



e-News

November 20th, 2024

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A letter from Lead Pastor Bo Mircea

Jonah 2:9—But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the LORD.’

I recently had a chat with a friend about the importance of living a grateful life. We both agreed that gratitude is crucial, but we had a slight disagreement on how to approach it. I believe that sometimes it can be challenging to be grateful, and when that happens, it seems like the whole ‘thankful attitude’ goes out the window. I think Jonah might have felt that way. But here’s the thing: if we look at certain aspects of our lives as sacrifices and promises to make good on, it might help us stay on track. I’m determined to live in thankfulness! I promise to be a grateful person, and I’ll walk with a thankful heart. Mindset is everything. Setting our hearts on the good things might take some effort at times, but it’s definitely doable. I pray that this season, we all be thankful, filled with that spirit of gratitude as we worship, go about our daily lives, or even just get ready for Thanksgiving.

Blessings,
Pastor Bo

P.S. This Sunday, Pastor Mark Morrison will be leading worship and preaching. I’m excited to see what the Lord will bring as we come together and worship as one in this season of thanksgiving.

Here are some updates:

- ****Thanksgiving Service:**** We’ll have our Thanksgiving service here at church on Tuesday, November 26th, at 7 PM. I hope you can join us for a short time of worship and meditation.
- ****Midweek** will be off next week for Thanksgiving.**
- ****Thanksgiving Break:**** The Church Office will be closed on Thursday and Friday next week for our Thanksgiving Break.
- ****Christmas Decorating:**** On Saturday, November 30th, from 9 AM, we need your help decorating the Sanctuary and the whole building for Christmas. Please come out and lend a hand! The Worship Council would love every hand that can help.
- ****Youth Group:**** Our Youth Group will not meet November 24, but will have an outing to GLOW Holiday Festival on December 1st, at the Joliet Slammers stadium. More details will be shared soon.

On a personal note: Yesterday was quite an eventful day. I had a lot of anxiety about going before the Presbytery, since I don’t remember the last time they held a vote like yesterday’s. But through their vote, the Blackhawk Presbytery confirmed the work of the PNC and the congregational call. I want to express my deepest gratitude to you all as a congregation, to the PNC, and the Blackhawk Presbytery for your unwavering support over the many years of working together in this place we all love.

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 11/17/24

GUEST PREACHER: Mark Morrison

USHERS: Ed Schultz, Mark Dykema, Sue Fordyce,
Mark Fumagalli

COFFEE: Barb Rodgers

LITURGIST: Lynn Kosowski **ACOLYTE:** Caroline Orr

SOUND: Rich Pool **VIDEO:** Matt Blaser

STARS OF HOPE

**MorningStar Mission gifts need to be returned
(unwrapped) this Sunday, November 24th!**

Thank you to everyone who purchased gifts to help make Christmas special for a child in need.

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

Children's Church Corner

Faith Focus: Harvest—God provides for our needs

Lesson for Sun. 11/24: God Provides Wisdom
Daniel 1:1-21

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

From Your PNC

The Pastor Nominating Committee is excited to report that at their meeting yesterday, 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.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Tuesday, November 26th at 7pm at First Pres.

Even in difficult and uncertain times, there are so many blessings in our lives. Come and celebrate the bounty that God provides to each of us.

OASIS: Women's Ministry

Each 1st and 3rd Wednesdays during Midweek

Room 217 from 6:45—7:15pm (after dinner)

Calling all women of our church and community age 15 and older to join us on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 6pm for dinner and 6:45 for fellowship with other women.

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 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.

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Stewardship Report

2024-2025 Budget	\$747,600
Year to Date Income	\$338,987
Year to Date Expenses	\$340,459
Per Capita	\$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

11/20 OASIS: Women's Ministry fellowship

11/21 Dinner Out Group—Craft'd in Plainfield

11/24 Stars of Hope due

11/25 Project LINUS

11/26 Thanksgiving Worship Service

11/30 Advent Decorating

12/6 Advent Concert with Harvest Arts

12/14 Brookfield Zoo trip

12/22 Christmas Fellowship Breakfast

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.

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group WILL NOT meet Sunday November 24.

Watch for info to come about the GLOW Holiday Festival outing on December 1.

PROJECT LINUS

Monday, November 25th at 9am in Hoffman Hall

Come make no-sew blankets for kids in need in our local community. If you can tie a knot, you can make a blanket!

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.

