



e-News

May 27, 2020

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Teen Mid-Week Bible Study: In the New Testament there was a man who had a sick son. He wanted Jesus to heal the boy; sounds familiar right? However, this man had a struggle going on in his heart. He cried out to Jesus “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24). If you have ever experienced an inch of doubt about God, Jesus, His love for you, or anything else along those lines Wednesday is the night for you! We’re going to talk about how belief and doubt can co-exist and how God is more powerful than doubt.

Wildfire Youth Group: Adding onto Wednesday’s lesson, we’re going to talk about sacrifices. With COVID-19, we’re all sacrificing things: hugs from grandparents, swimming at a friend’s pool, missing soccer or volleyball or baseball. We’re sacrificing so much this summer. Jesus sacrificed too. We all know that. But did you know that Jesus wasn’t necessarily happy about it? We’re going to look at Mark 10:25 and Matthew 26:39. Jesus did not sacrifice easily! If you’re not happy about the current state of things, don’t worry. You’re in good company. Sacrifice is hard. We’re just blessed enough as believers to know that God’s will is better than anything we could imagine.

“Resources for Difficult Days”

Throughout May we are focusing on the resources of our faith. We strive to rely on God who gives his enduring love and uplifting hope in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. In this Series we are studying the sources of strength, which God provides in the scriptures and to and through the followers of Jesus.

Sunday May, 31- “Staying Spiritually Fit” Gospel of Mark 1:21-38

This Sunday we will take a look at the Gospel of Mark 1:21-38. This passage captures the very beginning of Christ’s ministry, a moment filled with power and miracles, but also a moment of great personal introspection for Jesus. As I read this passage I am fascinated by the contrast between the public life and personal life of Jesus. Authority and decisiveness in his public ministry and also humbleness and introspection in those private moments. This Sunday we will take a look at “Being Spiritually Fit”, how to find the strength and balance for the days ahead. I would encourage you to take time this week, and in your private time ask yourself the following question:

Where and how do I balance my life?

Have a blessed week, see you Sunday.
Blessings, Bo

We have **one worship service online** with both traditional and contemporary songs in the service. Look for it online, on YouTube (firstpresjoliet), facebook, our website, or check the email sent each Saturday afternoon.

And this is even better. If you have a Smart TV, or Chromecast you can watch it on your TV.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

No one

May 24, 2020

Attendance - 307 views combined from Facebook and YouTube

Stewardship Report

2020-2021 Budget	\$734,307
Year to Date Income	\$105,668
Year to Date Expenses	\$81,201
Angel House Total	\$3,766
Received for bathroom renovation—	\$11,550

You may text your gift to FPJ at (815)205-3044 or go online to use a credit card. Just go to our Website and click on “Giving. Please continue to **remember the church in your giving** as we continue to further the life, ministry, and mission of First Pres. in new and different ways these days. You can give by mail, by online giving through our website using the “Give” tab, and through electronic giving.
Thank you for your generosity.

THE PASTOR'S CORNER... Craig Herr, Head Pastor

Sunday, May 31, Worship with us on this Pentecost Sunday, which is the birthday of the Church. The Holy Spirit came upon the followers and disciples of Jesus and Peter preached to the crowd that had gathered and many came to faith in Christ. The church was born and then the followers of Jesus began to go all over the world sharing the life of faith in Christ. Churches were started just about everywhere the followers of Jesus located themselves. The rest is history. We can think about the prompting of the Holy Spirit in our lives, as he lives within us, making Jesus present to us.

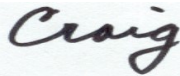
On Sunday, June 7 we celebrate the Lord's Supper in worship. Please prepare to set your table with bread and grape juice for worship. Confirmants will share their statements of faith in worship. Looking forward to good things on June 7.

For Pastoral Care please call the office to leave a message to talk with a pastor or call us on our cell phones. We are available and can access our messages from home.

No Big Changes on Reopening the Church Yet and still Worshipping Online, The session met on May 14 and discussed some of the details of reopening the church in conjunction with Governor Pritzker 5-phase plan. The session meets again on Thursday, June 11. We will discuss a plan for reopening for Worship once that is permitted in phase 4 of the Governor's plan. We should reach Phase 3 when June begins. But only 10 people can meet together during Phase 3. We will see what our options are for small groups to gather with masks and social distancing. It takes until phase 4, to have 50 people gather for worship at the church. Again, watch for details on when we can start a slow reopening process at the church. We want to reopen in a safe and healthy way, whenever that can occur.

Annual Report, Yesterday you received the Annual Report by e-mail in two parts. Please take a look at the news about our life, ministry, and mission over the previous year. We served each other, our community and our world in many ways throughout the year.

This Sunday, May 31 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Kendall Fris is organizing another drive-thru **Bags of Love Ministry** drop off in the church parking lot behind the church. Join in on helping those who are hungry.



Zoom Bible Study In June.

Pastor Carrie Kapral is going to start up another Zoom Bible Study in June. Watch for details on this second class.

DO YOU MISS COFFEE CHATS IN HOFFMAN HALL?

Well good news! If you have facebook we will be opening a group just for the First Pres family very soon! This will be a great place to catch up and chat and share prayer requests and pictures of the flowers you've been planting and so on!

Sunday, May 24- "Jesus and the Poverty of Alternatives"

Exodus 20:1-6, 32:1-4; Colossians 1:24-2:7; Matthew 4:1-11 (NIV)

It is unmistakably clear now, that we live in a time when the fragile form of this world is being felt by all. Seemingly strong and solid foundations are shaking. Do we have a Rock under our feet? A Rock that cannot be shaken – *ever?*," writes John Piper.

Do we have a strong and stable place upon which to stand and not be soaked with insecurities? It's an age-old question, what can I trust, where can I turn, in turbulent times?

Our world and our society offer up possible alternatives for people.

We see arguments in the three scripture passages we just read for a more plausible way to live than the life of faith.

I am grateful to Walter Brueggemann in his book "Gift and Task" for these insights on the three passages.

In Exodus 20, we find the covenantal claims of the 10 commandments.

Amidst you shall have no other gods before me, the soon-to-follow worship of the golden calf is an argument for an alternative god; Let's have a god who does not demand anything and who is easily available on a stand.

In Colossians, the Christian congregation is confronted with the possible alternative of a life philosophy that explains the whole of reality apart from, without the cross and resurrection, it's life without sacrifice.

And then In the Gospel narrative the tempter makes plausible arguments to try to talk Jesus out of his peculiar vocation as messiah. Take the easy road. Three plausible arguments against the alternative of faith. Forget any demands, any sacrifice, or hard choices when you fashion your life.

These three plausible arguments, in Exodus, Colossians and Matthew all have in common the offer of a more reasonable way to live other than a life of faith.

See the sermon for the rest of the story.

Zoom Time with Pastors on Wednesday mornings.

Each Wednesday Bo and Craig are on Zoom to have a time of fellowship and conversation with whomever signs on and wants to say hello. So use the Zoom link that will remain the same each week and say hello on Wednesday mornings. **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87393339501?pwd=NGtvU2ZWK0ZkYVNDb2VoUXpqdm5iZz09>

All of our virtual Worship Services are available on our YouTube page, you can just search for FirstPresJoliet. Audio-only recordings are still available on the Sermons page of our website as well.

Dear Friends In Christ,

May 27, 2020

We continue to **worship in hope** each week for Jesus is alive and active in our world. Life can be different in Christ, even in this different time. For the Savior brings an end to restlessness and opens us up to his peace, strength, and joy. We hope you are doing well and are healthy in this different and challenging time.

We will keep on worshipping online as we enter the month of June. The session met last week and we are talking about the details of reopening the church in conjunction with Governor Pritzker 5-phase plan. We may reach Phase 3 when June begins. But only 10 people can meet together during Phase 3. We will see what our options are for small groups to gather with masks and social distancing. **It takes until phase 4, to have 50 people gather for worship at the church.** This sounds like a broken record but please watch for details on when we can start a slow reopening process at the church. We want to reopen in a safe and healthy way, whenever that can occur. Thank you for worshipping with us online each week.

Our Youth Group is meeting online on Wednesday and Sunday evenings for check-ins and Bible Study. There will be another **Zoom online Bible Study in June.** Pastor Carrie Kapral is going to teach again, so keep looking at our E-News and Website for the details.

Vacation Bible School is going to be held later in the summer, in July. We will have a **virtual-online VBS.** Families will be able to pick up VBS kits at the church to use with online music, teaching and crafts. **On Sunday, May 31** from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Kendall Fris is organizing another drive-thru **Bags of Love Ministry** drop off in the church parking lot behind the church.

We thank you, once again, for your faithful financial support of First Pres. As we make our way through May our staff members, for whom it is feasible, are working remotely, online and daily through Zoom. Our custodians come in, at various times, to clean and work around the church as necessary. The **Office is Open** remotely for Communications, Website, E-mails, etc. as the Staff is working remotely. We continue to receive the daily mail at the church.

We've enclosed a few envelopes for you to use to mail in **offerings** during this time. You can use **online giving** through the website: www.firstpresjoliet.org Look for the "Give" menu tab. For the electronic giving option just call Tracy Norris, our church treasurer to sign up.

Join us online this Sunday for worship. We long for the time when we can worship together in person, see one another, and enjoy renewing conversation and fellowship. We continue to ask for your prayers for all things as we seek God's will, presence and grace.

May the "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

Craig and Bo and the Session

As you've seen in our Graduate Celebration emails we have had so many graduates in our First Pres Family to celebrate, here is one final graduate!

Bryan Endres



**-Graduating Bradley University with
a Degree in Computer Information
Systems Software Web and
Computer Security**

-Graduated Magna Cum Laude

**Once again MANY CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR FIRST PRES GRADUATES!
We are so happy to celebrate this amazing accomplishment with all of you!**