



e-News

September 27th, 2023
 805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435
 815-727-9259 firstpresjoliet.org

MIDWEEK:

Midweek Dinner and Classes each Wednesday!
 We have Kids Music, Kid's Bible Lessons, Dinner for everyone,
 Rec time for kids, and Bible Studies for adults.

NOTE: There will be no Music Class this Wednesday.
 Kids will have an extended Bible Lesson and activities
 instead. Music Class will resume next Wednesday.

Hello!

I have no words to express my thanks for your
 farewell to me. All I can think to say is **THANK YOU**
 for your prayers, your love, the generous gift, and
 the wisdom I take with me because of all of you.

Peace be with each one of you and I pray for God's
 blessings on the ministries of First Pres as you move
 forward into the future.

With great fondness,
 Carrie

Children's Church Corner

Faith Word: FAITH— *to believe in God's presence & to hope.*

Lesson for 10/1: 'Abraham and Sarah' Genesis 12:1-9

Bible Verse: "The Lord carried out just what he had
 promised." - Genesis 12:21

Church Family

Prayers of health and recovery for Helen Steinberg's siblings Judi,
 with her recent surgery, and Jim after a recent cancer diagnosis.

Healing for Don and Mary Caisley's grandson Aaron.

Continued prayers for Keith Farr as he deals with health concerns.
 Praise to the Lord for continued good medical results for Libby Hall.

Prayers of healing for Chuck Sticklen.

Sympathies and prayers to the friends and family of Glenn Brosell
 who passed last week.

SUNDAY SERVANTS 10/1/23

USHERS: Ed Schultz, Mark Dykema, Reed Mott

COFFEE: Barb Rodgers

LITURGIST: Bev Adelman

ACOLYTE: Cristian Haldorson-Diaz

SOUND: Keith LeVasseur

VIDEO: Matt Blaser

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Stewardship Report

2023-2024 Budget	\$772,600
Year to Date Income	\$266,226
Year to Date Expenses	\$263,616
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 PNC Process

Planning	Mission Study	Data Evaluation	Resume Evaluations	Interviews	Pastor Visits	Pastor Selection	Pastor Acceptance
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The Mission Study Report is nearing completion. More details to come soon.

A Letter from Transitional Pastor Roy Backus

Grace and peace be with you. Grace and peace. Pastor Roy, your Transitional Head of Staff, believes in plain talk from time to time. I believe this is one of those times.

CHURCH GROWTH CYCLES: All churches go through cycles in ministry. The key is to seek the Lord's guidance throughout the cycles of ups and downs. There are no plateaus; they are simply preparations for up or down. We might be afraid to speak openly about it, but FPJ is at a pivotal point between the celebrated past (an up), experiencing uncomfortable struggles in the pivotal present (a plateau which can go either way), and the Lord's future for us (Is it an up or a down?). When a church finds itself in any of these positions there is anxiety. If we are failing, people want something that will turn the church around. If the church is at a transition point, we just want someone to make decisions to get over it. If we are growing, then there are other struggles. That is life. We will always have challenges and distractions no matter where we are. Life, people are simply that way. Honest.

IT'S OUR CHOICE: So what can we do? We can choose which kind of anxiety we prefer. We can give up, hide, or commiserate. Some of us wish to wait for the new Head of Staff to arrive. That will be a wonderful day, and it will come! But, I believe we can tackle some of the present challenges and greet the new head of staff with a church full of energy, ministry and power. We can choose the Lord's Holy Spirit and a grateful attitude of expectation. With a committed and expecting congregation, the next Senior Minister will be set up for success with you.

MY JOB: It's my ministry, in this place at this time, to encourage evaluation of present and possible future ministries. This will address the status quo and make folks think new thoughts including issues, anxieties, and problems. New thoughts include saying goodbye to comfy traditions and discomfort with an approaching future. We can boldly take the challenges and make the most of them together, or we can continue to wring our hands in the present lull and simply wait.

SOME PRESENT QUESTIONS: The Session has hired Lindsay Gordon to be our new Director of Children and Youth Ministries. We know we must address the needs of our present and future children and

youth. We must minister to whole families. Lindsay comes with the gifts and experience to lead us in our renewal of those ministries.

Do we have enough money? That's up to us. Any and all offerings given to the Lord through FPJ are investments in the Holy Spirit's work through us. We prayerfully invest your offerings. I believe we are called to move forward and see a renewal of the power of the Holy Spirit working through our church family in the present. I believe we can truly lay the foundation for a vital church with relevant ministries. I am always open for conversations about where we are and how we are addressing our needs. Stay in prayer, and with me, recommit yourself to God's investment in us.

October 1 is World Communion Sunday. We will celebrate the Lord's Supper with Christians around the world. There is always a deep feeling of oneness with our brothers and sisters in Christ with a longing for the time when we are truly one in the Lord. Until then, we celebrate the Lord's vision for all humankind in Christ.

This year we will celebrate in a new way. The service will begin with our Communion Guild leading the children. They will set the Table of the Lord for the Sacrament. Together with the pastors, the children, and congregation will learn about the Sacrament, so that our covenant children may participate in the meal. I know there are many different understandings of whom can take communion. Our Reformed, Covenantal belief is that children wear the mark of the covenant in their baptism, so they are part of our faith family to whom the Lord's grace is freely offered. Together we will lead them in their receiving of the Christ meal.

Your pastors and Communion Guild are looking forward to this time of education and worship. I pray that you are too.

The sermon will focus on Noah, the great flood, and the covenant. Together we will see how the Lord began creation, all over again, and left us a sign of grace for his universal covenant. There are many lessons in the event which speak of God's grace for all. I encourage you to read the Noah experience in Genesis, Chapters 6 thru 9. See you Sunday.

Grace and peace be with you.

Pastor Roy

Associate Pastor, Bo Mircea

One of my favorite kids songs is Big House, based on this verse: "My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?" — John 14:2. In not so many words, Jesus lays out the why for His ministry and consequently our ministry. Heaven would be a crummy place if it were just a few of us. And that is the heart of so many ministries opportunities we have here at FPJ. Open the door, or maybe a window, so people can peer in and get a glimpse of what God's kingdom looks like. I know what you might be thinking, but we are not perfect or anywhere close to being perfect. Well this is where God is still working on us every day. And so his Kingdom comes closer and closer, to be as in heaven so here in our world. Would you pray this week that as a church we will practice open doors, open windows, and really be the people that God wants us to be so others will hear the invitation that God has for the world?

Happening at 805 Western:

-**Today is Midweek**, and I would like to invite you come over, not just for good food, but for great fellowship for all ages, and then maybe stay for choir. It is so good to see the church alive with the sounds of kids running around, and people chatting at the tables sharing life. It is a good time.

-**Next Saturday (10/7)** is our Monthly **Free Pancake Breakfast** - stop by have a pancake and some sausages but also get to know some of the amazing people that stop by every month. It is a great ministry to see in action. Saturday 8:30 am doors open for you.

-**Trunk and Treat** registration is live on the website, and we need trunks, people serving food, cooking, and welcoming the many people in our neighborhood. This ministry of First Pres has brought many people over the years that have found our church to be a place for their families. Who knows what God can do this year? If I was Mister Rogers I might say: you want to be that neighbor.

Have a great week,

Blessings,
Pastor Bo