



e-News

November 29th, 2023
 805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435
 815-727-9259 firstpresjoliet.org

Stars of Hope

Wrapped gifts are due back at FPJ by 6pm Nov. 29th or to MorningStar Mission by Dec. 1st.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, December 2nd

Worship Council invites YOU to join us as we decorate our church for the Christmas season! Decorating begins at 9 am, but please feel free to come at 8:30 am for the Night Deacons' free pancake breakfast. You will enjoy good food and fellowship before we prepare First Pres for Advent and Christmas. "Many hands make light work" - we should be done before noon. Thank You!!

POINSETTIAS

Cut off date is Dec. 11th

Help decorate our sanctuary this Christmas with beautiful poinsettia plants. **Each poinsettia is \$15.** Place your poinsettia order today on our website or with the form in your bulletin

OASIS Women's Ministry Rialto Outing

December 3rd Show at 2pm

An outing to see 'Away in the Basement: A Church Basement Ladies Christmas', a festive comedy show.

Tickets are \$45. Please contact Kris Hayden if you would like to attend. (815-258-8617)(tkkhay@yahoo.com)

Children's Church Corner

Faith Word: JOY: A feeling of gratitude or happiness.

Lesson for Sun. 12/3: 'Mary's Joy' Luke 1:26-38, 46-56

Bible Verse: "With all my heart I glorify the Lord! In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior. -Luke 1:46-47

Lesson for Wed. 11/29: 'God helps Daniel Act Wisely' Daniel 1

Church Family

Continued prayers for Don and Mary Caisley's grandson Aaron.

Prayers of health for Judy Jordan and Mary Jane Johnson.

Prayers of healing for Mary Caisley's sister Linda after her recent serious accident.

Prayers of healing for Al Brooks after his recent surgery.

Prayers of healing for Peter Mbi after his recent surgery.

SUNDAY SERVANTS 12/3/23

USHERS: Ed Schultz, Mark Fumagalli, Sue Fordyce, Laura House

COFFEE: Sue Fordyce

LITURGIST: Tandy and Bill Penhale with grandchildren

ACOLYTE: Crey Blaser

SOUND: Cliff Stepina

VIDEO: Matt Blaser

Youth Group Christmas Party

December 17th 6-8pm

Mark your calendar!

November 29, 2023

Stewardship Report

2023-2024 Budget	\$772,600
Year to Date Income	\$357,027
Year to Date Expenses	\$366,727
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 PNC has been working diligently for months on the Mission Study Report to develop a clear understanding of who First Pres is today and who we are called to be. The study talks about our church both past and present. Compiling this information has been a huge undertaking, and is vital in helping us find the person best suited as our next called pastor. The PNC is working on some edits to the report and will post the revised version on our website when it is completed.

A Letter from Transitional Head Pastor, Roy Backus

Grace and peace be with you.
Grace and peace.

Weddings are grace opportunities for the Gospel. Oh I know they are creative tangled webs of expectations, compromises, and caring for delicate emotions and feelings. They do take a great deal of energy on almost everyone’s behalf. You can simply use your imagination and consider the differing participants the bride, the bride’s mother, the bride’s father, the groom, his parents, the bride’s maids, the groom’s men, flower girls, ring bearers, the instrumental musicians, the vocalists, the seating of all the relatives and friends, etc. There’s just a bunch on the line. How could I possibly enjoy such an occasion, knowing that no wedding is perfect and there will always be a rub or two?

My enjoyment of weddings comes directly from the Gospel of Jesus. Each one is an opportunity to know a couple and their families and friends in a new way. I get to share several hours with them and get to lead a new set of friends and portion of the community into the church building. Such an occasion breaks the mystery of a strange building and place. Each of the new folks will be able to enter knowing somebody and what the building actually is.

Conversations, playfulness, all within the blessed awareness of faith and God’s presence is pretty wonderful. The possibilities for the Lord Jesus to move within all the people present is always there. Who knows how rich a seed of the Gospel can be planted in folks who rarely think of the ultimate priorities in life. Such occasions are true gifts.

The wedding couple gets an introduction into the Gospel through 1 Corinthians 13, Paul’s simple, yet profound, Spirit filled treatise on Love. Hearts and imaginations always open each time I read, *“Now remains, faith, hope and love, these three. But the greatest of these is love.”* and I am reminded that faith, hope, and love, are gifts from God. Along with that reminder, I realize we talk a lot about faith and love, but we rarely nail down the meaning, and gift, of hope. This week we will converse about hope and our living and experiencing it. Our texts are Isaiah 9:1-7 and Matthew 4:12-17.

Grace and peace be with you,
Pastor Roy

A Letter from Director of Children and Youth Ministries, Lindsay Gordon

Hello everyone!

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving! I find it wild that we’re already entering into the Christmas season. While this time can often become a blur of busy schedules, mad dashes, and (maybe) too many Christmas cookies, I hope that you find time to pause and rest in the weeks to come.

One of the joys of the season for me is all of the Christmas plays, musicals, and recitals. They always bring me a smile, as I remember the many that I took part in as a child as well! If you have a child or student taking part in an event like this in the coming season, I would love to attend and cheer them on, if you would kindly share the details of the event with me.

We will be gathering for youth group this upcoming Sunday at 6pm, continuing our conversation on miracles. We’ll be discussing a story very dear to my heart and personal testimony - the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, in Mark 5. What I love about this story is that the healing goes far beyond the physical. Jesus not only heals her body, but also her heart and her identity. I am thankful every day that Jesus still does the same for us, too.

I look forward to seeing you at Midweek, and hopefully this Saturday as we decorate for Christmas as well. My hope is that our youth group comes out and represents as we come together in joy and Christmas cheer. I am heavily resisting the urge to make an “it’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas” joke right now!

Blessings,
Lindsay Gordon

Micro Food Pantry—Holiday Request

For November and December we are asking for special donations of dry milk and holiday baking items for our Micro Pantry. There will be a collection box in the Narthex. *Examples of requested items include, but are not limited to: spices, flour, sugar, cake/cookie mixes, icing, veg shortening, baking powder, baking soda.*

Christmas Breakfast

December 17th 8:30-9:40am

Our Night Deacons will be continuing the tradition of a free special Christmas Breakfast on Dec 17th. Feed your body with ham, French toast, eggs, and fruit before feeding your soul in worship.

Dinner Out Group

December 21st 5pm

Angeli’s in Naperville. RSVP to Carol Kline (815) 630-7099

ADVENT 2023

Advent begins this Sunday, 12/3. Advent *devotionals* have been mailed for adults, teens, and kids (extras available at request). Starting this Sunday kids will receive pieces of their own **Nativity craft**, with new pieces each Sunday of Advent. Make sure to follow us on Facebook to enjoy **music** by our own musicians, shared each day of this season of Advent.



WHY30 Christmas Party
December 15th @7pm in the Fireside Room

- * The main dish will be provided but please bring a (peanut-free) food item to share.
- * There will be a White Elephant gift exchange (\$20 limit).

Don't forget to wear your festive attire!