



# e-News

January 31st, 2024  
 805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435  
 815-727-9259 firstpresjoliet.org

## YOUTH GROUP SUPERBOWL-ING

February 9th—meet there @7pm

Youths in 6th-12th grade are invited to a night of fun at Bowlero in Romeoville, from 7-9pm. Bring a friend! Please RSVP with Lindsay by Sunday 2/4. Lindsay.gordon@firstpresjoliet.org

## ASH WEDNESDAY

February 14th

**9am -10am:** Drop-in imposition of ashes & prayer time  
**5:30pm:** Fellowship Dinner  
**6:30pm:** Ash Wednesday Worship Service

## DINNER OUT GROUP

Thursday Feb. 15th

Meet at La Dulce Vita in Plainfield at 6pm  
 Speak with Carol Kline to be included in the reservation

## EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday March 23rd @9am

Participants can enjoy a delicious breakfast, craft activities, a reading of the Easter Story, pictures with the Easter Bunny, and of course an egg hunt!

## Children's Church Corner

**February's Faith Word:** GUIDE— Showing the way, like the light of Christ.

**Lesson for Sun. 2/4:** 'The Lord's Prayer' *Matthew 6:5-15*

**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. 1/31:** "Jesus Calls Matthew to be His Friend"  
*Matthew 9:9-13*

## January 31st, 2024

### Stewardship Report

<b>2023-2024 Budget</b>	\$772,600
<b>Year to Date Income</b>	\$510,585
<b>Year to Date Expenses</b>	\$524,552
<b>Per Capita</b>	\$43.00

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 submitted the finalized Mission Study Report (you can read it on our website) to the Commission on Ministry of Blackhawk Presbytery. Soon we will be able to access the Church Leadership Connection website where we will put together the information that is needed to search for a pastor. We hope to start seeing resumes and applications in the near future. This is a slow and tedious process and we are committed to being thorough in our search.

*A letter from Transitional Head Pastor Roy Backus*

Grace and peace, be with you. Grace and peace.

It's my hope that we all realize that, the number one reason people accept Christ, is because they know a Christian. AND the number one reason people do not come to know Christ, is because they know a Christian. Note, I did not say that "the number one reason people do not become Church Members is because . . ." That may be true, but our mandate is to bring people to Christ, not necessarily bring them to church. (Maybe this is another example of the former statement as a Shall statement, and latter statement as an Is Appropriate Statement!)

We are called to share the Good News of our Lord. The Apostle Paul knew and practiced sharing the life-giving message of our Savior. This week, we will see how great and grand our Lord really is. Isaiah's message in Isaiah 40 portrays our Lord as the all powerful creator and care giver. We will see how reliant we are upon him, and how graceful he is towards us. The story of Jesus' healings in Capernaum will remind us of our Lord's ministry and in a round about fashion state the goal of all people. We will discuss these two essential passages of God's Word, Isaiah 40 and Mark 1:29-39. In addition you could read companion passages of 1 Corinthians 9 and Psalm 147.

Grace and peace be with each of you.  
Pastor Roy

## **SUNDAY SERVANTS 2/4/24**

**USHERS:** Al Brooks

**COFFEE:** Sue Fordyce

**LITURGIST:** Dee Mullen

**ACOLYTE:** Abel DeNieuwe

**SOUND:** Keith LeVasseur

**VIDEO:** Drew Penhale

*A letter from Director of Children and Youth Ministries, Lindsay Gordon*

Hello everyone!

What a wonderful Sunday full of all kinds of celebrations! I was so grateful to be able to share in that joy with all of you. Thank you so much for your warm reception towards me and all of the new members, elders, and deacons.

It's hard to believe that we are already a month into 2024. Maybe at this point in the year, some of the "new car smell" has worn off - what once seemed new and exciting maybe feels a little mundane. Maybe resolutions have already been abandoned, or maybe it feels difficult to enjoy the newness of the year in the midst of the cold and rain. It's easy for exhaustion, or even burnout, to feel like it's beginning to creep in, even only a month into the year. And it's even easier to feel like we have to power through on our own strength.

I was given a reminder this week of where our source of strength comes from, when Isaiah 40:31 came up in my devotional reading: "but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." If we try to power through on our own strength, we will fail. "Faking it 'til we make it" can only get us so far. But God is the source of our strength - He is trustworthy to renew our strength when we put our hope in Him. I don't know about you, but I needed that reminder this week!

I hope that you can join us at Midweek - the hard work from the kids' music program sure showed this Sunday as they led us in worship!

In Christ,  
Lindsay Gordon

*A letter from Associate Pastor Bo Mircea*

*"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1*

Two weeks ago in my sermon I mentioned the interaction between a pastor and a Christmas - Easter church goer. When the pastor asked the man to be more active and show up to church in between those high holidays, to 'be active in the Lord's Army', the man responded "I am in the Secret Service".

That little story got me thinking and praying on it the last two weeks. In part because it warms my heart to see people excited and involved in the life of the church. Also because I know, not just from experience but also from the Bible and the church's witness over the many years, that faith grows when the people of God come and do the things of God. You might have heard me speak about the "Individualistic faith" that seems to describe our western approach to faith. When we compare that to the roots of our faith, I believe it is nothing close to it. So I want to ask you to join me in a simple prayer for the following month: Lord, help us make room, and find the time and space to be in your House and hear your Good News.

### **Happening at 805 Western:**

This past Sunday we celebrated the Lord in the lives of people that have heard the call of God in their hearts. Some became members of this faith community, some have accepted a call to serve the Lord as an elder or a deacon. I ask that you please pray that their lives will be blessed as they follow the Lord in this place.

Saturday is our Free Pancake Breakfast for the community. You know what I am going to say: You should be there for the best pancakes on this side of town. Hope to see you Saturday morning at 8:30 or before if you can come out and help serve, or are curious about the Night Deacon's Ministries.

Next Wednesday, February 7th, Day Deacons, or the visiting deacons as they are known around here, will meet at 9 am in Fireside Room. If you are interested in getting to know and serve people through this ministry you can always join us.

Blessings,  
Pastor Bo

**THANK YOU TO ALL OF  
OUR NEW OFFICERS AND  
ELDERS:**

Tiffany DeNieuwe,  
Michael Krueger,  
Sue Fordyce,  
Drew Penhale,  
Bev Adelman,  
Joe Boyd,  
Nola Boyd,  
Rick DeNieuwe,  
Estella Jurkovich,  
Jasmine Keir,  
Scherrie Sanchez,  
Jackie Brooks,  
Helen Steinberg,  
Mark Schneidewind

**THANK YOU TO ALL OF  
OUR OUTGOING  
OFFICERS:**

Brandi Kuczek,  
Kendra Albers,  
Jon Belfield,  
Ed Schultz,  
Ken Graham,  
John Savage

**WELCOME TO OUR NEW  
MEMBERS:**

Lindsay Gordon,  
Michael Krueger,  
Jim Pongrace,  
Maria Pongrace,  
Jen Garlitz