

# 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!

May 2024 • Vol. 67/No. 5

“Love one another. Feed each other.” This is a slogan I came up with a few years ago for our church. As I have contemplated who we are as a congregation, I come back to that we are a church who extends love and seeks to feed people. The feeding is of both physical and spiritual food. The physical feeding of people really stands out as our top priority in our mission to our community. We have loved cooking and feeding people long before I arrived in 2006. We’ve only expanded upon who we already were. I am proud to be the pastor at a church who takes feeding people so seriously. Because it’s just *what we do*, we don’t give it a whole lot of thought. But I want to use this month’s newsletter article to feature our two main ways we physically feed people: our Free Community Meals which just celebrated 15 years at the end of April, and our Free Community Produce Table, which is now in its 8th year and will soon boast a permanent shelter.

In late winter 2009, members of the First Presbyterian Church of Morrison, IL and the Morrison, IL community began to discuss what we could do to help people in need as the recession had brought heightened unemployment and strained finances to the area. Inspired by the free community meals in Morris, IL, held at the First Presbyterian Church of Morris, we held several planning meetings, and on April 30th, the last Thursday of the month, we hosted our first meal. We didn’t know how we would pay for this to be an ongoing event, but at the end of the evening, a donation basket was filled with cash and it was enough to cover the next meal. Though these meals are free, it has been through donations that we have been able to pay for them. In order to make the meals, we have depended upon hundreds of volunteers who have helped in many ways. In 2014, we began to utilize the Sauk Valley Foodbank which also has been extremely helpful in enabling us to continue these meals. For example, April’s pulled pork sandwiches were made from 120lbs of donated pork

butt and shoulder roasts from the foodbank.

We served meals twice per month until 2022, and now serve once per month. The way the meals have operated, the days of the week, and the use of volunteers has continually changed. It took about five years to really hit our stride, and soon dinner attendance rose to around 90 in-person and about 25 take-homes. In 2020 we had to shut down for a few months, but that summer we reinvented ourselves as Free Community Drive-Up Meals, and now serve 175-350 meals at each event. We’ve lost count of the meals we have given away, but it is in the tens of thousands.

On July 31, 2017, we moved ahead with a plan that had been blessed by the Session. As the peak of the garden produce growing season was at hand, I set up a table in the yard next to the church, made two signs, and placed a pop-up sunshade over the table. One sign read “Free Community Produce Table.” The other sign read “Pick Some or Leave Some.” And so, a social experiment started in which the community of Morrison, IL had the opportunity to drop off excess produce from their gardens while the opportunity was available for people to receive free produce. How would the concept of feeding one another, for free, pan out? Would the table be vandalized? Would people hoard and swoop up all the produce on the table when it got dropped off? Would anyone be willing to share? Would anyone be willing to take? Well, by the end of that first day, with just a simple sign at the street corner and a post on Facebook, a bag of freshly picked tomatoes was delivered to the table. Indeed, it was, and has been, a great success. The table stood up into October until gardens had been cleared out. Produce was routinely dropped off and picked up. The table went away until the following June.

In 2018, the sign was upgraded to a professionally designed and printed banner and a new sign was created for the street corner. It was again another very successful season and community residents were very happy with the

opportunity to share and receive. It was giving people the opportunity to help others and it was also an opportunity for people to receive good fresh produce (for free). Again, the table went away in the fall of 2018 and 2019. In summer 2020, the table was placed at a street corner at the opposite end of the church’s block. It had been sitting by the ramp to the Morrison Community Day Care which is housed in our church. With the need to keep a distance from one another, it made sense to move it away from where children were coming and going. At its new location, it became more visible and provided better parking. With the pandemic in full swing, we were unsure how that summer would go at the table. It was amazingly clear that people really wanted to help others, and people also had more time to garden, so the amount of produce coming in grew immensely. Also, the financial constraints of residents grew, so the need for free food grew. Further, the Sauk Valley Food Bank began seeing an increase in produce being delivered to them, creating a need to discard as much as possible, and the table became an outlet for this. So quite often, a load of fresh packaged produce would fill the table. When October 2020 rolled around, we decided to leave the table out for the winter. As gardens stopped producing, people started loading the table with canned and packaged goods. All winter, food appeared on the table and food was taken. The table has remained in that corner year-round and the popularity has only grown. It is taken care of mostly by people in the community. Expiring produce, cardboard boxes and items that can’t be eaten are taken away by people in the community. We have not asked others to take care of the table, but they do. The community has taken ownership in the care of the table.

Every summer we place a pop-up sunshade over the table, and every year a storm sweeps in and destroys the sunshade. Sometimes we lose multiple sunshades over the summer. Come winter, we leave the table open to the elements. ...Continued on page 5

# Church News

## CHURCH EVENTS

### Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship in-person at 10:15AM every Sunday morning. Virtual worship will continue to be provided indefinitely. We livestream each service from our Facebook group page: <https://www.facebook.com/firstpresmorrison>. The services are also posted on Monday mornings to our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@firstpresmorrison>

### Bible Study

Bible Study will be held at 9:30AM at Pleasant View Nursing Home on Tuesdays throughout the month.

### Sunday School

Children's Sunday School will be held on May 5 and 19 starting at 9:15AM. May 19 is the last day of Sunday School and Children's Sabbath. Weather permitting, we will have a party outside for Sunday School on the 19th including our bounce house. Otherwise we'll move it indoors.

### Fishing with Pleasant View and Ice Cream Socials Too

We will be helping host a fishing outing with the residents of Pleasant View. Join us at Rockwood State Park on Monday, May 6th at

10AM. You don't have to fish to attend. Come and be social! In chance of bad weather, we will postpone it to Monday, May 13th at 10AM. Meet at the marina fishing pavilion.

We are also starting to host "Ice Cream Socials" every month at Pleasant View. We held our first one as an impromptu event in April. Residents were sad as a beloved resident, Cheyenne Covell, had died the night before. Residents attending Bible study said they could use an ice cream cone as a pick-me-up. That afternoon we brought ice cream and nearly all the residents attended. It was a privilege to be able to see so many smiling faces. We decided we needed to make this permanent. So, join us every first Tuesday of the month at Pleasant View at 4:30PM for an ice cream social!

### Fire Dept Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, May 19th is the annual Morrison Fire Department pancake breakfast. Please note we will not have coffee hour this day. Please support our local fire department!

### Resthave Presbyterian Social Hour

Join us every 3rd Monday of the month at 2PM for "Presbyterian So-

cial Hour" at Resthave. There will be plenty of coffee and conversation! Join us on May 20!

### Bingo at Homestead

Marian Osborn invites one and all to join residents and friends of Homestead to play bingo on Wednesday afternoons from 1:30—2:30PM.

### Nursing Home

#### Remembrance Services

Pastor Mike is creating Remembrance Services at Pleasant View and Homestead, in conjunction with the Morrison Ministers' Council. We will have a remembrance service at Pleasant View on Thursday, May 23rd at 10:15AM. Please join us as we remember residents who have died in the past year. We will do the same at Homestead in late October/ Early November around All Saint's Day. Also, MMC will also begin to participate in the Remembrance Service that already takes place at Resthave in January.

### Newsletter Deadline 05/25

Please get information to be included in the June/July *Life Together* newsletter to the office voicemail or e-mail by May 25.

### Office Closed

The church office will be closed on Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day. Stacie will be in the office extended hours on Thursday, May 30.

### Drive-Up Meals

Our next meal will be on Thursday, May 30. The meal is sloppy joe sandwiches. It begins at **5PM**. Help is needed for food prep on Wednesday the 24th at 1:30PM and Thursday at 4:15PM.

## Prayer Requests

Those who have served the church in the past month; student Youdelka Philippe, her family and the Mission Starfish Haiti School; Yucatan Peninsula Mission; Victory Center; Sauk Valley Food Bank; Morrison Food Pantry; Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center and Blackhawk Presbytery; and those in need of healing and support: Individuals and families fighting COVID-19 infection, nursing & retirement home residents and staff, medical workers, essential employees, school teachers & staff; Larry & Bev Bealer, Dan Brandon, Janet Johnson, Ella Laughlin, Richard McCoy, Sheila Osborn, Bob Simms, Jean Temple, Jody Tucker, Rachel Tucker, Ray Tucker



## Blackhawk Presbytery Field Trip

The Land and Name Acknowledgement Task Force (LANA) of Blackhawk Presbytery invites you to join them Wednesday, June 5 for a visit to the Apple River Fort State Historic Site, followed by a picnic lunch and discussion at Schapville Zion Presbyterian Church. Pastor Mike is a member of this task force, FYI.

The day will begin at 10am at the Fort (Elizabeth, IL) for a guided tour and visit of the interpretive center. There will be a picnic lunch at Schapville Zion with a discussion around the Blackhawk name and related topics. There are optional activities available in the area in the afternoon, with dinner as a group (dutch treat) at DeSoto House Green Street Tavern, Galena.

For more information visit <https://blackhawkpresbytery.org/>. To reserve your spot, email Loreen at [loreen@blackhawkpresbytery.org](mailto:loreen@blackhawkpresbytery.org).

## CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### New Permanent Produce Shelter Coming Soon

We have purchased a gazebo to create a permanent shelter for our Free Community Produce Table, which will be going up in May. Total costs of the project is approximately \$6,000. This includes the concrete pad for the shelter and the new sidewalk along Knox Street which will provide safer access to the table. The Session is seeking to raise 100% for this project. Please help us!

### Congrats

We would like to congratulate Katie (Browning) and David Symington who were married in our church on April 20th! The couple currently lives in Florida. Katie joined our church when she was a member of our youth group in her high school years. We are happy to be able to celebrate their new life together.

### Prom Prince & Beyond

Congrats to our own Blake Huizenga, a junior at MHS. He was elected by his

peers as a Prom Prince. Blake also was elected as President of the Morrison FFA Chapter. Further, Blake was inducted into the National Honor Society this spring. Way to go, Blake!

### Presbyterian Women Project

PW, which includes all women of our church, is undertaking a new project. Resthaves are in need of walker caddy bags. These are cloth bags which attach to the walker and are used for the resident to carry things with while using the walker. I have been assured that they are simple to make and use a minimum of material. You can find a pattern on Pinterest by searching "walker caddy pattern" or contact Deb Zigler.

### Freezer Donated

Our church recently donated a freezer to God's Will in Morrison. This is a new 'store' on Main Street which is much like Goodwill, but all the items are free. The intent is to help people in our area who have financial limitation. They are also handing out free food. They needed a freezer to be able to store leftover bread and soups that The Bread Lady would like to donate, as well as leftovers from our own Community Meals when we have excess soups to give away. The Session believed this goes with our feeding ministry, and in such we purchased half of a freezer for \$500 from Yarbrough Appliance and Arnie Drolema donated the other half.

### Communion Dates for 2024

Communion is planned to be served on the following days in 2023: May 19, June 16, July 14 or 21, August 18, September 22, October 6, November 24, and December 22.

### New Phone System

We have a new phone company at the church which is saving us a lot of money. When you call the church office, it will go straight to a message. Press 1 to be directed to the office phone. Press 2 to leave a message for Pastor Mike, which will be sent to him via an email. This will also help cut down on the amount of unwanted promotional calls.

## 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](http://morrisonfoodpantry.org)

### 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](http://saukvalleyfoodbank.org)

### 211

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

Love  
one another.  
Feed  
each other.

# May 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 1:30PM BINGO @ Homestead	2	3	4 5PM Ken-Taco-Wars Block Party
5 6th Sunday of Easter 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	6 10AM Fishing w/ PV & Ice Cream @ Rockwood	7 9:30AM Bible Study	8 1:30PM BINGO @ Homestead	9	10	11
12 7th Sunday of Easter 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	13	14 9:30AM Bible Study	15 1:30PM BINGO @ Homestead 1:30PM BINGO @ Resthave	16 8-10AM Social Hour @ The Loft	17	18 9:30AM Family Fun (Bicycle) Ride
Mother's Day 19 Day of Pentecost 7AM MFD Pancake Breakfast 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 1PM Swinging Sunday @ Fairgrounds	20 2PM Resthave Social Hour 6:30PM Session Mtg.	21 9:30AM Bible Study	22 1:30PM BINGO @ Homestead	23 Newsletter Deadline 10:15AM Remembrance Service @ PV	24	25
26 Trinity Sunday 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	27 Office Closed	28 9:30AM Bible Study	29 1:30PM BINGO @ Homestead 1:30PM Meal Prep	30 5 PM Free Drive Up Community Meal	31	
	Memorial Day					

## 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!

### God's Will

God's Will Giving Center is a non-profit organization located in Morrison, IL run by local resident, Lori

Snow. Everything in the store is 100% free for those in need. They are open Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9:30am-2pm. Stop in or call Lori 815-499-8806 with questions.

### Swinging Sunday—Big Band

On Sunday, May 19, from 1-3pm, you can enjoy the Josh Duffee Band playing music from the 1930s, 40s & 50s. There will be dancing for anyone. It will be a "Swinging Good Time!"

This is brought to you by the Morrison Department of Fun. For more info, visit their Facebook page.

### Ken-Taco-Wars Block Party

Join the Morrison Department of Fun for a trifecta block party on May 4th beginning at 5pm, downtown Morrison! Celebrating the Kentucky Derby, Cinco de Mayo, and Star Wars all in

one PARTY! See their Facebook page for more information.

### Family Fun Ride

The Friends of the Parks Foundation and City of Morrison are sponsoring a Family Fun Ride to Rockwood on May 18. Sign up begins at 9:30am at St. Peter's Lutheran Church Parking Lot.

The ride will begin at 10am. There will be hot dogs and beverages, the DARE car, and fun games with Morrison Department of Fun at the park. There will be a kids "SWAG BAG" giveaway back at the church about noon. There will also be bike giveaways!

Bike helmets are recommended. Children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Children 17 and under must have a parent's permission.

...Continued from page 1

Also during COVID, the Morrison Food Pantry began to drop off their excess produce to the table after their weekly food give-away. In 2022, Ebenezer Reformed Church in Morrison began to have a free produce give-away once per week, in which they received free produce from the Sauk Valley Food Bank and allow anyone to come take what they need. They too began to drop off their excess produce to our table. Both of these drop-offs take place on Thursday mornings. It is quite a site to see how many people show up to take food from the table. If you happen to talk to someone getting food from the table, it is common that you will find tears of gratitude.

It became evident in 2021 that we needed a permanent table with a permanent shelter. We discussed various options but in was not until summer 2023 that we had a cement pad laid in the yard for an eventual permanent

structure. We had a 6x6 walkway poured from the street parking area sidewalk out to a 12x12 pad for the shelter area.

In January 2024, we purchased an outdoor 'brochure' box and created a document that provides information about food assistance in the Morrison area. It is placed next to the concrete pad for the table. People can take a flyer with the information and learn of other ways they can obtain food assistance.

Total projected cost of the entire project is \$6,000. We are seeking to raise 100% of these funds.

\$2,500: Concrete work (including sidewalk, walkway and shelter pad: \$3,000 minus \$500 grant from city of Morrison for the sidewalk portion.

\$2,432: 12x12 Gazebo  
\$1,068 estimated cost of materials to construct tables, walls, new signs, and provide solar lighting.

We've received a \$1,000 mission grant from Blackhawk Presbytery.

Over the years, we have come to understand how much people really want to do good and how much people want to help others. But so often, they don't know how to help. This gives people the opportunity to be helpful in their community. In such, this opportunity for the community in turn helps create beloved community. Further, if they become confident in the fact that they indeed can help others, of which our feeding-missions provide the opportunity, they are more likely to feel empowered and capable to find other ways to help others in need.

In our life together, as a community, we have fed one another. In love, let us continue to feed one another, live within and continue to build beloved community, and celebrate this life together!

Grace and Peace,  
Mike

## BUILDING LOVE

April was a better month for our building. We had more repairs done on our boiler, and more that will likely need to occur in the summer. We also had another large electric bill. Other than that, the building has held up fine.

Many, many, many thanks to Carol & Steve Wolf and Ron & Nancy Shank who volunteered several hours overhauling our dining room men's bathroom. Thanks as well to Tim West

for installing the floor. This project was going to cost over \$5,000 to have it done by Deerview. Instead through donations of time, materials and outside labor, this renovation did not cost the church anything.

We are anticipating that soon a new carpet to be installed in the youth group corner room where we had the radiator steam leak. Once that is installed, Steve Wolf will be installing a cover for the radiator pipes.

Keep an eye out to the Free Community Produce Table this month. A

shelter will be erected soon, and modifications will be added soon.

We await Deerview Construction to waterproof areas of our brick, fill in areas where the mortar in the brick has come out, and seal leaking windows.

We also await our organ company to fix the issue with the pre-recorded organ music electronic device. We are waiting until they come for the next organ tuning. In the meantime, Carolyn Aiken has volunteered to accompany us on the Clavinova.

# Leadership and Staff

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

Angela Reamer '24\*  
Ron Shank '24  
Deb Zigler '24\*  
Lexie Laughlin '25\*  
Scott Vandermyde '25\*  
Rick Barr '26  
Carol Wolf '26

Stacie Baker, Clerk

**Nominating Committee**

Lexie Laughlin  
Deb Zigler  
Jan Kelly  
Tim Reynolds  
Nancy Shank

**PW Coordinating Team**

Lynn Knox, Moderator  
Angela Reamer, Treasurer

**Resthaves Home  
Board of Directors**

Lynn Knox  
FPC Representative

**Resthaves Home**

**Women's Auxiliary Board**  
Deb Zigler

**Finance Team**

Lynn Knox  
Tim Reynolds  
Scott Vandermyde

**Staff**

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

*\*Elders in their 2nd consecutive term*

## Birthdays

05/01: Maddie Huizenga  
05/05: Katie Browning  
05/06: Tim Reynolds  
05/07: Karl Kruse  
05/08: Margaret Esse  
05/11: Lexie Laughlin  
05/12: Deb Zigler  
05/14: Lynn Knox

## Anniversaries

05/07: Jeremy & Stacie Baker



## May Scripture

May 5: Acts 10:44-48  
Ps. 98  
1John 5:1-6  
John 15:9-17  
May 12: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26  
Ps. 1  
1John 5:9-13  
John 17:6-19  
May 19: Acts 2:1-21  
Ps. 104:24-34, 35b  
John 15:26-27,  
16:4b-15  
May 26: Isa. 6:1-8  
Ps. 29  
Rom. 8:12-17  
John 3:1-17

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



May 30: Sloppy Joe Sandwiches  
June 27: Brats  
July 25: Hot Dogs (Fire Dept. Benefit)  
Aug 29: Pulled Pork Sandwiches  
Sept 12: Sloppy Joe Baked Potatoes  
Oct 10: Chili & Cinnamon Roll  
Nov 14: Soup (TBD)  
Dec. 12: Christmas Ham Dinner

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