

# 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!

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Here's a reprint of the article I wrote for February 2015, as a new father with a 7 month old. Reflecting on what to write for this February, I decided to once again share this article instead. Enjoy, and remember, God loves you.

February...such a month, promising to be short, but always so long. A month for presidents, the groundhog and black history. A month of winter almost being over, but not quite yet. Most of all, February is set aside as a month for love. All the stores already are decorated with reds, pinks and whites, with hearts pasted to walls and hanging from ceilings. Despite the commercialization of Valentines Day, it is nice that love gets a special holiday all to its own. Love is a word that equates to an emotion, an action, and a way of being. Love has been regarded as the greatest of everything since the beginning of humanity, and love is the center of our Judeo-Christian heritage. In English, the word love, be it a noun, verb, adverb or adjective, is scattered all over the Bible. When studied, it is found to be the central theme to the laws of Moses, the teachings of Jesus and the charges of the Apostles.

The books of law in the Old Testament repeatedly bring the people back to a state of love, so much so, that it cannot be argued that love is the basis for all the laws. One love pericope of the Deuteronomical laws is found in 10:12-21: "So now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? Only to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord your God and his decrees that I am commanding you today, for your own wellbeing. Although heaven and the heaven of heavens belong to the Lord your God, the earth with all that is in it, yet the Lord set his heart in love on your ancestors alone and chose you, their descendants after them, out of all the peoples, as it is today. Circumcise, then, the foreskin of your heart, and do not be stubborn any longer. For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no

bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the Lord your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your own eyes have seen."

This love is confirmed by Jesus in the New Testament who proclaimed indeed that the Greatest Commandment is to love God with our entire being and the second is to love our neighbor as our self. Jesus, toward the end of his life, gave us his own new commandment, "To love one another." (John 13:34).

There are many ways to describe love, for there are many types of love. Just as the Eskimos have 50 words for snow, both the Greek and the Hebrew translations of the bible have many words for love. Nine Hebrew words for love are found in the Old Testament. Ancient Greek has four words for love: eros, storge, philo and agape. Eros is a sexual love (this is not used in the New Testament); storge is the natural affection between kinfolk (used in Romans 12:10 combined with philo); philo is that natural spontaneous feeling of love; and agape is the eternal unconditional love. Agape love is the common love spoken about in the New Testament and is the unconditional eternal love that God has for us.

Being a father has made me reflect much on love. Over the months, I have started to change, as a father should, in my recognition and understanding of family and love. I have begun to be able to truly understand agape love of a father, such as God has for us. I see it all from a whole new perspective and now better grasp the love of God for all of creation. It has changed the way I engage relationships with others, as well as my leadership style, as I now find that I cannot interact with another without seeing them as having once been a baby who was once held and

loved as I love my son. I see people as the fragile and beautiful creatures that they are. For me, barriers have been destroyed and limitless potential has been revealed.

When I look at the world around us, I find that we have separated ourselves so much from nature and one another that it has become easy to lose the focus on love. Yet it is presumptuous to say that this is something new. These laws were necessary thousands of years ago in a time in which people lived in small tribes and collections of families. If such tight-knit people had such a hard time loving that God needed to pass on these laws of love, then how much harder might it be for us to love today? The common denominator through the ages is that humans are naturally disposed to being self-focused, creating us to easily become upset with others and have a difficult time to forgive. When we are centered on our own self, we are only able to really have eros love. Eros is a love in which we just want love for our own gain. The sexual desire associated with eros is wired in our primitive reptilian brain. We see something and a burning desire makes us want it badly enough that we are filled with a loving emotion which helps us in obtaining it.

Despite that it fulfills passionate desires, this is empty and shallow love. It is not quite philo love. For philo wants to be in a relationship with another. It wants to give and receive. Philo allows for that bridge in relationships. It is through having philo that we can love God and love our neighbor. It is that feeling of love that brings people together on a mutual plane. Through philo, we can break down walls and build each other up and be together as we walk through this life.

As philo bridges people together, storge love allows people to really see the bond and to not want to break away from that bond. Storge, which we associate with the love of families, makes us all the same in each others' eyes because it is a love that unites us as a single people. Storge love is necessary in order for us to

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# 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/channel/UCcZIobAb6lcNXGA0cbuuVdg>.

### Bible Study

Bible Study will be held at 9:30AM at Pleasant View Nursing Home on Tuesdays throughout the month. Rick Barr leads the studies that Pastor Mike is unable to attend.

### Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour hosts for January:  
February 5: Lexie Laughlin  
February 12: Cookie Frost-Off  
February 19: Mardi Gras Party  
February 26: Tim Reynolds  
If you would like to volunteer to host a coffee hour in March or April please see the sign up sheet in the entryway or contact the church office.

### Sunday School

Sunday School is for children up through 5th grade, and classes start at 9:15AM. Dates for the rest of the school year are as follows:  
February 5, 12, 26  
March 5, 12, 19  
April 16, 23, 30  
May 7, 21

### Confirmation

Confirmation is back in swing in February 2023. The schedule has been set for the rest of the year. Remaining, they have 7 classes and a retreat to Stronghold Castle for the Blackhawk Presbytery Confirmation Retreat, February 10-12. They will help with community meals, volunteer at Sauk Valley Food Bank, meet with the Session, attend all the special worship services through the winter and spring, and be confirmed on May 7.

### Cookie Frost-Offs

We're going to have more cookie frost-offs in 2023! We're going to now do them on Sundays during coffee hour so that families can attend as well. We'll start with a Valentine's Day frost-off, on February 12. We will be in need of cookies to frost. Presbyterian Women are now overseeing this mission. If you

would like to donate cookies, please contact Lynn Knox, or let Stacie in the office know.

### Drive-Up Meals

Our February meal will be on Thursday, February 23rd. We will be serving Chili beginning at **4:30PM**. Help is needed on Wednesday at 1:30PM and Thursday starting at 3:30PM.

### Session Meeting

Session will meet February 20 in person at 6:30PM at the church.

### Newsletter Deadline 02/20

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

### Transfiguration of the Lord, Communion, Church Community Sunday, Mardi Gras

On Sunday, February 19, we will celebrate Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday, which is the Sunday before Lent starts. We will serve Communion during the service. The Morrison Ministers' Council is also dedicating this as a Church Community Sunday, which marks the beginning of a time of prayer we are inviting our community to take part in, with the overarching theme to bring our churches together to serve Christ and meet the needs of our community. More info on that in the March newsletter. After worship, we're bringing back the King Cake. Come celebrate Mardi Gras with a fun coffee hour.

### Ash Wednesday

We will celebrate Ash Wednesday on February 22nd with a worship service with the imposition of ashes beginning at 7PM.

## 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, Janet Johnson, Joyce Mathew, Shirley Mills, Marian Osborn, Wayne Osborn, Cooke Shawver, Jean Temple, Rachel Tucker, Ray Tucker, Dick Vandermyde, Michael Vegter, Jr.

## Lenten Lunches

As part of the Morrison Ministers' Council church community initiative, we will be hosting a noon meal and short dining room worship service on the five Wednesdays in March, each at a different church. The first meal/service will take place at our church on March 1. We will be serving soups and chili from past community meals, dinner rolls, and desserts. We will be in need of people to set up that morning, to serve, and to clean up. More info as we get closer.

## CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Have a Good Idea?

We are looking for good ideas for our church, our community, our region, our nation and our world. It can be just for our church to act upon or something we can do in partnership with other churches, other businesses and organizations. If you've noticed a need and wish something could be done to address it, please send your idea to [goodideas.firstpresmorrison@gmail.com](mailto:goodideas.firstpresmorrison@gmail.com).

### Prayer Requests

Have a prayer request? You can now email them to [prayers.firstpresmorrison@gmail.com](mailto: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 Session Member.

### Presbytery 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.



## February Scripture

- Feb. 5: Isa. 58:1-9a (9b-12)  
Ps. 112:1-9 (10)  
1 Cor. 2:1-12 (13-16)  
Matt. 5:13-20
- Feb. 12: Deut. 30:15-20  
Ps. 119:1-8  
1 Cor. 3:1-9  
Matt. 5:21-37
- Feb. 19: Ex. 24:12-18  
Ps. 2 or Ps. 99  
2 Pet. 1:16-21  
Matt. 17:1-9
- Feb. 26: Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7  
Ps. 32  
Rom. 5:12-19  
Matt. 4:1-11

### Morrison VBS

It is that time of the year to start planning for our community Vacation Bible School. We would love to have your help in doing this. We usually like 2 people from each church to commit to a committee but we will take any help we can get. Please let us know if you have anyone in your church that would like to help or have any questions. We meet once a month. Our next meeting is February 21 at 6:30 at Brethren in Christ. For more information please contact Kellie Kohl.

## 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/>.

# February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 <i>5th Sunday after Epiphany</i> 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	6	7 9:30AM Bible Study	8	9	10	11
12 <i>6th Sunday after Epiphany</i> 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	13	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i> 9:30AM Bible Study	15	16	17	18
19 <i>Transfiguration of the Lord</i> 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 3PM Resthabe 4PM Homestead	20 <i>Presidents' Day</i> 6:30PM Session Mtg.	21 9:30AM Bible Study	22 <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	23 2PM Pleasant View 4:30PM Free Drive Up Community Meal	24	25
26 <i>1st Sunday in Lent</i> 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	27	28 9:30AM Bible Study				



## 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.

### Clinton Symphony Concert

The Clinton Symphony Youth Concert will be held at the Morrison High School Auditorium at 2PM on Sunday, February 19. Tickets are \$20. As a special offer to families, students are always admitted free of charge to Clinton Symphony Orchestra concerts. To encourage student musician attendance, they offer students the opportunity to sponsor one accompanying adult to the concert for half-price.

Check out their Facebook page by searching Clinton Symphony Orchestra for information on the concert, including THE DINOSAURS—a Primeval Symphony describing several dinosaurs!

### 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.

### Storytime @ Odell Library

Join Miss Katie every Thursday evening at 7pm for storytime. There will be stories, songs and rhymes in the children's area. Storytime is designed with preschoolers in mind, but all ages are welcome.

### Winter Fun

If you enjoy the cold outdoors, visit the Morrison Winter Park for ice skating (weather permitting) and sledding. The park is located at Waterworks Park and is open 7am–10pm daily. You may find more updates on their Facebook page by searching Morrison Winter Park.

### Chocolate Rendezvous

You are cordially invited to Sauk Valley Community College's only fundraising event of the year, a Chocolate Rendezvous on Saturday, February 11. Tickets can be purchased at <https://www.svcc.edu/news/events/chocolate-rendezvous/>

All proceeds will support Sauk's Impact Program.

Sauk's Chocolate Rendezvous promises an elegant evening with over 100 delectable chocolates and desserts from local, state, national and international vendors.

Your ticket includes mouthwatering heavy hors d'oeuvres like crab cakes, burnt ends, yellowtail tuna and more; three premium adult beverages in addition to complimentary bourbon and wine tastings; and a courtesy framed photo of you and your guest(s).

Imagine all of this accompanied by the professional sounds of Three on a Tree, Guitar by Tony Fiorini and the Chamberlain Sisters as you dance the night away. Not only does the price of your Chocolate Rendezvous ticket include everything already mentioned, but you'll be treated to free shuttle parking and, new this year, FIREWORKS!

We hope to see you February 11, dressed in your Red and Black finery for this signature Sauk "red tie" event.

To purchase tickets, please visit [svcc.edu/chocolate](http://svcc.edu/chocolate) and note Lori Cortez as the person that directed you to the website.

...continued from page 1

live out Jesus' commandment. Not only did Jesus state that we are to love one another, he tells us that "because he loves us, we too are to love one another." Jesus sees us as his brothers and sisters. Jesus wants us to be united together. Jesus wants our love to be a unification of the kingdom of heaven. Both philo and storge love live within the mammalian brain. It is something we can recognize in other mammals.

But it is in the higher creative mind, in the neo-cortex which Jesus is always calling us to live within, that we are able to grasp agape love. There are many scholars who will say that only God is able to have true agape love—that it is something outside of the realm of human acquisition. This may very well be true, yet we are all behooved to strive for it. We must, for sure, learn the other lower forms of love in order to be able to seek assentation of agape love. I believe that it is agape love in which the world is able to be healed in all its fac-

ets, for it is agape love that never ceases and will do whatever it can to help heal everything and to live in peace and harmony with all of creation.

As we look at our world today, it is indeed a miasmal place in many ways. Indeed, we have become separated from other humans and nature to an extreme that has never been seen before in history. Yet, at the same time, we are also closer to one another and the earth than ever before. The world is shrinking and we are learning more and more about how everything is connected and the need to care for everything. We can see the variety of ecosystems of this world and how everything truly is dependent upon one another. Unlike any other time in history, humanity has the power to truly unite together and to care for the earth. Still, there will always be that significant hurdle of overcoming our own selfish ways and all the greed and ill that comes from such a way of being.

In our life together, we have the ability to love one another as a family, as friends, and as individuals.

God has gifted us with love and has taught us of its importance. God has guided us to be able to overcome the obstacles that keep us from loving one another and to allow God's own agape love to enter us. Then, let us together, allow that agape love to extend out of us. Let us allow the Spirit of God to prevail in all our actions and allow ourselves to be the beacons of love which God has created us to be. It is a charge which we must strive after if we are going to continue to have existence here on earth. Not only is it our Christian calling, but it is also the calling of all people in order to bring the necessary healing to the earth in order to right the wrongs of our history and to usher in God's kingdom here on earth. In such, let us love one other and all of God's creation, just as Jesus has loved us.

Grace and Peace,  
Mike

# Leadership and Staff

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

Carol Wolf '23  
Lynn Knox '23\*  
Tim Reynolds '23\*  
Angela Reamer '24\*  
Ron Shank '24  
Deb Zigler '24\*  
Lexie Laughlin '25\*  
Scott Vandermyde '25\*

Stacie Baker, Clerk

**Nominating Committee**

Rick Barr  
Mavis Best  
Jan Kelly  
Jenn Reynolds

**PW Coordinating Team**

Lynn Knox, Moderator  
Angela Reamer, Treasurer

**Resthave 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

02/04: Doris Robertson  
02/06: Larry Bealer  
02/06: Aiden Dolieslager  
02/06: Shari Kuehl  
02/08: Arlyn Hayen  
02/12: Britney Sage  
02/20: Ann Mennenoh

### Upcoming Free Drive-Up Community Meals

First Presbyterian Church, Morrison

Feb. 23: Chili  
Mar. 30: Ham & Potato Soup  
April 27: TBD  
May 25: Pulled Pork Sandwiches  
June 29: Brats  
July 27: Hot Dogs (Fire Dept. Benefit)



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YouTube Channel: First Presbyterian Church of Morrison, Illinois

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