

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!

March 2024 • Vol. 67/No. 3

March enters, acting like it's April. Crocus and snowdrops are in bloom, creeping charlie are producing their small bluish-violet flowers, and dandelions, which never disappeared this winter, continue to shine in their sunny blooms throughout yards and field. Early daffodils grow fat heads, eager to emerge. The rest of the flower bulb kingdom has popped their ears far from the ground reaching up to an early spring. Meanwhile, honeysuckle buds have begun to break forth their electric green leaves, lilac buds swell, and trees in towns and along riverbank forests put out pollen. Honeybees are busy stuffing their pollen sacks, filling their hives with protein as the queen begins to lay her spring brood ahead of schedule. Swallowtails, painted lady butterflies and moths meander through woods alongside bluebirds and robins. Nature is a step ahead of the game. So where do we find our selves in our own season of life?

As we are now celebrating our 18th Lent together, I definitely stop and ponder once in a while, why we are still together as pastor and congregation. How is it that we have journeyed this many seasons together? After all, Jesus's ministry, at best, only lasted three years. Here we are, six times beyond that. Yet Jesus' ministry needed a distinct ending. It was also a distinct ministry. He was the Son of God, Son of Man. He miraculously healed. He taught wisdom and leadership to those who followed him. He stood up to his society's oppressors, and overcame them in every trial of wit and knowledge. He was the Messiah. We are his followers, some two thousand years later, in a world much different, yet quite the same. When I joined your ministry, we got

right into it. We didn't waste time. And neither did the changes of our world, society, norms, values, identity and composition. Our world is so much different than it was in 2006, when smart phones and social media didn't exist, and texting was expensive and rarely used. We've been through recessions and COVID. We've watched the politics of the nation at extremes on both ends while our nation has become far more loving and hateful at the same time. 2006 was a completely different era. 2024 is a world we hadn't imagined. Along the way, we've adapted, added on, cut back, and reimagined. We've kept on working and pushing our limits, striving to be our best, no matter what.

Today, in this 18th Lent together, despite how the world has changed, we are still in the middle of our ministry together. We are not at an end, so why should God separate us right now? We continue to work at it. We continue to seek a path in which we are serving Christ to the best of our ability. We don't always know what that is, so we are always seeking, always praying, and always open to the Holy Spirit. Continually, we witness that the Spirit is at work with us. Just as it *has* been with us and *is* with us, we can have faith that it *will remain* with us, as long as we place our focus and priority on serving Christ.

We find support from Christ as the heavy burdens we face and feel can often lean, fall, or collapse upon us. We find refuge from the fear, which the world and Church anxiously battle daily, in the strength and promise of our Lord Jesus Christ. We get power from the Holy Spirit. We are offered gifts in ways we often don't expect in which we

find blessings among our labors to love one another. The Creator works through others by providing them to us physically into our ministries and through inspiring financial generosity in the hearts of the givers. We keep on going. We keep on trying. We keep on serving. We keep on growing. We keep on enjoying this life together, and we're having fun doing so. It is a good life we share together. It certainly is full of its struggles of each given day, but we are here for each other, and we are there for those outside our walls whom we are able to reach with the love of Christ. It's good to be together for this 18th Lent. God is good, indeed.

As we head toward the cross once again, with Good Friday approaching, we have the opportunity to contemplate our lives, individually and collectively. Another season of Lent is in full swing, and another Easter Sunday is approaching. Another season of reflection is at hand, and another chance to make a push to be our best selves is in process. Who we will be this spring depends on many factors. Our bodies and minds continually change. Perhaps we are in better shape this year, or possibly this has been a rough year and we are struggling. These constraints limit our ability to function, and we have to learn to cope and live into the season we find ourselves within. We certainly are not the same physically as we were seventeen Easters ago. The babies born then are juniors in high school. Freshmen in high school are now in their thirties. The thirty-three year olds are now full members of AARP. People who were reaching full retirement age are now in their

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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/@firstpresmorrison>

Bible Study

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

Lenten Lunch Series

For the 2nd year in a row, the Morrison Ministers' Council will host a noon Lenten Lunch Series at various churches during the course of Lent. The lunches will be soup and bread and will have a time of reflection by the host pastor. This year's theme is "The Body of Christ." In this Lenten season we remember all that Jesus did for us. We especially remember the suffering that he went through. As we look at the body of Christ, we also recognize that we as His followers are the body of Christ. Come join us on 5 Wednesdays during Lent, at Noon for a

brief Lenten message and a free simple meal.

Wednesday, March 6 - The Hands of Christ
First Presbyterian Church

Wednesday, March 13 - The Mouth of Christ
Ebenezer Reformed Church

Wednesday, March 20 - The Feet of Christ
Emmanuel Church

St. Paddy's & 169th Church Birthday

Worship and Party Potluck

Our church turns 169 on March 28th, but that's on Maundy Thursday, so we are going to celebrate it early this year. And what luck! Pastor Mike is in the mood to cook up some roasters of goodness. It just so happens that Sunday, March 17, happens to be St. Patrick's Day, so why not double celebrate! We'll rededicate the church to God and renew our baptismal vows during the worship service and we'll celebrate with food and fellowship following. We'll be serving up corned beef & cabbage (with potatoes, carrots and onions) after worship. Please bring a side, salad or dessert to pass! And consider bringing some friends to eat with us!!!

Resthabe Presbyterian Social Hour

Join us every 3rd Monday of the month at 2PM for "Presbyterian Social Hour" at Resthabe. There will be plenty of coffee and conversation! Join us on March 18!

Bingo at Homestead

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

Sunday School

Children's Sunday School will be held on March 3, 10 and 17 starting at 9:15AM. We'll take a break during Spring Break but we'll be celebrating with the children on Palm Sunday and Easter. Children will parade in with palms on March 24th. Families, please arrive by 10:05AM. On Easter Sunday, March 31st, we will have our annual Easter egg hunt during the service. Sunday School will resume on April 7th.

Newsletter Deadline 03/21

Please get information to be included in the April *Life Together* newsletter to the office voicemail or e-mail by March 21.

Drive-Up Meals

Our March meal will be on Thursday, March 28. The meal is ham and potato soup and begins at **5PM**. Help is needed for food prep on Wednesday the 27th at 1:30PM and Thursday at 4:15PM. Meals will remain with the start time of 5PM through October.

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, Cooke Shawver, Jean Temple, Jody Tucker, Rachel Tucker, Ray Tucker



HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday

Celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem while we wave palms and shout hosanna. We will start off Holy Week on March 24th.

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Services

There are three opportunities to worship during Holy Week. Join us for them all!

-Maundy Thursday & Holy Communion Service, March 28: 7PM

-Good Friday (March 29) Community Cross Walk: 12:15 (Starts at Resthove and ends at Pleasant View.)

-Good Friday 7 Last Words of Christ Service: 7PM

Easter Sunday

Join us on Sunday, March 31st at 10:15AM to celebrate our risen Lord! No coffee hour that day

CHURCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flower Orders Due

Flower orders for Easter flowers are due into the church office by Thursday, **March 7**. Order forms are available in the office or can be emailed.

Presbytery Women Project

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

Presbytery Assembly Commissioners

Rick Barr has been elected by the Session to serve as our Commissioner at the February Blackhawk Presbytery Assembly Meeting, which will take place via Zoom. All members

are able to attend this Zoom meeting, but will not have voting rights. Scott Vandermyde has been elected as Commissioner to the May, Sept. and Nov. Assembly Meetings.

Communion Dates for 2024

Communion is planned to be served on the following days in 2023: March 28, April 21, 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.

Asset Mapping

On Saturday, February 5th, Stacie Baker, Rick Barr, Lynn Knox, Scott Vandermyde and Deb Zigler attended an Asset Mapping workshop at Stronghold, via Blackhawk Presbytery. Transformational General Presbyter Eric Heinekamp led church leaders from throughout the presbytery on how to look at opportunities for their church and community in new ways via the possibilities that are offered through the various forms of assets in their church (people and building) and their community. The Session will be engaging the beginning of an Asset Mapping process starting at their March 18th meeting. We'll also be involving the congregation on this journey as we explore looking at all of our blessings from God and how we can utilize them to best serve Christ as his disciples and apostles.

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

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.

March 24



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	4	5 9:30AM Bible Study	6	7	8	9
10 4th Sunday in Lent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	11	12 9:30AM Bible Study	13	14	15	16
17 5th Sunday in Lent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	18 2PM Social Hour @ Resthava 6:30PM Session Mtg.	19 9:30AM Bible Study	20	21 8-10AM Social Hour @ The Loft	22	23
24 Palm Sunday 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	25	26 9:30AM Bible Study	27	28 Maundy Thursday 5 PM Free Drive Up Community Meal 7PM Maundy Thursday Service	29 Good Friday 12:15PM Community Cross Walk 7PM Good Friday Service	30
31 Easter Sunday 10:15AM Worship						

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!

Grove Hill Cemetery

The annual clean up for Grove Hill Cemetery will begin on Monday, March 25 and continue through Friday, March 29.

The cemetery will be cleared of all debris, planters, and decorations that are not attached to a memorial. If there are decorations that you would like to keep, please remove them BEFORE March 25. You can replace them anytime after March 29.



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80s. Yes, we have all changed as we have watched the world change around us. Many suns have risen and set. Many moons have cycled. Many lives have walked on to the long journey. Many souls have been birthed into our world.

As we look forward to a new year of our spiritual life, living anew with our Risen Lord, we need to remember that we are both Christ's disciples and apostles. We continue to be Jesus' disciples as we continue to learn who Jesus is in our ever changing

lives. How do we embrace the words and works of Jesus' ministry in our lives today? In what ways are we inspired and motivated. Where do we feel the Holy Spirit calling us and leading us? We are apostles of Christ when we put our life to work in serving Christ. We take what we glean as disciples and actively live as apostles. In our current state of life, what part of the body of Christ can we best serve?

In our life together, we can complete this 18th Lenten season together with faith that God is indeed with

us—that we are courageously walking together into the future praying to be following the right path and serving as God would have us serve. Our world will keep moving. Seasons won't always act like they are supposed to. Our bodies and minds will always be challenged. Yet our souls continue to dwell in us, ever connecting us to the Triune God, ever urging us to live into our Christian lives together.

Happy Easter,
Grace and Peace,
Mike

BUILDING LOVE

Ah, this old building... Thanks to Ron Shank for overseeing cleanup from the water damage due to the steam leak in a frozen corner pipe in the youth group room. The pipe has been fixed; the carpet and shelving unit has been pulled out of the ping pong table room; carpets and furniture have been professionally cleaned; several items have been discarded; and the Sunday School class has gotten to be in charge of the remodel! Unfortunately, insurance will not cover the \$3,604.71 repair of the boiler pipe. Fortunately, with a deductible of \$2,500, the professional cleaning, repair and replacements will be covered by insurance.

In other "ugh" news, our insurance company will not cover any of

the damage to the men's bathroom in the basement due to a leak in a pipe. In such, we are stuck with the \$3,604.71 bill from the boiler company, and with all repair of the bathroom, estimated at \$5,950 by Deer-view Construction. We have decided to do the work ourselves. Thanks to the Wolfs for donating the flooring! We'll also need to take off the wall paper, prep and paint the walls and metal stalls, and replace the drop ceiling.

The boiler has chosen to break again in late February. New parts are being installed, but at a cost.

Speaking of insurance, our insurance company, Grinnell Mutual, is doing a nationwide sweep of their clients, and they are releasing all churches pre-1950 by April 1. We are currently in conversation with three

other insurance companies.

And as a final downer, our gas bill in January was \$1,500 and our electric bill was \$700. We're investigating why it was so high and how we can better save, but a cold January really piled up more than snow!!!

In positive news, we are looking to utilize the church yard far more this year. To do so, it needs leveled out in order to make it safe for all to walk on. We'll be seeking out a grant from Blackhawk Presbytery to help with this as it will present possibilities for new missions and ministries. We will also need donations from the community. Ron Shank will be overseeing this project.

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

03/05: Angela Reamer
03/06: Blake Huizenga
03/15: Jim Palmer
03/17: Steve Wolf
03/20: Collin Wolf
03/25: Heather Sim
03/29: Cynthia Reynolds
03/30: Cooke Shawver

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

Mar. 28: Ham & Potato Soup
April 25: Pulled Pork Sandwiches
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




March Scripture

Mar. 3: Ex. 20:1-17
Ps. 19
1Cor. 1:18-25
John 2:13-22

Mar. 10: Num. 21:4-9
Ps. 107:1-3, 17-22
1 Eph. 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

Mar. 17: Jer. 31:31-34
Ps. 51:1-12 or
Ps. 119:9-16
Heb. 5:5-10
John 12:20-33

Mar. 24: Isa. 50:4-9a
Ps. 31:9-16
Phil. 2:5-11
Mark 14:1-15:47 or
Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)

Mar. 31: Acts 10:34-43 or
Isa. 25:6-9
Ps. 118: 1-2, 14-24
1 Cor. 15:1-11 or
Acts 10:34-43
John 20:1-18 or
Mark 16:1-8

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Please Recycle