



e-News

January 8th, 2025

805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435

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firstpresjoliet.org

A Letter from Lead Pastor Bo Mircea

I am writing this, as I am getting ready to go through the coming home process, packing bags, making sure I am checked in for my flights, that my passport is where it should be. As I think about coming home, I have a hard time saying goodbye to this place that is also home. It has been good to be here, not only for me, but for my parents as well. As you know mom is still recovering from her surgery, and while dad has been a good helper to her, having her son home did prove to be the best medicine. For me it was good to see her getting stronger day by day, while giving me a chance to help around the house and spoil them.

As I think about living here and there, or there and here, I am always taken back to what living for the Lord means in practical terms, for us as people of faith. We live in a world that seems to be broken, that needs grace and hope, and yet we come from a place of faith, where we believe that the best is yet to come. We live in that tension that comes down to this: Live in God's grace when everything else fails.

This Sunday I am preaching on Luke 1:78-79

"Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

I want to encourage you to pray for the church, this church, for all of us, to be able to capture that light that shines from God's heart, and to share it with those around us.

It is a New Day, a new day that the Lord gives us and calls us to live in.

Looking forward to worship with you on Sunday,

Blessings,
Pastor Bo

Church Family

Prayers of health and healing for:

Jean Smietanski, Clint DeGeus, and Mary Jane Johnson.

Prayers for baby Anna, granddaughter of Sarah and Craig Randolph.

Prayers and sympathy to the family of Julee Coughlen. Visitation will be here at First Pres on Saturday, January 11 from 10-11am, with memorial service beginning at 11 am.

DINNER OUT GROUP

January 16th

Meet at Casa Margarita (145 S Weber Rd in Bolingbrook) at 6pm. Contact Carol Kline to be included in the reservation.

OASIS: Women's Ministry

January and February dates:

1/8 1/22 2/5 2/19

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. Children are invited to participate in the Soar High program running at the same time, and nursery care is available before and after dinner.

Children's Church Corner

Faith Focus: Treasure Seekers—We discover God together

Lesson for Sun. 1/12: Follow God—*Exodus 13:17-22*

Bible Verse: "Ask, and you will receive. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you." - *Matthew 7:7*



SAVE THE DATE– COMING UP

- 1/8 Soar High, Midweek, and Oasis resume
- 1/12 Congregational Meeting
- 1/15 Soar High and Midweek
- 1/16 Dinner Out Group at Casa Margarita in Bolingbrook
- 1/22 Soar High, Midweek and Oasis
- 1/29 Soar High and Midweek

HELPING HANDS UPDATE:

This marks the 19th year of the Helping Hands ministry here at First Pres. Since our inception in October 2005, we have delivered over 4800 meals, including over 200 this year. We would like to thank those of you in the congregation who have made referrals, have prepared and delivered these meals, and have taken the time to visit with the recipients. We are currently utilizing Golden Corral for our meal preparation. If you know of anyone you would like to refer to receive a meal or if you would like to help with the delivery of these meals, please contact the church office or Dave Steinberg at 331-212-0627. Again thank you. God bless all of you.

SOAR HIGH AND MIDWEEK

Soar High and Midweek programs both resume this Wednesday 1/8, and following Wednesdays.

Kids age 3 through 8th grade can participate in Soar High. 5-6pm kids will be learning music, art, and a Bible lesson. Kids are split into similar-age groups.

At 6pm everyone is invited to a fellowship dinner. The meal is free but donations are appreciated.

After dinner kids have a rec time while adults are invited to join the Adult Bible Study, and women are invited to Oasis: Women's Ministry twice a month.

Nursery care is available except during dinner, guardians are responsible for all of their children during dinner.

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.

THANK YOU to everyone who has donated their time to our Soar High program each Wednesday and on Sundays when the kids share the songs they've been learning. Thank you to our Soar High families and everyone who makes this ministry possible.

January 8th, 2025 Stewardship Report

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|------------------------------|-----------|
| 2024-2025 Budget | \$747,600 |
| Year to Date Income | \$439,327 |
| Year to Date Expenses | \$435,969 |
| Per Capita | \$44.00 |

The new Per Capita amount for 2025 is \$44.00. Per Capita is a shared cost among Presbyterians and is the amount every congregation pays for each active member to cover ecclesiastical and administrative costs to govern the PC(USA).

2024 giving statements have been mailed so you should be receiving yours soon.

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.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

January 12th—This Sunday

Session will be holding a Congregational Meeting to elect new elders and deacons.

SUNDAY SERVANTS 1/12/24

USHERS: Mark Dykema, Mark Fumagalli, Scherrie Sanchez, Ed Schultz

COFFEE: Sue Mott

LITURGIST: Don Caisley

ACOLYTE: Abel DeNieuwe

SOUND: Keith LeVasseur

VIDEO: Drew Penhale