

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!

September 2022 • Vol. 65/No. 8

September suddenly slingshots summer away, enabling autumn to abruptly arrive. Singing cicadas sadly serenade the surrender of the sun's splendor. The earth heaves her humble harvest. And we await for apple pies.

Have you ever heard the sound of rain gently falling on summer's end of green corn stalks, when the rust first appears around the leaf blades? Have you heard the pitter-pat play across the field like a band of hand drummers, each lost in their own groove? Have you ever heard the rustle of the dried corn stalks on a windy early autumn day, when the humidity has left and grasshoppers crazily hop about? Have you heard them rattle like dried bones, as though the ghosts of autumn have begun to haunt? Have you ever watched the soy bean pod swell in late summer rain? Have you watched as the first patch in the field of beans turns yellow, and how the field becomes a swirl of gold and green? Have you stood near a field at harvest time, when a swarm of Asian lady beetles flee?

What changes we see in the fields in September! What a perfect closing to the growing season. September is only outmatched, in my opinion, by late April through mid May here in north-west Illinois. We trade in the budding bushes and trees for red sumac and early turning maples. We exchange the elusive morel for the abundant oyster mushroom, among the other common autumn blooming woodland fungus. The strawberry, asparagus and rhubarb of spring are replaced with the ever ripening tomato, green bean and pepper. One ushers in new life, the other ushers in new death. Both elicit deep emotions. Both are required for the cycle of life to keep balance.

Oh, how these are just minor examples of the amazing world we live in, and an ever so slight glimpse into that which created it all. How is it that we are paying attention to the world around us? How are we connected to nature? How are we connected to our

Creator? How are we connected to our own self? How are we connected to the other humans who inhabit the world, both near and far? How is it that we are distracted? What pulls us away from what is right now? What pulls us away from what is real? What reality might we have become glued into? What distracts us from the beauty of God's creation, and from our relationship with it? What keeps us from our relationship with God...our self...our neighbor? How did it get that way? How much of it do we notice? Is the TV just on to be on? Are we scrolling through our phone out of old habit? Are we trying to kill time from one moment of busyness to another? Can we no longer be still, observe, and be content? Where has the poet gone? Where is the painter? Who is sketching the landscape? Who is baking the apple pie?

Over the last few months, we have been reading from the 12th through 14th chapters of the Gospel of Luke. In those chapters, there is a repeated theme. Jesus is telling all with ears to listen that he is pointing out the true way God intends for all humanity to live. It is a way that is connected to God. It is a way that is observant to one's personal relationship to God. It is a way that is observant to one's personal relationship to his or her own self, and to one another. Jesus warns of the ways of the world, and how they will ensnare us. Jesus tells us how hard it is to follow him. The world will always call us to pay attention to the shiny lures of the material. But God will always call us to pay attention to our relationship to all. Warning after warning, Jesus calls us to pay attention to the needs of others, to humble ourselves, and to do what errs on the side of love. Jesus calls us to let go of the old ways that keep us from having a personal relationship with God, and that which keeps us from loving one another. Jesus taught that this is of utmost importance, even if that means we have to separate ourselves from those we are

the closest. It didn't matter to Jesus if people lost their birthright or their home, if that meant that they gained a real relationship to God, to self, and to the other. Jesus taught that the true reward is not in these material possessions, but rather, it is in what we reap through love. Jesus taught us that there is a truer and a better 'now'. We no longer need to be subject to the inequalities and injustices of this world. We all have the power to face and stand up to that which seeks to disempower us, and by utilizing our higher mind, we may outthink and outplay those who oppose us, giving us the upper hand—all by merely thinking before we act, and honing in love.

The world wants to enslave us. God wants to free us. We only have this one life. The great moments of life flash before our eyes in real time. From childhood to old age, our life rushes past. Every possibility quickly sifts through our fingers. If we aren't striving to grasp at the current moment with an open mind, open eyes, open ears, and an open heart, it will pass us by—possibly unnoticed.

If life is a cup that we have the ability to fill, we have the choice to fill it with emptiness that is offered to us on a silver platter from those who don't really care about us. Or, we can fill it, overflowing, from the heaving harvest that God provides through love.

There is a trickster among us. It whispers to us to follow the path of comfort and pretention. It tells us to succumb to certain powers, while simultaneously telling us to make others subject to us. It is trying to trick us into believing that we are God, but without us recognizing that this is what we are doing. It is moving us away from a relationship with God, and takes love away from our life—though it replaces it with a fancy replica, which glimmers on the outside, but is filled with stinking rot on the inside. It whispers so softly that we think it's our own great idea...be in charge, be subject, hate,
Continued on page 5...

Church News

CHURCH EVENTS

Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship in-person at 10:15AM every Sunday morning (9:30AM on September 4). Virtual worship will continue to be provided indefinitely. We livestream each service from our Facebook group page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/firstpresmorrison>. The services are also posted on Monday mornings to our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcZIobAb6lcNXGA0cbuuVdg>.

Office Closed

The church office will be closed Monday, September 5 for Labor Day. Stacie will be in the office on Thursday, Sept 8 from 8:30am—2:30pm.

Bible Study

Bible Study will be held at 9:30AM at Pleasant View Nursing Home on Tuesdays, September 6 & 20th.

Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour hosts for September:
 September 4: Deb Zigler
 September 11: Sloppy Joe Meal
 September 18: Pie & Ice Cream Social/ Glenda Hegwood Farewell
 September 25: Rick Barr
 If you would like to volunteer to

host a coffee hour in October please contact the church office.

Drive-Up Meals

There will be one meal in September on the 8th. We will be serving sloppy joe baked potatoes beginning at 5:00PM. Help needed on Wednesday, September 7, at 1:30PM and again on Thursday, September 8, starting at 3:30PM.

Rally Day, Time Change & Meal

Sunday School will start back up on Sunday, September 11th, starting at 9:15AM, for children up through 5th grade (anyone one not potty trained needs to have an adult with them for classes). We'll have the bouncy house set up, and all the activities will take place in the church yard, weather permitting. Worship will move back to 10:15AM. We will serve a sloppy joe meal after worship for coffee hour.

Free Tie-Dye Event

It's back! Get your bright colors swirling!!! We will have a tie-dye event in the church yard on Sunday, September 11 from 3-5PM. All you need is white cotton materials to dye. We'll provide the rest.

Presbytery Assembly Mtg

The next Presbytery Assembly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13, from 9:30AM to 2:30PM at Stronghold Camp. If you would like to attend please contact Pastor Mike.

Nursing Home Worship Services

Pastor Mike, along with accompanist Carolyn Aiken, will lead worship services at our three local nursing/ retirement homes: September 18: 3PM Resthave, 4PM Homestead; September 22: 2PM Pleasant View. Please feel free to attend!

Harvest Celebration, Pie & Ice Cream Social, & Glenda Hegwood Farewell Party

Sunday, September 18, will be our annual Harvest Celebration for our worship service. We'll give thanks for the harvest and celebrate Holy Communion. Following, we are bringing back our annual Pie & Ice Cream Social, which we haven't had since 2019. Glenda Hegwood will be joining us this day and we will give her a farewell party during the coffee hour social. Glenda has moved to Lutheran Hillside Village in Peoria.

Deacon Meeting

Deacons will meet September 19 in person at 10AM at the church.

Session Meeting

Session will meet September 19 in person at 6:30PM at the church.

Newsletter Deadline 09/22

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

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; Dan Brandon, Orville Goodenough, Glenda Hegwood, Joyce Mathew, Shirley Mills, Marian Osborn, Wayne Osborn, the family of Vonda Shank, Cooke Shawver, Jean Temple, Dick Vandermyde, Scott Vandermyde, Michael Vegter, Jr.



September Scripture

- Sept. 4: Deut. 30:15-20
Ps. 1
Phlm. 1:1-21
Luke 14:25-33
- Sept. 11: Ex. 32:7-14
Ps. 51:1-10
1 Tim. 1:12-17
Luke 15:1-10
- Sept. 18: Amos 8:4-7
Ps. 113
1 Tim. 2:1-7
Luke 16:1-13
- Sept. 25: Amos 6:1a, 4-7
Ps. 146
1 Tim. 6:6-19
Luke 16:19-31

World Communion Sunday & International Potluck

On October 2nd, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday followed by our annual International Potluck, which has also been on hiatus since 2019. Bring your favorite international dish to pass!

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 2, World Communion Sunday. Please place your gift in the offering plate, in the office or donate online: <http://specialofferings.pcusa.org>.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Church Triumphant

Vonda Shank, age 100, mother of Ron Shank, completed this portion of life on Thursday, August 25th. Vonda has been on hospice the past week at Resthave. We give thanks for the few years Vonda was able to join us in worship and fellowship when she moved into Windsor Manor. She was a unique blessing to this world. Please keep all the Shanks in your prayers.

Deacons Are Here For You

Feeling a little down or lonely? Do you have physical, spiritual or emotional needs that we can maybe help with? The Deacons exist to help members and friends of the congregation in their times of need. You can utilize this ministry by calling one of your friendly Deacons. They want to help! Their names are listed on page 6.

Prayer Requests

Have a prayer request? You can now email them to prayers.firstpresmorrison@gmail.com. Please pass this on to others. If you have an immediate prayer request that you would like passed on to the congregation, please contact Pastor Mike or a deacon.

Presbytery Women Project

PW, which includes all women of our church, is undertaking a new project. Resthave is 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.

LOCAL AND OTHER RESOURCES

Golden Meals: Call 815 626-4442 (Monday-Thursday, 7:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.) Hot meals delivered Monday-Thursday. (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.

Sauk Valley Food Bank: Offers drive-up "pantry day giveaways" on some Saturdays where food is provided to residents of the Sauk Valley area. Call 815-626-4556 for details.

Sullivan's Foods: The Morrison location has also begun online grocery ordering for curbside pick-up or delivery. Call 772-4696 or see <https://www.sullivansfoods.net/>

Local Restaurants: Some are offering pick-up, curb-side pick-up and delivery. Call for details.

City News: Keep up on local news at our city's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/thecityofmorrison>

Morrison Hospital: The hospital's Facebook page provides information on new check-in procedures and other updates: <https://www.facebook.com/MorrisonCommunityHospital>

Whiteside County Senior Center: The Center is not open for walk-ins or events but some services are being provided by phone. Call 815-622-9230 and see their Facebook page or website: <https://www.wc-seniorcenter.org>.

PC(USA): The PC(USA) COVID-19 dedicated webpage adds new information and resources regularly in many areas: <https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>.

SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 13th Sunday after Pentecost 9:30AM Worship 10:30AM Coffee Hour	5 Office Closed	6 9:30AM Bible Study	7	8	9	10
11 14th Sunday after Pentecost 9:15AM Rally Day 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 3PM Tie-Dye Event	12 Labor Day	13 9:30AM Presbytery Mtg.	14	15 5PM Free Drive Up Community Meal	16	17 8AM Harvest Hammer 11AM Paint the Town 1PM Cemetery Walk
18 15th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	19 10AM Deacon Mtg.	20 9:30AM Bible Study	21	22	23	24
25 16th Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	26 6:30PM Session Mtg.	27	28	29	30	

COMMUNITY EVENTS

AARP Volunteers Needed

Looking for something to do this winter? AARP Foundation Tax-Aide offers free tax-filing help to those who need it most. We are looking for compassionate and friendly people to join our volunteer team this upcoming tax season. We'll provide the training and you'll get a great feeling from helping someone else. Help is needed from greeting the tax payer to preparing the tax return. You do not need to be an AARP member. We work at the Morrison Library. If you are interested or would like more information, please call Karen Berg at 815-625-5314.

Donations Needed

Resthove is asking for donations of shampoo and conditioner 2-in-1, such as Pantene, and scented body wash for their residents. If you would like to donate, you can drop them off at the church or contact Deb Zigler.

Harvest Hammer

The Morrison Rotary Club will

once again host its annual Harvest Hammer runs/walks on September 17. Children's races begin at 8:15 a.m., followed by the 5K run/walk and duathlon beginning at 9:00 a.m. A color run (free for all Harvest Hammer participants) will begin at 11:30 a.m. All races begin in front of the Morrison High School. Register online: www.harvesthammer.org.

Paint the Town

The Morrison Children's Art Preservation Association will host the annual Paint the Town event on September 17, beginning at noon. For more information on CAPA or Paint the Town you can email info@paintthetownmorrison.com or call 815-772-2670. Or register online: <http://paintthetownmorrison.com>.

Fall Cemetery Walk

The Spring Valley Presbyterian Cemetery Association is having their Fall Cemetery Walk on Saturday, September 17 from 1—5 pm. It will be held at 21852 Creamery Road, Morrison with free will giv-

ing to benefit Sauk Valley Cemetery Preservation Funding. A rain date is set for September 24.

School is Now In Session

Kids are back in school! Please watch for children walking to and from school, as well as getting on and off busses. Keep all students, parents, teachers, school administrators and staff in your prayers! May they all have a great year.

Whiteside Co Farm Bureau Fundraiser

In a rush? Need a little help with meal prep? Then check out the Whiteside Co Farm Bureau Fall Freezer Meal Fundraiser. They are offering 10 prepackaged, frozen meals that all you need to do is re-heat! Meals will be prepared by Custom Catering and BBQ—Scott Heeren, BBQ Pitmaster. You can find more information regarding cost and registration by calling the Farm Bureau office at (815) 772-2165 or online at: <https://form.jotform.com/82535453289970>

....Continued from page 1.

love, destroy, create...work so hard that all you can imagine is gaining all the riches of the world. Imagine how good life can be. Imagine how happy you will be when you do what you are told and take what you want.... On and on the tricks are whispered. The more and more lost we become, though we are tricked into believing that we are all the more found. Our faith is transferred from a faith in God to a faith in ourself and the world.

Then there is God. God finds us where we are. God speaks to us in truth. God knows that our life is short and fragile. God knows that God created the natural world in the realm of chaos in which anything can happen to us at any time. God gives us the ability to receive God's own being into our own being. There is love that permeates the world, and we are able recipients of that love. We have a soul, which is the breath of God that entered into us, and dwells within us until we breathe our last and God breathes it back in. This soul of

ours knows what is true. It knows what is love. It yearns for truth and love. It pulls us toward it. It warns us of the trickster. It helps us let go of what is old, of what we do not need. It helps us live into what is new, what is life giving. It is the conduit of the Holy Spirit into our own self. It is what frees our body from the tricks of the world. It stays pure. Our bodies, including our amazing brains, will one day decompose. Our soul will live on. Our soul reminds us that we are not God, but that God dwells within us. The soul asks to be fed through love. The soul pushes us to seek equality and justice for all. The soul rejects division based on the flesh—race, nationality, skin color, sexuality nor sexual orientation. The soul understands *all* as children of God, and that not one person is better or worse than the other. The soul understands how important this earth is for our survival, and for our ability to enjoy this life to the fullest. The earth is a blessing to humanity that must be protected. All life is precious, not just the

life of humans. The trickster calls for division. God calls for unity. The trickster says all is here for us to empower our own self. God says all is here to create a balance, and for humans to see to it that the balance remains, not to undo.

In our life together, we must seek to open up our entire being to all that is before us. We must stop being tricked. We must wake up. We must see that we are destroying one another and the world. We must embrace that all too often, this injustice is done in the name of Jesus, though it is exactly what Jesus despises. We must hold firm in our faith in the love of the Triune God and the potential in humanity. We need to pay attention to all that is going on around us, to not shrug at injustices, or to say, "It's beyond me." Rather, we must rise up in love to the challenges of this world and seek a new beginning in which we free ourselves and this world to be the potential that love enables.

Grace and Peace,
Mike

Leadership and Staff

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

Lexie Laughlin '22
Scott Vandermyde '22
Carol Wolf '23
Lynn Knox '23*
Tim Reynolds '23*
Jim Palmer '24*
Angela Reamer '24*
Deb Zigler '24*
Stacie Baker, Clerk

Deacons

Mavis Best '22
June Cortes '24
Nancy Glazier '24
Doris Robertson '23*
Jody Tucker '24

Nominating Committee

Rick Barr
Jan Kelly
Lynn Knox
Jenn Reynolds
Ron Shank
Deb Zigler

PW Coordinating Team

Lynn Knox, Moderator
Angela Reamer,
Treasurer

**Resthave Home
Board of Directors**

Stephany Trossbach,
FPC Representative

**Resthave Home
Women's Auxiliary
Board**

Deb Zigler

Finance Team

Lynn Knox, Angela Reamer,
Scott Vandermyde

Staff

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

**Elders and Deacons in their
second consecutive term*

Birthdays

09/01: Arlene Burkholder
09/02: Nancy Shank
09/21: Susan Wiersema
09/30: Sally Hayen
09/30: Ron Shank
09/30: Ray Tucker

Anniversaries

09/24: Daniel & June Cortes

Upcoming Free Drive-Up Community Meals

First Presbyterian Church, Morrison

Sept. 8: Sloppy Joe Baked Potatoes
Oct. 13: Chili
Nov. 10: TBD
Dec. 8: Christmas Ham Dinner



First Presbyterian Church of Morrison IL
100 E. Lincolnway, Morrison IL 61270
Phone: 815-772-3510

firstpresmorrison@gmail.com
prayers.firspresmorrison@gmail.com
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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