**Building God’s House of Peace: Malawi Matters**

Let’s stop for a moment to think about that which perhaps we cannot see. Let’s look beyond the walls of our church, beyond the boundaries of our community—even beyond the borders of our nation. There is much to see, much to talk about and think about . . . but for a moment, let’s talk about this: right now nearly 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS around the globe. The Sub-Saharan countries of Africa are disproportionately impacted, with nearly 26 million of those cases in this region alone.

“HIV/AIDS is still a worldwide issue,” says Phyllis Wezeman, a member of First Presbyterian Church of South Bend, Indiana. She leads Malawi Matters—a nonprofit that has not shied away from talking about the issue but is tackling it head on. The organization develops and facilitates HIV and AIDS education with the people of Malawi.

Malawi Matters is 100 percent volunteer driven. Donations are used for developing and supporting important training programs, and for much-needed supplies. Wezeman’s church is part of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley, which has answered the call to become a Matthew 25 mid council.

As a Matthew 25 mid council, the presbytery has committed to “radical and fearless discipleship” to embrace one or more of three focuses: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism and eradicating systemic poverty. The presbytery uses its portion of the Peace & Global Witness Offering in support of Malawi Matters. These gifts

support field work in more than 200 congregations and villages and more than 1,500 schools. Volunteers also travel to Malawi to serve as facilitators on teaching teams.

Malawi Matters is just one beautiful example of how Presbyterians who support the Peace & Global Witness Offering are building God’s household, a household of peace. Through our participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our church is extending Christ’s peace throughout our community—25 percent of the gifts received will stay right here at the church to build God’s house alongside (NAME THE ORGANIZATION OR GROUP ASSISTED IN YOUR MINISTRY). Twenty-five percent will support regional efforts in our mid councils, and 50 percent will go the Presbyterian Mission Agency for its ministries of education and partnership with active peacemakers all around the world.

In God’s house there are people of every background. There are people of every race, age and gender. There are those of us who are blessed to be able to offer support and those whose lives are blessed by receiving support. We are the church, **together**.

*Let us pray~*

God of peace, bring your promise to all people. May those who suffer from illness receive your healing touch, and your peace, which passes all understanding. Amen.