

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!

January 2024 • Vol. 67/No. 1

Here it is, another new year!!! What's something new you plan to do for you in 2024? What will you start and what will you stop? What might you learn? What might you gain in wisdom? What new skills might you acquire? What thoughts and actions will you cease? What aspects of the past will you stop dwelling upon? What new mindset do you hope to have? How can you better your own self as well as your communities?

Oh, to have New Year's resolutions. Oh, how to let them fizzle out before they get off the ground. That's the standard of New Year's resolutions, right? Good intentions are always intertwined in our hopes for the future. But our pasts seek to keep a hold on us, making it difficult to live in the present moment. Our present moment is full of constraints, distractions, and the unpredictable. We struggle to make our future what we want it to be, and in such, our past can become filled with unfulfilled plans. A perfect plan is hard to carry out. Even with the best effort, there is no guarantee we will be able to reach our ultimate goals. Therefore, how much more will unplanned ideas quickly fade away? Meanwhile, whimsical desires are easily scattered in the blowing winds of the world around us. So then, how do we truly become the person we desire to be? How do we shape our communities? How do we envision what we should do next? How do we understand what we should do now? What are our constraints, hindrances and obstacles? What are our assets, strengths and accumulated skills? What is a reoccurring theme in what keeps us from attaining our desired life? What is it within us

that gives us conviction and perseverance? What is it that helps us to overcome? What has helped us continue to push forward no matter what is tossed at us? How is our faith a part of it all?

An athlete sets goals in their realm of sport. They have an overall desire. Maybe it's to be world champion, or maybe it's just to improve their overall performance, or just to be healthier. As an athlete ages, one cannot expect to always be as good as one once was, but can still set goals to be as good as possible as the days pass. But so much can get in the way. There are constraints of time and money. Very few athletes are professional athletes. In such, they must live a 'normal' life, and add in their training when able. Also, there is also the reality of training. Injuries incur. Illnesses cannot be avoided. Life sometimes puts a stop to training, and it can be for such a time period that the athlete needs to nearly or completely start over. At times, an athlete is forced, due to injury, to completely quit the sport itself. Training not only puts stress on the body, it also puts stress on the mind. An athlete must continually find the drive to keep going. Giving up is always much easier. Especially when in the midst of training or a competition, the pain and fatigue placed on the body and mind is a tremendous struggle to overcome, and giving up is an attractive temptation. Big ambitions likewise can only be accomplished in small bites. A novice runner cannot plan to run a marathon immediately. Slowly, the body and mind must build itself. It takes time. And as we all know, when something takes a long time, we are more prone to stop—

especially in our 'give-it-to-me-now' society. Then, even after all of the hard work, the athlete may not ever accomplish their goals. And even for the athletes who seem to have perfected their training and make it to the event they have been waiting for all their life, they can get a simple cold the week of the event and fall short of ever being able to reach the goal that was theirs for the taking. Or, someone else may just be better than them. That's just life. We have to accept that. Still, it doesn't mean we shouldn't try. If we are going to bother trying, why not try to do our very best?

Paul wrote to the church in Corinth: "Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified." (1 Cor. 9:24-27) If we truly are going to try to bring in the new year with positive ambitions, if we are really going to set resolutions and keep them, if we are ready to set goals that we will dedicate ourselves to accomplish, and if we want to live our life to its fullest, then we must be truly dedicated to our feats, no matter what occurs along the way. At the same time, we need to be open to allowing for failure, change, or transitions. Seeking a goal is a beginning. But life happens. And we need to adjust along the way. We need to always be reprioritizing and updating our

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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. Rick Barr leads the studies that Pastor Mike is unable to attend. We will resume the studies on January 9th.

Coffee Hour

We will not have coffee hour on January 1. We currently do not have anyone signed up for coffee hour in January. If you would like to volunteer to host a coffee hour in January please see the sign up sheet in the entryway or contact the church office. On January 28th, we will have a potluck following the Annual meeting worship service. Please bring a main course, side, salad or dessert to pass.

Office Closed

The office will be closed on Monday, January 1, 2024. Stacie will be back in the office on Thursday, January 4. Wishing you a very Happy New Year!

Un-Decorating

We will be putting away the Christmas decorations on Sunday, January 7 after worship. Please join us to make this light work for everyone!

Epiphany Family Party

On January 7th, we will have our 2nd Annual Post-Christmas Epiphany Family Party and white elephant present exchange. All the families of the children and youth of our church are invited for a time of games, crafts, dinner and present exchange. Please bring a wrapped RECYCLED (unwanted and regifted) gift per person (for all who want to participate). Starts at 5PM in the dining room.

Resthve Presbyterian

Social Hour

Join us every 3rd Monday of the month at 2PM for "Presbyterian Social Hour" at Resthve. There will be plenty of coffee and conversation! We hope to see you on January 15th!

Session Meeting

Session will meet January 15 in person at 6:30PM at the church.

Sunday School

Sunday School will resume on January 21st. Classes begin at 9:15AM in the youth group room.

Annual Reports

Annual reports are due to the church office by Monday, January 22. Please e-mail or drop off at the church office.

Newsletter Deadline 01/22

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

Drive-Up Meals

Our January meal will be on Thursday, January 25. The meal is beef and veggie soup and begins at **4:30PM**. Help is needed for food prep on Wednesday the 24th at 1:30PM and Thursday starting at 4:15PM.

Annual Meeting & Potluck

The Annual Meeting worship service will be held on Sunday, January 28. Please join us for the installation of new and returning Session Elders (Rick Barr and Carol Wolf) and recap of the past year. We are going to bring back the Annual Meeting Potluck this year. This is an old tradition of our congregation which has been on hiatus since COVID. Please bring a main dish, side, salad or dessert to pass.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presbytery Women Project

PW, which includes all women of our church, is undertaking a new project. Resthve is in need of walker caddy bags. These are cloth

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, Orville Goodenough, Janet Johnson, Cookee Shawver, Jean Temple, Rachel Tucker, Ray Tucker



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.

Helping Hands

Thank you to all who purchased gifts for the Helping Hands family that FPC adopted. We helped a family with three children have a great Christmas!

Cookie Frost-Off

The Cookie Frost-Off held on December 17 was a great success! Thank you to those who provided the cookies and to all of our frosters!

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plans based on what has happened. An athlete, who misses a week of workouts due to an illness, must restructure future workouts. An athlete, who finds that for whatever reason a once dreamed goal is not realistic any longer, needs only to set a new realistic goal. Giving up is always an option, but it should only be the option taken when it is the best option. Sometimes we do indeed need to give up on what we are trying to accomplish. Sometimes we find that we are boxing the wind. Letting go of what we are trying to achieve can seem like quitting. And sometimes it is. But maybe it's not. Only our heart and our intuition can truly know which is which. It's one of life's tricks... are we abandoning or are we adjusting? Only we can know. Only when we are true to our own self can we live into our own true being.

Looking at Paul's words, we need to embrace that what is most important, which is to live for our spiritual connection to the Triune God. As we struggle with our body and mind, which are always changing, we can be assured the ability to live in right relationship with God is always attainable, no matter what. We cannot separate the spirit from the body and mind. Though society places little emphasis on the spiritual aspect of the self, we ourselves know

that our spiritual self is the most important, for it is the only part of our being that will continue when our body and mind are gone. Only the spirit is eternal. Our soul was breathed into our body by God, and to God our soul will return as God's breath leaves our mortal body. This short time on earth is a moment for our soul to experience physical life as well. The soul is not a bonus feature to the body and mind. Rather, the body and mind are vessels for the soul to dwell within. Our body and mind exist here on earth for our soul.

Contemplating this, why not follow what Paul says and put our priority into the spiritual realm? Why not place our highest goals in attaining the greatest relationship possible with the Triune God? Why not give that our all? So how do we do this? Well, we simply need the greatest spiritual trainer of all time: Jesus Christ. Through Christ's teachings, we can create many 'workout plans' and we can make them very complex. But the get-fit-quick version is this: LOVE ONE ANOTHER. If we set that as our top priority in how we live, we will find excellence in spirit, body and mind. When we come up short, we don't quit. We reflect. We repent. We forgive. We begin again. We keep seeking love. We love like Jesus loves. We teach like Jesus teaches. We care like Jesus cares. We heal like Jesus heals. We feed like Jesus feeds.

In our life together in this new year, we can work together to help achieve our goals for our body, mind and spirit. Though an athlete must persevere individual constraints and pains in their training, athletes accomplish their best results when being part of a team. For us, our teams are the beloved communities of which we belong. And there's always room to join into new communities who can help us, and of whom we can help. In this new year, let us set love as our united focus. May love help to empower ourselves, our communities and the world around us to be filled with the light of Jesus Christ and to bring true peace justice in our world.

Grace and Peace,
Happy New Year,
Mike

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.



January Scripture

Jan. 7:	Gen. 1:1-5 Ps. 29 Acts 19:1-7 Mark 1:4-11
Jan. 14:	1Sam. 3:1-20 Ps. 139:1-6, 13-18 1Cor. 6:12-20 John 1:43-51
Jan. 21:	Jonah 3:1-5, 10 Ps. 62:5-12 1Cor. 7:29-31 Mark 1:14-20
Jan. 28:	Deut. 18:15-20 Ps. 111 1Cor. 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28

January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Office Closed</i>	2 9:30AM Bible Study	3 32	4 2PM Comic Book Workshop	5	6
7 <i>Baptism of the Lord</i> 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	8 	9 9:30AM Bible Study	10	11	12	13 8:30AM Bald Eagle Watch
14 <i>2nd Sunday after Epiphany</i> 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	15 <i>No School</i>	16 9:30AM Bible Study	17	18	19	20
21 <i>3rd Sunday after Epiphany</i> 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	22 6:30PM Session Mtg.	23 9:30AM Bible Study	24	25	26	27
28 <i>4th Sunday after Epiphany</i> 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	29 Newsletter Deadline	30 9:30AM Bible Study	31	4:30PM Free Drive Up 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

Comic Book Workshop

The Loft on Main, NFP and Odell Public Library is hosting a Comic Book Workshop with Do Art Productions on Thursday, January 4 from 2-4pm. It's for ages 8-14.

Participants will learn how to turn their ideas and artwork into comics with plot, dialog and more. If your child is interested in art, drawing, cartooning or storytelling, this may be for them!

The program is free, but the seating is limited. Contact Odell Library to register at 815.772.7323.

If you have any questions please contact Miss Katie at krider.odell@gmail.com.

Winter Concert

Join the Sterling Municipal Band for their annual Winter Concert on Friday, January 5 at 7pm at New Life Lutheran Church, Sterling. They will feature soloist Riley Carter on saxophone. Admission is free.

Bald Eagle Watch

The Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and Clinton Community College is hosting the 40th Annual Bald Eagle Watch on Saturday, January 13 from 8:30am to 2:30pm.

This free program is dedicated to helping you understand, appreciate and help protect this amazing bird. Eagle watching will be at Lock #13, 4999 Lock Rd, Fulton, IL.

Exhibits and educational programs are scheduled from 9am to 2pm at Clin-

ton Community College, 1000 Lincoln Blvd., Clinton. Presentations will take place at 10am, 11am, 12:30pm and 1:30pm.

For more info, you can contact US Army Corps of Engineers at 815-259-3628 or US Fish and Wildlife Service at 815-273-2732.

Chamber of Commerce

The Morrison Chamber of Commerce is now accepting nominations for their Citizen of the Year award to be given out at the Annual Dinner in February.

Nominees should be a person that volunteers their time to make Morrison a great place to live, work, play and learn, who has made a positive difference in the lives of other citizens and who works continually towards the betterment of the community as a whole.

Submit your vote at <https://forms.gle/SmDsqHQMS91T4JVc6>
Contact the Chamber office with any questions 815-772-3757.

BUILDING LOVE

We love our old building, right? We are proud of its beauty and ability. We are honored to worship, learn, cook, feed, and have fun through her gift of space to run our missions and ministries. Our old building costs around \$30,000 per year to operate—just the basics. We do our best to maintain her, and when unexpected issues arise, we meet those needs to keep her in tip-top shape. We have done well honoring those who built her, added on, and also cared for her. This past year, the building has created a large financial burden for our congregation. Further, we foresee several projects that are needed for integrity, and also to enhance her beauty and functionality, as well as her ability to perform missions and ministries. All of these projects need financial support beyond our building fund investments. As we seek to build love in our community and world to the best of our ability, we also seek to love our old building to the best of our ability. Please give so we can continue to glorify God through her presence in our life together.

2023 costs included:

CONCRETE WORK: \$3,000

ELECTRIC WORK: \$6,800

PLUMBING ISSUES: \$1186.24

DISHWASHER REPAIR: \$500

NEW AC UNIT FOR FELLOWSHIP ROOM/ OFFICES: \$4,802

OLDS BOILER COMPANY: (*Invoices dating back to 2020, including major work in 2023*): \$20,116.04. Much more work was performed in 2023 but we have not yet received invoices. It's likely to be expensive.

CARPET CLEANING \$658

For 2024 (current plans):

EXTERIOR: We have contracted Deer-view Construction for various projects. This winter, they will renovate the water damaged men's bathroom in the dining room. This will cost us \$2,500 for the insurance deductible, and possibly anything extra insurance won't cover. In the spring, they will do a thorough inspection of our exterior. We know for sure we need to have certain areas of our brick waterproofed, including the belltower. We have realized the reason we are getting water into the sanctuary is due to the porous bricks letting in water during soaking rains. Once we know the water has stopped getting into the sanctuary, we will need the plaster fixed and painted on the inside. Further, there are certain areas, especially in the bell tower, where the brick mortar has

rotted away. Deerview will determine the best solution for these areas. Also, we are getting water in through the 3rd floor windows over the daycare. We will have those windows, and any others in-need, caulked.

SANCTUARY AC UNIT: The blower stopped working in a sanctuary AC unit at the end of the summer. We are still awaiting an autopsy and appraisal.

LIGHTNG: We are receiving 3 quotes from United Electric, a professional lighting company in Rock Falls: 1) Improved lighting in sanctuary; 2) LED lights to luminate our stained glass from the inside so the windows are lit at night; 3) Outdoor lighting for safety and beautification.

FREE PRODUCE TABLE: We'll build a permanent structure in 2024. Costs TBD. We're also looking into grants.

In the Future:

LINCOLNWAY BEAUTIFICATION: If the City and Sate fix our corner and put in a new sidewalk along Lincolnway, we plan to beautify our Lincolnway property, including repairing/blacktopping parking lot, fencing in the dumpster and landscaping in front of the church.

There's also that old twisting bell tower we're keeping an eye on!

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

Rick Barr
Mavis Best
Jan Kelly
Lynn Knox
Jenn Reynolds
Deb Zigler

PW Coordinating Team

Lynn Knox, Moderator
Angela Reamer, Treasurer

**Resthave Home
Board of Directors**

Lynn Knox
FPC Representative

**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

01/03: Jace Velasco
01/10: Greg Kruse
01/15: Marian Osborn
01/19: Leah Huizenga
01/22: Kelly Vegter
01/27: Mitch Dolieslager
01/28: Shirley Thompson

Anniversaries

01/14: Clay & Alyssa Sibley

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

Jan. 25: Beef and Veggie Soup
Feb. 29: Chili
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



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goodideas.firspresmorrison@gmail.com

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https://www.facebook.com/firstpresmorrison

YouTube Channel: First Presbyterian Church of Morrison, Illinois

Contact Pastor Mike at revselburg@gmail.com



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