



THE STEEPLE

New Boiler Fully Funded and This Year Fully Blessed!

This just may be the year that I stop limiting what I think God might do to bless our church and encourage our ministry efforts! We were able to install a large-scale solar energy system. We have been able to bless missions work locally and globally like never before. We have seen lives transformed through Needs Among Us. We are seeing many new faces walking through our doors on Sunday mornings. We are caring for one another with so many sources of congregational care. Our worship has had so many engaging and beautiful moments of witness and praise. Facilities challenges of HVAC systems, parking lot repairs, leaks, needed renovations, and so much more have been addressed and funded. And now we have faced down what has been a feared challenge for years. I remember people saying, even in my first year here nearly twelve years ago, "Well, we better hope the boiler doesn't go out! That is an expense that could really hurt!"

And in 2024, in the middle of all the blessings that God has walked us through, we found ourselves in that reality. The boiler broke. No heat for the next winter. And then through the ingenuity of the trustees and a few other helpers, we found a great company that specializes in boilers who could give us a great deal. And then, through the generosity of so many church members and friends of the congregation, we received enough special offerings to fully fund this boiler replacement. Nearly \$80,000 came in to make this happen. Thanks be to God.

I look forward to the many ways that God will spoil us in the future because I can see the gratuitous blessings that are flowing now. It is not just financial resources. It is the Spirit-induced dedication and inspiring faith of so many followers of Jesus among us that is making love, care, mercy, forgiveness, and grace into everyday words around here. Thanks be to God.

in Christ, Pastor Rich

→ October 27: All Saints' Sunday ←

The Faithful of every generation: An excerpt from the Companion to the Book of Common Worship (Geneva Press, 2003, 150-151).

All Saints' Day is a time to rejoice in all who through the ages have faithfully served the Lord. The day reminds us that we are part of one continuing, living communion of saints. It is a time to claim our kinship with the "glorious company of apostles ... the noble fellowship of prophets ... the white-robed army of martyrs" (Te Deum). It is a time to express our gratitude for all who in ages of darkness kept the faith, for those who have taken the gospel to the ends of the earth, for prophetic voices who have called the church to be faithful in life and service, for all who have witnessed to God's justice and peace in every nation.

We will recognize our faithful servants on All Saints' Sunday, October 27. We have the names of many who have died this past year. However, if you want to confirm that your loved one is on the list, or if you have someone to add, please call the Church Office, (618) 233-0295, by Monday, October 21. ←

United Bells Ringing our Praise!

On August 28, rehearsals resumed for United Bells. We meet every Wednesday at 5:30 pm. Experienced ringers and anyone interested in learning to ring are welcome. Please consider joining this committed group who work, laugh, and pray together, all to the glory of God! For more information, please call or email Julia Weeks, (618) 531-5002, juliaaweeks@gmail.com.



These Days

These Days daily devotional books for October-December 2024 are available at the Chapel entrance and at the reception desk in The Commons.

First United Presbyterian Church

1303 Royal Heights Road, Belleville, IL 62223
618.233.0295 www.firstunitedpres.org

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

Announcements

RISE AGAINST HUNGER®

A well-known story from the Gospels tells of the time Jesus and His disciples fed more than 5,000 men, women, and children. Jesus is at it again but this time He will be working through His followers at First United Presbyterian Church to feed thousands of people through a program called Rise Against Hunger.

On Wednesday, October 9 starting at 5:45 pm volunteers will gather in the gym to package meals using Rise Against Hunger's time-tested process that delivered 57.4 million meals to 37 countries, including the United States in 2023.

Rise Against Hunger meal-packing events provide a fast and fun way to lend meaningful help to people in critical need. The process uses an assembly line to package all meals in about two hours. It is a wonderful way to make a real difference in a short amount of time.

Since 2005, Rise Against Hunger volunteer groups have packaged over 590 million meals, relying on groups of any size in locations across the world to package the meals. This is where FUPC comes into play.

The packaging process is efficient and quick and anyone of any age can take part. Jesus will be present in the spirit as FUPC feeds the hungry, but we will need the congregation to come in person to make the event a success. We hope those coming will consider inviting others too. There will be opportunities to ask questions and RSVP between worship services through October 6. Whether you have signed up or not, all are welcome.

For more information, contact Laura Hall, (618) 781-2187, laurahall104@att.net.

Wednesday Night Meals

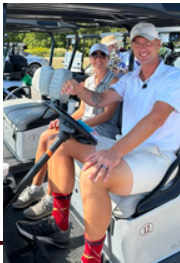
Wednesday night youth activities are in full swing. The FUPC youth are an enthusiastic group of kids and we love to see their smiling faces when they come down to eat dinner. We smile when we hear a kiddo get excited that we are having cereal and bacon for supper. Or when they come back for seconds because they love our soft tacos!

We need volunteers to help provide a meal. There are so many options! Are you part of a life group at church? Talk to them about providing a Wednesday night meal as a group. Would you rather donate funds for a meal? That's great too!!

Contact Jess Mokriakow, (618) 910-3738, jmokriakow@gmail.com or Leah Lankford, (618) 696-6576, shawnandleah@yahoo.com to get the details.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

September 17 was the 21st Annual Clarence Voigt/Bob Samples Memorial Golf Tournament at Far Oaks Country Club. This year 28 golfers participated and raised just over \$2,000. All proceeds go to the Children & Youth Ministries at FUPC. Thank you to all who volunteered, played, and donated this year!



from the Trustees

In addition to routine maintenance, Trustees were involved with:

- Solar project: Cameras and lights are being installed on our solar panels.
- Women's restroom by the library: Update is in progress.
- Boiler project: A bid has been accepted for the purchase and installation of a new boiler. Thanks to everyone for special donations to the fund to make this happen!
- Hail damage: Our insurance company is appraising hail damage to our air conditioning units and to our roof.
- Basketball project: Donations to the fund to purchase new basketball hoops and backboards are appreciated.
- Thanking the FUPC gardeners who tend our landscaping in the summer heat!

Thanks to everyone who helps maintain our church and church grounds!

Mini Mission Fair

The Mission Committee in cooperation with the Member Connections Committee hosted a Mini Mission Fair on September 15 for the Monthly Gathering. Brightpoint representatives were there to answer any questions regarding what this nonprofit organization does in our community. We played food pantry bingo and assembled hygiene kits for PCUSA missions and shared a delicious meal!



Veteran's Life Group Events

Please consider placing the following dates on your calendar:

Saturday November 9

This will be our FUPC COMMUNITY BREAKFAST sponsored by your Veteran's Life Group and the Hospitality Ministry. Planning is in progress so more information will follow. We look forward to this breakfast each year as we meet and greet new people from the community.

Sunday November 10th

This will be our CELEBRATION OF VETERAN'S DAY in The Commons immediately following our FUPC 10:30 am service. We invite ALL of our church family and their family and friends to attend this popular event. This year we will be honoring those who served during the War in Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom - March 2003 to November 2011) and the War in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom - October 2001 to December 2014). No matter where you were stationed during these dates, we want to honor your service. More information to follow. As in the past, we will also have displays in The Commons. Finally, we will once again distribute QUILTS OF HONOR to those remaining veteran church members who have not yet received their handmade quilt - our way of thanking them for their military service and family sacrifices.

We appreciate all of you and your continued support of FUPC Veteran's Life Group.

Blessings, Ken & Shawn
314-791-5371

Fellowship & Caring Ministries

OCTOBER 4 Sand Dollars

The Sand Dollars will meet in Eversull Hall on Friday, October 4 at 6:00 pm for dinner and a meeting. If you are a family (children included), couple, or single adult and would like to share a meal in a very relaxed atmosphere with Christian fellowship, please join us. Anyone interested, please contact our Skippers, Brenda & Joe Fedak, (618) 558-7086, or Jan Nevois, (618) 402-7170.

OCTOBER 10 Book Club

In October, the Book Club will discuss *The Memory Keeper of Kyiv* by Erin Litteken. 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 November is *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett.

OCTOBER 22

Potlucks with a Purpose

Potlucks with a Purpose will be meeting in Eversull Hall on Tuesday, October 22 at 6:30 P.M. In addition, PWAP will be responsible for the Coffee Hour on October 20. Emails will address this later. We were able to donate \$200 to Our Brother's Keeper, the organization that sent a representative to speak at our July meeting.

OCTOBER 23

Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you like to crochet or knit or would like to learn, join the fellowship of this exceptional ministry on Wednesday, October 23 at 9:30 am in The Commons. Prayer shawls are continually added to the inventory. Be part of this outreach to those celebrating joy or needing comfort. Shawls are in the bookcase in the Narthex. For more information contact Mary Teague, (618) 920-7589.

from the Deacons

August Deacon's Meeting: Deacons Present - 17. Total contacts - 286 (50 calls, 201 cards, 18 visits, and 17 emails & texts).

from the Deacons an interview with... Vee & Rose Safarian

Each month the FUPC Deacons will provide a glimpse into the life of a member included on their Thinking of You List. It will allow readers to become acquainted or reacquainted with former leaders of the FUPC Family.

What is the secret to your longevity and good health?

One of our secrets is good behavior. Our parents taught us well and always took us to church.

What would be your advice to your younger self?

No advice. We would not change anything.

What was one of your moments closest to Christ?

We have always felt close to Christ. We have been Presbyterian all our lives and we love our church.

How has church and your love of God shaped your life?

Church has always been part of our lives. We love the people of our church; they have always been so nice to us. Our parents always took us to church and taught us to love God.

Of all God's blessings in your life, what are the three closest to your heart?

Our most dear blessings are family, church, and our relationship as sisters.

Favorite church hymn:

We like "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "Jesus Loves Me."

Favorite Bible verse:

We like all the Psalms.



WIN A BEAUTIFUL QUILT!

The Christian Education Committee is sponsoring a Quilt Raffle to benefit the Professional Church Vocations Fund Scholarship. The quilt is hand-quilted by the FUPC Quilters. Tickets go on sale October 6. The winner will be drawn on November 3. Tickets are \$5 and only 250 will be sold. Tickets will be available after the 8:00 am service and before and after the 10:30 am service. You may also send a check to the Church Office with Quilt Raffle on the memo line. Your ticket will be entered for you.

Adult Discipleship

There are numerous learning, connecting, and fellowship opportunities available for adults throughout the month of September.

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 via Zoom. Contact the Church Office for more information.

WOMEN'S CIRCLES

FUPC two women's groups meet in-person and via Zoom. Gathering monthly from September through May, their purpose is to nurture women's faith through prayer and Bible study. If you would like more information, please contact a leader.

- Lamplighters Circle will meet October 15 at 1:00 pm, Amy Brummitt, (618) 235-4226.
- ***Please note time change.*** Lydia Circle will meet October 17 at 1:00 pm, Jan Jensen, (626) 894-6580.

SUNDAYS SUNDAYS SUNDAYS

CONNECT & GATHER

Looking for a casual way to reflect with others about life and faith? Join other adults in the Library from 9:15-10:00 am on Sunday mornings for a time of fellowship and discussion. Come see what questions await in the three mystery boxes!

CREATED FOR CONNECTION

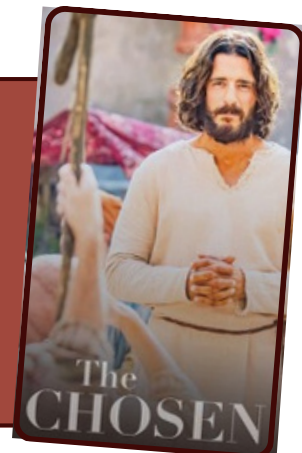
Do you enjoy discussing the sermon with other believers? If so, join us as we discuss our sermon series called Created For Connection on October 6. This class is hybrid, meeting in-person in the Vista Room or via Zoom at 9:15 am on Sundays. For details and to receive study materials, contact Rhonda Eugea at reugea@firstunitedpres.org. Login information for Zoom is included in the eWeekly every Friday.

RESET

God's mercies are new every morning! But sometimes it is easy for us to get stuck in the same old routine. Let us hit the "reset button" so we can claim the fresh start God makes available to us. Join us for this three-week series on October 13, 20, and 27. Our lessons are "Soul Reset," "Reset Values," and "Reset Direction." This class is hybrid, meeting in-person in the Vista Room or via Zoom at 9:15 am on Sundays. For details and to receive study materials, contact Rhonda Eugea at reugea@firstunitedpres.org. Login information for Zoom is included in the eWeekly every Friday.

THE CHOSEN

Come join us to watch and discuss seasons 3 and 4 of *The Chosen*, the groundbreaking movie depiction of the life of Jesus and His disciples. This class meets on Wednesdays from 5:30-7:00 pm in the Blue Room (the former preschool room in the lower level) beginning September 4. Bottled water and popcorn will be provided. Feel free to bring supper in a sack or snacks to share. For more information contact Roger Doll, (618) 402-1822 or Brenda Doll, (618) 444-9660.



Serving

**GIVE a
MEAL
a MONTH**

GAMAM will collect food for the Community Interfaith Food Pantry. The pantry helps over 100 families from Belleville and Swansea each week and in need of all nonperishable food items, especially peanut butter, sugar, flour, cooking oil, canned fruit and vegetables, soup, cereal, and pasta. We also collect toiletries like soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, and feminine products as well as diapers and wipes. Any donations of these items as well as monetary donations are appreciated. Items will be collected Sunday October 13 and taken to the pantry. Contact Laurie Brown, (618) 620-8112, or Judy Stratton (618) 978-5485 with questions.

from Hospitality

For everyone who hosted Coffee Hour this summer, a Great Big Thank You. When everyone pitches in, everyone gets served and everyone gets to serve. This is classic First United! The Sundays in September and October are filled but we have many openings for November and December so get out your favorite recipes and have some fun hosting with your family and/or friends.

MOBILE MARKET



Mobile Market has commenced! Our next market takes place October 17 in the main parking lot and under the portico. Volunteers should arrive at 8:00 am and dress for the weather. We sort and distribute the food to waiting families. Cars drive to the portico and we put the food directly into their cars. The project is a joint effort between District 118 and FUPC and helps families in need of food. Join us for a fun and worthwhile effort. Questions can be directed to Judy Stratton, (618) 978-5485 or Laurie Brown, (618) 520-8112.

THANK YOU TO OUR DEDICATED FUPC GARDENERS!!

As we near the end of the gardening season please take a moment to thank the dedicated volunteers who keep everything beautiful and healthy on our church grounds. They are unsung heroes!

Amy Abernathy, Dan Bainter, Pat Hargrove, Barb Harnist, Nancy Kreeb, Sue Perez, Grady Phillips, Laura Rumer, Judy Stratton, Dan Wagner.



from Stewardship

Stewardship by Living Christ's Words

Seeking connections is essential. However, preparation and the right connections make all the difference. We have the choice to live in the victory God has promised or to be overcome by temptation. We are not alone. God has designed and prepared us to meet life's challenges.

Dr. David Jeremiah suggests six measures we can take on our journey: 1. Overcoming falsehood with truth (Ephesians 6:14); 2. Overcoming evil with righteousness (Ephesians 6:14); 3. Overcoming anxiety with peace (Ephesians 6:15); 4. Overcoming fear with faith (Ephesians 6:16); 5. Overcoming confusion with wisdom (Romans 12:1-3); and 6. Overcoming temptation with scripture (Ephesians 6:17).

Unspoken by Dr. DJ, but a critical part of God's plan is found in Matthew 18:19-20: We are meant to be connected to God and to each other. And so, we have heard worship messages in the past month reminded us of these critical connections. We have been reminded of our connections in the unity of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:1-6) and in the essential relationship with Jesus Christ (John 15:1-12). Let us continue to acknowledge the root source of our hope in the ways we faithfully steward our time, talents, and treasures in service to the victorious mission God is providing for us together.

The Stewardship Committee

Children & Youth Discipleship

Wednesday Night Ministry for Children and Youth!!

Every Wednesday during the school year (except during holiday breaks), there is fun, food, and faith for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Each night has games, dinner, and faith discussions for every age. If you would like to sign up a child or youth for Wednesday nights contact Rhonda Eugea at reugea@firstunitedpres.org or you can scan the QR code and fill out a digital form.



Wednesdays for Grades K-5

October 2: We are finishing a five-week series called "Songs, Prayers, and Wise Sayings" of the Bible. Our lesson this week is "A Time for Everything!" based on Ecclesiastes 3:1-7.

October 9: Children along with their families will participate in Rise Against Hunger as we pack thousands of meals! See the article on page 2. This will be instead of our "normal" Wednesday nights, so plan to participate as a family. This will be a fun night of working together to feed the hungry!

October 16, 23, and 30: We are beginning a 4-week series called "Wise People." On October 16 we will learn about Deborah; on October 23 we will learn about Nabal, Abigail, and David; and on October 30 we will learn about the woman of Tekoa.

Wednesdays for Grades 6th-12th

October 2: We'll begin a four-week series called "Beyond Belief." The Bible is full of things that seem almost "beyond belief." Sometimes that's because the stories we read on its pages are miraculous. Other times, the Bible says things that sound a little too good to be true. In this four-week series from the Book of Exodus, we'll explore what the story of Moses and the Israelites can help us discover about doubt and belief.

October 9: Youth along with their families will participate in Rise Against Hunger as we pack thousands of meals! See the article on page 2. This will be instead of our "normal" Wednesday nights, so plan to participate as a family. This will be a fun night of working together to feed the hungry!

October 16, 23, and 30: We will continue our four-week series called "Beyond Belief."

Sunday Discipleship for ALL Children and Youth

SUNDAYS
9:15-10:00 AM

There are opportunities for all ages to grow in their faith on Sunday morning. Safe, interactive childcare will be available in the Toddler Room for children 5 years old and under. Kids in grades Kindergarten through 5th have a time of **Faith & Fun!** This will help younger children build their basic beliefs and knowledge about God in fun and engaging ways. Sixth through 12th graders are invited to come eat some waffles and explore the Bible in meaningful ways during **Waffles & the Word**. Contact Rhonda Eugea if you have any questions at reugea@firstunitedpres.org.

Children and Worship at FUPC

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

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 been trained and background checked.

Children's Chapel for age 3 through grade 3

After a special time with the pastors, children are invited to leave with a Worship Leader and Greeters to continue to worship in Children's Chapel. This is a special place where children will hear stories of God's people and respond.

2024 Kick-Off: Big Faith, Big Fun!

August 28 was our kick-off for Wednesday Night Ministry for children and youth. We had 60 students and 20 volunteers participating in a night of Big Fun! There was a 74-foot obstacle course, big Jenga, a photo booth, big bowling, and big connect four. It was a wonderful way to start the beginning of the school year!



First United Presbyterian Church

Personnel Budget Update

As October brings in a new season, the church leaders of Session, Trustees, and other ministries plan for the 2025 church budget. In 2024, we conquered many financial hurdles including the installation of a solar energy system, repairs to our existing air conditioning systems, and the replacement of the 20-year-old boiler system. Our congregation met these financial needs in addition to supporting the ongoing missions of the church. In 2025, we want to budget accurately to anticipate new possibilities and support all our thriving ministries.

One of the largest portions of our budget is our personnel expenses. The Personnel Committee conducts an annual review with all staff members and then considers performance, competitive positional salary data, and current cost of living adjustments to determine appropriate levels of compensation to award and budget.

Caring financially and medically for pastors is required by the Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order. In 2025 the Board of Pensions of PC (USA), which provides the prescribed pension and healthcare benefits for our pastors, is implementing a new benefits structure.

New healthcare offerings will include:

1. A transitional pastoral plan paid entirely by the congregation that is similar to our current plan but with increased medical dues as a percentage of salary toward full family health coverage.
2. A congregational pastoral plan that is paid entirely by the congregation for the installed pastor only. Dependent coverage – for a pastor and spouse, a pastor with children, and a pastor with a family – will be competitively priced as fixed-cost additions and congregations may choose to pay all, some, or none of the cost.

As benefit costs continue to rise, and understanding that life situations are different, the Personnel Committee and Session are currently in the process of determining the appropriate plan(s) to provide to our pastors and their families.

Your continued prayerful support of these ministries is appreciated.

OCTOBER
Worship Focus



Staff Leaders

Rev. Rob Dyer, Senior Pastor / Head of Staff

rdyer@firstunitedpres.org

Rev. Alex Lysdahl, Associate Pastor

alysdahl@firstunitedpres.org

Rhonda Eugea,

Director of Christian Discipleship

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Jami Olsen, Administrative Assistant

office@firstunitedpres.org

Dr. Andy Jensen, Director of Music

ajensen@firstunitedpres.org

Mat Conway, Worship Music Leader

Diana Umali, Pianist / Accompanist

Dale Overstreet, Director of Audio /

Visual Ministries + Custodian

videoministry@firstunitedpres.org


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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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To submit articles and suggestions each month, simply email the team!


**theSteeple@
firstunitedpres.org**

www.firstunitedpres.org 

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office hours

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

Sundays

8:00 am Chapel Worship

9:00 am Chancel Choir

9:15 am Sunday School

10:30 am Sanctuary and
Zoom Worship

5:45 pm Children & Youth

5:45 pm United Bells

