

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!

April 2023 • Vol. 66/No. 4

As the first light of day fills the sky in early spring, the bird songs penetrate my bedroom window, calling me awake from my winter slumber. The robin bids me to look at her worm she pulls from the damp lawn, still brown yet speckled with clumped hints of green. Starlings appear, uninvited, and pick at the dry thatch grass, and fly off to add to their nests. A sparrow attempts to grasp a spent chicken feather in his beak to add down to his own hidden nest. My teenage cat meows at the door, asking to come in from her night out, ready to sleep away the day. Behind her, a moth flutters by. The air warms itself as the day grows, with winds picking up by the hour. By noon bees emerge from the hive, with spring cleaning in full swing and foraging for first flowers. Yet the nectar and pollen flow is nowhere close. Crocuses stand alone as the yard's sole flowers, their colors standing brilliant against the still dull earth. The other early spring bulbs must have been lost to moles, mice and scratching hens. Yet all the spring bulbs as well as the lilies and irises shine in brilliant green ears inching above the brown muddy ground. The first buds on the lilac bulge as the pussy willow's fuzz first appears. The honeysuckle and forsythia slowly begin to awaken with the tiniest of buds forming. And up above, in their annual travels, wood ducks perch in the old hackberry tree. Of all these signs that nature gives, it is when the wood ducks arrive, I feel most settled knowing that spring is surely here.

Life has its ways of letting us know that something has started or something has ended. As children and youth, we learn of beginnings and endings in books, games, travels and school. The calendar year teaches us that on Monday morning we head to school, on Friday afternoon it is the weekend. In the morning we wake up and go to school. In the afternoon school is done and we go home, and

eventually we go to bed. The day is simple, but it is full of beginnings and endings. Summer comes and vacation begins, but in August it must end and school begins once again. In school we have new teachers, make new friends, and eventually, hopefully, we add romantic relationships into our life. Yet teachers change, friendships can end, and romance is ever fickle. As we grow, we begin and end jobs. We move to new places, and eventually we leave them. All the while, we experience the death of people and pets in our lives. The seasons change. Beginnings and endings are constant. They are ever growing and never ceasing. And yet, despite this, we so easily can feel stuck in the middle of somewhere and nowhere.

It is not always easy to know where we are between the beginning and end of most aspects of our life that are not controlled by the calendar and the clock. There are aspects of our life we pray would last forever, and others we pray would end immediately. Living in the in-between can cause stress, anxiety, doubt, longing, loneliness, uncertainty and more. Yet it can also provide hope, reliance on faith, adventure, and wonderful surprises.

As we venture closer to Holy Week, we draw closer to the end of Jesus' ministry. Jesus' time traveling the dusty trails of Judea and beyond was very short. Believed to have only lasted three years, Jesus knew that the inevitable awaited him. His beginning was in the Jordan River, baptized by John. His earthly ministry ended with his ascension into heaven. His travels were not always predictable. He could never stay at one place too long. He could never feel settled. He could not always go where he possibly intended. He had to live in the moment and be led by the Spirit as to where to go next. With every new adventure, Jesus knew he was coming closer to a brutal death. He had an understanding that he would not re-

main dead, but that he would return to life. He had to rely on hope and faith. He believed he was sent from God and that God would always be with him. But this didn't make the time of Jesus' in-between always easy. He showed us, with his leadership, that we have to keep going forward, no matter what life is throwing at us, or how hard everything seems to be. The direction forward, Jesus shows us, and calls us to go, is in the direction of love. Look for the love that is around us. Look for the love that is in us. Look for the love that is working through us. We can see God's presence in that love. We can receive that love. We can live within that love. We can be that love.

Though Jesus' ministry was radical, and though loving others in a just and equal way in our own lives is also radical in many ways, we can breathe easier when we realize that no matter where we are in life, a beginning, ending or in-between (or, more likely, a whole slew of those places mixed together) all we are called to do is receive and extend love. That's it. That's Jesus' commandment to us all. Love one another.

In our life together, as we prepare for Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, his last supper with his disciples, his heinous crucifixion, and his triumphant resurrection, let us set our sights on love. Together, our love is stronger. Together, we can change our culture and society to be focused on justice and equality that is filled with love. Together, we can continue Jesus' ministry. Together, we can help each other in all the stages of life. Together, we can be Christian. Together, love can triumph. Together, the world can find a new beginning in the love we receive from our Triune God that we pass on as beacons of Jesus' Light.

Happy Easter,
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:
 April 2: Church Birthday Party
 April 9: Easter / No Coffee Hour
 April 16:
 April 23:
 April 30: Rick Barr
 If you would like to volunteer to host a coffee hour in April or May please see the sign up sheet in the entryway or contact the church office.

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Services

There are three opportunities to worship during Holy Week. Join us for them all!

- Maundy Thursday & Holy Communion Service: 7PM
- Good Friday Community Cross Walk: 12:15 (Starts at Resthave and ends at Pleasant View. This year, there is the option to park at St. Peter's Lutheran church at noon and ride a bus down to Resthave)
- Good Friday 7 Last Words of Christ Service: 7PM

Palm Sunday & Church Birthday Celebration

Our church turns 168 on March 28th. We'll celebrate the church on Palm Sunday, April 2nd by renewing our own baptismal vows, rededicating the church to God and having birthday cake at coffee hour! There may even be leftover soup at coffee hour (just depends on what's left after the meal on March 30).

Easter Sunday

Join us on Sunday, April 9th at 10:15AM to celebrate our risen Lord! No coffee hour that day

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:

April 16, 23, 30
 May 7, 21

Session Meeting

Session will meet April 17 in person at 6:30PM at the church. The Confirmands will join us for this meeting.

Bulletin Free Sunday & Earth Day Clean Up

On Sunday, April 23rd, in honor of Earth Day, we will have our annual bulletin-free Sunday. At 1PM that Sunday, families and friends are invited to meet at the marina at Rockwood State Park to pick up trash (and keep an eye out for early morel mushrooms!) Wear appropriate clothing and footwear. We'll supply garbage and recycling bags, as well as nitrile gloves.

Newsletter Deadline 04/23

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

Drive-Up Meals

Our April meal will be on Thursday, April 27. This is our 14th Annual Free Community Meal!!! The meal is still TBD and begins at **5:00PM**. Help is needed on Wednesday at 1:30PM and Thursday starting at 3:30PM.

May Day Baskets

On Sunday, April 30th, PW will oversee a fun service project during coffee hour. In lieu of a cookie frost-off, we will be making May Day baskets to take to members and friends of the church. This is a project for people of all ages.

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.

Confirmation Sunday

Come one, come all to celebrate our Confirmands as they publicly dedicate their lives to Christ and become members of our congregation on Sunday, May 7th!

Tie-Dye Event

We will have our next Tie-Dye Event on Sunday, May 7th from 2-4:30PM in the church yard. Bring 100% cotton materials to dye, we'll supply the rest. Rain date is May 21. Pray for nice weather!

Children's Sabbath

May 21st is our last day of Sunday School, and our children will lead the worship service that day! Also, for anyone interested, we will have new members join the church this day. Contact Pastor Mike by the end of April if you are interested.

CHURCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to the World

Congrats to Alyssa and Clay Sibley upon the birth of their son and first child, Clive Kenneth. Clive was born on March 14th at 7:13 AM, weighing in at 7lb 5oz and 20" long.

Earth Care Team

We are now officially an Earth Care Congregation through the PC (USA). We are only one of four such congregations in Blackhawk Presbytery! We are assembling a team that will oversee this mission of our church, to ensure we are being the best stewards of God's creation as possible. We'll begin planning for educational opportunities, explore ways we can further reduce our environmental footprint, and explore what we can do with our church yard. Please contact Angela Reamer, Carol Wolf, or Pastor Mike if you are interested or simply would like more information.

Safe Place Congregation

In May (date TBD), we will have a special evening training by CLOCK, Inc to certify our congregation as a "Safe Place". A Safe Place is a community that gathers in a certain location, like a church, who pledges, and is trained, to be a safe environment for all people. It's a sanctuary, if you will. The specific focus is to be a safe place for any person of the LGBTQ+ community. We want our church to be able to proclaim that our love is truly for all and that all are welcome. To put actions to where our words are, being trained, with ongoing education, is our best path forward. We had a presentation by CLOCK, Inc in January 2022 focusing on LGBTQ+ 101. CLOCK, Inc is based in Rock Island and serves the LGBTQ+ community, especially youth. To learn more about them, visit their website at <https://www.clockinc.org/>

Presbytery Women Project

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

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.

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/>.

APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>2 <i>Palm Sunday</i></p> <p>10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour</p> <p>7PM "Messiah" Concert</p>	<p>3 <i>Monday of Holy Week</i></p>	<p>4 <i>Tuesday of Holy Week</i></p> <p>9:30AM Bible Study</p>	<p>5 <i>Wednesday of Holy Week</i></p>	<p>6 <i>Maundy Thursday</i></p> <p>7PM Maundy Thursday Service</p>	<p>7 <i>Good Friday</i></p> <p>12:15PM Community Cross Walk</p> <p>7PM Good Friday Service</p>	<p>8</p> <p>1PM Easter Egg Hunt Pleasant View</p>
<p>9 <i>Resurrection of the Lord</i></p> <p>10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:30AM Bible Study</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7PM Confirmation Class</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16 <i>2nd Sunday of Easter</i></p> <p>9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour</p>	<p>17</p> <p>6:30PM Session Mtg.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:30AM Bible Study</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7PM Emmanuel's Voices of Praise</p>	<p>22</p> <p>3PM Emmanuel's Voices of Praise <i>Earth Day</i></p>
<p>23 <i>3rd Sunday of Easter</i></p> <p>9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 7PM Emmanuel's Voices of Praise</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:30AM Bible Study</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>5PM Free Drive Up Community Meal</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30 <i>4th Sunday of Easter</i></p> <p>9:15AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 11:15AM Coffee Hour 3PM Resthave 4PM Homestead</p>						

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

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.

Easter Egg Hunt

Join the staff and residents of Pleasant View on Saturday, April 1 for their annual Easter Egg Hunt. Registration begins at 1pm. There will be candy, prizes and lots of FUN!! For more information contact Pleasant View at 815-772-7288.

From the Food Pantry

The Food Pantry personal items needed.

Toilet Paper
Paper Towels
Kleenex
Shampoo

Bleach
Bar Soap
Laundry Soap
Dish Soap
Men's & Women's Deoderant

We do not need the full size products. Dollar Tree, Dollar General, Family Dollar and Walmart usually have the small size.

"Messiah" Concert

The Morrison Ecumenical Chorus will present the Lent and Easter portions of G.F. Handel's "Messiah" on Palm Sunday, April 2, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 601 North Jackson Street in Morrison. The concert, which is sponsored by the Morrison Ministers Council begins at 7 p.m.

"Messiah" has been performed in Morrison in even-numbered years since 1956. Unfortunately, the COVID 19 pandemic made it necessary to cancel the 2020 performance just two weeks before it was scheduled to occur. Consequently, it has been five years since the community has been able to take part in this Easter tradition. The singers in this year's chorus, who come from churches in Morrison and surrounding communities, are very excited to be able to sing together after such a long break.

The chorus is under the direction of Katy Janicek, choir director at Bethesda Lutheran Church in Morrison, and is accompanied by Christine Holmer of Clinton, Iowa. Soloists include Connie Swanson-DeSpain and Beth Yaklich, sopranos; Sara Dunne, alto; Eric Phend and Luke VanderBleek, tenors; Mark

Kapusinski, bass; and Ben Logan, trumpet.

A free-will offering will be taken to cover expenses with any extra funds going to the Ministers Council to help with their activities. We hope that many of you will begin your Holy Week observance by sharing this special concert with us.

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

Capital Improvements Coming and Donations Needed

We have two big projects underway this spring. We are having major concrete and electrical jobs performed. We also have had some maintenance costs in March.

We will be replacing the sidewalk along Knox Street, creating a pad for the produce table in the yard and a cement pad for the lending library area (yes, we will finally put that up this spring!). We'll also fix a broken patch near the day-care ramp. The estimates for this full job have come to \$8,000. Ron Shank is gifting us with the removal and disposal of the concrete, which saves us \$1,300. Josh Gowan, who runs a local concrete company, has offered to the remainder of the job for around \$3,000. His grandmother was Mary Bull and in his appreciation for our church and the care we offered to Mary, and knowing how much our church meant

to her, he is completing this project at cost. We will also receive a \$500 grant from the city. In such, we are looking for \$2,500 to complete this task.

We have a major fuse box outside of the dining room, and a smaller one in the sanctuary, of which our insurance company is mandating that we switch out to breaker boxes. Unfortunately, the insurance company won't help us with the cost. The predicted cost for this is about \$7,000 (will know the final price after the project is completed).

Also, our dishwasher was in need of professional repair and the total bill came in just over \$1,000. We're also awaiting a plumbing bill from Alvarado's for fixing a slow leak in the kitchen handwashing sink.

We are asking for financial help from the congregation and friends of the church to help us complete these two projects. For more information on the projects, please speak with Pastor Mike or Ron Shank.

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

**Resthave Home
Women's Auxiliary Board**
Deb Zigler

Finance Team
Lynn Knox
Tim Reynolds
Scott Vandermyde

PW Coordinating Team
Lynn Knox, Moderator
Angela Reamer, Treasurer

Staff
Rev. Dr. Mike Selburg, Pastor
Stacie Baker, Office Manager
Scott Vandermyde, Organist
Courtney Bruckner, Custodian



**Elders in their 2nd consecutive term*

Birthdays

04/14: Rick Barr
04/14: Justin Knox
04/22: Alyssa Sibley
04/29: Miguel Velasco

April Scripture

April 2: Matt. 21:1-11
Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29
Phil. 2:5-11
Matt. 26:14-27; 66
Matt. 27:11-54
April 9: Acts 10:34-43
Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24
Col. 3:1-4
Matt. 28:1-10
April 16: Acts 2:14a, 22-32
Ps. 16
1 Pet. 1:3-9
John 20:19-31
April 23: Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Ps. 116:1-4, 12-19
1 Pet. 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35
April 30: Acts 2:42-47
Ps. 23
1 Pet. 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

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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



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)



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