



PRESBY PRESS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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MARCH 2016



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

Dear FPC Family,

All or most of us will recall when the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly approved marriage for same-gender couples at its June 2014 meeting in Detroit. Shortly after our elders established a Task Force to study the issue and make recommendations to the elders as to FPC-Ottawa's response going forward. That Task Force, chaired by Ron Koestler and comprised of 6 other people representing different thoughts/positions on the issue of marriage, met for several months from fall-2014 through spring-2015. They worked faithfully and diligently to consider the issues and recommendations to the elders in light of the history, mission and theological DNA of First Presbyterian Church. Session received their report with gratitude for their work and *Loving Community* spirit around an issue that can be challenging within our national culture right now to discuss in communities of differing viewpoints. One final part of their work was to present the Statement on Marriage (see pg. 3) to the elders for approval, which was accomplished at the January 19, 2016 session meeting. Please read through it, along with the earlier statement by the August 21, 2001 session (see pg. 2). The new statement should not be understood to replace or rescind the 2001 statement, but to amplify and stand alongside it. Please feel free to share any feedback you might have with me, Clerk of Session Diane Farrell or any of your 13 elders.

In Christ,
Pastor John Walker

(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.**

Session's August 21, 2001 Theological Position Statement

The session of First Presbyterian Church in Ottawa, Illinois, meeting this 21st day of August, 2001 joins faithful believers throughout the Church in confessing:

- That Jesus Christ alone is Lord of all and the way of salvation.
- That holy Scripture is the triune God's revealed Word, the Church's only infallible rule of faith and life.
- That God's people are called to holiness in all aspects of life. This includes honoring the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman, the only relationship within which sexual activity is appropriate.

We therefore announce our commitment to the Confessing Church Movement and we implore all Presbyterians who share these historic Christian convictions to:

- Renew their individual commitments to the above confessions.
- Urge their session and presbytery to affirm these confessions and to declare that they will not ordain, install or employ in any ministry position any person who will not affirm them.
- Urge the 2001 General Assembly to instruct the General Assembly Council to require that all program personnel uphold these confessions and ensure that these confessions are followed faithfully in all programs and Policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Easter Lilly Orders Are Due By March 13th!

Lilies will be ordered by Worship committee and will be in the sanctuary on March 27th. You may designate your flower be given to a shut-in, or you may take it home after the service.

Cost of the flowers will be \$14.00 and must be included with the order form. These can be sent to the church office or placed in the offering plate (in an envelope marked "Worship Committee"). Please complete and turn in the order form by

March 13th.

If you have any questions please call
Diane Kennedy (870-740-0442).

Pastor

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jwalker@ottawafirstpres.org

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Treasurer

Betty Angus

Westminster Choir Director

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*Our Elders are
committed
to serving.*

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343-3673

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434-4123

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(Fellowship & Outreach)
228-2217

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(Deacon)
433-5477

Diane Farrell
(Clerk of Session)
434-2774

A Statement on Marriage First Presbyterian Church of Ottawa, IL

In light of recent decisions by our denomination concerning Christian marriage, the session of First Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, IL, meeting this **19th day of January, 2016**, reaffirm the following confession, originally put forth by our session on August 21, 2001:

- That Jesus Christ alone is Lord of all and the way to salvation.
- That Holy Scripture is the triune God's revealed Word, the Church's only infallible rule of faith and life.
- That God's people are called to holiness in all aspects of life. This includes honoring the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman as the only relationship within which sexual activity is appropriate.

We recognize that this confession is at odds with many of the views of our culture, and that there is a lack of consensus within today's Church concerning the nature of Christian marriage. We seek to be a people of both grace and truth, and as such we affirm the following:

- That all Christians do well to approach any discussion of marriage and human sexuality with the humility of those who know their own sin;
- That *we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23), and that there is no "us" and "them" when it comes to sexual longings, dysfunctions, or sin;
- That core to the gospel message is a vast forgiveness that is found in Jesus Christ; and
- That, as beneficiaries of this vast forgiveness, our desire is to welcome all, and to encourage all to live in conformity with the Gospel, as members of the loving community of Jesus Christ.

Gentlemen of First Pres.— Coming Saturday March 5th

We will meet for breakfast, fellowship, and a video program by Jim Brooke on a trip to see his daughter and granddaughters in Ethiopia. Please join us for a great morning from 6:30 to 8:00 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Ottawa. Let's have a good turnout of First Pres. men to welcome our guests and brothers in Christ. God Bless and spread the Word. Please contact Jim Keely (433-0868) if you would like to help prepare the meal.

Prayer **BREAKFAST**

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!!



THANK YOU, CAROL WOECKEL

It started with one bag of books that was given to me from caring friends—“CAN YOU USE THESE?” —then, another bag and another bag!

Having been a teacher all my life, I knew the value of books, reading and their impact on education! Throughout our trips to Uganda and visiting families and schools, the lack of educational tools was shocking and saddened me to the core!!! Reading books stimulates young minds, improves imagination, develops creativity, increases writing skills, verbal expression and vocabulary, and opens their minds to the outside world!

As the books started to collect in my basement, I still was in a conundrum as to how to proceed!! Then, I thought of my librarian friend, CAROL WOECKEL, and decided to call her for ideas on how to arrange the books—and the rest is history!

Without the help of Carol and her meticulous librarian skills, these books would still be in boxes in my basement! For 1 1/2 years, Carol single-handedly categorized about 3,000 books (with a tiny bit of help from me!) which will fill two libraries in rural Uganda! THANK YOU Carol, for your devotion to this project, one that was dropped in your lap for consideration and you graciously accepted!!! The children and parents at Glory Primary School and St. Paul Primary School send their thanks and gratitude to you!!!



Easter Egg Hunt



Our 5th annual Easter Egg Hunt will be March 27th, directly after the worship service that morning. All children up to and including 5th grade are invited to join us.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time.

Come join us for an evening of artist delight at "Art & Soul" (in the basement of Avant Garden, downtown Ottawa). We will be painting a spring floral masterpiece under the direction of owner Alicia Sesto. Cost is \$30 per person and includes all your supplies. Invite your friends!

Please contact Kerry Gerding to sign up at 815-434-4123.



“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”

Check out the Happy Birthday Bulletin Board in Scott Hall to see who was born when...

Then check up when someone in our FPC family is celebrating a birthday!
Send them a blessing!

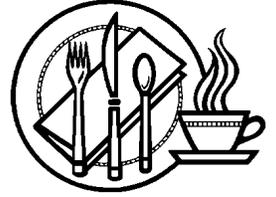
“Truly, truly I say to you unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3

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 April, May, July, August, September, October and December. 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

Betsy Feagans (Mon. PM): 433-5480

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

Lisa Mestelle/Women-Beth Moore Bible

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

Study (Thurs. PM): 252-7462

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

Carol Engberg/Women: 433-3465
(Thurs. PM, once a month)

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.

LADIES' NITE OUT

Tuesday, March 1, 6:00 p.m. at
R Grotto

Please contact:

Karen Mikkelsen
630-532-9602

for info & reservations.

KUM JOIN US

SUNDAY, MARCH 6TH

**11:15 A.M. FOR MEETING
IN SCOTT HALL**

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



FOOD, FELLOWSHIP & FAMILY



MARCH

Beverly Boudreau	1
Lisa Smithmeyer	2
Kerry Gerding	5
Nancy Lewis	6
Randy Ehret, Sr.	8
Kathy Gonzalo	13
Darren Bragg	15
John W. Walker	16
Sarah Walker	17
Grant Smithmeyer	21
Ed Grobe, Madi Trolinger	22
Matthew Walker	24

APRIL

Rob McGrath	1
Shawn Yepsen	3
Sue Koestler	3
Mike Farrell	8
Lyle Robinson	8
Diane Farrell	11
Brian Huebner	12
John Roark	13
Jade Prebianca (Boaz)	16
Karla Armstrong	18
Caroline Schmidt	18



Looking Back at 150 years

First Presbyterian Church 1869-2019

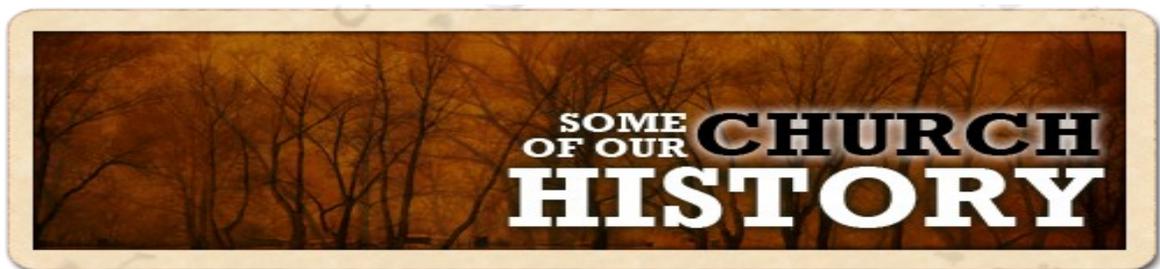
In about 3 years we will be celebrating 150 years with First Presbyterian Church. As the time gets closer we will be preparing for a celebration to mark this event. Right now, we want to share some of our church history that we find in Session minutes.

The Presbyterian structure requires that the session keep meeting minutes and we are fortunate to have several books of minutes to review. These will be in Scott Hall during coffee/fellowship time. We will also have paper available for those who want to look over these historical minutes and make comments about what they remember of that time.

The Deacon's fund was established March 1913. At that time the session minutes reflect the following:

“It was suggested that a fund be provided for the purpose for doing little deeds of Christian charity, locally. After some discussion a motion was made, seconded and carried that a fund to be known as the Deacon's Fund be provided from the loose collection at the communion service. ET Ebersol, Secy.”

For 103 years First Presbyterian has recognized our mission within the community of Ottawa. We continue to have this special giving opportunity to provide little deeds of Christian charity to members of our community. We now have special envelopes available to give toward this purpose. Many times these donations help members of our church family as well as people in the community who need some temporary help to get through difficult times. We are thankful for the foresight of the elders of 1913.



Putting God First

Putting God First sounds easy, I know, but we mere humans that is not so.

We have to make a real effort to get up and pray.

Then try to keep God in your thoughts all through the day.

Smiling and encouragement are not easy sometimes, arguments with people because of pride.

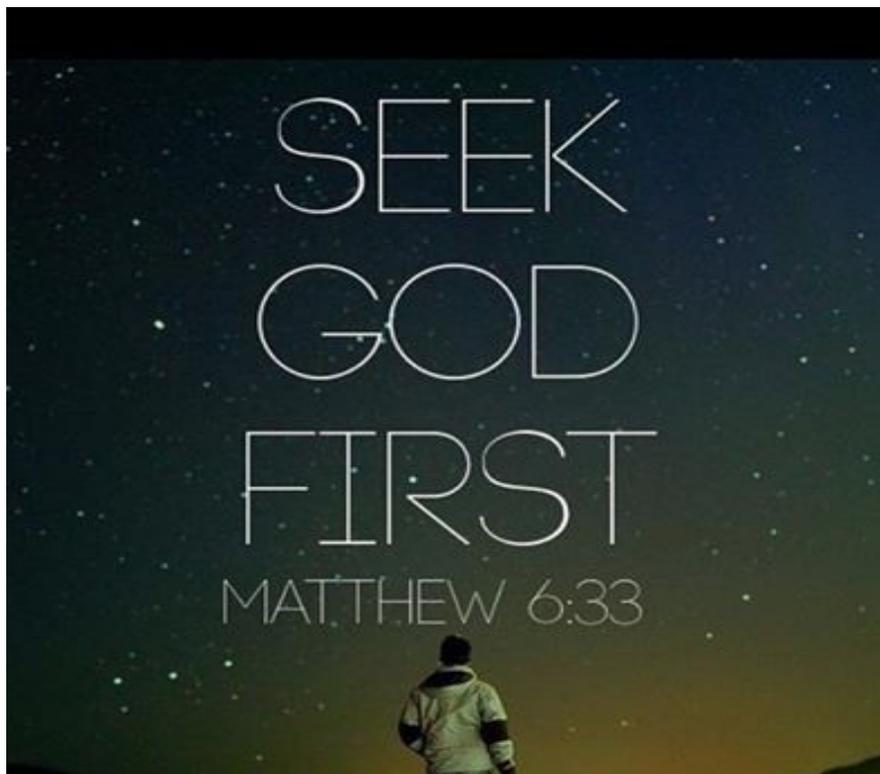
Trying to be Christian is like a full time job, being kind instead of judging or being a snob.

People are watching and observing if we practice what we preach.

We are Christian and without knowing it, teach and lead.

Being Christian is a big responsibility.

By Ruth Stephan



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Every Sunday 9:00 am Fellowship 9:00 am Prayer 9:30 am Choir 10:00 am WORSHIP			Every Wed. 9:30 am Prayer, library 7:00 pm Choir in Library	Every Thurs. 9:30 am Seniors Small Group		Every Saturday 6:30 am Men's Small Group
		1. 6 pm Ladies Nite Out	2.	3.	4.	5.
6. 4th Sunday of Lent 12:30 pm– Kum Join Us	7.	8. 7 pm–Session Committee Meetings	9.	10.	11.	12. REMEMBER TO TURN YOUR CLOCKS BACK 1 HOUR!
13. 5th Sunday of Lent “Soul Shine” in worship 5 pm–LOL4JC	14.	15. 7 pm–Session Meeting	16.	17.	18.	19.
20. Palm Sunday Noon– Community Meal at Knight's of Columbus	14.	15.	16.	17.	25.	26.
	HOLY		WEEK		Good Friday	
27. Easter Sunday 9am–Easter Breakfast 10am– WORSHIP! 11:15am– Easter Egg Hunt	28.	29.	30.	31.		



March 2 0 1 6

First Presbyterian Church
114 East Jefferson Street
Ottawa, Illinois 61350

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Return Service Requested

Reliving the Passion

- **March 13th ~ Mike Stohr and Soul Shine will lead us in glorious worship music!**
- **March 20th ~ PALM SUNDAY welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem.**
- **March 24th ~ Maundy Thursday Worship at 7:00 p.m.– Celebrating Christ’s Last Supper**
- **March 27th ~ EASTER SUNDAY– He Is Risen!**
9 am.-Easter Breakfast
10 am-Easter Worship
11:15 am– Easter Egg Hunt

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