

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!

April 2026 • Vol. 69/No. 03

April arrives in the midst of Holy Week this year. As we remember Jesus' last supper, death and resurrection, we here in northwest IL are experiencing the early awakening of spring. Woodland flowers have already begun to blanket the ground. Crocuses and daffodils, along with the myriad of small spring bulbs, are brightening our dull gardens. The rabbit ears of tulips are sticking out of the ground, hiding a bit longer before they bloom. Lilacs and honeysuckle are weeks into their budding. Forsythia and pussy willows are flowering and inviting pollinators to dine. Star magnolias delight the olfactory with spring's first perfume. Honeybees continue to bring in pollen which they have been collecting from hidden places since early March, rearing their brood to bring in the spring honey flow. Electric green willow branches swing in the spring wind. Red maples dot the sky with their burgundy buds, making a mess every time it rains. March leaves us with a day in the 80s and finishes with rain showers and temps in the upper 70s. Then April arrives cold and wet, playing us for the fool.

Winter has passed. New life is before us. With every passing day for the next month, the earth will grow greener and brighter. By the end of the month, the days will be fourteen hours long with the sun rising before 6AM and the sun setting near 8PM. Life is growing. We are in the midst of the awakening of the earth. Our souls are called to awaken as well.

Holy Week brings upon the end of Lent. We have had an opportunity to focus upon our own spirituality during this Lenten season. Though it is something that pastors preach about and something some folks actually strive to attempt, only the deeply focused have stayed strict on their spiritual journey during Lent. For most of us, life just simply gets in the way

and time slips by all too quickly. Lent is a long time to keep focus on such a practice. It's not much different than focusing on our new year's resolutions. We have epiphanies as to what we can do to improve our lives, and we might give it a good go for the first few weeks of January, or maybe we can even make it into February. But the healthy foods we might have bought on January 2nd were either eaten or spoiled, and unlikely were replaced. Newly purchased gym memberships that seemed to be getting their money's worth are used less and less. Stacks of books with good intention to be read become covered in dust. And so on. Our reality is that it is very difficult to start something that improves our lives and to keep that going. It is far easier to fall back into old ways, old habits, and living in ways that are easy and bring momentary enjoyment rather than long term gain. The difference with Lent is that it is a practice that comes out of the Church. We should not only be focusing on improving the physical and mental aspects of healthy living. Lent also incorporates our spirituality. To focus on any portion of body, mind and spirit, it takes constant attention, a change of routine, and willful dedication. This is difficult to attain in any portion of life. Somewhere our journey gets set in certain ways. Living in a world that provides ease in so many ways, we are less likely to take the harder road when it seems just fine to live in the cruise-control realm we have been driving.

Perhaps an issue is that we try for too much all at once. It seems that when we get excited with a new idea, we can want to go all in. But the energy behind the excitement is fleeting. Perhaps we are trying to take too big of a bite all at once and we give up too easily. The answer to "How do you eat an elephant?" is "One bite

at a time." Look at spring. Does she show up all at once? Unless it's an anomaly year where we have temps in the 90s for several days in early spring or late winter when everything really *can* open all at once, spring naturally will choose to take her time. She starts with the simple flowers that can withstand the climate of late winter. Only that which can live for periods of time below freezing and can withstand heavy frosts will appear. There is spacing between all that opens. Even tulips and daffodils are found as early, mid and late spring blooming. And the earth is not fully awake until all chances of winter's return are gone. The ground must slowly warm. The earth must continually turn. The nights must grow shorter. The days must grow longer. Little by little, life returns. Perhaps this is how we can accomplish the feats we seek to accomplish. Yet what do we focus on first and most of all—the body, mind or spirit? If we focus on the body and mind first, the spirit is going to get set on the back burner and likely ignored and forgotten. Yet if we lead with the spirit, the body and mind will follow. Then the focus of the body and mind will be subjugated to the realm of the spirit, instead of the spirit being limited to the desires of the body and mind.

Our New Year's resolutions seem to be easiest to set our goals on the body and mind. Often we spend Thanksgiving through New Year's Day over-eating and under-exercising. By January 2, we are ready to feel better. And as we are distracted with all that the holidays demand of our time and energy, we now can give more focus to our own self. In spring, the body and mind find better potential to be free to be outside, to move more, to find inspiration, and to focus on shed-

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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:

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 9:30AM at La Bella (formerly Highlight Health/Pleasant View) on Tuesdays throughout the month. Everyone is welcome!

La Bella (Formerly Pleasant View) Ice Cream Socials

On April 7, and the first Tuesday of every month, we will have an ice cream social at 4:15PM. We switch up the dessert every month. Come enjoy this time of fellowship with the residents and staff at La Bella of Morrison.

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!

MMC Maundy Thursday Services

The Morrison Ministers' Council will host their 2nd annual Maundy Thursday services at our town's three retirement/ care facilities. Pastors Jon Eastlick, J.T. Blean, Craig Sipes and Mike Selburg will preside over the services this year. The community is invited to attend any or all of the services:

-10AM La Bella (Highlight Healthcare)

-1PM Resthave

-2PM Homestead

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Services

-Maundy Thursday & Holy Communion Service, April 2: 7PM

-Good Friday Last Words of Christ Service, April 3: 7PM

Easter Sunday

Join us on Sunday, April 5 at 10:15AM to celebrate our risen Lord! Note, no coffee hour.

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 conversation! Weather and illness permitting, please join us on April 20!

Session Meeting

The Session will meet on Monday, April 20th at 6:30PM.

Newsletter Deadline 04/23

Please get information to be included in the May *Life Together* newsletter to the office e-mail or voicemail by April 23rd.

Bulletin-Free Sunday

Our annual Bulletin-Free Sunday will be on April 26. In recognition of Earth Day and our desire to be good stewards of the earth, we will save paper by not having bulletins that Sunday Morning. We will also celebrate the essence of Earth Day.

May Baskets

Join us after worship on April 26 to make May Baskets. This is our 4th annual May Basket Sunday. The baskets will be delivered to those who could use a pick-me-up. Please let the church office or Pastor Mike know if you have any May Baskets you would like to deliver so that we have enough supplies. Sign up by April 19.

17th Anniversary Free Community Meal

Our next meal will be on Thursday, April 30. We'll be celebrating our 17th anniversary of Free Community Meals! The meal is a pulled pork sandwich with sides. It begins at **5PM**. In-person and drive-up meals are available. Help is needed only on Thursday at 4PM.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Per Capita

The per capita in 2026 is \$45 per church member. Of that total, \$30.11 is kept by the Presbytery (which includes various missions); \$3.81 is forwarded to the Synod of Lincoln

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; 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; Bev Bealer, Mavis Best, Dan Brandon, Glenda Hegwood, Dale Johnson, Lynn Knox, Marian Osborn, Jody Tucker, Ray Tucker, Edna Ulrich



Trails; and \$11.08 goes to the General Assembly of the PC(USA) for its administrative budgets. Thanks to all whom have already paid their 2026 per capita at the beginning of the year.

2025-26 Communion Dates

Tentative Communion dates for 2026 are: 4/2; 5/24; 6/21; 7/19; 8/16; 9/13; 10/4; 11/22; 12/20.

Blackhawk Now Illinois Prairieland Presbytery

As voted upon by the Assembly of Blackhawk Presbytery in 2025 to take a on a new name, "Illinois Prairieland Presbytery". The new name officially took effect in March 2026.

Children's Chairs for Sale

We have several old children's chair 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.

BUILDING FUND

We are in need of donations to our building fund for various projects. Please help us keep our church up and running!

KITCHEN FRIDGE:

We purchased a new residential refrigerator for our kitchen in mid-March. We have split the cost with the daycare, with each paying \$1,260.

COMMERCIAL FRIDGE:

We purchased a new commercial refrigerator that is slated to be installed on March 4.in early March and now resides in the pantry. We are splitting the cost with the daycare at \$2,825 each.

BOILER ISSUES:

We have had multiple boiler issues over the winter and soon when the heating season is over, we will have those issues fixed.

HELP FINISH THE BELL TOWER RENOVATION:

We are also hoping to have the bell tower renovation finalized, but we can't do that until we have the funding upfront. We learned last year from our mason that our belltower should never have been closed up. Decades ago, members decided to place wood boards behind the louvers to keep rain and birds/bats/critters out. However, that's not how the bell tower was designed. It needs to breathe. It was designed to be open, and to let rain in. It has drainage channels inside and has enough ventilation to allow the brick and floors to dry out quickly. Instead, rain and moisture can still get in through the cracks in the boards, especially since some boards had been missing for several years, but then the moisture is trapped in for far too long. The result is that the inside layer of bricks became covered in scale and the mortar continually falls out of the brick. For \$10,000 we can have the inside of the bell tower de-scaled and tuck-pointed. In addition, the wood boards will be removed and a heavy duty metal mesh screen will be placed behind the louvers to keep critters out. Please help us finalize the renovation to our bell tower. It has lasted 100 years as is. Let's fix it completely now and we'll have it for centuries to come! If you are donating specifically to the bell tower renovation, please note that with your donation.

SANCTUARY DAMAGE

Due to one of our boiler issues, extreme heat caused the paint to come off the paneling along the balcony in the sanctuary. Once the boiler issue is fixed, we will hire Deerview to refinish and paint the paneling for approximately \$1,000.

Over the last six year, we have had leaking coming in through the area of the belltower in the sanctuary & bell tower and plaster has been destroyed. We believe the leaking has been stopped from last

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.

summer's tuckpointing. However, the Session does not want to perform the approximately \$2,000 it will cost to have Deerview fix the plaster issues until we have the rest of the bell tower tuckpointed, etc. This gives all the more need behind supporting the finalization of the bell tower renovation.



April 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 Easter Sunday 10:15AM Worship 	6	7 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella 4:15PM Ice Cream Social @ La Bella	8 2PM BINGO @ Homestead	9 MMC Maundy Thursday Worship 10AM @ La Bella 1PM @ Resthava 3PM @ Homestead 7PM FPC Service	10 7PM Good Friday Service	11 12PM Dept of Fun Euchre Tournament
12 2nd Sunday of Easter 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	13	14 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella 6PM WellRounded Flower Arranging 6PM Property Tax Mtg	15 1:30PM BINGO @ Resthava	16 8AM Social Hour @ The Loft	17	18 9AM Area Wide Recycling Day @ Fairgrounds
19 3rd Sunday of Easter 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	20 2PM Social Hour @ Resthava 6:30PM Session Meeting	21 9AM Resthava Volunteer Breakfast 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella	22 Earth Day	23 Newsletter Deadline	24	25 12PM 3rd Annual Wiffleball Tournament
26 4th Sunday of Easter 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	27	28 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella	29 1:30PM Meal Prep	30 5PM Free Community Meal		

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.

Euchre Tournament

Morrison Department of Fun is hosting a Euchre Tournament at Brick Block Pub on Saturday, April 11. Registration is from 11am to 12pm, with the tournament beginning at 12pm and runs until about 4pm. The cost is \$20 per person. There will be a blind draw, so no partner is needed.

There will be a cash payout for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place. For more

information or to register for the tournament contact Kelly at 815-218-6705. Come enjoy the fun!

Flower Arranging

Join NAMI Sauk Area for a relaxing and creative evening with WellRounded Flower Arranging hosted by The Blue Violet.

This hands-on floral arranging will be held on Tuesday, April 14 beginning at 6pm at Odell Public Library. You will learn the basics of flower arranging and create your own arrangement to take home. This event is free, but registration is required. For registration go to <https://namisaukarea.org> and search events for WellRounded Flower Arranging.

WellRounded is a community wellness initiative offering free, inclusive events that support mental, emotional and social wellness. For more info, visit namisaukarea.org.

Property Tax 101

Interested in learning more about how your property tax is calculated in Whiteside County and where the

money goes?

Attend the next public informational meeting at the Whiteside County Courthouse about the Real Estate Property Tax Cycle. This will be held on Tuesday, April 14 beginning at 6pm in the County Board Room. The presenters will be Supervisor of Assessments, Robin Brands; County Clerk, Karen Stralow; and County Treasurer, Penny VanKampen.

3rd Annual Adult Wiffleball Tournament

Morrison IL Parks and Recreation is hosting the 3rd Annual Adult Wiffleball Tournament on Saturday, April 25 at the Morrison Sports Complex. Registration begins at 10am, followed by the tournament at 12pm.

The team cost is \$100 with a max of 10 players. All players must be at least 18 years old.

For more information contact Nathan Jacobs 815-535-1105 or njacobs@morrisonil.org. To register, visit www.quickscores.com/morrisonssports.

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ding winter's weight and dullness and bring on new bodies and clearer minds. Yet there is also something in the new life that is blossoming all around us that awakens our soul. In such, in these years in which Easter comes early, it is likely easier to gain a spiritual awakening and continue down a spiritual journey post-Easter. The wonders and joy of spring enlighten us. We feel relief from winter's end and our soul magnifies the Lord in the glory of what spring brings. If we pay attention, we can feel an inner yearning for something spiritual. As we breathe in the fresh smells from the first dew of the morning through the evening sunset, as we hear the birds awaken before the sunrise and the spring peepers that serenade us in the evening twilight, as our eyes are excited with the brightness of flowers and leaves after the dullness of the past several months, our soul yearns to come to the surface and to experience all the joy of the season.

As our souls emerge with spring, we can focus on our spiritual journey. It doesn't have to be only in Lent. And like Mother Nature, we can go into our spiritual journey slowly. We can allow ourselves to focus on what we can handle, just like the early bloomers that can handle the heavy frosts and snows. Little by little, day by day, we can give focus to our connectedness to God. We can add more prayer into our life. We can add more time for contemplation and sabbath. We can add reading the Bible more and more to our daily life. We can pay more and more attention to how we are giving and receiving love. We can think about volunteering our time, talents and treasures, and slowly increase our giving. If we take it day by day, and seek to be mindful when we wake up that this is the day the Lord has made, we can rejoice and be glad in it, and every day. We can continue to be mindful through the day of our spiritual self, and when we go to bed,

we can give thanks for what we have experienced and been able to do with our day. And in the morning, we can begin again, and with mindfulness, we can increase our focus and growth of our spiritual side, all the while, connecting it and leading our body, mind and spirit. We build to living our entire life, within each and every day, with and for Christ.

In our life together, we can help one another focus on being the best people we can be. As we celebrate Holy Week and Easter, setting our minds to our crucified and risen Lord, we can connect our spiritual selves to one another. And post-Easter, we can strive together to be mindful of our body, mind and spirit, individually and collectively. Together, we can continue to grow closer to God and one another, blossoming alongside the earth.

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**

Deb Zigler
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



April Scripture

- Apr. 2: Ex. 12:1-4 (5-10)
11-14
Ps. 116:1-2, 12-19
1 Cor. 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b-35
- Apr. 3: Isa. 52:13-53:12
Ps. 22
Heb. 10:16-25 or
Heb. 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1-19:42
- Apr. 5: Acts 10:34-43 or
Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24
Col. 3:1-4
John 20:1-18
- Apr. 12: Acts 2:14a, 22-32
Ps. 16
1 Pet. 1:3-9
John 20:19-31
- Apr. 19: Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Ps. 116:1-4, 12-19
1 Pet. 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35
- Apr. 26: Acts 2:42-47
Ps. 23
1 Pet. 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

Birthdays

04/14: Rick Barr
04/22: Alyssa Sibley
04/29: Miguel Velasco

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

Apr. 30—Pulled Pork Sandwich
May 28—Sloppy Joe Sandwich
June—No Meal
Jul. 30—Brats (Fire Department Benefit)
Aug. 27—Pulled Pork Sandwich



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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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Life Together is published 11 times per year by the
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Love
one another.
Feed
each other.