



# OPEN DOOR

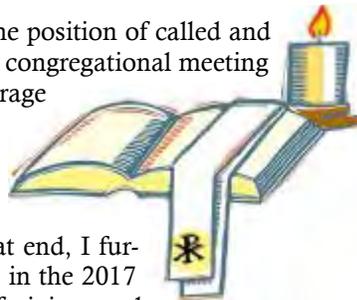
Volume XXXXIII, No. 12, December 7, 2016

## From the Intentional Interim Minister

As 2016 winds down, it definitely is not a slowdown in congregational life. While there have been transitions throughout the year, the pace has kept us on task for our mission and ministry. And how exciting that is! We have continued to serve and give witness to our glorious God.

How wonderful to have welcomed new members and extended our outreach with visitors. We are blessed with new faces and new energy. I am thankful for our various committees and the Session for good work which continues into the next year.

On January 22 we look forward to meeting a candidate for the position of called and installed pastor of First Presbyterian, Urbana. We will hold a congregational meeting that morning, following the 9:30 a.m. worship time. I encourage every member to be present that day, even if you have not been as active recently. This is an exciting time in the life of the church, and you don't want to miss it. Thank you members of the Pastor Nominating Committee in your devotion and discernment for the opportunity of this occasion. To that end, I further encourage members and friends alike to fully participate in the 2017 budget process. If you have not yet returned an estimate of giving card, please do so as soon as possible. Please do not live in a misunderstanding that you have nothing to offer to God through your church giving. Every gift makes a difference.



Years ago I served a church where a student said she was reluctant to make a pledge to the church. She worked at a fast food restaurant, and said she had never seen her parents give on a regular basis through the church. What's the point, she asked? She was encouraged to pray and think about how she wanted to engage life as she grew in her faith. Finally she decided to make sure she gave a minimum of \$5 a month as her estimate of giving. After several months she found that she could increase the amount, but she shared with several church leaders, that it really changed her sense of being a part of God's work in the world. One of the most endearing moments in my life with her was to hear her say, "I love giving! It's a great feeling." I couldn't agree more.

See you as church.

Blessings,  
Deborah

**Congregational Meeting:** The Session, at the request of the Pastor Nominating Committee, has called a **congregational meeting for January 22, 2017**, immediately after the 9:30 a.m. worship service, in the Sanctuary. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on a call to a candidate put forth by the PNC for Pastor of our congregation. The candidate will have preached at the 9:30 worship service. Further information about the candidate will be sent to members of the congregation in mid-January, 2017.



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**Christmas Offering 2016 –  
Now's the Time to Help**

We are receiving our annual Christmas offering throughout the month of December. This very important offering supports our local mission and also our Benevolence Fund for 2017. There is more need than ever this year since Illinois State funding continues to be impacted by our state budget difficulties; meanwhile, our social agencies need your help! Offerings may be placed in the weekly offering (Please mark "Christmas offering" on your checks), dropped during the week at the church office, or made on our church website. Thank you for your generosity in helping those in need.



**Be The Church**

Thank you to each of you who already turned in your Estimate of Giving for 2017. Our current number of received pledges is \$411,387. Our goal for 2017 based upon Session's draft budget to develop and nurture our ministries, programs, facilities, and staff is \$463,246. If you have yet to return your estimate of giving, please do so as soon as possible either to the church office or via e-mail to Rachel Glad-den at [Rachel@firstpresurbana.org](mailto:Rachel@firstpresurbana.org). The current gap between pledges and our goal suggests that we might have to make adjustments to our plans for 2017. The Budget and Finance Committee will meet on Monday, December 19 to develop a final recommendation to Session. Session will review and adopt the final budget for 2017 at its meeting on Tuesday, December 20. Therefore, if you have yet to respond, or if you have the ability to consider an increase in your already submitted estimate of giving, your timely action will impact what we need to do in the coming days as we look to **Be The Church** in 2017. Thank you.



**Food & More Program Donation  
Request for December:  
DISH SOAP**

**Advent and Christmas Schedule**

**Sunday 11:30 a.m. Chapel Services**

Each Sunday through December 18

**Wednesday, December 7 – Taizé Worship**

in Chapel at 7:00 p.m.



**Sunday, December 11 – Third Sunday of Advent**

Alternative Christmas Gift Sale

**Wednesday, December 14, 11:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall**

**Christmas Luncheon with Carol Sing**

hosted by the Deacons

(see the article on page 3 for details)

**SATURDAY, December 17, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

**Caroling and Cookie Sharing**

organized by the

Fellowship Committee

(see the article on page 3 for details)



**Sunday, December 18 – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Children and Youth Service for 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

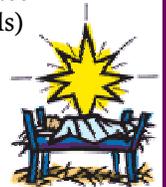
**Sunday, December 18, 4:00 p.m. – Blues/Jazz Service**

sponsored by the Wellness Committee

(see the article on page 3 for details)

**Saturday, December 24, 7:00 p.m.**

**Christmas Eve Service**



**Sunday, December 25, 11:00 a.m. – Christmas!**

One combined service with Korean Presbyterian Church



**Sunday, January 1 – Epiphany Sunday**

Communion with ONE service only at 11:00 a.m. George Johnston will preach

**One Service Sundays – 11:00 A.M. Only**



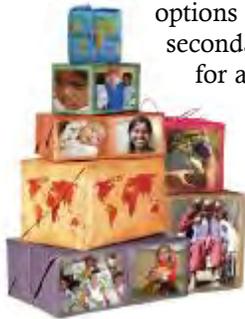
Please note that on Sunday, December 25 we will join with the Korean Presbyterian Church for a ONE SERVICE ONLY worship time of **11:00 a.m.** in the sanctuary.

One January 1, 2017 there will be ONE SERVICE ONLY at **11:00 a.m.** as we celebrate communion and observe Epiphany Sunday in the sanctuary.

# Advent Events

## Alternative Christmas Gift Sale!

The Mission Committee presents the Alternative Gift Sale again this year. This is a great way to get a gift for the person who seems to have everything. Purchase items to benefit our sister church in Domasi, Malawi in honor of your loved ones. Options include several



options to support preschool, primary, and secondary education, shallow wells, tuition for a college student and many more. You will receive a photo card to send to your loved one notifying them of the gift. These are gifts that give twice—so please plan to drop by the Alternative Gift table in the narthex on **Sunday, December 11.**

## Christmas Luncheon

**Wednesday, December 14, 11:30 a.m., in Fellowship Hall**



The luncheon will begin with entertainment provided by children from the Cooperative Nursery. Following lunch, Case Sprenkle will lead a carol sing-along from the piano. The Deacons will provide the meal.

Everyone is welcome! Let us know if you are coming by signing up on the sheet in the Friendship Pads, or by notifying the office.



## Blues/Jazz Service Sunday, December 18, 4:00 p.m.



This season of the year, with short sunlight days, can be a time not of joy, but depression. Perhaps it is also the first time to celebrate without a loved one. Perhaps it is simply a time of loneliness. Maybe you just like jazz. On Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m. the Wellness Committee will present our third annual "Blues" Jazz Worship service in the sanctuary. The 40 minute service will include live jazz music by a jazz quartet, led by Chris Beyt, scripture, anointing, candle lighting, prayer, and a time of sharing. There will be a reception with light refreshments following the service.

## Caroling and Cookie Party

Everyone is invited to go caroling **SATURDAY, December 17 at 3:30 p.m.** Help bring Christmas joy to our homebound members and others in the congregation. The more people we have caroling, the more people we can visit. We will take a plate of cookies to each individual or couple we visit. After caroling, we will return to the church to warm up with hot chocolate and cookies.



We will not plan for carolers to take cookies home this year, but instead just enjoy them at church after caroling. **If you can, please drop off about three dozen cookies in the church kitchen by 2:00 December 17 so that we have time to prepare the special plates for the individuals we visit. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall at 3:30 p.m. to get our songbooks and cookies.**

This event is always much enjoyed by both carolers and "carollees" – don't miss out! Contact Karen Mortensen

[Karen.pinney.mortensen@gmail.com](mailto:Karen.pinney.mortensen@gmail.com) if you have any questions. Sign up on the

sheet in the Friendship Pads or contact the church office if you plan to participate. RSVP is appreciated, but not essential. Please join us even if you don't sign up!!



## Church Office



The church office will be closed Friday, December 23 and Monday, December 26 so the staff may enjoy the holiday. **Merry Christmas!!** Rev. Owen is available by cell phone (217-714-1210) in case of emergency.

The Rev. Owen will be on vacation December 26 through January 7. In case of emergency while Deborah is away, please contact Rev. Connie Tapp Bandy, (217) 202-9624.

# Church Family



## In the Church Family

Let us remember in our prayers:

- Ann Harden, recovering at home after a car accident
- Wanda Giddings, home from Carle
- Amanda Pellett

**With sadness we share the news that** Willa Strothmann passed away on November 22. A funeral was held December 2 at our church. Let us be praying for her son Mark Strothmann.

**With sadness we share the news that** Barbara Dalbey died November 29, 2016. A service was held December 5 in our church sanctuary. Please be praying for her family.

**We share our love and sympathy with** Jamie Peterson and family following the death of Jamie's father John Weiss. Services will be held in the spring of 2017 in Pennsylvania.

**With sadness we share the news that** the Rev. Jim Down passed away. Funeral services will take place December 30 in St. Lewis. Let us be praying for his wife Betty and family. The Rev. Jim Dowd was pastor of FPCU 1973-1989. (Betty's address is 30835 Jones Dr, Dowagiac MI 49047.)

## Congratulations Graduates

**Sandra Darfour-Oduro** will graduate in December with a PhD in Community Health from the University of Illinois.



**Abbi Frings** will graduate summa cum laude in December with a BA in Political Science/International Studies (minor in Spanish) from Culver Stockton College. She is the daughter of Deborah Owen and Kevin Frings.



**Maggie Murray** will be Student Teaching for the spring semester. She will graduate this spring with a BA in Elementary and Secondary Education from the University of Illinois. Maggie has served as our church Nursery Caregiver since October 2014. The middle schoolers (GLU) gave her a delightful, and tearful send-off Sunday night, December 4. She will be missed as the volunteer leader.

## Sunday Assisting Schedule

	<b>December 11 Third Advent</b>	<b>December 18 Fourth Advent</b>	<b>Christmas Eve, December 24,</b>	<b>Christmas, Dec. 25, 11am</b>	<b>January 1, 11 am, Epiphany</b>	<b>January 8 Lord's Bapt.</b>
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Joan Sheppard	John Harden	Lauren Smith	Korean Ch. members	Steve Hall	Deborah Owen
<b>Head Usher</b>	Jason Harris	Andy Harden	Will Smith	Korean Ch.	Shari Hall	Harold Guither
<b>Ushers</b>	Bob Resek Lois Resek Linda Brucker	Eliza Champion Isaac Ellis Andrew Mortensen Ari Tantular	Julie Smith Madeleine Wolske Emma Hall	Two from our church TBD	Ann Ricker Two more TBD	Lois Guither Two more TBD
<b>Greeter</b>	Dixie Jackson	Dixie Jackson	TBD	N/A	TBD	TBD
<b>Steward</b>	Eric Peterson	Lauren Smith	Sandy Nieman	Bob Burger	TBD	TBD
<b>Coffee</b>	Julie Sherwood	Jamie Ellis	N/A	TBD—cocoa	Karen Mortensen	TBD
<b>Cup Washer</b>	Julie Sherwood	Jamie Ellis	N/A	N/A	Karen Mortensen	TBD
<b>Communion Table</b>	Crèche	Crèche	Crèche Poinsettias	Crèche / Korean Church	Communion, prep. Shari Hall	Flowers given by Lowell Hill
<b>Advent Candle-lighters</b>	Shirley Walker Marilyn Kay Julie Sherwood Dixie Jackson	Eliza and Cecelia Abbamonte Autumn Ellis	The Thies Family	N/A	N/A Acolyte TBD	N/A Acolyte TBD

## High Points of the Session Meeting of November 15, 2016

This is a brief summary of discussions and actions from the Session meeting of November 15, 2016. A copy of the full minutes is posted in the library after they are approved at the next month's Session meeting.



1. The final 2017 budget awaits the results of the pledge drive. A number of pledges are still outstanding.
2. Rev. Owen highlighted the myriad of activities in which she and our congregation have been engaged this past month.
3. Rev. Stu Smith has resigned from his part time position at FPCU.
4. Guye and Youngsun Williams were received into membership. They will be received by the congregation at a future date.
5. A congregational meeting to elect the 2017 Nominating Committee will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Corporation on January 29. A special congregational meeting will be held January 22 to act on a personnel matter.
6. Ann Ricker has amassed very extensive paper and computer records for FPCU, dating back to 1856. Karen Mortensen will be working with her and the office to make them more available. This is an amazing labor of love.
7. The Session is beginning a Long Range Planning process. The PNC feels strongly that a new pastor will want us to continue on this path rather than waiting for his/her arrival. Having Long Range Planning underway is a positive in recruitment of a new pastor. It will take a couple of months before the full form of the process is decided, and the congregation will be kept informed and closely involved. Suggestions from the congregation are always welcomed.
8. The Session is asking the Earth Care Committee to advise on short term steps that we can take to help meet our Paris Pledge carbon footprint reduction.
9. The Mission Committee is working with the Jeanes Church in Malawi on setting up a preschool.
10. The two recent adult seminars on LGBTQ were briefly discussed. There may be some additional educational opportunities scheduled after the first of the year. No actions were taken by the Session.
11. Rev. Owen's landmark birthday was celebrated with song.



—Don Greeley, Clerk of the Session

## Sunday Seminars 10:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall

### Sunday, December 11

#### **“A Shofar Blower’s Rendition of ‘O’ Holy Night’: On Being Jewish in Today’s World”**

**Dr. Lee Melhado**



Dr. Lee Melhado completed her undergraduate degree in English at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh. She earned a Master's and a Ph.D. in chemistry at Washington University in St. Louis. In 1991, she obtained a Master's in Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Until her retirement in 2009, she was a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. During her career, she served as Director of the Radioisotope Laboratory at UIUC, as Manager of Crisis Triage Services at the Mental Health Center of Champaign County, as Director of Psychiatric Services at The Pavilion Hospital, and as Executive Director of the Champaign-Urbana Jewish Federation.

Lee has had a life-long interest in interfaith issues. Raised Episcopalian, she converted to Judaism in 1971 and has run classes for prospective converts at Sinai Temple and Hillel. She served four terms as vice president of the Religious Workers' Association on campus. She is a frequent speaker in classrooms, churches and on interfaith panels throughout the CU area, and enjoys building relationships with colleagues in Christian, Muslim, and other faith communities. In 2009, she received the Intercultural Dialogue Award granted by the Intercultural Fellowship Foundation.

### Sunday, December 18

#### **“Deep Listening: Music, Meditation, and the Christian Community” Jonathan Young, our Director of Music**

Western music has a long and close association with the Christian church, which is the foundation of our culture's musical traditions, sacred and secular. In this seminar we will explore that connection as it relates to the use of music to facilitate transcendental experiences. Specific examples will include the Taizé community, Gregorian chant, and modern art music, as well as musical traditions from non-Western cultures. Our goal will be a deeper understanding of the power of music to inspire heart, mind, and spirit, and truly be a universal language.



## Gift Giving Thanks and Reminder



Thanks to all who took tags from our giving tree to give gifts to residents of the CCNH (Champaign County Nursing Home)!! All tags were taken the first Sunday!! Please remember to return your tagged, wrapped gifts to the church **by Sunday, December**

**11.** Questions can be directed to Marty Lampman. Thanks for your caring and willingness to help residents who no longer have family now know someone cares for them.

## Adult Bible Study

Sundays at 8:15 a.m. in Meeting Room B (Jonathan's office) which is next to the church office on the main floor. We are currently studying the book of Colossians.



## Advent Candlelighters

*Top Left: Peter, Karen, and Andrew Mortensen on November 27.*

*Top Right: Barbara Schleicher on December 4.*

*Bottom Left: Grace Sancken at 11:30 a.m. service on December 4.*



## Advent Devotions are available in the narthex

The devotions, by Michael Hoy, are based on Martin Luther's beloved hymn, "From Heaven Above." "Jesus is the Gift that bears with us in the midst of life and death and brings us all into the light and life of the Father's blessing as his own children."

**Devotionals for families with children** are also available in the narthex. The devotional is called "Welcome Baby Jesus – Advent and Christmas Reflections for Families." Each day has a Scripture quote, a brief reflection, and an action to complete.



*Holiday Reception, November 27, 2016*



*December 3 outing to see the movie Loving at the Art Theater in Champaign*

# Community Events

## ChoraLiers Christmas Concert

On Tuesday, December 13, 7:30 p.m., the ChoraLiers of Clark-Lindsey Village will sing its Christmas concert. The performance will be held in the main dining room. Members of the 38 voice choir include Cindy Fraser, Elaine and Bill Hall, Marilyn and David Kay, Nancy Morse, and Marilyn and Dick Thies, directed by Jan Impey. You are invited to add this to your holiday musical joy.

## A Baroque Christmas Concert



On Sunday, December 18, at 7:30 p.m. at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 405 W. Clark, Champaign, bring family and

friends for the glow of holiday music with the University H.S. Madrigals and the BACH chorus and orchestra, featuring selections from J. S. Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, and a medley of hymns and carols with audience participation. Tickets may be purchased at the door (\$20 General/\$10 Students) or in advance at [www.baroqueartists.org](http://www.baroqueartists.org).

**A  
Very Merry  
Christmas to You  
From the Staff of First  
Presbyterian Church of Urbana  
And Have a Very Happy New  
Year!**

\*\*

Rachel Gladden, Steve Johnson, Jonathan Young,  
Tracy Weddle, Nani Baker, Jennifer Immke,  
Madhu Pradhan, Maggie Murray, Brian Summers,  
Chris Beyt, Ed King, Alphonse Kiu, Rev. Deborah Owen

## Thank You from the Staff

Thank you friends for the various Christmas cards and gifts. They are much appreciated!!

## Presbyterian 101



**Question from November:** Who is known as the "Father of Presbyterianism?"

**Answer:** John Calvin

**New Question:** What is the Book of Confessions which Presbyterians use?

Look for the answer in the January Open Door

## December Prayer for Children

We pray for those without a faith community of care and support.

## CoYA and Spring Break

Alternative multi-generational spring break mission trip to Mississippi: March 19-26, 2017.

## Reconnecting Our Community One Letter at a Time ...

At the December 19 Ripple Effect meeting, we will be sending cards and letters to people from our community and beyond who are separated from us due to incarceration or immigration policies.

**Monday December 19, 2016, 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.**

**Bethel AME Church (401 E. Park Street, Champaign)**

**Free street parking**

\* Stationery and postage provided

\* Dinner provided

\* Children's activities

\* Resource tables

\* All welcome! Bring your addresses, reach out to our neighbors, share your concerns

*About the Ripple Effect: Ripple stands for "Reaching Inside Prisons with Purpose and Love." We are a program of the Education Justice Project at the U of I. We want to be there for one another and to demonstrate the care and concern that exists in our community. For more information: [info@educationjustice.net](mailto:info@educationjustice.net), 217.300.5150, [educationjustice.net](http://educationjustice.net). We welcome donations and your support. Co-sponsors: CU Immigration Forum, Latino Partnership, Three Spinners, U-C Quaker Meeting.*

## Church Staff

Interim Pastor – Rev. Deborah Owen  
[deowen@FirstPresUrbana.org](mailto:deowen@FirstPresUrbana.org)

Financial Administrator – Rachel Gladden  
[rachel@FirstPresUrbana.org](mailto:rachel@FirstPresUrbana.org)

Office Manager – Tracy Weddle  
[office@FirstPresUrbana.org](mailto:office@FirstPresUrbana.org)

Sexton – Steve Johnson, [sjohnson@FirstPresUrbana.org](mailto:sjohnson@FirstPresUrbana.org)

Director of Music / Organist – Jonathan Young  
[jyoung@FirstPresUrbana.org](mailto:jyoung@FirstPresUrbana.org)

Media Support Specialist: Nani Baker  
[nbaker@firstpresurbana.org](mailto:nbaker@firstpresurbana.org)

Children's Choir & Junior Handbell Choir Director –  
Jennifer Immke, [jenykate14@hotmail.com](mailto:jenykate14@hotmail.com)

Guitarist – Chris Beyt

High School Youth Fellowship Leader – Brian Summers

Toddler/Preschool Caregiver – Madhu Pradhan

AV Technician Coordinator – Ed King

Tenor Section Leader: Alphonse Kiu

## OUR KEY MESSAGES

Welcome to our church family!

God is doing *exciting* things here!

Choose a path: **Have an impact & feed your soul!**

**Thanks** to Lois Guither and Shirley J. Walker for preparing this Open Door for mailing.

**Open Door Deadline:** For inclusion in the next Open Door, items should be submitted by **Thursday, January 5** to [office@firstpresurbana.org](mailto:office@firstpresurbana.org). The Open Door will be mailed on **Wednesday, January 11**.

**First Presbyterian Church of Urbana**

**602 W Green St, Urbana, IL 61801**

**(217) 367-8357**

**[www.FirstPresUrbana.org](http://www.FirstPresUrbana.org)**

**Find Us on Facebook**

**Church Office Hours**

Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Address Service Requested

First Presbyterian Church  
602 West Green Street  
Urbana IL 61801