



The Servants' Light

February 22, 2017

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.”***

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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.



Ash Wednesday

March 1

Dinner at 5:45 p.m.

On the menu:

Baked Ham with Pineapple
Glazed Carrots, Cheesy Scalloped Potatoes
Green Salad, Crescent Rolls/Butter
Assorted Gourmet Cookies
Lemonade & Coffee
Freewill offering received

Worship/Communion at 6:30 p.m.

“Begin Again, Make A Fresh Start”

Chancel Choir & Children's Choir singing
Ashes are available for those who desire.

(Children's Choir meets at 5 p.m. as usual, for rehearsal.)



Dear Lord, as we enter this Solemn and Holy Season, we pray that you would send your Holy Spirit upon us that we might prepare ourselves for these coming 40 days of Lent. Even though we may no longer wear sackcloth and ashes, we do seek to humble ourselves so that we can understand the magnificence of Your Love for us as You humbled Yourself and gave Your Life on the Cross that we might receive the gift of Eternal Glory with You. AMEN.



Sunday, February 26. Come and meet God in worship with your church family this Sunday. Come celebrate who God is, what the Lord has done, and what our Heavenly Father will do in our world and in our lives. Come and discover or rediscover the dreams Jesus wants to bring to life in and through you and his church.

The Chancel Choir is singing at the 9 a.m. worship service. The Worship Band is playing and the Children's Choir is singing at the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Sermon. This Sunday I am preaching on "Lasting Impact." The sermon text is Matthew 13:44-46. We will consider the "Lasting Impact" of being the church and servant witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Jesus works in and through us we make a decided difference in our world and in people's lives. What Jesus does in and through us individually and as a church family makes a "Lasting Impact." In Chapter 13 of the *Love Does* book, 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." When we give ourselves to what God wants to do, life becomes brighter, better, bigger for us and for others who we serve as followers of Jesus.

Feed My Starving Children. We have started a waiting list for serving at Feed My Starving Children on Saturday, March 4, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at Trinity Christian School in Shorewood. It's possible that a

few people may cancel and you can be added. I am calling to see if we can expand from 40 people going to more. Please call the office to sign up. We need your name, phone number and e-mail address for making our commitment to Feed My Starving Children. We have given \$2,000 to support the packing of food for malnourished children all over the world. It will feed 9,000 children desperately needing meals. Call the office to sign up or sign up this Sunday morning.

Loving Each Other Deeply Marriage Seminar For Lent. Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott have created a four-week Discussion-Video Seminar on helping couples grow their relationship and take it to a new level of love and intimacy. This "DeepLove" marriage enrichment discussion group will start on Wednesday, March 8, at 5:15 p.m. and meet in Room 210. The Four Sessions focus on: Personality, Communication, Conflict, and Adaptability. It all starts with a personality assessment to help couples think about the DNA of each others' personalities.

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.

In Christ,

Craig



Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 12. Remember to turn your clocks ahead 1 hour!

February 19, 2017

Worship Attendance — 179

Stewardship Report

2016-2017 Budget: \$ 786,000

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Year to Date Receipts | \$620,508 |
| Year to Date Expenses | \$631,390 |

2016-2017 Bequest/Gift Income Received — \$41,911
Angel House Mission—\$2,746



Known to be in the Hospital:

Joyce Bossen & Betty Schuck at Presence
St. Joseph Medical Center

Sympathies are extended to Pam & Bill Sparlin on the passing of Pam's mother, Betty Wright, on Feb. 16.

Joyce Miner would like to thank the pastors and congregation for the visits, meals and cards sent during her long recovery from health problems. It's wonderful to feel a part of such a caring community.

Lent Journey Sermon Series

Lent is a 40 day Journey of Faith from Ash Wednesday to the Crucifixion. We follow Jesus and we observe the lives of the 12 Disciples as they too followed Jesus. Thank God there is more to come after the Crucifixion; there's Easter Resurrection and Joy!

During Lent we will focus on the life, ministry, and sacrificial suffering and death of Jesus. The Sermon series for Lent is based on looking at Jesus. Who is Jesus? What is the life he invites us to live? Join us to focus on Jesus this Lenten Season.

The Sermon Series is "Look to Jesus." We will study who Jesus is by referring to our Servant Values: S.E.R.V.A.N.T.S.—Spirit-Filled, Empathy, Renewal, Visibly Seeking Out, All Together, Nearing God, Teaching, and Submission.

Ash Wednesday—"Begin Again, Make A Fresh Start"

March 5—"Spirit-Filled"

March 12—"Empathy"

March 19—"Renewal"

March 26—"Visibly Seeking Out"

April 2—"All Together"

April 9—"Nearing God"

Maundy Thursday, April 13—"Teaching"

Good Friday, April 14—"Submission"

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

We use the Common Lectionary Bible passages each week. Jim Mullins leads the exploration of what the words meant to past hearers and what they mean today to present hearers.



We have trained Stephen Ministers who are eager to walk alongside anyone who needs someone to provide caring listening and supportive conversation. If 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, call Kris Hayden, First Pres. Stephen Leader, @ 815-725-3696 or 815-258-8617 (cell).

Adult Education Opportunities

"A Journey to Easter: Romans and the Reformation" Adult Discussion Group
Tuesdays, 12 noon

Reflecting on 500 years since the start of the Protestant Reformation calls attention to the Bible as key to the Church's vitality. The Bible is what connects us to our worship, both as individuals in our homes and as a community of faith gathered on Sunday morning. The historical importance of Paul's letter to the Romans cannot be underestimated. We are journeying for 9 weeks, looking at the book of the Bible that inspired Martin Luther, especially Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith." We are meeting in the Fireside Room on Tuesdays at noon—bring a sack lunch and join us!

New MEN'S Discussion Group

To all the men at First Pres and their friends...the C4 Men have expressed a desire to begin a men's discussion group about what they believe. So, beginning Wednesday, March 8, at 5:15 p.m., the MEN of the church are invited to come and discuss a confession of faith that has been part of the church since the 4th Century. Just because it's old, doesn't mean it's outdated. We will use Adam Hamilton's new book and DVD "*Creed*" to guide us as we talk about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Church, forgiveness of sins and resurrection of the body.

We will meet each Wednesday of Lent and you are invited to stay for dinner with our ZooM family, which begins at 6:05 p.m. I have ordered 10 books (\$14 each) which will arrive March 2 for those who may be interested.
— Pastor Dale

1st Pres. Blog

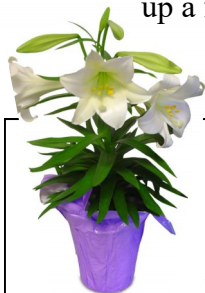
Our 1st Pres. Blog during the Lenten Season will follow the lectionary passages. The Lenten journey comes to life as we engage with the text and the blog, with the writers and the comments. Join us as we continue our journey in the word: <https://firstpresjoliet.wordpress.com>.



May 5, 2017, here at First Pres.

The world is missing out. We could all be learning more; living out our purpose; leading and being led by people who inspire and enlighten us, giving us strength and allowing us to grow. Leadercast was built on a belief that the world needs better leaders—Leaders Worth Following. We need better leaders in our communities, businesses, organizations, and in homes across the world. Leadercast exists to serve individuals and organizations across all sectors who want to become intentional about raising their standard of leadership.

Leadercast is Friday, May 5, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. right here at First Pres. The best price is for a group of 3 or more from the same company, registering by March 30 (\$69 per person/\$79 for a single registration). Costs increase the later you register, up to \$99 at the door for a group of 3 or more/\$109 for a single registration. Pick up a flyer at church or call the church office.



Easter Flowers

We would like to decorate the sanctuary for Easter with many pots of beautiful flowers. If you would like to donate flowers for Easter, please fill in below and mail to the church office or place in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church—Easter Flowers." The deadline for ordering is April 2.

How many (at \$12/pot):

_____ Lilies _____ Tulips _____ Mums

Our/My Easter Flowers are given:

_____ to the Glory of God
_____ to the Glory of God and in loving
 memory of loved ones
_____ to the Glory of God and in loving
 memory of _____

Name _____

Small Groups & Special Events

At its regularly scheduled meeting of February 9, 2017, the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Joliet, voted:



- to approve any baptisms that may be requested before the next session meeting;
- to raise staff salaries in the new budget year by 3%;
- to remove Robert, Cynthia and Ingrid Schwartz at their request.

—ALL-OFFICER RETREAT IS THURSDAY, FEB. 23, BEGINNING WITH DINNER AT 5:30 P.M.



If you have prayer requests, please fill out the form in the pew pad and place in the offering plate, in the box on the table in the narthex, or mail to the church office. Our Pat's Prayer Circle prays for those in the congregation, their friends and relatives, and for those in our community and

Meal Fellowship

Men's Breakfast—March 3, 7:30 a.m. at the Old Fashioned Pancake House on Jefferson St., Joliet.

Dinner Out Group—March 21, 6 p.m. at P.B. Mulligan's Restaurant, Prairie Bluff G.C., 19433 Renwick Rd., Lockport. Please call Sis Schmidt at 815-725-0544 or Mary Haas at 815-524-4624 by March 20 if you are planning to join us, so a reservation can be made.

Men's Dinner Group—March 24, 6 p.m., at Old Town Restaurant, 113 Stephen, Lemont. RSVP to Bob Smietanski 815-838-7616.

PW Circles

Thurs. AM Circle

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

Mary Circle

2nd Thursday (Mar. 9)
in the Fireside Room
Bring a sack lunch at
12 noon; dessert &
meeting at
12:30 p.m.

Servants of Jesus Christ —

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



The Night Deacons are serving breakfast on Saturday, March 4, 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.

Thank You for Sweaters & Sweatshirts for Farragut School

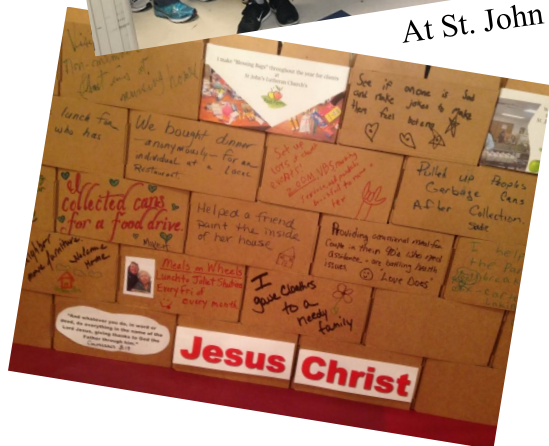


A very nice assortment of warm clothing for Farragut Grade School was donated recently by the congregation. Lots of sweaters and sweatshirts, gently worn, and even some new, were contributed. A block has been filled out and added to the growing collection in the narthex. Thank you for showing God's love with your act of kindness.

— PW



At St. John Food Pantry



2017-2018 Stewardship Campaign

Whatever we do that is of Christ Jesus has “Lasting Impact.” When we put Jesus’ teachings into practice we are building our lives upon him, the solid rock, and making an enduring impact. The good news is that God wants to work in and through our lives in our world. We are truly co-workers for God. When we live this way we create a “Lasting Impact.”

We serve one another and those beyond our church family because saved people serve others. That’s why we are doing 150 Acts of Service this year. We share the Good News of Jesus outside the walls of our church because found people find people.

As a church and as individual followers of Jesus we can make a “Lasting Impact” in our day and time. Our financial support of First Pres. is a significant part of creating this “Lasting Impact.” Please prayerfully consider what you will give this year to make a “Lasting Impact” for Christ and his Kingdom. Pledge cards will be mailed next week; please return them on Sunday, March 12, or Sunday, March 19.

Project Linus workday is Monday, February 27, 9 a.m. to 12 noon in Hoffman Hall. We make no-sew fleece blankets and easy quilts for area children in need. These blankets give children warmth and security in their difficult lives. Call Tari for more info: 815-351-2544



150 Loving Acts of Service Beyond the Walls of Our Church

Our blocks are growing! In honor of our 150th Anniversary this year, we are committing to 150 loving acts of service *beyond the walls of our church*. If you rake leaves for an elderly neighbor, take a meal to a sick co-worker, or serve at St. Pat’s Food Pantry (for example), fill out a block with the details and add it to our collection of blocks. If you are part of a church-sponsored project, the church creates one block; if you serve as an individual, you create one block.



VBS 2017 IT'S HERE!

Maker Fun Factory

For your Zoom Calendar

Zoom March & April

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

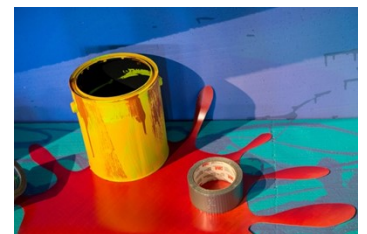
April 5 - Zoom Closing
Pinewood Derby

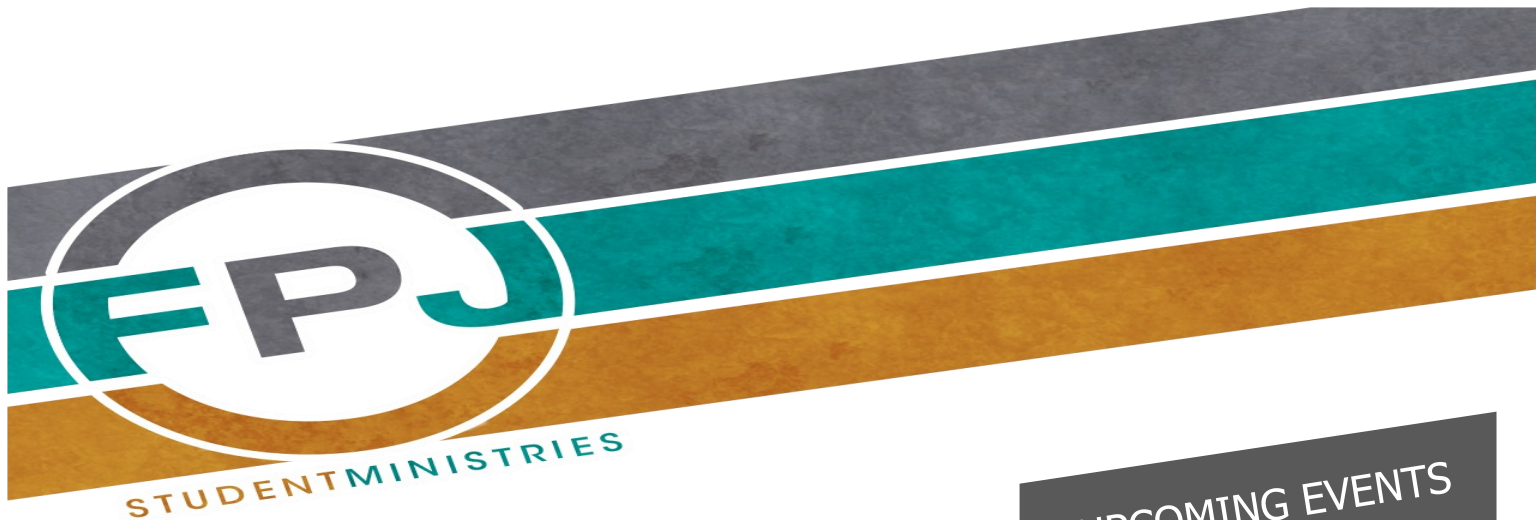
VBS – June 19-23

*Sports Camps
July 10-13
July 17-20*

Can you think of a time when you experienced something so big that it made a big difference in your life? I remember being in my first year in Seminary back in Romania, and during the summer of that year we got involved in Vacation Bible School. For a couple weeks, we ran a VBS where lots of kids came to hear about Jesus, to sing, play and have fun. I keep thinking of what that summer meant to me. It shaped my ministry vision, it helped me see the importance of reaching the kids, and sharing that God loves them and has a plan for their lives. Every year since, I am amazed at the things God is doing during VBS. From kids stepping out of their way to help others, to volunteers stepping out in faith, to planting those seeds of faith...all that happens in one magical week. It is not by accident, it is not by chance; but it's because of prayer, standing on God's promise and the vision that every kid and their family is loved by God. So I am asking you to pray, to join us, and to make VBS another week when, as a community, we make a lasting impact in someone's life. This year we are joining many other churches in a trip to the Maker Fun Factory, a world where curious kids become hands-on inventors who discover they're lovingly crafted by God.

— Bo M.





At the time of this writing, I have been working at First Pres. for just over a month. If I have one take away from that time it is that sometimes Christians, especially youth, always try to search for a solution to small problems in their lives; for example, if I give up social media, I will be less stressed about what other people are doing, or if I spend more time focusing on my walk with God, I will find peace in my life. These searches always seem to end in vain for many reasons, namely lack of motivation and more importantly, many times these small symptoms being treated won't cure the disease that is ailing people. Many times people rely on themselves to fix their problems without going to God for the help they truly need.

I say all that to get up on my soapbox and say that I think the practice of giving things up for Lent almost never achieves the goal the practice was created for. Most of the time giving things up for Lent is seen as a way to get closer to God by using the time you would normally spend doing the thing you gave up to pray, read your bible, etc. I have seen many people use this as a way to restart that diet that was originally a New Year's resolution or pat themselves on the back and make a big deal on how they gave up something that is seen as impossible to give up by many, such as television or more recently social media. I am, of course, not saying that this is everyone; there are many people I have met who have used that time to get closer to God and have an effective Lent. However, coming from the youth perspective, it is hard not to sometimes see Lent as an obligation to give up something or a moment to flaunt how honorable they are being giving something up.

That being said, Lent can be a very moving experience for many people. Perhaps instead of giving up chocolate and devoting the time you would have spent eating chocolate to get closer to God, you spend the forty days of Lent doing a devotion each day that ends with eating a piece of chocolate to help keep you motivated to finish. The truly important thing, however, is that you keep doing something to remain close to God after Lent is over. If you just do something for the forty days of Lent and then stop, it seems more of an obligation than a true experience of coming closer to God.

— Will Ward
will.ward@firstpresjoliet.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jr./Sr. High Youth Group—

Meets Sundays,
Mar. 5, 12 & 19
6 to 8 p.m.

Sunday School—

Every Sunday in March
10 to 10:30 a.m.

Sky Zone

Saturday, Feb. 25
at 10 a.m.

The Winter Retreat has
been postponed.

Get your money in for
the Summer Mission
Trip!!!!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

PERIODICALS
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Address Service

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805 Western Ave.
Joliet, IL 60435

Newsletter Deadline—The deadline for
reserving space in the March 29 *Servants'*
Light is **March 10**. Please e-mail to
sherry.buffington@firstpresjoliet.org.

TO:



"Failure is not an option..."

This quote came from the movie Apollo 13 and is a good introduction to providing an update on the C4 Men's Ministry at First Pres. Sometimes in life it takes a couple of attempts to get things going. But...if it is a good thing and there are a few who think it's worth fighting for....well, then you keep going after it until you get it right!! Just ask Adam Halatek, Ed Schultz, Bob Becker, Jeff Kasper, Wayne Zoellick, Mike House, Bo Mircea and myself – eight of the nine men on the C4 leadership team who came together on February 12th (Matt Blaser had a conflict) to look at why we have stalled and what we could do to move forward. No one is claiming victory yet because this is a very long journey to reach all of the men at First Pres.; however, we did talk about some tough things that are holding us back, like: commitment, the daily grind of life, getting distracted, etc.

While we looked back, we know that we need to look forward and challenge ourselves and pray that God will bless this ministry at First Pres. With that in mind, we set some realistic and challenging near term goals:

Because Christ is our central focus, the C4 Men decided they wanted a men's only discussion group to work on what they believe – we will be using Adam Hamilton's book and DVD "*Creed*" to guide us during Lent (see the "Growing in Christ" page).

The C4 leadership team will commit to meeting monthly using Scripture and prayer to guide our direction and progress...the next meeting is March 26th after second service. The C4 leadership team will focus on creating a Men's Retreat for the fall of 2017.

You, too, can help the men at First Pres. by praying for this important ministry – for the leadership team that they will be guided by God and his Word and that the men of First Pres. would come to know this group as an important part of their lives.

— Pastor Dale