

# 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!*

**October 2024 • Vol. 67/No. 9**

The dearth of October is upon us. We note the flattening of fields as the combines comb corn and beans, leaving haggard orange tan stalks to rot. Summer's flowers are all gone to seed, with busy bees flooding the few remaining fall blooms. Bee keepers add sugar water to their hives to ensure their honeybees make it till the spring. It's a long time until the lilacs of spring bloom. But wait. Lilacs are blooming again, right now. Have you seen them? They are all around. Lilacs of many varieties are blooming again. Experts have various opinions, but it all comes down to environmental stress. It could be the drought from the last two years catching up to them. It could be that the excessively dry September forced them. Perhaps it was the extreme swings of heat and cool, including spring like cold nights with midsummer day temperatures for the past month. It's a good conversation to have with those who like to ponder nature and how the world is today. The experts conclude that this second bloom won't hurt the plants. They should bloom just fine next spring. So, no matter the reason, we can celebrate that we are able to enjoy lilac blooms in late September and early October.

Over the years, I have planted many lilacs and have replanted several runners throughout my yard, especially on the hillside. Though there are many wonderful spring smells of the various amazing spring flowers, it is the lilac I love the most. I noticed early this September that many of my lilacs looked dead as their leaves had turned brown and fallen. But as I investigated, I saw several buds on the stalks. It is typical for lilacs to have buds on them through the winter, which is where they will grow their clusters of spring flowers. But these buds looked like they do in the spring, not at the end of summer. My father-in-law told me he had the same issue with his lilacs, and so did a friend of his, but they had something stranger in Cedar Rapids. Those buds had grown new leaves, and soon enough...new flowers. So, I've been

on the lookout. First, I noticed lilac flowers at a neighboring farm. Shortly after, over the past ten days, I have been watching flowers immerge among many of my lilacs, and they keep coming. I have also noticed them on lilacs in neighboring towns. Despite the abnormality, I have been enjoying smelling the lilacs—a rare treat in early autumn. It is quite confusing to my senses when the olfactory takes a whiff of these beauties. With eyes closed, I am transported to the time of the year when forest floors are damp and thick with new growth. In the scent of the lilac, I can also smell that forest floor, full of moss, flowers and morel mushrooms. What joy that smell brings. What a wonderful time spring brings to our planet. It is the gift of the promise of new life from the earth to all existence. It is proof of how struggles can be overcome and that new beginnings shall come again. It is the essence of creation itself. And it can all be experienced with the scent of a lilac flower. Opening my eyes after each indulging inhale, I am transported back to reality. It is the beginning of autumn. We are in a drought. The beans and corn around me are being harvested. The ground is dry. Plants are wilting and few flowers are left. The air is full of dust from the fields. Apples are falling from trees. The rest of the world around me is preparing for winter's death and hibernation. But not the lilacs. They are having a rebirth—a second spring. And, of course, I thought to myself, there is a sermon in all of this.

Nature has its seasons. Here in the Midwest, we are fortunate to experience very pronounced seasons. Yet, as time passes, the more we are realizing that the seasons seem to be getting confused. We have harmed the earth and she does not function in typical ways any longer. Nonetheless, there are still four distinct seasons. In our own lives, we have our own sets of seasons. One set is that of aging. Our spring begins with infancy, which is much like March. April is our childhood. Our youth is like May

and our adulthood is our summertime. If we are lucky enough, we make it to the autumn of old age and walk on to the long journey in winter. Another set of seasons revolves around our experiences. Parenthood itself is set in its seasons, as we have the spring of our children's birth, and our autumn is our empty nesting time. Our daily lives can also be seen as seasonal. We have our highs and lows in life. When we are experiencing something new, it is a springtime, when we are living steady, it is a summer, and when we know that changes are coming, it is an autumn, and when we must let go of something, it is a winter.

These autumn lilac blooms have got me thinking about tenacity, survival, resilience and attitude. A truth to human existence is that we all hit hard times in life. These hard times appear for many reasons. There are internal and external changes that occur...those that are forced upon us and those that are a result of our choices. For external changes being forced on people, I contemplate the many people are affected right now by the destruction of Hurricane Helene. I think about people I know going through radiation and chemotherapy. I recall those who struggle with emotional, mental, and physical illness. I remember those who have recently lost their spouse, sibling, or child. I keep in mind those who have recently lost their jobs at John Deere and other places. And then there are so many people who are amidst messes and struggles of their life—broken relationships, seeking a fair share of child custody, substance abuse, and so much more. Further, there is the constant cloud of negativity that permeates all around us in news, social media and conversations. The upcoming presidential election is not helping. There are so many people we all know, and possibly even our ourselves right now, who are having a really hard time in life. And when life is really hard, it is difficult to know

*...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/@firstpresmorrison>

### Bible Study

Bible Study will be held at 9:30AM at Pleasant View Nursing Home on Tuesdays throughout the month.

### Bingo at Homestead

Marian Osborn invites one and all to join residents and friends of Homestead to play bingo on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 1:30—2:30PM. There will be refreshments and prizes!

### October Sunday School

We'll hold Sunday School on October 6, 20 & 27 starting at 9:15AM.

### World Communion Sunday

On October 6, we will celebrate the annual World Communion Sunday. We will partake in the Last Supper along with all the other churches

around the world who observe this day, recognizing we are all one in Christ.

### Peace & Global Witness

#### Offerings

Donations to this Presbyterian Church USA Special Collection enable the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. Donations will be accepted now through October 6, World Communion Sunday. Please place your gift in the offering plate, in the office or donate online: <http://specialofferings.pcusa.org>.

### Drive-Up Meals

Our next meal will be on Thursday, October 10 beginning at 5:00PM. The meal is chili and The Bread Lady cinnamon rolls. Help is needed for food prep on Wednesday the 9th at 1:30PM and Thursday at 4:15PM.

### Dine-In Meals!

The Session has decided to try something new beginning with our October meal...we are inviting people to eat their meal inside our dining room, also beginning at 5PM (guests arriving earlier than 5PM will be put to work!!!). We'll offer drinks, but meals will be served via the same bags as the drive-up

meals. If it's a meal that would require a plate and flatware at home, we'll offer that as well. Nothing fancy. It's just an opportunity to dine with others. Come join us and enjoy the company!

### Golden Oldies Lunch

Our next Golden Oldies lunch will be at Homestead on Wednesday, October 16th at noon. Cost of meal is \$7. Feel free to stick around for bingo at 1:30PM. Deadline to RSVP is Wednesday, October 9th. Please let Marian Osborn know if you are coming: 815 772-4711.

### 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! Join us on October 21!

### Family Road Trip

The families with children and youth are heading to Casper Bluff Land and Water Preserve to see a thunderbird effigy mound (near Chestnut Mountain/ Galena) following worship on Sunday, October 20th. We'll drive into the Galena Territories in the peak of fall colors and see the last remaining effigy mound in IL. Plus for those whose legs permit, we'll add some beautiful hikes to other mounds and a Mississippi River overlook.

### Newsletter Deadline 10/24

Please get information to be included in the November *Life Together* newsletter to the office voicemail or e-mail by October 24.

### Fall Fest Fundraiser

Folks from our church will have a food stand during the Chamber of Commerce Fall Fest at the Sports Complex on October 26th from 1-3PM. Help financially support their

## 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, Brandy Claeys (a friend of Stacie's), the family of David Hoffman, the family of Janet Johnson, Richard McCoy, Wayne Osborn, Jody Tucker, Rachel Tucker, Ray Tucker



future trips and enjoy some delicious food!

## Reformation Sunday

Celebrate the great breakaway from the Catholic church and how we emerged into free thinking reformed Christians! As always, it's the last Sunday in October (27th).

## Family Pumpkin Carving

Our annual pumpkin carving event for our families with children and youth will be Sunday, October 27 from 3-5PM in the church dining room. Bring your own pumpkins to carve. If you are partial to your own knives, please bring them.

## Remembrance Sunday

### & Cherished Recipe Potluck

Remember those who have walked onto the long journey as we celebrate our short and delicate lives on Sunday, November 3rd. For the 2nd year, we will have a potluck where we invite you to bring your replica of a cherished recipe of a favorite dish a loved one once made for you.

## Stronghold Youth Retreat

We are inviting our Jr. & Sr. High youth to attend the annual Stronghold retreat in the castle on November 1-3. More info has been sent to the families.

## CHURCH

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Congrats!

Congratulations to Collin Wolf and Sydney Cronin on their upcoming wedding on October 12th.

#### The Church Triumphant

David Hoffman, husband of Barb Ardapple Hoffman, completed this portion of life on September 25th. A celebration of life will occur on Sunday, October 6th at 2PM at the Ivy Club in Peoria. Pastor Mike will preside.

#### Thanks for the Corner

We would like to thank the City of Morrison for rebuilding the drainage and laying new concrete at the corner of Lincolnway and Genesee!

## Presbyterian Women Project

PW, which includes all women of our church, has undertaken a project. Rest-have is 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. You can find a pattern on Pinterest by searching "walker caddy pattern" or contact Deb Zigler.

## Communion Dates for 2024

Communion is planned to be served on the following days in 2023: October 6, November 24, and December 22.

## LOOKING AHEAD— SAVE THE DATE

*November 1-3:* Blackhawk Presbytery Jr. & Sr. High Retreat @ Stronghold

*November 3:* Remembrance Sunday and Cherished Recipes Pot Luck

*November 17:* Thanksgiving Service

*November 24:* Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday

*December 1:* Advent begins; Decorate the church for Christmas @ 9:15AM; Hanging of the Greens Worship Service @ 10:15AMish; Record Breaking Party following (Pastor Mike breaks the longest pastorate in the church's history that day)

*December 8:* Congregational Meeting following worship to approve incoming 2025 Session Elders

*December 15:* Cookie Frost-off during coffee hour

*December 24:* Christmas Eve Worship Service @ 4PM

**Reminder: Every month...**

*1st Tuesday, 4:30PM:* Ice Cream Social at Pleasant View

*3rd Monday, 2PM:* Resthave Presbyterian Social Hour

## 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](http://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](http://saukvalleyfoodbank.org)

### 211

Have other needs? Call 211. This directory of regional help covers a myriad of needs. Part of United Way.

Love  
one another.  
Feed  
each other.

# October 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 9:30AM Bible Study 4:30PM Ice Cream Social @ PV	2 9:30AM Bible Study 1:30PM BINGO @ Homestead 1:30PM Meal Prep	3 4:30PM Free Drive Up Community Meal	4 3pm Homecoming Parade (MHS)	5
6 20th Sunday after Pentecost 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	7 No School	8 9:30AM Bible Study	9 1:30PM BINGO @ Homestead 1:30PM Meal Prep	10 4:30PM Free Drive Up Community Meal	11 No School	12
13 21st Sunday after Pentecost 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour	14 No School	15 9:30AM Bible Study	16 12PM Golden Oldies @ Homestead 1:30PM BINGO @ Resthave	17 8AM Social Hour @ The Loft	18 7PM Back to the Arcade!	19
20 22nd Sunday after Pentecost 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour Road Trip Casper Bluff Land & Water Preserve	21 2PM Social Hour @ Resthave 6:30PM Session Mtg	22 9:30AM Bible Study	23	24	25	26 1pm Halloween Fall Fest & Parade
27 23rd Sunday after Pentecost 9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 3PM Family Event—Pumpkin Carving	28	29 9:30AM Bible Study	30	31 Halloween 4pm Trick or Treat		

## 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

### Back to the Arcade!

Morrison Department of Fun is hosting a retro arcade night! This fundraiser is an adult only event to be held at the Whiteside County Fairgrounds on Friday, October 11 from 7-11pm.

There will be a wide array of old-school games, such as Pac-Man, Donkey Kong and Street Fighter, to bring back your inner child! It is free to play, but donations are welcome. There will be a Popcorn Bar and Tiki Bar with refreshments available for purchase.

### Rummage Sale

Morrison United Methodist Church's Fall Rummage and Bake Sale will be held on October 18-19.

They will accept donations of gently used items and baked goods Monday, October 14 through Thursday, October 17 from 9am—12noon. If you are looking to declutter, now is the perfect time! All proceeds will go to benefit local community service and global mission efforts.

### Halloween Fall Fest

The Morrison Chamber of Commerce will be hosting their Halloween Fall Fest and Parade on Saturday, October 26 from 1-3pm at the Morrison Sports Complex.

There will be games, trunk or treat, and awards for the best costumes!

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how to move forward. A wall can seem to be in the way. All the doors may seem locked or hidden. Hope may seem forsaken, and faith may appear useless. It is easy to find ourselves in times in which we want to give up. Just like the lilacs, we face stresses in our life. The lilacs are facing stress from the messed-up environment, which is out of their control. Our stress comes from our own 'environments', much of which is also out of our control. So, what lessons can we learn from the lilacs this autumn?

The lilacs, in their stressed state, have naturally chosen in their instinct to bloom again. They could have just died. They could have gone into an early hibernation and hoped for the best, seven months from now. But instead, their natural response was to oppose their environmental stresses and return to spring.

Is this something we can do? The common choice for us, when going through hardships, is to continue to suffer and wait for it to end. We talk about having positive thoughts and surrounding ourselves with that which will help us. But, usually, we see ourselves in an autumn that can only lead into the depths of bitter winter. So, what would it take to turn the situation around and enter our own spring?

This shift takes a huge mental load. In order to laugh at our situation and say, "You can't have dominion over me," we must give up on trying to have control of the situation and instead, take control of our thoughts and actions. The world may be beating us to death, but we can still dance in a way we are able. The world may be

crushing us, but we can still laugh and sing. The world may put up every road block, but we can still be part of the beauty of the world. We can seek to have the right attitude in which we find a second spring.

This is definitely easier said than done. However, if we take the time and effort, no matter how much despair we may witness, we can see that love is still in our lives. Love is what we need the most. Love is what comforts us and gives us new chances. Love is what forgives and gives new life. Love is where the seed of hope emerges and grows. Love is where faith gets us through. Love is how we find a spring, in the midst of our fall.

Of our body, mind and spirit, we know that our body and mind is subject to the whims of the world around us and our own physiology. Yet our spirit can always be free. If we only focus on the body and mind, we can easily be dragged down, and find no way out of our situations. Yet it is the spirit within us that gets us through. It is our spirit that connects to love. It is our spirit that creates hope. It is our spirit that adheres to faith, and uses it to get us through the fire. It is our spirit that connects us to God. In Christianity, we have faith in the existence of God's own spirit, the Holy Spirit. As God is love and the Creator and Healer of all, we can find our new creation and new healing in God's love. This love is found all around. It is in the helping hands of strangers, professionals, family and friends. It is in the smile of the sympathetic, compassionate and empathetic person. It is in a handshake, hug and kiss. It is in the prayers of others. It is in moments that

can appear coincidental but something inside tells us that it was God at work. It is also seen in the beauty of God's natural creation—in the sunsets and sunrises, in the contours of the earth, in the artistry of flowers, and in their scents...especially in a lilac.

This idea of finding spring again in one's times of trial may seem an impossibility. The bigger the struggle, the harder it can be to see the silver lining, to consider life can get any better, or that we are not simply forsaken and forgotten. Yet we can remember how we have seen others find spring in their autumn. If others can do it, surely we can as well. We can embrace that there is love in our life, that there is hope, and we can have faith, that no matter what is going on in our life and in the world, we need not give up. We can persist. It is in the spirit of the lilac to bloom again in a second spring and to share its beauty with the world around it. It is also in our spirit to do the same.

In our life together, we can help one another in our times of trial. We may have an opportunity to share our love with others so that they may receive love and find a kindling in their spirit, which will lead them to hope and into faith and into new life...a new spring. Likewise, we can remain open to receive love from others. In Christ, there is always a promise of new life. As he himself could not be kept down by the greatest of trials, he has given us a path through the Holy Spirit to allow our own spirits to find the pathways to spring.

Grace and Peace,  
Mike

# 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**

Lexie Laughlin  
Deb Zigler  
Jan Kelly  
Tim Reynolds  
Nancy Shank

**PW Coordinating Team**

Lynn Knox, Moderator  
Angela Reamer, Treasurer

**Resthaves Home  
Board of Directors**

Lynn Knox  
FPC Representative

**Resthaves 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

10/02: Jakob Palmer  
10/03: George Selburg  
10/05: Kolten Sage  
10/07: Michael Vegter  
10/16: Bev Bealer  
10/18: Silas Dolieslager  
10/19: Dave Zigler  
10/20: Cheyenne Sage  
10/21: Scott Vandermyde  
10/22: Jody Tucker  
10/27: Emily Davis  
10/27: Ted Volckmann  
10/30: Wendy Volckmann

## Anniversary

10/12: Ron & Nancy Shank  
10/13: Chad & Myra Huizenga  
10/16: Dennis & Arlene  
Burkholder  
10/16: Ray & Jody Tucker  
10/19: Steve & Carol Wolf  
10/23: Dave & Deb Zigler



## October Scripture

Oct. 6: Gen. 2:18-24  
Ps. 8  
Heb. 1:1-4; 2:5-12  
Mark 10:2-16  
Oct. 13: Amos 5:6-7, 10-15  
Ps. 90:12-17  
Heb. 4:12-16  
Mark 10:17-31  
Oct. 20: Isa. 53:4-12  
Ps. 91:9-16  
Heb. 5:1-10  
Mark 10:35-45  
Oct. 27: Jer. 31:7-9  
Ps. 126  
Heb. 7:23-28  
Mark 10:46-52

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

Oct 10: Chili & Cinnamon Roll  
Nov 14: Hearty Soup  
Dec. 12: Christmas Ham Dinner

**First Presbyterian Church of Morrison IL**  
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*Life Together* is published 11 times per year by the  
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