

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!

May 2026 • Vol. 69/No. 04

Winter's crisp cold air has been replaced with spring's warm moist air, filled with the scents of lilacs, honeysuckle and bridal wreath spiraeas. April rushed us through spring while May comes in looking more like Mother's Day or even Memorial Day. The honey bees are busy filling their supers with honey, getting a head start this year. The rivers and creeks are bloated and ponds are at their brink. Lawn mowers are hard at work keeping grass under control. Summer vegetables and annual flowers will be safe to plant the first week of May. Spring has been glorious thus far—much different than years in which April lingers in the 40s and 50s with high winds and cloudy skies. This year we are blessed with such beauty.

Our lives are constantly changing just like the seasons. We all know this. When we go to bed every night, we are not the same person we were when we woke in the morning. We had the day's experiences. Some days are so routine, we can't imagine that the day changed us at all. Some days are dramatic that transform our lives in definite and everlasting ways, for better or for worse. Many days we don't remember. Other days we'll never forget. But no matter how each day goes, we have lived each one, and we have had experiences in each one, and each day has changed us. And, of course, we have aged one more day, one day further away from our birth, and one day closer to our death.

I have written and spoken many times before about change. I describe change as inevitable. It occurs externally and internally. It is constantly forced upon us and we also make changes on our own. How we deal with the changes is called transition. How we lead our transitions is multifaceted, and these include the influence of our environment (all that is going on around us), our state of mind, our health, our focus, our faith,

our determination, our wants and our needs, our ego, and our spirit. We set a goal for a transformation we want to live into and steer our life through the transitions among the changes in order to reach that transformation. However, this is only the case when the changes are noticeable. But most days, changes go unseen. It's just another day. It's just another week, month and year. But life passes by swiftly, and we move from one age to the next with what seems just a few breaths. When we pause to contemplate, we can see the ebb and flow of changes in our lives.

Let us think of a shallow sea in a protected cove. Think of what it is like in the water near the shore. Most days it is peaceful. Waves are slight, just ripples on the water surface. However, water is moving in and out from the deeper waters beyond the cove by forces that are far beyond the lagoon's control. A little sand will get disturbed, but it settles quickly. The water remains clear. Yet sometimes the waves pick up. These waves stir up the sand and rock and rush them to the shore, and the waves pull the water, along with the sand and rock back toward the sea. The water becomes translucent. We can't see as well what's underneath. It just depends on the size and force of the waves. Eventually, however, the waves cease and the agitated debris in the water settles, and all becomes clear again. And sometimes there are storms, even as big as hurricanes. At this point, the water becomes unsafe. The water becomes dark from all the disruption to the sea floor. The waves crash heavily into the beach, pulling the beach away, reshaping it, sometimes completely destroying it, sometimes changing it forever, sometimes allowing it to return to its prior self over time. As the current of the sea becomes greater, the chance increases of rip currents that can take what is at the shore and carry it far out to sea where it will

never be able to return to where it once was. Still, there will be calm again. The chaos will be over. Everything will settle. Everything can start anew, just differently.

This happens in our lives, constantly. It never stops. We get used to it in so many ways. It's typically not until the drastic changes occur that we take notice. While the motion of the drastic change is happening, we just hold on for dear life. It isn't until it is all over that we can evaluate what has happened and make a plan for how to transition and what we want to make out of those transitions: our transformation.

How do we deal with the changes in our own lives, especially the medium to large ones? What do we rely upon? How do we get help? How do we suffer? How do we heal?

We all have toolboxes that we have been filling with coping mechanisms. Some tools we have figured out on our own. Others were taught to us. Sometimes we have even taken classes to be able to add more to our toolbox. Our toolbox is a valuable asset and it's our only way to get through any event in life. Yet when the going gets tough, we easily forget that we have our toolbox. It seems paradoxical. We build up this toolbox to use it when we need it the most, but it so often seems to have been swept away by the waves in the storm. This is never true. There is always a toolbox and there are always more tools to be added to it amidst our times of trial. Our communities around us offer to us tools. They offer to us helping hands. And yet sometimes, our whole community will be facing the same storm, and we can feel like a forsaken people. When we cannot find a tool in our toolbox to help us, or when we think our toolbox is lost, and when no one else around can help with their own tools, then we can feel utterly lost. But let us not forget hope, for *Continued on page 5*

Church News

CHURCH EVENTS

Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship in-person at 10:15AM every Sunday morning. 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 9:45AM at La Bella on Tuesdays throughout the month. Everyone is welcome!

La Bella Ice Cream Socials

On May 5, and the first Tuesday of every month, we will have an ice cream social at 4:15PM. This month we will be serving virgin margaritas! 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!

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 May 18th!

May Day Baskets

Thanks to our volunteers and to Angela Reamer for organizing and buying everything for this year’s May Day Baskets. We put together 40 ‘baskets’ and delivered them this week.

Rockwood Clean-Up Day

On Sunday, May 3, we will have our annual family clean-up day at Rockwood State Park. We will meet near the marina at 1PM to walk around the lake and pick up trash (and look for morel mushrooms).

Mother’s Day

Join us on May 10th for our Mother’s Day worship service. As always, we will be handing out flowers to all women. Let us give thanks for the mothers, and the women, in our lives.

Youth Sunday

On Sunday, May 17th, our children and youth will lead the worship service. Weather permitting, we will have a bounce house set up at 9AM for a fun morning. We will also be celebrating high school senior Jacie Reynolds. Stay after for a special

coffee hour!

Pentecost

Pentecost this year is on May 24th. Join us as we celebrate the Holy Spirit! Communion will be served.

Session Meeting

The next Session meeting will be rescheduled to a time and date TBD.

Newsletter Deadline 05/21

Please get information to be included in the June/July *Life Together* newsletter to the office e-mail or voicemail by May 21st.

Free Community Meal

Our next meal will be on Thursday, May 28th. The meal is a sloppy joe sandwich with sides. It begins at **5PM**. In-person and drive-up meals are available. Help is needed Wednesday at 1:30pm and on Thursday at 4PM.

CHURCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office Closed

The church office will be closed on Monday, May 25, for Memorial Day. Stacie will be back in the office on Thursday, May 28.

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 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.

Prayer Requests



Those who have served the church in the past month; 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

2025-26 Communion Dates

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

Blackhawk Now Illinois Prairie Presbytery

As voted upon by the Assembly of Blackhawk Presbytery in 2025 to take a on a new name, "Illinois Prairie 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. Color Star has sanded and painted 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 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.

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.



May 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 5th Sunday of Easter 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 1PM Rockwood Clean-Up Day	4	5 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella 4:15PM Ice Cream Social @ La Bella	6 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella 4:15PM Ice Cream Social @ La Bella	7	8	9 11AM Celebration of Life Jane Ann James
10 6th Sunday of Easter 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour Mother's Day	11	12 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella	13 2PM BINGO @ Homestead	14	15 7PM Friday Evening Worship @ Emmanuel	16 9AM Annual Plant Sale @ Library
17 7th Sunday of Easter 7AM MFD Pancake Breakfast 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	18 2PM Social Hour @ Resthave	19 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella 9:30AM Presbytery Mtg @ Stronghold	20 1:30PM BINGO @ Resthave	21 Newsletter Deadline 8AM Social Hour @ The Loft 10AM Remembrance Service @ La Bella	22	23
24 Day of Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 3PM Resthave 4PM Homestead	25 Office Closed 10:30AM Memorial Day Parade Memorial Day	26 9:30AM Bible Study @ La Bella	27 1:30PM Meal Prep	28 10AM La Bella Worship Service 5PM Free Community Meal	29	30 9AM Touch A Truck Downtown Rock Falls
31 Trinity Sunday 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour						

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.

Plant Sale

Morrison Garden Club's Annual Plant sale will be held on Saturday, May 16 from 9am-1pm in Odell Library's Community Room.

The annual sale features donations from club members and local gardeners. All proceeds help support current

and future Morrison beautification projects.

You can stop in to find the perfect plant, new gardening tips or to connect with fellow local gardeners.

Pancake Breakfast

Morrison Fire Department's Annual Pancake Breakfast will be Sunday, May 17 beginning at 7am. Please stop in to show your support, enjoy wonderful food and catch up with your neighbors.

Touch A Truck

The Nation's Largest Touch a Truck Event will be held in Downtown Rock Falls on Saturday, May 30 from 9am-3pm. This is a community-funded, not-for-profit, free to the public event featuring nearly 200 vehicles.

This is a unique opportunity for families to look, touch and learn, while exploring equipment that builds, serves and protects our communities, from race cars, air boats,

vintage trucks and so much more. There will also be Heroes from the Illinois DNR, Tollway, Police and Fire Department to meet and talk to.

There will be a sensory friendly "quiet hour" from 9am-10am where all horns, loud sirens and engines will remain silent so anyone with sensory sensitivities can also enjoy this event.

More May Highlights...

May 6—Mother's Day Flower Bar

3-7pm @ Blooms 2

May 15—2026 Opening Ceremonies

Morrison Baseball & Softball
4:30pm @ Sports Complex

May 22—Free Vein Screening

9am @ MCH

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our toolbox is made from hope.

What tools are in your toolbox to help you transition through changes? What tools will help you seek out a desired transformation? Where is your relationship to God in that toolbox? If *faith* is in your toolbox, then you can believe that in all circumstances, even when there seems to be no chance of getting through, we can believe that God is with us. And we can believe that our God comes in a Triune form. We have Jesus who has taught us the path that we are to follow, as he is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He has lived and died for us, so that even if we lose our lives, nothing can end the life of our soul. We will live on in the spiritual realm. However, sometimes death is not the worse that can happen. There are so many scenarios that will make our life become something that we never wanted and will find it (nearly) impossible to live with. Here, we can remember the presence of the Holy Spirit. God connects to our soul through the Holy Spirit. God guides and leads us through the Holy Spirit.

And God our Creator will make new paths available for us. God will provide the path of new life, whether it is in this life or the one to come.

The Triune God is always available to us in our toolbox. God is the most important asset we have. The flesh is fragile and temporary. The spirit is eternal. And God guides us in our transitions toward the path in which we find love. Though darkness may at times seem all around us, there is always at least a pinprick of light. There, in the darkness, we find God. And we find that light in love. Love is the guiding force that will heal us, will bind us, will lead us, and will bring us to the new life we will best live once the waters have settled. In the mean time, both in still and unstill waters, we can remain faithful. In our faith, we can remember to pray. We can remember to breathe. We can remember to not lose hope. We can remember we are never alone. We can remember that one way or another, we will get through this, no matter the season.

In our life together, we can help one another as the changes occur in

our lives and in the world we share. As God is always present for us, we can be present for others through offering them the loving actions in which we are able. And when actions aren't available, we can always be there in prayer and in solidarity. United in love, we will have God present. Let us never forget that God is love. So love binds us to one another as we bind our own self and our community together in love, in God. And in love, we can appreciate the beauty that occurs in the stillness and in the chaos. We can embrace life together in the good times and bad. In that love, we will find the beauty that is greater than the beauty of the springtime. Even though one season is different than the next, and no two seasons are ever exactly the same, we can remain strong, full of hope, full of faith, full of love, full of endurance, and united in the beloved community of Christ.

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



May Scripture

- May 3: Prov. 4:10-18
Ps. 119:1-32
1 Pet. 2:2-10
John 14:1-14
- May 10: Ezek. 34:1-7a
Ps. 115
1 Pet. 3:13-22
John 14:15-21
- May 17: Isa. 45:1-7
Ps. 21:1-7
1 Pet. 4:12-14; 5:6-11
John 17:1-11
- May 24: Num. 11:24-30
Ps. 104:24-34; 35b
Acts 2:1-21
Jon 20:19-23
- May 31: Gen 1:1-2:4a
Ps. 8
2 Cor. 13:11-13
Matt. 28:16-20

Birthdays

- 05/01: Maddie Huizenga
- 05/06: Tim Reynolds
- 05/08: Margaret Esse
- 05/11: Lexie Laughlin
- 05/12: Deb Zigler
- 05/14: Lynn Knox

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

- May 28—Sloppy Joe Sandwich
- June—No Meal
- Jul. 30—Brats (Fire Department Benefit)
- Aug. 27—Pulled Pork Sandwich
- Sept. 10—Baked Potato Sloppy Joe
- Oct. 8—Chili & Cinnamon Roll



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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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one another.
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each other.