



# The Servants' Light

January 31, 2019

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***“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.

#### **Holy Hunters—**

10:30 a.m.

#### **Coffee Fellowship—**

10:00 to 10:30 a.m.

#### **Nursery/Preschool Care—**

8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

## **Spaghetti To-Go Fundraiser!**

***Support the Wildfire Youth Group Mission Trips***



### **The what:**

On Saturday, February 9, from 5 to 7 p.m., the Wildfire Youth Group will be offering to-go dinners. Each dinner will include spaghetti, meatballs, bread, salad, and water. Tickets are available for pre-sale at \$8/dinner, but we will also happily take walk-ins the day of, at \$9/dinner! Buy your tickets this Sunday or call Karissa at 815-727-9259 x 207.

### **The why:**

Jesus calls us all to go out into the world and spread the Good News. For teen-agers, this is an intimidating call. While they are trying to navigate the world of school, social statuses, and interpersonal development, the call from Jesus is just another thing they must add to their massive pile of stresses. Harder yet, this call has potential to alienate them from peers. Mission Trips are designed to put students together with other believers so that they can see they are not alone in loving and choosing Jesus; while at the same time, they are able to serve Jesus the way that He's asked everyone of us to follow Him.

### **And what are the students doing?**

**Senior High Students:** July 7-July 14 our senior high students will be heading to Pocahontas, VA, to help repair homes for a town in need of the love of Jesus. The homes we will be working on will be low income homes, and let us not forget that Jesus has called us to care for the least of these! People in poverty are so often glanced over and this week will be an excellent opportunity for our students to not only help them, but to *engage* with a population that they may never have met before!

**Junior High Students:** A few weeks after the senior high trip (dates are still to be determined) our Junior High students will spend three days at FPJ where they will learn the value of helping their home church, and will experience volunteer opportunities right here in Joliet (Spanish Community Center, Joliet Hope Center, and another organization not yet decided on). The three days spent locally aim to show students that the mission field is eve-

**Your monetary support is the reason these students can experience  
this life-changing adventure with Jesus. Thank you!**



**SUNDAY, February 3.** This is our final Sunday for our “Run Your Race” Sermons Series. We look once more at how we follow the Lord Jesus in our Race of Faith. Are we present to the One who is present to us? Are we listening to

his voice? What does he have in mind for us now? We celebrate the Lord's Supper at both the 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Worship Services this Sunday. We serve the traditional elements for communion at the 9:00 a.m. service. We offer both intinction and the traditional elements at the 10:30 a.m. service.

The Chancel Choir is singing at the 9:00 a.m. service. The Worship Band is singing and playing at the 10:30 a.m. service.

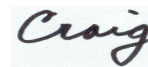
**SERMON.** I am preaching this Sunday on “Run In Strength.” The sermon scripture passages are Zechariah 4:6 and I Timothy 4:8-10. God says, “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,...” (Zech. 4:6). In other words, God is saying, live in and through my strength, which I offer to you. It is by my Spirit, my Strength through which you will be able to run your race of faith. All too often we seek to live in our strength and by our own understanding rather than through relying upon the Lord. Let's worship together this Sunday and seek the presence, strength, and guidance of God.

**OUR BOARDS FOR THE FIVE PRACTICES OF FRUITFUL CONGREGATIONS** are back up in the Narthex/Lobby Area. We moved them out for the Advent-Christmas Season. But now they are back as they are significant to us for our life, ministry, and mission.

***What is happening?*** The session has been working and giving thoughtful reflection on all of the suggestions (Post-It Notes) provided by the congregation and elders. You will see that the more important Post-It Note Idea/Suggestions have been placed higher on the boards. This means the session teams are giving higher priority to those suggestions. They are also arranging them together in clusters when they have a clear relationship to each other. The Post-It Notes that have been placed lower on the board have less priority right now and are in the “parking lot.” They are still there in case their priority changes as the planning process goes on. Yet some will remain there.

***What can you do?*** One thing you can do is to identify any ministry-mission suggestions you want to help work on by writing your name on that particular Post-It Note. You can invite another person to do that with you so you have two people interested in helping make that ministry-mission suggestion a reality.

In Christ,



**Known to be in the Hospital:**

Todd Garrison at Provena St. Joseph

The hospitals will no longer call to tell us who is there, so please let us know if you are admitted and when you go home.

**Just Born:**

Jacob Michael Strimel (Jan. 6)  
Son of Michael and Jill Strimel

**January 27, 2019**

Worship Attendance — 111

**Stewardship Report**

2018-2019 Budget: \$799,852

<b>Year to Date Receipts</b>	\$623,390
<b>Year to Date Expenses</b>	\$647,862

2018-2019 Bequest/Gift Income Received — \$14,000

Please call Tracy Norris if you wish to use electronic giving through your bank. We also have online giving in which you can use your credit card. Just go to our website, [www.firstpresjoli.org](http://www.firstpresjoli.org), and click on “Giving.” Tracy is also receiving Pre-Pledges for 2019 and 25% of pre-pledged giving is used for January-March 2019, while 75% is used for April-December of 2019.

# Growing in Christ—

## February Sermon Series Parables

**“Parables: Stories of Purpose”** are the focus for a Sermon Series this February. Jesus often told stories and parables when teaching. Each parable has a particular point, which Jesus wishes to emphasize with his audience. We will see how Jesus’ teaching in Parables translates into today’s world.

- February 10 “Appearances”  
Matthew 13:24-30. (The Wheat and the Tares)
- February 17 “One Question”  
Matthew 25:31-46
- February 24 (still being pondered)
- March 3 “All In”  
Luke 14:25-33 (Counting the Cost)



For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.  
-Matthew 25:35-36

### Luke 14:25-33 (ESV)

<sup>25</sup> Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup> “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. <sup>27</sup> Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. <sup>28</sup> For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?”

## Adult Education Opportunities



### Tuesday “Lunch Bunch” Bible Discussion Group

We continue with the Bible study on the Letter of James which will take us through February 19th. We will begin our preparation for Lent on February 26th and then look at the Lenten lectionary Bible passages into Holy week. Bring your lunch and join us at 12:00 noon in Room 210 on Tuesdays for a Spirit-led and filled discussion. — Dale

### C4 Men’s Bible Discussion Group

Men of First Pres. and your friends...the purpose of C4 is for men to focus on what it means to be and live out the life of a godly man. So, for the next several weeks, we will look at the biblical character attributes of a C4 godly man—a life of Conviction, Courage, Compassion all grounded in Jesus Christ. Our Lenten journey will then look at Simon Peter as one who was a godly man. Join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in Room 210 for Spirit-led and filled discussion.

— Dale

### Women’s Discussion Group

Lisa Haldorson is facilitating the Women’s Discussion Group which meets Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. We are studying Max Lucado’s book, *Grace: More Than We Deserve, Greater Than We Imagine*. Lucado challenges us “to not only receive grace but also to be changed by grace. Shaped by grace. Strengthened by grace. Emboldened by grace. Softened by grace. Snatched by the nape of our necks and shaken to our senses by grace.”



## All-Officer Retreat February 21, 6:30—9:00 p.m.

Elders and Deacons will meet for the All-Officer Retreat on February 21, beginning with dinner at 6:30 p.m. We'll be working on putting together a plan for our ministry and mission based upon the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations Framework. We are using the ideas which the Congregation and Session Councils created and attached as post-it notes to the five large boards in the Narthex/Lobby area. If you are an Elder or Deacon, please RSVP to this important night to build the life, ministry, and mission of First Pres.

## 2nd Sunday Potluck

Second Sunday Potluck is cancelled this month. Stop by Saturday night, February 9, 5 to 7 p.m. to pick up a Spaghetti Dinner To-Go and support our Youth Group Mission Trips.

## Ladies Night Out February 26, 6:30 p.m.

Join us on Tuesday, February 26, at 6:30 p.m. in Hoffman Hall for another Bunco Night! Don't worry if you've never played before, it's an easy game to learn. It's also a great way to get to know others better since the teams change during play. We promise laughter, fun, and maybe even some chocolate!

### Thurs. AM Circle

2nd Thursday  
(Feb. 14, 9:15 a.m.)  
in the  
Fireside Room

### Mary Circle

2nd Thursday (Feb. 14)  
in the Fireside Room  
Come at 12 noon and bring  
a sack lunch; meeting and  
bible study at 12:30 p.m.

## Small Groups & Special Events

### Session Notes

At its regularly scheduled meeting of January 10, 2019, the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Joliet, voted:

—to appoint Don Caisley as Clerk of Session and Chris Wise as Assistant Clerk of Session;

—to appoint Tracy Norris as Treasurer and Helen Steinberg as Financial Secretary;

—to hold a second Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 20, 2019, to change the bylaws to reflect that more than one youth elder or deacon may be elected for a 1 year term; and to elect Colin Becker, Lilly Dunbar and Hunter Belfield as Deacons;

—to accept Mark Fumagalli, Laura Wakefield, and Diane Seeman (on letter of transfer from Elwood Presbyterian Church) into membership of First Presbyterian Church of Joliet;

—to allow a free-will offering basket, in addition to the \$8 per ticket cost, at Wildfire Youth Group's Take-Out Spaghetti Dinner on February 9.

**We Voted to Change the Church Bylaws last Sunday and Elected Night Deacons.** Last Sunday the congregation voted to change our church bylaws to allow us, according to the discretion of the session, the ability to elect more than one youth member to be a Deacon or Elder. We do think it's better to have more than one youth serve together at a time as a Deacon or Elder. Thanks for approving that change. Our three Youth Night Deacons, Colin Becker, Hunter Belfield, and Lilly Dunbar, are delighted to serve.

## Meal Fellowship

**Men's Breakfast**—Feb. 1, 7:30 a.m. at the Old Fashioned Pancake House on Jefferson St., Joliet.

**Dinner Out Group**—Feb. 19, 6:00 p.m. at Tom Kelly's, 495 Degroate Rd., New Lenox. Call Jean or Bob Smietanski, 815-838-7616, to make a reservation.

**Men's Dinner Group**—Feb. 22, 6:00 p.m. at Firewater BBQ, 1847 Knapp Rd., Crest Hill. RSVP to Bob Smietanski at 815-838-7616.

# Servants of Jesus Christ —

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

### Night Deacons Food Ministry

On the first Sunday of each month, the Night Deacons collect monetary donations to fund our various ministries. Please use the special envelopes marked "Night Deacon Ministries" in the pew racks for your donation. Thank you for your on-going support!

Our next Night Deacons' Free Pancake Breakfast is Saturday, February 2, 8 to 10 a.m. Come on out and help us serve and welcome those in our community who are hungry.

**FROM THE Treasurer's Office:** The Per Capita charge payable in 2019 is \$38.47 per active member. The per capita pays for administrative costs at three levels of the Presbyterian Church. Each local church is assessed for the active members reported the previous year. If you would like to pay your per capita, please send it via offering plate, indicating "Per Capita" on the check.



### Vendors Wanted

for our March 30  
Craft Fair

We are looking for sellers, crafters, and shoppers! If you are interested in table space to sell your merchandise, pick up a registration form in the church office or print one out from our website. Proceeds from space rentals, gift/prize drawings, food, etc. will benefit Stephen Ministry and our Women's Ministry. Check out our website for information and the registration form.

### Project Linus Workday

Project Linus was cancelled this week, .....so we'll meet next Monday, February 4, at 9 a.m. With this extreme cold weather, the blankets we donate to children in need are even more appreciated. Join us to make fleece blankets and easy quilts and please bring your sewing scissors. Call Tari Ambler, 815-351-2544 for more information.



Since the inception of this ministry in October of 2005, over 4,000 meals have been provided to members of our church family through your assistance. In the past year alone, over 217 meals have been provided. Helping Hands would like to thank the following people who, over the past six months, have provided meals, rides, and other services to members of our congregation. There is always a need for more people to help provide assistance. If you would like to be a part of this vibrant ministry, know of someone who can use some temporary help, or would like more information about Helping Hands, please contact Betty Jones at 815-729-0349, David Steinberg at 779-234-6413, or the church office at 815-727-9259.

Dale & Tari Ambler  
Jean Bailey  
Marvin Balsley  
Don & Raelene Barnes  
Bob & Colin Becker  
Don & Mary Caisley  
Pat Costion  
Carla DeYoung  
Kyla Fris

Jen Gabl  
Judy Garrison  
Caroline Gheorghiu  
Amy Gibson  
Pat Haldorson  
Kris Hayden  
Mike & Laura House  
Rich & Mary Jane Johnson  
Chet June

Carol Kline  
Diane Milosevich  
Bo Mircea  
Martha Sayles  
Carolyn Schaeffer  
LuAnn Stepina  
Emma Sticklen  
Wayne & Linda Zoellick

# Children's Ministry Update

Today I am still thinking about Deut. 6:4-7.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

These words I am commanding you today are to be upon your hearts. And you shall teach them diligently to your children and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

To love the Lord with all your heart... That seems to be one of the common motifs we see in the Scripture, as our response to God's grace, as a way to show our faithfulness. Sometimes I wish that Jesus would have said more to his disciples about how to love God, and what that means. Moses surely had something in mind when he spoke to the Israelites and put the future of their faith in their hands. It is that responsibility of sharing our faith with the next generation that has me motivated in the things I do. But I also have the recognition that the church alone cannot and will not be able to change the world of tomorrow without all of us committing to it.

Today I want to encourage you to love the Lord with all your heart, and to love those around you with all

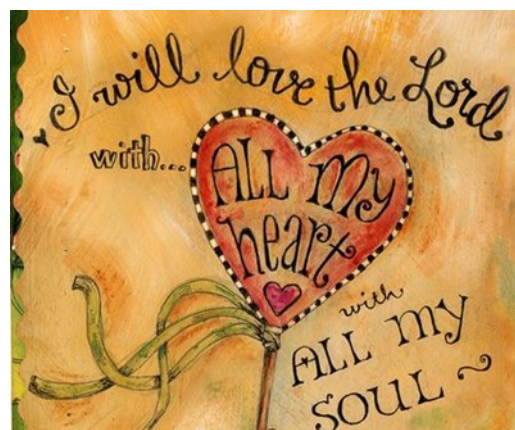
that you have, to be ready to share and tell the story of God and of your faith with them.

Children look at you and me to be examples, not just in day to day living, but also for their faith.

I pray that every day of our lives we will be given the chance to share our faith and speak about the love God has for the world.

Be blessed,

Bo M



## Mark your



Easter Egg Hunt:

April 13  
@ 9:00 am

Get ready for lots  
of crafts, food and  
lots and lots of  
Easter Eggs



VBS 2019:

Soon we will have a  
theme to share with  
you; until then write  
down the date for this  
year's VBS:

JUNE 24-28





# WILDFIRE YOUTH GROUP

January began with a night of fellowship for Wildfire as we came together to watch *I Can Only Imagine*. Since then, our youth have continued to see each other outside of the regular Sunday night youth group! We are proud to have had teen helpers join the church to take down Christmas decorations and were excited to see some teens join the rest of the church family at Second Sunday Potluck, as well as Chili and Movie Night.

We were honored to have Veronica from The Spanish Community Center join us this month and tell us about her beloved organization. We were happy to write letters of encouragement to our new neighbors from foreign lands and were even given a creative exercise to try to understand just how exciting and scary it would be to move to a whole new country. We also continued our discussion on Jesus and looked at some evidence proving Jesus is God. Lastly, we were honored to have our very own Matt Blaser share his testimony with us!

The teen Bible study hosted at Mid-Week is continuing our quest through Matthew. In the month of January we looked at Jesus' shockingly imperfect family tree, Jesus's birth (including some learning for the first time that Joseph had wanted to privately divorce Mary until an angel told him not to), John the Baptist's preparation for the way of Jesus, Jesus' baptism, temptation in the wilderness, and the beginning of discipleship. We discussed our own dysfunctional families, our own temptations, as well as if we could ever "drop our nets" and leave everything to follow Jesus. Through the Wednesday night Bible study the teens are seeing more and more not only the amazement of Jesus, but how truly relatable He is as well.

We are looking forward to February!

I give many thanks and blessings for all of your support to these kids.

Many Blessings,

Karissa

## Upcoming Feb. Events

Feb. 3  
The "God" Claim,  
Part 2  
6:00—7:30 p.m.

Feb. 5, 6:45 p.m.  
Movie Night at  
Louis Joliet Theater  
*The Kid Who Would  
Be King*

Feb. 10:  
Service Sunday —  
College Care  
Packages  
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 17:  
"Is Jesus the  
Only Way?"  
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 27:  
Live Testimony—  
Katie Shelton  
6 to 7:30 p.m.

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

**Newsletter Deadline**—The deadline for reserving space in the Feb. 27 *Servants' Light* is **Feb. 10**. Please e-mail to [sherry.buffington@firstpresjoliet.org](mailto:sherry.buffington@firstpresjoliet.org).

TO:

## February Daily Devotional Blog

We are focusing on the parables of Jesus—many of these parables occur in multiple gospels. The blog will run Monday through Friday only.

2/1	The Rich Man and Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31
2/4	The Master and Servant	Luke 17:7-10
2/5	The Unjust Judge	Luke 18:1-8
2/6	Pharisees and the Publican	Luke 18:9-14
2/7	The Workers in the Vineyard	Matt. 20:1-16
2/8	The Two Sons	Matt. 21:28-32
2/11	The Wicked Tenants	Mark 12:1-9
2/12	The Great Banquet	Matt. 22:1-14
2/13	The Budding Fig Tree	Luke 21:29-33
2/14	The Faithful Servant	Mark 13:34-37
2/15	The Ten Virgins	Matt. 25:1-13

2/18	The Talents or Minas	Luke 19:12-27
2/19	The Sheep and the Goats	Matt. 25:31-46
2/20	Parable of the Wedding Feast	Luke 14:7-14
2/21	The Lamp Under a Bushel	Mark 4:21-25
2/22	The Wise and the Foolish Builders	Luke 6:46-49
2/25	New Wine into Old Wineskins	Matt. 9:16-17
2/26	Parable of the Strong Man	Mark 3:27
2/27	Parable of the Sower	Luke 8:5-8
2/28	Parable of the Mustard Seed	Matt. 13:31-32