



The Servants' Light

February 27, 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.



March 6

Ash Wednesday Dinner, 5:30 p.m.

Baked Ham with Pineapple

Honey Glazed Carrots

Cheesy Scallion Mashed Potatoes

Tossed Salad & Assorted Dressings

Rolls/Butter

Chocolate or Butterscotch Pudding with Whipped Cream

Lemonade & Coffee

Freewill Offering received

Ash Wednesday Worship/Communion, 6:30 p.m.

Pastor Bo will be preaching on “Blessed Are You” as we begin our

Lenten Sermon Series, “More Like Jesus: Sermon on the Mount”

Chancel Choir, Worship Band, Kids Choir



Growing in Christ—

"More Like Jesus: Sermon on the Mount" Sermon Series for Lent

We will start the Season of Lent with our Ash Wednesday Evening Worship Service. Throughout Lent, on our way to Easter, we will focus on the Sermon on the Mount. We will journey through some of the most familiar teachings of Jesus from Matthew, Chapters 5-7. As we study these passages, we will relate them to the events surrounding Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. In the process, our worship services will reveal that the cross itself is the ultimate sermon on the mount for our journey of faith in this special and sacred season.

March 6	<u>Ash Wednesday</u> "Blessed are You" Matthew 5:1-11
March 10	"Salt and Light" Matthew 5:13-16
March 17	"Prayer and Fasting" Matthew 6:5-18
March 24	"Do Not Worry" Matthew 6:25-34
March 31	"Judge Not" Matthew 7:1-5
April 7	"Build on Rock" Matthew 7:24-27
April 14	<u>Palm Sunday</u> "Ask, Seek, Knock" Matthew 7:7-11
April 18	<u>Maundy Thursday</u> "The Golden Rule" Matthew 7:12
April 19	<u>Good Friday</u> "The Tree and its Fruit"
April 21	<u>Easter</u> "The Better Way" Matthew 5:6, 6:19-21, 7:13-14

Adult Education Opportunities

Tuesday "Lunch Bunch" Bible Discussion Group

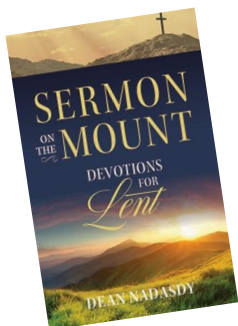
We've just completed our look into the Book of James, and now we journey into Lent with our tanks full as we ponder something a little different for our lunch time discussion group, which will focus on the Revised Common Lectionary passages. For example, our first week will dig into: Joel 2:1-2 (Bob), 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Cor 5:20b-6; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 (Dale). Bob and I will add a little twist...we will pick two passages for focus; and for those who participate, we hope and pray you will bring some insights from either of the other two passages to share with the group. So join us in Room 210 on Tuesdays at 12 noon. Bring your lunch and enjoy a Spirit-ed discussion together. — Pastor Dale

C4 Men's Bible Discussion Group

Since the beginning of the year we have been looking at what it means to be godly men in this world...men of Courage, Compassion, and Conviction grounded in Christ. As we enter into Lent, we will look at one godly man, Simon Peter—one with flaws but one with courage and faithfulness also grounded in Jesus. All men of First Pres, and any friends you might want to bring with you, are invited to gather in Room 210 on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. for a Spirit-ed discussion about being godly men in this tough world today.

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. During Lent we will be studying Women in the Bible.



Devotions for each day of Lent, by well-known preacher Dean Nadasdy, powerfully reveal that the cross itself becomes the ultimate sermon on the mount for our journey through this sacred season.

Devotionals are available in the Narthex.



SUNDAY, MARCH 3. This is our final Sunday for our “Parables: Stories of Purpose” Sermon Series. The Parables of Jesus are filled with meaning and insights on what it means to follow the Lord Jesus and live in his wonderful and merciful Kingdom, the Kingdom of God.

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. This Sunday I am preaching on “All In” from Luke 14:25-33, the parable of Counting the Cost. We will think about how God is “All In” for us; in and through the love, grace, and leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are called to be “All In” for this One who loves us more than we can even imagine.

ASH WEDNESDAY IS THE BEGINNING OF THE LENTEN SEASON! Plan now to join us for dinner and worship next Wednesday, March 6. Enjoy great meal fellowship and meaningful worship for all ages



Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 10. Be sure to set your clocks ahead one hour when you retire Saturday night, March 9th.



Known to be in the Hospital: No one.

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.

with your church family on Ash Wednesday. And, while you are at it, invite a guest or some guests to come with you and meet a great group of people at First Pres.

LENTEN SEASON BROCHURE. We have many special experiences planned for the season of Lent. Take a look through the brochure included in this week’s *Servants’ Light*. There are opportunities to worship, study, enjoy meal fellowship, and more. You will receive your very own copy this Sunday in your Bulletin.

HABITAT, PREPARING TO BUILD A NEW HOME! Habitat is going to build a new house in the 1500 block of North Raynor Ave. this Summer. The plan is to break ground in June. If you are interested in helping to build this new home, which is not far from our church, please let me know or one of our Mission Council Members know: Mary Kessling, Mahryha Iwema or Lisa Kasper. Dave Cavanaugh and I attended an information session in January to learn about the details for the new home and the wider mission of Habitat for Humanity in Will County. Mission Council has made a \$5,000 pledge to go toward the building of the new home.

In Christ,



February 24, 2019

Worship Attendance — 179

Stewardship Report

2018-2019 Budget: \$799,852

Year to Date Receipts	\$682,246
Year to Date Expenses	\$685,816

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, 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.

Children's Ministry Update



It's Winter, and I love it. I love the white snow, the chilly mornings and clear nights. But above all, I love winter because it is soup season. Yes, you heard me right, soup season. And here is something you might not know about me: I love to take time and make those winter soups. It is the process I love, picking up the vegetables, finding the meats to go in, and then the whole chopping and dicing, and the boiling and cooking. A good soup, in my opinion, takes time, preparation and the right ingredients.

There is nothing right about instant soups; not in my book.

And Christian faith is just like that, something that develops over a long time, with the right ingredients in place and with the right seasonings. At least that is the philosophy behind the Christian Ed ministry here at First Pres. We take time to develop faith in kids, youth and adults, and that might take years! And that's okay. We like to take our time to familiarize the children with the Bible. Quiz time: How many times does a kid go through the Bible while in Sunday School/Children's Worship? Three Times!!! Yes, you heard that right. From age 3 and all the way through 5th grade, every Sunday our kids learn the stories of the Bible, and every Sunday they learn something new about how those stories apply to their lives.

For example, during Lent this year, kids will learn about a lost son and a father's forgiveness, about Jesus' last days with his disciples. These might be stories that are familiar to you as a parent and a grandparent, but to a kid these stories are a new understanding of God's grace and love for them. It is discovering that firsthand. And yes, it takes time to cover all the stories in the Bible, but by the time they leave Sunday Children's Worship, those stories will be not just familiar, but also personal to them because they experienced them time and time again.



You might have heard me say from time to time, that Children's Ed is about church and family walking together for a while to plant the seeds of faith in the hearts of a child. I realize that one hour in Sunday School or during Midweek Family Night is just the beginning of that conversation with God. Kids need that time in church to kickstart some conversation with their parents about God. The parents need the church to be there and provide a structure and a format that will help those conversations. And I believe that to be true. And because of that, I want to invite you to walk with us this Lent Season, come and find out who Jesus is as a family, discover the awe-inspiring imposition of ashes, or the joy of Easter Egg hunting. Come and discover your faith anew this season.

See you and your family in church on Sunday, or Wednesday!

Blessings,

Bo M.

Mark your calendars



Lent starts on March 6th –
Ash Wednesday Dinner
@ 5:30 p.m. followed by
Ash Wednesday Service
@ 6:30 p.m.



Easter Egg Hunt – April
13th @9 a.m.

Starting in March on
Wednesdays — Pinewood
Derby Car Clinics during
Midweek Family Night



WILDFIRE YOUTH GROUP

As a Facebook meme perfectly said: “January went by pretty slow, but February’s doing 75 mph in a 35 mph zone.” I have a feeling we can all relate to that. Maybe it’s because there are only 28 days; maybe because the dreariness of January has finally (mostly... kind of...) left us. Either way, we can all agree that February has been an excellent month at Wildfire!

We began the month with our Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser and I want to send a huge shout-out “Thank you!” to all those who supported the youth who will be going on life changing adventures in Jesus’ name. If you attended the dinner you were sure to see handfuls of kids working and playing together—enjoying a night of service and joy! We raised a total that rounds to \$2,500 (I had misquoted myself in previous announcements of funds raised; I apologize)!

The most impactful part of the night, however, was watching our youth become the hands and feet of Jesus as they cared for a gentleman who was using our Micro Food Pantry. One student noticed the man and began to talk with him, breaking through all prejudices and fears that we adults sometimes associate with the unknown needy. Soon after, another student invited him for dinner while another gave him money from her own pocket. This man spent the rest of the evening with some of our students and their families. Our students experienced first hand Jesus’ words in Matthew 25:35-45. They ended the night by laying hands on him and praying over him. Thus far, I am happy to report, that the relationship with this man has continued. He has found a safe place at FPJ and members of our congregation continue to show care for him by providing warm clothing and hot meals.

The month continued with our students showing more generosity by preparing College Care Packages. While some may believe finals is a great time to send care packages, I have seen that the stress of February can be just as brutal as that of May. Those who have received our packages have sent many words of gratitude and thanks.

On February 17 we were happy to have our friends Enlivened back! They are a local band whose mission is to spread the Gospel and show kids that worship comes in many forms. They sang, shared stories, and one even shared an original song she had written. The best part of the night was when Danny, the band’s leader, began talking to the students about surrendering the broken pieces of their lives to God and how He would make something beautiful out of it. The band asked the kids to write down things they would like to surrender on broken pieces of tile and the band will then make a beautiful piece of art with these broken pieces to illustrate just how God makes beauty from the ashes.

Then we ended the month with a great live testimony from a dear friend of mine. She has an amazing voice and gifted us with a song before sharing her own story of God’s grace and redemption.

Based on this packed review, I must agree! February has flown by at at least 75 mph! As the month concludes, my excitement continues and I look forward to what March brings for us.

Thank you for your continued support.
Please continue to pray for the students, the leaders, and myself.

With many blessings and much love,
Karissa

Upcoming March Events

March 3
The Names of Jesus
Craft Night
6:00—7:30 p.m.

March 10:
Service Sunday —
FPJ’s Helping Hands
6 to 7:30 p.m.

March 15:
Fellowship Event:
Windy City Bulls
Faith Night
5 to 10 p.m.

March 17:
Lesson: Is Jesus
the Only Way?
6 to 7:30 p.m.

March 24:
Live Testimony—
Matt Pritz
6 to 7:30 p.m.

March 31:
Fellowship Night!
6 to 7:30 p.m.

2nd Sunday Potluck

Second Sunday Potluck is back—March 10, right after second service. Bring a dish to share and spend some time getting to know others better.

Ladies Night In
March 26, 6:30 p.m.

Make & Take: Essential Oil Edition!

Our very own Meredith Palmer will be taking over as host for the evening and teaching us all the in's and out's of Essential Oils! Maybe you have a diffuser because you know how trendy they are, but you aren't sure what to actually do with it. Or maybe you're already an expert and you're looking for a fun way to connect with more essential oil lovers! Wherever you are on the spectrum (even if you are someone who doesn't have any oil history!), you are welcome to join us for a night of education, fun, and fantastic smells. Meredith will provide us with some great information, help us make our own blends, and then be available for more support and purchases. If you even heard of essential oils, this will be the ladies night for you!

Meal Fellowship

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

Dinner Out Group—Mar. 19, 6:00 p.m. at Public Landing Restaurant, 200 W. 8th St., Lockport. Call Jean or Bob Smietanski, 815-838-7616, to make a reservation.

Men's Dinner Group—Mar. 22, 6:00 p.m. at Wild Horse Restaurant, 2314 W. Jefferson St., Joliet. RSVP to Bob Smietanski at 815-838-7616.



Session Notes

At its regularly scheduled meeting of February 14, 2019, the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Joliet, voted:

- to replace 7 HVAC units that are failing in the church offices area for \$17,495;
- to replace the failing office copying machine for up to \$9,000;
- to make a pledge of \$5,000 to Habitat for Humanity to use in building the planned Habitat House on N. Raynor Avenue;
- to allow Creighton Blaser to sell hot chocolate on February 24 to support the Will County Children's Advocacy Center;
- to approve a budget for next year of \$760,935, with the "Grateful Giving" Campaign to be mounted in the March timeframe in support of this financial plan;
- to approve collection of a free will offering during the Palm Sunday Breakfast to support the Church Picnic and the Mission to the Homeless project.

Thurs. AM Circle

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

Mary Circle

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



In an effort to keep our costs minimal for the Craft/Vendor Fair Café (March 30), we are looking for donations of the following supplies:

Bottled water
Cases of Pop: Coke, Diet Coke, Pepsi, Diet Pepsi,
7-up or Sprite (cans only)
Bags of chips - (50 ct. boxes) original variety
Candy bars, full size
Hot dog buns

Items can be brought to church anytime to the table in Hoffman Hall (look for the Craft/Vendor Fair Donations sign). When leaving donations, please sign the sheet so we can properly thank everyone who helps to make this event a great success.

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 this Saturday, March 2, 8 to 10 a.m. Come on out and help us serve and welcome those in our community who are hungry.

Mission to the Homeless

For the past two years or so, Linda and Wayne Zoelick have been leading the “Mission for the Homeless” effort at our church, packing up food and clothes items you have brought in for distribution at MorningStar Mission. It has been a wonderful “go and do” effort; however, some recent physical limitations have been hampering the effort and Linda and Wayne have determined, with sadness, that they are no longer able to lead this effort at the church. We have made arrangements to get the clothes items delivered to MorningStar Mission and the food items have been repurposed to the Micro Pantry, but we will be taking down the table in the Narthex. Should someone in the congregation feel God’s call to continue this ministry in our community, please contact one of the pastors or better yet, contact Linda or Wayne to find out more details. Please keep Linda and Wayne in your prayers as they make this transition from a ministry they began when they were in Tucson.



Join our Team of Sunday Morning Greeters!

We are looking for smiling faces to greet guests and members arriving for Sunday morning worship. We have greeters at both church entrances, Western Ave. and the back parking lot, at both Sunday services. You may be asked for directions to the sanctuary, but usually duties are just to open the door as people arrive and to greet them. Anyone recognized as a visitor should be led to the Connections Table in the narthex. Greeters should arrive 20 minutes prior to the start of services. To cover both entrances at each service, we need 4 greeters every Sunday; or a couple may want to serve together at one entrance.

If you can commit to one Sunday a month (i.e., the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday) that would be ideal. If you have to miss a Sunday and can’t find a replacement, we can help you. Just contact Barb Rodgers at 815-439-3747 or barbrodgers1945@sbcglobal.net and let her know that you want to be a part of this important ministry!

“Grateful Giving” 2019-2020 Stewardship Campaign



God’s grace, given to us in Christ Jesus, is wonderful and transformational;...sustains, shapes, and strengthens us. God’s grace covers all of our failures, shortcomings, and sins. Jesus is God’s “Amazing Grace” to us. Our lives are, in a sense, a living response to God’s grace. Through the “Grateful Giving” of ourselves we can respond in many, many ways—serving, giving, loving, hoping, believing, praying, worshipping, surrendering, forgiving, building, striving, challenging, creating,...and more.

Our “Grateful Giving” 2019 Stewardship Campaign gives everyone of us the opportunity to make our own response to God in terms of “Grateful Giving.” This week you will receive the introductory letter for our “Grateful Giving” Stewardship Campaign for 2019-20. There will be an enclosed brochure picturing some facets of our life, ministry, and mission, as well as an outline of this year’s budget.

Then, during the week of March 10, you will receive your pledge card with a two page selection of pictures of First Pres. We ask that you return your pledge card on Sunday, March 17 or March 24. Or, if you prefer, you could mail it to the church office for Tracy Norris, our treasurer. Please begin to think about your grateful response to God’s grace.

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

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805 Western Ave.
Joliet, IL 60435

Newsletter Deadline—The deadline for reserving space in the March 27 *Servants' Light* is **March 10**. Please e-mail to sherry.buffington@firstpresjoliet.org.

TO:

March Daily Devotional Blog

We'll continue our focus on the parables of Jesus; and then turn our attention to "Our God Is....." The blog runs Monday through Friday.

3/1	The Leaven	Luke 13:20-21
3/4	The Lost Sheep	Luke 15:4-5
3/5	The Wicked Tenants	Matt. 21:33-41
3/6	The Great Banquet	Luke 14:15-24
3/7	The Budding Fig Tree	Matt. 24:32-35
3/8	The Faithful Servant	Luke 12:35-48
3/11	The Lamp Under a Bushel	Luke 8:16-18
3/12	New Wine Into Old Wineskins	Luke 5:37-39
3/13	Parable of the Strong Man	Matt. 12:29
3/14	Parable of the Sower	Mark 4:3-9
3/15	Parable of the Mustard Seed	Luke 13:18-19

3/18	The Wicked Tenants	Luke 20:9-16
3/19	The Budding Fig Tree	Mark 13:28-31
3/20	The Faithful Servant	Matt. 24:42-51
3/21	Our God Is...Love	John 4:16
3/22	Our God Is...Spirit	John 4:24
3/25	Our God Is...The Holy One	Psalms 16:10
3/26	Our God Is...The I Am	John 8:58
3/27	Our God Is...Yahweh	Exodus 6:3
3/28	Our God Is...The Alpha & Omega, The Beginning & End	Rev. 1:8
3/29	Our God Is...God Almighty	Exodus 6:3