ANNUAL MEETING AND LIFE INTO 2018

If you attended our Annual Congregational Meeting on the 21st, you took note that we accomplished a lot. We took care of important yearly business items including the election of a new class of officers. Treasurer Bill McCune led us through end of year 2017 figures and the 2018 Budget adopted by Session that includes a $51,000 shortfall in income compared with last year’s pledges. Reserve funds will be used to fill this anticipated gap unless income from other sources comes in.

There were a few ministry updates including our continued concentration on the theme of Bearing Fruit that we began to explore in 2017. This is not just a passing emphasis. It forms the basis of how we look at all aspects of our ministry life and mission during this transitional period. What we explore and learn and apply can shape ministry in dynamic ways for years to come. 2018 is critical to this process.

Another update came from our team of elders (Jeff Clinger, Jon Moll and Pat Smith) whom are watching over the final details of the sale of the north 2.8 acres to Ball State for a new parking structure. The closing date is currently set as February 5th. Jeff shared that there is an on-going commitment for Ball State and church representatives to meet regularly during the planning and building phases to keep abreast of all details. Proceeds from the sale, $433,750, will be available for whatever will enhance our ministry as determined by Session. The congregation will be invited to share ideas. Programs, new ministries, infrastructure needs and plenty of other options will be under consideration.

Aileen Howard informed us that a task force has been formed to look at what we currently provide by way of worship and what might serve us best in the future. Representatives of every ministry impacted by our Sunday morning life are part of this group. We look forward to how any changes might help us be fully aware of not only what we currently experience but what might best help us to bear even greater fruit for those who are part of the church now and those who might come to join us in the future.

The congregation was informed that Cathy Alexander is leaving our staff after ten years of service in three different positions. Her life and ministry exhibited in these roles has made a deep impact on our church and on each of us individually. With her love of people, her love for this church and for the world, her presence on staff will be sorely missed. Her decision to not remain a staff member was made to alleviate part of our projected budget deficit. It did. She will continue to explore where she can serve just like the rest of us “regular members.” We look forward to what she will contribute from a non-staff position!

These are just a few examples of ministry aspects that are in flux as we begin 2018. What else will be revealed? It’s intriguing to consider the possibilities of all that God is preparing for us. I’ve shared before that I consider life an adventure, especially a life by faith in Christ. We never know what’s around the corner, but we can always rest assured that something is, something of which God is fully aware, something being readied to help us trust in God, live for Christ and stand together for all of God’s best.

I look forward to what this year will show us and how we will lean into it with love, compassion and steadfastness by the power of God within us. Every moment provides the opportunity to follow Jesus with all our hearts. May 2018 show us the evidence of this beyond all we ask or imagine.

The Rev. Dr. Pat Smith
OFFICER NOMINATING PROCESS

Every year four members of the congregation-at-large, one current Board of Deacons member and two current Session members are elected to be our Church Nominating Committee. Their primary task is to provide names to be elected as ordained officers of the church—deacons and elders.

The process begins in November with an invitation to the congregation to prayerfully consider whom they would like the committee to consider for the next class of officers. People can submit as many names as they wish including their own. We always receive names of many good people and are grateful for everyone who is willing to serve. The committee then meets, talks about roles and the best people for those roles and develops a list of those they believe should be approached to serve.

Once people agree to serve, those names are shared at the Annual Congregational Meeting. After time to allow for other nominations, an election is held. At this year’s meeting on January 21st, the following were elected to serve in the Class of 2020:

**DEACONS:** Chris Bowles, Don Fields, Jeanne Fields, Heather Rogers, Laura Rogers, Lani Wilson

**SESSION:** Nancy Barefoot, Norm Beck, Patrick Burkey, Myron Earhart, Lance Scholtes, Warren Vander Hill, Julia Wadsworth

We express our appreciation to the Officer Nominating Committee for 2017 who led us through this year’s process. The committee, as elected, consisted of Jacqueline Burton, John Foster, Jim Gooden, Marty Kendrick, Nanette Rushton, Kelly Shrock and Sue Whitaker. Bill McCune was also asked to be involved. They were assisted in their work by their moderator, our Clerk of Session, Clara Rice.

Please remember to pray for these new officers and all our officers throughout the year as they lead and serve us, the Lord Jesus and our ministry.
Join Us!

On Ash Wednesday, February 14, at 6:00 pm, come join us in Fellowship Hall for a simple meal, a communion service will follow at 7:00 pm. Reservations are recommended. Please call the church office or email Gabby at office@firstpresmuncie.org

Note: Our weekly reunion of Wednesday Bible Conversation “Eavesdropping on Jesus” will be cancelled for this day.

REGISTRATION FOR PRE-K IS ALMOST HERE!

BEGINS ON MONDAY- FEBRUARY 5, 2018

Registration will be online at firstpresmuncie.org.

Your child must be of age by August 1.

Please note when you register, your registration fee is due within 72 hours to secure your placement.

Registration fees are non-refundable.

For more information you may contact Tracy Clinger, Director at 751-7960 or tracy@firstpresmuncie.org

Third Thursday

Everyone is welcome for lunch and fellowship in Fellowship Hall at 12:00 noon.

February 15
Homefront-WWII; When the Nation Came Together
Speaker: Rich Harris
To register, call the church office (765-289-4431) or email office@firstpresmuncie.org by Monday, February 12th.

The cost is $3.00.
It has been five years since we began our partnership with the Iglesia Evangélica Dominicana (IED) in Mella, Dominican Republic. In addition to all our church members who supported this ministry with prayers and donations, the following have traveled to the DR to participate directly in the partnership: Alan Simmons, Allison Simmons, Amanda Brown, Autumn Duncan, Brad Southwick, Carrie Jo Miller, Cassie Alexander, Dan Alexander, Dan House, Hyejung Lee, Jack Alexander, Jessica Bryzek, Jessica Burkey, John Foster, Lauren Simmons, Lucas Clay, Mackenzie Clinger, Marie Burkey, Marty Kendrick, Megan Brown, Michelle Kaithchuck, MyungKu Lee, Scott Brown, Sunwoo Lee, Wesley Potter, Tracy Clinger, and me!

We have learned a lot over these 5 years. Our trips have included important elements of a mission trip. We have completed (and funded some construction projects) and have held Bible School in “our” church. Like any good ministry, we have expanded by moving outside the church walls to partner with the local preschool and high school. Our trips are not “mission trips” any longer, they are “family reunions”.

During these 5 years, our Presbytery came alongside our ministry in the Dominican Republic. This has led to a country-wide music program for IED worship leaders, leadership training for IED pastors, and a women’s conference open to all IED women.

Our ministry in the Dominican Republic is at an appropriate turning point. Not only should we celebrate our five year partnership, but we should also look ahead to the next five years. What should our partnership look like now? What is God calling us to do differently? With a new pastor, Pastor Freddy Medina at our church (our dear Pastor Luis has moved to a church San Juan de la Maguana), it is an especially good time to look ahead. What is God calling Pastor Freddy to do in Mella and how can we come alongside???

On February 19-22, Dan and I will join a small Presbytery team to travel to the DR to do just this…to look ahead, to discern what God is calling us to do in partnership with our friends in the DR. We will carry Dorcas baskets with us (thanks for the donations). We will meet with Rev. Cancu and Jo Ella Holman, PCUSA mission co-worker. We will travel to Mella to build relationship with Pastor Freddy.

Your prayers for safe travel and for discernment would be greatly appreciated!

Cathy Alexander

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**Dee Dah Day**

Women’s Book Study & Prayer Group

Join us for the Dee Dah Day women’s fellowship.

We meet every 2nd and 4th Friday at 9:00 starting with Coffee/Snacks, and follow with book study.

If you have any questions, please contact Barb Ottinger at 765-289-4080 or email lkbaott59@comcast.net

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**2018 Per Capita**

Please help offset First Pres’ Per Capita expense to Presbytery for 2018 by reimbursing the church for the per capita (*$39.05*) of each FPC member in your family. Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian, memo: “Per Capita”. Thank you!
In December, 2014, Carrie Jo Miller, Barry Sumner (Zionsville PC), and I had the privilege to travel to the Dominican Republic to visit Iglesia Evangélica Church leaders in the south-west corner of the country. This part of the Dominican Republic (DR) is six hours from the capital of Santo Domingo and very close to the Haitian border. According to PCUSA missionary, Jo Ella Holman, this area of the DR is the poorest part of the country and the least served by outside groups.

During our visit, we met with several pastors, their families and church leaders. It was a wonderful experience and we got to know fellow believers who have an incredible faith and spirit. We were uplifted by their love of God, their worship and focus on sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in their communities.

At the church in Jaquimeyes, Pastora Alfreda told us how the women of the church help each other with “Dorcas baskets”. Many of you will recognize Dorcas from Acts 9:36. “Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity.” For a Dorcas basket, each woman donates a food item (valued at 50 pesos or less) for the basket. Then, a woman is chosen to receive the Dorcas basket. Why does the Jacquimeyes church do this? A Dorcas basket helps supplement what the family is able to buy and eases the burden of feeding a family.

We also heard from the women of Pastora Alfreda’s church about how difficult it is to acquire basic craft items (crayons, glue sticks, etc) for children’s activities, such as vacation Bible school. As we were brainstorming with the church leaders, we came up with the idea to provide a Dorcas basket of craft items for each of the churches we visited.

This is where we need your help! Our Presbytery goal is to make 11 VBS Craft Dorcas Baskets. Please donate items from the list below. Various teams from our Presbytery will take the baskets to the DR. The deadline for donations is February 4.

Thank you in advance for your donations! Cathy Alexander

**Needed supplies:** hole punch, staplers and staples, stickers (animals, trees, etc.)
Korean Language School has been opened by the International Congregation for foreign students, children, and adults.

We are in the conference Room every Sunday at 1:30 p.m.
Tuition is free, everyone is welcome!

Volunteer at Christian Ministries Sleeping Room

Since Sunday, January 28th and until Saturday, February 3rd our church has been preparing and serving meals to men at Christian Ministries.
Breakfast is from 6 to 7:30 a.m. and dinner is from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at their Sleeping Room upstairs at 401 E. Main Street.
Please come with a friend and bring a prepared dish or cook food which is there.
Sign-up sheets are at the information desk. Thank you!

Wednesday’s Bible Conversations
Eavesdropping on Jesus: What’s He Really Up To?

Participants look at each text of the “Life Clues” sermon series the week before that text is preached. The series explores deep conversations Jesus has with various people and the miracles recorded in John’s Gospel.

Everyone is invited to these stimulating conversations in the Lounge, from 6:00-7:00 p.m. we started on January 10 and will continue until April 11.

Volunteers always welcome!
Kitchen volunteers at 12:30 to 3:00 pm and Delivery drivers at 2:30 pm
A sign up sheet is located on the bulletin board, behind the information desk.

Salvation Army Pantry Item For February: Personal hygiene items

(soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc.).
Please place your donation(s) in the cart in Fellowship Hall.
Join our team of Volunteer Bus Drivers

Here’s an easy volunteer opportunity…providing Sunday morning transportation for our Westminster Village members.

The church bus is very easy to drive and doesn’t require a special license.

The bus leaves the parking lot at 10:20 to arrive at Westminster around 10:30 am.

The group is in the main lobby waiting for the bus (pull under the overhang).

After the service, you bring the van to the circle to pick up the group.

If you have any questions, ask one of our current drivers: Cathy Alexander, Jeff Clinger, Tim Koontz, Jonathan Schmidt, Claudia Sursa and Bob Wadsworth.

If you would be willing to drive, please contact the church office 765-289-4431.

A reminder email with the schedule will be sent out weekly.

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Support our South View Food Pantry

Volunteers are welcome to distribute food at South View from 4:45 to 7:00 on the following dates:

- February 22
- March 22
- April 26
- May 24

Email Cathy Alexander if you would like to be part of this wonderful ministry!

cathy@firstpresmuncie.org

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Flower Calendar 2018

If you wish to provide flowers for a Sunday worship service, please sign up on the Flower Calendar posted behind the information desk.

You will be contacted in advance of the date you request.

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We Need Liturgists

Liturgists for the 11:00 am services are needed.

If you are willing to serve as a Scripture reader for a Sunday service, please sign up on the bulletin board behind the information desk or contact Gabby at (office@firstpresmuncie.org or call 765-289-4431).

Readings for the week will be emailed to you or a copy can be picked up in the office.

Thank you!

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info@firstpresmuncie.org

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:

8:30 a.m.—Contemporary Services
11:00 a.m.—International Service (Chapel)
11:00 a.m.—Traditional Service

The Rev. Dr. Pat Smith, Interim Pastor
rpatsmith@firstpresmuncie.org

The Rev. Dr. Myungku Lee, Associate Pastor
9brights@firstpresmuncie.org

Carrie Jo Miller, Commissioned Ruling Elder
cjmiller3501@comcast.net

Tracy Clinger, Director of Pre-Kindergarten
tracy@firstpresmuncie.org

Lisa Ulrich, Business Administrator
lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

Gabriela Burciaga, Administrative Assistant
office@firstpresmuncie.org

Lucas Clay, Building Superintendent
lhclay96@gmail.com
The Gospel of John

During Advent and Christmas we enjoyed a full celebration of the birth of Jesus. As we step into a new year it’s a good time to pick up the rest of the story in order to discover who he was and what he sought to accomplish. Our sources are the mini-biographies of Jesus called the Gospels, the “Good News.” This winter, we will walk through one of these documents called, The Gospel According to John.

If we take a face value what the Bible says, this man John knew Jesus well. He was among the first to become a disciple of Jesus. His declared reason for writing his treatment of Jesus and his ministry is “that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

John’s gospel includes moments in Jesus’ ministry that provide compelling clues about himself, about faith and about big picture realities related to God and all creation. These startling clues are given in a series of conversations and miracles. With each of these events, Jesus points out something deeply important for those who were with him then and for us today.

Come join us as we examine these “life clues” in the months ahead. Each of these clues might lead to vital discoveries for us all.

February 4  For the Shunned  4:1-26
February 11  Loss Becomes Gain  4:43-54
February 14  Ash Wednesday - Lame Walk  5:1-9
February 18  Hungry Are Fed  6:1-5