

Life Together



The First Presbyterian Church
of Morrison, Illinois
~est. March 28, 1855~

*Reaching out to our neighbor with open hearts;
sharing God's blessings with others.*

All Are Welcome!

August 2026 • Vol. 69/No. 06

August abruptly comes barging in, saying, "See ya!" to June and July. Summer's time of lightning bugs and cherry pies is pushed aside with garden harvests, county fairs and school coming back in session. Town ball now has long since gone, fall sports practices are well underway. Cicadas scream, "My time is now!" while monarchs hastily lay their eggs. The milkweed bends from the weight of seed pods, with chrysalis dangling in a humid light breeze. A butterfly awaits inside, as sweet corn is plucked in the fields nearby.

Another summer comes and goes, bringing zucchini, tomatoes, peppers to be piled high. Neighbors first accept garden gifts with smiles, eventually waving off an approaching garden gift, saying, "I have enough, maybe next time." Wild flowers begin to dry up and die, leaving honeybees hungry in August's dearth. Children, youth and college kids mournfully murmur beneath their breath, begrudgingly loading backpacks. Their songs are all the same, "Why does it have to be this way?" as autumn prematurely bounds in.

Yes, it's that time of year again. Summer vacation is stolen away. The dog days suffocate us. Gardens dump their bounty all at once. The fair comes and goes. And in a wink of an eye, Labor Day will soon be here.

Though I love August for all its beauty and bounty, I loathe the freedom it steals. As spring comes bringing forth new life, August compiles all the fruit of all the labor, and leaves us sitting upon winter's edge. Sure, September brings apples, summer squash and pumpkins. October brings the brilliant leaves and bonfires. November ushers in winter's playground and giving us the beauty of the naked landscapes and trees. And winter gives us rest and sleep, and for some, at times the snow. For those of us who also love this season,

we also have trouble letting it go at winter's end. Soon late winter finds us finishing projects inside and out. We hurry for the springtime rain, spouting excited hurrahs as we see the green and bright colors sprout once again. Then Memorial Day suddenly appears, like a far off dream now come to life, bringing back June and July. We relish in those summer days, remembering the freedom we had when we too were young. But then August always comes abruptly in, pushing us right along.

So many seasons I've watched here at Hamilton Grove, in Morrison and the small towns of Whiteside County. Eighty now have come and gone since I first arrived on a hot late July afternoon. Eighty seasons I have been with the old church at the corner of Genesee and Lincolnway. Two decades lived. Two decades gone. Two decades of memories. Two decades ago, my body had finally matured enough that I could grow a full beard. Two decades later that beard is turning gray. Two decades ago so many loved ones were still alive. There were so many to whom we hadn't considered we'd have to say goodbye. Two decades ago, our bodies were more able, our children were younger or unborn, now growing and grown, many with families of their own. Two decades of seeking visions of the Spirit have been our blessing.

Chasing God's opportunities with a willful heart, we have journeyed together to explore what could be. We have taken chances. We have failed and succeeded. We have ended much of what the elderly remember as always-have-been. In turn, we have lived into so much that *was* and *is* new. Two decades ago an idle congregation anticipated something new. They prayed for a new pastor as their previous one retired, and wondered who they might now become. They

gave thanks for their past and what they'd been doing, for their fellowship and laughter and love. But a fire they felt brewing deep in their souls told them they needed to stop twiddling their thumbs. So God called me to you, just a kid trying to be a man, hoping to make it a few years. Well two decades later, we've given it a good run, but we're nowhere close to being done.

God is still working, still burning that fire, still calling us, pushing us, and keeping us going. We keep praying, and listening, open to the Spirit. We are continuing as we are able, we are stopping what needs ended, and starting when Christ says, "Let's go!" We haven't given up yet, I don't think we ever will. It's not in us to ever think that way. We are children of God, we are apostles of Christ, we are beacons of the Holy Spirit. We have love at our center. We seek the kingdom of heaven, and we want it for everyone. We focus on unity, on peace, on equality. We strive for justice, for balance, for harmony and humbleness. We do not think of ourselves as better. We just do what we can do, to live out the greatest of God's commands. We seek to love God with our entire being, with all our might, with all our strength. We worship together. We pray and we sing. We listen and we teach—all to embrace the love of God, and to be able to love one another in the Gospel way. The good news is this, that God always loves us. God's love gives forgiveness. God's love gives new life. God's love gives us the chance to serve. We seek to live in a balanced style, of loving our neighbor as our self. We, begrudgingly at times, must love our own self, forgive our own self, allow ourselves to move on from the past and live into the moment at hand, and to know that our love for self is

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Church News

CHURCH EVENTS

Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship in-person at 10:15AM every Sunday morning. We livestream each service from our Facebook group page:

facebook.com/firstpresmorrison.

The services are also posted on Monday mornings to our YouTube channel:

youtube.com/@firstpresmorrison

Bible Study

Bible Study will be held at 9:45AM at La Bella on Tuesdays throughout the month. Everyone is welcome!

Bingo at Homestead

Homestead invites one and all to join residents and friends to play BINGO on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 2—3:30PM. There will be refreshments and prizes!

Resthave Presbyterian Social Hour

Join us every 3rd Monday of the month at 2PM for “Presbyterian Social Hour” at Resthave. There will be plenty of coffee and conversation! Weather and illness permitting, please join us on August 17th!

Newsletter Deadline 08/20

Please get information to be included in the September *Life Together* newsletter to the office e-mail or voicemail by August 20th.

Free Community Meal

Thanks to all who helped with and sponsored our 6th Annual Morrison Fire Department Benefit Meal on June 30th. We handed out 400 meals and raised \$3,000 for our volunteer fire department!

Our next meal will be on Thursday, August 27th. The meal is a pulled pork sandwich with sides. It begins at **5PM**. In-person and drive-up meals are available. Help is needed Wednesday at 1:30pm and on Thursday at 4PM.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy 100th Birthday

Glenda Hegwood

On July 28, Glenda Hegwood reached the century mark. A crew of Morrison Presbyterians went to Peoria to celebrate with Glenda. If you have not yet sent a card, please do so by mailing it to Glenda: c/o Lutheran Hillside Village 6901 N Galena Rd. SP 1303 Peoria, IL 61614.

The Church Triumphant

Dan Brandon completed this portion of life on Thursday, June 4. There was a private family burial at Grove Hill on Friday, June 5.

Edna Ulrich completed this portion of life on July 18. Visitation and worship service were held at our church on Friday, July 24, with burial at Oak Knoll in Sterling.

Favorite Hymns

Pastor Mike is looking to add to the pool of hymns we sing. Do you have some favorite hymns in our hymnal or from elsewhere that we don't sing? Please let Pastor Mike know. He'll be asking each Sunday in August.

Per Capita

The per capita in 2026 is \$45 per church member. If you haven't paid it yet, please do.

2025-26 Communion Dates

Tentative Communion dates for 2026 are: 8/16; 9/13; 10/4; 11/22; 12/20.

Children's Chairs for Sale

We have several old children's chair that have been stored in various places in the church and it's time for them to find a new home. They have metal frames and wood seats and backs. We are asking for donations of your choice.

BUILDING UPDATES

We are still looking for donations to help cover the costs of our several expenses we have accrued this year. We have replaced the broken commercial fridge with a much larger one which now lives in the pantry. We have a new fridge as well in our kitchen. The costs for both were split with Morrison Day Care, each having paid \$4,085.

SANCTUARY AC

One of our two AC units for the sanctuary gave out, but has been able to be temporarily fixed. The cost of the repair was \$1,350.

Workman's is suggestion we pur-

Prayer Requests

Those who have served the church in the past month; the Mission Starfish Haiti School; Yucatan Peninsula Mission; Victory Center; Sauk Valley Food Bank; Morrison Food Pantry; Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center and Blackhawk Presbytery; God's Will Giving Center; and those in need of healing and support: Nursing & retirement home residents and staff, medical workers, essential employees, school teachers & staff; Bev Bealer, Mavis Best, the family of Dan Brandon, Glenda Hegwood, Dale Johnson, Lynn Knox, Marian Osborn, Jody Tucker, Ray Tucker, the family of Edna Ulrich



chase a new after this cooling season. That cost is TBD.

BOILER ISSUES:

We have finally paid off our \$1,000/month boiler bill! And now the boiler company has come to fix a major two year old leak in the boiler, which is consisting of a major overhaul. Work began on July 23. While here, they will also replace a few radiator traps that have been overheating certain areas and causing major stress on the building.

BELL TOWER RENOVATION NEAR COMPLETION

A doner has made the interior bell tower renovation come to fruition. In June, the same mason who tuckpointed our building exterior in 2025 has now restored the interior of the bell tower. Years of mineral deposits growing out of the brick due to the bell tower being boarded up decades ago has now been removed. The complete interior was then tuckpointed. Boards behind the louvers have also been removed to allow the bell tower to breathe again, as it was designed to do. A wood floor made of decking was created for the lower section of the tower, and 10" insulation was placed below the floor. This will greatly reduce the cold air that permeates into the sanctuary in the winter. However, the mason used chicken wire instead of fine mesh wire in the windows, so bats could still get in. Further, the side of the louvers which were previously protected by boards are now bare and need painted to protect the wood. Pastor Mike and Bryan Etter will head up this project in August.

The interior of the belltower also needs fixed due to water damage over the years. We are going to attempt to do the work ourselves. The walls need a plaster coating in areas, ceiling tiles need replaced, and the wood walls need scraped and painted. Also, the doors have not been flush for a long time and we need to rehang them.

SANCTUARY DAMAGE

Due to one of our boiler issues, ex-

treme heat caused the paint to come off the paneling along the balcony in the sanctuary. Color Star has sanded and painted the paneling for approximately \$1,000.

We are looking to have Deer View/Color Star fix the plaster issues caused by rain over the last decade coming in at areas surrounding the bell tower within the sanctuary, some of which are at the very top of the wall, well beyond our capability to fix. These areas will then be repainted. The current estimate is approximately \$1,000 for this work.

NEW INTERNET & UPCOMING UPGRADES INCLUDING LIVE-STREAMING

Pastor Mike, Bryan Etter and Jim Palmer ran ethernet cable from the day care's fiber optic to give us internet on our side of the building. Mike is overseeing the rest of the project and is utilizing a local professional who is volunteering to help. Soon, the whole church will have a seamless mesh of Wi-Fi internet. Also, Pastor Mike has applied for a \$5,000 technology grant from the Presbytery Foundation. Grant winners will be announced on August 17. If we receive this grant, we will use the money to purchase a computer system to professionally live-stream our worship services so that both sound and video are exceptional (currently, they are both less than mediocre). We have other visions for utilizing this new computer system, including hopefully creating volunteer and learning opportunities for Sauk Valley Impact Program students.

DAYCARE HVAC

The Morrison Day Care received grants in 2025 to cover the installation of mini-split HVAC systems, like we have in our dining room. These systems will heat, cool and dehumidify. Further, the units all have air purifiers to hopefully provide a healthier environment for children and teachers. This will also reduce the need for the church to run the boiler as early and as late in the fall and spring season as they have in the past.

FOOD RESOURCES

Golden Meals:

Call 815 626-4442 (Mon—Thurs, 7:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.) Hot meals delivered Mon—Thurs. (With frozen/sack meals for weekends.)

Morrison Food Pantry:

Open Thursday mornings, 8-10 a.m., for curbside pick-up of food and dry goods. Now located at the old bowling alley at 629 E. Lincolnway.

morrisonfoodpantry.org

Ebenezer Church

Free fresh produce given away on Thursdays 9:45a.m.

God's Will Giving Center

Limited free food, essential items, as well as household items. Open Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Sauk Valley Food Bank:

Offers drive-up "pantry day giveaways" on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon, where food is provided to residents of the Sauk Valley area. 1801 Plant Drive Sterling, IL

saukvalleyfoodbank.org

211

Have other needs? Call 211. This directory of regional help covers a myriad of needs. Part of United Way.

ELECTRIC BILLS AND SOLAR REBATES

We are being partnered to a solar farm so that we can receive 10% off our electric bills. Thanks to Cody Weets, we have this opportunity. Our electric bills average around \$500 per month, and in June, it reached nearly \$900! Hopefully with the new daycare HVAC system and a repaired boiler, our bills will go down.



August 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 10th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	3 National Watermelon Day	4 9:45AM Bible Study @ La Bella	5	6 4pm Chamber Pop Up Market 6:30pm Family BINGO	7 2pm Wedding Vow Renewal @ Resthave	1
9 11th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	10	11 9:45AM Bible Study @ La Bella	12 2PM BINGO @ Homestead	13	14	15
16 12th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship & Communion 11:15AM Coffee Hour	17 2PM Social Hour @ Resthave 6:30PM Session Meeting	18 9:45AM Bible Study @ La Bella Whiteside Co Fair	19 PLT First Day of School 1:30PM BINGO @ Resthave	20 Newsletter Deadline 8AM Social Hour @ The Loft	21	22
23 13th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	24 Morrison First Day of School	25 9:45AM Bible Study @ La Bella	26 1:30PM Meal Prep	27 5PM Free Community Meal	28 5PM Prophetstown Proud Cruise In	29
30 14th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	31					

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Food Pantry Needs

The Food Pantry personal items needed. Drop them off in the narthex. Any size is appreciated.

Toilet Paper	Paper Towels
Kleenex	Shampoo
Bleach	Bar Soap
Laundry Soap	Dish Soap
Men's & Women's	Deodorant

Social Hour at The Loft

The Board of The Loft hosts a Third Thursday social hour each month, on — you guessed it — the Third Thursday of each month from 8-10AM. The Loft is a non-profit business on Main Street. Please stop in and check it out.

Resthave Wedding Vow Renewal

Pastor Mike will be officiating a wed-

ding vow renewal service at Resthave Home on Friday, August 7 at 2PM. You are welcome to join for the service and the celebration to follow.

Family BINGO

Morrison High School's Key Club is hosting Family BINGO in the Community Room at Odell Library on Thursday, August 6 from 6:30—8pm. It is free for all to join. There will be snacks, water and prizes to win!

School is Back in Session

School will be back in session this month! Please be patient and watch for students and busses.

Prophetstown schools are back in session on Wednesday, August 19th; while Morrison schools begin Monday, August 24th.

Prophetstown Cruise In

Prophetstown Proud's Annual Car Cruise In will be on Friday, August 28 from 5-7pm along Prophetstown's Main Street.

There is something for everyone. Whether you want to show off your ride or just admire the ones on display, come out and enjoy the fun!

Save the Dates

Saturday, Sept. 19—Chalk the Walk & GLOWapalooza—End of Summer Block Party, Downtown Morrison

Saturday, Oct. 10—Boobie Bus Breast Cancer Fundraiser

Wednesday, Oct. 21—Chamber Appreciation Day

Saturday, Oct. 24—Fall Fest & Halloween Parade

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how we embrace God's love for ourself. But we do not let the ego take over, instead we keep that in check. In its spot we place our neighbor. We find that we are connected to one another as our souls are intertwined with Jesus in the center. The Holy Spirit binds us into the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit binds us together as the Church. The Holy Spirit binds us together, soul to soul, with Jesus between us all. From us, to Christ, to the other. From the other, to Christ, to us. We are all one in Christ. We are all one, all us humans. We are all one, all of creation together.

We are called together as a beloved community. Christ brought together a group of Scotts fresh to the young state of Illinois, at the foothills of the Driftless region, which the last glaciers left alone, and ancient land still standing. These Scotts built a strong building at the base of that foothill, along an ancient path leading to the creek to the north and beyond into the rolling hill territories, with the flats beyond to the south. They built that strong building literally upon a rock, with limestone just feet below the floor. That building has stood for nearly a century and a half. It has seen the sights of so many faithful

saints born as infants and walk onto the long journey as the old and wise. It has seen the Dutch arrive, more immigrants arriving, and early pioneer families still extending their family tree branches. The world changed around them in ways that those in 1855 could never imagine.

Just think of how the world changed. In 1855, slavery still existed. Lincoln was not yet president. There was no electricity, no plumbing, no radio, no phonograph, no modern medicine. Transportation was found in horses and trains. Communication came through letters and the telegraph. The world of the original congregation is as foreign to us as our world would be to them. The world has grown from 1.2 billion to 8.3 billion people. And of the changes, we find ourselves now in a world where church is no longer a norm. Yet despite the drastic changes from then to now, and even the vast changes in the last 20 years, we are still here. The First Presbyterian Church of Morrison, IL stands with a strong building built upon solid rock. The congregations still stands strong upon the Rock of Jesus Christ. We are still God's children. We are still called to serve. No matter the season, no matter the changes that take place in and around us, we are still united to carry on the

keys of the kingdom.

In our life together, we can give thanks for the generations that have come before us, for the generations we are blessed to live with, and for the generations to come. The seasons will indeed come and go, but the love of God and the calling of Christ will never cease. Together, we will continue to be filled with the Holy Spirit, guided to find the ways in which God has planned to use us. We will still worship the Triune God and celebrate our life together. We will continue to live out our vision, *Reaching out to our neighbor with open hearts; sharing God's blessings with others.* We will continue to love one another and feed each other. We will continue to seek balance of loving those within the church walls and those outside of our church walls. We will continue to have a community focus, believing we exist to actively serve, in the name of Jesus Christ.

For all these seasons, for all the love I have been a part of, for I have been gifted, and in all the ways I have been able to share my gifts. I am blessed to still be here. Thank you.

Grace and Peace,
Mike

Leadership and Staff

Session Elders/ Board of Trustees/ Personnel Committee/ Safety Team/ Stewardship Team

Rick Barr '26
Carol Wolf '26
Ron Shank '27*
Tim Reynolds '27
Jim Palmer '28
Angela Reamer '28

Stacie Baker, Clerk

**Elders in their 2nd consecutive term*

Corporation Officers

Ron Shank, President
Tim Reynolds, Vice President
Scott Vandermyde, Treasurer

Nominating Committee

Bryan Etter
Tim Reynolds
Greg Rider
Carol Wolf
Deb Zigler

Resthave Home Board of Directors

Deb Zigler
FPC Representative

Resthave Home Women's Auxiliary Board

Deb Zigler

Finance Team

Angela Reamer
Tim Reynolds
Scott Vandermyde

Staff

Rev. Dr. Mike Selburg, Pastor
Stacie Baker, Office Manager
Scott Vandermyde, Organist
Courtney Bruckner, Custodian



August Scripture

- Aug. 2: Isa. 55:1-5
Ps. 145:8-9, 14-21
Rom. 9:1-5
Matt. 14:13-21
- Aug. 9: 1 Kings 19:9-18
Ps. 85:8-13
Rom. 10:5-15
Matt. 14:22-33
- Aug. 16: Isa. 56:1, 6-8
Ps. 67
Rom. 11:1-2a, 29-32
Matt. 15:(10-20)
21-28
- Aug. 23: Isa. 51:1-6
Ps. 138
Rom. 12:1-8
Matt. 16:13-20
- Aug. 30: Jer. 15:15-21
Ps. 26:1-8
Rom. 12:9-21
Matt. 16:21-28

Birthdays

08/01: Carol Wolf
08/13: Jacie Reynolds
08/15: Leala Reynolds
08/16: Ken Mills
08/21: Jan Kelly
08/21: Katie Rider
08/22: Robert Van Osdol
08/29: Mavis Best
08/29: Daniel Cortes

Anniversaries

08/30: Jared & Elizabeth
Wessels

Upcoming Free Drive-Up Community Meals First Presbyterian Church, Morrison

Aug. 27—Pulled Pork Sandwich
Sept. 10—Baked Potato Sloppy Joe
Oct. 8—Chili & Cinnamon Roll
Nov. 12—Chicken & Veggie Soup
Dec. 10—Christmas Ham Dinner



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www.firstpresmorrison.org

https://www.facebook.com/firstpresmorrison

YouTube Channel: First Presbyterian Church of Morrison, Illinois

Contact Pastor Mike at revselburg@gmail.com



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Love
one another.
Feed
each other.