



The Servants' Light

March 29, 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.



Palm Sunday, April 9

Breakfast from 8:15 to 10:30 a.m. — Youth Fundraiser

Breakfast casserole (Bacon, Sausage, Veggie)

Yogurt Bar

Pastries and Fruit

Water, Milk and Juice

Traditional Worship at 9 a.m.

Contemporary Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Message: *Servant Value—“Nearing God”*

Maundy Thursday, April 13

Dinner at 6 p.m. —Pork Roast w/stuffing, Red Potatoes,
Green Beans, Salad w/dressing, Rolls, Dessert & Beverages

Freewill Offering

Worship/Communion at 7 p.m.

Message: *Servant Value—“Teaching”*

Good Friday, April 14

Meditative Service at 6 p.m.

Message: *Servant Value—“Submission”*

Easter “Resurrection” Sunday, April 16

Traditional Worship at 9 a.m.

Contemporary Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Message: *“Overcoming Fear”*



Hosts Needed to Welcome Our Guests!

If you enjoy talking to folks, have a welcoming heart and a ready smile, we need you. Call the office or sign up this Sunday to be a host at our Easter Egg Hunt, on Palm Sunday, or on Easter Sunday.

The Pastor's Corner—

Craig Herr, Senior Pastor



Sunday, April 2. We are part of the body of Christ, that community of people called out and led by our Savior, the Lord Jesus. Together we are the hands and feet of Jesus in the world whenever we allow Jesus' love, grace, hope, and joy to live in and through us. There is much we can do All Together as God's people. Come and worship the good and gracious God who transforms all of life, including our lives.

The Chancel Choir is singing and the Glory Ringers are playing at the 9 a.m. worship service. The Worship Band is playing at the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Sermon. I am preaching this Sunday on "All Together." The sermon texts are Psalm 96:1-10, Matthew 4:18-25, and Ephesians 4:4-7, 11-16. Thank God that we are created for community. The church is the community of all those committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore committed to each other and the world, which God so loved and loves still. There are significant ministries and mission that we do All Together. Worship is one of the more important choices and activities that we do All Together. Join us this Sunday as we meet All Together to worship our great and wonderful God.

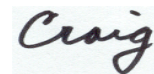
Most Important Three Things! The three most significant things in the life and ministry of our church over the next two and a half weeks are: The Easter Egg-stravaganza (Easter Egg Hunt) Saturday, April 8 @9:00-11:00 a.m., the Palm Sunday Breakfast on Sunday, April 9, from 8:15-10:30 a.m., and Easter Sunday, April 16.

We need friendly and welcoming people to volunteer to be Hosts at all three of these times. We open our church to 150-200 children and adults from the community for the Easter Egg-stravaganza. We welcome many on Palm Sunday and the Youth raise the funds they need for summer mission trips. On Easter we open wide our doors to many, many visitors who will come to worship. Call the office to volunteer or sign up in the Narthex on the Host Sign Up Board. Don't let this Lent & Easter Season pass by without helping First Pres. to be a friendly and welcoming place to all who come.

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Worship. Okay, yes, there are more than three things that are significant as we move toward Easter. Maundy Thursday Worship and Dinner Fellowship, and Good Friday Worship are all special times of worship and fellowship. Join us and invite your family, neighbors, and friends.

Everyone & Anyone Can Invite. Yes, that's right! Only everyone and anyone can invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to come and worship with us on Easter Sunday at either the 9:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. worship service. If they are more inclined to attend a traditional service with the choir and handbells, then invite them to the 9:00 a.m. service. If they prefer more of a contemporary service with a worship band, then invite them to come to the 10:30 a.m. service. Be a discerning inviter when you extend an invitation. Simply invite someone because it works and God loves them.

In Christ,



March 26, 2017

Worship Attendance — 201

Stewardship Report

2016-2017 Budget: \$ 786,000

Year to Date Receipts \$703,792

Year to Date Expenses \$722,250

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



Known to be in the Hospital:

Harry Cobourn at Presence St. Joseph Medical Center

Sympathies are extended to John Jorgensen and Jane Hopkins and family on the passing of their mother, member Joanne Jorgensen, on March 23rd.

A Memorial Service for Joanne Jorgensen will be held April 14, 10 a.m., at Blackburn-Giegerich-Sonntag Funeral Home.

Growing in Christ—

Lent Journey Sermon Series

We continue with our Lenten Journey, focusing on the life, ministry, and sacrificial suffering and death of Jesus. The Sermon series, “Look to Jesus,” focuses on the questions—Who is Jesus? And what is the life he invites us to live? We are following Jesus and observing the lives of the 12 Disciples as they, too, followed Jesus. We are studying 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.

Join us to focus on Jesus this Lenten Season.

April 2—“All Together”

April 9—“Nearing God”

Maundy Thursday, April 13—“Teaching”

Good Friday, April 14—“Submission”

Easter Sunday, April 16—“Overcoming Fear”

“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.



Just go to our website — www.firstpresjoliet.org — and at the top of the home page click on “Media” — “Sermons.” It’s that easy!

Adult Education Opportunities

“A Journey to Easter: Romans and the Reformation” Adult Discussion Group Tuesdays, 12 noon, through April 11

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 nearing the end of our 9-week journey, 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!

MEN’S Discussion Group Wednesdays at 5:15 p.m. Through April 12

To all the men at First Pres and their friends...the C4 Men expressed a desire for a men’s discussion group about what they believe. So,... 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 are using 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 the resurrection of the body. Men—join us on Wednesday evenings for our discussion group, and then stay for dinner with our Zoom family.

1st Pres. Blog

Our 1st Pres. Blog during the Lenten Season is following 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.

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 (\$69 per person) registering by March 30; after that 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 registration form at church or call the church office.

PW Circles

Thurs. AM Circle

2nd Thursday
(Apr. 13, 9:15 a.m.)
in the
Fireside Room

Mary Circle

2nd Thursday (Apr. 13)
in the Fireside Room
Bring a sack lunch at
12 noon; dessert &
meeting at
12:30 p.m.



Armed Forces Weekend Commemoration WW II Battle Reenactment

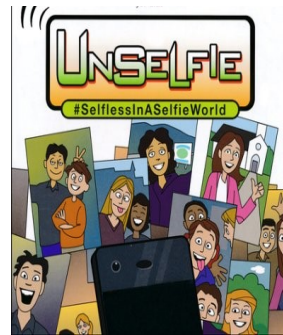
See history come to life with events such as vintage WWII aircraft flyovers, hundreds of uniformed reenactors, vintage WWII tanks, jeeps, and motorcycles, period style USO Show, plus lots of activities for all ages; food and beverages available. Adults \$10, Children 7-12 \$5, 6 and under free. Stronghold is our Presbytery's Camp & Retreat Center located at 1922 Illinois Route 2 North, Oregon, Illinois. Visit www.strongholdcenter.org for the full list of events!

Small Groups & Special Events

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



- to approve any baptisms that may be requested before the next session meeting;
- to move the April Session Meeting to Thursday, April 20, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.



Children's Musical April 23

Be sure to join us on April 23, at either 9 or 10:30 a.m., when our Children's Choir leads us in worship with the musical "Unselfie." With a constant barrage of Selfies, Tweets, and Snaps, it's easy to get caught up in today's self-absorbed culture. Join our children on an adventure where they learn the importance of being unselfish in today's selfie world by sharing the transforming love of Jesus.

Help us Celebrate your Graduate!

Look for forms at the entrances, or e-mail us with the info on your Jr. High, Sr. High or College graduate, along with a photo. Deadline for submitting info for our Graduates Board is May 7.



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

Dinner Out Group—April 18, 6 p.m. at Cookie's Restaurant & Lounge, 103 W. Mondamin, Minooka. Call Jean or Bob Smietanski at 815-838-7616 to make a reservation.

Men's Dinner Group—April 28, 6 p.m., at McBride's on 52, 2727 W. Jefferson St., Joliet. RSVP to Bob Smietanski at 815-838-7616.

Servants of Jesus Christ —

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



Stephen Ministry New Training Class

We are looking to move forward and grow our Ministry Team. Stephen Ministers are laypeople—Christian men and women—trained to provide one-to-one care to people experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, relocation, or separation due to military deployment. A new training class will begin in late Spring. We are looking for both men and women who feel God's calling to give distinctively Christian care through this ministry. If you are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister, contact Kris Hayden, First Pres. Stephen Leader, @ 815-725-3696, Ext. 209 or stephenministry@firstpresjoliet.org.



The Night Deacons are serving breakfast on Saturday, April 1, 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.

One Great Hour of Sharing



On Easter Sunday, we will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. A gift to One Great Hour of Sharing enables the church to share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, providing food to the hungry, and helping to empower the poor and oppressed. Our offering helps support the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Presbyterian Committee for the Self Development of People.



Celebrating
150 years
With 150 Loving Acts of Service!



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, drive a neighbor to a doctor appointment, give clothes to a needy family, volunteer at Hospice or a local hospital, etc., fill out a block with the details and add it to our collection of blocks. Remember, if you are part of a church-sponsored project, the church creates one block; if you serve as an individual, you create one block.

Children's Ministry Update

Easter Egg Hunt



Listening to the Easter

Last year *The Herald News* was doing a piece about Easter and what the religious community was doing. I was interviewed as part of that piece, and was asked the question: Why does your church organize an Egg Hunt? It is a great question, especially when you think about all the symbolism that is involved with an Easter Egg Hunt. First you have the Easter Bunny, a character that we all should agree is not found in the Bible, but traces its roots in old pagan traditions. Or how about the eggs? Of course, I can recall the Story of Mary Magdalene that I was told as a child—that as she was returning from the market with a basket filled with eggs, she stopped at the cross of the Savior where His blood dripped over the eggs. But then again, this is just part of tradition, and we cannot find its roots in the Scriptures.

So why organize an Easter Egg Hunt? Even this past Sunday I was asked this question. Here is what I think about the Easter Egg Hunt. We have an Egg Hunt because it is a great opportunity to reconnect the tradition with Easter itself. Easter is about the Resurrected Lord, about a Savior that went to the cross to bring Hope to all of us, about the third day Resurrection—a surprise so big that it caught so many unprepared, and the Joy we experience once we embrace the New Life that we find at the cross.

When we get together before Palm Sunday and our church is welcoming kids and their families for an Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt, we are not just organizing another event where kids get to do lots of crafts and hunt for eggs in a church. We welcome them to a place that has experienced the Joy of Resurrection, a place where people experience and are sharing their love. Our church has always been a place where people are welcomed, but also a place where we share the story of Easter. Kids and parents alike spend time listening to that story, each and every year, as part of the festivities. We tell that story because, without it there would be no egg hunt. Without Christ there would be no surprise and no good news.

I want to invite you to come and be part of that story that continues even 2,000 years after Christ was crucified; I want to invite you to come and be one who has experienced that joy and then share your love with some people who might need a reminder of Christ's love. Bring a friend along, invite your neighbors and let the joy of Easter Resurrection take hold of your heart once again.

Be blessed,
Bo

Easter Egg-stravaganza

April 8

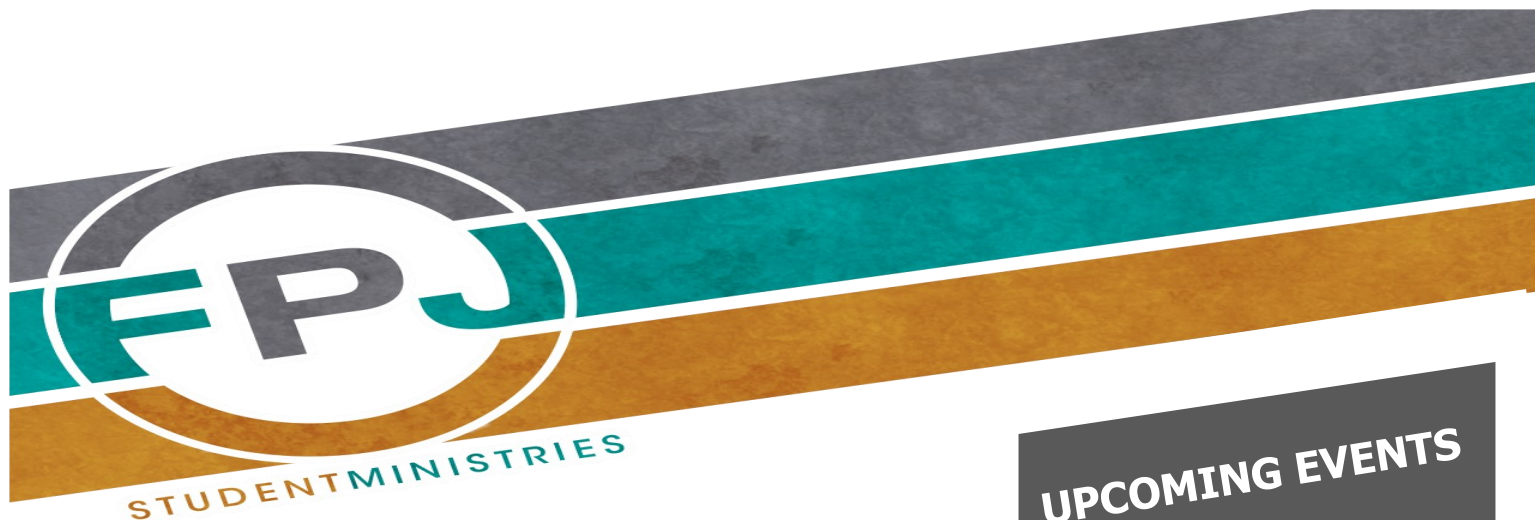
9 to 11 a.m.

**Breakfast, Telling of the Easter Story,
Arts & Crafts, Pictures with the
Easter Bunny, Easter Egg Hunt!**

15 Minutes with Ed Council

As a church we put a lot of value on children and youth; we dedicate lots of effort and resources to the youngest of our congregation. And we do that because we believe that teaching them and helping them discover their faith is part of our Christian call as a church. And at the same time, we recognize that the amount of time the kids spend in church is sometimes just the starting point of that call. We recognize that when church and family work closely together, we are more likely to have a bigger impact. This past Sunday we kicked off that conversation by talking about mission impact in our lives. Next month, on April 23rd, we will look at the impact of THE DIGITAL WORLD AND YOUR KIDS. We hope to be able to help you start a conversation with your kids and teens about the safe and good practices of living in a digital world. Plan on joining us and bring your questions, bring your digital life along, and let's talk about it.





Mission can be one of the most important things that young Christians can take part in during their time in youth group. Most people, when trying to convince others to go on or give money towards a mission trip, say that mission is something that can bring kids closer to God and give them a better appreciation for what they have. True as that may be, I think mission has a much more important function in the grand scheme of the church. It could be argued that mission brings kids together forming bonds and making memories that will last a lifetime. To me this aspect is just as, if not more, important than the things that are normally said about mission trips. It is true that we go on trips to spread God's word and help the less fortunate, and that is very important. However, if kids form these bonds, they will want to come back to church, and this can lead to a deeper relationship with God, one that is much deeper than what they might get on a mission trip. So when you are donating to the trip, think about the people we are going to help, but also think about how you can help the kids grow once they get back.

The Palm Sunday Breakfast is our biggest fundraiser of the year—and funds both the Sr. High Mission Trip (this year to Leech Lake Reservation in Minnesota) and the Jr. High local mission work.

On the menu at the Palm Sunday Breakfast (free will offering) —
 Breakfast Casserole
 (your choice of Bacon, Sausage, or Veggie)
 Yogurt Bar
 Pastries and Fruit
 Water, Milk and Juice

We will also have a raffle for a number of items, including the new iPad (just out this week!) and the beautiful quilt at right, made and donated by JoAnn McBride (we'll be selling raffle tickets this Sunday, also). Please prayerfully consider your generous contribution to our youth and their mission trips!

— Will Ward
will.ward@firstpresjoliet.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jr./Sr. High Sunday School—

Meets April 2, 23 & 30
 10 a.m.
 (no Youth Sunday School
 on Palm Sunday or Easter)

Jr./Sr. High Youth Group—

Meets Sundays,
 April 23 & 30—
 6 to 8 p.m.
 (no Youth Group
 April 2-16)

SPECIAL MOVIE NIGHT

Sat, Apr. 1, 6:30-9 p.m.
 here at church
 “Kubo and the Two Strings”



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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805 Western Ave.
Joliet, IL 60435

Newsletter Deadline—The deadline for reserving space in the April 26 *Servants' Light* is **April 10**. Please e-mail to sherry.buffington@firstpresjoliet.org.

TO:



A Ladies' Day Retreat

*Saturday, May 13
8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.*

here at First Pres.

Let us go off to a quiet place and get rest — Mark 6:31

Does life seem to have you running on empty and in circles? Wandering aimlessly? Stumbling in the dark? Come find strength for the journey at our Ladies' Day Retreat on May 13th. Bring a friend....Make a friend....Be a friend!

Ladies, this is a special day set aside just for you to unwind and relax, to meet some new friends, and to take time to grow stronger in God's Word.

The \$10 per person cost includes a light breakfast, a Panera lunch, enriching workshops, a special gift, worship, and a spiritual message from Mary Lynn Keir.

Registration is online April 3—May 7. Or you may register on Sunday mornings beginning April 9. Child-care is available upon advance request.