

# THE STEEPLE



## ***Jesus is Risen.... Again!***

We proclaim this Good News at Easter each year. Jesus is Risen! This one event changed the very fabric of our suffering, our sin, our future, our hope, our everything. The truth is that we proclaim this Good News every single Sunday in worship. We also proclaim this every moment that we live out of our faith. If Jesus died on that cross and never rose from the dead, then the prayers, the mercies, the fellowship, the worship, and everything else that we do are fundamentally weakened to sentimental absurdities. If our faith is nothing more than a few life lessons and a general "do good" directive, then we have lost the very source that can empower and define our entire lives.

And yet, this is exactly the problem we face. Many are eager to drop the core beliefs of their faith to make it something less for the sake of fitting all the world religions and philosophies together. Others are eager to drop the core beliefs of their faith to embrace a more dogmatic, unforgiving, and condemning version of the Christian religion for the sake of clearly marking the boundaries of what they think God is doing in our world. Embracing our core beliefs helps us maintain a balance in our faith. Our core beliefs make us subject to truths instead of alternative creators of truth. These core beliefs begin and end at the answer to a simple historical and theological question: Did Jesus rise from the dead?

What do you say? How could your answer change your life? How could your answer change this day?

In Christ,  
Pastor Rob



## **April 2 - Palm Sunday**

8:00 am - Chapel

10:30 am - Sanctuary and Zoom

## **April 7 - Good Friday**

7:00 pm

FUPC Collinsville

## **April 8 - Easter Egg Hunt**

10:00 am

FUPC Belleville

Rain (Drive thru) or Shine (Outdoors)

## **April 9 - Easter Sunday**

8:00 am - Chapel

10:30 am - Sanctuary and Zoom

## **Holy Week Schedule**



### **First United Presbyterian Church**

1303 Royal Heights Road Belleville, IL 62223  
618-233-0295 [www.firstunitedpres.org](http://www.firstunitedpres.org)

We are a Christian Church that glorifies God through meaningful worship, active discipleship, faithful service and nurturing fellowship.

# Announcements

## Church Directory Update

We know many of you are wondering about the arrival of our new Church Directory. We realize this is an important tool in learning new faces as well as a handy tool for contact information. To say this has been a challenging endeavor is an understatement. Please know that the Member Connection team is making every effort to bring you this tool. As soon as we have a reliable delivery window, we will share it with you. ~ Your Member Connections Team

## April 8: Easter Egg Hunt

The Sand Dollars will host an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 8, at the church. Gather at 10:00 am, with the egg hunt starting at 10:30. Admission is free. This event will be held outdoors rain or shine. In case of rain, there will be a drive-through Easter Egg give away. There will also be attendance prizes for every child. Children should bring their own baskets. For more information, contact our Skippers Brenda and Joe Fedak, 618-233-1213, or Jan Nevois, 618-277-4383.



## April 30: Calling All 50-Year Members

If you joined First Presbyterian of Belleville, First Presbyterian of East St. Louis, or Westminster Presbyterian in 1973, we want to celebrate this important milestone in your spiritual life. A special recognition is planned for Sunday, April 30, during the 10:30 am worship service. Help us make sure no one is missed. Please call the Church Office, 618-233-0295, to check the list for your name.

## A New Food Resource

*'So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.'* Thus, Joseph reassured them and comforted them. Genesis 50:21

Our Deacons have initiated a supplemental food resource for anyone in our Church family who might need help with groceries from time to time. It will be an in-house companion to the community food pantries. If anyone ever experiences food insecurity, it is an additional resource to help put food on the table.

Food Resources Available  
Non-Perishables for the Congregation  
On a Bookshelf in Narthex Hallway



You do not have to ask permission to take food from the bookshelf, just take what you need. The bookshelf is located outside the Sanctuary and to the left of the prayer shawl shelves. It will be stocked with donations from the Give-A-Meal-A-Month ministry, the Deacons, and anyone else who would like to donate. Our Food Resources will be monitored by the Deacons for variety and expiration dates.

## Join United Bells!

The bell choir is always looking for new members. If you have never played bells and would like to learn, please contact Julia Weeks at [juliaaweeks@gmail.com](mailto:juliaaweeks@gmail.com) or 618-531-5002, and we can introduce you to the experience.. There are no age limits. Hope to see you soon on Wednesdays at 5:45 pm in the Choir Room!

## Trustee Notes

In addition to routine maintenance, Trustees have also:

- Researched solar energy for our church
- Scheduled spring inspections
- Replaced the flag on the flag pole
- Planned landscaping and outdoor painting

## Scholarships Available for 2023-2024 Academic Year

Applications for the following scholarships are now available.

- Presbyterian and Ray L. Angerer Scholarships for those entering or currently enrolled in associate, bachelor, or graduate level degree programs
- Paul Cornell scholarship to those pursuing a Christian vocation
- Louise M. Erwin Scholarship to a graduate level student in a therapy-related discipline with a plan to work with children (Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Speech Therapy).

Applications are available in the church office. To request one by email, contact Stephanie Foltz, [sfoltz@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:sfoltz@firstunitedpres.org). All completed applications are due no later than **May 1**.

## April 30: No Name Chorale Concert

Accidental Mantra / 2:30 pm / Cathedral of St. Peter, Belleville



# Adult Fellowship

## April 11: Special Presentation

Don't miss out on a very special gathering of the Family Stories Life Group for the reading of unique stories to be presented on April 11, 9:30–11:30 am. In addition to a few FUPC authors, we will be hearing tales from Mr. Davis who is an author, retired minister, and professional storyteller. He has written several books and performs throughout the U.S. in libraries, schools, churches, and festivals.

He has appeared on ABC News Nightline and has been a guest on National Public Radio and CNN. His books and spoken word recordings have received critical acclaim and won many awards. Best of all, his stories make audiences laugh, sigh, and want to hear more.

We would love to have you attend. Call Jan Jensen, 262-894-6580, for more information.

## April 13: Book Club

In April, the book club will discuss *The Last Bookshop in London* by Madeline Martin. We will begin at 6:30 pm via Zoom. Please contact Joyce Dyer, joycejdyer@att.net, for the Zoom ID and passcode. The book selection for May is *The Alice Network* by Kate Quinn.

## April 25: Potlucks with a Purpose

Potlucks with a Purpose will meet Tuesday, April 25, at 6:30 pm, in Eversull Hall. Please bring any dish you want to share (approximately 6 servings). We will discuss modifying the meeting times/days and sign up to provide coffee hour(s) refreshments. Please bring your ideas for causes to which we can donate. For more information, contact Sheila Misselhorn, misselhorn417@gmail.com.

## July 13-16: Cursillo Weekend

Take a break from the responsibilities and stresses of daily life. Focus on becoming connected or reconnected with our Heavenly Father. We expect Him to always be there for us, but are we always there for Him? As in any relationship, both parties need to display love and commitment. Spend a weekend, in the beautiful surroundings of Todd Hall in Columbia, Illinois, with a group of Christians with this same goal in mind!

Added blessings include good food, excellent music/singing, peaceful surroundings and an opportunity to feel the presence of God with new Christian friends. This can be life changing! It was for us! Please contact Brenda Doll, 618-444-9660, or Roger Doll 618-407-1822, with questions or for more information.



# Adult Discipleship

## Sunday Mornings

9:15 am

Thoughtful Christian Gathering

## April 2

*Love God, Neighbor, Enemy: Live Peacefully*

What does it mean to love well? This practice explores this call to love through action by living peaceably.

## April 9

Easter, no class

## April 16, 23, 30

*Signs and Wonders: A Beginners Guide to the Miracles of Jesus*

Amy-Jill Levine explores selected miracles of Jesus in historical and theological context. For each miracle, she discusses not only how past witnesses would have understood the events, but also how today's readers can draw meaning from Jesus's words and actions.

This class is hybrid, meeting in person and on Zoom. For details and to receive study materials, contact Stephanie Foltz, sfoltz@firstunitedpres.org. Log-on information for Zoom is updated each Friday in the eWeekly.

## During the Week

### Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study Group meets hybrid every Wednesday morning at 8:30 am, both in person in the Vista Room and on Zoom. Contact the Church Office for more information.

### Women's Circles

First United's two women's groups meet monthly with the purpose to nurture women's faith through prayer and Bible study. The circles meet hybrid, i.e., both in person in the Vista Room and on Zoom. If you would like to join one of the circles, need more details, and/or to receive the Zoom log-on information, contact a leader. This year's Bible study is *Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight*.

- Tuesday, April 18, Lamplighters Circle, 1:00 pm; Amy Brummitt, 618-235-4226
- Thursday, April 20, Lydia Circle, 6:00 pm; Jan Jensen, 262-894-6580

# Caring Ministries

## From the Deacons

During the past month, sixteen tireless and compassionate FUPC Deacons warmly reached out and served our congregation through **308 contacts** during the past month; this includes calls, cards, visits, and emails/texts. On average, that is more than ten contacts per day. All deacons were present at the March meeting, as they continually brainstorm ways to better serve our church family.

## April 26: Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you like to crochet or knit, or want to learn, join the fellowship of this exceptional ministry on Wednesday, April 26, at 10:00 am, in The Commons. Be part of this outreach to those celebrating joy or needing comfort. Prayer shawls are in the bookcase in the Narthex. For more information, contact Mary Teague, 618-920-7589.

# Family News

## Our Deepest Sympathy

For Jami Olsen, our Administrative Assistant, on the death of her mother, **Barbara “Bobbe” Olsen**, who died on March 1 in Belleville.

For Elizabeth, Matt, Thomas, and Marian on the death of their father, father-in-law, and grandfather, **Larry Schramm**, on March 1 in Smithton.

For Henri Lawrence and family on the death of her husband, **Ted Lawrence**, who died on March 2 in O'Fallon.

For the family and friends of **Ruth Ann Bourque** who died on March 10 in Lakeland, Florida.

For Megan Jenkins and family on the death of her uncle, **David Jenkins**, who died on March 14.

## New Blessing

**Micah Moore Foltz** was born on March 2 in Delaware. Micah is the son of Miriam and Steven Foltz, brother of Parker, and grandson of Stephanie Foltz.

**Linus Jude McCaffrey** was born on March 3 in Tennessee. Linus is the son of Madison and Bryan McCaffrey, brother of Peter, and grandson of Caryn Meder and Kevin Meder.

# Stewardship

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” We have learned that the Word became incarnate as an infant and experienced each life stage. We have the opportunity to be the hands and feet of God through the presence, witness, life, and crucifixion of Jesus. By accepting Jesus as the Christ, we are tasked with being stewards of the Word. We have the assignment to engage each other - especially our children - in the wonders, meaning, and comfort an abiding faith in Jesus can reveal.

As stewards, we can start with Empathy, Validation, Compassion, Structure, and Encouragement as authoritative parents. We provide situational support when a task may exceed current capacity, using scaffolding to allow failure(s) but build resilience through guidance, increasing capacity, exposure to positive influences, and diminishing structure. We must constantly provide unconditional love.

Our stewardship can extend beyond our individual families to the Church family and community. This Easter, let us reflect on how we can provide the best example of stewardship in response to the ultimate blessing received. ~ *Stewardship Committee*



# Children's Ministry

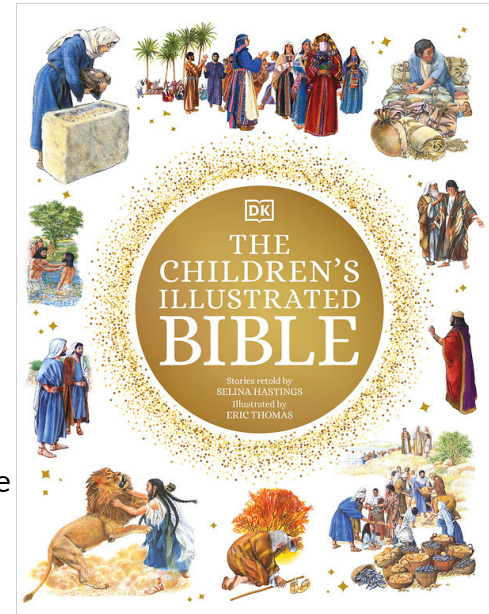
## Wednesday Nights for Grades K-5 (5:45-7:30 pm)

### April 5: no meeting

**April 12, 19, 26:** children will gather for dinner, games, sharing Bible stories, and response time. During April, we will celebrate Easter, be reminded that God is always with us, and celebrate our year back together!

### April 16: Bible Discovery Class

On Sunday, April 16, from 9:15-10:15 am, there will be a class for children in grades K-5 who have not received their own copy of *The Children's Illustrated Bible*. Each child must be accompanied by at least one adult family member (a parent, guardian, or grandparent). Come discover together how to use this Bible to find many of the wonderful stories of God's people. The Bibles will be presented to the children during the 10:30 am worship on April 23. Contact Stephanie Foltz to reserve your places!



## PYC Mystery Day

Saturday, April 22, will be PYC's Mystery Day, an all-day adventure, full of fellowship and mystery!

PYCers (grades 3-5) won't know where we are going in the greater St. Louis area until we arrive at each location on the church bus! All expenses will be covered as this day is included in the budget. For more information, contact Stephanie Foltz.

## Children and Worship at FUPC

All children are welcome in worship at FUPC! During the 10:30 am service, there are also two special places for children.

- **Childcare** - During Worship for birth through age 3

Two caring volunteers are in the Toddler Room, ready to welcome children ages 3 and younger. The volunteers are members of FUPC and have all been trained and background checked.

- **Children's Chapel** for ages 3 through grade 3

After a special time with the pastors, children are invited to leave with a Worship Leader and Greeters to continue worshipping in Children's Chapel. This is a special place where children will hear stories of God's people and respond. For more information, please contact Stephanie Foltz.

# Youth Ministry

This month, the youth (grades 6-12) will be talking about the Easter story. These stories will show us that, when life takes unexpected turns, God gives us help. And even when we've messed up or are ready to give up, Jesus never turns away from us, but gives us life, gives us hope, is with us, and gives us another chance.

Youth are going to camp this summer! High school (just completed grades 9-12) youth will be going to the University of Nebraska from July 10-14. Middle school students (just completed grades 6-8) will be going to the University of Central Missouri from June 29-July 2. At both events there will be tournaments for basketball, dodgeball, frisbee, and soccer. There will be fantastic worship and fruitful discussions that all lead to a life-changing week. If you have a student who is interested, talk to Wyatt, [wlenhart@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:wlenhart@firstunitedpres.org).

# Giving and Serving

## Give-A-Meal-A-Month: April 2 and 9

In April we will again feature the Community Interfaith Food Pantry's need for canned soup, saltine crackers, and boxed spaghetti noodles. As always, monetary donations or other food and hygiene items are appreciated. Please remember to check your donations for expiration dates; the Pantry cannot accept vitamins or supplements. Thank you for your continued support!

The FUPC March collection was 405 pounds of food!

## April 20: Mobile Market

Mobile Market helpers are needed at August Gate Church on Thursday, April 20. We plan to meet at **8:00 am** and be done by 10:30! Contact Laurie Brown, [laurie0811@att.net](mailto:laurie0811@att.net), or Judy Stratton, [judy55stratton@gmail.com](mailto:judy55stratton@gmail.com), for more information. This is a huge food give-away to our community.



## Coffee Hour

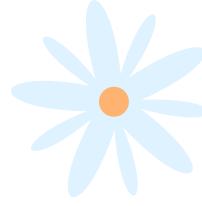
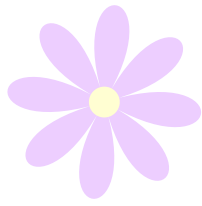
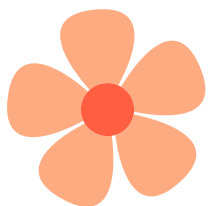
In March, Coffee Hour was brought to you by the families Brown, Thornberry and Englert, Men's Bible Study, Chancel Choir, and Sheri and Kyle Rogier. By sponsoring Coffee Hour, you have an opportunity to connect in a special way with your church family. If you belong to a ministry or social group here, you can inform us and invite us into your activities.

The Hospitality Ministry hopes you enjoy being here. We are always open to suggestions. We can't offer a large variety of drinks, but are the tea drinkers feeling neglected? There are health benefits to both coffee and tea. Please contact Martha Tambala, 314-496-1957, or Sue Perez, 618-514-4203, with any suggestions.

\*Note: There are several "orphan" dishes and containers in The Commons' kitchenette. Please stop by and claim yours.

## Enjoy Gardening?

After years of carefully tending their designated garden area, several of our dedicated gardeners have retired. Thank you... and know that your efforts over the years have been greatly appreciated! Now, we need to find new gardeners to continue in their place. From April through October, members are needed to weed small, easily managed areas. Weekly weeding is preferable but not necessary. If you could serve to help keep the grounds of First United beautiful for all to enjoy, or if you have questions, please call Pat Hargrove, 618-239-6425.



## Love Well

We had a well to go along with our series of "Love Well." During this series we were reminded to love our neighbors, ourselves, our enemies, and our God well. We pulled bags out of the well to remind us to be ready to love all well. This was in preparation for Needs Among Us. We dropped not only our needs into the well, but also our gratitudes.





# Celebrating



## FUPC Ladies Celebrate St. Patrick's Day

All FUPC women were invited to share lunch and fellowship together on St. Patrick's Day. Everyone also enjoyed seeing picture albums of Presbyterian Women's activities from past years!



## Children at FUPC: Loving Well

During March, our children focused on love as a verb. Through reading, hearing, and acting out Bible stories in costume, they explored how to put love into practice through service and servanthood, mercy, courage, and peace. There were faith conversations, games, and service projects. There were "Standing O's" to thank those who prepared meals or donated funds. GFF and PYC are children's groups for grades K-5 which meet on Wednesdays from 5:45-7:30 pm.





# Thirty Years of Serving the Community

First United resumed hosting, in person, the 2023 Gathering of the Center for Racial Harmony. This event celebrated not only the extraordinary acts of kindness, goodwill and courage of 42 students from area schools, but also commemorated the 30th Anniversary of the Center for Racial Harmony. While the photo captures the image of the diverse group, the program included the names of the participating schools and nine pages describing the acts leading to each child's nomination. (List of schools and basis for each child's nomination can be found on <http://www.facebook.com/firstunitedpresbelleville>). The theme for the 2023 Gathering was Growth and Nurturing. Congratulations were extended to each student, their families, teachers, principals, school support staff, and other mentors throughout the community. A special thank you to Pastor Dyer, First United, and all those who helped plan and staff the church for the recognition and celebration of God's greatest blessing – our children. God Bless all those being celebrated, all those who hosted, and all those who helped make the program a success. ~ Robert Wells, Center for Racial Harmony

## The Gathering - 2023

FIRST UNITED  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
in partnership with  
[firstunitedpres.org](http://firstunitedpres.org)



## Our Staff

Senior Pastor / Head of Staff

**The Rev. Robert J. Dyer**

[rdyer@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:rdyer@firstunitedpres.org)

Associate Pastor

**Rev. Alexandra K. Lysdahl**

[alysdahl@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:alysdahl@firstunitedpres.org)

Director of Christian Education

**Stephanie Foltz**

[sfoltz@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:sfoltz@firstunitedpres.org)

Director of Youth Ministries  
and Digital Media

**Wyatt Lenhart**

[wlenhart@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:wlenhart@firstunitedpres.org)

Director of Music

**Dr. Andy Jensen**

[ajensen@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:ajensen@firstunitedpres.org)

Pianist / Accompanist

**Diana Umali**

Worship Music Leader

**Mat Conway**

Director of Audio/Visual Ministries + Custodian

**Dale Overstreet**

[videoministry@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:videoministry@firstunitedpres.org)

Administrative Assistant

**Jami Olsen**

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The Steeple

Articles and Suggestions

[TheSteeple@firstunitedpres.org](mailto:TheSteeple@firstunitedpres.org)

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Belleville, IL 62223

**618-233-0295**

office open  
Monday-Friday  
8:00 am-1:00 pm



## Let's Connect!

### Sunday

8:00 am Chapel  
9:00 am Chancel Choir  
9:15 am Thoughtful Christian  
Gathering  
10:30 am Sanctuary + Zoom

### Wednesday

5:45 pm United Bells  
5:45 pm Children & Youth



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