



# The Servants' Light

December 25, 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.

### Coffee Fellowship—

10:00 to 10:30 a.m.

### Nursery/Preschool Care—

8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**NOW SHOWING**  
**CHILI AND**  
**MOVIE NIGHT**  
presented by  
Parish Council

## Showtimes:

4:30 pm	Chili Set Up, bring a crock pot!
5 pm	Dinner/chili tasting/voting begins
6 pm	Movies begin

**Peanut Butter Falcon (PG-13)** : Finding an unlikely friend in an outlaw, a man with Down Syndrome pursues his dream of becoming a pro wrestler.

**A Dog's Journey (PG)** : A story of a man and his dog. The dog is reincarnated repeatedly in the hopes of reuniting the man's granddaughter, and protecting her.

**Breakthrough (PG)** : 14-year old John was trapped in a frozen lake for over 15 min. His family sits at his bedside in the hospital and pray for his recovery.

**Downton Abbey (PG)**: The Crawley's are visited by the King and Queen of England resulting in scandal, romance and intrigue.

**Dumbo (2019) (PG)** : Tim Burton's larger than life reimagining of the classic Dumbo. A baby elephant is able to fly with his comically large ears, and becomes the main attraction of a declining circus.

### Bo Mircea, Associate Pastor of Children's Ministry and Family Ministry

**Happy 2020!** As we start the new year, I pray that this year will be a great time for us to grow in Christ, to discover the goodness of God in everything we do and to be able to share God's love any chance we have.

**This Sunday,** The text is Luke 2:8-20 - "When Hope Enters In". By now the shine and glory of Christmas has started to fade. The presents are unwrapped, the dinners were yummy but done, and family have left back to their houses. So what is left after Christmas? Hope! Hope that lasts! Hope that makes us go for another year. And even more Hope that continues to transform and give meaning to our lives. I would invite you come this Sunday having that expectation of Christmas, an expectation for things to come and what the Lord can do in our lives. As a reminder we have one service this Sunday the 29th at 10:30 am with the Worship Band and Ken Meyer singing, and also coffee hour at 10 am. Bags of Love packing for homeless starting at 10am. See you Sunday! Merry Christmas!

**As we start the New Year, we are also starting a new sermon series:** "New Hope for the New Year", 6 weeks of sermons based on finding hope even in the most difficult life moments.

**2019 has been a great year for ministry** here at First Pres. We have seen so much being done to help the homeless, or through the food pantry. I would like to encourage you to keep these ministries in mind as we are starting the new year, since the winter months can be very taxing on the people that benefit from Bags of Love and the Food Pantry.

**Midweek Family Night** is starting up again on January 15th at 5:30. If you love a good meal and some great people around the table you have to come and see what this all about. Kids, parents and grandparents everyone is welcome to come and share a meal and then find some time for spiritual growth in one of the classes we offer. The Ladies group are continuing their study on Messy people and the Men's Groups is looking at the Book of James.

**Movie and Chili night** is around the corner - January 25th. Mark your calendar and get ready for some competition and great chill. We have reserved some great movies to share with you: Peanut Butter Falcon, A Dog's Journey, Breakthrough, Downton Abbey, and the 2019 Dumbo – remake.

**I wish you a Happy New Year and May God bless us all this year!**

Bo M.

#### December 22, 2019

Worship Attendance — 205

#### Stewardship Report

2019-2020 Budget: \$ 768,135

Year to Date Income \$528,317

Year to Date Expenses \$525,852

2018-2019 Bequest/Gift Income Received - \$3,000

Online giving is available on our website under "Give". Also by texting (815)205-3044, or talking with Tracy Norris in the church office.

## OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Sympathies are extended to the family and friends of Sis Schmidt due to her recent passing. Visitation will be at Blackburn on Friday the 27th at 10 am with a service to follow at 10:30.

### From the Treasurer's Office:

Annual statements of your 2019 contributions to First Presbyterian will be mailed within the first few weeks of January. To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2019 income tax return until you have received this written acknowledgment of your contributions.

**Sermon Summary**  
**Sunday December 22**

**Praise in Hope**  
**1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

All sermons are available on our website under "Media".

This Sunday we read Paul's words to the Thessalonian church. In 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, we were reminded that there can be joy, love, life and laughter in every situation, at all times. We can praise (offer grateful homage) God in every situation.

Let's face it - life includes a mixed bag of experiences - some really, really joyful, some heart wrenchingly awful, and the whole spectrum in between. Yet God is always present, to the point of actually entering into our lives here on this earth.

In this, we find hope and reason to praise Him in every season.

Thanks be to God!

**MIDWEEK MEN AND WOMEN'S STUDY:**

This is an opportunity for men and women (and not just parents) to meet and study the Bible and strengthen fellowship. This group meets Wednesday nights at 6:30, dinner at 5:30! Teen and Child study groups are included, as well as childcare so the whole family can come, no need to worry about a babysitter!

**PERSONAL/FAMILY FINANCIAL**  
**PLANNING MEETINGS**

**NEXT MEETING HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL**  
**THE NEW YEAR**

Scripture encourages families to have financial plans and actions. Since spring of this year a conversation about finances at the family level has been growing within the church. No one will be asked to disclose personal information during the session, though some may volunteer to do so.

please contact

**Ken Graham (630 297-5632)**

**kengraham8@msn.com**

or

**Jim Huey (815 953-8422)**

**hueyjim@comcast.net**

*Please leave a message if you call.*

**"New Hope for the New Year" (January 5-February 9)**

As we anticipate what the new year means, we look with Hope at what 2020 will bring. We understand that there will be New Hopes realized and New Challenges presented as the year unfolds to us. This sermon series is about navigating life in the hope of Christ Jesus and finding strength for the inevitable challenges that surface. We will seek wisdom from the lives of God's people and parables in the Bible such as David, Rahab, the Prodigal Son, Josiah, Mary, and Daniel.

"From Shepherd Boy to King"

I Samuel 16-18

"Writing New Chapters"

Joshua 2, 6

"Mending Fences with Family and Friends"

Luke 15:11-32

"Return to Faith"

II Kings 22-23

"When Life Changes in a Moment"

Luke 1:26-38

"Foundations for Making a New Life"

Daniel 1-3.

### Meal Fellowship

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

**Dinner Out Group**—January 21st, 6 pm at Al's Steakhouse on Jefferson in Joliet

**Men's Dinner Group**—January 24th, 6pm at Dragon Light on Larkin in Crest Hill

Call Jean or Bob Smietanski, 815-838-7616 to RSVP

### MIDWEEK

Come for the dinner and stay for the classes! We have classes for women, men, teens and children and childcare for the little ones! Everyone is invited and more than welcome to even just join us for fantastic homecooked meals every Wednesday night, dinner starts at 5:30.

**MIDWEEK IS ON A HOLIDAY BREAK AND WILL RESUME ON JANUARY 15th!**

### GLORY RINGERS

SO, YOU SAY YOU CAN'T SING ?

Well then, you need to join the First Presbyterian Church Handbell Choir. You don't even have to know how to read music – you just have to be able to count! Glory Ringers rehearse on Mondays at 7:00 p.m. and we would love to have you join us! We ring for two Sundays per month plus special services such as Christmas, Easter, etc. Anyone from high school age on up is welcome. This is a different kind of music ministry that I'm sure you will enjoy. Feel free to talk to one of the members of Glory Ringers and find out how exciting ringing can be. We need YOU to be a part of the Music Ministry of First Presbyterian Church!

### "The Way" Small Group

Join us in exploring an early Christian path. The early Christians were known for the way they loved, particularly each other. We will use some recent understanding of the spirituality that underlies this way of life. Meetings are now Wednesdays during Midweek, in room 217/219

### Praise Yoga

Come, to find peace in your heart and mind, and to experience the power of God's transforming grace deep in your heart. Every Tuesday at 7PM and Thursday at 8AM in the Narthex. Praise Yoga will resume on January 7th. Keep In touch with Emma Sticklen for further updates.

## Small Groups & Special Events

# Session Notes

- All Officer Retreat will be held Thursday February 20th at 6:30 pm
- This years ministry plans and accomplishments were reviewed.
- After reviewing that list a discussion was posed to answer the questions What is the good we should do? At what cost? For whom?
- The Ministry Plan was found to be sound. Plans were accomplished, some plans remain, and there are new issues to be considered next year A motion was made to continue work on current ministry plans and to form new plans in the new year
- Stewardship Council's 2020 Campaign theme will be "Sharing Hope"

## Project Linus

Join us and help make no-sew fleece blankets for children in need, especially with the colder months creeping up on us. Project Linus meets the last Monday of each month. In January the meeting will be on the 27th at 9 A.M. in Hoffman Hall.

Please bring your sewing scissors!



## SECOND SUNDAY POTLUCK

Our first quarterly potluck will be on Sunday, 1/12/20, right after the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Bring a dish to share, drop it in the kitchen and head to worship. Items can be kept cold or warm if necessary. If you attend the first service you can run out after coffee hour to pick something up or just stay and have additional time to visit. We always have delicious food and great conversation, so come get out of that post-holiday slump and enjoy time connecting with your church family.



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

**A HUGE thank you to the following people who helped decorate our Church for Christmas.**

Jaimie and Oscar Manjarez and Manassas  
Karen Meyers  
Jana and Bob Rudisill  
Mark Rowzee and Anna  
Sharon and Dave Cavanaugh  
Sue Fordyce  
Jeff Lundeen  
Sue Lee  
Marie and Suzanne Penhale



Jean Bailey  
Kim Bolte  
Lynn and Tom Sperling  
Matt Pritz and Laura Wakefield  
Hunter Belfield  
Kaleigh Belfield  
Jen Garlitz  
Tandy Penhale

### **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!

### **BAGS OF LOVE**

There is only the 10:30 service on December 29th so come early, drink some coffee, and help pack some bags of love! 10 a.m. in Hoffman Hall all helping hands are welcome. Please come help us make the lives of individuals in need a little easier this harsh winter. These bags of necessities will be given to those in need at the local MorningStar Mission.

### **DID YOU GET AMAZON GIFT CARDS FOR CHRISTMAS?**

Always remember you can contribute to the church by simply making Amazon purchases through the web page "smile@amazon.com." This is a simple way to contribute .5% of Amazon purchases to FPJ! That money goes into a general fund that helps us maintain our lovely church and run the amazing projects and events that help our community.



### **Help Fill Empty Shelves and Empty Stomachs!**

There are several opportunities at First Pres. to help those in our community who are food insecure—

Our **Micro Pantry** offers canned and packaged food to those in need. You can help by bringing food or by offering to check the pantry one day a week and filling it with food we have on hand.

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The Night Deacons' **Free Pancake Breakfast** is the first Saturday of each month, 8 to 10 a.m. Come on January 4th to help greet and serve our guests.

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Our **Bags of Love** are filled with donations (collected in the Narthex) of food and hygiene items. These are then packed together once a month and donated to the local MorningStar Mission to be given to homeless individuals.

# Children's Ministry Update

**Happy 2020!!!** Can you believe it? I still remember when we turned a new leaf into the year 2000. Do you remember Y2K? Or going to Blockbuster to get movies for the weekend? Oh boy, that seems so long ago. So much change has happened in these past years. And looking forward we can always expect more of that. Change has become part of who we are, and it happens at a fast pace.

Maybe you are in the same boat with me as you look at the world around us, and you might find yourself asking how is this ongoing cultural change is going to affect us as believers?

The reality is that it will, and it already does. Families across the country have changed their worship pattern over the years. Every Sunday worship became every other Sunday worship. Sports and extra curricular activities are forever competing with our time that we allocate for worship. And yet I am a strong believer in the future generation. I believe that they will have a strong faith and a love for God that can and will make a difference.

But that depends on us, on who we are and what we do today. I like to think that our lives are like an anchored boat. We need strong anchors in our lives. For me I like to think that Faith is one of those, family and friends are others, and life calling another. These anchors keep us safe and on the right track. Sometimes it happens that one of them might snap and yet we will still be able to go through the storms because of the other ones.

*"He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure."*

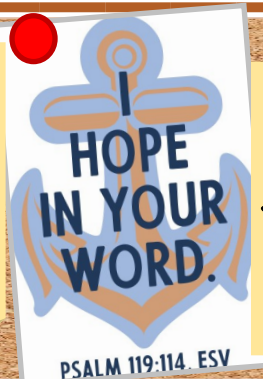
Isaiah 33:6

This is my prayer for all of us as we enter 2020, that we will have a strong foundation and our faith will be that strong anchor that will help us navigate all the storm that might come our way. It is also my prayer that each parent and grandparent can share their faith with their kids in such a way that will forever change the future generations.

Happy New Year!  
Bo M.

## MIDWEEK

Will resume on  
January 15th, so  
come and join us!



## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

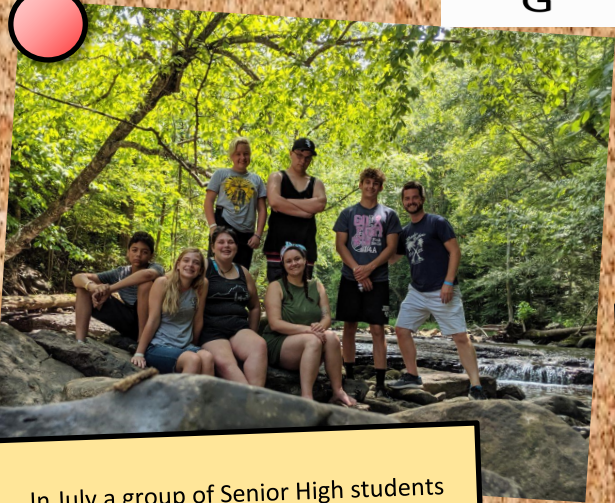
Mark your calendars!  
June 22 through 26th we will  
be having a fun railroad  
themed VBS!





# WILDFIRE YOUTH

G R O U P



In July a group of Senior High students headed to Virginia where we helped restore homes. Not only did we restore many homes, but we built new friendships and many of our teens had a faith revival.

2019 has been a big year for Wildfire Youth Group! We have a set of faithful Confirmands, studied the *Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* on Wednesdays, and every Sunday we gather together to learn about the Holy Spirit!

Not only have we been busy with these weekly activities, but we have enjoyed two amazing mission trips and one fun fundraiser.

In February of 2019, through the Spaghetti To-Go Dinner we were able to raise over \$2,000 for our mission trips. Thank you for all the support.

Later in the month, the Jr. High kids came together for three half days where we spent time serving the church and the community. We made connections with the Salvation Army, The Spanish Community Center, and took home bags filled with necessities to help break barriers when we see someone in need on the streets.

If you are a student who is going into the 9th grade this fall or graduating 12th grade in the spring, this is for you! We will be going to Green Bay, WI June 14-21, 2020. Mark your calendars for the following dates to learn more about this opportunity: February 3 (an intro meeting), March 9 (a fellowship hour to get to know your crew), April 6 (team building), May 25 (final meeting for forms and logistics). All meetings will only be one hour beginning at 6pm in the upstairs cafe area. Attendance to 3 of the 4 meetings is mandatory to attend the trip. Students in the congregation will receive a mailing soon with more information. If you are not a member and interested, email Karissa for more information: [Karissa.fleming@firstpresjoliet.org](mailto:Karissa.fleming@firstpresjoliet.org).

Students who are entering 6th-8th grade will have the chance to participate in another half day mission trip where we continue to explore the local missions that are happening right here in Joliet. Remember, the mission field is everywhere! The mission trip will be set sometime in mid-July with dates still to be set.

We will have another foodie fundraiser on April 25 which is sure to be another blast!

Our weekly curriculum will continue with learning about the Holy Spirit on Sundays—specifically how the Holy Spirit interacts with us today, Wednesdays we will begin a study on *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis, and Confirmation is scheduled to happen June 7.

2020 is going to be an amazing year and I can't wait to keep serving with the teens and the Church!

Blessings,  
Karissa

### Newsletter Deadline—

The deadline for reserving space in the September 25 *Servants' Light* is **December 10.**

Please e-mail to  
[office@firstpresjoliet.org](mailto:office@firstpresjoliet.org).

It fills up fast!

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Craig M. Herr—Senior Pastor

Bo Mircea—Associate Pastor of  
Children's Ministry  
and Family Ministry

Karissa Fleming, Dir. of Youth  
Ministry

Jen Gabl—Administrative  
Ministry Assistant

Ellen Kientop—Outreach Ministry  
Assistant & Newsletter Editor

## January Daily Devotional Blog

12/30	Psalm 122; Daniel 9:15-19; James 4:1-10
12/31	Psalm 122; Genesis 6:1-10; Hebrews 11:1-7
1/1	Psalm 122; Genesis 6:11-22; Matthew 24:1-22
1/2	Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14
1/3	Psalm 124; Genesis 8:1-19; Romans 6:1-11
1/6	Psalm 124; Genesis 9:1-17; Hebrews 11:32-40
1/7	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 4:2-6; Acts 1:12-17, 21-26
1/8	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 30:19-26; Acts 13:16-25
1/9	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 40:1-11; John 1:19-28
1/10	Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19, Romans 15:4-13
1/13	Psalm 21; Isaiah 24:1-16a; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12
1/14	Psalm 21; Isaiah 41:14-20; Romans 15:14-21

1/15	Psalm 21; Genesis 15:1-18; Matthew 12:33-37
1/16	Psalm 146:5-10; Ruth 1:6-18; 2 Peter 3:1-10
1/17	Psalm 146:5-10; Ruth 4:13-17; 2 Peter 3:11-18
1/20	Psalm 146:5-10; 1 Samuel 2:1-8; Luke 3:1-18
1/21	Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; Luke 1:46b-55
1/22	Psalm 42; Isaiah 29:17-24; Acts 5:12-16
1/23	Psalm 42; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Jude 1:17-25
1/24	Psalm 42; Zechariah 8:1-17; Matthew 8:14-17, 28-34
1/27	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:1-17; Galatians 3:23-29
1/28	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:18-22; Galatians 4:1-7
1/29	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:23-29; John 3:31-36
1/30	Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7
1/31	Luke 1:46b-55; 2 Samuel 7:18, 23-29; Galatians 3:6-14