From the Pastor

A Stronger Foundation

The week before Christmas, my new neighbors across the street had the foundation to their garage replaced. They had just moved in a few weeks earlier and all of a sudden a backhoe and dump truck appeared and the foundation was dug out from underneath the garage, which was propped up by 2X4s. It has been quite fascinating to watch the process unfold.

In a sense, the church is in a similar ‘remodeling’ process. We are working toward moving the money we currently hold in the Endowment into the Maintenance, Ministry, and Music Support Funds. This process will involve a vote of the Endowment Trustees, the Session, and the Congregation (tentatively scheduled for Feb. 4th). The whole point of this financial remodel is to increase the likelihood that you will contribute to the Support Funds. Our hope is to grow the amount of money we have available to support the work of the church from our current level of about $750,000 into multiple millions. A church our size should have endowed funds of at least $10 million.

The past building and organ projects have consumed a lot of capital. Now that those campaigns are finished and the church is out of debt, it is time for us to begin increasing our endowed funds to ensure the church is able to continue and grow it’s current level of ministry well into the future. The more money we have in the Support Funds, the more we will be able to underwrite on-going and unexpected maintenance costs, hire new staff as needed, or buy more choir chairs. As the church continues to grow, the need to support that growth increases.

In 1 Timothy 6:18-19, Paul writes, “(W)e are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for (our)selves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that (we) may take hold of the life that really is life.” It is time for us to begin ‘storing up … the treasure of a good (financial) foundation for the future...’ of First Pres.

Peace,

David

Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard

Though you will receive this in the midst of the 12 days of Christmas, the rest of the world will be trying to move on to the next thing. But we in the church are invited to stay in the moment, to travel the journey toward Epiphany and remember the story of the wise ones who offered gifts to the child, and the light of the good news to the world. Indeed, as the winter solstice passes and the coming of the light begins once again, I encourage you to allow the whole season to unfold with the richness of the story of the birth of Emmanuel to be a source of comfort, encouragement and peace.

I am aware, too, that the new year has come and people want to live out their resolutions. To that end, some opportunities will be given in the coming weeks that will give opportunities for learning, reflection and wisdom. See page 4 for details on the upcoming Lecture Series and Fireplace Room Series.

We are also working to restart a discussion group for parents of children—whether toddlers or teens, to provide a time for conversation, sharing of wisdom and discussing the challenges that families face in these times. The group will meet at 10:00a.m. To be added to our email list, contact Rob Monroe at rmonroe@kirkwoodpres.org or me at kblanchard@kirkwoodpres.org.

Dinners with David and book groups will also resume in the new year. Join us!

Blessed Christmastide and Happy New Year,

Karen
A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

January 7, 2018 - Epiphany Sunday
Sermon: Follow the Star - The Rev. Dr. David Holyan
Scriptures: Isaiah 60:1-6 and Matthew 2:1-12
The story of the ‘wise ones from the East’ is so familiar to us we might miss important clues for our own spiritual journey. It seems crazy to trust dreams or ‘read the stars’ to see how God might be at work in the world, yet this is exactly what this story invites us to do. According to Isaiah, the light of God’s loving presence is shining in the world. Matthew tells us it shines through the infant Christ-child. The question for us to consider is: are we too ‘wise’ to trust stars and dreams in today’s world?

January 14, 2018 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Sermon: You Are With Me - The Rev. Dr. David Holyan
Scriptures: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 and Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
In these two passages from the Old Testament, we learn of the nearness and intimacy God has with us, especially when we are called to serve. While it takes Samuel some time to figure out it is God who is calling, he finally does and responds: “Speak; your servant is listening.” In the Psalm, we have the affirmation of God’s knowledge of who we are even before we are born. In these passages we will explore the intimate nearness of God and what it means for us as we seek to be faithful to the birth of the Messiah.

January 21 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
Sermon: The Changing of Minds - The Rev. Dr. David Holyan
Scriptures: Jonah 3:1-5, 10 and Mark 1:14-20
The link between the passages in Jonah and Mark is that they are both about ‘changing your mind’. In the Jonah passage, God changes God's mind because the people of Nineveh take Jonah’s message seriously. In the Mark passage, all people are invited to ‘change their minds’ (the literal translation of “repent”) and trust in the nearness and goodness of God's kingdom. This Sunday we explore the gift of having a God who is willing ‘to change God’s mind’ and the invitation for us to turn our thinking ‘inside out’ because of God’s nearness and goodness.

January 28, 4th Sunday after Epiphany
Sermon: Holy Hesitations - The Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard
Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 and Mark 1:21-28
The words from Mark tell us of the beginning of Jesus' ministry. He is gaining quite a bit of attention for his actions and healings. Paul speaks to the early Christians about the challenge of old behaviors versus new and the importance of realizing that what we do is noticed by others. They are invitations for us to consider who we are and that our actions impact others.

From the Director of Music Ministries
As we enter the final days of 2017, I look back on the last twelve months and am struck by how vibrant our church is and continues to be. In the Music Ministry, 2017 was a great year. The Choir traveled to New York and sang in Carnegie Hall, we completed a successful renovation of our rehearsal spaces, and Travis Evans joined our church staff as the new Music Associate. We saw growth in all our music groups, the Con Spirito concert series continues to offer beautiful music outreach to our community, and countless volunteers led music faithfully each and every Sunday. I thank the members of this congregation who continue to support our work each and every week.

I look toward 2018 with great optimism as we continue to answer the call to serve in music ministry. We will sing the Lord's song with joyful hearts and voices, and worship God in good times and in bad. Let our church continue to be one that welcomes all people and proclaims good news to a world that dearly needs to hear it.

With my warmest wishes for a happy and blessed new year, I remain.

Faithfully yours,

Bill
Giving Tree - THANK YOU!
Thanks to your generosity we were able to provide Christmas gifts to 22 children in need within the Kirkwood School District. These children are in six different families at six different schools.

This was our second year working with the FPC Children’s Center and together we provided more than 150 gifts, and more stocking-stuffers than we could keep count of. Additionally, we were able to put money into a fund for the district to help some of the families with utility assistance and more.

Work Camp Auction is Coming
Have you heard? The Senior High Fellowship students will be heading to Red Wing, Minnesota for Work Camp in July for two weeks of work in and around the city. We are slated to take more than 40 students on the trip this summer - the most we have taken in a long time!

Our fundraising for this mission experience is focused on the Work Camp Auction, which includes a sit down dinner, silent auction and live dessert auction. Our students will start planning things after the first of the year, we hope that you will put April 15th on your calendar NOW!

If you have items to donate for the Auction now, bring them! More on that next month, but we have space now.

Family MOVIE Night!
Join us for a family-friendly movie night on Sunday, January 7th. We will begin at 5:30 and start the movie in Fellowship Hall at 5:45. Pizza and popcorn will be provided for only $5 per family. (As a reminder - “family” means church family - if you are reading this, you are invited!)

Children’s Ministry

Sunday School
Advent has passed and our Sunday School is now focused on the stories from the life of Jesus! January brings them to stories from Mark. They will learn about Sabbath and then turn to Jesus calming the storm, healing a girl, and feeding the multitudes. Important stories in their faith journey together!

LOGOS
Thank you to all of our LOGOS families that made Christmas Eve so special at the 4:00 service!

LOGOS Themes for this month are:
January 3 - NO LOGOS
January 10 - Airplane Night
January 17 - Recycle Carnival
Bring a Friend Night, too!
January 24 - Knight Night
January 31 - Board Game Night

Do you have board games that your family no longer plays? We would love to add them to our game library for LOGOS and other ministries around our piece of the church world. Let Rob know!

Youth Ministry

Senior High Fellowship
We will start planning for when it is our turn to lead worship at the Arise! service on Sunday, March 11th.

Our students will also be heading to Hidden Valley and having a lock-in at FPC on January 19th-20th. If you have a student that’s interested, contact Rob before January 15th!

Parents will meet on January 21st at 7:00p.m. to get details about the Work Camp Auction, which is coming up April 15th!

Quest (our Confirmation Ministry)
Quest will delve into the Trinity and Creeds before visiting Temple Israel and Saint Peter Catholic Church to see how others worship. This is a fun group to be with and learn alongside this year - they join on March 4th!
Con Spirito Concert Series Presents

The Mound City Slickers
January 21, 2018 at 4:00p.m.
Fellowship Hall

The Slickers are a Saint Louis band that returns to music from a time when the city was known as “Mound City”. The group is comprised of six musicians who play instruments including fiddle, mandolin, banjo, guitar, piano, and ukelele, performing a variety of genres from blue grass, traditional tunes, folk, and ragtime. There is no cost to attend but we will accept a free-will offering. Refreshments will be served during the performance.

SUNDAY MORNING CLASSES

CHRISTIAN CONCERNS LECTURE SERIES: 9:00A.M. in Room 009

January 7 & 14: Dr Patrick Osbourne will share information about the latest findings, issues and concerns regarding climate change. Dr. Osbourne is the Executive Director of the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center and has 30 years experience in tropical ecology research, education and environmental consultancy in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Australia, the Philippines and Kenya.

January 21 & 28: Dr. Gwyneth J. Williams, Professor of History, Politics, & International Relations at Webster University will speak on the history of women's right to vote. Many of us think that the right to vote for women was a simple straightforward debate to give permission to vote or not to vote, but there were many more issues involved. Dr. Williams will speak about various aspects of the debate, including those in the church with regards to the question of equality of women vs. the differences between men and women with regard to the meaning of granting women the right to vote.

FIREPLACE ROOM SERIES: 10:00a.m. in Room 030

January 7: Zoe Martin, an elementary education major at Mizzou, will speak about the importance of creating libraries of diverse materials that promote awareness of various customs, races, faiths and households and how classrooms are becoming more diverse, which means there are more students of different races, cultures and abilities. However, in the children's literature publishing industry there is a major diversity gap. This can impact how children see themselves being viewed in society. This class will focus on these concerns along with the criteria to look for in selecting diverse literature and examples of the available resources.

January 21: Kurt Wunderlich and co-worker will offer a class on financial matters for people of faith. They will speak on the stewardship of wealth, exploring what the bible says about stewardship, how to make each dollar have the maximum impact, and how to make sure your advisor is acting in your best interest.

January 28: We welcome Candace O'Connor, author of many books including, “Renaissance: A History of the Central West End”, which she will share with us, focusing on a time of change when many institutions moved out of the area and how the hospitals and churches that stayed are making a commitment to stabilize the area.

FOURTH WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP: 1:30P.M., Room 029

This group will resume meeting on the 4th Wednesday in January.

New participants are always welcome!

January 24: “Gentleman in Moscow”, by Amor Towles.
March 28: “Dead Wake”, by Erik Larsen
April 25: “What She Ate”, by Laura Shapiro
Security Update

If you were here at the 11AM service on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, you may have noticed a visitor. Neil Thompson, a South County resident who considers himself a ‘street prophet’, joined us for worship. Neil dresses (and looks) like Jesus. When he entered the building, many who saw him were immediately alarmed and many of you later sent emails to the church asking about what we did to verify he was not a threat or what our security policy is.

The staff, in cooperation with the Finance & Operations Committee, are working on creating a Security Policy and Plan for Sunday Morning. With the involvement of the Kirkwood Police Department, we will create a Policy and Plan that makes sense in the event of a medical emergency, major disruption, criminal activity or active-shooter situation on a Sunday morning. Once the Policy and Plan have been completed, we will be providing training to the entire congregation. Stay tuned.

FROM THE VISITOR/NEW MEMBER COMMITTEE

VISITOR/NEW MEMBER GATHERING: As you meet and become acquainted with visitors in our church, keep in mind our next Visitor/New Member Gatherings:

1/21 1st gathering – Church Lounge – meet and greet – get to know one another
1/28 2nd gathering – Our hope for our members and what they should expect from the church.
2/4 3rd gathering – New Members join on this Sunday (at the service of their choice), church tour and an introduction to the congregation.

Active participation: Your help is needed. Serve as a door greeter and support our Know No Strangers perspective. This is a great way to stay acquainted with members and get to those who are newer while welcoming visitors into our building and worship services. If you are interested in door greeting, stop by the Welcome Center or contact a member of the Membership Committee. (Brad Gift, Kristy Mitchell, Stuart Jaeger, Al Murray, Hugh McGaughy, Al Hinton, Leah Engelhardt, Karen Blanchard)

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ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET

The Mission Committee greatly appreciates your generosity and support for the 2017 Alternative Gift Market. Your purchases allowed us to contribute the following amounts to twelve organizations that are making a great difference in the lives of people in need:

Bead for Life: $397
Cotinga: $50
FORAI Crafts: $144
Heifer Project: $300
Kwasha Kids’ School: $193
Lydia’s House: $36
Marion Medical Mission: $50
PAL Craftaid: $406
Partner’s for Just Trade: $1,107.50
Presbyterian Children’s Homes & Services: $165
Room at the Inn: $42

A special thank you goes to the bakers from our Presbyterian Women’s Circles and to the volunteers who staffed the market. If you are interested in helping our committee support organizations such as these, as well as provide hands-on mission opportunities for church members, please consider joining the Mission Committee. Contact Committee Chairperson, Craig Wilde, for information at craig12472@gmail.com.
The Breakfast Club will kick off the New Year with guest speaker Frank Darr, member and Deacon of our church. Frank is responsible for live streaming the 11:00 a.m. service on the Internet. Come hear the details! Mark your calendar for Thursday, January 4th, 8:00 a.m. in the Fireplace Room! Bring a friend!

Meal-A-Month Items
- Canned Pasta w/Meat Sauce
- Canned Mixed Vegetables
- Canned Peaches
- Optional: Peanut Butter and Soup

Prime Timers
Please join us on Friday, January 26, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. for our annual dinner and movie night. We will enjoy a light supper before the movie, the title of which will be revealed after the meal. There will be a charge to help cover the cost of the meal. Please RSVP on the sign-up sheet near the Welcome Center by Wednesday, January 24. Call Jim and Fran Madson at 314-821-4588 or email at jimmadson@att.net.

The Dementia Discussion Group meets every 3rd Saturday at 10:00 a.m. downstairs in room 028. The next meeting is Saturday, January 20. If you have any questions, contact Alice Bowen: asquare812@hotmail.com or Angela Gracey: anggracey@msn.com.

The next Grief Support Group will meet on Tuesday, January 23, 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. in the lounge. For more information contact Ellen Hitchens at lh4cats@yahoo.com or Mary Ann Shaw at mashaw5@sbcglobal.net.

Condolences
The congregation extends its deepest sympathy to:
- Stephanie Schmidt and family, whose father passed away on November 20.
- Rick Brandenberger and family, whose mother passed away on November 18.
- Sally Hunt following the death of her husband, Francis on November 24.
- The family of Mabel Becker following her death on December 2.
- The family of Jean Garbe who died on December 5.
- The family of Donna Jepsen who died on December 7.

Save These Dates
Save these dates for a return mission trip to Lafayette, LA, April 15-21, 2018. Residents continue to need assistance recovering from severe flooding in 2016. Watch for more information in the coming months, or contact Linda Jarrett (write4you@sbcglobal.net), Liz McCane (lizmccane@gmail.com) or Georgina Sikorski (gwsikorski@gmail.com).

Per Capita is an opportunity for all members of the Presbyterian church to participate equally, responsibly and interdependently by sharing the cost of co-ordination and evaluation of mission; and of performing ecclesiastical, legislative, and judicial functions that identify a Reformed Church, while at the same time strengthening the sense of community among all Presbyterians (GA Minutes, Part I, 1995). Each member is asked to share in paying their Per Capita apportionment, $31.00 per member in 2018. You may pay your Per Capita by using the Per Capita envelope in your 2018 box of offering envelopes or by using one from the pews. Your payment should be earmarked Per Capita.
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<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8:15 AM Communion Worship</td>
<td>8:45 AM First Pres Cafe</td>
<td>9:00 AM Lecture Series</td>
<td>9:05 AM Arise! Contemporary Worship</td>
<td>10:00 AM Education for All Ages</td>
<td>11:00 AM Traditional Worship</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9:00 AM Preschool/KDO</td>
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<td>9:00 AM Parent/Teacher Conferences</td>
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<td>4:00 PM LOGOS</td>
<td>4:45 PM Children's Choirs</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>8:30 AM Preschool DLAL Screenings</td>
<td>9:00 AM Preschool/KDO</td>
<td>3:30 PM Music Inst.</td>
<td>6:00 PM Girl Scouts</td>
<td>6:30 PM Arise! Praise Band</td>
<td>7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>8:30 AM Preschool DLAL Screenings</td>
<td>9:00 AM Preschool/KDO</td>
<td>2:00 PM Music Inst.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10:45 AM Men's Bible Study</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>8:15 AM Communion Worship</td>
<td>8:45 AM First Pres Cafe</td>
<td>9:00 AM Lecture Series</td>
<td>9:05 AM Arise! Contemporary Worship</td>
<td>10:00 AM Education for All Ages</td>
<td>11:00 AM Traditional Worship</td>
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<td>9:00 AM Preschool/KDO</td>
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<td>5:30 PM Arise! Praise Band</td>
<td>7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal</td>
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<td>Preschool/KDO</td>
<td>2:00 PM Music Inst.</td>
<td>SHF Lock In</td>
<td>6:30 PM Arise! Praise Band</td>
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<td>8:15 AM Communion Worship</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>9:00 AM Preschool/KDO</td>
<td>11:15 AM Fire Drill</td>
<td>3:45 PM Music instr.</td>
<td>5:00 PM Finance &amp; Operations</td>
<td>7:00 PM Con Spirito Committee</td>
<td>6:00 PM Support Group</td>
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<td>5:30 PM Music Inst.</td>
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<td>9:00 AM Book Group</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>9:00 AM Preschool/KDO</td>
<td>11:15 AM Musikgarten I</td>
<td>10:00 AM Musikgarten II</td>
<td>1:30 PM Book Group</td>
<td>3:00 PM Presbytery Nominating Committee</td>
<td>4:00 PM LOGOS</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>9:00 AM Preschool/KDO</td>
<td>11:15 AM Musikgarten I</td>
<td>10:00 AM Musikgarten II</td>
<td>4:00 PM LOGOS</td>
<td>4:45 PM Children's Choirs</td>
<td>5:30 PM Middle School Ringers</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>11:15 AM Musikgarten I</td>
<td>10:00 AM Musikgarten II</td>
<td>6:15 PM Chancel Ringers</td>
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January 2018
CHURCH STAFF

David A. Holyan, Pastor
Karen Blanchard, Associate Pastor
Tom Glenn, Parish Associate
Bill Stein, Director of Music Ministries
Travis Evans, Music Associate
Rob Monroe, Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries
Paige Misselhorn, Children’s Ministry Assistant
Sherry Peters, Director, First Presbyterian Children’s Center
Paula Bujewski, Office Administrator
Jane Meppiel, Financial Coordinator
Donnell “Dee” Robinson, Head Custodian
Brian Clay, Custodian

KIRKWOOD PRES 2018, Issue 1
First Presbyterian Church
100 East Adams Avenue, Kirkwood, MO 63122
Telephone 314-965-0326, FAX 314-965-3861
Editor: Paula Bujewski
paulab@kirkwoodpres.org

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www.kirkwoodpres.org