As I join you in Interim Time at First Presbyterian of Kirkwood, I offer the following information as a broad outline of the kinds of tasks we will be working on together moving forward. While these tasks are listed in numerical order, please know that the interim journey is never sequential. To be used well, interim time must be intentional. There is important work to be done, and we don't want to waste a moment that this in-between-time offers.

While these covid days limit our in-person meeting abilities, I hope we can connect over the phone or via zoom. My contact information is found at the end of the document. Please call, email, text, etc. to arrange a virtual visit. I'm so glad to be here with all of you!

**Tasks For A Congregation In An Interim – February 7, 2021**

During an interim there are tasks for a congregation to be engaged in that may be divided into two categories: **Tasks of Continuity** and **Developmental Tasks**. At the outset congregations are most concerned about those related to continuity, and attention must be given to a congregation’s ongoing ministry and mission. The Developmental Tasks of the congregation provide a frame of understanding for the interim pastor, church leadership, and members as they move the congregation to a new understanding of itself, its ministries, and the future that God is calling them into.

**Tasks Of Continuity**

1. To maintain the worship, education, and service programs of the church.
   Often interim ministers are secured to help assure the continuation of the church’s program and ministry. Interim ministers work within the existing programs to explore and discover with the members the value of existing programs and ministry, and to assist in making them more effective if possible.

2. To emphasize fellowship and reconciliation.
   Congregations during an interim often need to rebuild a sense of community. The interim minister will work with church leaders and members to discover ways to offer increased opportunities for, and participation in, fellowship activities and events. Often this means bringing together those who have become separated in previous settings with the hope and expectation that they can recognize present points of connection or agreement.

3. To address special needs of the congregation.
   Even the healthiest of congregations presents special needs at the time of an interim. The interim pastor will help identify and respond to those needs using skills in pastoral care, conflict management, and organizational leadership.

*Continued...*
Developmental Tasks Of The Congregation

1. Coming To Terms with History
   A. Resolve feelings of grief
      Pastoral care in an interim often is focused on dealing with the grief within the congregation around the loss of a pastor or circumstances around that pastor’s departure. Part of the history sharing is recognition of that grief and may include addressing previous grief left unresolved.

   B. Reinforce ministry of all the members of the church.
      A second aspect of coming to terms with history is recognizing the work of church members in the development of program and ministry. This helps the congregation take responsibility for, and take charge of, the direction and work of the church. This is an especially good time to tell the great stories of the church, and to encourage members to hear those stories and their stories as they relate to God’s great story of creation and recreation.

2. Setting New Direction – Clarifying and Restating The Mission of the Church
   There is a need for meaningful conversation within the church as to the church’s mission. This will provide the interim pastor, church leadership, and the Pastor Nominating Committee with invaluable information about the congregation and its life and work. This offers the opportunity to direct attention again to the call to service and the opportunities to support the mission of the larger church. The process may also identify specific goals for the interim pastor, as well as provide the contours for future vision setting with the new settled pastor once s/he is in place.

3. Shifts in Leadership and Power
   With transitions in pastoral leadership there are inevitable shifts in congregational leadership. The interim pastor assists the congregation as it deals with such shifts in several ways: Review and clarification of job descriptions for personnel and committees/teams can lead to more effective leadership within the congregation; Participation with the Nominating Committee provides opportunity to address the responsibilities of church officers and to urge consideration of all active members; Interim time allows for, and truly requires, significant effort in officer training and leadership development.

4. Strengthen Denominational Ties (and Ecumenical Relationships)
   This time allows for the renewal and strengthening of ties to the larger church. The interim pastor has a responsibility to participate in the denomination and to share the focus and work of the larger church with the congregation. Often opportunities for growth in mutual understanding, respect, and trust are presented as the denomination assist in the call process for a new pastor. (There may also be a need to strengthen, redevelop, or reaffirm ecumenical connections and commitments)

5. Preparation for New Pastoral Leadership
   The interim pastor is temporary! The presence and work of an interim pastor can take the pressure off of a Pastor Nominating Committee, allowing them to work diligently, but not hastily. Upon departure an interim pastor can help provide for an enthusiastic and an informed transition to new pastoral leadership. The interim pastor will depart cleanly, drawing appropriate boundaries that facilitate the development of the ministry of the new pastor.

These steps are somewhat sequential, but aspects of all of them will weave their way throughout this “in-between time”. I pray that our journey together may be filled with God’s grace, peace, and love as we seek to serve each other and Jesus Christ with energy, intelligence, imagination and love.

Interim Pastor Bill Smutz
Cell #: 314.853.7165   email: wsmutz@kirkwoodpres.org
We are a people of the Book, and of books. We have a deep commitment as Presbyterians to continue to grow in knowledge and in faith throughout our lives. During this pandemic time, many of us are finding different ways to keep our minds occupied as we are more centered around being at home. There are a number of activities that are offered via zoom, but I know that some of us are looking for ways to learn new things, new skills and new knowledge.

To that end, the church has a number of DVD resources that we can share with you. If you’d like to learn about the American History of Religion, this series begins with the settlement of missions and walks through the Puritans, Baptists, the Jewish faith, Roman Catholicism and onward through the centuries. There is a series on Church history that takes us from the early years following Jesus’ resurrection through to Constantinople. We also have more materials on Judaism and Islam as well as a DVD on Jerusalem as seen through the eyes of young people of all three faith traditions that are prevalent in that city. There is a series from Bill Moyers talking with various well-known people about Faith and Religion. We also have a really fascinating DVD series about religious places and shrines that share the story of those who find meaning and healing in the process of being in those places and following rituals, as well as a series on the Dead Sea Scrolls. And to go back even further, we do have some VHS tapes on the Book of Acts and Revelation by a well known biblical scholar.

We can leave these materials for you outside the church door at the Jefferson lot entrance with your name on them. It’s a great way to learn something about both early and contemporary matters of faith and utilize some important resources we have to share here at the church.

Shalom,

Karen

The season of Lent is upon us. Devotionals books will be made available for you to take home in the near future. Please stay tuned for availability.

The Grief Support Group is meeting on the 4th Monday of each month from 3:30pm-5:00p.m. The next meeting is Monday, February 22, in the Fellowship Hall. For more information contact Ellen Hitschler at ln4cats@yahoo.com or Mary Ann Shaw at mashaw5@sbcglobal.net.

Our deepest sympathy goes to:
* The family of Mary Edgerley, who died January 7, 2021.
* The family of Joan Goeckeler, who died January 12, 2021
* The family of Jean Davis, who died on January 27, 2021
From the Director of Music Ministries

February brings the winds of change to our congregation. We warmly welcome the Rev. Dr. Bill Smutz as our Interim Senior Pastor, and in just a few days we enter into the season of Lent. Our midweek worship services will resume at noon on February 17th, Ash Wednesday, and will continue through the season. Our *Con Spirito* concert series is happy to present the Tree of Life Chapel Lenten Recital Series, live-streamed this year without an audience, every Friday at noon. (see schedule below)

Although we are still in the midst of Winter, we know that Spring is on its way. We continue to find ourselves living in a time of pandemic but give thanks for vaccines and a hopeful return to in person worship later this year. In the midst of these changes and movements, fully enter into Lent and the wonderful journey it provides. Immerse yourselves in prayer and scripture, participate in live-streamed worship on Sundays and Wednesdays, and tune in for meditative music on Fridays. More than anything I wish for a choir loft full of singers and a church full of our beloved congregation! As we continue to be safe and faithful, the Spirit dwells among us and brings us together.

May this Lent be a time of reflection and peace for us all.

Faithfully yours,

*Bill*

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*The Con Spirito Concert Series*

*Tree of Life Chapel Lenten Recital Series*

*These 30 minute performances will be live-streamed at noon on the following days. Due to artist and copyright agreements, these recitals will not be archived.*

- **February 19**: Chamber Project St. Louis (flute, viola, and harp)
- **February 26**: Jennifer Mazzoni, flute and Matthew Mazzoni, piano
- **March 5**: The Perseid String Quartet
- **March 12**: Reflections for Lent, Bill Stein, piano
- **March 19**: St. Louis Irish Arts
- **March 26**: Louisa Wimmer, soprano and Anthony Heinemann, tenor
February 2021 Worship Schedule

Sunday, February 7 -- The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Rev. Dr. Bill Smutz, preaching
Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, liturgist
Anthems by the Chancel Octet
Bill Stein, organist and director
Travis Evans, accompanist

Sunday, February 14 – The Transfiguration of the Lord
Rev. Dr. Bill Smutz, preaching
Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, liturgist
Anthems by the Bell Choir
Debra Hillabrand, Hymn Leader
Travis Evans, organist and director

Wednesday, February 17 – Ash Wednesday
Worship service at 12:00 pm
Rev. Dr. Bill Smutz, leading
Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, assisting
Anthony Heinemann, Soloist
Bill Stein, organist

Sunday, February 21 – The First Sunday in Lent
Rev. Dr. Bill Smutz, preaching
Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, liturgist
Anthems by the Chancel Octet
Bill Stein, organist and director
Travis Evans, accompanist

Wednesday, February 24 – Midweek Lenten Worship
Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, leading
Rev. Dr. Bill Smutz, assisting
Bill Stein, organist

Sunday, February 28 – The Second Sunday in Lent
Rev. Dr. Bill Smutz, preaching
Rev. Dr. Tom Glenn, liturgist
Anthems by the Chancel Octet
Bill Stein, director
Travis Evans, organist

We are looking for additional volunteers to learn how to host our live-stream ministry. There is a simple training procedure for this. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Bill Stein at bstein@kirkwoodpresp.org or (314) 965-0326. This a wonderful way to assist in worship during the pandemic.
Work Camp 2021 Announcement and Fundraiser!

We are excited to announce that our Work Camp trip will be going to Colorado Spring in July! After a successful trip in 2020 we are confident in our ability to make a safe and meaningful trip come together. We have already lined up a handful of work partners and anticipate taking around 40 students and 6 adult volunteers on our two week trek! We do not anticipate being able to host an Auction this year, so we are rolling out a variety of opportunities to give to the trip. Here is our first offering, and it’s delicious!

Our First Fundraiser - February 1-March 4, 2021

We are excited to be partnering a now-closed Saint Louis icon: Two Nice Guy’s Pizza! These are original recipe pizzas and are delicious! They are very generously offering us a gift of $3.00 per pizza ordered! This is huge in fundraising.

Go to their website to order - www.tngspizza.com - and in the checkout page choose “Work Camp” in the Organization line. If a student referred you, please put their name in the box below as well.

Pizzas will be delivered to First Pres in March and we will communicate with recipients about delivery or pickup.

If you would like to donate without buying pizza, please reach out to Rob Monroe, Youth Director, at rmonroe@kirkwoodpres.org. We will have other opportunities soon!

Click on this link to order now!
http://www.tngspizza.com/

THANK YOU FROM KWASHA KIDS

Kwasha-Kids wants to thank all who donated to the Kwasha-Molya School in December 2020 through the Alternative Gift Market program. You are our “unknown” supporters and we hope you know how much your generosity means to us.
MEETING & STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

February Christian Concerns Class, 9:30 a.m
Email Ann Miller to be added to the Zoom list at ann.willie@hotmail.com

The Isle of Iona and the Iona Community
These sessions will explore the rich history and the ongoing life of the Isle of Iona and the Iona Community. This topic should be of particular interest to Presbyterians, since the Iona Community was founded by representatives of the Church of Scotland. The series will cover these topics as follows.

February 7: Iona: History, Geography, and Architecture
February 14: Clint will talk about Iona Community and Celtic Theology: Justice and Peace “For All People.”
February 21: The focus will be on the Iona perspective of “The Whole of God’s Creation.”
February 28: Clint will conclude the series speaking about the music, liturgy, and worship of Iona.

* Spiritual Formation Class on Zoom: The group meets at 9:30am on Zoom on the Second Sunday of each month. If you’d like to join in, contact Tom Edelstein at tedelstein@att.net.
* The Esther Circle meets the second Thursday of the month at 11am. For more information, contact Carlin Scanlan at ccscanlan@swbell.net.
* The Men’s Saturday Morning Bible Study Group on Zoom meets at 11am on Saturday mornings. Contact Tim Morrison at timothy.lee.morrison@gmail.com to be added to the Zoom invitation list.

BOOK GROUPS

Fourth Wednesday Book Group: We will be discussing two books at the Fourth Wednesday book group. Many have read the assigned book, The Dutch House. So many of us were enthralled by the work of Alex George, who wrote the Good American, we decided to also read his book, The Paris Hour. The group meets by Zoom at 1:30 on February 24. If you are not presently on the invite list, please let Karen know at kblanchard@kirkwoodpres.org.

ECUMENICAL OPPORTUNITIES

* We belong to the Interfaith Partnership. They are again offering a virtual course series exploring some practices of the world’s religions on Tuesday evenings from 7PM-8:10PM, January 26 to March 30.

Each class will focus on a practice from the perspective of differing religious communities. This series will be led by Rev. Dr. David Greenhaw, an ordained Christian minister and the recently retired President of Eden Theological Seminary, who is currently the Chair of the Cabinet of Interfaith Partnership.

To register, go to https://bit.ly/2IwmGIA. This series is free but contributions to Interfaith Partnership are greatly appreciated and needed so that they can continue providing a high-level of religious programming.

* A new series of Month of Grace + Prayer: An Ecumenical Retreat in Everyday Life, is being offered starting February 21. All meetings will be virtual (Zoom or phone if you prefer). Weekly meeting times set around your schedule. Pray on your own 20 minutes each day and meet one-on-one with a spiritual companion one hour each week for four consecutive weeks. Committed couples have the option to participate as a couple. All adults are welcome regardless of denomination or affiliation. For more information, visit www.momentsofgraceandprayer.org and to register contact Clarence Heller at clarenceheller@gmail.com.
School Supplies and Healthy Snacks for Kirkwood Students

Thanks to everyone who donated school supplies and healthy snacks to Kirkwood students. Now that our kids are starting a new semester, we are again asking for First Pres members to help out by donating school supplies and healthy snacks such as:

**School Supplies**
- Reusable water bottles (the drinking fountains are turned off)
- Notebooks
- Pencil cases/boxes with supplies such as pencils, scissors, erasers, glue sticks
- Crayons
- Small whiteboards
- Mechanical Pencils

**Healthy Snacks**
- Animal crackers
- Cheez-its
- Pretzel graham crackers (plain, no flavored)

We will be collecting donations now through February 28, 2021. Please bring your donations to the Jefferson parking lot entrance of the church with the awning on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-12. For more information, please contact the Mission Committee at mission@kirkwoodpres.org. Thank you!

Breakfast Casseroles for St. Patrick’s Center

Thank you, First Pres members, who have prepared nourishing and hot meals for St. Louis homeless people. There’s still plenty of need, so please join us by preparing a delicious breakfast casserole. Check out our web site for the recipe. For more information, please contact Julie Nesvig at j.nesvig83@gmail.com.

Welcome to our New Members

**Michael J. von Gebel** grew up in Northern and Central Illinois. Michael is a veteran of the U.S. Army. He graduated from LakeLand College with a degree in Business Management. He has lived around the globe but settled in Missouri in 2007. He has been married to Paul Kukie, a member of the choir, for 22 years. He enjoys gardening, genealogy and writing, and looking after their four-legged children Mistofflees, Tiger, and Gabby. To welcome Michael to our church family, you can send him an email to vongoebel@hotmail.com.

**Julia Drebes Abreu** is a member of the Esther Circle and Wednesday Book Club. She grew up in Bethel Park Pennsylvania and graduated from Grove City College. She met her husband while working at Bayer in Pittsburgh and has an MBA from the University of Pittsburgh. Her dad, who also worked for Bayer, grew up in St. Louis and her grandparents lived in Kirkwood. Julia left her work as a process consultant to raise three children, two daughters in college and a son at Ladue High School. After living in Denver Colorado for four years, her family has been in St. Louis for over three years. She comes to us by letter of transfer from St. Andrews Methodist Church in Colorado. To welcome Julia to our church family, you can send her an email at julia@abreu.net.
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. Each member is asked to share in paying their Per Capita apportionment, $32.00 (same amount as last year) per member in 2021. This breaks down to $20.15 for Presbytery, $2.90 for Synod and $8.95 for GA. You may pay your Per Capita by using the envelope in your 2020 box of offering envelopes or by clearly earmarking your payment of cash or check for ‘Per Capita’ and mailing it to the church. Thank you for supporting the benefits of being a connectional church.

**THE NEXT TWO WEEKS**

**Sunday, February 7**
- 11:00am Worship Service - Live Streamed
- 1:00pm Chancel Choir Singing Pods - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Sr. High Fellowship

**Monday, February 8**
- 8:00am Preschool
- 11:30am Staff Meeting - 030

**Tuesday, February 9**
- 10:00am Book Group - Zoom

**Wednesday, February 10**
- 8:00am Preschool
- 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 7:15pm Board of Deacons - Zoom

**Thursday, February 11**
- 10:00am Prayer Time - Sanctuary (sign-up required)
- 7:00pm Section Leaders rehearsal - Sanctuary

**Friday, February 12**
- 8:00am Preschool

**Saturday, February 13**
- 10:00am Prayer Time - Sanctuary (sign-up required)
- 11:00am Men’s Bible Study - Zoom

**Sunday, February 14**
- 9:30am Christian Concerns Class - Zoom
- 9:30am Spiritual Formation - Zoom
- 11:00am Worship Service - Live Streamed
- 7:00pm Sr. High Fellowship

**Monday, February 15**
- 8:00am Preschool
- 11:30am Staff Meeting - 030
- 5:00pm Finance Committee - Zoom

**Tuesday, February 16**
- 10:00am Book Group - Zoom
- 6:30pm New Member Committee - Zoom
- 7:30pm Session Meeting - Zoom

**Wednesday, February 17**
- 8:00am Preschool
- 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
- 7:00pm Mary’s Women’s Circle - Fellowship Hall
- 7:15pm Lucy’s Women’s Circle - Offsite

**Thursday, February 18**
- 10:00am Prayer Time - Sanctuary (sign-up required)
- 7:00pm Section Leaders Rehearsal - Sanctuary

**Friday, February 19**
- 8:00am Preschool
- 12:00pm Tree of Life Chapel Lenten Recital Series - Live Streamed

**Saturday, February 20**
- 10:00am Prayer Time - Sanctuary (sign-up required)
- 11:00am Men’s Bible Study - Zoom

If you would like to receive by mail an Upper Room or These Days devotional booklet, call the church office or email Paula at paulab@kirkwoodpres.org.