



e-News

July 16th, 2025

805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435

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firstpresjoliet.org

A Letter from Lead Pastor Bo Mircea

Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.—John 1:16

Are you running on empty, or on fumes? Are your days feeling like a marathon that gets longer and longer? Are you finding yourself “short” with people that you normally like? Are you crumbling under the pressure of everything surrounding you?

If the answer to any of that is yes, then I have one more question for you: Are you running on Grace or running on your own grace?

There are days when faith clashes with the day. And as people of faith we respond to those days, and not necessarily in the best way. I would like to remind you today that it is ok for you to experience those days, they will come as I said. I would also like to encourage you to step back for a minute and remember that God is our source of life. We forgive because He forgives, we love because God loves. So once again let me ask you a question: Are you running on Grace or running on your own grace?

You might ask me a question too, after reading this letter: Bo, Why are you going there? In part because I got to think a lot about grace this past week, as I am preaching on the hymn “Amazing Grace” this Sunday, and in part because I too answered yes to those questions. And it is good for all of us to remember that God will carry us through when we find ourselves in Him.

I am looking forward to Sunday worship. It might be Summer time, but it is still ok to bring a friend so we can celebrate God’s grace.

Blessings,
Pastor Bo

Happening at 805 Western

This is a big week for us, as we are meeting as Session and councils with so many things to do and plan for, especially as we will be taking time to plan the next season of ministry, from events, to classes and ministry direction. So I am asking you to pray for creativity, imagination, and Spirit driven vision for those that God has around the leadership table at this time.

Don’t forget Serve Day is fast approaching, July 26th. If you have any questions please reach out to Barb Rogers.

Church Family

Prayers of health and healing for:

Jean Smietanski, Mary Jane Johnson, Mark Fumagalli, Al Brooks, Carolyn Schaeffer, Fred Krueger (Michael Krueger’s father), and Mary Lynn Keir.

ACOLYTE

If you would like for your child(ren) to help serve Jesus Christ and His church by being an Acolyte during Sunday morning services, please send an email to Worship Council Member, Sarah Randolph at music.randolph@firstpresjoliet.org. Sarah will then contact you to show you where things are and how to place items.

The Acolyte would need to arrive at church by 9:50 am. Guardians need to help the Acolyte light the 2 candles on the communion table, then take the battery operated “Christ Candle” to the Narthex and wait for the first hymn, then carry the Christ Candle to the communion table. The Acolyte should then sit up front by the Pastor until the Children’s sermon. After the Children’s sermon, the Acolyte will go to Sunday School or sit with family.

The word acolyte is derived from the Greek word *akolouthos*, meaning companion, attendant, or helper, who waits continually upon another: a follower. The Acolyte ministry has its roots in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible, where the prophet Samuel is seen assisting Eli, the Levite priest, and Elisha is seen assisting Elijah the Prophet.

Why do we have candles and acolytes?

The lighting of the communion table candles in the worship service is a symbol of Jesus coming into the presence of the worshiping community. Just as the Israelites were led through the desert by a pillar of fire, we are led by Christ, the light of the world.

To acolyte at worship is to bring: Celebration, Reverence, Anticipation of Christ’s return. In short, the Acolyte sets the visual table for worship. The Acolyte brings the light of Christ to start worship and leads the light of Christ out before the congregation leaves to serve Jesus Christ.

CONCERTS AND COOKIES

8/9 @6pm

The band **REVDOG** will be performing at First Pres, outside if the weather permits, so bring your camp chair.

Admission is free so grab your family and friends and enjoy an evening of live music and tasty cookies!

Rocky Roast will be present selling gourmet coffee and tea to concert goers.

Nursery care will be available for kids 2yrs and under.

SOAR HIGH PROGRAM

Wednesdays Sept.17th– April 29th

3yr olds-8th grade

MUSIC

DINNER

BIBLE

5:30-6:10pm 6:15-6:45pm 6:50-7:25pm

Students will be grouped by age, ability, and skill level. Music will include singing and playing instruments. Bible lessons will be age-appropriate with lesson based games and crafts.

Nursery care will be available during Music and Bible times.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO REGISTER YOUR CHILD(REN) TODAY!

SAVE THE DATE– COMING UP

7/26 Serve Day at Northern Illinois Food Bank

8/9 Concert and Cookies—REVDOG

8/14 Dinner Out Group –Juliet's Tavern

9/7 Back to Church Sunday

9/17 Soar High/ Midweek programs resume

Children's Church Corner

Faith Focus: Invited: The Holy Spirit invites us to wonderful things.

Lesson for Sun. 7/20: The Holy Spirit Invites the Lonely
- 1 Kings 19:1-21

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

2025-2026 Budget \$707,600

Year to Date Income \$150,314

Year to Date Expenses \$157,703

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.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

- Free Summer Lunch Program– M-F 11:30am –1pm
- Serve Day at Northern Illinois Food Bank
- Free Pancake Breakfast—first Sat of the month

FREE SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM

June 5th through August 15th M-F 11:30am-1pm

Youths age 18 and younger are invited to stop in and be served a FREE nutritious lunch. Fridays are fun Bingo days! Reach out to Barb Rodgers if you would like to volunteer or to know how you can best support this ministry.

SERVE DAY

7/26 9am-11:30am at Northern Illinois Food Bank

Volunteers will help sort and pack meals for those in need in our community.

FREE PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Saturday August 2nd

Our Night Deacons host a free pancake breakfast each 1st Saturday of the month. All are invited to enjoy this breakfast and to help serve our community.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD BANK

Northern Illinois Food Bank focuses on delivering food and healthy eating services to the Northern Illinois community. As part of the national Feeding America network, they serve our neighbors in 13 counties by providing 250,000 meals per day.

Our July Serve Day will be 7/26 9am-11:30am at Northern Illinois Food Bank. Volunteers will help sort and pack meals for those in need in our community.

***Collected for Angel House & Hope 27 to date: \$2,025
(June's Mission of the Month)***

SUNDAY SERVANTS 7/20/25

USHERS: Ed Schultz, Dale Mullen, Mark Dykema, Jeff Lundeen

COFFEE: Nola Boyd

LITURGIST: Megan Pritz

ACOLYTE: Jacob Pritz

SOUND: Cliff Stepina

VIDEO: Todd Hayden

GREETERS: Barb Rodgers and Betsy O'Mara