



e-News

September 16, 2020

805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435
815-727-9259 firstpresjoliet.org



Fall Sermon Series "Stronger Together"

We have begun a Fall Sermon Study Series on the Power of Being the Church together. We will Study the New Testament Letter of I Timothy.

Paul writes this letter 3-5 years after being in prison and writing Ephesians. Timothy is the pastor at the Ephesian Church by this time.

We will think about how good it is to be the Church Together. Join us for our Fall Sermon Series through 11/8.

The Most Amazing View Timothy 1:12-20 (NIV)

I have wall art in my home that says, "May your trails be crooked and winding, leading to the most amazing view." The most amazing view. My trails have, indeed, been crooked and winding – hopefully less so the more I am able to focus on the MOST amazing view, Jesus.

Jesus is amazing. And so much more! The apostle Paul knew this. His trail had been crooked and winding. Paul the apostle is a person worth listening to and learning from because he lived his life for Christ. Yet, he started out as Saul, who was a blasphemer, a persecutor, a violent man. These traits are not what comes to mind when we describe a faithful follower of Christ. That's the point! Paul says that he was shown mercy because he acted in ignorance and unbelief. Haven't we all, at some point, acted the same? Probably not in the same way as Saul/Paul, but in so many other ways? And yet, there is mercy. Because Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He heaped mercy on us. As a result, we have access to the most amazing view – the love and mercy of Jesus.

It's been a rough year, no doubt about it. Years like this can blur the view, years like this can tempt us to wander back onto some of those crooked and winding paths. It's okay – the view is still there. We just need to turn our faces toward it. This is one of the reasons the church is so important, we are stronger together. We can remind one another who we are in Christ. Not with judgment, or anger, or frustration, but with mercy and faith and love.

May you feel the peace of Christ this week, no matter where your path is leading you.

Peace be with you,
Carrie

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

No information

"We express our thanks to our church friends for your calls, thoughts, and prayers during Bob's illness and death."

- Mary Haas and Family

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR INFORMATION ON VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

If you do not receive the mailed packet soon and would like to participate or have questions please email ellen@firstpresjoliet.org.

We have **1 worship service online** with traditional and contemporary songs in the service. Look for it online, (YouTube (firstpresjoliet), facebook, our website) or check the email sent each Saturday afternoon.

We are doing one live worship service at 9 am each Sunday. If you plan to attend **MAKE SURE YOU MAKE A RESERVATION**. Seats are not guaranteed unless you rsvp with the office by noon on Friday. To do this call or email the office.

September 16, 2020

Stewardship Report

2020-2021 Budget	\$734,307
Year to Date Income	\$292,912
Year to Date Expenses	\$267,129

Received for bathroom renovation—\$11,650

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.

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

On Sunday, September 20, we enter the second week of our "Stronger Together" Sermon Series. There are three ways you can worship with us: at our Live Worship Service at 9:00 a.m. or our Online Video Worship on either FaceBook or on YouTube.

We read in the scriptures that "The joy of the Lord is our strength." Whether we worship Live or Online the Spirit of the Lord unites us in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last week I shared with the Staff, Session, and Congregation in Worship (both Online and Live) that **I am going to retire as the Senior Pastor of First Pres. on May 1, 2021.** By that time, I will have served this wonderful church and all of you for 32 years. I will have been a pastor for nearly 41 years and will be 67 years old. My parents are 87 and 84 years of age and I would like to be able to see them more, spend more time with Leslie, and our children and families. It has been a wonderful time of ministry to be able to serve you for all these many years. It seems only yesterday that we came to Joliet but the years have passed quickly. **The session understands the process** for going into an interim period and seeking a new Senior Pastor, which the Presbyterian Church follows. **Our Staff is an excellent staff** and Bo is a wonderful Associate Pastor. All of the Staff find joy and meaning in serving you and the Lord Jesus Christ. We will have time to talk about these things as the months unfold. **I thank you** for being able to serve as your pastor these many years.

Watch this Fall for our **Virtual Children's Worship/Sunday School** called "Celebrate Wonder." It's designed for Children, Preschool through Fifth Grade.

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.

We need you to continue to make reservations for Live Worship Each Sunday by Noon on Friday. Let us know by Noon on Friday and remember to say how many are coming. You can do that by calling the office and leaving a message or talking to one of us and/or by e-mailing the office. **Please remember on Sundays** that for the foreseeable future we are holding only our 9:00 a.m. worship service and have postponed the 10:30 a.m. service due to attendance.

May the Lord bless you and keep you in his love, grace, and mercy.

Craig

TAILGATE DINNER TONIGHT!

If you've been to a tailgate already this year you know it's a blast! Bring your family and friends, chairs, and either order a delicious pot roast from the Jacob Henry Mansion or bring your favorite meal!

Parish Council is so happy to sponsor these Tailgate Dinners and give everyone an opportunity to stay safe but get to spend time with their church community. Keep an eye out for more fun events from them!

Sunday, September 13, "Advance" I Timothy 1:1-11, Mark 12:28-34 (NIV)

What a fall season this is for starting school. School's on again, off again, on, off... They were going to have both in class and remote learning, a hybrid model. But many colleges had tough starts with coronavirus outbreaks.

Grade school and High school systems were watching. Finally, many decided to wait, going back to the classrooms for half a week. Therefore, many kids are home with remote schooling again.

Crystal Lowery was talking about how remote schooling was going at her house this fall because of Covid-19.

"My 2nd grader has 5 video meetings per day. Five zoom meetings. At one point he goes,

'I think this one could have been an e-mail.'

So, I guess he's ready for the Corporate World. "

Just when we thought things were getting much, much better we had an increase in Covid-19 cases and many plans changed. Problems happen in our world.

That's a dynamic we see in the Ephesian Church as we dig into our study of I Timothy. There were problems arising in the Ephesian Church. Until then, the church had been flourishing. Paul had made it a center for evangelism for three years.

The church was growing and very viable. Their mission was to advance God's work, the good news of the Gospel for new life, salvation, by faith in Jesus Christ.

Then all of a sudden, unexpectedly, problems started to surface. We don't hear about them in the book of Ephesians but we do in I Timothy. But now some 3 to 5 years later in the Ephesian Church we learn about the challenges, the impediments, the obstacles that surfaced.

Right in the first chapter, in the opening 5 out of 7 verses, we find out what is going south.

Paul is out of prison and has gone to northern Greece on a mission.

He wants Timothy to stay in Ephesus to guide and lead the church, and solve problems.

Here are the problems that are disrupting the vitality and life in the Ephesian Church.

There were false teachers, teaching false doctrines, beliefs about the faith.

They were spinning out myths, stories of genealogies and promoting controversial speculations and meaningless talk.

They want to be teachers but don't know what they are talking about even though they are so confident.

Doesn't that sound like today with all of our social media, blogs, podcasts, etc.

Check out the sermon online to see what happened.

All of our virtual Worship Services are available on our YouTube page and website.