From the Pastors

The Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, Associate Pastor

I bought lettuce plants and various seeds on a beautiful early Spring day but I had to wait to put them in because a frost was coming. So out on the enclosed porch they went, where I watered them (and tried to keep the cats from eating them!). I find this time of waiting in early Spring a challenging time—just want to get into the soil, stir in the compost from the winter vegetable scraps, put in starter plants, seeds and bulbs for carrots and beans, zinnias and caladiums. After the grayness of winter, I am so eager to experience the joy and wonder of watching plants and trees grow. But then I remember I need to pull back and say—wait—you need to wait because it's too soon and a late frost can wreak havoc.

When I was considering what colors to pick for the impatience plants that we put in the flower pots outside of the kitchen window, the irony of their name struck me. If I am honest, patience is not one of my virtues. I also know I am not alone, especially in our culture of immediate gratification. We want to do it when we want, things to happen according to our desires and our schedule—under our control and our command.

It struck me then that it is like moving through Lent. Lent is the season of waiting. It seems so long, and in those times when it comes earlier in the year it is darker, it can seem never ending and it can try my patience. But then when Easter arrives I am reminded once again that the wait is a meaningful and necessary one. It is a wait that enables us to find new depth and deeper meaning regarding the joy of Easter and its promise of new life. It is May. We have made the journey. We have arrived not on our time, but God’s kairos time. The gift of love that represents the love of God was surely worth the wait. Thanks be to God.

With gratitude and joy,
Karen

The Rev. Dr. David Holyan, Pastor

A Sign of Hope

I'm writing this article on the Tuesday morning of Holy Week. Yesterday I watched as flames appeared to consume the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. The images were horrifying. I can't imagine the feelings that must have coursed through those who gather there for worship as they watched their church go up in flames the Monday before Easter. But then this morning, I woke to see this image. The golden cross still hanging above the altar.

Above a smoldering pile of burnt roof beams, with smoke still rising from the ruins, the golden cross hangs as a beacon of hope and new life. Maybe the fire didn't destroy the message of Easter but provided an unwanted opportunity for the Christians of Paris and the rest of the world to reflect deeply upon their lives and the faith that sustains us all. Just when we think all is hopeless and lost, the cross of Christ and the hope for a new creation rises to our awareness. The passage that came to me was Paul's famous profession of faith (Gal. 6:14), “May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ...”

It also reminded me of what I saw at the Grace Presbyterian Church in Tuscaloosa 8 years ago this April. Following the devastating EF4 tornado that ripped through town, I was deployed to Grace PC to provide support. When I arrived at the church I was ushered into the sanctuary to see the devastation. The roof was cracked open at the seam in the top and half the wall in the chancel was missing. But the cross was still hanging, with half of it's backdrop being part of the wall and the other half blue sky with broken trees. It was a surreal sight. In the midst of all the destruction the cross hung right in the middle of it all.

As we think about the gifts of Easter we each carry within, may we all remember these two images of hope hanging in the midst of destruction. And may we be that hope for others.

Peace,
David

A Time for Fellowship for those with Young Children

Bring your children and join with others for a Taco Supper on Saturday May 18 from 5-7:30pm at church. Taco fixings (Mac'n Cheese for the kids) will be provided—bring your favorite salsa! Come for conversation, fellowship, food and share ideas for future gatherings. For more information or to RSVP contact Julie Nesvig j.nesvig83@gmail.com or Brad Gift at brad.gift@att.net. We will meet in the Fireplace Room on the lower level.
A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

May 5, 2019 - 3rd Sunday of Easter
Sermon: “The Turning Point” - The Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard

Both readings for this morning take place after the death of Jesus. In Acts, Saul who becomes Paul has a most unexpected vision. In John, the disciples gather on the beach in the same manner of their calling in the beginning of Jesus's ministry. Both groups are challenged to move in a new direction, to be those who follow him—both Paul who had heretofore persecuted believers and the disciples who had returned back to their old lives, suddenly are inspired once again to follow him. In these post Easter celebration days we too are called to be renewed in our commitment to follow him.

May 12, 2019 - 4th Sunday of Easter
Sermon: “Being Led to Life-Giving Water” - The Rev. Dr. David Holyan
Scriptures: John 10:22-30 and Rev. 7:9-17

The end of this passage from the Book of Revelation is one of the sweetest passages about how much God cares for us. Our shepherd will guide us to springs of living water and God will wipe away all our tears. When we think about real pain or fear and the tears that often come when we feel safe enough to open up, the idea that God cares enough to wipe our tears is so comforting. Water, whether it be life-giving or tears, is where we often find God at work.

May 19, 2019 - 5th Sunday of Easter
Sermon: “Love One Another” - The Rev. David Dr. Holyan
Scriptures: Rev. 21:1-6a and John 13:31-35

Jesus gives us a new commandment: love one another. What starts out as a confusing passage from the Gospel of John ends with a very clear message: love one another. This is the mark of a Christian—love one another. This is how the world will know us—love one another. We will explore this foundational trait of our life as Christians—to love one another.

May 26, 2019 - 6th Sunday of Easter
Sermon: “Peace Be With You” - The Rev. Dr. David Holyan

This passage from the Gospel of John would make a great life verse: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” Peace you leave with me; you give me your peace. You do not give as the world give. My heart is at peace. I am not afraid. – AMEN!

From the Director of Music Ministries

To everyone in our Music Ministry – Travis Evans, Choir members, music staff, Praise Team singers and instrumentalists, children's choir members, bell ringers – THANK YOU for the beautiful and meaningful music throughout Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. We are so blessed by your gifts and talents!

Due to popular demand, our Musikgarten program has been extended into the month of May. Musikgarten is our program for very young children and their parents/caretakers. They meet Wednesday mornings. For more information, please contact Ellen Hitschler, instructor, at ln4cats@yahoo.com.

The Church Orchestra will play the first Sunday of June and I would love to include more players this round. We encourage all ages and talent levels to play with the Church Orchestra. If you are interested, please email me and I'll provide you with dates and times. Send me a message at bstein@kirkwoodpres.org.

Please see page 6 of this newsletter and learn about some great concerts this month, including our annual May the 4th organ recital. This year's recital will be at 2:00p.m. in the afternoon followed by tasty ice cream treats. I hope to see many of you there!

Easter Blessings,
Bill
Work Camp Auction - THANK YOU!
The Auction was a fun night and our youth appreciate the support you have given us in our efforts to get to Work Camp 2019 in the Washington, DC, region!

Work Camp Anniversary Celebration!
Work Camp, our annual youth mission trip, was begun in the summer of 1969. We are calling on all all former Work Campers to check in - even if you can not attend on May 31-June 2, 2019. You can contact us through the following website: http://www.kirkwoodpres.org/connect/wc50/
Please reach out if you have any questions!

Sunday School Celebration!
To celebrate another wonderful year of learning and growing together, we will have Cindy’s Zoo bring their petting zoo to our lawn on Sunday, May 5th, during the 10:00 a.m. hour! Please join us and pet (or feed) the animals!

LOGOS Wraps Up
We have just finished another fun year of LOGOS! For those that do now know, LOGOS is open to any child in elementary and middle school each year and is a big outreach into our community. Almost half of our students are not from families that are members - thank you for being a welcoming congregation that lets us reach beyond our walls to pass on the faith!

CAMP K is Coming!
We still have a few spots open for Camp K, June 3-7. We also have openings for 6th-12th grade helpers. Contact Rob for more information!

Senior High Youth
Our high school students will be spending the first weekend in May at Mound Ridge doing a weekend of volunteering. This is a wonderful tradition started a few years ago with effort being put in to work together before our big trip in July!

God Created Each of Us for a Reason
2019 Confirmation Class Creed
God is always with us - guiding us in our journey. We are all children of the same God.

We know that Jesus died for our sins.

The Spirit unifies us and brings us together.

We know that we do not have all of the answers and are not afraid to ask questions.

God calls on us to love our enemies and be forgiving of others as we have been forgiven.

We are called to be like a city on a hill, to be examples to those around us.

We trust that God accepts our mistakes when we ask for forgiveness.

We have respect and appreciation for other religions and believe we can learn from each other.

Our beliefs can change but God will not. That brings us comfort.

We accept and encourage diversity - it’s okay to be different.

We carry on our faith by helping others both in our communities and wherever we are.

We should live our lives recognizing the love that God gives us, living life to the fullest.

Peace.

Rob Monroe - Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries - rmonroe@kirkwoodpres.org
SUNDAY MORNING CLASSES

CHRISTIAN CONCERNS LECTURE SERIES, 9:00a.m. in Room 009

What one biblical scholar calls Israel’s basic credo begins like this: “A wandering Aramean was my ancestor”. The reference is to Abraham—short, wherever Abraham went, he was an immigrant! Later in the biblical narrative, Moses led a whole nation of immigrants toward a Promised Land. Given these memories, it is no wonder that Israel’s Torah regularly advocates compassion for the “sojourner” or “alien” or “immigrant”. In this study led by Clint McCann, Evangelical Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Eden Theological Seminary in Webster Groves, we’ll consider Israel’s narrative, legal, and prophetic traditions, along with the stories of Ruth and Esther and several New Testament texts. The goal will be to develop a biblical-theological background for thinking about immigration from a faith perspective.


May 12: A Wandering Aramean Was My Ancestor” (Deut. 26:5): Remembering Immigrant Origins and Treating Immigrants with Justice and Compassion


SPIRITUAL FORMATION CLASS - 9:30a.m. in Room 028

The Spiritual Formation series will focus on deepening the stillness of the heart through prayer, meditation, study and reflection. The subject for May will be on the meaning of incarnation in our lives. Tom Edelstein leads this group which will meet the second Sunday of the month at 9:30a.m. in room 028. If you have any questions please contact Tom malages08@gmail.com

BIBLE STUDY & BOOK GROUPS

Fourth Wednesday Book Group: has concluded its regular schedule but stay tuned the newsletter for a mid-summer gathering.

Men’s Bible Study: First Pres men of all ages are invited to join us Saturdays at 10:45a.m. in Room 029. All men are welcome, no matter your knowledge of scripture or where you are in your faith journey. We take turns reading aloud, ask questions, discuss what the Holy Spirit might be saying, and even share in laughter. Call Robert Trottmann at 314-909-6779 with any questions.

Raising the Challenging/Challenged Child - Sunday, May 5, 10:00a.m. in Room 009

In today’s complex world, raising a child is challenging enough even with free access to information, social media and electronics. But when you add emotional, physical and mental challenges, the job becomes more complicated. We are interested in creating a discussion group for parents who find themselves raising children and dealing with such issues. It is our hope that this group will help families navigate the challenges of dealing with schools, peers, their larger families, medical professionals and just the day-to-day challenges each unique situation brings. Plans are to form a group for the pooling of resources and information along with sharing experiences and questions in this faith based, non-judgmental support group. If you are interested in such a group, join us on Sunday, May 5 in Room 029 at 10:00a.m. Questions? Contact Mike Lages at malages08@gmail.com or Karen Blanchard at kblanchard@kirkwoodpres.org.

Adult Mission Trip Tradition Continues

First Pres has a fifty-year tradition of sending our youth on a two week mission adventure. Twenty years ago, Sharon, and the late Stan Croissant, wondered, why should the kids have all the fun? They began to plan the first of three adult mission trips to Guatemala, which took place in 2001, 2002 and 2004. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, three trips to southern Mississippi were organized and were followed by disaster relief trips to Tuscaloosa, AL, Joplin, MO (3 trips), Little Rock, AR, Lafayette, LA (2 trips), and, most recently, to Hattiesburg, MS. Most of these trips were facilitated by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. The Croissants participated in nearly all of these missions, and Stan was the epitome of a humble servant-leader. He had considerable remodeling skills and was eager to teach others, but more importantly he loved to share the joy of helping others in need.

Last month, fifteen church members spent a week in Hattiesburg, MS helping two people who lost their homes to a tornado in 2017. The people we help are either uninsured or underinsured and have no other resources to rebuild their homes. Both houses are nearing completion. Most of our work was indoors and included cabinet installation, tiling, interior and exterior trim work, painting and yard cleanup. Our work partners from R3SM (Recover, Rebuild, Restore South Mississippi) were very patient and helpful. We stayed in an historic, renovated railroad hotel with a lovely wraparound porch. In our limited free time we explored the immediate neighborhood of older homes and enjoyed southern cuisine. It is a humbling experience to help someone who has lost their house and possessions get back into a safe and permanent home. We feel called to be the hands of Jesus in the world, to listen to survivors’ stories and do whatever we can to give them hope. Many trip participants begin with minimal building skills, but learn to install drywall, woodworking, flooring, roofing and siding. We develop close friendships by working and learning from each other. We hope more members will consider following Stan Croissant's example by joining us on the next adult mission trip.
On April 16 we welcomed 9 new members. Some are people who have been connected with us in the past, some are those who are connected with present members and those who have yearned to return home to traditional Presbyterian worship.

Amy Clausing is returning to this congregation to be closer to family and long time friends—and in the way only in which the Kirkwood area can be interwoven, Karen Blanchard and her family bought Amy's house when her family moved east 17 years ago. She has two grown children living in the Midwest and enjoys traveling, tennis, and a love for Michigan.

Wendy Ballsrud grew up in this church, was married here and her mother Jean MacDonald sang in our choir for many years. Wendy and her husband Bob recently became grandparents for the first time—their daughter Whitney teaches at North Glendale school and their daughter Natalie lives in Colorado. Part of her roots are from Maine where she has spent many summers. She serves on our home communion team.

Candace Myers Flynn is originally from Hershey Pennsylvania and grew up at Webster Groves Presbyterian Church. When her mother Gwendolyn Myers began work with the Synod of Mid America of the Presbyterian church, they moved for a while to Kansas City. Candace returned to the area and worked at Edward Jones, where she met her husband Tim. They have two children, Emma and Sean. She loves horses, dogs, rugby and spending time with her family. She is joining by reaffirmation of faith.

Betty Jane Shultz has recently moved to this area from Ohio where she lived for many years. Recently she decided to move here to Kirkwood to be closer to family—her daughter Cindy Schnabel is a long time member of our choir. She enjoys traveling and reading and is an AVID Pittsburg Steelers fan that was formed by her Pittsburg roots.


Bret & Lora Berthold were both confirmed and married at First Pres and are thrilled to be back. Bret works as the Director of Operations for the Metro St Louis Sewer District and they have two young adult children, Ben graduating in May from Rolla, and Emma, who is a junior at Truman State. Lora is with Trader Joe's in Des Peres and loves to garden and is, in her words a devoted foodie, while Bret enjoys hunting and skiing.

Sally Kirkpatrick, Lora's mother, was born in Arkansas and grew up on Cloverbend Farm. She attended Arkansas State and graduated with a teaching degree and taught music. She later attended nursing school and worked at St. Joseph's hospital. Like mother like daughter, she enjoys gardening and she also enjoys knitting.

**Celebration of 50-Year Members**

This year’s recognition of our Golden Members will be held at the 10:00a.m. service on Sunday, June 9th. The church software is able to identify those who have been part of this congregation continuously since 1969, but it does not recognize those who have left and returned that may have a combined membership of fifty years. If you think that situation may apply to you, please contact Paula in the church office at paulab@kirkwoodpres.org or (314) 965-0326, so we can check earlier records and get a complete list. Thanks!

**Breakfast Fundraiser to Benefit the Homeless**

You are invited to join us for our annual fundraiser, *Breakfast with the INN Crowd*, a breakfast event and auction being held on Friday, May 10 from 8:00a.m. to 10:00a.m., at the Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel to benefit Room at the Inn. All proceeds from this event help the homeless women and families who find shelter with Room at the Inn. In collaboration with nearly 50 interfaith congregations, including your own, Room at the Inn helps clients identify and address the barriers that contributed to their homelessness and gain self-sufficiency. Tickets are $40/person or $45 at the door. To purchase reservations or for more information, please visit our website at www.roomstl.org/events, or contact Mary at 314-209-9181 or maryk@roomstl.org. We are also seeking items for auction, baked goods and event volunteers!

**STEPHEN MINISTRY SPEAKER: SUNDAY, MAY 19, 9:30a.m. in 030**

Loneliness is not only an issue for the young, but also for seniors. As we age, the loss of family and friends, changes in mobility, and retirement without a new routine, can contribute to a sense of loneliness and depression. Elizabeth Sergle, the CFO of Visit-A-Bit with the Visiting Nurses Association, will speak both about the impact of loneliness and about a volunteer program to train people to visit with seniors providing conversation, connection and community. If you have a loved one who expresses a sense of loneliness or you are seeking a meaningful volunteer role, we hope you will join us.
The congregation extends its deepest sympathy to:
* Sharon Croissant and family following the death of Stan on March 24, 2019. A service is planned for Saturday, May 25 at 1:00p.m.
* John LeFort and family following the death of his mother.

Hey Prime Timers! Enough with the education-culture-civic stuff! Let's do something truly hedonistic and tour a chocolate factory, Friday May 10 at 10 AM at the Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate Company at 5025 Pattison Avenue on the Hill. We will follow up with lunch at Favazza's at 5201 Southwest. We'll meet in the church parking lot at 9:30a.m. for car-pooling. Contact Nancy Magnuson for info at (314) 842-2933 or JNMag1@att.net.

BREAKFAST CLUB
On Thursday, May 2, Tom Waltz will be our guest speaker. The subject will be on Vietnam. Breakfast is at 8:00a.m., cost is $2.00. Please join us if you are able.

The Dementia Discussion Group will meet Tuesday, May 25, 7:00p.m.-8:30p.m. in the lounge. For more info contact Ellen Hitschler at lnc4cats@yahoo.com or David Evans: davidevansma@yahoo.com.

The Grief Support Group will meet on Saturday, May 18 downstairs in room 028. If you have any questions, contact Alice Bowen: asquare812@hotmail.com or David Evans: davidevansma@yahoo.com.

BREAKFAST CLUB
On Thursday, May 2, Tom Waltz will be our guest speaker. The subject will be on Vietnam. Breakfast is at 8:00a.m., cost is $2.00. Please join us if you are able.

CHANGES COMING FOR BRIDGE BREAD
Attention Bridge Bread Lovers! Sales will change from every Sunday to the second Sunday of the month. Bridge Bread has some new items like mini-cinis, artisan bagels and pan brownies that we will be offering. We are hoping that you'll look at this as a donation that helps men find a way out of homelessness to a new way of life. With the help of many churches, First Pres of Kirkwood included, Bridge Bread has opened the door for these men, some of whom have even gone back to school. Stop by the table and see what we have to offer! The money raised will help train and provide transitional housing to the ever-growing population of the homeless in St. Louis. The need is ongoing, and we appreciate any and all help! If you just want to throw a $1 in the basket, we will donate the bread to a local nursing home. Questions? Contact Linda Jarrett at 636-394-4642 or write4you@sbcglobal.net.

The Pentecost Offering helps the church as a whole encourage, develop, and support its young people and addresses the needs of at-risk children. 40% of the Pentecost offering is retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Special envelopes will be in the pews during worship on Sunday, June 9. Please give as generously as you are able. Thank you.

May Concert Schedule.
May 4 – The Annual Organ Dedication Recital, 2:00p.m.
Scott Montgomery, award winning concert organist from Fayetteville, Arkansas, will be our guest recitalist this year. Scott's playing is fresh and exciting, and you don't want to miss this. Join us at 2:00p.m. on Saturday afternoon for his recital and free ice cream following the performance!

May 15 – The University of Michigan Men's Glee Club, 7:00p.m.
We are excited to host this outstanding men's chorus while on their Spring tour. Under the direction of Mark Stover, the Glee Club will sing a wide variety of works. Tickets are available at the door for $15.

May 19 – The Bach Society of St. Louis, 3:00p.m.
The Bach Society returns to First Presbyterian Church and will present JS Bach's “Mass in B minor”. There will be a free lecture at 1:30p.m. in the Chapel. Tickets are available through their website: www.bachsociety.org. (Please note: tickets are not available at the church.)
### MAY 2019

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<td>Sunday School Celebration 8:15 AM Communion Worship 8:45 AM First Pres Cafe 9:05 AM Arise! Contemporary Worship 10:00 AM All Ages Education for 11:00 AM Traditional Worship 7:00 PM Work Camp Parent Meeting</td>
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<td>9:00 AM Book Group 9:00 AM Preschool/ KDO 5:00 PM Music Instr. 7:00 PM Worship, Music, and Arts</td>
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