

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 2023 • Vol. 66/No. 3

Worms. We're waiting on the worms. As midnight crept in on February 27th, 2023, we experienced the first thunderstorm of the year followed by drenching rain. Looking out at my puddle soaked yard, and knowing it will reach the mid-50s today, I wondered, will today be the day the worms come to the surface? For me, I am really waiting for my muddy front yard to begin to grow grass again. Our chickens, who prefer to spend much of their time hanging out in our front yard, peck away at the grass over the winter. With this being a year with little snow cover, the chickens have delighted themselves by eating nearly all the grass stalks in front of the house down to nubs. And as I declare that this has been the Winter of Mud, I can't wait for the grass to come back. With last night's lightning, nitrogen has been placed back in the ground, and now all we need is the worms to come to the surface and some warm sunny days, and the grass will begin to appear. And though I know I shouldn't expect the grass to grow for another 6 weeks, I can hope. Meanwhile, as I am looking out the rain drenched window, I see the chickens out of their coop, braving the rain, pecking around for any bugs or worms that may be appearing on this warm wet morning. They anticipate the return of the worms to fill their bellies and give them a break from old grass. Though the redwing blackbirds rode in with the storm, filling the marsh-like ditches with their trills, the robins have not yet arrived. In such, the chickens are likely to wait for that snack. And as I am contemplating all this, my 5 year old son came up to me and said, dad, if you cut a worm in half, will you have two worms? Worms. Their on our mind.

Worms are one of the late winter / early spring signs of new life being on its way. This is the time of

the year for us in regions of four seasons to be anticipating the end of the drab winter. We look forward to the disappearance of mud, as well as the dull browns of the landscape. So soon will the first colors reappear. That a simple glimpse of purple, pink, yellow and green will set our senses on fire. The very first crocus, honeysuckle bud, and forsythia flower feed the soul great riches. The first clump of grass in the yard appears like a turtle shell slowly rising from the death of winter. The first flowers of the forest floor are a heavenly blanket. We're all ready for life to return. We're ready to let go of the old and live into the new.

Lent always happens at the perfect time for those in the land of four seasons. Our spirit is already yearning to see life return. It coincides with our spirit yearning to let go of the darkness that has crept in over the year, and to work to irradiate it. Just like we need to take a shower or bath, wash our sheets, and clean our house as dirt, dust, grime and grease accumulate, so it is with our body, mind and spirit. We need to flush our bodies of their toxins. We need to move beyond what has become the winter norm. We need to raise our heartrate, breathe deeper and longer, and we need to put healthy foods and drinks into our system. Our mind needs stimulated beyond the mundane winter's doldrums and unnecessary time-filling routines. Most of all, our spirit, that is, our soul, needs love. It needs to receive love and it needs to give love.

Good Friday is on April 8th. That's the goal date to be ready to die on the cross with Jesus. That's the last day for Lenten training. We have these days ahead to prepare to let go of that which we no longer need and to empower ourselves to gain the health we need in body, mind and spirit, so that on Easter morning, we can rise and say, hey,

I've got a new life, a new outlook, and new opportunities ahead. Then as spring moves into full steam, we can flourish in our life and live every moment fully. We can be healthier in so many ways. Our lives can be balanced and fruitful. It's time to move out of our winter and into our spring.

In our life together, as we seek to individually and communally transition into a life of wholeness and wellbeing, we can look to the teachings of Jesus to help us get there. We need to remember first and foremost how much our own Creator loves us. We are always given the opportunity to begin again. Further, Jesus teaches us about right relationships with self and one another. We must love our own self and not allow society to make us feel inadequate, demeaned, isolated, and unworthy. Further, we need to be careful to impart such thoughts onto others. We are here to care for one another, to meet each other's needs in the ways in which we are able, and to connect ourselves to one another through the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, we are waiting on the worms to bring new life. We are waiting on the seasons to change. We are waiting on the robins, the flowers, and all the new life to appear. And we are waiting for new life in ourselves and the world. Though we have to rely on nature to bring her spring, we cannot wait without working for change in our lives and the world. In order for our lives and the world to be better than it is right now, we have to be mindful, work hard, stay dedicated, and keep focused on God's love. In love, we shall always blossom, no matter our age or our physical and mental limitations. Love is of the Spirit, and our soul never grows old.

Grace and Peace,
Mike

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 leads the studies that Pastor Mike is unable to attend.

Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour hosts for March:

March 5: Lexie Laughlin

March 12: Deb Zigler

March 19:

March 26: Rick Barr

If you would like to volunteer to host a coffee hour in April please see the sign up sheet in the entry-way or contact the church office.

Lenten Lunches

As part of the Morrison Ministers' Council church community initiative, we will be hosting a noon meal and short dining room worship service on the five Wednesdays in March, each at a different church. There will be a short worship service in the dining rooms focusing on the Beatitudes. The first meal/service will take place at our church on March 1. We will be serving soups and chili from past community meals, dinner rolls, and desserts. We will be in need of people to set up that morning, to serve, and to clean up. More info as we get closer. Please come at 11AM to help. The future meals are:

-March 8: Ebenezer

-March 15: Brethren in Christ

-March 22: Bethesda

-March 29: Emmanuel

The Ministers' Council is also asking for churches to pray for specific areas for the 40 days of lent. Please see page 4 for the list.

Sunday School

Sunday School is for children up through 5th grade, and classes start at 9:15AM. Dates for the rest of the school year are as follows:

March 5, 12, 19

April 16, 23, 30

May 7, 21

Confirmation

The Confirmation Class enjoyed a weekend retreat in February to the castle at Stronghold with other churches from our and other presbyteries. Over 30 youth attended. Thanks to Tim Reynolds for being our adult volunteer leader for the weekend. Confirmands will meet for class on Wednesdays March 1, 15 and 22 at 7PM at the church.

Drive-Up Meals

Our March meal will be on Thursday, March 30th. We will be serving Ham and Potato Soup beginning at **5:00PM**. Help is needed on Wednesday at 1:30PM and Thursday starting at 3:30PM.

Session Meeting

Session will meet March 20 in person at 6:30PM at the church.

Newsletter Deadline 03/23

Please get information to be included in the April *Life Together* newsletter to the office voicemail or email by March 23.

Jim Camp Leading Worship

Our former pastor, Jim Camp, will be leading worship on Sunday, March 26th.

Palm Sunday & Church

Birthday Celebration

Our church turns 168 on March 28th. We'll celebrate the church on Palm Sunday, April 2nd by rededicating the church to God and having birthday cake at coffee hour!

Summer Hours

The Session decided at their February Meeting that we will remain at 10:15AM in the summer, and that the intention is to no longer change service hours in future years.

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.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presbytery Women Project

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

Earth Care Congregation

We have become an Earth Care Congregation! In January, we submitted our application to join this Presbyterian Church (USA) certification program, meaning, we are publicly pledging to becoming more involved in being stewards of God's earth. We underwent an evaluation process in which we studied ourselves in several areas of environmental awareness and works, of which we passed with flying colors. For years we have been striving to care for the environment and doing much to make sure our church's ecological-impact footprint is small. By becoming certified, we are also pledging to create an Earth Care Team who will oversee the church's environmental conscientious works. The team will help keep up the good works we are already doing but will also look into new areas so we can be the most earth-friendly congregation possible. If you are interested in being part of the Earth Care Team, please talk to Pastor Mike, or the two Earth Care Team representatives from Session: Angela Reamer and Carol Wolf. For more information about Earth Care Congregations, check out the PC(USA) link: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/>

40 Days of Lent Prayers

During the 40 days of Lent, every day the Morrison Ministers' Council asks that everyone will pray for Unity in the body of Christ as Jesus Himself prayed in John 17, and also the following things daily (reminder, the 40 days of Lent don't include Sundays):

1. You Church body
2. Your family
3. Businesses in our community
4. Doctors and Nurses
5. City Leaders
6. Police, Sheriff, and state police officers
7. Fire Fighters/Ambulance, Paramedics
8. Those who are sick or injured
9. Hospital administration
10. Teachers
11. Schools and administration
12. Justice for the oppressed
13. Those who are suffering
14. Homeless
15. Those living in poverty
16. Veterans
17. Service men and women (active)
18. Those struggling with mental illness
19. State and local road workers
20. Farmers
21. Forgiveness (for me and offering to others)
22. Refugees
23. Widows and widowers
24. Those who have been falsely judged
25. Those in prison or jail
26. That people would come to know the love of Jesus
27. People that you work with
28. Those struggling with addiction
29. Children and grandkids
30. Pray for the unborn
31. State leaders
32. National Leaders
33. Caretakers
34. Those who have lost loved ones
35. Those struggling financially (unemployed)
36. Those who live alone
37. Environment (Earth, droughts and floods etc..)
38. Pray for your enemies
39. Pray for yourself
40. Pray for the Lords return

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/>.

MARCh

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 12PM Lenten Lunch @ FPC 7-8PM Confirmation Class	2	3	4 8AM Rooted in Christ
5 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	6	7 9:30AM Bible Study	8 12PM Lenten Lunch @ Ebenezer	9	10	11
			15 12PM Lenten Lunch @ Brethren in Christ 7-8PM Confirmation Class	16	17	18
12 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	13	14 9:30AM Bible Study	22 12PM Lenten Lunch @ Bethesda 7-8PM Confirmation Class	23	24	25
			29 12PM Lenten Lunch @ Emmanuel	30	31	
19 4th Sunday in Lent 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	20	21 9:30AM Bible Study	29 12PM Lenten Lunch @ Emmanuel	30	31	
			7-8PM Confirmation Class	Newsletters Deadline		
Flower Order Due	27	28 9:30AM Bible Study		5PM Free Drive Up Community Meal		
26 5th Sunday in Lent 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour						

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.

Donations Needed

Resthabe 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.

Pleasant View Donations

The Activities Department at Pleasant View is requesting donations for upcoming activities.

- * Body wash and body wash puffs
- * Brushes and combs
- * Keurig cup pods
- * Hot chocolate
- * Individual wrapped snack size candy bars
- * Cloth tablecloths (seasonal also)
- * Cheese puffs or puff corn
- * Hot glue gun glue sticks
- * Glue sticks
- * Elmer's glue
- * Construction paper
- * Markers
- * Crayons

They are also accepting candy contributions for their Children's Easter Egg Hunt through March 15th. The Easter Egg Hunt will be held on

April 1st. If you would like more information please contact Pleasant View at 815-772-7288.

Rooted in Christ

The annual Rooted in Christ Women's Conference will be held on Saturday, March 4, 2023 beginning at 8am at Ebenezer Reformed Church. This will include two speakers, fellowship, shopping, praise, food and coffee. You can purchase tickets by visiting https://rootedinchrist.ticketleap.com/rooted-in-christ/dates/Mar-04-2023_at_0800AM.



Easter Lilies and Spring Bulbs to the Glory of God are available for display in the sanctuary on Easter. Please place your order no later than **March 19**. Payment may be made in the offering plate or in/to the church office, indicating "Easter Lily" on your check. Thank you.

Each plant costs **\$13.50** and comes in a 6-1/2" pot wrapped in foil.

PLEASE ORDER—Specify quantity (\$13.50 each):

- _____ Easter Lilies
- _____ Daffodils
- _____ Tulips: *Choose color(s):* ___ Pink ___ Purple ___ Yellow
- _____ Hyacinth: *Choose color(s):* ___ Pink ___ Purple

AMOUNT DUE \$ _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

In celebration of _____

Donor(s) name(s) _____

_____ I will take my plant(s) after the Easter service, April 9

_____ Please use the plant(s) in the ministry of the church

Leadership and Staff

**Session Elders/
Board of Trustees/
Personnel Committee/
Safety Team/
Stewardship Team**

Carol Wolf '23
Lynn Knox '23*
Tim Reynolds '23*
Angela Reamer '24*
Ron Shank '24
Deb Zigler '24*
Lexie Laughlin '25*
Scott Vandermyde '25*

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

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: Cookie Shawver

Anniversaries

03/04: Bud & Shirley Thompson
03/05: Ted & Wendy Volckmann

March Scripture

Mar. 5: Gen. 12:1-4a
Ps. 121
Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17
Mar. 12: Ex. 17:1-7
Ps. 95
Rom. 5:1-11
John 4:5-42
Mar. 19: 1 Sam. 16:1-13
Ps. 23
Eph. 5:8-14
John 9:1-41
Mar. 26: Ezek. 37:1-14
Ps. 130
Rom. 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

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goodideas.firspresmorrison@gmail.com

www.firstpresmorrison.org

https://www.facebook.com/firstpresmorrison

YouTube Channel: First Presbyterian Church of Morrison, Illinois

Contact Pastor Mike at revselburg@gmail.com



Upcoming Free Drive-Up Community Meals

First Presbyterian Church, Morrison

Mar. 30: Ham & Potato Soup
April 27: TBD
May 25: Pulled Pork Sandwiches
June 29: Brats
July 27: Hot Dogs (Fire Dept. Benefit)



Life Together is published 11 times per year by the
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