



OPEN DOOR

Volume XXXIV, No. 5, May 3, 2017

From the Pastor

Mustard Seeds

John Steinbeck entitled his last novel, *The Winter of Our Discontent*. He borrowed it from Shakespeare, of course, who put the words into the mouth of his Richard III: "Now is the winter of our discontent..." How interesting to recall this in the light of the relatively recent discovery of Richard III's remains in England, and recent political happenings.

Following the news about the discovery of the king's lost remains, there was another story about changes closer to home. The news about the increase in the number of the "Nones," people who claim no religious affiliation, has been much discussed. The Nones, together with agnostics and atheists, now make up about 20 percent of the population.

There are many reasons for the rise in the number of nones. Many parents no longer "require" their kids to participate in religious activities, since many parents no longer participate either. Both parents usually work now, mostly by necessity, since household income has been stagnant since the late 1970s. There are more single parent households. Youth have so many more options academically and athletically. There are so many more ways our time gets spent. Truth be told, the Church has been far from perfect, and has alienated far too many.

Yet, this is not the whole story. David Hollinger, a professor of history, has published a book, *After Cloven Tongues of Fire*, in which he makes the case for the gifts progressive, ecumenical churches have made to American culture. Our churches have advocated and struggled for racial equality, gender equality, embracing diversity rather than fearing it, and full inclusion of gay and lesbian people in membership and leadership. The degree to which our churches have been committed to and invested in these endeavors, varies, true enough. But since 1960, American culture has come to reflect these religious values, and we are the better for it. And ever more of our churches are embodying these values, too. The irony, Hollinger says, is that ecumenical churches have "experienced a cultural victory and an organizational defeat," in that our numbers have declined since 1960. Sometimes progress is made in counterintuitive ways.

Other hopeful signs of new life in ecumenical churches include the many ways we are more caring in our ministries. We do much more beyond our walls. We are more mission minded, through such things as Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and community organizations like Faith in Place, and international church partnerships. We are advocating for better stewardship and sustainability through such things as being Earth Care Congregations.

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From the Pastor *(continued from page 1)*

Our congregations have a much more diverse leadership these days. Women now serve as much as, and more, than men. We enjoy a rich diversity in background, what with so many of us moving in America these days, as well as diversity of work experience and education. Finally, the most recent nation-wide congregational life survey reported that congregation members are happier. Eighty-seven percent of worshippers indicated that they are happy with the spiritual lives. More than three in four worshippers say they always or usually experience a sense of God's presence, inspiration and joy in worship. Nearly nine in 10 respondents said worship helps them with everyday living.

All to say, yes, sometimes church life today feels like "the winter of our discontent." But we also have so much going for us. It is as Paul wrote, "God is faithful, and God will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing God will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it." God gives us all we need to face our challenges, both within, and challenges beyond us in society. As we begin the work of long range planning, these are good things to remember, and give thanks for.

— *Pastor David*

Farewell to Madhu Pradhan

On **April 30** during the worship service, we said goodbye to long-time member and staff, Madhu Pradhan. Our nursery and toddler rooms were always ready for action with Madhu in charge! She has been with us since 1998. She and her family will be in Nepal for awhile, leaving the first week in May, and after that will be relocating to the Dallas, Texas area.



Farewell to Jonathan Young

Sometimes things happen very quickly. With mixed regret and congratulations, we must say goodbye to Jon Young as he pursues advancement of his church musician career. He started a position as Music Director at Holy Cross Church in Champaign Monday, May 1st. A simple reception in the Narthex followed worship on **April 30th**.

Sunday Seminars

10:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Sunday, May 7 — "Caring for Creation" Seminar Series on Pollinator and Wildflowers

Maggie Dougherty-Roberts, Champaign County Master Gardener and Master Naturalist and member of the Board of the Robeson Meadows subdivision, will describe her 8-year long effort to convert Robeson Meadows into a pollinator friendly landscape. With a power-point enhanced presentation, she will show how she first developed a "monarch way station," and then, with Fellow Master Gardner Dr. Japhia Jayasingh-Ramkum, began planting "pockets" of beneficial plants in the subdivision. She will provide tips on helping neighbors understand and value areas enhanced with pollinator-friendly native plants and steps for overcoming roadblocks that prevent neighborhoods from developing healthy pollinator environments.



Sunday, May 14: "History and Status of Churches in Cuba"

Don and Nancy Uchtmann will share pictures and stories from their recent trip to Cuba.

Sunday, May 21: "Solar Champaign-Urbana Programs" — Andy Robinson.

Sunday, May 28: no seminar

Update on Malawi Nursery School

Roof trusses are going up at the nursery school at Jeanes CCAP. Give thanks for the consistent progress being made! To view an album of images sent from our contractor, Sam Ncozana, in Domasi, go to: <https://www.icloud.com/sharedalbum/#B0t5fk75vsXCggt> (photo at right).

An insert with more information is included in this issue of the Open Door.

Church News

Confirmation Class and Baptism Sunday, May 7

On April 24, 2017 Isaac Ellis, Andrew Mortensen, and Ari Tantular, members of this year's Confirmation Class, met with the Session. After reading their statements of faith, they were received with applause into membership. During the course of this past year they

studied, among other topics, the Bible, Mission, Prayer, the Sacraments, the Trinity, "Why a church?", and Presbyterian polity.

They will be received by the congregation during worship on **May 7, 2017** at which service Isaac Ellis will also be baptized.



Thank You Volunteers!

April 23-29, 2017 was National Volunteer Appreciation Week. Terry Good, Volunteer Manager at the Senior Resource Center sent a thank you to all the volunteers at First Presbyterian Church of Urbana.



"You helped make a friendly check on 153 people in our community who need daily assistance and you boosted their health as you delivered more than 16,000 hot, nutritious meals for Meals on Wheels. You also assisted us in giving 320 older adults access to food, medical care, and socialization by providing Senior Transportation rides. Thank you for making this a caring community."

A message and certificate are posted on the Church bulletin board.

**Malawi
Nursery
School**

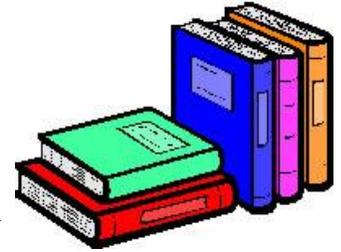


New in the Church Library

Earth Care

Mutel, Cornelia F. *A Sugar Creek Chronicle: observing climate change from a Mid-western woodland.* 2016.

The author, an ecologist and science writer at the University of Iowa, interweaves stories of her lifelong nature ramblings and realizations, together with her observations of change during 2012 in Iowa. Her tracing of the "woodland's expression" as global temperatures rise is a compelling pairing of the personal and the scientific.



Gershon, David. *Low carbon diet: a 30 day program to lose 5000 pounds.* 2006.

Helpfully divided into snappy suggestion lists for modifying aspects of personal and household energy use. Also includes a section on how to pass the message on to others effectively and tactfully.

World Religion

From our friends at the Baha'i Center, Urbana:

Baha'u'llah's teachings on spiritual reality. 1996.

The life (1817-92), mission, and key teachings of the founder of the Baha'i faith; also excerpts from three other Baha'i figures.

Vafai, Shahin. *The Baha'i faith.* 2011.

A brief introduction to the faith.

– Ann Ricker

Adult Bible Study

Sundays at **8:15 a.m.** in Meeting Room B which is next to the church office on the main floor. We are currently studying the book of First Corinthians.



Church Family



In the Church Family

Let us remember in our prayers:

- Phyllis Mast (Meadowbrook)
- Virginia Bradford (Meadowbrook)
- The Feitshans family
- Mindy Watts-Ellis' father, home
- Bill Hall, home
- Don Murphy, home
- The Rev. Heidi Weatherford, recovering from surgery
- The Rev. Laura Aull Johnston, recovering from surgery.

With sadness we share the news that Bill McCabe passed away on Thursday, April 20, 2017. There will be a private family service. Please keep Eleanor and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

With sadness we share the news that Tjuk Soetono, Rosintan Panjaitan's husband passed away on Saturday, April 15. The funeral was held on Monday, April 17, 2017. Please keep Rosintan and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Happy Birthday Dodee! A celebration for Dodee Buzzard's 98th birthday was held at Clark-Lindsey Village on Saturday, April 29 from 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. The announcement is posted on the Church bulletin board.

Happy birthday, Myrtle! Myrtle Shove will have a 90th birthday party on May 14, 2017. She would appreciate cards. Her address is...

PYC and GLU Schedule
Middle and High School Youth
Every Other Sunday, 6:00-7:30 p.m., Youth Center

May 7— Illinois Softball Game (12:00 at Eichelberger Field, Urbana)

May 21— End of the Year Barbeque



Calling All Graduates



Will you or someone in your family be graduating? Please send information describing their degree, university, and plans for the future to the church office ASAP. We will recognize graduates on **May 21**.

Celebration of Our Graduates!

Join us in the narthex following worship on **Sunday, May 21** as we celebrate an important milestone in the lives of our grads. More details on our grads will be included in the bulletin on the 21st.



Sunday Assisting Schedule

	May 7	May 14	May 21	May 28
Worship Leader	Cindy Fraser	Bob Burger	Dixie Jackson	Katrina Good
Head Usher	Harold Guither	Andy Harden	John Dimit	TBD
Ushers	Ann Ricker, Julie & Dave Sherwood	Gary & Dixie Jackson	Carol & Ed Scharlau	TBD
Greeter	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Steward	Pat Jensen	Bob Burger	TBD	TBD
Coffee Maker	Bob & Lois Resek	TBD	TBD	TBD
Cup Washer	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Communion Table	<i>Communion</i>	Susan & Darryl Silver	<i>Flower dedication available</i>	<i>Flower dedication available</i>

Session Highlights & Food Pantry

Notes from the April 18, 2017

Session Meeting

- Church finances are in order. The last funds have been transferred to the Jeannes Church in Malawi for the preschool construction.
- The annual meeting of the congregation will be on Sunday, June 11, 2017, after worship.
- The Confirmation Class will be received by the Session on April 24, 2017, and will be welcomed by the congregation at worship on May 7. Isaac Ellis will also be baptized at that worship service.
- The Session approved the initiation of a Long Range Planning process. Rev. Oliver-Holder recommends using materials from *Percept* which are designed to assist a congregation in the development of a strategic mission plan with an emphasis on the next three years. There are three phases to be completed over a 22 week period. Phase 1 is information gathering about our congregation and our community. Phase 2 is a series of eight Bible-based reflection sessions through which the congregation participates in reshaping the church's vision and mission. Phase 3 is development of a detailed plan. A team consisting of members of the Session and members of the congregation will shepherd the process. The cost would be around \$1000. See <http://www.perceptgroup.com/Products/ReVision/REVISIONfront.aspx>
- The Session discussed in some detail how our congregation can be welcoming to and inclusive of LGBTQ persons. Rev. Oliver-Holder presented a "Welcoming Process Outline" from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Institute for Welcoming Resources. It is an 11 step process which moves at a gradual pace tailored to the individual congregation. Opportunities for church members to come together for learning, talking, and sharing in an open and respectful manner are an important part of the process. Toward the end of the process, further congregational input is included. There was unanimous approval to move ahead with this approach toward welcoming LGBTQ people, seeing this as the first step in our congregational journey to becoming truly welcoming of all people. Initially a small group of Session members and others will begin this process. After hearing and considering the request of a member to present a full adult forum regarding alternative Biblical interpretations concerning same gender relations, the Session also approved the following statement: "In light of the fact that we have adopted a process approach to become a welcoming congregation, we invite all members of the congregation to share their views in the course of this process . . ."

— Don Greeley, Session Clerk

Our Food Pantry

The **Spice Packing Event on Saturday, April 29** went very well. About 30-35 people attended, including many youth. We packed over 900 jars of spices (10 varieties) in under 90 minutes! The spices will be given to those attending our nutrition class and our partners who come to the food pantry each month. We ordered the spices through Common Ground Coop at Lincoln Square. Many thanks to the Mission Committee at First Pres who helped fund the event, to Ryan Larson who helped coordinate the event, and to all who participated!



At the April food pantry we served 36 households (132 people, including 73 children and 18 seniors). Four people requested food from the special diet table and over 80% brought their own bags! Many thanks to our shoppers and to Ryan Larson, Cindy Burton, Louise Dunn, Nancy McNabb, Candace McMaster, Beez Gordon, Jon Todd, Jacque Chase, Cecilia Ottemann and five members of the Urbana High School Honor Society for their assistance this month!

— Chris Todd

Can-Do Offering for the Food Pantry

Sunday, May 14

The Can-Do offering on the 2nd Sunday of each month is a major source of funding for our food pantry. Because of the special Palm Sunday service there was no Can-Do offering in April. On **Sunday, May 14th** we will have a special Can-Do offering to catch up and also to raise funds for another rolling shelf (needed to hold the increasing food donations from our shoppers and partner churches!). We hope to have a few youth from our partner churches join with our youth in collecting this special offering. Many thanks for your continuing support of the Food & More food pantry.

**Food & More
Program Request for
May:**

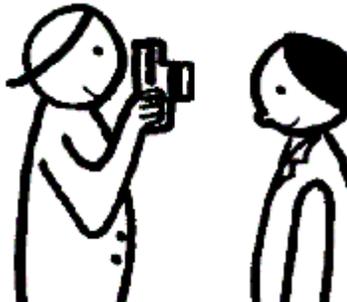
SPAGHETTI PASTA



Media Release Forms Needed

We have many wonderful pictures and other media of members engaged worship, programs and activities. We would like to put these on our Facebook and Website pages and include them in newsletters and brochures.

You can make this job easier by signing a **Media Release Form**. With a signed form on file we won't have to ask your permission every time we want to use a picture or recording of you. All members of the family can be listed on one form. Not sure if you already filled one out? Contact the office or just fill out a new one! Everyone over 18 gives their own permission; parent permission is required for those 18 and under.



The form will be available under the mailboxes on Sunday mornings in May. Signed forms can be put in the box under the mailboxes or left in the church office. Many thanks!

May Fun & Fellowship

The Christians at Station Theatre Sunday, May 7, 8:00 p.m.

Call or email the church office to reserve seats for this thought-provoking play. When you do, please note whether or not you'd like to meet for dinner at Pizza M in downtown Urbana before the play. Ticket cost is \$10, payable on the night of the play. Feel free to invite friends.

Take Me Out to the Ballgame! Friday, May 19, 6:00 p.m.



Come out to enjoy an Illini baseball game against Big Ten rival Iowa at Illinois field in Champaign, followed by ice cream at Jarling's. We'll plan to meet at the entrance to the field at **5:30 p.m.** Admission is free! Bring as many friends as you'd like.

Earth Care Expo Outings

The Earth Care Team is offering opportunities to enjoy outdoor activities this spring. To participate in one or more of these outings, sign-up sheets will be available in the Narthex following worship on **Sunday, May 7.**

Biking Allerton Park: Dave and Julie Sherwood will lead a leisurely bike ride within and around Allerton Park on lightly traveled roads on **Saturday, May 13.** The 10-mile ride will begin at **10:00 a.m.** at the main parking lot near the mansion. Lunch at the Brown Bag in Monticello will follow the bike ride for those interested. If needed, the rain date will be Saturday, May 20.

Birding Walk in Crystal Lake Park: Beth Chato will lead the walk on Saturday, **May 20, at 8:00 a.m.** Participants will meet at the Lake House. This area is



one of the most exciting birding areas during migration. Champaign-Urbana is surrounded by corn and soy bean fields, and the Crystal Lake area especially is an oasis, providing food, shelter, and water for tired birds on their way north or south, sort of a wildlife motel. Ten to twelve people would be about the right number.

Tree Identification Walk: Jamie Ellis will lead a walk in Hessel Park in Champaign on **Sunday, June 11, at 4:00 p.m.** The walk will begin at the Pavilion, where there is parking. Parking is also available on the east side of the park. Jamie will point out interesting trees along the way. He will also give some tips on identification and information on the natural history and ecology of each species. All ages are welcome.

Egg Carton Request

Nani & Malia Baker, small backyard-chicken-flock owners are in need of egg cartons if you have any extra or can save some. We would rather reuse than buy new ones. Much appreciated! The Baker gals.



Community Events



Opportunity to Contribute to Your Health and Our Waterways

The Ninth Annual Illinois Marathon took place in Urbana-Champaign on April 20 - 22, 2017. Our Earth Care Team organized a First Presbyterian Church of Urbana (FPCU) team to raise money for Prairie Rivers Network by participating in their Run/Walk for Clean Water fundraiser. Team members David Bullock, Elizabeth Greeley, Don Greeley, Dixie Jackson, Gary Jackson, Dave Sherwood, Case Sprenkle and Barbara Sturgeon participated in one of the Illinois Marathon events (5K, 10K or half marathon).

The Goal: The FPCU team's financial goal is to raise \$500 or more within our congregation. If the goal of \$500 or more is attained, the FPCU Run/Walk for Clean Water team will contribute an additional \$500.

How to Contribute: Send a check made out to Prairie Rivers Network to the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, 602 West Green Street, Urbana, IL 61801 or contribute on line at the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana's Run/Walk for Clean Water website: www.imathlete.com/donate/ FPCUEarthCareTeam

Thank you for considering contributing to the Run/Walk for Clean Water fundraiser as a response to the Presbyterian Church USA's call to engage in tasks restoring creation.

Symphony of Homes Historic Elm Boulevard, Champaign Sunday, May 7 12:00-5:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$15. Visit five homes from the past century on this charming brick-paved boulevard now a thriving, interactive neighborhood. Presented by The Guild of the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra.

Invitation to Solar Open House Saturday, May 6, 4:00—6:00 p.m. 1406 Maywood Drive, Champaign

Dave and Julie Sherwood residence. Solar Urbana-Champaign 2.0 is a grassroots purchasing program offered by the City of Urbana and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association to enable home and business owners throughout Champaign County to pool their buying power to make installing solar more affordable than ever. Program information is found at <https://t.e2ma.net/click/g2r62b/0xdcdl/wyz62t>

At the open house Dave Sherwood will discuss the experience of recent solar installation and the Midwest Renewable Energy association will deliver a Power Hour Presentation. A representative from New Prairie Construction will be on hand to answer any questions, and light refreshments will be provided.



Rain Barrel & Compost Bin Sale Saturday, May 6, 9 a.m. - noon

Parking lot north of City Building, 208 S. Vine St., Urbana. Take advantage of one-day only bulk pricing for rain barrels and compost bins. Urbana and Champaign residents are eligible for a \$25 rebate for rain barrels with proof of residency such as a utility bill. Sale is open to all. Pre-order now at: www.rainbarrelfundraising.com/Urbana.

Big Tent 2017 Race, Reconciliation, and the Reformation July 6-8th St. Louis, Missouri

Registration is now open for this year's Big Tent that will take place on the campus of Washington University. Through plenary events, Bible study, workshops, and worship, you will be challenged and renewed by the power of the gospel message to overcome our current realities of anxiety, division, and inequality. Go to www.pcusa.org/bigtent for more information.

African Children's Choir Friday, May 5 at 7:00 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church, 701 E. Florida Avenue, Urbana. See the Church bulletin board for more information.

Church Staff

Pastor/Head of Staff – Rev. Dr. David Oliver-Holder
david@FirstPresUrbana.org

Financial Administrator – Rachel Gladden
rachel@FirstPresUrbana.org

Office Manager – Tracy Weddle
Substitute Office Manager – Melissa Records
office@FirstPresUrbana.org

Sexton – Steve Johnson, sjohnson@FirstPresUrbana.org

Director of Music / Organist – position open

Media Support Specialist – Nani Baker
nbaker@firstpresurbana.org

Children’s Choir & Junior Handbell Choir Director –
Jennifer Immke, jenykate14@hotmail.com

Guitarist – Chris Beyt

High School Youth Fellowship Leader – Brian Summers

Toddler/Preschool Caregiver – position open

Nursery Caregiver – Skylar Matteson

AV Technician Coordinator – Ed King

Tenor Section Leader – Alphie 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 Carolyn Conrad and Marianne Manigan for preparing this Open Door for mailing.

Open Door Deadline: For inclusion in the next Open Door, items should be submitted by **Wednesday, May 31** to office@firstpresurbana.org. The Open Door will be mailed on **Wednesday, June 7, 2017**.

First Presbyterian Church of Urbana

602 W Green St, Urbana, IL 61801

(217) 367-8357

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