

»»» APRIL «««

FIRST FOCUS NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORMAL, IL 61761

JOIN US ON
APRIL 13

BLONO GO



JOIN US AS WE SERVE OUR COMMUNITY HERE IN BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

sign up today

**SATURDAY,
APRIL 13TH!
8:30AM-12PM**

»»» SERVE ALONGSIDE US ON APRIL 13TH!

BloNo Go is starting to become one of our most loved church traditions, going on three years. Each year, we contact our local mission partners and ask how our church can be of assistance to them. That might mean painting, landscaping, deep cleaning, etc.

These organizations within our community do so much to help others; this is our chance to help them any way we can during BloNo Go! We are reminded during this event that we are God's hands and feet, so we want to leave the church walls to GO into our community to spread God's love and light.

A sign-up table is now available at the church. There will be eight work sites to choose from. If you need childcare, please sign up and let us know. We're looking forward to working hard and making a difference together!

This year, we will be serving:

- Boys & Girls Club
- Catalyst Ministries
- Cedar Ridge Elementary School
- East Bay Camp
- Fairview Elementary School
- Habitat Construction
- Habitat Restore
- Home Sweet Home Ministries

**HERE IS A LIST
OF WHO WE
WILL BE
SERVING**





PARENT INPUT INVITATION

Parents of children up to age 18 are invited to join Kelli Owens for an informal discussion about upcoming faith formation opportunities for parents and/or families! This will take the place of the Marriage Matters class on Sunday, April 28, from 9:45-10:45am.

GREEN TEAM: STORY STROLL: APRIL 7TH



STORY STROLL

Our first Story Stroll will be Sunday, April 7 for Kids of the Kingdom and Youth Groups starting at 6pm. There will be pages from the book, "We Planted a Tree" posted, and we can learn more about the landscaping around the church building. A craft and snack will be provided. The signs will be up through April 10 and then again starting on Earth Sunday through Arbor Day, April 21 through April 26 for Playmates, PASS, and anyone to stroll our "path of pages." Families will have an opportunity on April 7 to sign up for a free small bare root sapling to plant in their yards to be picked up on April 21 in partnership with Ecology Action Center's 100,000 tree project.



We have many lovely items in our knit-crochet closets, including baby afghans, laprobes, large afghans, and prayer shawls that we would be happy to share with others. Please contact becky.mentzer@gmail.com, if you have someone who could benefit from one of these handmade and blessed items to bring them cheer, courage, and love - whatever is needed in their lives. We also have skeins of yarn that we want to share with others - it's like shopping the yarn aisle only for free!

CINCO DE MAYO PARTY AT THE MENTZER'S



Hola! Rob & Becky Mentzer are hosting their annual Cinco de Mayo Fiesta slightly early - Friday, May 3, 6pm. Bring your favorite south of the border dish to share and we will have a great evening! Please RSVP to becky.mentzer@gmail.com, if you are coming so we have enough seats for everyone! Our casa is in Tanglewood Estates: 19573 Oakwood Dr, Bloomington 61705. Can't wait - see you there!

CARE & SHARE DONATIONS FOR HOME SWEET HOME MINISTRIES

Donations can be brought to the church, M-F, during office hours or on Sunday mornings. Please place donations in the grocery carts at the main entrances.

- Individual bags of chips/treats for sack lunches
- Napkins
- Bottled Water
- Flour (5 lb.)/Sugar (4 lb.)
- Jelly
- Coffee/Tea & Coffee Filters
- 8 oz-12 oz. clear/styrofoam disposable cups
- Garbage bags (56-60 gallon size)
- Scotchbrite/Chore boy scrubbers
- Razors
- OTC medicines

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP OFFERINGS

HERE'S WHAT'S NEW

SUNDAYS, APRIL 7-MAY 12TH, 9:45-10:45AM

Sign up for either class online at firstpresnormal.org>Resources tab>Sign-Ups by Thursday, April 4.

➤➤➤ MARRIAGE MATTERS

Whether you are married, have been married, or hope to be married, you are invited to join in conversations about why marriage matters and matters central to the marriage relationship. You may come with your spouse or on your own. Topics include Ideal vs Real Marriage, Faith as the Marriage Glue, Learning to Appreciate Our Spouse, Grace Connects Us, and A Marriage of Purpose. No class April 28. Led by Pastor Karol Schilling and Kathy Mitchell.

➤➤➤ NOOMA VIDEO SERIES

This class includes short videos from Rob Bell giving a Christian perspective on everyday issues. The videos are a starting point for thoughtful discussion on the connection of daily events and God. NOOMA comes from the phonetic spelling of the Greek word "pneuma" meaning "breath" or "spirit". Videos we will use: Rain, Trees, Sunday, Kickball, Rhythm, and Rich. Led by Todd S. Smith.

APRIL 27TH ➤➤➤ BLESSINGS WOMEN'S SPRING GATHERING

Program: The Un-Named
Women of the Bible

Reserve your place for Saturday, April 27, 9am-11:30am by signing up online at firstpresnormal.org > Resources tab > Sign-Ups. Please indicate if you need nursery care. There is no fee for this event. A continental breakfast will be served. Please bring a monetary donation for First Presbyterian Summer Camps. Women of all ages are welcome. Please feel free to contact Irene Denbesten if you have any questions at irenedenbesten@gmail.com.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

FIRST	LAST	BDAY	FIRST	LAST	BDAY	FIRST	LAST	BDAY
Becky	Yamamoto	Apr 2	Alissa	Briggs	Apr 12	Leni	Swearingen	Apr 21
Michelle	Pate	Apr 3	Sally	Bailey	Apr 13	Ralph	Rodriguez	Apr 21
Kennady	Stombaugh	Apr 3	Taylor	Beal	Apr 13	Jo Ann	Freeman	Apr 21
Mark	Briggs	Apr 5	Sherry	Smith	Apr 15	Jack	Swearingen	Apr 22
Amy	Hobbs	Apr 5	Dena	Benscoter	Apr 16	Daniel	Elder	Apr 22
Dick	Erzen	Apr 6	Buelah	Hensey	Apr 16	Devan	Bishop	Apr 23
Bergen	Jome	Apr 7	Curt	Spaur	Apr 17	Mary Lou	Kimball	Apr 23
Ryan	Han	Apr 7	Sam	Redd	Apr 17	Rob	Mentzer	Apr 24
Amanda	Cryer	Apr 8	Cole	Brent	Apr 17	Melynda	Blue	Apr 26
Cody	Walker	Apr 8	Christopher	Schilling	Apr 18	Wayne	Sorenson	Apr 27
Sheila	Melzer	Apr 9	Poonam	McAllister	Apr 18	Eric	Barbour	Apr 28
Brigham	Kruger	Apr 10	John	Blanks	Apr 19	Hayden	Hancock	Apr 29
Nancy	Guthoff	Apr 10	Karol	Schilling	Apr 19	Jacque	Hansing	Apr 30
Morgan	Bishop	Apr 11	Leslie	Henderson	Apr 20	Kendyll	Hobbs	Apr 30
Joyce	Moncelle-Kaye	Apr 11	Amy	Welch	Apr 20			
Tom	Huskisson	Apr 12	Matt	Litwiller	Apr 21			

If you would like to be added or removed from this list, please contact the church office at (309) 452-4459 or alunt@firstpresnormal.org.

Members: The Nominating Committee of First Presbyterian Church is responsible for creating a slate of candidates to be presented to the congregation for election. As part of that process, we are seeking recommendations from the congregation on candidates to be considered for the positions of **Elder** or **Deacon**. Submission of a name to our committee does not guarantee nomination, but will receive thoughtful consideration as we develop our slate of nominations. Thank you for your help and prayerful considerations!

Please complete and sign this form and place it in the Recommendation Box at the Church. Or, you may return in a sealed envelope (ATTN: Nominating Committee) by May 12, 2024.

Recommendations for Consideration – DEACONS

As defined in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA):

G-2.0201 Deacon Defined: The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.

W-2.0302 Deacons: Deacons are called to lead the congregation in compassion, witness, and service, representing the ministry of the church in the world and the presence of the world in the church. While deacons have no particular responsibilities for the ordering of worship, the session should ensure that deacons (where present) have regular opportunities to lead in worship, and that their ministries of compassion, witness, and service are reflected in the public services of the church.

Given these definitions, I suggest the following individual(s) be considered by the Nominating Committee:

Name	Why do you feel this person would be a good candidate?	Is this person aware you are recommending them?
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____ Date: ___/___/2024

See next page to recommend candidates for Elder

Recommendations for Consideration – ELDERS

As defined in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA):

G-2.0301 Ruling Elder Defined: As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God's Spirit and governance of God's people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matthew 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office.

W-2.0303 Ruling Elders: Ruling elders are called to nurture the common life of the people of God through their gifts of discernment and governance. They should also cultivate an ability to teach the Word when called upon to do so. When appropriately prepared and commissioned by the presbytery, ruling elders may proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments in a particular congregation (G-2.1001). In a particular congregation, ruling elders shall provide for the church's worship and encourage the people's participation. Specifically, when serving together on the session, ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament: make provision for the regular preaching of the Word and celebration of the Sacraments, corporate prayer, and the offering of praise to God in song; oversee and approve all public worship in the congregation, with the exception of responsibilities reserved for the minister of the Word and Sacrament; determine occasions, days, times, and places for worship; and have responsibility for the arrangement of worship space, the use of special appointments (flowers, candles, banners, paraments, and other objects), and the ministries of music, drama, dance, and visual arts.

Given these definitions, I suggest the following individual(s) be considered by the Nominating Committee:

Name	Why do you feel this person would be a good candidate?	Is this person aware you are recommending them?
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Name (printed): _____ Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/2024

See previous page to recommend candidates for Deacons

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Come join us!

Keep 20% of the Proceeds

Join us at Portillo's for a fundraiser to support:

First Presbyterian Church - Playmates Preschool

When:

April 9, 2024

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

at the Portillo's located at:

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Normal, IL

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For online/app orders to qualify for the fundraiser, orders must be placed for pickup only, from the participating restaurant, on the fundraiser date and during the listed fundraiser hours. Gift card purchases, delivery orders, and orders placed on the third party websites are excluded from the fundraiser. Online ordering subject to availability. \$200 minimum fundraising sales required for the organization to receive donation. Cannot be combined with other offer codes.

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