

Life Together



The First Presbyterian Church
of Morrison, Illinois
~est. March 28, 1855~

Reaching out to our neighbor with open hearts;
sharing God's blessings with others.

February 2019 • Vol. 62/No. 2

*"It can't beat us!" Pa said.
"Can't it, Pa?" Laura asked stupidly.
"No," said Pa. "It's got to quit some-
time and we don't. It can't lick us. We
won't give up."*

*Then Laura felt a warmth inside her.
It was very small but it was strong. It
was steady, like a tiny light in the dark,
and it burned very low but no winds
could make it flicker because it would
not give up.*

—Laura Ingalls Wilder, *The Long Winter*

The home I have lived in for the last 12.5 years is an early frontier cottage, built in the 1830s by Deacon Adam Hamilton. When Blackhawk and his neighboring tribes were driven west in 1832, groups of white people came to this area from the northeast to take over the land.

By 1837, all the First Peoples had been driven away and a new era began for northwest Illinois. During times like this past week, in which we encountered a deep snowfall followed by extremely cold weather, I wonder what life must have been like for so long

here in this house and how the residents persevered with nothing but the "basics".

Laura Ingalls Wilder was born in 1867, more than 30 years after my home was built. Her book, *The Long Winter*, was about the harsh winter of 1880-81 and the perseverance of her family and community. The times had changed in these three decades, as the central and eastern United States enjoyed the post-Civil War Victorian Era while the west was still wild. Ingalls Wilder noted the changes that became apparent during that harsh winter:

*"If only I had some grease I
could fix some kind of a light," Ma
considered. "We didn't lack for light
when I was a girl before this new-
fangled kerosene was ever heard of."*

*"That's so," said Pa. "These times
are too progressive. Everything has
changed too fast. Railroads and tele-
graph and kerosene and coal stoves—
they're good things to have, but the
trouble is, folks get to depend on 'em."*

And while this all seems like such a bygone era—especially for someone like me, born in the U.S. in 1975—the truth is that the postmodern world that I have only known is not the only way of life folks still living in our congregation and community have known.

Many of our congregants and residents remember a childhood with no electricity, no indoor plumbing and went to a one room school house. The old frontier is actually not too far gone, though for an ever-growing number of Americans, this way of life is something found only in history books.

Yet, whether we have always lived with modern conveniences or not, we all share the same reality that life is full of hardships. And hardships are certainly relative to each individual.

The first time my oldest son scraped his knee, when he was three, you would have thought that his leg had been severed. The pain he experi-

enced was like none other he had ever experienced. He didn't know how to deal with it except through a prolonged and dramatic episode of tears and anguished screaming.

His little brother, on the other hand, who has yet to scrape a knee, seems to be able to take a licking and keep on ticking. We've come to call him a



"bruise". I have to think when his first skinned knee comes, he's going to look at it, let me spit in some dirt and rub it on the wound, and keep on running after his brother.

As we continue to age, humans each learn to deal with hardships in a way that is relative to their experiences, their personalities and their thresholds for various types of pain and inflictions. Some folks live a long life and are always fragile and sensitive. Others are tough, brutish and seem to have no limit of what they can take.

Still, except for the few who have conditions in which they enjoy pain and inflictions, the rest of us prefer to live a life that is pain and infliction free. So, when we are faced with a challenging time, we have to redirect our minds to accept that we have entered a difficult situation. A situation that is going to require us to change our course so that we can address the matter at hand and overcome whatever it is we are facing.

Be it a blizzard, tundra temperatures, a plague of grasshoppers, drought, or flooding; be it illness or injury; be it economic, political or

Continued on page 4

IN THIS ISSUE:

Worship at UMC

We will join with UMC for worship on Sunday, Feb. 3., at 10:15 a.m. Stay after for a soup lunch Page 2

Cookie Frost-off

Bring some cookies to decorate on Feb. 13 at 9:30 a.m.. Page 2

Donation Statements

were mailed last week for your information and tax purposes Page 3

Sunday School Highlights

The Sunday School kids had lots of fun in January! Page 5

Church News

CHURCH EVENTS

Sub/Soup Preparation

Yucatan Peninsula Mission (YPM) volunteers and youth are asked to help make soup Saturday, February 2, for the fundraiser the next day. Meet at UMC at 5:00 p.m. Saturday evening. Help will also be needed on Sunday, February 3, starting at 8:30 a.m. to make the subs and get ready for the lunch. Work should be done around 1:00 p.m.

Worship at UMC Feb. 3

We will combine worship services on February 3 with the United Methodist Church (UMC) at UMC. The service will include Communion and will begin at 10:15 a.m.

Soup Lunch and

Sub Pick-up The youth group/YPM crew will distribute pre-ordered subs and serve a soup lunch on Sunday, February 3, after worship at UMC. This fundraiser will help send the youth on trips and retreats as well as folks to the Yucatan Peninsula. If you didn't pre-order a sub, we will have some extra subs available.



Session will begin meeting two times per month—on the first and third Mondays at 7:00 p.m.—to focus on the future of the church and stewardship considerations, as well as general church business. The first meeting will be February 4 and the second on February 18.

Bible Study takes place each Tuesday morning at 9:30 a.m. at the church. Join us whenever you can! We study the upcoming Sunday's Scripture.

—Feb. 5: Luke 5:1-11; Isa. 6:1-8; 1 Cor. 15:1-11

—Feb. 12: Luke 6:17-26;

Jer. 17:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:12-20

—Feb. 19: Luke 6:27-38; Gen. 45:3-11; 1 Cor. 15:35-38, 42-50

—Feb. 26: Luke 9:28-36; Exod. 34:29-35; 2 Cor. 3:12-4:2

VBS Planning It's the time again to start planning for our community Vacation Bible School. The first meeting will be Thursday, February 7, at 6:30 p.m. at Emmanuel Church. If you're interested in helping kids in our community grow closer to God and have a lot of fun, please come.

Youth Group The Combined FPC & UMC Jr. & Sr. High Youth Group will meet at First Presbyterian on Sunday, February 10, from 5:30-7:00 p.m., for a game night in the youth group room. Dinner will be provided. We'll meet again on the 24th for a yet-to-be-determined fun night.

PW Guilds The New Mission Guild will meet on February 11 at 1:30 p.m. The PW Coordinating Team will meet at 10:30 a.m. on February 19 at the church. Sage Guild will meet on February 21 at 1:30 p.m. All women of FPC are invited to attend any meeting. The 2019 PW booklets, with meeting dates and other information, are available on the table outside the church office.

Sunday School Mtg.

Sunday School leaders and helpers will meet February 11 at 7:00 p.m. at UMC.

Presbytery The next Presbytery of Blackhawk meeting will be February 12 at 9:00 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of

Dupage in Bollingbrook. Pastor Mike and Lynn Knox will attend.

Cookie Frost-off Plan to bring a batch of cookies to the church on Wednesday, February 13, at 9:30 a.m.

We will decorate the cookies, while enjoying coffee and fellowship, then deliver the goodies to our members and friends in the community. If you know of anyone who could use a friendly valentine cookie delivery, please let Mike, Bev Bealer or the church office know.



Free Community

Meals There will be two meals in February, the 14th and the 28th, from 5-6:30 p.m. The first meal will be a "Romantic Italian Dinner" in celebration of St. Valentine's Day. Pastas, salads, drinks and desserts will be served. This is a fundraiser hosted by the YPM crew, but extra help will be needed. The Meal on February 28 will be chili. Donations of desserts will be needed for both meals. Prep help will be needed the Wednesday before each meal, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Hope to see you there!

Deacons will meet on Monday, February 18, at 10 a.m. at the church.

Guest Leaders Beth Wicks will lead the worship service on February 24 while Mike is away. Doug Harridge will lead the choir that Sunday while Connie is off.

Newsletter Please get information to be included in the March 2019 *Life Together*

(Continued on page 3)

CHURCH EVENTS

(Continued from page 2)

newsletter to the office by Tuesday, February 26.

Golden Oldies will meet on Thursday, February 28, at a restaurant at noon for lunch. All members and friends of FPC are welcome to come! The location has yet to be determined but hold the date.

UPCOMING EVENTS

World Day of Prayer

Friday, March 1, is designated as World Day of Prayer, a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. Find more information at <https://worlddayofprayer.net>.

Communion will be served on March 3, April 18 and May 12. Dates for the remainder of 2019 will be announced in a later edition of *Life Together*.

Ash Wednesday

service will be held on **March 6** at 7:00 p.m. Come join us for a short worship service and imposition of ashes from last year's palms as we begin preparations for the Lenten season.



Women's Conference

All women of the Morrison area are invited to the "Rooted in Christ" Women's Conference on Saturday, March 9, at Ebenezer Reformed Church, 309 E. Park St., Morrison. Sessions will run from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. See the Rooted in Christ, Morrison group on Facebook, call 772-2472 or e-mail rootedinchrist310@gmail.com for more information and to register.

Daylight Savings Time

is March 10. Set your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday night.



Lent Join us in Lenten Worship Services, beginning March 10 through April 14 (Palm Sunday).

St. Patrick's Day Meal

The annual Irish-inspired Free Community Meal—including corned beef and traditional sides—will be Thursday, March 14. Save the date and invite your family, friends and neighbors!

Holy Week Services

Holy Week will begin with a Palm Sunday service on April 14. A Maundy Thursday service, with Communion, will be held on April 18 at 7:00 p.m. A Good Friday service will be held at 7:00 p.m. on April 19. *Easter* and the *Resurrection of the Lord* will be celebrated on Sunday, April 21, at 10:15 a.m.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Congregational Meeting

was held on January 20. Reports were approved. Session leaders Rick Barr, Jim Palmer and Angela Reamer were installed/reinstalled to the Class of 2021. Junee Cortes, Jan Kelly, Marian Osborn and Greg Kruse were installed/reinstalled as Deacons, Class of 2021.

Statements 2018 Contribution Statements were mailed in mid January to those who contributed last year. If you have questions, or you did not receive one and you should have, please contact the office.

Deacon Phone Tree The Deacons decided they will reestablish the phone tree. Members will be contacted in the event of an emergency, death in the church or worship cancellation. *Please be sure the office has your up-to-date contact information.*



One Great Hour of Sharing Donations will be accepted in the offering plates March 6-April 21 in support of the Presbyterian mission to bring the love of Christ to some of the most vulnerable people around the world. You can also donate online at www.presbyterianmission.org.



MINISTER'S MESSAGE *(Continued from page 1)*

religious persecutions; be it mental and emotional distress or spiritual anguish, we all suffer hardships.

With modern advancements, there are many more ways for us to be protected and to overcome hardships. We now have electricity, furnaces, air conditioning, plumbing, vehicles, snow plows, irrigation, pesticides, advocacy, laws, medical technology, natural and pharmaceutical medications, and counseling. But these won't always keep us from being vulnerable. They are good to have but they can fail us. Just like folks in the 1880s were becoming with kerosene, coal stoves and trains, we too can become over-dependent on today's technology and services.

There will always come a time when we are going to have to face our hardships head-on. And, though each effort is individual, in the sense that we have to personally act in order to overcome, we have the reassurance that we never have to be alone.

Sometimes suffering is corporate...like this last week's weather. We all had to face it. Yet there were different levels of hardships. Some people were living on the streets with no warm place to go. Some people lost power or their furnace went out. Some people got to stay put and snuggle into the warmth of their home. No matter what, even though an individual may not know it or know where to find it, there are always communities around ready and willing to reach out and help those in need. There is always love being offered. And God is always present.

When we are facing the worst, when it seems we may have hit rock bottom, when we don't think there can be any light in our life, it is hard to be able to look out beyond this painful shell that is strangling us. In order to crack open that shell, we need the tiniest glimmer of hope. Hope is

the pinprick into the darkness that lets in a tiny amount of light. But once the light is in, it begins to warm us and brighten us. This small flame, with faith, can grow.

We can believe that God is with us, and that God loves us, and that God will get us through this. As our faith builds, the light grows brighter. If we can only open ourselves up just enough to see that there is still love and beauty in the world, then we can be saved from our times of trial.

For when we open up, we can see that there are hands reaching out to us to help us. We just need to then reach out and take hold of those hands. And be it when we are struggling or when we are thriving, we need to remember that we need to reach out to help others as well. Certainly, two drowning people will drown together if they hold onto each other in fear. Yet two people with hope and faith can help each other be saved.

Jesus commands that we love one another. (John 13:34) We, as Christians, need to realize that we need community. We need to be helped and we need to help. We need to receive light and we need to shine light. We need to be filled with the Spirit and we need to spread the Spirit. The communities that we are part of need to be focused on being the light and love of Christ. We need to be focused on loving one another so that we can help each other in our times of need.

February 2 is recognized for many reasons. In our culture today, it's Groundhog Day and we celebrate it as the day that, if the groundhog sees his shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter, and if he does not, then spring is right around the corner.

Early Christians, and Christians throughout the world today, celebrate it as Candlemas. This is the 40th day after Christmas and the official ending of the Christmas season. Many tradi-

tions wait until February 2 to take down their Christmas decorations. They bring their leftover candles to church, and with a celebration as joyous as that of Easter Sunday, they light up their sanctuary with the candles and give thanks to the return of the light.

"Pagan" celebrations that far outdate those of Christianity, celebrate February 2 as the halfway point between winter and spring. It is the tilting of the earth to the point in which we are closer to spring and summer than we are to Midwinter (December 25). We are growing closer and closer to the days being longer than the nights. On March 17, we find a balance of day and night. So soon we will have late sunsets and early sunrises. And, even though when we look out there are piles of snow, before we know it, we can be planting our spring gardens.

When life seems to be at its worst, the best can be right around the corner. With the help of our beloved communities, and with hope and faith in the Triune God, we can overcome whatever hardships and persecutions we face. We can let that slow light warm up inside us into a raging fire. We can and shall overcome!

In our life together, let us be that beloved community that reaches out for help and to help. Let us be the love and light of Christ. Let us embrace the love that the upcoming Valentine's Day reminds our society about—a love that is not selfish, but rather, a love that brings us all together by thinking of others and with a true desire to help and to be helped. Let our love light shine and may our hearts rekindle the flame of God's loving Spirit so that we may warm up the world around us.

Grace and Peace,
Mike

Prayers

Let Us Seek God's Blessings in Our Prayers for: Those who have served the church in the past month. Student Youdelka Philippe, her family and the Mission Starfish Haiti School; Yucatan Peninsula Mission; Victory Center; Sauk Valley Food Bank; Morrison Food Pantry; Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center and Blackhawk Presbytery; those in need of healing and support: Alberta Ardapple, Dan Brandon, Marion Collins, Mary Kernan, Spencer Knox, Ted Luther, Mary Newman, Edna Reynolds, Jean Slavin, Julie Stinson, Ray Tucker, Dick Vandermyde, Helen Volckmann.



Sunday School Newsletter

Sunday School

meets each Sunday, from 9:00-10:00 a.m., at the United Methodist Church. Children, from preschool to 6th grade, are welcome to join at any time! We have started our new unit "Freedom". The children are learning how Moses helped the Israelites and how God asked him to help.

Questions?

Please contact Kellie Kohl at 772-4174 or kohl68@yahoo.com.



Some Sunday School workshop fun—food and games—from January!



The Sunday School children made cards to thank local firefighters and delivered them January 27. Tim West and Joe Beilema then showed the kids around the firehouse and answered questions. Thank you firefighters!



Thank you!!

...On behalf of the Stronghold staff it is my honor to thank you for your generosity and the recent gift in support of our ministry.

We are blessed and grateful for the 56 years of Stronghold and the memories created here that last a lifetime. In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, Stronghold continues to be a much needed place of respite, a place of renewal and a place to retreat into the loving arms of God in fellowship with others or alone in nature.

The new year will once again be filled with summer campers, school and church retreats and over 10,000 people from around the world coming to experience Stronghold. Your gift and support is essential because there is much to be done in preparing for the coming year and to ensure the sustainability of Stronghold...

Again, thank you for your thoughtful stewardship and generous support at this time. Friends and donors, like you, are the very people who "Keep Stronghold Strong" and provide the firm foundation upon which we can continue to build for the future.

May Peace be with you, your loved ones and family,

Dr. Danny Pierce,
Executive Director

February 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 4th Sunday after Epiphany 9AM Sunday School / Choir Practice 10:15AM Worship Service & Communion at United Methodist Church 11:30AM Soup lunch and Super Bowl Sub pickup	4 7PM Session Meeting	5 9:30AM Bible Study	6	7 6:30PM VBS Meeting	1 2	5PM Soup Fundraiser prep at UMC
10 5th Sunday after Epiphany 9AM Sunday School / Choir Practice 10:15AM Worship Service 11:30AM Coffee Hour 11:30AM Properties Committee Meeting 5:30-7PM Youth Group, FPC	11 1:30PM New Mission Guild Meeting 7:00PM Sunday School Meeting at UMC	12 9AM Presbytery Mtg. 9:30AM Bible Study	13 9:30AM Cookie Frost-off 1PM Free Community Meal Prep	14 4PM Free Community Meal Prep 5-6:30PM Free Community Meal	15 16	
17 6th Sunday after Epiphany 9AM Sunday School / Choir Practice 10:15AM Worship Service 11:30AM Coffee Hour	18 10AM Deacon's Meeting 7PM Session Meeting	19 9:30AM Bible Study 10:30AM PW Coordinating Team Meeting	20	21 1:30PM Sage Guild Meeting	22 23	
24 7th Sunday after Epiphany 9AM Sunday School / Choir Practice 10:15AM Worship Service 11:30AM Coffee Hour 5:30-7PM Youth Group	25	26 Newsletter deadline 9:30AM Bible Study	27 1PM Free Community Meal Prep	28 12PM Golden Oldies lunch, location TBD 4PM Free Community Meal Prep 5-6:30PM Free Community Meal	5	

Community Happenings

Library LEGO Club will meet Saturday, February 2, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. It's an all-ages group that gets together to build and create with LEGO blocks the first Saturday of each month. Just show up to participate.

Chicken & Biscuit

Supper Erie Methodist Church, 811 8th Street, Erie IL, will host a fundraiser buffet on Wednesday, February 6, from 4:30-7:00 p.m. In addition to chicken & biscuits, enjoy vegetables, jello, dessert and a drink. Donations will support mission efforts. Take-outs will be available.

4-H Kid's Workshops

Whiteside County 4-H will host a Magnificent Monday Project Workshop on February 18, from 9:00 a.m.-noon. The event will include several hands-on sessions on art, science, crafts, animals and more, for kids aged 5-12. Children do not have to be members of 4-H to participate. The event will take place at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Morrison. Pre-registration is required: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu> or 815-632-3611.

Ladies Craft Night Out

Erie Methodist Church will host a Ladies Night Out and craft time on Wednesday, February 20, at 6:00 p.m. Attendees will make a sign. The cost of the craft is \$15. Call 309-659-2541 to reserve a spot.

Resthave Soup Supper

A variety of soups, along with a sandwich and drink, will be served on February 21, from 5-7:00 p.m., at Resthave Home. Carryouts will also be available. Donations will be taken. The Garden Pain Rip-snorters 4-H club will also host a bake sale in conjunction with the supper.

Family Trivia White Oaks Therapeutic Equestrian Center (WHOA) will host a family Trivia Night fundraiser on February 23 at the Odell Community Room. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and trivia starts at 7:00 p.m. The cost is \$10 per person. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. This is a family event, so questions will be child friendly. contact Tawny, at 815-535-6208, to reserve spots.

The Whiteside Forum

will host a book discussion of "American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America" by Colin Woodard and discuss the current state of our union on Thursday, February 28, starting at 6:30 p.m. The event will take place in the Program Room of the Odell Public Library.

Ready... Set... Grow

U of I Extension will host a gardening workshop on Saturday, March 23, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. at Sauk Valley Community College in Dixon. Join Master Gardeners and guest speakers for this event offering participants information about various aspects of home gardening. The fee is \$45, and registrations will be accepted until March 18: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu> or call 815-632-3611.

Senior Center Trip

Whiteside County Senior Center (WCSC) will host a trip to *A Tribute to Buddy Holly* event on May 30 at 1:00 p.m. at Circa 21. The cost is \$85 for members; \$90 for non-members. The performance will feature all the band's hits as well as some lesser known gems. The deadline to sign up is May 17. Call 815-622-9230.

TEN VALUES OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Worship keeps your heart in constant tune with God.

Worship keeps your mind on the great necessity for having God's word spread throughout all nations.

Worship improves your character by learning the great examples that Christ gave to us.

Worship improves your disposition by learning to be meek and humble like Christ.

Worship helps in your everyday life by learning to love one another, even as Christ loved you.

Worship teaches you to give and know the wonderful joy you receive by giving.

Worship teaches you to pray, for prayer is the answer to many of your problems.

Worship gives your soul great joy and comfort, to know that God is near.

Worship shows the world that you are working for Christ and his Kingdom.

Worship is what Christ intended for you to do. "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Borrowed from a past issue of the FPC newsletter

Leadership and Staff

Session Elders/ Board of Trustees

Deb Zigler '19*
Carol Wolf '19*
Lynn Knox '20
Tim Reynolds '20
Alyssa Sibley '20*
Rick Barr '21*
Jim Palmer '21
Angela Reamer '21
Jan Kelly, Clerk

Deacons

Nancy Glazier '19*
Jane James '19
Doris Robertson '20
June Cortes '21*
Jan Kelly '21
Marian Osborn '21*

**Elders and Deacons in their
second consecutive term*

Nominating Committee

Rick Barr
June Cortes
Greg Kruse
Lynn Knox
Lexi Laughlin
Marian Osborn

Personnel Committee

The full Session

Stewardship Team

The full Session

Worship Team

Rick Barr
Connie Swanson-
DeSpain
Doug Harridge
Nancy Shank
Scott Vandermyde
Deb Zigler

Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team

Sally Hayen, Moderator
Jane James, Secretary
Lynn Knox, Treasurer

Resthabe Home

Board of Directors

Lester Mathew,
FPC Representative

Staff

Rev. Dr. Mike Selburg,
Pastor
Jean Eggemeyer,
Office Manager
Doug Harridge,
Organist
Scott Vandermyde,
Organist
Connie Swanson-DeSpain,
Choir Director
Lori Hutchison,
Custodian

Feb. Liturgists Feb. Greeters

2/3: None (Worship at UMC)	2/3: None (Worship at UMC)
2/10: Tim Reynolds	2/10: Mavis Best & Donna Gray
2/17: Nancy Shank	2/17: Alyssa Sibley
2/24: Rick Barr	2/24: Angela Reamer

February Birthdays

2/3: Lori Hutchison
2/4: Doris Robertson
2/6: Larry Bealer, Aiden Dolieslager,
Shari Kuehl
2/8: Arlyn Hayen
2/12: Britney Sage
2/25: Victoria Volckmann

February Anniversaries

None

Upcoming 2019 Free Community Meals

Feb. 14: Romantic Italian Dinner
Feb. 28: Chili
Mar. 14: St. Patty's Day Corned Beef Dinner
Mar. 29: Breakfast for Dinner
Apr. 11: Easter Ham Meal
Apr. 25: Special 10th Anniversary Meal
May 9: Spring Stew
May 30: Taco Bar
June 27: Pulled Pork
July 25: Summer Picnic
Aug. 29: Sloppy Joes
Sept. 12: Potato Bar
Sept. 26: Oktoberfest
Oct. 10: Autumn Harvest Chili
Oct. 24: Goulash
Nov. 21: Thanksgiving Turkey Meal
Dec. 7: Christmas Walk Fundraiser Meal
Dec. 12: Christmas Dinner



First Presbyterian Church of Morrison IL
100 E. Lincolnway, Morrison IL 61270
Phone: 815-772-3510
firstpresmorrison@gmail.com
www.nimbitmusic.com/firstpresmorrisonworship
Contact Pastor Mike at revselburg@gmail.com
or 309-361-1975



Life Together is published 11 times per year by the
First Presbyterian Church of Morrison IL.
1st Printing: February 1, 2019

Please Recycle