Beginning January 15!

Wednesdays
5:30 – 7:00 PM
See more on page 3!

DONE IN 60 MINS
FREAKY FAST INTRODUCTIONS TO THE CHRISTIAN BASICS

THE BOOK OF REVELATION
Read about the next Done in 60 Minutes presentation and the Exploring Revelation Group to dig deeper on page 4!

RUMMAGE for Mission
In the year 2020, the Rummage ministry celebrates its 70th year! Read about this year’s celebrations, and how you can participate in the ministry that raises over 30% of our mission funds on page 8!

In this issue...
Inquirers’ Class
Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration
Done in 60 Minutes: The Book of Revelation
Being Good Neighbors in a Red-Blue Land: Worship & Workshops on Polarization
The Magic of Christmas in the Preschool
Meal-a-Month
Staff Update
January Featured Mission Partner: National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon Syrian Relief Effort
Session Highlights

Third Thursday Taizé Prayer Service
6:30 PM, Chapel
Every Third Thursday of the Month
Thursday, January 16
Pastor’s Message

Dear Friends,

As a new year—and new decade—begins, it is only too easy to compile a catalog of woes as we consider the world we live in: a world disfigured by global warming, millions of refugees from want and violence, religious strife, racism, corruption, disinformation, the abandonment of truth. It would be all-too-easy to leave the promise of Christmas behind us as we pack up our decorations and dump our trees by the curb.

But Christmas isn’t meant to be just one day of the year. Christmas transforms each day of the whole year, bringing light into darkness, hope to despair, courage to fearfulness and grace for the burdens we must carry. Christmas changes everything. God is with us. We will not be left to ourselves. As Howard Thurman said, “Christmas…is the promise of tomorrow at the close of every day, the movement of life in defiance of death, the assurance that love is sturdier than hate, that right is more confident than wrong, that good is more permanent than evil.”

Now a new decade beckons, like the glittering expanse of Lake Michigan at sunrise. The deep water calls to us: we must put forth our boats and go...

Lord of earth, sea and heaven, may our boat be as nimble as a catamaran, balanced on twin hulls of truth and grace. And may our rudders, fashioned from scriptures both Old and New, be firmly fastened to the tiller of Christ’s Cross. Give us the courage to hoist high our sails of faith; and may the Holy Spirit fill them with heavenly power and direction.

Friends, the verge of the shoreline stretches like sand beneath our feet. A new voyage of promise and possibility invites us to push our prows into the water.

Look up from your catalogs!

And set forth with joy.

Clinton
Senior Pastor, Head of Staff
**Faith Formation**

**Inquirers’ Class**
**January 30 and February 1 and 2**

If you have been visiting First Pres and would like to learn more or become a member, mark your calendar for the upcoming Inquirers’ Classes. The goal is to help you understand more about the Christian faith, what it means to be a Presbyterian, and how you can feel even more at home at the church. It will also be a great opportunity to meet and get to know our Head Pastor, Clint Roberts!

We will meet together for an informal dessert from 7:00 to 8:30 PM on Thursday, January 30 (location TBD). Saturday morning, February 1, begins with a continental breakfast at 8:30 AM in the Parish House Conference Room and ends after lunch at 12:30 PM, and Sunday morning, February 2, will be from 10:15 to 10:45 AM in the South Parlor.

To register or for any questions, please contact Pastor Chip at chardwick@firstchurchlf.org or 224.544.1963.

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**Wednesday Night Supper**
**Wednesdays, beginning January 15**
**5:30 – 7:00 PM, The Great Room**

Join us around the table as we share in a weekly catered buffet supper. Gluten free options and stuff kids like to eat will also be available. Bring your family and friends!

For any questions, please contact Pastor Kristie Finley at kfinley@firstchurchlf.org.

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**Commemorate the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.**
**Monday, January 20, 12:45 PM, Market Square**

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King changed the trajectory of the United States, seeking justice for those long denied by society. Recognize the incredible impact he has had on our nation by coming to Market Square at 12:45 PM on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 20.

There will be a brief public prayer, and then in the spirit of Dr. King, we will march down to the Church of the Holy Spirit for a chance to explore his legacy further using short videos and small group conversations. The event, designed for the whole community, will end by 3:00 PM.

Questions? Contact Pastors Kristie or Chip in the church office at 847.234.6250.

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**SAVE THE DATE WOMEN’S RETREAT 2020**
**FEBRUARY 28 – 29**

**FOR QUESTIONS, CONTACT PASTOR KRISTIE AT KFINLEY@FIRSTCHURCHLF.ORG**
Faith Formation

Done in 60 Minutes:
The Book of Revelation
Sunday, January 12, 10:10 AM and 12:10 PM
12:10 PM session includes a light lunch

The book of Revelation is one of the most difficult books in the Bible to understand. What does all that wild imagery mean? What about 666 and the anti-Christ? Most importantly, what could it possibly have to do with your life today? If these questions resonate with you, you won’t want to miss the upcoming Done in 60 Minutes session on the book of Revelation. The presentation will cover the questions above, and more!

Pastor Chip Hardwick will give two identical presentations in the chapel on Sunday, January 12, from 10:10 to 11:10 AM and from 12:10 to 1:10 PM. The latter includes a light lunch.

For those who want to dig deeper than 60 minutes allows, Pastor Chip will lead an Exploring Revelation group on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:00 PM between January 15 and February 19 in the Stuart Room. Participants will have the chance to read along with Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation by renowned Bible scholar Bruce Metzger. You can purchase a copy of the book for $10 on Sunday mornings beginning January 12 or from the hospitality desk in the church office during the week. There is no need to register for the Sunday presentation or the Wednesday evening exploration group.

For more information, contact Pastor Chip at chardwick@firstchurchlf.org or 224.544.1963.

BEING GOOD NEIGHBORS IN A RED-BLUE LAND

WHAT IS IT TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR IN A LAND DIVIDED TRIBALLY BY POLITICS?

IN THIS POLARIZATION WORKSHOP, WE EXPLORE THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION TOGETHER.

DR. ALLEN HILTON, LEADER OF HOUSE UNITED, WILL HELP US BUILD COMMUNITY ACROSS OUR DIFFERENCES.

ABOUT Allen Hilton is the founder and executive director of House United, a nonprofit initiative that helps groups collaborate across theological and political differences. He holds a PhD in New Testament from Yale University, where he also served on the faculty of the Divinity School, and has led Christian formation in three large churches. Allen is a sought-after speaker on reconciliation and community building.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25
8:30 AM – 1:30 PM
HISTORY CENTER LAKE FOREST LAKE BLUFF

ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, DR. HILTON WILL PREACH IN THE 9:00 AM WORSHIP SERVICE, AND LEAD A “COURAGEOUS CONVERSATION” FROM 10:15 AM – 12:00 PM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL.
The Magic of Christmas in First Pres Preschool

Christmas is a time for family reunions, for family bonding, renewing friendships, exchanging gifts and going on holidays. People around the world celebrate Christmas in different ways, following their beliefs and their traditions. Christmas is a time to celebrate. Foremost it is the celebration of the birth of Jesus and is meant to bring a message of peace and hope.

The Preschool was a flurry of activity related to the season and the holiday itself. The mystery and magic come alive through stories, crafts, and most of all, talking about what the holiday means to the children here at First Pres Preschool and their families.

It is to remember Jesus’ birth and to care for, share, and give to people who need help this season and beyond.

It is the time to spend with family.

It is about opening presents and having fun, being with family and being out of school or at work.

It is to witness the true excitement and enchantment of the season through the eyes of children.

It is the time to reflect on what’s truly important in life.

It means to share love and help other people.

It is about showing gratitude and compassion.

It is the time to make others happy.

The overall message is clear. Christmas means to spend more time with family, showing gratitude, and loving, sharing, and making people happy, and remembering the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Here are some pictures to illustrate all of the fun we had this holiday season. Hope everybody had a Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year from all of us at First Presbyterian Preschool!

Blessings,

Suzie Brunner
Director of Preschool
Opportunities to Serve, Connect and Learn

Please join us in our Bible Studies!

**Brown Bag Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 11:45 AM, Parish House Conference Room
Gretchen Seymour, gretchenseymour@me.com

**Adult Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 1:30 PM
Deerpath Room
Cynthia Hessemer, chessemester@gmail.com

**Wednesday Women’s Bible Study:**
Wednesdays at 9:45 AM, South Parlor
Rita Fossell, ritafoseell@sbcglobal.net

**Exploring Revelation Group:** Jan. 15 – Feb. 19
Wednesdays at 7:00 PM, Stuart Room
Chip Hardwick, chardwick@firstchurchlf.org

**Men’s Bible Study & Prayer Group:**
Fridays at 7:00 AM, South Parlor
Peter Keller, pkjeller@concentric.net

**Men’s Discussion Group:** Every other Sunday at 8:30 AM, Parish House Library
David Cain, mdavidcain@gmail.com

Knitters & Crocheters!

Are you looking for a quick & easy project? You can participate in the Prayer Shawl Ministry’s annual drive to make hats & scarves to be used in the community. We provide patterns, yarn, hooks, needles and help.

All are welcome to join us on Tuesdays between 1:00 & 3:00 PM in South Parlor or put finished items in the Prayer Shawl mailbox in the office.

Any questions can be addressed to Nancy Orbison 847-680-1302 or Beth Miller 847-295-8890.

Meal a Month

Meal of the month for January supports Independence Center, one of our mission partners who helps adults with mental illness seeking the opportunity to be productive members of society by providing ongoing social, educational, vocational, and housing opportunities. Below is a list of donations for Independence Center to help with their programs. Please return donations by Sunday, January 19.

- Laundry Detergent
- Household Cleaning Products
- Razors
- Hand Sanitizer
- Lotion
- Depends
- Toilet Paper
- Hair Brushes/Combs
- Paper Towels
- Chapstick
- Garbage Bags
- Face Moisturizer
- Q Tips
- Wash Cloths & Towels
- Canned Goods
- Mouthwash
- Mac & Cheese
- Floss
- Body Wash
- Dish Soap

PADS
*(Providing Advocacy, Dignity & Shelter)*

**Wednesdays, January 8 and 29**

Join us on January 8 and 29 for this month’s PADS nights! First Pres provides food and volunteers on the 2nd and 5th Wednesday of the month, and we are in need of volunteers and food.

Sign up to serve: [firstchurchlf.org/serve-at-pads](http://firstchurchlf.org/serve-at-pads)

Sign up to donate food: [firstchurchlf.org/donate-food-for-pads](http://firstchurchlf.org/donate-food-for-pads)

We are grateful to all of you for living out your faith through generous donations of time and food, which are so desperately needed. If you have any questions, please email Shawn Ward at shawn66@comcast.net.
**Mission Corner**

January Featured Mission Partner:

**National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) Syrian Relief Effort**

Since 2013, First Pres has supported the relief efforts in Syria for those who have lost their homes or been affected by the civil war. NESSL is working through 19 local relief committees of the Presbyterian churches in Syria to provide vouchers for water, electricity and fuel for cooking and heat, to help Syrians who want to stay in their country. It also provides assistance with medication, hygiene, schooling, rent, and psycho-social and spiritual support. The goal of NESSL’s relief efforts is to be “a Christian tool to alleviate the suffering of daily living of many Christian and non-Christian Syrians.” While helping people from different backgrounds, they want to prioritize the continuing concern for the Christian presence in Syria. They desire for people to stay in their homeland with the hope of creating “an atmosphere of reconciliation through stretching hands to all the surroundings” and for “the story of Jesus to be lived and acted in the midst of this pain.”

For more information, visit [en.synod-sl.org](http://en.synod-sl.org) or [www.SyriaLebanonPN.org](http://www.SyriaLebanonPN.org). To read more about the current situation in Syria, see article on page 9.

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**Staff Update**

We are thrilled to welcome Patrick Goyermac to our staff as Financial Accounting Manager. Patrick has been working here since last summer in the same capacity after Yehuda Jacobi retired. In such a short period of time, he has become such a wonderful asset to the Business Office! Please come by and officially welcome Patrick.

**About Patrick**

Patrick has been married for 21 years and has two children in college. He has completed an MBA from University of Phoenix and has completed graduate work at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He also has a Bachelor degree in Accounting from Western Michigan University. In his spare time he enjoys doing home improvement projects around the house.

This January, we welcome James “Jim” Cochrane as our Seminary Intern. Serving under our pastors, Jim will be working with our high school and middle schoolers, as well as being given opportunities to experience the breadth and scope of our congregation’s many ministries as he prepares to become a Presbyterian Minister himself.

**About Jim**

Recently moved to Chicago, Jim is currently working on a Masters of Divinity degree at McCormick Theological Seminary in Hyde Park. When he is not studying his Hebrew flash cards, Jim can be seen running along the lakeshore trail with his wife Becca and their goldendoodle, Tucker. Jim is thrilled to come on board as a Seminary Intern and use his past experiences working for churches in Iowa City, IA and Minneapolis, MN to better serve the First Presbyterian community. First Pres has always held a special place in Jim’s heart and he is excited to work with and learn from this congregation!
May 2, 2020 marks the 70th anniversary of the First Pres Spring Rummage Sale. Since its inception in 1950, the sale has raised over $6.5 million dollars for our mission partners. Annually, the sale raises 30% of the overall mission budget for First Pres, and people from all over come to volunteer and purchase items.

In 1950, rummage sales were very common. In 2020, rummage sales have become exceedingly rare. Rummage is a ministry that requires many hands, much organization, and continued coordination. Each year, we build on what our amazing predecessors have done and figure out how to better serve our clients and mission partners.

We are so proud to be a part of this unique and important Rummage Ministry at First Pres, and we hope you will help us celebrate the anniversary of this great event in the upcoming months. We encourage the entire congregation to participate in Rummage by donating items, sorting, volunteering during the sale or inviting others outside our congregation.

As part of our celebration of the 70th year, we are looking for photos or press clippings from years past, especially the early years of the sale. If you have any photos or press clippings, please share with Martha Zeeman at martha@zeemanfamily.com.

We are also looking for new volunteers to help us in two particular areas. We are in need of a volunteer coordinator. This role consists primarily of data entry and can be done at off hours from your home. We are also in need of a clean up coordinator. This is a well established role that just needs a new coordinator to arrange the schedule and logistics for the end of the sale. If you're interested in learning more about either of these roles, please contact Martha Zeeman at martha@zeemanfamily.com.

We look forward to a GIGANTIC sale on May 2, 2020!

Heather Strong and Martha Zeeman
Co-Chairs of First Presbyterian Rummage Sale

Last month in Rummage...

On Monday, December 16, the Rummage year-round sorter team hosted a potluck luncheon to celebrate the Christmas season. Thirty five regular volunteers attended and enjoyed good fellowship, good food and great entertainment planned by Rummage Sorting Room Supervisor, Cynthia Hessemer! There was a gift exchange of “interesting” rummage donations including a flushing toilet statue and jester hat with tuxedo t-shirt among many others. They were joined by Pastor staff Kristie Finley and Chip Hardwick, who invoked the blessing.

Finally “Heavy Lifter” Curtis Pierre warmed their hearts with his singing talent leading the group in the Twelve Months of Rummage original song!

The Rummage Ministry is a special one for our church and celebrates 70 years in 2020!

Come join in the fun year-long!
Syria Update:
How Our Church Helps Reduce Suffering

For seven years, First Pres has faithfully supported relief efforts by our sister Synod, NESSL (National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon), both financially and by building relationships with pastoral leaders in the Middle East. NESSL serves as our “boots on the ground” to funnel support to people in dire need in this war-ravaged part of the world. First Pres dollars have launched schools for refugee children in Lebanon, and in Syria helps supply heating oil, food, medicine, and basic necessities for living. Support is through Mission donations, our choir’s fundraising concert, formation of a prayer partnership with the church in Fairouzeh, Syria, and freewill offerings responding to personal visits from NESSL and PCUSA representatives.

Importantly, NESSL provides help to all people in need, regardless of religious affiliation. (This is not true of other denominations in the area).

Just as NESSL was starting to pivot towards redevelopment and reestablishment of homes for citizens returning to cities, recent Turkish incursions into Syria have triggered a renewed mass migration of people from war within their neighborhoods.

Of the 3 million people living in northeastern Syria (the current battleground between Syrian, Turkish, and Kurdish forces), 1.8 million needed humanitarian assistance before recent violence erupted, and 710,000 became newly displaced. Water infrastructure is now severely damaged. Winter has come. Food is scarce and food prices have sky rocketed. The protection of internally displaced people (IDPs) and the civilian population remains a critical concern.

Quite simply, this eight year long war has displaced 15 million people (original population was 22 million) and destroyed most of the country. Local Presbyterians have provided the constancy to soothe, heal, and repair. We are grateful that we continue to have the opportunity to join our Syrian brothers and sisters in Christ through prayer and contributions to NESSL.

NEW CONCEPT for the All-Church Auction & Dinner!

Opening Hearts and Homes for Mission
SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, March 7

We will gather in the Great Room for the auction and fellowship, then depart for dinner at various First Pres members’ homes, as Jesus and his apostles were hosted in the disciples’ homes. All proceeds will go to First Pres Mission grants.
Session Highlights

Session Highlights from the December 16 meeting by Mary Watanabe, Clerk of Session

At its December 16, 2019, Stated Meeting, session:

- Enjoyed fellowship and refreshments at the Manse, hosted by Pastor Roberts and his wife Deb;
- Reflected on the meaning of “home for Christmas” with Pastor Roberts in a devotion and prayer;
- Heard Moderator Roberts’ enthusiastic report including his delight in getting to know all of us, his praise for the church staff, and his looking forward to experiencing Christmas Eve here;
- Was encouraged by Clerk Watanabe to sign up to serve communion on January 5 and February 2, 2020;
- Unanimously passed a motion to have our annual Congregational meeting on February 9, 2020, at 10 a.m.;
- Unanimously passed a motion to accept a resolution regarding Pastor Kristie Finley’s housing allowance;
- Enthusiastically passed a motion to hire Jim Cochrane, McCormick Seminary student and grandson of long-time FPCLF members Jim and Jo Cochrane, as Youth Faith Formation Intern, starting Jan. 5; he will be with us on Sundays;
- Unanimously and with great expectations passed a motion from Pastor Finley and Family Faith Formation to begin “Wednesday Dinners,” starting in January, giving all ages a chance to enjoy fellowship and a meal together in the Great Room;
- Unanimously and with great expectations passed a motion from Adult Faith Formation (AFF), presented by Pastor Hardwick to accept an Overture to the General Assembly focused on how to counter polarization and encourage reconciliation among people who disagree with each other;
- Heard that AFF has invited Allen Hilton to present a program open to the public at the LF/LB Historical Center on polarization on January 25; he will also preach at 9 a.m. on January 26 and hold a “courageous conversation” after the service in Fellowship Hall;
- Was reminded by Pastor Kristie of the 45th Work Trip Reunion Party on December 22; anyone who has ever attended a work trip is invited;
- Heard that Pastor Hardwick will do a “Done in 60 Minutes” on Revelation in January;
- Was told about plans for a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ecumenical program on his birthday;
- Heard from the Mission Revenue group that the All Church Auction will be March 7 and a new event, Rummage Runway, will be April 18;
- Was pleased with the Finance report FPCLF will likely break even on our budget by the end of the year; that endowments have done especially well; and that committees are to be congratulated for their timely cooperation in the budgeting process;
- Heard from the All Church Nominating Committee (ACNC) that while they have no self-nominated candidates, they do have a healthy list of suggestions for Elder, Deacon, and At-Large members of ACNC; the final slates will be voted on at the Annual Congregational meeting, February 9;
- Learned that the new church website is to be completed early in 2020; and
- Shared our concerns and joys, one of which was Clint’s School Bus Caroling Group that had a great time singing in Lake Forest and Lake Bluff at the homes of church members who cannot always get out.
## Deacons

John McNicholas, *Moderator*

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## Elders

Mary Watanabe, *Clerk of Session*

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<td>Roberta Miller</td>
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<td>Barbara Schulz</td>
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## Staff

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<td>Donna Birney</td>
<td>Rev. Kent Kinney</td>
<td>Catarino Rodriguez</td>
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<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
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<td>Suzie Brunner</td>
<td>Jan McNicholas</td>
<td>Sarah Seccombe</td>
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<td>Director of Preschool</td>
<td>Director of Business Operations</td>
<td>Director of Children’s Faith Formation</td>
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<td>Rev. Kristie W. Finley</td>
<td>Guillermo Montufar</td>
<td>Alisa Steady</td>
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<td>Interim Associate Pastor</td>
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<td>Patrick Goymerac</td>
<td>Susan Noble</td>
<td>Dr. Thomas Tropp</td>
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<td>Accountant</td>
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<td>Director Of Music and Arts</td>
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<td>Rev. Dr. Charles B. Hardwick</td>
<td>Kane Quilos</td>
<td>Dr. Barry Wenger</td>
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<td>Interim Associate Pastor</td>
<td>Director of Communications</td>
<td>Organist, Director of Handbells</td>
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<td>Stewart Kerr</td>
<td>Rev. Clinton G. Roberts</td>
<td>Cymbre Westburg</td>
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<td>Senior Pastor, Head of Staff</td>
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BEING
GOOD NEIGHBORS
IN A
RED-BLUE LAND

WORSHIP AND WORKSHOPS
ON POLARIZATION

JANUARY 25 – 26
READ MORE ON PAGE 4

Opening Hearts and Homes for Mission

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, March 7
All-Church Auction & Dinner
New concept in 2020!
Read more on page 9!