The number twenty is noteworthy as you pick up this edition of our Columns newsletter. So is the number fifty as in fifty percent or halfway. I'll be glad to explain.

As May 2018 begins, I will have been your pastor for twenty months. For over a year-and-a-half, we've traveled together into charted and uncharted territory. It doesn't take much imagination to know that charted territory is defined space, known space. Whether we've gone that way before or others have, there is at least some knowledge available to us so that we can be better informed about current realities and what lies ahead.

Uncharted territory takes us into areas about which we know nothing or at least next to nothing. Perhaps we have no hard information about what lies around us and before us, but there is something that keeps us moving forward. Our movement might be tenuous or we may keep on with a bold and adventurous spirit. No matter, there will be much to see and experience, because the new is all around us.

I'm glad to be on this journey with you both for the longer view and for this coming month. In the longer view, we are at about the middle (or the fifty percent mark) of a projected three-year-time frame for this intentional interim period. I've written in months past about how we view this time of transition from one pastor (J. D.) to the next (unknown but greatly anticipated!).

One view is that we just hold steady. In this scenario, my role would be as a place holder, utilizing my gifts to love and support you as we wait for what is to come when you call a new pastor. The other view is the one I've asked you to adopt. This view is that our time is to be received as a strategic time for God to lead us to stretch and go deep as best we can with God's help. This is a path that invites, stirs and even demands that we take a hard look at who we have been, who we are and who we believe God wants us to be.

This more rigorous way is not the easy way. We know that to be true, don't we? We've made decisions that haven't come easy or left us all on the same page. For instance, this past month Session unanimously approved a task force recommendation to move to a one-service Sunday morning schedule at 10:00 starting on September 9th. While we all likely support everything that helps us build a sense of togetherness and community, we may not prefer to adjust our preferences (time of worship, style of music or communion). Yet, with all our individuality, we can all make the adjustments in order to come to worship as one body.

Uncharted waters also can bring obviously wonderful opportunities! Jan McCune shared a Minute for Mission from the Bearing Fruit Harvesters on Sunday, April the 22nd about two very special developments on the horizon. Please read the full report in these pages about (1) our being one of thirty-one congregations in Indiana to be accepted into the Centers for Congregations Mutual Ministry Project, and (2) our Second Bearing Fruit Weekend, June 8-10. Rev. Deb Mitchell, lately of Southern California and now of Indianapolis, is a fellow traveler of the way of Jesus who has a deep heart for God and for the Church and years of leadership in congregational missional development. The whole congregation, all weekend event of great importance includes a Friday night dinner and presentation, Saturday morning and afternoon sessions and Sunday worship.

I offer a word of thanks to some very special people. Three staff members will leave us this month. We knew when they joined us in their respective ministry roles that their time with us would be finite due to their degree programs coming to a close at Ball State. With deep appreciation for Lucas Clay (Building Superintendent), Anna Buck (Worship Leader at 8:30 worship) and Ben Weaver (Organist), I offer my sincere thanks to each of them for all they have done among us for the glory of God.

As we travel into May, may we fully invest ourselves in the journey and look forward to all that lies before us.

Pat
BEARING FRUIT UPDATE

Reverend Pat’s latest sermon series is entitled “God’s Message on the Move.” That is an apt description of what is happening in First Presbyterian, Muncie.

I want to share two sightings of God on the move in our midst.

God on the Move #1:

Last month I reported to you that Harvesters took a step into the unknown when we mailed off a program grant application to the Center for Congregations. This week I received word that we are one of 31 congregations chosen to participate in their intensive multi-year program. During that time, we will develop and implement a new mutual ministry in and with our community.

Myron Earhart Marty Kendrick and I will attend a series of 5 educational sessions starting next month and ending in February. May and June’s classes will prepare us to run listening sessions with both our church and community members to hear what both groups perceive as the most critical needs in Muncie. We also want to hear everyone’s ideas, talents, and passions which will help us discover a joint mutual ministry. Next February our church/community partnership will apply for up to $30,000 in matching funds to launch our new mutual ministry.

Thank you for your prayers and encouragement on this exciting new venture.

God on the Move #2:

Last year, 192 people attended the first Bearing Fruit weekend where Ray Jones shared his vision for transforming the church with a capital C. The Harvesters group, the mutual ministry grant, the peanut butter and jelly drive for Cardinal Kitchen, and the Salvation Army Soup and Sandwich benefit last December are all outgrowths of that weekend.

Mark your calendars for June 8-10 for the Second Bearing Fruit Weekend. It will follow the basic structure of last year’s: Friday night dinner with keynote speaker, Saturday workshops, and Sunday service. Rev. Deb Mitchell, a Presbyterian minister will facilitate the weekend. She has a wonderful life story. Born in Ft. Wayne, she attended Purdue and worked her way up the corporate ladder to become a VP at AT&T. Sensing a deeper call, she graduated from seminary and became the director of Presbyterian Urban Ministries in the San Diego Presbytery where she worked with the needy and homeless. She also became a specialist in revitalizing existing churches and worked with 6 different Presbyterian churches in San Diego. Two of those churches later hired her as an interim pastor. She and her husband, Mitch, recently returned to Indiana and live in Indianapolis. Her proposed weekend retreat sounds exciting, uplifting and relevant to where we are as a congregation. You will get a sneak preview of Rev. Mitchell on May 6 when she preaches and conducts Sunday School.

#3: It’s Your Move:

A. Thank God for all the new opportunities that have come our way. Keep praying for God’s direction for our church and for you personally as we move forward.

B. Attend a listening session and participate in the mutual ministry process in any way you can. Be part of the Second Bearing Fruit Weekend June 8-10.

Finally, if you are excited about what is going on, we are always looking for enthusiastic go-getters on the Harvesters committee. Talk to John Foster or me if that sounds like you.

Thank you, Jan McCune
Update from Finance Committee

Re: Proceeds from the Sale of Land

Closing on the sale of land to Ball State occurred on February 5, 2018. We received, after closing costs, $432,455, which is now invested at two local banks, earning 1.25% interest, while decisions were and are being made for its use.

The first commitment was to pay back a loan from the Endowment Fund to the Capital Campaign to make improvements to Youth Hall (which had been an unusable space) and to pay the Capital Campaign consultant. The remaining balance of the loan, including interest, was $126,627, and has now been paid. The Endowment Fund’s earnings are used to pay for routine repairs and maintenance for building and grounds, including church bus and elevator maintenance expenses. Prior to 2018, the General Fund operating budget paid for grounds, church bus expenses and elevator maintenance expenses.

The Center for Congregations program grant, which we just received, includes the strong possibility of receiving a cash grant of up to $30,000, depending on our submitting a viable program proposal. Receipt of this grant would be contingent upon our providing an equal amount. Therefore, $30,000 has been set aside for this purpose. This money will not be spent before some time in February, 2019.

Session recently approved three projects recommended as extremely necessary by the Building Committee. The projects are: replacement of a boiler for $46,045 (the new boiler will yield savings in our utilities budget), Bride’s room repairs estimated at $10,000, and extensive masonry wall repairs on the north and west sides of the building, totaling $130,750. Some of this money will be spent in the very near future.

To summarize, $126,627 has been paid to the Endowment Fund, reducing the total available funds to $305,828. Of this remaining amount, $216,795 has been committed, leaving $89,033 still uncommitted. This amount will increase with interest earnings. As of the end of March, $450 had been earned in interest on the full $432,455.

The Building Committee has identified approximately $200,000 that will need to be spent in the next one to two years. These are needs, rather than desirables. At the time of the planning for the Capital Campaign, these were on the list of needed fixes.

As more decisions and commitments are made, we will update you.

“Talk Abouts”

Australian Aboriginal traditions required boys to go on walkabout as a months long period of individual travel and subsistence living for personal challenge and spiritual deepening. It was what took a boy to adulthood.

Borrowing from this concept, we will be offering everyone the opportunity to “Talk About” as part of our First Pres experience the rest of this year. Built on some of what we’ve done already this year, these Talk About sessions will give us an opportunity to hear more related to various meaningful and vital parts of our ministry. We’ll gather the first Sunday of each month in Fellowship Hall for presentations and discussions from 9:45-10:30.

On May 6th, we welcome Rev. Deb Mitchell who will facilitate a discussion about how our 21st Century context for ministry as a congregation can be understood in fresh and dynamic ways in light of the 1st Century realities Jesus and his first followers faced. This Talk About is in conjunction with our on-going emphasis on bearing fruit.

We hope you will be with us on the 6th and also mark your calendars for every first Sunday of the Summer and Fall for these timely and meaningful presentations and conversations.
Everyone is welcome for lunch and fellowship in Fellowship Hall at 12:00 noon.

May 17
Speakers: Ron Naylor and Woody Noblitt, retired pastor of First Baptist Church.

To register, call the church office (765-289-4431) or email office@firstpresmuncie.org by Monday, May 14. The cost is $5.00
**Find Your Voice!**

Have you always wondered what it’s like to sing in the Chancel Choir but didn’t want the extra time commitment? We have an offer for you!

During the month of May, the choir meets each Sunday at 10:30 to learn an anthem for the 11:00 service. No mid-week rehearsal.

Anyone with previous choral experience is welcome to join the May Choir. Contact Kerry Glann to express interest. kglann@bsu.edu

Anyone interested in providing Special Music for summer services (8:30 & 11:00, June – August) should look for a sign-up sheet in the Choir Room in the coming weeks.

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**Building Repairs Are Coming:***

1. **Exterior Masonry Demolition and Rebuild** to the NW and NE areas of the church will begin shortly. This project is slated to take 6 weeks weather permitting. Parking will be restricted in the West Parking lot during the time. Anticipated start time of April 30th.

2. **Boiler #1 replacement** will begin May/June. No known time frame for completion. Guaranteed Heat this winter.

3. **Roof and Spouting Repair** outside the Brides Room Bow window will begin when weather is dry and temps above 50 degrees consistently.

Thank you to those who took time out of their busy schedules to attend on Sunday Talk About on April 22nd and learn of the needs of our aging property. Should anyone have a question or concern regarding these repairs and future needs, please contact me via e-mail at tdclinger@yahoo.com.

Prayerfully, Jeff Clinger
Building Committee Moderator

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Join your First Pres friends for the popular Indianapolis Symphony summer event at the **Symphony on the Prairie.**

**Friday, June 29**

We will leave the church parking lot around 5:00 for those who want to use the church bus.

We need at least 10 people to have a picnic table down in front. Estimated cost is $35 per person.

Reservations are needed by June 22.
First Pres was delighted to have Ball State Graduating Senior Ryon Herin preach on Sunday, April 22. Ryon is from Frankfort, Indiana and is completing his undergraduate honors degree in psychology. He’s made his home with us during his years at the university. Our university ministry and music ministry have been his major investments. He sings in our Chancel Choir and serves as a liturgist.

Session welcomed Ryon into the membership of the church last year. He has been endorsed by our Session and received by our presbytery’s Commission on Preparation for Ministry as an Inquirer, the first step in his process of being ordained to ministry within the PCUSA. He’ll spend his summer as a youth ministry intern at Village Church of Prairie Village, Kansas (suburban Kansas City) and start seminary this Fall at Princeton Theological Seminary.

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 Koons, 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.

First Presbyterian Church will be closed on Monday, May 28th in observance of Memorial Day.

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.

Hirons’ Salvation Army Food Pantry needs help!

Please help replenish this fund which purchases food for the pantry beyond individual donations. Checks to FPC, memo Hirons. Thank You!

Women’s Book Study & Prayer Group

The Dee Dah Day women’s fellowship is currently studying the book: The Gift of Years--Growing Older Gracefully, by Joan Chittister

Our Spring Gathering will be at the Delaware Country Club on Friday, May 25 at 11:30 am.

(Reservation information: Linda Green (765-744-5979/lgreenern@aol.com) by Tuesday, May 22)

If you have any questions, please contact Barb Ottinger at 765-289-4080 or email lkbaott59@comcast.net
Korean Language School has been opened by the International Congregation for students, children, and adults. We are in the Conference Room every Sunday at 1:30 p.m. Tuition is free, everyone is welcome!

We Need Liturgists for the 11:00 am services. If you want to serve as a Scripture reader for a Sunday service, please sign up on the bulletin board, call 765-289-431 or email office@firstpresmuncie.org

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

Campus Ministry Conference in NCKPC of PCUSA April 9-12, 2018.

Pastor Myungku Lee is the Director of NSKPC of PCUSA.

He presided the Annual National Conference in Atlanta, GA, where approximately 37 pastors and their wives attended from all over the country.

Salvation Army Pantry Item for May: Peanut Butter and Jelly

Please place your donation(s) in the cart in Fellowship Hall.

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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
lhcley96@gmail.com

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.
Jesus’ public ministry years came to a seemingly disastrous end when he was betrayed and crucified. The movement that he and his apprentices precipitated had its highs and lows, periods of immense popularity and also of unbridled opposition. There were people who adored Jesus and those who hated him. The haters win out.

Then, the totally unexpected happened. His followers started saying that Jesus, once dead and buried, was alive.

They talked about his appearances to them in various places over several weeks. At the end of that time, those who knew Jesus as Rabbi, Master and Messiah, began to share this belief with others.

Over the next seven weeks, we will look at some of the pivotal moments as the Good News of God’s life-giving love begins to take hold back in the First Century. There are implications for us in the Twenty-First Century, too. Come explore how “Good News on the Move” starts to change the entire world for all time.

May 6–God Goes Before  
Acts 10:44–48

May 13–In the Right Seat  
Acts 1:15–17, 21–26

May 20–Bewilderment Gives Way  
Pentecost  
Acts 2:1–21

May 27–God Fully Present  
Trinity Sunday  
Isaiah 6:1–8