



The Servants' Light

December 28, 2016

The Servants' Light (USPS 560-720) is published monthly by
First Presbyterian Church, Joliet, IL. Periodicals Postage paid at Joliet, IL
**Postmaster: Send address changes to *The Servants' Light*,
805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435-6998.**

***“Servants of
Jesus Christ—
Ministering
To One Another,
To Our Community,
And To Our World.”***

805 Western Ave.
Joliet, IL 60435

815.727.9259
FAX 815.727.9348
office@firstpresjoliet.org
firstpresjoliet.org

Sunday Morning

Schedule

Worship—

9:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Children's Worship—

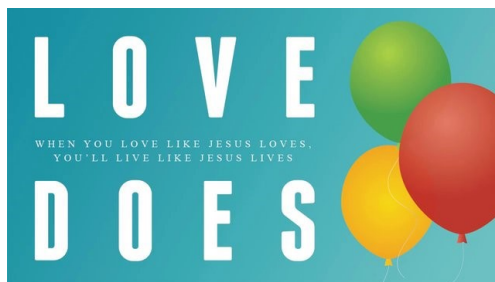
9:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Coffee Fellowship—

10:00 to 10:30 a.m.

Nursery/Preschool Care—

8:30 to 11:30 a.m.



LOVE DOES SERMON SERIES AND STUDIES

On Sunday, January 8, we begin an 8-Week Sermon Series on “Love Does.” It’s based on the foundation of Love God and Love Neighbor – in that order. Love is practical. Love takes action...Love Does! We will be using Bob Goff’s book, *Love Does*, as we take a fresh look at what it means to love God and love others.

Here’s where we are going with this series.

Sunday, January 8 —“With You”—Matthew 18:20, John 1:9-14, Philippians 2:5-11. Bob Goff, “I used to want to fix people, but now I just want to be with them.”

In the weeks to come we will explore these fresh insights about what love looks like in real life.

“Succeeding at What Doesn’t Matter?” Bob Goff writes, “I used to be afraid of failing at something that really mattered to me, but now I’m more afraid of succeeding at things that don’t matter.”

“Never Give Up...On...” Bob Goff writes, “I used to think God guided us by opening and closing doors, but now I know sometimes God wants us to kick some doors down.”

“Lasting Impact.” Bob Goff writes, “I used to think that I needed to sacrifice for God, but now I know faith is like a game of Bigger and Better.”

“Real Faith.” Bob Goff writes, “I used to think religion tasted horrible, but now I know I was just eating the fake stuff.”

Adult Discussion Groups:

On Tuesdays at Noon bring your lunch for an adult discussion group led by Dale Ambler, starting January 10. Or come on Wednesdays at 5:15 p.m. for an adult discussion group led by Dale Ambler, starting January 11. See page 2 of the newsletter for more information.

— Pastor Craig



Sunday, January 1. Worship with your church family on the first Sunday and Day of the New Year. Happy New Year to you! What a great way to start the New Year by being together in worship. Please remember that we have one Worship Service this Sunday at 10:30 a.m. May the Lord fill you with hope, joy, and strength as we start 2017. Ken Myers is singing at the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Sermon. This Sunday Bo is preaching on “Why We Keep Believing.” The sermon text is Hebrews 11:13-16. Bo writes, “With Christmas behind us, there is one question that remains: How do you keep that Holy Night feeling in the days to come? Faith is that igniter that will help us keep the promise of Christmas alive not just during the Christmas season but throughout our lives. As we gather on Sunday, let us remember the everlasting promises of God that had for so long served as foundations for so many people. Please join me in reading Hebrews 11:13-16 and pray that as we welcome the New Year, our hearts will be invigorated by the promise of God throughout the ages.”

“Love Does” Sermon Series and Study Starts January 8, 10 and 11. On Sunday, January 8 we begin an 8-Week Sermon Series on “Love Does.” It’s based on the foundation of Love God and Love Neighbor – in that order. Love is practical. Love takes action...Love Does! We will be using Bob Goff’s book, “Love Does,” as we take a fresh look at what it means to love God and love others. On Tuesdays at Noon bring your lunch for an adult discussion group led by Dale Ambler, starting January 10. Or come on Wednesdays at 5:15 p.m. for an adult discussion group led by Dale Ambler, starting January 11. See page 2 of the newsletter for more information.

December 24 & 25, 2016

Worship Attendance — 356

Stewardship Report

2016-2017 Budget: \$ 792,916

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Year to Date Receipts | \$534,486 |
| Year to Date Expenses | \$537,418 |

2016-2017 Bequest/Gift Income Received — \$41,911

Video Projection Ministry. We need some more volunteers in the video projection room for Sunday Worship. The Hymns, Songs, Sermon Slides and video clips add an essential visual element to our worship of God. If you would like to volunteer once a month in the Video Room for Sunday services, just give me a call or e-mail (craig.herr@firstpresjoliet.org). It’s a wonderful way to serve, and we have excellent volunteers who will easily provide the training you need to get on board.

Midweek Study & Family Night. ZooM meets at the church on Wednesday Evenings. There is an adult study, “Love Does,” before dinner at 5:15 with Dale Ambler leading. There’s dinner for everyone at 6:05 p.m. It’s a great night for all of our church family. Come join us.

Thank you to those who helped put up our Christmas decorations to make our sanctuary, Hoffman Hall, and entrances so beautiful: Dale & Tari Ambler, Alexandra Boness, Dave & Sharon Cavanaugh, Kevin & Cristan Emanuel, Pat Haldorson, Mike House, Susan Lee, Karen Myers, Krista Rowzee, Jana & Jameson Rudisill, Jim & Barb Schwandt, and Sandi & Dave Zang.

In Christ,



Known to be in the Hospital:

Russ Mathena at Presence St. Joseph Medical Center

Just Born:

Grayson T Lee (Dec. 21)
Son of Lindsey & Michael Lee, Jr.

Passing to Life Eternal:

Twila Shafer (Dec. 10)
William Jacques (Dec. 20)

Sympathies are extended to Mark and Krista Rowzee and family on the passing of Mark’s father, Edward F. Rowzee, III, on December 23rd.

Betsey O’Mara thanks her church family for prayers and well-wishes during her recent hospital stay.

Growing in Christ—

"Love Does" Adult Discussion Group Tuesdays at 12 noon

Bring your lunch and join us in the adult discussion group based on the foundation of Love God and Love Neighbor—in that order. Love is practical. Love takes action...Love Does!

January 10: "I'm With You" (Matthew 1:18-23)

January 17: "Free to Fail" (John 21:15-19 / Matthew 16:13-19)

January 24: "Audacious Love" (1 John 4:7-12 / Genesis 28:10-17)

January 31: "Be Not Afraid" (Mark 6:45-52)

February 7: "Follow Me" (Matthew 4:18-20 / Matthew 16:24 / Luke 18:18-22)

The format for each week:

God's Word

- Discussion questions

Video

- Discussion questions

Application

Help, Hope, Healing! Stephen Ministry

We have trained Stephen Ministers who are eager to walk alongside anyone who needs someone to provide caring listening and supportive conversation. Perhaps you need someone to talk to during a difficult time or a time of change or a time when you are recovering from one of life's challenges. Just give one of our leaders a call: Cyndi Schwartz @ 815-325-9711 or Kris Hayden @ 815-725-3696.

"Bible Perspectives" Sundays, 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. Room 201 with Jim Mullins

We use the Common Lectionary Bible passages each week. The format basically follows a three question format: What do these words mean? What did these words mean to the original hearers? What do these words mean to us today?

"Love Does" Wednesday's at 5:15 pm

Join us in an adult discussion group based on the foundation of Love God and Love Neighbor – in that order. Love is practical. Love takes action...Love Does!

January 11: "I'm With You" (Matthew 1:18-23)

January 18: "Free to Fail" (John 21:15-19 / Matthew 16:13-19)

January 25: "Audacious Love" (1 John 4:7-12 / Genesis 28:10-17)

February 1: "Be Not Afraid" (Mark 6:45-52)

February 8: "Follow Me" (Matthew 4:18-20 / Matthew 16:24 / Luke 18:18-22)

The format for each week:

God's Word

- Discussion questions

Video

- Discussion questions

Application



Start the new year out with daily reading of our on-line devotional blog, which can be accessed through our website, www.firstpresjoliet.org, or at firstpresjoliet.wordpress.com.

Small Groups & Special Events



&



Saturday, January 28
Set-up at 4:30 p.m.
Tasting begins @ 5:00 p.m.
Movies begin @ 6:00 p.m.

Bring a crockpot-full of your favorite chili to share with others. The more people...the more chili we need!

Movies will be decided in early January. Look for more details in the weekly eNews and on our website.

PW Circles

Thurs. AM Circle

2nd Thursday
(Jan. 12, 9:15 a.m.)
in the
Fireside Room

Mary Circle

2nd Thursday (Jan. 12)
in the Fireside Room
Bring a sack lunch at
12 noon; dessert &
meeting at
12:30 p.m.

Meal Fellowship

Men's Breakfast—January 6, 7:30 a.m. at the Old Fashioned Pancake House on Jefferson St., Joliet.

Dinner Out Group—January 17, 6 p.m. at Capri Sogno Italian Restaurant, 24102 W. Lockport St., Plainfield. Please call Sis Schmidt at 815-725-0544 or Mary Haas at 815-524-4624 by January 16 if you are planning to join us, so a reservation can be made.

Men's Dinner Group—January 27, 6 p.m., at Anthony's Restaurant & Pub, 3151 Voyager Lane, Joliet. Please RSVP to Bob Smietanski at 815-838-7616.



At its regularly scheduled meeting of December 8, 2016, the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Joliet, voted:

- to approve any baptisms that may be requested before the next meeting;
- to approve funds as follows for the following international mission projects: \$1,500 for a garden well for drinking, bathing, washing & irrigation for an entire community, and \$500 for a sand dam to provide clean water to an entire community;
- \$2,000 for International Justice Ministry to rescue enslaved people, help them resettle, and provide job and educational opportunities for their children;
- and \$2,000 for the Feed My Starving Children Program, which provides food to starving people worldwide;
- to approve the new Sabbatical Policy beginning January 1, 2017;
- to approve hiring Will Ward as Youth Director;
- to approve the transfer on request of Dale Hammond to First Presbyterian Church, Aurora; removal per their request—Jalayne Ahoyt, Frances Moody, Christina Lynch, Tom and Karie Chesebro, Robin Estep, Michael and Terry Lyons; and placed on Inactive List per their request—Gregory and Melinda Eaton, Angela Winters-Harmon, Rob and Robin Hartney.

Ordination/Installation of Officers

Ordination and Installation of Officers is Jan. 8. There will be a Congregational Meeting also on January 8 to vote to elect new officers for the Class of 2019 and to fill vacancies.



Help with Christmas Decorations

Plan to come on Saturday, January 14, 9 to 11 a.m. to help take down and store the church Christmas decorations. Many hands will "make the job light."

Servants of Jesus Christ —

Ministering to One Another, to Our Community, and to Our World

Thank You

A big thank you to all of you who donated hygiene products during the months of October and November.

The response was so great and the amount was so abundant that we were able to help in three different areas. Donations were given to the Veterans, Stepping Stones and Groundwork. In fact, Groundwork had hygiene products on their Christmas List. Since the IL State Government has cut back, these products were greatly appreciated.

So, a big thank you again and start saving for next Fall so we can help those in need next year.



PW takes sweaters and hoodies to Farragut School, along with mitten tree donations, providing much needed warm clothes for the (700) students. Any outgrown sweaters or sweatshirts you have would be put to good use. Please leave them in Hoffman

Hall. Thanks for all your generous help for these children.

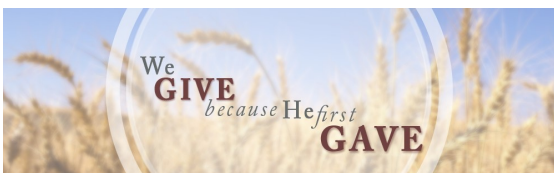
— Presbyterian Woman



The Night Deacons are serving breakfast on Saturday, January 7, 8 to 10 a.m. to those in our community who are spiritually or physically hungry. Come on out and help us serve and welcome our guests.

From the Treasurer's Office:

Annual Statements of your 2016 contributions to First Presbyterian Church will be mailed within the first few weeks of January. To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2016 income tax return until you have received this written acknowledgment of your contributions. You may lose a deduction for some contributions if you file your tax return before receiving this written acknowledgment from the church.



It's easy to support the life, mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Here are the guidelines for On-Line Giving and Text Giving. Donations to special offerings such as mission projects and the Christmas Joy Offering (which helps our Night Deacons feed the hungry in our community) can also be made on-line and by text giving.

On-Line Giving: Go to our website—firstpresjoliet.org— and click on the “Give” box at the top of the home page. You can plug in your user e-mail address and set up a password. On-Line Giving can be used for an occasional payment when you are out of town or for automatic recurring giving or for special offerings.

Text Giving: Text an amount to 815-205-3044. The first time you text a donation, you will be prompted with a one-time registration screen. This will assign your mobile number to First Pres., and allow you to select what account your text donation is withdrawn from. All subsequent donations will simply be texting the amount to First Pres. (which can be saved for easy access in your phone's contact list). You will get a text confirmation that your donation was successful.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Craig M. Herr—Senior Pastor
Dale Ambler—Associate Pastor
Bo Mircea—Associate Pastor of Children's Ministry
and Family Ministry
Diane Uden—Administrative Ministry Assistant
Sherry Buffington—Outreach Ministry Assistant &
Newsletter Editor

PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID
AT JOLIET IL
USPS 560-720

Address Service

First Presbyterian Church
805 Western Ave.
Joliet, IL 60435

Newsletter Deadline—The deadline for
reserving space in the January 25 *Servants'*
Light is **January 10**. Please e-mail to
sherry.buffington@firstpresjoliet.org.

TO:

Social Media...What Is It and Why Do We Need It?



Facebook...Twitter...Instagram...Snapchat...each of these are part of a broad category called social media. Let's face it...it is almost 2017 and social media is a reality. But what is it? I think it is easier to describe it this way: the "social" part: refers to interacting with other people by sharing information with them and receiving information from them. The "media" part: refers to an instrument of communication, like the internet (while TV, radio and newspapers are examples of more traditional forms of media). In short, social media are web-based communication tools that enable people to interact with each other by both sharing and consuming information.

Social Media also allows First Pres., and all those who interact with social media, a way to tell thousands in our community what is going on at the church. For example, this past Christmas we were able to use social media, in addition to traditional media like the newspaper, to tell people about the Cantata, Christmas Eve and Day services. Those of you with Facebook accounts, for instance, were able to take the ad we created and SHARE it on your Facebook page—thus increasing our reach, called ENGAGEMENT, in the community. Engagement means that we are communicating with people in a way that gets them to pay attention, which increases our possibility of attracting someone to whatever it is we are promoting.

Social media relies on YOU, the user, to help spread the word of whatever is going on at the church. When you LIKE a page or a picture or post on Facebook, your Facebook friends have the opportunity to see it. When you COMMENT, the same is true, only now you are adding a personal touch which further adds in connecting with others in a way that can get them to pay attention. The overall idea behind a church using social media and relying on its members to help through ENGAGEMENT forms the initial groundwork of relationship development. Clearly, personal, face to face invitations will always remain the best way of engaging others in our neighborhoods and places of work. SOCIAL MEDIA, though, is the surest link to individuals under 45 years of age today. Look for more insights related to SOCIAL MEDIA in the future.

— Pastor Dale

Recipe for Growth

It's 2017! For most people the turn of time is about new resolutions and trying to be a better self. As we start this new year I want to share with you one of my favorite Bible verses—Luke 2: 52 "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Time and time again this verse becomes my prayer as I see the little ones come for the children's message on Sunday. And this year once again I pray that indeed, as the kids grow and as we the adults get wiser, we all get to experience God's favor. I pray that each one of us will desire and seek God's favor, that we will grab at every opportunity to learn about God's grace, and that we'll make new friends that share the same love for God that we share. I pray that 2017 is not just another year, but a year where we find God's favor, a year where we grow spiritually and become people of Influence; people that can and will change their world by sharing God's grace.

Have a blessed new year!

Bo Mircea

Happy New Year



Zoom Jan—April Fruit of the Spirit

This semester we will be looking at the Fruit of the Spirit. Come ready to have some fun and learn something new.

Jan 11 - Movie Night

Jan 18 - Love

Jan 25 - Gym Night

Feb 1 - Joy

Feb 8 - Peace

Feb 15 - Bowling Outing

Feb 22 - Patience

March 1 - Kindness

March 8 - Goodness,
Pinewood Cars Night 1

March 15 - Gentleness,
Pinewood Cars Night 2

March 22 - Self-Control,
Pinewood Test Run

March 29 - No Zoom,
Spring Break

April 5 Zoom Closing
Pinewood Derby



Youth Group meets again on January 8 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Come ready for fun, great fellowship, and growing in our faith. And come to learn more about our new Director of Youth Ministry, Will Ward, who will begin his ministry with us on Sunday, January 15. Come and help us get ready to welcome Will Ward to our church family!

The Youth Bible Study and Learning Times are based upon Mark Hall's (Lead Singer and Pastor Casting Crowns) Youth Study Book,

“Thrive: Digging Deep, Reaching Out.”

Hall writes, “You were meant to do more than just survive.

You were meant to thrive... You were meant to have life
and have it more abundantly.

That's the promise of the eternal God.”

Bible passages and insights from Mark Hall are at the center of the study time as we begin 2017 with our youth.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

Feed My Starving Children:

We are going to “Feed My Starving Children” on Saturday, February 18.

Plan ahead and invite your friends.

Meet at the church at 8:00 a.m. and we will travel to Feed My Starving Children for the 9-11 a.m. meal packing session. We will eat lunch together after we pack hundreds of meals for children and families in need. Transportation will be provided from the church.

Choosing Timber-Lee Winter-Extreme Retreat Dates for both Junior High and Senior High in late January and in February.

Will Ward will be starting with us as our Director of Youth Ministry January 15. Will lived in Joliet for 8 years and attended our preschool.

Join us each week for Youth Group at the Church from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
It's a great time with your friends.