



The CHIMES

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights

November/December 2020

Choose love. Be the light. Change the world.

From the Pastor **Manna from Heaven**

by Rev. Alex Lang, Head of Staff

When I was growing up in Virginia, my parents ensured that I had everything I needed and much of what I wanted. My mom was definitely the softy of my two parents. Whereas my dad would grumble, “We can’t afford it,” my mother would often say, “Well, maybe just this once.” My mother’s attitude towards gifts was the result of her own childhood where her requests were frequently shot down. In an effort to give me the childhood she never had, my mother compensated by giving me most everything I desired.



Not a bad deal. But then the stock market crash of 1987 changed everything. My father was a stock broker and his business was obliterated. His investment firm paid a salary of \$200 a month. Everything else was based on commissions. There were some months in 1988 where my father was only bringing home that \$200 salary. On top of this, we had just bought a new house and my little sister had entered our family. As you might imagine, our finances were in freefall.

At the time, I was eight years old. My parents did their best to hide their financial problems from me, but I could tell the situation was bad. There was a lot more stress in the house. My clothes were getting a bit small for me and not being replaced and, most importantly, the steady stream of new toys dried up. Our money was being diverted to the basics—food, bills, transportation.

Eventually, my father had a very hard conversation with me. If I wanted extras, I would have to earn them myself because we were barely getting by. It wasn’t long after this that I began my lawn mowing career. I remember how that situation taught me a lot about life—nothing is guaranteed and everything can change on a dime.

Throughout this entire time, I remember my family going to church almost every Sunday. Many of the kids in my church were in the same boat. One or both family members

had lost their jobs. There was one Sunday where a girl in my class began crying because she was afraid her family might lose their home. I distinctly remember on that Sunday, our teacher sat all the kids down and started teaching about the story of the Israelites being lost in the wilderness.

She told us that they were scared like us because they didn’t know what was going to happen next, but at every step along the way, God provided manna from heaven. The heavens rained down bread to feed and sustain their families. She ended the lesson by saying, “God sustained the Israelites during their difficult time and God will sustain you during your difficult time.”



This remarkable story brought me comfort in 1988 and it has kept me grounded during the pandemic. This year, more than any year in recent memory, has been a time of wandering in the wilderness. With so much volatility, our church is the one place I can turn where I’m reminded that, like the Israelites, God will provide. Our community has been a rock for so many people, helping them navigate the uncertainty of the last six months. Now we need your help so that we can continue offering hope and respite.

This year we are hoping that you will commit to being the **Manna from Heaven** that will ensure we can continue to provide uplifting worship, pastoral care, mission, and programs. Your financial commitment will allow God’s gifts in your life to be made new, enabling us to serve those inside and outside the walls of our church.

If you can afford to give what you gave last year, please do so. If you can afford to give a little more, even if it’s a few hundred dollars, that can make huge difference because there will be people in difficult financial circumstances who cannot afford to support the church. If you’ve never made a commitment before, a great starting point is \$35 a week. That comes out to \$1,820 for the year for an individual, and \$3,640 for a couple. Of course, if you can give more, every dollar helps.

Stewardship continued from page 1

When you write down your financial contribution for Commitment Sunday on November 8, I ask that you prayerfully consider how your commitment to First Pres will make a tangible difference in sustaining our congregation during this difficult time. Together, our community will build

God's kingdom by sharing manna with our broken world. 🕊



Christmas Joy Offering

by Phyllis Orzechowski, Mission Committee Chair

Looking for the perfect gift? Trying to find a gift that communicates how well you know or love someone? Family? Friend? Boss?

We all want to find the perfect gift to express our feelings toward others. God gave the perfect gift to us. Jesus came to live among us, bringing light and love into our world. Jesus was the greatest leader, teaching us to love and give to others. Leaders impact our lives in so many ways, our lives of faith, and are role models for our own journeys of faith.

During Advent, we celebrate the gift of leaders through the Christmas Joy Offering. This offering supports leaders from Presbyterian-related schools and colleges that educate communities of color, so that the wideness of God's intended diversity is reflected to all. Well-equipped future leaders are needed for the church. This offering also supports church leaders and their families dealing with critical financial needs.

The Christmas Joy Offering is evenly distributed with 50% going to Providing Opportunities for Communities of Color (Leadership Development) and 50% for Giving Back (Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions).

This year the Christmas Joy Offering will be collected from November 29 through December 20. See page 3 for how to donate online or by check.

Take a moment to think of the leaders in your life that had an impact on you. Would you be where you are today without them? Would you be who you are today without them? Please give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering so that great leaders will continue to be developed for future generations and to also provide financial assistance to past leaders. 🕊

Advent 2020

by Rev. Alex Lang, Head of Staff



Once again, the season of Advent is upon us, but this is unlike any Advent in recent memory. As we prepare for the birth of Jesus, we find ourselves wondering—what exactly will Christmas look like in the era of COVID? Will we be able to gather with family and friends? Will we be able to exchange presents? Will we be able to go caroling so that we can spread Christmas cheer? The unknowns are palpable.

Since the entire world feels backwards and upside down, I realize that the birth of Jesus is a grounding force for us as Christians. For me, I find the person of Jesus to be remarkable. His birth inspires me to strive to be my very best, even in the midst of a world that often brings out the worst in us. Jesus is the one thing we can count on in this topsy-turvy world. Jesus is our rock. So I want to take time during Advent to talk about how he can ground us in the year to come.

Our sermon series during Advent is entitled **Through the Looking Glass**. The title comes from the



follow-up to the famous children's story **Alice in Wonderland**. Alice once again enters into a fantastical world, but this time she does so by climbing through a mirror. There she finds that, just like a reflection, everything is reversed, including logic. For instance, running helps you remain stationary, walking away from something brings you towards it, chessmen are alive, nursery rhyme characters exist, etc.

I read that and thought to myself, "Sounds like the world we're living in right now. It's all backwards." The beauty of this story is that it exposes the paradoxical nature of human existence, which is exactly what Jesus does for us. Jesus shows us that if we want to become like him, we often have to embrace the opposite of what our nature tells us to do.


For instance, if we want to be strong, Jesus tells us to embrace our weakness. If we want to be intelligent, we have to embrace how little we actually know. If you want to overcome your enemy, you don't fight them, you love them. Every sermon title represents a paradoxical element of the human condition and how Jesus contains that element within himself.

The hope through this sermon series is that you will come to understand the beauty of Jesus' birth from a completely different perspective. Yes, Jesus brings us hope because he is the embodiment of God's love in the world, but he also brings us hope because he helps us to fully become the person who God intended us to be. We need wholeness in this fractured world and Jesus helps us achieve wholeness by becoming the best of what we were meant to be. 🕊

Flowers For Worship

Add a touch of beauty to worship! The **Presbyterian Women's Flower Committee** is accepting donations for flowers in the worship service throughout the year with a \$25 suggested donation for each memorial request.

There are two ways to sign up for flowers, **online** or by sending a **check**. Be sure to choose "Flowers - Sunday PW" from the Select a Fund drop down when giving online, or write "PW Flowers" in the memo section of your check. In "Optional Memo" box put in requested date of memorial or celebration and exact details how you would like it to appear in the bulletin. Thank you so much for your support!!

For more information, contact Sue Henderson at suhenco@comcast.net or 847-804-1682. 




Christopher House Christmas Gifts

Normally, at this time of year, we would be thinking about adopting Christopher House families and buying, wrapping, and delivering Christmas gifts for them. Sadly, we cannot do that this year because of the pandemic. Fortunately, we have an excellent alternative – contributing to the Christopher House Thrive Fund. This fund exists to assist families who are struggling to pay major bills, such as rent or utilities. The pandemic has hit the Christopher House community very hard, so these donations are needed now more than ever. As of August, over 60 families received assistance from the Thrive Fund.

Between November 1 and December 15, you may contribute to the Thrive Fund online or by check – see How to Give info.

Be sure to choose "PW - Food Drive" from the Select a Fund drop down when giving online, or write "Thrive Fund" in the memo section of your check.

Hopefully, at this time next year, we can return to our tradition of buying gifts for the families. In the meantime, your monetary gifts will be a great help during these difficult times. Thank you! For more information, contact Fran Spencer at fran109spencer@yahoo.com, 847-767-2334 or Liz Thompson at lizbt85@yahoo.com, 847-537-9087 co-chairpersons. 

How to Give Online or by Check


For all of the programs on this page and many others, you can give either online or send in a check.

To Donate Online – on the church's website:

1. Go to www.firstpresab.org.
2. Click on "**GIVE**" which is the top line of the website.
3. Click on the blue **GIVE NOW** button.
4. Type in the amount, choose the name of the fund under "Select a fund" add a memo and your email.
5. Click **CONTINUE**.
6. If you're not logged in, it will ask you to log in, or continue as a guest. If you log in, your payment info will be saved to make it easier to give next time.
7. Fill out your Payment Details and click **GIVE**.

To Donate by Check – send a check to the Church Office made out to FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH and write the name of the fund to which you are donating in the memo.

Mail your check to:

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights,
302 North Dunton Ave., Arlington Heights, IL 60004 

Giving

Support the Ministries and Missions of First Presbyterian Church

At First Pres, we are centered on building the kingdom of God in our community and across the globe. Three simple phrases guide our work: **Choose love. Be the light. Change the world.**

Will you help?

GIVE NOW.


Firman House Winter Items



Last year, the winter items collected were valued gifts to the children of Firman House and the donations were greatly appreciated. Please keep these young children in mind again this year! Instead of picking out hats, mittens, and scarfs, think of the amount you would pay and donate that so these items may be purchased and given to the families of Firman House.

You can donate to Firman House either online or by check - see How to Give info.

Be sure to choose "PW - Food Drive" from the Select a Fund drop down when giving online, or write "Firman House" in the memo section of your check.

Your donations mean so much to these children. Questions? Contact Kathy Doering at doering.kathy.m@gmail.com or 847-255-4364. 


PADS Update

by Michele Holifield

Since March 2020, First Pres has provided meals for Journeys clients who are staying at two Arlington Heights hotels. The week begins with many church members and friends dropping off donations of food, mailing checks, making online donations, and signing up to work once a week. Once a week, the week continues when several people meet at 6:30 am to prepare, package, and deliver up to 85 breakfasts and lunches. Then at 5:30 pm, another group of people meet to package and deliver dinner. In October, we started to deliver food boxes, providing breakfast and lunch

to 30 people for one week. It is with profound gratitude that the PADS food team thanks all those listed below for their unwavering support during this time of great need.

At this time, Journeys and PADS sites have determined that it is not a safe option to open the many shelter sites in our area. Funding has been secured to house everyone in the area hotels at least through the end of December. Journeys is actively working to ensure the safety of their clients beyond December with additional funding.

If you are not already involved with our meals ministry or would like more information on the PADS program, please contact the PADS food team at padsfood@firstpresah.org. 

Thank you VOLUNTEERS!

- Kristi Adrowski
- Amanda and Greg Agami
- Kurt and Mary Ahlers
- Bob and Nancy Ahrens
- Betsy and Mark Allen
- Katy and May Allen
- TC and Ellen Anderson
- Richard and Betty Arnold
- Deb Artman
- Nancy Ashe
- Anders and Adam Benson
- Dave and Linda Berkow
- Wendy and Bruce Blanck
- Dick Breeden
- Lee and Dawn Bruce
- Kelly Campbell
- Dan, Laura and Mikayla Carlson
- Tom and Susan Carroll
- Cerniglia Family
- Curt and Lori Chandler
- Courtney Childs
- Bill and Jo Christian
- Liza, Bob, Spencer and Jack Churchill
- Chris Conroy
- Erin Cooney
- Sally Costello
- Ben Couture
- Kelly, Bailey and Reagan Dean
- Kathy and Hayden Dieringer
- Bill and Cathy Dillon
- Sam and Jan Dix
- Karen Felch
- Cathy Felix
- Paula Fendius
- Sharon Ferdinand
- Kris Ford
- Jim and Marilyn Graves
- Ed and Cathy Harding
- Bob and Alison Harrald
- Don and Lois Hartung
- Amy Hempleman
- Susan Henderson
- Kim and David Hogan
- Ian Hogan
- Don and Ruth Howard
- Michele, Susannah and Charlie Holifield
- Megan Howe
- Amy Huchthausen
- Karen Hughes
- Don and Nancy Johnson
- Bob and Dianne Kappus
- Jim and Ingrid Kaufman
- Lauren Kelleher
- Marty Kraybill
- Tom Krigas
- Landwehr Family
- Connie Landwehr
- Betty Launer
- Sharon LeFevre
- Richard and Marilyn Levinsky
- Rob and Nancy Lincoln
- Kristin Lindstrom
- Laura Liston
- Leah Lorenzo
- Mollie and Amy Lumsden
- Bob and Mary Mamoyac
- Joe and Katie Marr
- Larry, Cathy and Grace Martin
- Jeff and Carrie Martinka
- Jim and Mary Mayer
- Matt McCormick
- Cathy Mataloni
- Menninga Family
- Michalczyk Family
- Pam Miller
- Jim and Jeri Monroe
- Donna Myers
- Jan Niemeyer
- Patty Noble
- Earl and Gloria Oak
- Pam Orals
- Mark, Phyllis, Alex and Matt Orzechowski
- Tom and Nancy Pardo
- Steve Provancal
- Laura Puckett
- Eric Reiswig
- Patricia Richard
- Jan and Sandy Richardson
- Helen Ross
- Katy Rossi
- Debbie Rowells
- Amy Schaezzen
- Susan Schuffler
- Ed Slivovsky
- Amy Sonderegger
- Fran and Ross Spencer
- Frank and Jody Stanhope
- Shantelle Thomas
- Bill and Liz Thompson
- JoAnn Thompson
- Sara Thornton
- Jane Treppa
- Danielle Voyles
- Marc and Katie Washco
- Amy Welzenbach
- Bruce and Nancy Williams
- Al and Karen Wilson
- Chuck, Patty and Jackson Yedor

News From Presbyterian Women



We had a “ZOOMing” good time with our first Circle meeting in September, led by Gladys Holtz and Rev. Judy Hockenberry, on a perfect topic *The Heart of Lament, ways to express in prayer our needs for help and guidance.*

Please join us on **October 21, at 9:00 am**, as we discuss “*Lamenting Together*” and on **November 18**, as we discuss “*Women’s Lament*” both found in the Bible Study “*Into the Light*”.

Circles 1-3 will be gathering on Zoom for our Circle meeting on **December 9, at 9:00 am**.

A very special Christmas event, “*Memories of Christmas Past*”, will be held on **December 16, at 1:00 pm**. Meet Amy Meadows, the former head of decorations for Christmas at Marshall Fields (*see below*).

PW continues to support

- Faith Community Homes collection for needed supplies
- Christopher and Firman House Food Drives
- Christopher House Thrive Fund for Christmas
- Firman House Winter Items
- Flowers for Worship

Thank you for your support and generosity! You make a big difference in so many lives in the communities all around us. Want to know how to join us? Contact Gladys Holtz at: gladysholtz@comcast.net or 847-394-1216. 📞

Memories Of Christmas Past

Imagine what it would be like to manage all the decorating for Marshall Fields for Christmas.



Join us for our very special Presbyterian Women’s Christmas Gathering! On **December 16, at 1:00 pm**, you are invited to join Amy Meadows, the former Director of

Decorations for Marshall Fields’ windows, giant Christmas tree, and decorations on all levels. Hear her stories and see wonderful decorations from the past. This is an inspiration to start thinking about decorating your own home for Christmas. All are welcome to view this program via Zoom. To join the holiday magic, send your reservation to



Wendy Blanck at blanckfamily@sbcglobal.net by December 13. You will receive the Zoom link on December 14. Questions? Contact Wendy! 📞

Church Women United

Unfortunately, due to the Pandemic, Church Women United has chosen not to have a World Community Day service this year, usually held in November. Church Women United is always working for a world of justice and peace, especially for woman and children.

We encourage you to vote in this very important election, whether it be by mail, in-person, or early voting. Voting is a very essential way to help turn our goals into reality. We want to let you know you are in our thoughts and prayers! 📞

Advent Candle Lighters

We are looking for individuals or groups of people who would like to be part of our annual Advent Candle Lighting tradition. This year will be a little different due to COVID-19. We do not expect to be worshipping in person during December. We will be recording the Advent Candle Lightings in advance of the actual Sunday. The recordings will take place in our Chapel and we can work together for your convenience. Please consider volunteering for this opportunity by contacting Pastor Judy at Judyhockenberry@firstpresah.org. 📞



Sign up today to be part of our Advent Candle Lighting

From the Conductor's Stand

by Adam Hendrickson, Director of Music and Worship

November and December will see the first of our 2020-2021 Virtual Concerts take place. Many of you received a letter in the mail, outlining the details of this concert series. While donations to the series are appreciated, and useful, the letter was also intended to be informational. I hope you'll be able to tune in and enjoy these concerts from the comfort of your home.

Virtual Concerts

All Saints' Day, November 1, 2020, 4:00 pm

On All Saints' Day, we will be presenting selections from Howard Goodall's *Eternal Light requiem* to commemorate the lives of those who have moved on into the eternal light while also acknowledging our own joys and struggles dealing with life and loss.

Concert for Strings, November 2020

(Date TBD) 4:00 pm

Violinist, John Eckhardt, has been the concertmaster for our choir and orchestra concerts for many years. He and Adam Hendrickson are putting together a concert for string orchestra. Mendelssohn, Bach, Mahler, and Barber will be some of the featured composers of the concert.

Messiah Sing-Along, December 2020

(Date TBD) 4:00 pm

First Pres is once again teaming up with the Northwest Symphony Orchestra to bring Handel's *Messiah* to the Arlington Heights community in virtual, sing-along form. Warm up your vocal chords and join in the virtual participation, as we fill the airwaves with beautiful music, such as the "Hallelujah Chorus," honoring the birth of our Savior. It will also be perfectly acceptable to listen to the concert without singing along. You are encouraged to do whatever will make you feel the happiest!

The Glory of Christmas, December 2020

(Date TBD) 4:00 pm

First Pres Adult Choirs and Orchestra will present their annual Christmas concert to celebrate the birth of the Messiah. [🔗](#)

Youth Ministries

by Rev. TC Anderson, Associate Pastor for Children, Youth, & Families

Both Middle School and High School Youth Groups have started meeting regularly. Every other week, we meet on Zoom and catch up and pray together, and the weeks in between, we meet around a fire pit in the parking lot and have a more "regular" youth group with highs and lows, prayers, a lesson, and a game. It has been wonderful to be able to see each other in person and we will continue to do this as long as the weather allows us to or until we're able to move inside. **Middle School Youth Group meets on Wednesday nights at 6:00 pm** and **High School meets on Sunday nights at 6:00 pm**. If your youth feels comfortable joining us please have them do so! [🔗](#)



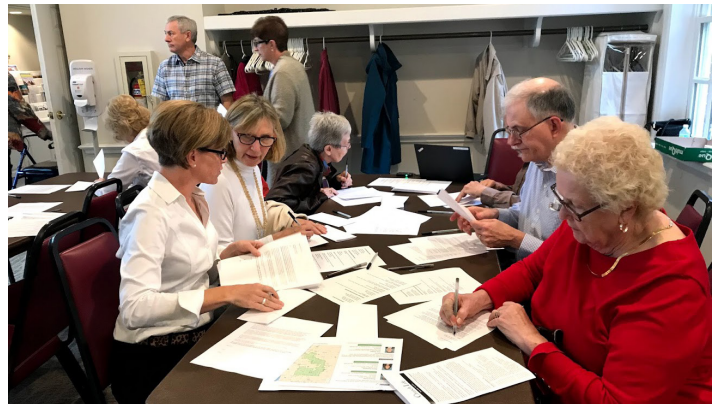
Join Stone Catchers

Are you interested in talking and learning with people interested in social justice issues and policy? Stone Catchers seeks to actively engage in justice ministry throughout the year through education and action. Stone Catchers focuses on how we live our lives with our faith at the core.



Here are some ways that Stone Catchers has been active since September of 2018:

- Writing letters of solidarity to local synagogues following the shooting at the Philadelphia synagogue
- Sponsoring a letter writing campaign on immigration issues
- Participating in several local peaceful justice marches, demonstrations, and protests
- Sponsoring the MLK Day of Service in 2019 and 2020 at First Pres – including a food drive and community lunch
- Community vigil for racial justice with other Arlington Heights churches every Friday from May – October 2020
- Monthly newsletter with resources



Letter writing

Have you been wondering why we chose the name Stone Catchers? Watch the video

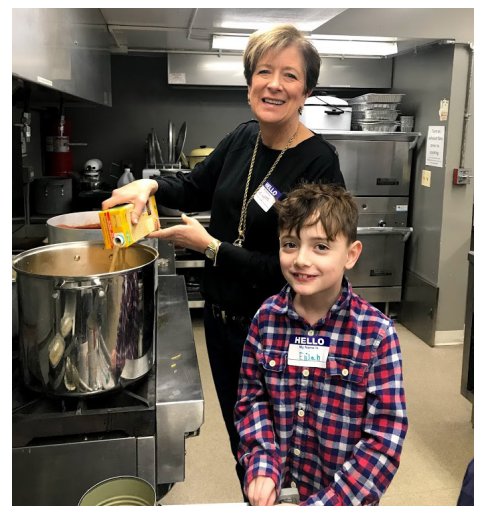
<https://www.theworkofthepeople.com/stone-catchers>

and consider joining us to catch the stones of injustice.

To join our mailing list contact Michele Holifield at micheleholifield@firstpresah.org or Katy Allen at katyallen@firstpresah.org



MLK Day of Service



The CHIMES

First Presbyterian Church
of Arlington Heights
302 N. Dunton Ave.
Arlington Heights, IL 60004-5993
Phone: 847-255-5900
Fax: 847-255-3475
www.firstpresah.org / mail@firstpresah.org



We are praying for these and many
other members in our congregation.



SYMPATHY

Please join in extending sympathy to:

Philip and Jill Arkin and family, on the death of their
son, Christian Arkin

Marilynn Graves and family, on the death of her sister,
Shirley Graham

The Jacoby family, on the death of
Jean Jacoby

Beth Johnson and family, on the death of her cousin,
David Cushing

Kirsten Olson, on the death of her father,
Barney Olson, II. Mr. Olson was also a cousin to
Peter Bukowski, Nancy Lincoln and nephew of
Betty Lou Bukowski

Gordon Palmer and family, on the death of his wife,
Vivian Palmer

Tom Pardo and family, on the death of his sister,
Marsha Moore

Hal Stern, on the death of his sister,
Shirley Allen

The Tarchala family, on the death of
Lenore Tarchala