

# 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!

December 2022 • Vol. 65/No. 11

December is greeted with a shivering handshake from November, as they met at 13 degrees F. The half moon of November 30th smiled her biggest smile, as on December's onset, she heads toward full. The stars still glittered in her radiant light. They shimmered in the west wind, which screamed wicked earlier in the day, seeking to push vehicles off the road, tossing neighbor's unraked leaves and fallen corn husks in the countryside into the yard, ditch and field of another. November left angrily, though she settled down in the end.

Here we find December First one week past Thanksgiving. How strangely time moves. 2022 was gone before an eye blinked, and yet, the distance between my 47th birthday on Monday, November 21st, and the nation going back to regular business on Monday, November 28, felt as though an eternity had set in. This past birthday feels as long ago as my 46th. Time can make one ponder. It certainly invokes many emotions: peace, stress, excitement, anxiety, hopefulness, despair, to name a few. Time brings pace and balance. Time chips away at our life. Time reminds us. Time cares not for us, nor does it not care for us. Time is oblivious. Time does only what it can do...it moves onward.

We age with time. Sometimes we anticipate and encourage it to speed up. Other times, we pray for the moment to stay forever. It's not unusual to wish it could go backward. We try to conquer time. We try to figure it out. All

we end up discerning is that it sure does go faster and faster with every passing day. And with each day, we gain new experiences. We gain new people in our lives. We watch the world around us. We see it all for what it is at an exact point in time. We remember what was. We wonder what will be. All the while, time moves forward. We age. The world changes. But God...God is constant. With time, however, we can gain a better understanding of God in our personal life, in the world, and in the cosmos. There is a loving relationship that grows and grows and grows, if we give some of our time to our spiritual self and our connection to the spiritual world. And the more time we give to that part of our own self, the more we understand God, and God's love, and the love we can have for our own self, and the love we can give and receive with humans, pets, backyard creatures, our yard, our landscape, our forests and fields, our rivers, streams and lakes, the sky, the trees, the plants, the flowers, the bees, the ants, and even, maybe even, the mosquito.

What do we notice, as time passes? What are we paying more attention to? What are we paying less attention to? What seems to stay the same? How often do we look up at the sky? How often do we look and listen all around? Where is God when we are paying attention, and noticing God's presence? And have you noticed that most people you ask will say that the older they get, the less they believe in coincidences? They see God involved in that which we might have otherwise

written off as chance or luck. What have these people gained with time? What wisdom can be accrued! And yet, when we were ever so young, when we were coming to age, and we felt God, and we knew God, and we got goosebumps, did we not know God in such a beautiful and innocent way—our first conscious and enlightened encounters?

Christmas is coming, ready or not. Christ is coming, ready or not. A second coming is awaiting us all, in at least that we all must die, and all must return to God. But 'must die' gives it a negative connotation. However, saying 'get to die' doesn't sit comfortably overall. Either way, we will die. Yet for now, we live!

Advent begins with *hope*. We all have multiple hopes. Some hopes fade. Some hopes are fulfilled. Some hopes are lingering still, remaining present in our lives. Advent moves to *peace*. We all hope for peace. No one with love in their heart argues with that concept. It's just so hard to obtain, and certainly it easily slips or crashes away. Often it explodes. Yet we seek it. We believe in it. We pray for it. We wait for it. We work for it. And next comes *joy*. What a joy it is when our hope, through our faith, brings us peace in our state that may have presented injustice, hatred, harm, inequality, misrepresentation, stereotyping, bigotry, and so on. What peace it is when we find calm amidst our sadness, stress, depression, anxiety, fear, despair and more. What joy it is for hope to win out. What joy it is to see God

...continued on page 5

# 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 is now leading the studies that Pastor Mike is unable to attend. In December, we will not meet on the 27th.

### Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour hosts for December:  
December 4: John & Cynthia Reynolds  
December 11: Ron & Nancy Shank  
December 18:  
If you would like to volunteer to host a coffee hour in December please contact the church office.

### Sunday School

Sunday School will be held on December 4, 11 and 18 for children up

through 5th grade. Classes begin at 9:15AM in the youth group room. This month we will learn about the five themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Christ.

### Nursing Home Worship

Pastor Mike will be hosting the worship services at the local nursing homes at the beginning of December. Please join us on Sunday, December 4th: 3PM, Resthave; 4PM, Homestead. Carolyn Aiken will be the accompanist for these two services. On Thursday, December 8th, we will worship at Pleasant View at 2PM. This will be a special service in that the Bible Study group members of our church and from Pleasant View will be planning and presenting this service together.

### Confirmation

Confirmands will be helping prepare and serve the Community Meal in December. They will start classes back up in January.

### Drive-Up Meals

Our December meal will be on Thursday, December 8th. We will be serving **Christmas Ham Dinner** beginning at **4:30PM**. Help is needed on Wednesday at 1:30PM and Thursday starting at 3:30PM.

### Helping Hands

For those helping with presents for the Helping Hands Family, please have your gifts to the church office by Sunday, December 11.

### Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 11 after the worship service. We will be approving the 2023 proposed budget and incoming Session members. Please be sure to attend.

### Family Christmas Party

We're having a Christmas party for families on Sunday, December 11 from 5-7pm. Dinner will be Isle of Rhodes pasta and bread, applesauce and salad. For dessert, we will frost cookies and eat them! We'll also provide crafts and games to play. We are asking \$3 donations per person to help cover costs. Please RSVP by December 7th.

### Jean Temple 90th Birthday Parties

Jean Cain Temple turns 90 on December 13th. There are three ways to celebrate Jean:

- 1) Dec 10, 1-3PM, Odell Library. Her family is throwing her this party.
- 2) Dec 13, 1:30PM, Resthave Home: Presbyterian Women are throwing her a party for our church members and Resthave residents.
- 3) Send Jean a card at:  
408 Maple Ave, Rm 108  
Morrison, IL 61270

### Session Meeting

Session will meet December 12 in person at 6:30PM at the church.

### Newsletter Deadline 12/22

Please get information to be included in the January *Life Together* newsletter to the office voicemail or e-mail by December 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, Janet Johnson, Joyce Mathew, Shirley Mills, Marian Osborn, Wayne Osborn, Cooke Shawver, Jean Temple, Rachel Tucker, Ray Tucker, Dick Vandermyde, Michael Vegter, Jr.

## Christmas Eve Service

Our Christmas Eve service will begin at 4pm. The children and youth are invited to participate. Our 'pageant' will be held during the service this year. Those participating in the service will need to arrive at 3:30pm to put on their outfits.

## Christmas & New Year's Day Services

Christmas Day and New Year's Day both fall on Sunday's this year. We will have worship services both days, but they will be only about a half hour each. Please join us in comfy clothes (or pajamas). Coffee and hot chocolate will be served for you to take into service. No coffee hour afterward.

## 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 deacon.

### Presbytery Women Project

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



## December Scripture

- Dec. 4: Isa. 11:1-10  
Ps. 72:1-7, 18-19  
Rom. 15:4-13  
Matt. 3:1-12
- Dec. 11: Isa. 35:1-10  
Ps. 146:5-10  
Luke 1:46b-55  
James 5:7-10  
Matt. 11:2-11
- Dec. 18: Isa. 7:10-16  
Ps. 80:1-7, 17-19  
Rom. 1:1-7  
Matt. 1:18-25
- Dec. 24: Isa. 9:2-7  
Ps. 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
- Dec. 25: Isa. 52:7-10  
Ps. 98  
Heb. 1:1-4 (5-12)  
John 1:1-14

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.

### Thank You from UMC

United Methodist Church wants to thank the First Presbyterian Sunday School for helping to pack our boxes for Christmas Operation Child Shoeboxes. We were able to ship 26 boxes to children in need around the world. Once we know where our boxes went, we will let you know!

## 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/>.

# December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 9AM PTO Craft and Vendor Show
4 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	5 9:30AM Bible Study 4:15PM CP Holiday Train—Clinton	6 9:30AM Bible Study 4:15PM CP Holiday Train—Clinton	7	8 4:30PM Free Drive Up Community Meal	9	10 5:30PM Christmas Walk
11 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	12 10AM Deacon Mtg. 6:30PM Session Mtg.	13 9:30AM Bible Study	14	15	16	17
18 4th Sunday of Advent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	19 6:30PM Session Mtg.	20 9:30AM Bible Study	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	26	27 9:30AM Bible Study	28	29 Newsletter Deadline	30	31 New Year's Eve

## 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.

### CP Holiday Train

The Canadian Pacific Holiday Train will be making a stop in Clinton on December 6 at 4:15pm at the east end of Main Ave, near the Sawmill Museum. There will be a music performance beginning at 4:30pm. They will be collecting cash or non-perishable foods donations to benefit the local food bank. You can enjoy fireworks as they depart.

### December Painting

Mahaffey's On Main Street is offering an evening of painting and refreshments. The picture will be snowmen with a Christmas tree. Attend by yourself or bring along some friends! Cost is \$45 per person. Contact Sidonna Mahaffey for details or to register.

### Donations Needed

Resthave 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.

### Holiday Tour of Homes

The 2nd Annual Holiday Tour of Homes, sponsored by Morrison Community Hospital, will be held December 1—3. Tickets are \$100 for Thursday night, featuring an "Evening of Tidings and Candles", or \$15 on Friday and Saturday. You can purchase tickets at <https://mchf.cbo.io>, the MCH front desk or contact Rich Criss.

### Morrison Christmas Walk

The Morrison Annual Christmas Walk will be December 3rd beginning at 5:30pm. There will be singing, shopping, treats and the Christmas Parade!

### PTO Craft and Vendor Show

The Annual Morrison PTO Craft Fair will be Saturday, December 3 from 8am—2pm at Morrison Junior High School. Lunch will be provided by 4-H Club. Come out and support local!

### 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.

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once again—to know God's presence within our own presence. For Advent next brings *Love*. And if God really is love, then when we experience the giving and the receiving of love from humans, all life, and all of creation, we are in God's presence. God is entering into us. We notice love, and we let love in. God is in us. God works through us. We love one another. Others receive God, others embrace God, and God works through them, endlessly passing from one to another. And when we can build a community based off this love, we build a beloved community that is centered in love—centered in God—centered in Christ. And so, Advent ends with *Christ*. For Jesus showed us what love really is. Jesus showed us what God really is, through love. And Jesus fully came to understand that God's love is for

every single person. No matter how unrepentant we may be, no matter how lost, or how full of hate, or how foreign we feel or are treated, God still loves us unconditionally. Love is all around. God is all around. We can always receive love. We can always be with God. We can always grow with God. We can pass the time with God. And when our time is up on earth, it is indeed our own second coming, for we shall come home to Christ, and he shall welcome us in.

In our life together, in this time of Advent, as we say goodbye to 2022, as we anticipate the birth of a Christ Child, and as we soberly accept that one day we must die, but that today we must live, then we await what is next, give thanks for what was, and celebrate what is good right now. God is great. God

is good. God is with you. God is with us. God is among us. God calls us together, in beloved community, to equally and justly care for one another.

As we head toward Christmas, may we seek love in our lives. May our faith in the Triune God lead us into hope, peace, joy and love. May we embrace the love God has for us. May we continue to seek revelation in the life of Christ so that we can mature in our ability to love as he loved. As time passes, may this old year fade into a newness that we need, so that we may shine our lights into the darkness of the world, together, for our remainder of time here on earth.

Grace and Peace,  
Merry Christmas,  
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  
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, Tim Reynolds,  
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

12/05: Myra Huizenga  
12/06: Joel Roberts  
12/12: Kohen Blasdell  
12/13: Jean Temple  
12/18: Lisa Sage  
12/30: Rachel Tucker

## Anniversaries

12/12: Tom & Karen Genz  
12/15: Ken & Shirley Mills  
12/31: Greg Kruse &  
Susan Davenport

### Upcoming Free Drive-Up Community Meals

#### First Presbyterian Church, Morrison

Dec. 8: Christmas Ham Dinner

**2023**

Jan. 26: Vegetable Beef Soup

Feb. 23: Chili

Mar. 30: Ham & Potato Soup



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