



# e-News

November 27th, 2024

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## A letter from Lead Pastor Bo Mircea

For the Thanksgiving Service this year I shared the Parable of the Ten men with Leprosy from Luke 17. I am fascinated by the parable, because in some strange way it still makes sense in our modern understanding of life. There is no confusion in my mind when I say: We are blessed people in this country. We are Blessed, and that is the end of the conversation. What amazes me is that sometimes we look more like the 9 men rather than the one. The ones that went about their lives as if nothing had happened to them, without turning to the one that changed everything for them. That is the challenge we all face: how do we turn to God with grateful hearts. And as the saying goes: Words can only say so much, actions speak louder than words. What does our life look like in this give and take between us, our faith, and the source of our blessings? I, for one, I am still working on finding that answer for myself, and I pray that you will find it too. May God give us not just hearts full of thanksgiving, but words and deeds that speak to that.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and all yours,  
Blessings,  
Pastor Bo

## Happening at 805 Western:

Long list today, but exciting:

- **Office will be closed** on Thursday and Friday for Thanksgiving
- Saturday Nov 30th 9 am **DECORATING FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS** - We need you, there is no easier or fancy way of saying that. Please come out and help us decorate and bring that Christmas feel in this old building.
- **Sunday Dec 1st** - You should receive a Devotional this week. It has been a lovely tradition for our church to immerse ourselves in the readings leading through Advent. And, let me say this: Some traditions are fantastic and this is one of them. Happy reading and praying.
- Sunday Dec 1st - **Youth Group Outing** - Glow Experience - Meet at church at 4:30. Marie and Drew Penhale will be our advisors that will host this evening. Food and tickets will be provided, BUT we need to know you are going. Email us at office@firstpresjoliet.org
- Friday Dec 6th - at 7 pm - Please arrive earlier - **Harvest Arts Concert**. Christmas is coming to us early this year as a musical gift with some very gifted musicians, and opportunity to be welcoming to guests.
- **Dec 4th - Midweek** will be back on
- Please don't forget to **sign up for the Zoo Trip by this Sunday**

P.S. I said lots of things going on, but they are exciting and great opportunities for the season. Looking forward to seeing you around - Bo

## Church Family

### Prayers of health and healing for:

Sheila Lundeen, Jean Smietanski, Klint DeGeus,  
Mary Jane Johnson, and Pastor Bo's mom.

Prayers of comfort and peace for Sean Belter and family after the passing of Scott Gregg Belter this past August.

## SUNDAY SERVANTS 12/1/24

**USHERS:** Ed Schultz, Mark Dykema, Dale Mullen, Barb Rodgers

**COFFEE:** Nola Boyd

**LITURGIST:** The Penhale Family **ACOLYTE:** Caleb Adler

**SOUND:** Keith LeVasseur **VIDEO:** Todd Hayden

**NOTE:** The church office will be closed November 28-29th for the Thanksgiving holiday.

## POINSETTIAS

Poinsettia orders are now open! Donate a pot of Poinsettias for \$15 . Orders are due by December 15th. Forms are available on our website and as an insert in your Sunday bulletin. Flowers will be beautifying our church for the Advent season, but will be available for pick-up afterwards.

## BROOKFIELD ZOO TRIP

**Saturday, December 14th 3pm-9pm**

*Our congregation will visit the zoo together and see our decorated tree and all the lights! Discounts and carpools available. Find more info online or on the attached form.*

**Deadline to purchase tickets is December 1.**

**This is the last chance for discounted tickets and carpools!**

## Children's Church Corner

**Faith Focus:** Harvest—God provides for our needs

**Lesson for Sun. 12/1:** Elizabeth and Zachariah

Luke 1:5-25

**Bible Verse:** "The Lord carried out just what he had promised." *Genesis 21:1*

## OASIS: Women's Ministry

during Midweek (12/4, 12/11, 1/8, 1/22 and more)  
Room 217 from 6:45—7:15pm (after dinner)

Ladies - join us on Dec 4th & 11th Midweek to do Christmas cards for our shut-ins and local Veterans. We'll gather in room 217 from 5pm-6pm. Enjoy dinner with the families, back upstairs for dessert, and to finish more cards until about 7:30pm. All are INVITED!!!

**THANK YOU** to everyone who has donated their time to our Soar High program each Wednesday and on Sundays when the kids share the songs they've been learning. Thank you to our Soar High families and everyone who makes this ministry possible.

## ADVENT CONCERT

Friday, Dec. 6 at 7 pm in the sanctuary

Bring family and friends to enjoy a Christmas concert by Harvest Arts featuring flute, harp, cello, viola, and viola. Come rekindle the joy and glory of Christmas!

## GIVING AND TAX SAVINGS

Those with Traditional or Rollover Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) must begin taking mandatory withdrawals at age 73. You're required to pay US and IL income taxes on these Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs). If you add the Qualified Charitable Distribution step, YOU PAY NO U.S. or IL INCOME TAX WHILE THE CHARITABLE GIFT QUALIFIES AS AN RMD. In effect, you can donate SOME OF WHAT YOU'D OTHERWISE PAY IN TAXES to the church or another public charity! Savings typically range from 30 to 40% of the gift amount. If you're not familiar with QCDs, contact Ken Graham at [kengraham8@msn.com](mailto:kengraham8@msn.com) Please put your name and QCD in the subject line.

## HURRICANE RELIEF

We are accepting donations through Nov. 27 for the relief efforts of hurricanes Helene and Milton which will be forwarded to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Just make a notation on your check or put it in a specially labeled envelope available in the narthex. You may also donate online; choose "Hurricane Relief" on the drop down menu. These funds will directly benefit those affected by the devastating storms.

## **November 27th, 2024**

### **Stewardship Report**

<b>2024-2025 Budget</b>	\$747,600
<b>Year to Date Income</b>	\$342,844
<b>Year to Date Expenses</b>	\$354,770
<b>Per Capita</b>	\$43.00

**Received for Hurricane Relief \$6,070.00**

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.**

## SAVE THE DATE— COMING UP

11/30 Advent Decorating  
12/1 Zoo trip sign up deadline  
12/6 Advent Concert with Harvest Arts  
12/14 Brookfield Zoo trip  
12/22 Christmas Fellowship Breakfast  
12/24 Family Worship Service at 4pm  
Christmas Musicale at 10:30pm  
Traditional Worship Service at 11pm

## **From Your PNC**

The Pastor Nominating Committee is excited to report that the Presbytery of Blackhawk unanimously approved the recommendation to install Rev. Bogdan Mircea as Lead Pastor! We will let you know the details about his installation service as soon as we have them. Please continue to pray for Pastor Bo and the people of First Pres as we look forward to the ministry opportunities ahead.

## YOUTH GROUP

Happy Thanksgiving to you all! This Sunday our Youth group is meeting at church at 4:30pm to go to the Glow lights festival for a fun outing. We're looking to be at the stadium at 5pm. Tickets and food will be taken care of, we just need you. We should be done before 7pm. The advisors will ask you for your phone numbers so they can coordinate pick up. Please let us know if your teen will join us.

## We'd appreciate YOUR help to decorate our church for Christmas!

This year we will be gathering to decorate and beautify our church for the Advent season on **Saturday 11/30 at 9am**. This important task takes many hands but makes for a fun morning—with enough help this decorating can be accomplished in 2-3 hours. Please consider being a part of our decorating crew— sign up online.

**Soar High** is excited to have 38 active children participating! However, we need at least two adult volunteers to help each Wednesday from 4:45-6pm. (No musical experience needed.) We are asking people to have fun with the children and sign up to help at least one Wednesday between now and April. Volunteer sign up on our website—go to the Events tab, click on coming up, and scroll down to Soar High. Once you fill out the Google Form, you will be sent an email link to a Google Sheet to sign up for the date(s) you can to help. Thank you so much!

## Childcare Volunteers

Thank you to those who responded and will help our Children's Ministry Team in the future. We are still looking for some folks who are willing to help in the nursery if needed on a Sunday if there's an abundance of kids. If you are interested please contact the church office.

