



e-News

January 4th, 2023

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

CHECK OUT THESE VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES WITH FIRST PRES!

Micro Pantry

There is an opening for the 1st Friday of each month. If you are interested please take a look at the volunteer and donor information available on our website. Scroll down on the homepage and just click the 'Micro Pantry Volunteer and Donor Info' button. If you're interested in volunteering or if you donate food make sure to check it out!

Are You Called to Serve?

We have a great opportunity for folks who want to be more involved in First Pres.

If you feel called to serve on Session, on any of our councils, as a Night Deacon, or as a Day Deacons please reach out to Ed Schultz or Craig Randolph

Help Un-Decorate

Jan. 14th at 9am

Come lend a hand in taking down our Christmas decorations as we prepare for the new year!

Coffee and donuts will be served!

Volunteer Opportunity: St. John's Food Pantry

January 28th

Our Night Deacons will be sponsoring the St. John's Mobile Food Pantry and they're asking for volunteers. Shifts are open for 7am—11am.

Full description and volunteer registration is available on our website.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Prayers of health and recovery for Mary Lynn Keir.

The January Birthday calendar is available on the homepage of our website.

Poinsettia Pick Up

Poinsettia plants are ready to be taken home! You can pick up yours on Sunday mornings, or during office hours on weekdays. The office is open 8:30-4:20 M-F. If you plan to stop in at lunchtime please call the office ahead of time!

Pancake Breakfast

January 7th at 8:30 am

Stop in to help out or share in our Free Pancake Breakfast hosted by our Night Deacons! All are invited!

Youth Group

Our First Pres Youth Group will be meeting once again starting in January! Meetings will run from 6-8pm with dinner, games, and fellowship.

Mark your calendar for:

January 3rd, 2023

Stewardship Report

2022-2023 Budget	\$772,600
Year to Date Income	\$4358,906
Year to Date Expenses	\$513,512

Per Capita: \$42.00

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 Roy Backus, Transitional Pastor

The National Football League is a part of my adult life. Growing up in Texas football was a shared faith and obligation. The median salary of an eleven man, Texas high school football head coach is a little over \$110,000 a year. For me football is the result of nature and nurture. Of course cheering from the stands, playing in the band in the stands, and assisting the players with their homework is not actually playing the violent sport. (I did play peewee football in the sixth grade for ½ a season. Since practice was on Wednesday nights when I went to church, I didn't get much attention or playing time. As my father led me to believe, serving the Lord on Wednesday nights was more important than tackling or blocking techniques.) I know the choice isn't necessarily a either or, but in the long run football really isn't that important.

The first quarter of last Monday Night's NFL game between the Buffalo Bills and the Cincinnati Bengals changed many people's in tone and direction in a brief moment. Damar Hamlin, the Bills' safety made a great tackle, stood up, blacked out, and fell backwards. Then the race by both the NFL teams medical staffs to save his life began. He was resuscitated and his heart had to be shocked into beating again. He was on the field for a lengthy period of time before he was taken to an excellent trauma center in Cincinnati. In one event in a few moments, everyone's attention shifted from the game to a young man's life. Everyone knew what was the true priority. The game was secondary and the result was postponement of the game, even though there's only one week left in the regular season. The game might be canceled. The decision is not as important as the knowledge that life is more important than a sporting event. It really is true. (BTW Damar Hamlin is still in critical but stable condition in an intensive care unit.)

Life is more important than a game. Our lives get distracted and pulled apart by all kinds of lesser issues and emotions. We end up putting more time, energy and imagination into the passing inconveniences and opposing viewpoints, than we place in caring for one another's souls. We even set aside years of dear friendships over misunderstandings from second hand biased information. When we finally check out what really matters, we are called back to the central issues of our lives, those whom we share life, and our calling in God's service to one another and others.

It is nice to know that even the NFL, a multibillion dollar cutthroat business, can recognize life as more important than a game. May we too learn this easy, but often passed over, lesson within God's love.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Roy

A Note from Carrie Kapral, Lay Pastor

Hi Friends!

I've been back with all of you just over a month now, and I need to share with you that our worship together has been very special. I am reminded, anew, at what a gift it is to gather with other people who know Jesus, and are just doing their best to stay on the path. God has made us to be in community with each other - and when we worship together, have coffee together, serve together, and just spend time together, we begin to know and understand one another. I love that there are many ways to worship, but I truly believe that gathering together in person is healthy for our souls and for our relationships. I encourage you to continue attending in-person worship regularly or, if you've been away, please come back. Bring your kiddos. Bring them in their jammies if you need to. There is always room for God's children - at any age and any stage.

January 8 is Baptism of the Lord Sunday. It is a regular part of our liturgical calendar. Part of our tradition. This is an important time in our faith life, as we remember Jesus' baptism, recall our own baptisms, and remember that baptism isn't an end to our faith journey, it is part of the beginning!

Speaking of beginning, it is only January and we already have sooooo many things happening at First Pres! Please check the calendar or the website for full information.

Some of the things -

January 14 - let's **undecorate** the church together! There will be donuts, and maybe some of us can go out for breakfast when we are done.

Midweek begins again on **January 11!** There is something for everyone. FOR REAL. Come and join us.

January 26 - a baby shower **bruncheon** with the women of Oasis!

I'm looking forward to seeing you Sunday - or any day! I'd love to meet you for coffee or tea sometime.

In the interim, peace be with you!

Pastor Carrie

GET READY FOR MIDWEEK!

Midweek Family Nights are starting up again next week, on the 11th. Whether it's just you or your entire family everyone is invited to join us for this wonderful tradition every Wednesday.

5:30 pm—Kid's Music Class and Adult Fellowship

6 pm— Fellowship dinner

6:30 pm—break for Bible Studies (Men, Women, and Children)

Nursery care is available