



e-News

February 21st, 2024
 805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435
 815-727-9259 firstpresjoliet.org

A NOTE FROM SESSION

Dear Congregation,

Session has approved the intermediate plan for ministry from March first until a senior pastor is selected and approved. Pastor Bo Mircea has been unanimously selected by Session to serve as Acting Senior Pastor/Acting Head of Staff from March 1, 2024, until a Called Senior Pastor/Head of Staff is in place. The terms Senior Pastor and Head of Staff are used interchangeably by Presbyterian Church USA. The first is congregation focused and the second personnel focused.

Let us look forward with excitement to what the Lord will do in our congregation as we serve together.

- The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Joliet

LINUS PROJECT

Monday Feb 26th 9am-Noon

No experience required! Bring a pair of scissors and help make fleece blankets for children in need, right here in our community.

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. 2/25: 'Zacchaeus' Luke 19:1-10

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. 2/21: "Jesus Brings a Widow's Son Back to Life" Luke 7:11-17

Church Family

Prayers of relief and recovery for Lindsay Gordon as she suffers through an intense prolonged migraine.

Prayers for Helen Steinberg's brother Jim.

Prayers requested for the healing of Anna Jean Wilhelms, daughter of Carol (Randolph) and Nathan Wilhelms and Granddaughter of Sarah and Craig Randolph to be born about May 30, 2024.

Prayers and sympathies to Reed Mott and his family after the recent passing of his nephew Ryan Mott.

Prayers of health and recovery for Joyce Bossen.

Prayers for Mary Caisley's sister Linda.

SPRING FEVER CRAFT AND VENDOR FAIR

April 27th 9am-2pm

30+ Crafters and Vendors expected on site

Special prize drawings | Snack Café

Interested crafters & vendors can find more info on our website, or by contacting Kris Hayden.

Music Lessons with Sarah are cancelled this week, but we have some fun game surprises for kids today at 5, you don't want to miss it!

February 21st, 2024

Stewardship Report

2023-2024 Budget	\$772,600
Year to Date Income	\$545,896
Year to Date Expenses	\$552,110
Per Capita	\$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 finished compiling the information for First Pres' Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP). We are in the process of submitting this so that it may be approved and then posted on the Church Leadership Connection website. Once that happens, our search will begin and the website will match potential candidates to our specifications. Please continue to pray for the committee and the process as we seek to find the person God has chosen for First Pres.

A letter from Transitional Head Pastor Roy Backus

Grace and peace be with you. Grace and peace.

Too often we complicate life. This is especially true when it comes to church and religious practices. Years ago I read a "textlike" theology book titled, "A Quest for Vitality in Religion." Years later I discovered the author was a Southern Baptist professor at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, KY. He wrote under a pseudo name, because he would be attacked for his positions on theology and the cycles of church life. (The book opened many new avenues of thoughtful faith to me.)

The flow of the book traced an established faith empowered by a spiritual leader and the new insights and energy of his/her vision instilled, through experience, in the first generation of disciples. Then the second generation of disciples (usually raised in the faith), has to establish practices to re-establish the continued practices of the faith, and the loyal practice. The third generation brings questions of the practices and meanings. By the fourth generation there is a disengagement between the foundations of the original generation of disciple experience and the present practice of tradition. Through the practice of the established norms of worship, the beliefs grow distant from the early generations. The present practitioners do not have the immediate experience of the early generations. In quick order, the faith tradition will become brittle and unable to continue and shrink to fit only those who practice with a sense of necessity to the past traditional loyalty.

This has happened in religious communities in all traditions all over the world. This death of vitality continues, unless there is a new awakening in the present, isolated generation. A newness of religious experience and a new vitality of discovery and meaning can happen in the new generation with visionary leaders who translate the original beliefs, truths, experiences from dead history to living experience in the present. It rarely happens, but it can through faith and commitment.

These last few weeks I've been reminded that 1st Pres., Joliet, will never be the church that it once was. Only the present disciples can create a new vitality of what this church can become. A renewal can only come from your hearts to bring the new, necessary vitality to the present.

This week, our central lesson is in the Gospel of John, Chapter 10, verses 24 through 30. Read the entire chapter and be reminded of our Lord's commitment to care for us for eternity. It's my daily prayer that we live in the warmth and vitality of his call.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Roy

P.S. The Lectionary texts are: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, Psalm 22:23-31, Romans 4:13-25 and Mark 8:31-38.

A letter from Director of Children and Youth Ministries Lindsay Gordon

Hello everyone!

Rocket greatly enjoyed being with you last Sunday - thank you so much for your warm reception of my sweet boy! Youth group also had a wonderful time at our Super Bowl(ing) event on Sunday. I look forward to being able to gather together again in the youth group room this upcoming Sunday. It's so good to be able to be with you all again, and I'm so grateful for your continued prayers.

As we look ahead to March (already?!), I am so excited for all the joy and celebration that comes with Easter. On March 23rd, we will be hosting our annual Easter Egg Hunt! We will need lots of hands on deck to make it happen, so I would ask that you would begin to prayerfully consider volunteering - either with the egg hunt itself, or with crafts, serving food, welcoming families - there's a place for everyone! It will be a really fun day, and I certainly hope you'll join us.

I look forward to seeing you at Midweek tonight! I hope you have a wonderful rest of your week.

In Christ,
Lindsay Gordon

A letter from Associate Pastor Bo Mircea

Psalm 37:23

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way."

This morning as I was talking with Pastor Roy about this coming Sunday, I was taken back in time to the many years of knowing him and serving with him through Blackhawk Presbytery and more. Even talking to my parents, and them remembering Roy playing saxophone at my ordination service back in 2014, brought back some good, heart felt memories. As we look at saying good bye to him this Sunday, I would like to encourage you to remember the good and precious moments of seeing God's grace in the time we have been blessed to serve alongside him. It is my prayer for Pastor Roy that God will smile on his future, that SHALOM will guard him and his family, and as he picks up his saxophone again in his "new retirement" he will find the music that soothes his soul. Roy Backus - Thank you for your heart, for your friendship, and for your ministry to all of us.

Blessings,
Pastor Bo

Happening at 805 Western

- Lifted Up in Love - I will encourage you to read your **Lent devotional** and pray along the way that God will help us see his grace and love as we go through this time of Lent.

- The **Easter Egg Hunt** is on the horizon - March 23rd - It's not too early to put it on your calendar!

- Please **continue to pray** for the ministry of this church, and for the work of the councils that are serving so faithfully among us.

SUNDAY SERVANTS 2/25/24

USHERS: Scherrie Sanchez, Mark Dykema, Rick DeNieuwe,
Estella Jurkovich

COFFEE: Al Brooks

LITURGIST: Hasen Qi

ACOLYTE: Claire Moretti

SOUND: Cliff Stepina

VIDEO: Drew Penhale