

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!

October 2026 • Vol. 69/No. 08

October arrives as the harvest moon wanes. Cold nights are upon us as the sun sets far earlier now. Forty-six minutes are subtracted from the sunset by Halloween, bringing night upon us before 6PM. And yet on November 1st, the sun will set at 4:54PM thanks to an early time change. On average, approximately two minutes and forty seconds of sunlight is lost per day in October. Overall, an hour and twenty minutes of light disappears. It's a rush. Summer has lingered so long and suddenly the sun is setting during the Wheel of Fortune and, in a blink, before the six o'clock news. The sun is rising after my children wake up and will soon be rising as we drive to school. October takes away our light. It ushers in the long dark nights. It brings the death of the earth in Northwest Illinois. The frosts will settle and kill off the annual plants, bring slumber to the perennials, and knock the leaves off all but the honeysuckle. We'll celebrate death, come October's end, with ghouls and goblins and tricks or treats, preparing for the Day of the Dead.

Final tomatoes and peppers are picked from the thinning gardens. Only kale and brussels sprouts remain among the unharvested pumpkins and winter squash. Plants are pulled and gardens turned. Corn and soybeans are harvested in the fields, leaving the earth bare naked, ready for a long slumber. The birds are making their exit south alongside the monarch butterflies. Fish find deep holes. Fishermen pull out their boats and docks. The rivers and creeks begin to dry. Leaves dance their brilliant departing polka. Chimneys smoke wood which was sawed, split and stacked in summer's heat. Apple pies are baked. Pumpkin spice is added to cider, coffee and about everything else. Chili is stewed. Carmel apples are dipped. Harvest celebrations are held and hayrack rides are enjoyed. Stars brilliantly blaze the winter constellation patterns. The noonday sun arcs lower to

the southern horizon and sets more slowly at a steep and gradual angle, making the evening seem to linger with magical length. Winter life is creeping in. October is the host at the door.

October can lead to both depression and joy. It is a miraculous month. It is much like regular life. When we focus on one aspect of the month, just like life, we can toss up our arms in surrender. And at the same time, we can be filled with vivid memories, deep emotions, and feeling of immense love. Indeed, it is possible that October creates more emotional memories than any other month. The change is so intense that we cannot help but feel it deep in our core. Yet instead of preparing to give up as the earth's death begins to engulf us, we instead prepare ourselves for the hard journey ahead of cold months, short days and long nights. Is not this the human way—when life gets harder, we dig deeper and endure? Humans don't actually like to give up easily. We are animals built to adapt and survive. We transition amazingly well. And when we do so, we seek to find enjoyment that is present. We prefer to smile. We prefer to laugh. We prefer to celebrate. We prefer to keep on going no matter what the world and the seasons toss at us. And when we face the hardest of times, we create lasting memories that will be told in stories of heroism later in life. We will take our dark nights and turn them into dreamy tales. We turn the poison into nectar. We persevere. We conquer. We begin again. And all the while that we ride the wave, both on life's highs and lows, we shout out to the universe in our horrors and our jubilations, that we shall be victorious. Only death shall someday conquer us, but even then, we believe it is only our bodies that shall return to the earth. Our faith tells all that our breath of life, our soul, our spirit, will live on—forever! For every day is the day the Lord has made. No matter what, we shall find reasons and ways to re-

joice and give thanks in it!!! This is the way our Creator made us. And so, we look to Autumn as the annual test of our strength. We prepare our endurance. We dig deep. And we conquer. Most of all, we seek to do it in community, for humans are communal creatures and being with others is what we long for, whether we admit it or not. When the cold months enter in, we draw closer to one another. In such, we need to remember to reach out to others and to let others reach out to us. As the squirrels build thicker nests and frogs burrow into the mud, humans gather around one another, using celebrating life as a reason to come within hugging reach. October brings homecoming and hospitality. It brings us back together once again. October begins this congregating with celebrations that last beyond Christmas. We find reasons to get together and celebrate life. And the harder life gets, the more we join together in community to celebrate the life we still have and the beauty which is in it. We do not focus on what we don't have and the hardships. Instead, we celebrate and give thanks for what we do have, both individually and collectively.

Although we jubilantly celebrate life together more and more starting in October, we still feel the pinch of death as the world changes around us. Yet death is part of life and we need not view it negatively. By watching the world around us fade to winter, it can be a reminder that we need to understand aspects of our own selves and our communities which need to come to a closure. Jesus insisted that humans repent. We are to reflect on our lives, individually and communally, and find what dwells in our thoughts, words and actions that are void of love, and that separate us from God, from our neighbor, and even our own self. We need to determine new paths, new ways of being, new ways of living, new ways of thinking, new ways

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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 10AM 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!

Free Community Meal

Our next meal will be on Thursday, October 8th. The meal is a chili and cinnamon roll. It begins at **5PM**. In-person and drive-up meals are available. Help is needed Wednesday at 1:30pm and on Thursday at 4PM.

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 conver-

sation! Weather and illness permitting, please join us on October 19th.

World Communion Sunday & International Potluck

On October 4, we will celebrate the annual World Communion Sunday. We will partake in the Last Supper along with all the other churches around the world who observe this day, recognizing we are all one in Christ. We are also bringing back our International Potluck!!! Bring a dish with international flair to pass—it could be a main course, side, salad or dessert. Or, just join us and enjoy the feast.

Peace & Global Witness Offerings

Donations to this Presbyterian Church USA Special Collection enable the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. Donations will be accepted now through October 4, World Communion Sunday. Please place your gift in the offering plate, in the office or donate online: <http://specialofferings.pcusa.org>.

Breakfast Club

We are trying a new endeavor this year for our children and youth. They are invited to join together for an event on select Sunday mornings at 9:15AM. These events will combine youth group, Sunday School

and breakfast. Part of the time they will have free range in the newly refurbished youth group game rooms to play with the new equipment or play card and board games. Breakfast food will be available. Pastor Mike will spend part of the time with them to discuss that Sunday’s theme. Our first Breakfast Club met on September 20. October dates are the 11th and 18th.

Adults brining the children and youth are invited to sip coffee and have good conversations in the dining room during this time.

Newsletter Deadline 10/22

Please get information to be included in the November *Life Together* newsletter to the office e-mail or voicemail by October 22nd.

Reformation Sunday

Celebrate the great breakaway from the Catholic church and how we emerged into free thinking reformed Christians! As always, it’s the last Sunday in October (25th).

Family Pumpkin Carving

Our annual pumpkin carving event for our families with children and youth will be Sunday, October 25 from 3-5PM in the church dining room. Bring your own pumpkins to carve. If you are partial to your own knives, please bring them.

Looking Ahead...

November 1: All Saint’s

Remembrance Sunday &

“Remembered Recipes” potluck

Nov 6-8: Stronghold Youth Retreat

Nov 15: Breakfast Club 9:15AM

Nov 22: Breakfast Club 9:15AM

Nov 22: Christ the King Sunday

Nov 29: First Sunday of Advent/

Church Decorating/ Hanging of the Greens

Dec 6: Breakfast Club 9:15AM

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; Rick Barr, Bev Bealer, Mavis Best, June Cortes, Glenda Hegwood, Dale Johnson, Lynn Knox, Marian Osborn, Mike Zigler



Dec 13: Congregational Meeting
for 2027 Budget and Session
Elders
Cookie Frost-Off

Dec 20: Breakfast Club 9:15AM

December 24: Christmas Eve
Service 4PM

Jan 10: Baptism of the Lord Sunday
Installation/ Ordination of
Incoming Session Elders
Family Epiphany Party and
Recycled Present White
Elephant Exchange

Jan 31: Annual Meeting
Worship Service

Feb 7: Transfiguration of the Lord
Sunday, Mardi Gras Party,
Valentines Cookie Frost-Off

Feb 10: Ash Wednesday Service

Feb 14: Family Super Bowl First
Half & Valentine's Day Party

March 14: Church 171 Birthday
Celebration and Rededication
Service

March 21: Palm Sunday

March 25: Maundy Thursday

March 26: Good Friday

March 28: Easter Sunday &
Church's 171st birthday

April 17: Earth Week Family Event

April 25: May Day Baskets

May 16: Day of Pentecost

May 23: Trinity Sunday

June 1: Free Community Tie-Dye
Event

June 8-15: Yucatan Peninsula
Mission Trip

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office Closed

Stacie will be out of town October 9-12th. The office will be closed on Monday, October 12th. Stacie will be in the office on Tuesday, October 13th from 8:30am-12 noon.

Per Capita

The per capita in 2026 is \$45 per church member. If you haven't paid it yet, please do. 2027 rates will be \$46.

2025-26 Communion Dates

Communion dates for 2026 are:
10/4; 11/22; 12/20.

BUILDING UPDATES

The September newsletter outlined the many updates to the building and properties over the summer. In the last month, much work was completed on the boiler. The boiler has been nearly rebuilt and is ready to go for the winter. The radiator trap which was creating several serious issues throughout the church last winter, causing much damage is being replaced on October 1. Also, the radiator in the men's bathroom in the daycare wing will be getting a knob-regulated thermostat. This bathroom has been overheating for several years, and a few years it lead to the toilet completely evaporating unbeknown to anyone, which lead to the whole church smelling like sewage on Christmas Eve! This and a new trap for the radiator will also be installed on October 1. We will then be turning on the boiler and checking the whole system throughout the church. Send prayers for the radiator to make it through the heating season!!!!

Children's Chairs for Sale

We have several old children's chairs 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.

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.



October 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:30PM Golden Agers BINGO @ Odell	2	3
4 19th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship & Communion 11:15AM Coffee Hour	5 Office Closed No School	6 10AM Bible Study @ La Bella 10AM Sauk Valley Senior Showcase	7 1:30PM Meal Prep	8 5PM Free Community Meal	9	10 11AM Boobie Bus Breast Cancer Fundraiser
11 20th Sunday after Pentecost 9:15AM Breakfast Club 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	12	13 10AM Bible Study @ La Bella	14 2PM BINGO @ Homestead	15 8AM Social Hour @ The Loft	16	17
18 21st Sunday after Pentecost 9:15AM Breakfast Club 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	19 2PM Social Hour @ Resthabe 6:30PM Session Meeting	20 10AM Bible Study @ La Bella	21 11am Chamber Appreciation Day 1:30PM BINGO @ Resthabe	22 Newsletter Deadline	23	24 1pm Chamber Fall Fest & Halloween Parade 4:30pm Nightmare on High St 3K Run/ Walk
25 22nd Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 3PM Pumpkin Carving	26	27 10AM Bible Study @ La Bella	28	29	30	31 4pm Trick or Treat

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.

SV Senior Showcase

On Tuesday, October 6th, from 10am to 2pm, Sauk Valley Media is hosting a Sauk Valley Senior Showcase at Northland Mall in Sterling.

This is an exhibit for local area seniors and caregivers. There will be dozens of displays that feature information on health care providers, caregivers, retire-

ment planning, insurance coverage, long-term care, nutrition, and many other subjects of interest to the growing senior set and their caregivers. You can even play Senior Showcase BINGO for a chance to win groceries!

Boobie Bus—Breast Cancer Fundraiser

Morrison's Department of Fun is hosting a Breast Cancer Fundraiser bar crawl on Saturday, October 10th.

Check in for your day of fundraising fun is 10:30-11am at the American Legion, 306 E Main St. You will receive your t-shirt and bus assignment at check in. They plan to leave town at 11am with a return time of 8pm.

You may bring a small cooler with drinks and snacks for the ride. And don't forget cash for raffles and games along the way.

Registration is required. The cost is \$40, which includes your bus seat and shirt. Register at <https://forms.gle/8g4hHFe6ZKa8bwX6A>

Fall Fest & Halloween Parade

Morrison's Chamber of Commerce is holding their annual Fall Fest & Halloween Parade on Saturday, October 24 from 1-4pm along Main Street.

You will enjoy a costume contest, Trunk or Treating, games and a whole lot of spooky family fun!

Nightmare on High St 3K

Morrison Parks and Recreation is hosting Nightmare on High Street 3k Run/Walk on Saturday, October 24.

This is a costume fun run with a costume and yard decoration contest.

Registration for the run begins at 3pm at Northside Elementary School, with the race beginning after the costume contest at 4:30pm. The cost is \$35 which includes a Glow in the Dark T-shirt or \$15 without the shirt.

You can register at <http://www.quickscores.com/morrisonsports>.

...Continued from page 1

of speaking and new ways of acting that are only filled with light. Darkness only exists where the light cannot reach. Darkness has no properties on its own. However, it is in the darkness in which there is no love. And when aspects of our lives dwell in the darkness, then our thoughts, words and actions will end up being void of love. In this void, we will hurt one another. In this void, we will succumb to our ego, to greed, to desires of the flesh, and have no thought of how we affect others or our self. In this void we separate ourselves from God. This void creates imbalance and injustice, and ultimately destruction. This void is fed by hate and is the cause of separation. We see this void in the world around us and it gives us fears and anxieties. And these feelings and woes pull us into the void, and propel us to separate ourselves from one another, and to join in the great destruction of humanity and our planet. But it is just darkness. It is just the absence of love. It doesn't have to be this way. Repent, Jesus told us. See where we have gone astray. Recognize that God is right before us. God is calling us back. God gives love to us in all of God's creation. We can let that love into

us. And when love enters us, we can let it find where the darkness dwells within us and irradiate it. We must go through steps to overcome what we have done in the darkness. But in forgiveness, there is new life. In reconnecting ourselves to the Triune God, we are spiritually safe from the darkness. We then can physically work to only allow our thoughts, words and actions to be that of love. Just as the world must be reborn through the dearth and death of winter, we must be reborn by dying to the darkness that clings to us, and to live into love. The Holy Spirit gives us this opportunity. The Holy Spirit grafts us into the body of Christ. And Christ, in his death and resurrection, has spiritually conquered the darkness. In such, as we are baptized through the Spirit into Christ, we are spiritually made one with Christ, and the darkness cannot possess any part of our spirit. Our spirit is only light of love. And as darkness cannot dwell in the light, it can only cling to our weak flesh. So, the question becomes, are we to be creatures of the flesh or creatures of the spirit. And when our spirit is fully connected the Holy Spirit, darkness is indeed only able to get into our brains and affect our thoughts, words and actions. So we

must train ourselves to let the Spirit awaken our spirit, and for our spirit to awaken our flesh, so that we may seek love and reject hate. We indeed must die to the darkness in order for our own spring to appear, for the light to return, and for the life of sowing and reaping harvests of love to dominate all aspects of our own selves.

In our life together, we must do this individually and communally. We can't do it alone. We must lean on others for help and we must be there to help others. Yet we must make the necessary changes in our own life in order to be a person in our communities who lives within the light and spreads love in all that we do. We need each other. We can't give up on our own selves. We can't give up on our brothers and sisters. We must be a new creation, and Jesus has shown us the way. He has shown us the truth. He has shown us how to fully live this life. For he is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and in him, we shall embrace the cycles of life and live them communally, in heavenly love, here on earth. Let's be the light of the world, together!

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**

Nancy Shank
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



October Scripture

Oct. 4: Isa. 5:1-7
Ps. 80:7-15
Phil. 3:4b-14
Matt. 21:33-46
Oct. 11: Isa. 25:1-9
Ps. 23
Phil. 4:1-9
Matt. 22:1-14
Oct. 18: Isa. 45:1-7
Ps. 96:1-9 (10-13)
1 Thess. 1:1-10
Matt. 22:15-22
Oct. 25: Lev. 19:1-2, 15-18
Ps. 1
1 Thess. 2:1-8
Matt. 22:34-46

Birthdays

10/01: Emmeline Rider
10/02: Jakob Palmer
10/03: George Selburg
10/16: Beverly Bealer
10/18: Silas Dolieslager
10/19: Dave Zigler
10/21: Scott Vandermyde

Anniversaries

10/12: Ron & Nancy Shank
10/13: Chad & Myra Huizenga
10/16: Dennis & Arlene
Burkholder
10/19: Steve & Carol Wolf
10/23: Dave & Deb Zigler

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

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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https://www.facebook.com/firstpresmorrison

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Love
one another.
Feed
each other.