



# e-News

February 18th, 2026

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## A Note from Lead Pastor Bo Mircea

'Nearing God' is this coming Sundays value and message, but it could be the title for the entire Lent season. There is this old understanding that God is always near to us, standing ready, but it is us who chooses to observe or understand His presence. At times I think that our western approach to faith makes us too casual in our approach to God. We almost treat God like our next door neighbor that is always there, but we only see him when we need him. In contrast, traditions like Catholicism, Orthodox, Judaism, and even Islam, have and put more emphasis on us looking to discover and fall into "God's lap" rather than taking it for granted. Think of the parable of the Sower, and think about what it takes to prepare the soil before it can produce fruit. It does not just happen. I hope that on Sunday we all can look and find a "new" way of nearing God not just in our Lent journey but in our lives.

See you on Sunday,  
Blessings,  
Bo

## Happening at 805 Western

- As I have mentioned in services in the past, **the need for prayer is great**. Sometimes you might have someone specific in mind, that we might not have in the eNews, or mention by name in Sunday Prayers. There are many concerns, and especially in today's world where personal information is so precious that sharing a little can be too much, and can cause some distress or trouble to those mentioned. I would like to remind you that we do not print a name or details about people we pray for without direct permission to do so. Also, during Sunday Prayers, unless asked specifically for a name, we will protect that information since we livestream online. I do want to encourage you to continue to share your prayers, as we do pray regularly for the needs of our congregation, and our Thursday Prayer Group, Day Deacons, Helping Hands, and so on, can join alongside and offer their prayers and help.
- Elders and Deacons, please plan on attending Feb 28th -9 am **Officer's Training and Planning Session**.
- **Tanzania team** is meeting and working on finalizing a list of things needed for the trip. This morning I was on a video call with Holly in Tanzania talking about different projects we can be part of, one that has to do with cake. More details to follow.
- As we are getting close to the **end of the Fiscal Year**, and working through the new budget, on behalf of the Stewardship Council, I express my gratitude to all of you for the way you support this congregation. "Choose Gratitude" - brochures and information about the new year's budget will be sent after Session approval.

## Church Family

### Prayers of health and healing for:

Mary Jane Johnson, Mark Fumagalli, Sherry Jones, Nicole Celios (Scherrie Sanchez's daughter), Pam LeVasseur, Joyce Bossen, Estella Jurkovich, Barb Rodgers, and Steve Reyes.

Prayers and sympathies to Judy Bartels and her family after the recent passing of her uncle Dick Pettigrew.

I want to thank everyone that has been so dedicated to praying for my daughter Nicole Celio. She is awaiting the results from her final Pet Scan, and we are very hopeful. So, a grateful thank you to all who prayed. It has been a very difficult year. I am praying that FATHER will give her strength and peace in her spirit as she goes forward. Thanks to each of you that continues to pray for her and our family. We need a victory.

- Scherrie Sanchez

## ASH WEDNESDAY

February 18th

5:30pm: Dinner

6:30pm: Worship Service

*Nursery care will be available during the worship service.*  
Soar High and Midweek programs will not meet 2/18.

We invite all to our Ash Wednesday observances.  
*Soar High and Midweek programming will resume 2/25.*

## PROJECT LINUS

February 23rd

every 4th Monday of the month

9am

Join together to make blankets for kids in need in our community. All you need is to be able to tie a knot. There is plenty of time for chatting while we work.

## SAVE THE DATE – COMING UP

- 2/18**—Ash Wednesday  
-Dinner 5:30pm  
-Worship Service 6:30pm
- 2/23**—Project Linus
- 2/28**—Officer Training and Planning
- 3/2**—Oasis: BUNCO Night
- 3/7**—Free Pancake Breakfast & Prayer group
- 3/14**—Spring Fever Craft and Vendor Fair
- 3/15**—Soar High performance
- 3/21**—Serve Day at St. John's Food Pantry

### Oasis Women's Ministry: BUNCO Night

Monday March 2nd 6:00

Coldwell Banker Realty Group—Party Room  
925 Rt 59—Shorewood

First Pres. Church Joliet - Oasis Women's Ministry invites ladies out for a night of BUNCO fun and fellowship, with snacks, refreshments and prizes!

6pm - 8pm - Bunco starts promptly at 6:30pm

## Children's Church Corner

**Faith Focus:** POTLUCK: God's community includes everyone.

**Lesson for Sun. 2/22:** Jesus Heals Bartimaeus  
—Mark 10:46-52

### February 18th, 2026 Stewardship Report

2025-2026 Budget	\$707,600
Year to Date Income	\$489,526
Year to Date Expenses	\$496,885
Per Capita	\$45.00

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*Thank you for your generosity.*

## MISSION OF THE MONTH

### 2026 Mission Trip: Hope 27

Hope 27 is an expansion of the mission of Grassroots - From the People, For the People into a new community, in western Kenya. This is the same organization that runs Angel House orphanage in Tanzania that we have supported for many years. Their guiding verse is James 1:27.

They are using a different model for orphan care in Kenya. Their sixteen scholarship students live with their extended families and they meet together on Saturday mornings for encouragement, character development, and discipleship training.

During school holidays, which in Kenya are April, August, November, and December, they host an enrichment camp for their own scholarship students as well as a number of additional vulnerable children from the community. Hope 27 has an awesome team of seven local teachers who run seven classrooms for K-12 students. They teach and review content in Mathematics, English, Kiswahili, and Science as well as sharing breakfast and lunch together, playing soccer, singing, and making arts and crafts. Hope 27 is developing a farm, which is their long-term plan for funding the orphan scholarships. This past year, God has provided Hope 27 with the ability to drill a well and construct a poultry unit on the farm. A variety of vegetables and fruits are already planted.

#### **A Prayer for this Mission:**

In a world where it is harder and harder to show Christian love, and to live out the call to feed the poor and the needy, Lord help us to remember that we too are the poor and needy. Help us go out of our way, to make room for your ways, as we serve and give not just to our own but to those you call yours. Help the church to love, indeed, all the people from all the corners of the world. Make us your ambassadors of love. Amen.

### SUNDAY SERVANTS 2/18/26

#### ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

**USHERS:** Ed Schultz, Sue Fordyce, Pat Haldorson

**LITURGIST:** Don Caisley

**SOUND:** Cliff Stepina

**VIDEO:** Todd Hayden

### SUNDAY SERVANTS 2/22/26

**USHERS:** Ed Schultz, Scherrie Sanchez, Mark Dykema, Sue Fordyce

**COFFEE:** Al Brooks

**LITURGIST:** Joe Milosevich

**ACOLYTE:** Rylie Blaser

**SOUND:** Cliff Stepina

**VIDEO:** Drew Penhale

**GREETERS:** Marie & Suzanne Penhale, Jackie Brooks