



PRESBY PRESS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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OUR MISSION

TO BE THE
LOVING
COMMUNITY OF
JESUS CHRIST
THAT WILL

WIN

NEW FOLLOWERS
OF CHRIST TO
SAVING FAITH

GROW

ALL FOLLOWERS
TO DEEPER FAITH

GO

INTO THE
WORLD AND
DEMONSTRATE
FAITH

From the Pastor's Desk

The Grit & Grace of Being the *Loving Community of Jesus Christ*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I believe that as a church body it is important we regularly are thinking about and reviewing our FPC mission statement together... *To Be the LOVING COMMUNITY of Jesus Christ*. As a community on this journey together it's needful for us to be renewed in heart and mind of what and who we are wanting to grow to be for Christ's glory – *a people whose lives and witness are identified and activated by LOVE*. It's a supernatural kind of love, and it's only by supernatural means of the Holy Spirit that we can begin to have inside and outside of us the kind of love that Jesus calls us to.

It is always important for us to hold up the high ideal of that level of *Loving Community*, even as we are honest about how our love can often look in our everyday lives together. Yes, it's far from the ideal, but we are growing up and learning more of the kind of grit and commitment it takes to love, *really love* each other. We are also discovering just how this deep love can emerge from our frail hearts and hands as we look to Christ and his love for us. It's amazing! Ordinary people like us who have good days and bad, who sometimes seem to be oddly matched with others in the church, can actually be drawn together by the grace of God that astonishes the world (and us!) with how much we are being transformed in LOVE! When we recognize this powerful truth of who we are together in Christ, others want to come find out what it is that's going on.

In short, we become very effective to *WIN, GROW & GO in faith* to our world. That's exciting!

(Continued on pg. 3)

Remember to Pray for One Another!

Your First Presbyterian Church Family believes in the power of prayer. (See Romans 1:9b-10a). You are invited to pray intentionally for one another in the First Presbyterian Church family.. **Please pick up a name of someone to pray for from the basket at the back of the sanctuary.**

PRAY AND PLEDGE FOR 2016

Our pledges for 2016 are currently \$20,000 short of what is needed to continue operating our church ministry next year at the same level as 2015, with no increase in employee salaries or benefits. The Session will not be able to meet our budgeted obligations without dipping into our reserve funds and diminishing what may be needed for emergency expenses. The Session asks you to pray and prayerfully consider increasing your pledge for 2016. Please speak to a member of Session if you have any questions about our congregation's financial situation. We are also behind about \$5,000 in receiving this year's pledges, so please give what you are able by the end of 2015. Thank you for your prayers and consideration.



Give
unto the **Lord**

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committed
to serving.***

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(Clerk of Session)

434-2774

Here's a personal reflection on the kind of Loving Community in church that I'm talking about. It comes from a writer and NPR commentator named Heather King. She's a recovering alcoholic who has come to faith in Christ and offers her unvarnished reflection on her initial experience with the church. See if you can relate to what she describes:

"My first impulse was to think, My God, I don't want to get sober (or in the case of the church, worship) with THESE nutcases! (or boring people, or people with different politics, taste in music, food, books, or whatever). Nothing shatters our egos like worshipping with people we did not hand-pick The humiliation of discovering that we are thrown in with extremely unpromising people!—people who are broken, misguided, wishy-washy, out for themselves. People who are ... us.

"But we don't come to church to be with people who are like us in the way we want them to be. We come because we have staked our souls on the fact that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and the church is the best place, the only place, to be while we all struggle to figure out what that means. We come because we'd be hard pressed to say which is the bigger of the two scandals of God: that he loves us—or that he loves everyone else." (Adapted from Heather King, "The Better Church," Shirt of Flame blog, 10-23-11)

I am grateful for our bold and challenging mission statement that starts at square one with the great challenge *to be the LOVING COMMUNITY of Jesus Christ*. That's just where it needs to start, continue and end. It's just where you and I need to start as we seek by great faith and hope in Christ in 2016 to be *a people whose lives and witness are identified and activated by his love*.

Welcome to the grit and grace of *LOVING COMMUNITY!*

Pastor John Walker



Can you imagine what education would be like in the US if a teacher's only educational tool was a chalkboard and chalk?? That was the case at Glory Primary School in Uganda! It was sad to observe, especially knowing how available they are available in every school in America!

For several years now, our Uganda team has been collecting CHILDREN'S BOOKS for Uganda! We were frequently asked HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GET THEM TO UGANDA? We had to honestly say that we had no idea but we were confident that God would make a way to get them there! To make a long, GOD-DRIVEN STORY shorter, the 1,600 books are now in the Glory Primary School Library! And the good news is, Milton has found us another small school that is in dire need of books!!!

ST. PAUL PRIMARY SCHOOL children are excited to have been chosen by us for our next project! We have already collected several hundred books and Carol Woeckel and Debbie Damron are in the process of duplicating the process of preparing the books for their eventual shipment to Uganda, hopefully, summer 2017. But we are very short on our goal of 1,500 books. Would you consider blessing this project with children's books?—Christian, hard back, sturdy paperback, sets of children's books, beginning reader books, junior chapter books and baby books! If in doubt you can contact Dianne, Debbie or Carol Woeckel. FPC can be proud to know that they have helped improve the education of children in Kahondo, Uganda, and have given them a sense of school pride. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!



We Miss You!

Our current health has not allowed us to attend service as much as we would like. We miss your fellowship and wish to express our gratitude to our church family for all off your prayers and support. God is good and will bless us all.

Cathy and Roy Peters

It has been several years since we had a new Church Directory printed (without pictures). We would like to get a new one printed in January!

Please contact the office and let Cindy know if you have any changes in your address, phone number or email address by January 14th!

Church Directory

UPDATE





If you do not currently receive the First Presbyterian Church newsletter by email and would like to, please send your request with your email address to Cindy Arjes in the church office: fpcone@ottawafirstpres.org. She will be glad to add you to the list and see that you get monthly news of FPC's mission, ministries and current events.

Your Help Is Needed!

The Christmas paintings in Washington Park will come down on Saturday January 2, 2016, with breakfast at 6:30 a.m. at First Presbyterian we will then meet in Washington Park at 8 a.m. We always have a great time of fellowship and your help will be greatly appreciated. May God Bless you and yours in the New Year.

You've Been Blessed to Be a Blessing!

How has God blessed you? How will you be a blessing to someone else?

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing..." Dueteronomy 11:26

Please check the bulletin board in Scott Hall and color in your blessing!

There are crayons available and poster board for you to share a blessing.

Endless
BLESSINGS

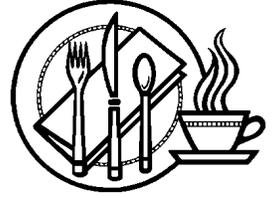
WIN, GROW, GO: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Wednesday Prayer Team:

Please come pray each Wednesday, 9:30 am—10 am, in the church library with a team of dedicated pray-ers lifting praises and concerns to the LORD for members of our church family, the greater Ottawa community, our missionaries and prayers for our nation and the world.

Free Community Meals; 3rd Sunday of every month: **LOOKING TO FILL January!!**

Might God call you to work on the community meal project? On the third Sunday of each month volunteers are needed to do the following: Organize the meal (decide what to make, plan the purchase of food); cook the meal; visit with those eating; clean up. Who can help? Anyone, any age. Are you feeling like you and your friends can be the next ones? Contact Kerry Gerding (434-4123) or Betty Ehret (228-2217) for more information and to sign up.



Prayer Shawls: Our Prayer Shawl Ministry is still going strong.

Do you know someone who could use a hug from God (who doesn't)? Please call us so that we may provide a Prayer Shawl for you to give that "someone" who needs God's hug.

Jackie Bean 434-3380

Why not join a small group? At FPC small groups are important. Why? Because few experiences encourage and build our faith more than small groups. Small groups teach us how to better know, understand and apply God's word in daily life. They also become a place of good friendship and caring. Want to join a small group? It's easy! Just talk to Pastor John or one of the small group contacts listed below:

Mike & Diane Farrell (Sun. PM): 434-2774

John Walker (1st Sun. PM monthly): 433-1045

Betsy Feagans (Mon. PM): 433-5480

Jack & Sandy Finnegan (Thurs. AM): 433-5253

Carol Engberg/Women: 433-3465

(Thurs. PM, once a month)

Diane Kennedy (Thurs. PM): 870-740-0442

Lisa Mestelle/Women-Beth Moore Bible Study (Thurs. PM): 434-2318

Jim Keely/Men (Sat. AM): 433-0868

Handy Food Receipts

Please save your receipts and bring them to church. We can earn 1% of the receipts totals for our church! Boxes will be in Scott Hall and on the table by the church offices.

Ottawa Community Food Basket:

Donations for the Food Basket for the month of June is pasta/spaghetti. Let's fill the barrels at the entrances to our sanctuary and share our gifts with the less fortunate in our community.



Sunday Greeters needed:

We need your smiling face to greet newcomers and "oldcomers" at the front door on Sunday mornings. This is a great way to contribute to the life of your church.

FOOD, FELLOWSHIP & FAMILY



JANUARY

Keith Stevenson	5
Michael Hess	6
Betty Ehret	12
Dawn Hess	13
Jim Davey	16
Cathy Peters	21
Earl Gerding, Nathalie Schmidt	26
Debbie Walker, Dana Snook	27
Diane Kennedy	28
Winona Bartlett	31

FEBRUARY

Nathan Hess	10
Dan Brockman	11
Idalia Stricklin	13
Noah Trolinger	14
John Damron	15
Erin Stuedemann	19
Tiffini Thompson	24
Sue Brockman, Jackie Boaz	27
Dianne Jamison	28

LADIES' NITE OUT

Tuesday, December 1st 5:30 p.m. at
Hank's in Ottawa

Please contact:

Carol Engberg

433-3465

for info & reservations.

KUM JOIN US

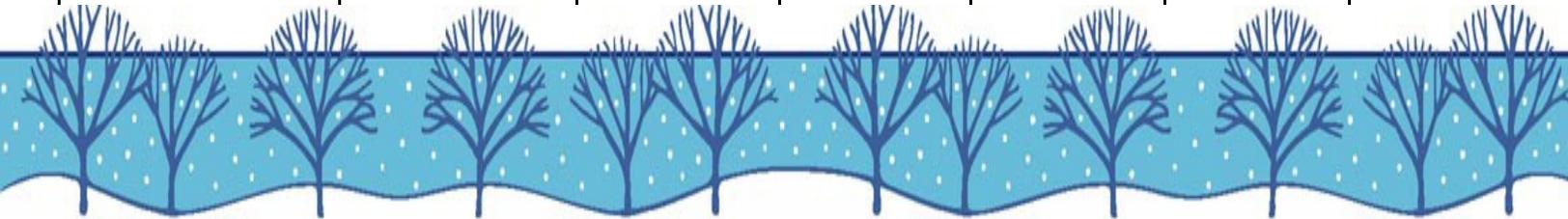
SUNDAY, DEC. 6th

**12:30 P.M. FOR MEETING
IN SCOTT HALL**

**MEAL WILL BE AT
HALFTIME RESTAURANT
FOLLOWING MEETING**



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>Sunday's starting 9/13</u> 9:00 am Fellowship 9:00 am Prayer 9:30 am Choir 10:00 am WORSHIP			<u>Every Wed.</u> 9:30 am Prayer, library 7:00 pm Choir in Library	<u>Every Thurs.</u> 9:30 am Seniors Small Group		<u>Every Saturday</u> 6:30 am Men's Small Group
					1	2
3 11:10 am-Congregational Meeting	4	5 6pm-Ladies Nite Out	6	7	8	9
10 New Elders ordained and installed in worship 5pm-LOL4JC	11	12 7pm-Session Committee Meetings	13	14	15	16
17 Noon- Community Meal	18	19 7pm-Session Meeting	20	21	22	23
24 5pm-LOL4JC	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



JANUARY

2016

First Presbyterian Church
114 East Jefferson Street
Ottawa, Illinois 61350

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Return Service Requested

For Your Information....

- January 3: A brief congregational meeting will follow worship in the sanctuary to elect Mike Farrell and Pete Trolinger to session as elders in the class of 2018.
- January 10: New elders will be ordained and installed in worship.
- January 24: Mike Stohr and “Soul Shine” will lead us in worship through music and song.

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