



# e-News

April 30th, 2025

805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435  
815-727-9259 [firstpresjoliet.org](http://firstpresjoliet.org)

## A Letter from Lead Pastor Bo Mircea

Acts 6:1-6  
Seven Chosen to Serve

*1 Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. 2 And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Therefore, brothers and sisters, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, 4 while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." 5 What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.*

As I am making my way through the readings following the resurrection, I am getting into the good stuff of the early church days, and the expansion of the church from few to many in a matter of days and weeks. It is quite a story to read, and I am thinking what a story that would be to witness. Just think about your preacher sharing the Gospel and 3,000 people being added to the congregation. That is like Billy Graham numbers. And yet at the same time, I find myself looking at our church from a different point of view these days. Something more along the lines of: "the harvest is plenty but the workers are few". And when I say this, know that I am very thankful for each and every one of you and all the dedication and many hours you put into serving the Lord here at 1st Pres. I love that part about our church, it is kind of a reflection of the Church in Jerusalem, everyone bringing their gifts to serve, and through that dedication making a difference in the lives of many. Now why am I sharing this with you? Because, I want to ask you to pray for the months ahead of us. 1st Pres is not just Sunday Worship, 1st Pres is hours and hours of planning for events open to the neighborhood. 1st Pres is about pastoral care, visiting, taking a meal to someone in need of a kind word and a prayer. 1st Pres is about getting food ready for many people that find this place an oasis in

their week or the place where they can find what they need to fill their needs. 1st Pres is about Vacation Bible School, Summer Concerts, and even Pet Blessings, as a way to tell our neighbors about God's love. I am sure you can fill in your own definition of what 1st Pres is. More importantly, and this is what spoke to me as I was reading Acts, none of this is possible without that balance between going out of the walls of the church and going closer to God. I really want to encourage you in this post-resurrection season to continue to pray and find your way to the Lord, as a way to sustain yourself, and find ways to encourage and serve along side those who labor in the work of ministry.

This Sunday, we will celebrate the Lord's supper, and Baptism, two great promises of God to all the believers, just another reminder of God's goodness and faithfulness to our church. Looking forward to worship with you on Sunday,

Blessings,  
Pastor Bo

## Happening at 805 Western

- This **Saturday is the Night Deacons Free Breakfast** - this tradition started a great number of years ago, and it continues to bring people over to enjoy "some of the best pancakes in the world" as Reed will say. Here is an invitation for you to come and taste and see. This will not be just a treat for yourself, but also an engagement with those serving this special ministry at 1st Pres.

- **May 17th - Two serve day opportunities.** In the morning St. John food pantry - please contact Barb Roger to sign up. In the afternoon the youth are going to Feed My Starving Children - please contact Bernie Blaser for more details and to sign up.

- **May 31st - Pet blessing** - Mark your calendar and talk to your pet friends about it. Everyone needs prayer, even Mr. Mouser or Miss Daisy. But more importantly so do their masters. Last year this was a fun time to connect with so many people. I hope to see you around.

## SAVE THE DATE– COMING UP

5/4 Oasis afternoon at the theater  
5/8 Dinner Out Group—Public Landing  
5/14 Annual Report Review Meeting  
5/17 Serve Day at St. John's Food Pantry  
5/17 Youth Group—Feed My Starving Children  
5/18 Congregational Meeting—Annual Report  
5/31 Pet Blessing  
6/5 Summer Lunch Program begins  
6/23-6/27 Vacation Bible School—registration is open  
6/28 Concert and Cookies—Harvest Arts  
8/9 Concert and Cookies—REVD OG

### OASIS: Women's Ministry

Upcoming dates:  
4/30

Oasis will meet at 5pm for fellowship and various service opportunities, Midweek dinner is at 6pm each Wednesday (free but donations appreciated), and after dinner the ladies are invited to tea and dessert with Oasis until roughly 7:15pm.

### SERVE DAY at ST JOHN'S FOOD PANTRY

May 17th 7am-11am

Our faithful Night Deacons will be volunteering their time at the St. John's Food Pantry, and invite you to join them. You can sign up on [stjohnfood.org](http://stjohnfood.org), just click 'Serve With Us' and scroll down to May 17th, or reach out to Barb Rodgers.

## Children's Church Corner

**Faith Focus:** Recipe for Love: Jesus teaches us to love and welcome others.

**Lesson for Sun. 5/4:** One Part Empathy-Luke 6:31

**Bible Verse:** "Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other." *John 13:34*

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### Stewardship Report

2024-2025 Budget	\$707,600
Year to Date Income	\$38,354
Year to Date Expenses	\$53,629
Per Capita	\$44.00

You may text your gift to FPJ at (815)205-3044. You can give by mail, by online giving through our website using the "Give" tab, and through electronic giving.

*Thank you for your generosity.*

## Church Family

### Prayers of health and healing for:

Jean Smietanski, Mary Jane Johnson, John Savage, and Carrie (daughter of Lyle Weber).

### YOUTH SERVE DAY

May 17th 5-6:30pm

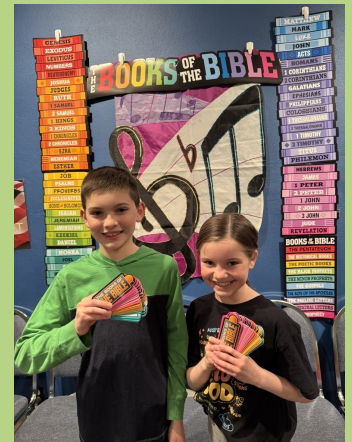
Our Youth Group is organizing a serve day at Feed My Starving Children. If you have a youth interested in helping, please reach out to any of the youth leaders. Spots are limited!

### PET BLESSING

May 31st

Join us outside as we bless the animals that enrich our lives! All types of pets are welcome (with leash or appropriate container, please), and will receive a token to commemorate the blessing.

Congratulations to Soar High Members Malachi and Genesis Gray for memorizing the Books of the Bible and earning the Books of the Bible key ring flip charts. **YOU SOARED HIGH FOR JESUS!**



### VBS 2025 TRUE NORTH

June 23rd-27th

True North VBS shows kids that God is a faithful friend we can always trust. He's our True North! Folks 6th grade and up are invited to participate by donating their time and lending a hand in guiding the kids through this journey.

**Register today!**

### SUNDAY SERVANTS 5/4/25

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

**COFFEE:** Jasmine Keir

**LITURGIST:** Kris Hayden

**ACOLYTE:** Rylie Blaser

**SOUND:** Cliff Stepina

**VIDEO:** Matt Blaser

**GREETERS:** Marie Penhale, Jackie Brooks