



e-News

June 16, 2021

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



A NEW DAY FOR THE CHURCH—A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU

A New Day for The Church – A new Opportunity for you. The Book of Acts, is a letter from Luke to Theophilus, and captures the life of the early church in the light of the resurrection.

Sunday, June 20th :Do You Understand

Do you (we, I) understand? It's a valid and important question to ask ourselves, and each other, as we read and do our best to apply God's Word to our life - to our decisions, our actions, our words and our thoughts. We find this addressed in this week's text (Acts 6:26-31) as Philip encounters a man pondering words from Isaiah. Philip takes time to help the man understand what he is reading, and then takes the extra step to introduce the man to Jesus. There is some really good stuff here.

Philip leads us to understand that God often presents opportunities to share our faith, and this reading, in particular, reminds us that sometimes, we don't understand Scripture ourselves. Scripture is highly contextual -- and that can make the "so what" a little puzzling to discern. And so we study, together, and individually, God's Word. The further we wade into our relationship with Jesus through scripture, the better prepared we are to answer questions - because I'm pretty sure many questions people who don't know Jesus may have are the same ones we have had, or still do.

When I read the Bible, I often jot down my questions. One question I had this week was "Why on earth was the man reading out loud?" Well, it turns out that it was customary in the first century to read out loud. Why you may ask? Well, I don't know the answer to that just yet. I will need to dig a little deeper into ancient customs for that answer. I'm sure someone in the congregation knows the answer already! :)

The bottom line? Questions are okay. In fact, they are more than okay - because when we look for the answer, especially when we look for the answer together, we grow in faith. Remember, Jesus is for everyone. Everyone. All the time. Many people don't know him yet. Be encouraged by Philip to read the Bible regularly. You never know when someone may have a question for you to answer, or to look into further.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

We encourage you to call us with information to share with the First Pres Family. We also appreciate current information such as addresses to mail to and emails and phone numbers to contact you and keep you connected with First Pres.

THIS WEEK'S BLOG, BOOK OF ACTS—6/17-6/23

- 6/17 Ch. 19:11-41—Miracles in Ephesus
- 6/18 Ch. 20:17-38—Paul's Farewell to Miletus
- 6/21 Ch. 21:17-40—Paul Seized in Temple
- 6/22 Ch. 22:1-30—Paul's Defense & Recalls
- 6/23 Ch.23:12-35— A Conspiracy to Kill Paul

PROJECT LINUS

Project Linus is back! Bring your scissors and join us in Hoffman Hall! We are excited to get back to making blankets with you! We are meeting from 9– Noon on the 28th. Let the Office know if you're coming.

We have **1 worship service** with traditional and contemporary songs in the service. Look for it online,(YouTube (firstpresjoliet), facebook, our website).

There is one service at 9 a.m. Sunday morning. Reservations are required by contacting the office by noon on the Friday before.

June 16, 2021

Stewardship Report

2021-2022 Budget	\$734,307
Year to Date Income	\$170,046
Year to Date Expenses	\$120,746

This includes \$23,487 of Employee Retention Credit.
Per Capita: \$38.47

You may text your gift to FPJ at (815)205-3044 or go online to use a credit card
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... Bo Mircea, Pastor

First Pres you are an awesome church! This past Sunday we got to celebrate not only Pastor's Craig Ministry at First Pres but also a full Sunday Reopening, with a full choir, and lots of people in worship. Going forward Sunday morning will follow the same format, all people are welcomed on Sunday morning, no reservations required at this time. While we are transitioning to a full worship experience First Presbyterian Church follows State guidelines - masks are recommended for unvaccinated individuals and those who are more comfortable wearing masks. At his time each council is looking at all the little things we need in place for a full reopening and working through all those little details.

Part of this return to normal, Children's Worship- Sunday school for kids is back starting this Sunday. Our classrooms will welcome all kids age 3 through 5th grade on Sunday morning after the children's sermon.

Vacation Bible School registration is still open and bag pick up is now! Go to the Website and get all the information needed or help us by spreading the word to someone that might like to get involved in this.

Looking towards September I would like you to encourage you to find a place to serve. I know we will need lots of hands to make things like Wednesday Night Dinners, Saturday Breakfast, and Study Groups, possible. In the words of Uncle Sam: WE NEED YOU!

Looking forward to see you in worship this Sunday,

Pastor Bo

VERY, VERY, GRATEFUL!

To everyone in our First Pres. Family, please know that Les and I are very thankful for your wonderful retirement celebration last Sunday. I could not have imagined a better or more special celebration for my retirement and years of ministry with you. It was so gracious, generous, loving, and joyous. It was so great to worship with you at both services in the morning and take in all of the music, prayers, and message. Having the celebration lunch at the Victorian Ball Room was wonderful.

I want to thank the committee led by Sue Lee (Mary & Don Caisley, Pat Costion, Mary Gajcak, Mary Jane Johnson, Jill Strimel, and Ed Schultz) for all of their efforts. Each one of the speakers were so very good and encouraging. It was so great to receive the stack of index cards with everyone's memories over the years to read through and think about. I will treasure them. Your gifts to us were amazingly generous.

Again, please know how thankful and grateful I am to all of you. Leslie, Allison & Ryan, Aubrey, and Colin all express the same gratitude to you.

Many Blessings from the Lord Jesus Christ to you, always!
Craig

Last Sundays Sermon

Matthew 25:31-40 - Ministry is more than a job, it is the invitation to all of us to be part of serving the Kingdom of God. Ministry is not about the pastor, the minister, the spiritual leader. Ministry is about each person discovering their place and call, their gifts, and saying: Here I am Lord use my life. So while we look at what that means in the long term, we can start with the simple things, looking at Jesus and following in his footsteps. Help the poor, listen to the oppressed, lift those that are need, bring joy to those around us, and comfort to those that are grieving. Ministry is not about the pulpit, ministry is about the service we each bring. Lord help us to serve you in any way we can.

Blessings, Bo

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

Vacation Bible School!

VBS is virtual again this year! Registration is open ! Next week is the last week to sign up and get the supply bag! Check our website for more info and to sign up!

Habitat House Dedication

The Habit for Humanity House that First Pres had volunteers help with, has a dedication soon!

June 25th at 9 am, at 1517 N Raynor.

The poem Allison and Aubrey wrote, and Allison read at Pastor Craig Herr's Retirement Celebration is available to be read on our website [HERE](#)

The pre-school is reopening!

We are starting with a limit of 8 children per service. As always the preschool is for children 3 through 5th grade. Priority will be to children that cannot sit through service easily. The nursery is remaining closed for the time being. Safety protocols are being followed within the preschool rooms. All adults will be wearing masks, and toys and surfaces will be cleaned/quarantined as appropriate. Kids will be dismissed after the Children's Worship portion of the service as we have done, and kids should be picked up after service from the two regular classrooms.