



PRESBY PRESS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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FEBRUARY 2018



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 Annual Report:

Our Hope in 2018

In my last two years of annual reports, I have attempted to help us look with honesty and hope at some of the challenges facing the church today, our own First Presbyterian Church included. Using certain measurements we have seen declines in most churches, including our own, attendance and giving most notable among them. Those metrics are undeniable, but before we panic or despair, let me tell you why I am full of hope for the future of the church and for our FPC family.

I have hope first and beyond all other reasons because of this: Jesus Christ is LORD and Savior of his church for which he died. He is also Head of his church. I know that Jesus is not anxious about his church. Ever. Because he knows what he's doing in our life with him. If we are in a season of change, it's okay because he is with us, just like he was with the disciples when they were being tossed about by the stormy changes on the Sea. There in that storm of changes they gained a glimpse of just who he is as LORD, when he stood and with a word the creation obeyed his command.

I have hope because as stormy as these changes can feel to us, it's not the first season of change for Jesus' church. We just celebrated the 500th anniversary of another stormy season of change that happened for the world and the church in the Great Reformation, as it's come to be called.

Cont. 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.**



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, February 11th, 2018 at 10:45 a.m. in Scott Hall for the purpose of: **(a)** Re-viewing the 2018 budget; **(b)** Electing of congregational members of the Nominating Committee; **(c)** Receiving annual reports **(d)** Transact any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

NEW Q PLACE COACHING SESSIONS BEGIN IN FEBRUARY!

Start a Group for Spiritual Seekers! Where can the spiritually curious go to safely explore spiritual topics and learn more without being told what to believe? This is what Q Place is all about. The “Q” is for Questions. Q Place initiators (2-3 Christians do it together) provide a non-threatening small group environment that discusses spiritual questions and issues with people who believe differently so they can find God as revealed in the Bible. Former atheist Lee Stobel says, “I wish Q Place had been around when I was a seeker investigating spiritual issues!” Get equipped to start your own Q Place (i.e. spiritual seeker group) from the convenience of your home computer! In the 7-week, 75 minute FREE online sessions, experienced coaches will walk you through the process. Go to <https://www.qplace.com/q-place-coaching/> for more info and to sign up! How does Q Place work? Find out in this 38 minute webinar rebroadcast <https://www.qplace.com/how-q-place-works-rebroadcast/> Why not join a coaching group and experience the joy of sharing your faith? New coaching sessions start the week of February 5: **Mondays @ 8:30 pm, Thursdays @ 2 pm and Thursdays 7:30 @ pm**

Pastor

John W. Walker

jwalker@ottawafirstpres.org

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Cindy Arjes

fpcone@ottawafirstpres.org

Treasurer

Betty Angus

Westminster Choir Director

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Organist

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Pastor's Message cont. from pg. 1

No one had access to headlines or social media 500 years ago as we do today. Today's media connections bring this stormy season to our minds and hearts to such extent that we become hyper-aware of our situation and, I believe, more anxious. The Reformation of 500 years ago was much more tumultuous than what we witness today, at least thus far. It's difficult to put things into perspective when anxiety moves our thinking and understanding. Phyllis Tickle was a well-known author and speaker on the Christian faith until her death in September 2015. As an expert on the history and contours of the church, she made a telling observation about the church's lifecycles when she said something to this effect: *Every 500 years or so, the church has a rummage sale.* Indeed, if you study the cycles of the Christian church, and even those of the Jewish and Muslim religions, you will find that every 500 years there is a season of change. Sometimes it's seismic. What I believe is this: the Holy Spirit, who is Jesus' presence with us (by his promise he gave to us until he comes again), will get us through whatever this current change is about. We need not fear, but simply trust and follow Jesus, asking him to help us be faithful every day in our witness to him. The Holy Spirit will equip us with all that we need. We must not give up!

I have hope because of the *Loving Community of Jesus Christ* that we are together! Even if it can be said that some of our metrics have declined in recent years, let me say I believe those are by no means the only measurements we need to pay attention to. I think everyone at First Presbyterian knows it – *I do!* There is a vitality of spirit, of joy, of gladness for our life together, a richness of fellowship and a deep love for one another that comes only from Christ. It's not perfect, but it is undeniable. And we are growing in those measurements. Forget the other metrics we always seem to want to count! Let's commit together that, with the Holy Spirit, we will grow in these measurements of vitality and reach out to the community with the good news of the gospel. We're already experimenting in this regard and having some measurable success. As I look back in 2017 on the many good moments of our life in the *Loving Community of Jesus Christ to WIN, GROW & GO*, one such moment stands out. It was this past fall when Lisa Mestelle had a great idea that FPC should show up in the midst of our neighbors and community to be a blessing at Ottawa's annual *Scarecrow Fest*. What happened that day was amazing! It was rich and exciting! It was fun!

Cont. on pg. 5

*Our Elders are
committed
to serving.*

Brian Huebner
(Worship)
433-5477

Mike Farrell
(Worship/Deacon)
434-2774

Brian Smithmeyer
(Discipleship)
795-6791

Brad Angus
(Trustee)
433-2946

Dan Mestelle
(Trustee)
252-7462

Dan Duggan
(Trustee)
431-9168

Mark Brockman
(Administration)
815-333-8429

Pete Trolinger
(Administration)
795-6791

Gayle Schmitt
(Fellowship & Outreach)
815-667-9892

David Farrell
(Fellowship & Outreach)
815-252-2351

Ron Koestler
(Missions)
343-6088

Diane Farrell
(Clerk of Session)
434-2774



SECRET SISTERS PIZZA PARTY

Thursday February 8th at 5:30 p.m.
at Bianchi Pizza

Bring your secret sister gift

Please find the new bio sheets in the basket in the kitchen. Complete and return to the basket or give to Dave Farrell (815-252-2351) or Gayle Schmitt (815-667-4964) .



eCycling for Education

Please help **Opportunity School's Fundraising for Education** and recycle your old electronic items for free. Opportunity School will be placing recycling bins outside of the classrooms for donations of cell phones, laser & ink cartridges, laptops, iPods, tablets, eReaders, notebooks and iPads.

Pastor's Message cont. from pg. 3

The many creative games Lisa and Dan set up that Saturday were a big hit with so many kids and parents. When many found out that we were FPC and just doing this to be a blessing, they were surprised. They took note. I believe it was an important moment of **hope** in the growth of FPC's witness to our community that Jesus and his church are vitally present to make a difference in today's world.

For 2018 and beyond, how would Jesus have us celebrate our life together in him while reaching out and inviting others to come join in the journey? How can we grow in our metrics of serving others for the sake of the gospel? How is Jesus calling you to reach out and draw someone in to the vitality of life at First Presbyterian in 2018? What will YOU do to live your **hope** in Christ in an uncertain world where the church is undergoing change? What we have at First Presbyterian Church is worth sharing. Let's do it!

Full of hope with you in Christ,

Pastor John Walker

The Ottawa Prayer Center Turns 1 Year Old!

You are invited to join us in celebrating the 1 year anniversary of the Ottawa Prayer Center. The even will feature worship led by the Chicago House of Prayer, prayer facilitated by local pastors and a vision casting for 2018. A time of fellowship, finger food and refreshments begins at 6:30 p.m. with worship starting at 7 p.m.. The Ottawa Prayer Center is located at 807 LaSalle St. (above Jeremiah Joe's) Free admission! Free childcare is available! Hope to see you there!

EASTER IS COMING ON APRIL 1!

It won't be long and we will be celebrating Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. As usual, orders will be taken for Easter Lilies in the weeks before Palm Sunday. The last day to put your order in will be Sunday, March 18! If you have any questions please contact Nathalie Schmidt (433-0175)

STOCK THE STORE

With Christmas just around the corner, Believe in Uganda would like to announce an opportunity to GIVE to the poorest of the poor in Uganda!

Since 2008, it has been a tradition for the Ottawa team to present each destitute family they visit with gifts—basic needs that the family has lived without for a very long time. Milton, the director of Innovations for Transformation Initiatives, wants to open a small store at his facility and stock it with many of those necessities. His staff has compiled a list of needs and costs, then those items will be handed out to those families who qualify for the donation. Thus, the fundraiser, STOCK THE STORE!!

Would you please consider making a financial contribution towards this fundraiser so we can help provide basic needs to families in Uganda? Your help is greatly appreciated!

Any donation can be made to the Mission Committee indicating Uganda Fundraiser.

1. Bath soap (24)	\$27.00
2. Washing soap (24)	27.00
3. Lotion/petroleum jelly (12)	20.00
4. Mosquito nets (4)	23.00
5. Toothbrush (10)	4.00
6. Toothpaste (16)	16.00
7. Sugar (12 kgs)	14.00
8. Posho (24 kgs)	14.00
9. Rice (24 kgs)	20.00
10. Match box (1)	1.00
11. School Books (4 doz)	5.00
12. Pens/pencils (1 box)	1.00
13. Cooking oil (12 kgs)	20.00
14. Salt (24 packets)	7.00
15. Shoe polish (6 tins)	5.00

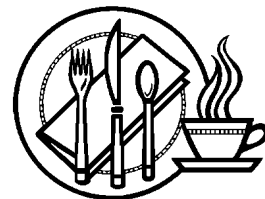
LOVE, WIN, GROW, GO: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Would you be willing to supply a meal for our Jr. High Youth Group (LOL4JC)?

They meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays from 5 pm to 7 pm, and they start each meeting with a meal to begin a time of fellowship before launching into their discussion and game time. Please contact Lori Trolinger (815-795-6791) or Lisa Smithmeyer (815-313-5843) if you would like to commit to preparing a meal for our LOL4JC kids

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

for July, August and September of 2018. 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 Dave Farrell (815-252-2351) or Gayle Schmitt (815-667-4964) 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

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

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

Carol Engberg/Women: 433-3465

(Thurs. PM, once a month)

Women's Bible Study (Thurs. PM):

Debbie (252-7309) or Amanda (424-333-8429)

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.

If you have any questions please contact Gayle Schmitt (815-667-9892).

Ottawa Community Food Basket:

Donations for the Food Basket for the month of February is cereal. 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 please contact Brian Huebner (815-433-5477) for more information.

LADIES' NITE OUT

Tuesday, February 6

6:00 p.m.at
Annie's
in Naplate

Please contact:

Idalia Stricklin
815-488-5182
for info & reservations.

KUM JOIN US

**SUNDAY, February 4
at 11:00 a.m.**

IN THE LIBRARYS

**WE WILL MEET AT
HALFTIME RESTAURANT
FOLLOWING MEETING**

All are welcome!



FOOD, FELLOWSHIP & FAMILY



FEBRUARY

Edythe Brockman	6
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

MARCH

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, Madeleine Trolinger	22
Matthew Walker	24
George Mansour	29

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><u>Every Sunday</u> 8:45 am Prayer 9:00 a.m. Choir Practice 9:30 am WORSHIP 10:45 am Fellowship 10:45 am-ZONE, Jr. & Sr. High Sunday School</p>			<p><u>Every Wed.</u> 7 pm Choir in the Library</p>	<p><u>Every Thurs.</u> 9:30 am Seniors Small Group</p>		<p><u>Every Saturday</u> 7:30 am Men's Small Group</p>
				1.	2.	3.
<p>4. COMMUNION SUNDAY</p>	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
<p>11. 11:45 am-Future Cast Team 5pm-LOL4JC</p>	12.	13.	<p>14. ASH WEDNESDAY 7PM-Ash Wednesday Service</p>	15.	16.	<p>17. 6:30pm-Ottawa Prayer Center Anniversary at 807 LaSalle St.</p>
<p>18. FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT NOON-Community Meal</p>	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.
<p>25. SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 11:45 am-Future Cast Team</p>	26.	27.	28.			



February 2018

First Presbyterian Church
114 East Jefferson Street
Ottawa, Illinois 61350

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Ottawa, Illinois

Return Service Requested

Ash Wednesday Service

Please join us Wednesday, February 14 at 7 p.m. for FPC's
Ash Wednesday Service

Come start the holy season of Lent in worship with your FPC family



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