by the Elders direction to launch **ALIN!** Back to the Bright Side as our vision for the church's future.

Our congregation did very well over the past 18 months with the continued support. We couldn't have done it without everyone's financial contributions.

Now we are asking for everyone that can, return their annual contribution pledge for 2022. This will allow us to plan programs for the upcoming year and beyond. We want to continue to provide support for PADs and other community outreach programs that help people who really need our support. We have made a difference in so many lives.

Your financial commitment will help First Presbyterian continue to help those in need and make us a beacon of hope for those who want a place to belong and love God.

To this point, we are behind our budgeted goal to provide all we offer at First Pres.

We would appreciate if you could commit any amount and return your commitment card to the church office or fill out your commitment card online at firstpresab.org/contribute/pledge/.

If you need any assistance, call the office at 847-255-5900 or contact anyone on our committee:

- Moira Menninga
- Barrett Peterson
- Mike Noble
- Bob Churchill
- Roger Anderson
- Andrew Bennett

Blessed we are all,
Your Stewardship Committee



Please give to cover your Per Capita Apportionment

Each year every Presbyterian church is apportioned a share of the ecclesiastical expenses of the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. These are the activities that make us Presbyterian. This apportionment is based on church membership. In 2022, this apportionment is \$36 per member. Any funds you designate for the apportionment will be used for this purpose and will free up our General Fund dollars to be used in

supporting the vision, overall ministry, and missions of our congregation. Please consider contributing your share of the

Per Capita Apportionment. An Initial Offering Envelope for this purpose has been included with the 2022 weekly offering envelopes. If you do not receive envelopes, please use one of the Per Capita envelopes from the pew pockets in the Sanctuary or donate online by selecting 'Per Capita' in the drop-down menu.



Per Capita

GIVING FOR NOVEMBER 2021

Below is a summary of the church's income for the month of November and Year-to-Date. We encourage everyone to give regularly and generously. 2021 year-end contributions must be received by December 31 to be included in 2021 giving. You may give by check, online via the church website or by stock transfer. If you need assistance to make a stock transfer, contact Debbie Walter at the church office. Thank you for your good stewardship!

| | MONTH OF NOVEMBER | YEAR TO DATE |
|----------|-------------------|--------------|
| Receipts | \$ 88,377 | \$1,062,105 |
| Expenses | \$119,606 | \$1,185,638 |
| Balance | (\$31,229) | (\$123,533) |



November Session Notes

By Laura Carlson, Clerk of Session

Session Highlights from the unapproved minutes from the November 15 and December 13, 2021, Meetings of Session. Session was thrilled to accept and welcome the following **new members**: Andrew Bennett, Geraldine Mary Campbell, Launa Ismail, Eric and Codi Larson, Steven Miller, Peter Truell, Kenneth and Susan Weller, and Brittany Winslow. Please help us welcome these members into our First Pres Family.

Session passed the following Motions from the **Worship, Music, and Sacraments Committee**:

Hold only **one worship service** on December 26, 2021 at 10:30 am; and **Communion dates** set forth by the WMS: January 9, First Communion of the New Year; February 27, Confirmation Sunday; March 2, Ash Wednesday; April 14, Maundy Thursday; May 1, Celebrating the faith journey of our 8th graders; June 5, Pentecost; July 31, Mid-summer communion; October 2, World Communion; November 27, First Advent; and December 24, 10:00 pm service only.

On November 30, 2021, the following Motion from the **Personnel Committee** passed electronically: The Personnel Committee seeks Session approval for First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights to hire temporarily Reverend Steve Howery to assist with the duties of Reverend Judy Hockenberry during her medical leave of absence. The following are the terms of call that were approved: Reverend Howery's contract dates would be from December 1, 2021 thru February 28, 2022. Reverend Howery would work three days a week at \$35.00 an hour for 25 hours a week. His primary duties would be Pastoral Care/Funerals and helping with the 10:30 am service on Sunday.

Due to the health of Pastor TC and Pastor Judy at the time, Session passed an electronic Motion to cancel the Vision and Strategy meeting of Session scheduled for Sunday, December 5, 2021.

Currently there are **160 people who have signed up to be ALIN!** Session members have begun calling persons who checked the box that they wanted to get more involved.



Session has also started utilizing the newly acquired information and is working on creating a central volunteer database. It is not too late to sign up to be **ALIN!** at firstpresab.org/allin.

Session is continuing to work on the details of **Session goals for 2022**. In conjunction, Session has begun reviewing data from the **Christian Faith Survey** distributed on Sunday, December 12 and December 19. Session will soon begin recruitment of at-large members for the Internal, External, and Cultural Goal teams. Each team is committed to one action item in 2022.

Abbreviated versions of the three goals for 2022 were prepared for communication to congregation for January.

Internal Goal: To reengage current members who prior to the pandemic had already become less involved in worship and other First Pres activities. Through direct, one-to-one conversations, this team will learn why the level of engagement for some has dropped and what First Pres can do to encourage them to come back with a higher level of engagement.

External Goal: To be known as a humanitarian resource in the community, so others will identify First Pres as a welcoming church for those in need and those new to the area.

Cultural Goal: To offer friendship and a caring community for all. This team wants First Pres to be known as the church where no one is a stranger. This team also will work to create a community where everyone is welcome to worship and participate.

Session welcomed Laura Ryerson, chair of the Deacon Restructure Task Force, to the meeting. Laura Ryerson gave a thoughtful presentation about the proposed Deacon Reorganization. An enthusiastic, productive discussion followed. Session will work alongside the Deacons in preparation for bringing the proposal to the congregation.

Session reviewed the budget and discussed strategies for cost savings and increasing pledges over the next year. Given the impact COVID has had on many members' finances, the budget for 2022 looks good. Session also celebrated the



incredible support from the congregation for the Capital Campaign.

The **Stewardship & Finance** committee has been making phone calls to over 300 households to connect with members.

At the next combined meeting Sunday, January 9, 2022, Session will vote on the Deacon's Proposal for Reorganization, the Terms of Call for Pastors, and the 2022 Budget.

Much appreciation was expressed to outgoing Session members **Tom Carroll, Bob Churchill, Carrie Costello, Tom Pardo, and Marjorie Lock** for their faithful service to First

Pres and God. Please take a moment to thank them when you see them. We will miss them on Session.

Session is excited to accept five new Elders who will join Session starting in January 2022. Please join us in showing appreciation and in welcoming the following new Elders: **Don Lyon, Floyd Mays, Steve Olszewski, Dick Reeves, and Liz Thompson.**

We are looking forward to an exciting, vibrant New Year. Happy 2022 Everyone!

Respectfully submitted by
Laura Carlson, Clerk of Session

Building Update

Bringing the Hearing Impaired into the Loop

Thunder Hearing installed a hearing loop in the Sanctuary the first week of December. The wires were also installed in order to have a hearing loop in the Chapel when renovations are complete.

You might be asking – **What is a hearing loop?** The hearing loop is a series of wires that is currently running in figure eights throughout the Sanctuary. The wires are then integrated into our audio system. Hearing aids that are equipped with a small coil, known as a T-coil, pick up the magnetic field signal which is then amplified into a high quality audio signal delivered directly to the ear of the hearing aid user. The hearing loop is not only for those with hearing aids. Anyone who needs assistance in hearing more clearly can benefit from the hearing loop by the use of a receiver. Receivers are always available in the Narthex. If you would like to try a receiver, see an usher for assistance.

For those with any type of hearing loss, the availability of a hearing loop in places like the First Pres Sanctuary can be life-altering. Ingrid Kaufman shared her story of how the installation of the hearing loop is life altering for her.

“In the past, the echoes and background noise would make it impossible for me to hear much of the sermon, especially end of sentences and punchlines. I would always ask Jim ‘what did he say?’ or ‘what is so funny?’. I was not part of the experience. My previous tension and anxiety completely disappeared and once again, I felt part of the congregation and community.”

If you are interested in learning more about the hearing loop, plan to attend a workshop on Sunday,



January 23, at 11:45 am in the Sanctuary. At that time, an audiologist from Thunder Hearing will talk with us about the benefits of the hearing loop, answer questions, provide individual assistance to anyone who needs assistance in getting their T-coil operating with our system or coaching you on the use of the receiver. If you have questions before January 23 about the hearing loop, please contact Michele Holifield at micheleholifield@firstpresah.org.

HEAR BETTER WITH OUR HEARING LOOP

TURN ON T-COIL IN HEARING AID OR COCHLEAR IMPLANT

Not sure if you have a t-coil? Check with your hearing care provider. Get t-coil activated if it isn't already.

No hearing aid? No problem!

Ask staff for a loop receiver **OR** purchase LoopBuds from ThunderHearing.com to use with your iPhone or iPad.

- ✓ No Background Noise
- ✓ No Reverberation
- ✓ Just Clear Sound



Pastor Judy on Leave Until March 1

As many of you know, Rev. Judy Hockenberry had a medical emergency in November where she ended up in the ICU. Although Judy is now home, she requires time to heal, rest and recuperate. The Session has approved a medical leave of absence from December 1 through February 28 so that Judy is able to fully recover.

Please do not call, text or e-mail Judy during the next two months. If you have pastoral care needs or concerns, please email Rev. Lang. If you would like to send Judy a card expressing your prayers, sympathy and well-wishes, please feel free to send them to the address on the right.

Judy Hockenberry
777 Sanborn St
Des Plaines, IL 60016

Given the impact on pastoral resources as a result of Judy's temporary leave, the Personnel Committee in conjunction with the Session and the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) have hired Rev. Steve Howerly to help with the pastoral care and worship needs of the church. Rev. Howerly is the former pastor of Niles Presbyterian Church and is honorably retired. We feel very fortunate that he answered the call to help us during this challenging period.

A Note from Judy December 2021

Dearest friends,

I am completely overwhelmed by your outpouring of prayers and love. God is certainly using each of you in powerful ways to sustain me and bring me to a complete recovery. For those of you that don't know the story, I will share what I know/remember. On Tuesday afternoon, November 16th, I left work at about 4:30 to go home and begin preparation for a routine colonoscopy. I expected to be out of the office on Wednesday and back on Thursday. I have had three or four colonoscopies and while they are far from pleasant, I have never had an adverse reaction.

The last thing I remember was being wheeled into the room for the procedure. I have no idea how many hours later I came to some level of consciousness but when I did, I was on a ventilator. There is no clear reason for what happened to me. The bottom line is that when they tried to wake me following the procedure, they could not get my oxygen levels to a safe range (usually considered 90% or higher) so they intubated me. From about 11:00 am on Wednesday until 6:00 pm on Friday I remained on a ventilator. I was alert some of that time and writing feverish notes to the family about things that needed to be cancelled and people for whom I was supposed to do something. At some point the medical team decided I needed heavier sedation. No more writing notes! She must rest! Alex

stepped up to make sure all the things I was worried about were assigned to others (mostly to him!).

And you – all of you began to pray and send cards and pray harder. On Friday when they extubated me, I was still on a lot of oxygen. Throughout the night I made steady progress. By Saturday evening I was able to go to a regular room. On Monday I went home at 5:30 pm. Six days in the hospital. Six days in bed. I went home weak and tired and alive and able to breathe adequately on room air. Thanks be to God.

Needless to say, this has been an incredibly traumatic journey for me and my entire family, as well as my close friends and colleagues, and all of you. Only in this last week have Ken and I been able to talk about the fact that I almost died. We still have a lot to process. The Personnel Committee and Session have been gracious in allowing me as much time as I need to recover – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. I miss all of you. I miss First Presbyterian. I miss my ministry. Still, I know this time is important for my full recovery.

"Thank you" feels very inadequate in the face of your outpouring of love. Cards, food, books, notes – all of it mean so very much because with each of those things comes the larger message of your love for me and through that love, I know God's love for me. Your love lifts me up and aids my recovery.

You are a wonderful and amazing congregation. I thank you. My whole family thanks you.

Love, Judy

Meet Steve, Interim Pastor

My name is Steve Howery and I'll be filling in for Judy in worship and pastoral care while she is on medical leave. I'd like to tell you a little about myself. I am a native Illini. I was born in Chicago and graduated from Libertyville High School. I was confirmed in Libertyville's First Presbyterian Church.

I graduated from Indiana University, Bloomington, with a degree in religious studies and received my M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary.

I served churches in New Jersey, Texas and Louisiana before returning to Illinois to serve as pastor of Niles Community Church in 2001. I retired from that position in 2018.

I live in Glenview with my wife, Carol, where we enjoy gardening, cooking and entertaining. I enjoy playing music with my friends (mostly rock) and from time to time feel inspired to write a song or two.

We each have two grown children and now three granddaughters. I'm looking forward to getting to know you in the days ahead.



SYMPATHY TO:

- Bob Ahrens*, on the death of his wife, *Nancy Ahrens*
- Ellen Anderson* and family, on the death of her father, *Jerry Brault*
- The family of *Elaine Best*
- Sheila Hall*, on the death of her sister, *Barbara Robison*
- The family of *Edie Jolly*
- The family of *Betty Roach*
- Cathy Williams*, on the death of her father

CELEBRATIONS:

- Marcia Bennett*, on the birth of her great-grandson, *Oliver Thomas Vuono*
- Rick and Laura Liston*, on the birth of their grandson, *Miles Lennon Liston*



Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women Circle Meetings – January

MORNING CIRCLES 1, 2, 3

Start the year out right and come **January 19**, at our **new time of 9:30 am**, to enjoy lively discussion and fellowship as we talk about “RUTH” over a warm cup of coffee or tea and treats. Lessons 4 & 5 from our book *What My Grandmothers Taught Me* will help us learn all about Ruth and her struggles as a woman. How are some of Ruth's struggles a lot like women's struggles today? There is a social time to share news and fellowship in person and enjoy more personal small group discussions. Mark your calendar!



EVENING WITH CIRCLE 7

Busy during the day? Here is your chance to join an evening Circle on **Tuesday, January 18**, in the church Parlor at **7:00 pm**. Enjoy some warm coffee or tea, goodies and share in a lively discussion from the final chapter of *Almost Everything: Notes on Hope*. Have a relaxing evening as you join in the fun and fellowship. Questions? Contact Liz Thompson lizht85@yahoo.com

The CHIMES

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January 2022

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