

First Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 297
915 E. Orange St
Hoopeston, IL 60942
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First Presbyterian Church
Hoopeston, Illinois



The Bridgebuilder

March 2023

Prayer for Baptism

O God, maker and ruler of all things.
Your voice thundered over the waters at creation.
You water the mountains and send springs into the valleys
to refresh and satisfy us and all living things.
Through the waters of the flood you carried those in the ark to safety.
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery to freedom.
In the wilderness you nourished them with water from the rock,
and you brought them across the river Jordan to the promised land.
By the baptism of his death and resurrection, your Son, Jesus,
has carried us to safety and freedom.
The floods shall not overwhelm us, the deep shall not swallow us up,
for Christ has brought us over to the land of promise.
He sends us to make disciples,
baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Pour out your Holy Spirit, and claim your daughters and sons,
no longer Jew or Greek, no longer slave or free, no longer male or female,
but one with all the baptized in Christ Jesus,
who lives and reigns with you, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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First Presbyterian Church of Hoopeston

First Presbyterian Church

915 E Orange St
PO Box 297
Hoopeston, IL 60942

Phone: 217-283-6229

E-mail: church@fpchoopeston.com

We're on the web!

www.fpchoopeston.com

Head of the Church	Jesus Christ
Ministers of the Good News	All of Us
Session Elders	Gwen Bandy, Wayne Bandy, Skip Betka, Donna Boyer, Sadie Hofer, Kristy Kelnhofer, Gina Morgan, Julie Stump, Ray Stump
Deacons	Debby Dixon, Linda Martin, Shirley Wagoner
Organist and Music Director	Rick Brackmann
Administrative Assistant	Pat Catron
Custodian	Gary Deck
Director of Older Youth Group	Sadie Hofer
Pastor	Wade Meranda
Childcare Provider	Lindsey Paredes
Director of Younger Youth Group	Lindsey Paredes



Parker Owen Robinson

Miles Daniel Robinson

Baptized on February 26

Children of Steve Robinson and

Jennifer Robinson

*Reprinted with permission from The
Worship Sourcebook, 2013, Faith Alive
Christian Resources, page 279*



Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends,

I am happy to report that seven of our youth have completed Confirmation Class and are currently writing their statements of faith which they will share with the Session. Then we will schedule a Confirmation Sunday to receive them into membership of the church. It's been a pleasure to spend this time Owen, Brylie, Nolan, Ethan, Abby, Parker, and Miles, and to share our faith, beliefs, and traditions with them. We can be proud of their attendance and attentiveness. They have seeds of faith in them and a lifetime ahead to let their faith grow. Faith makes life better. Here they are, Lord!

You may have noticed some ceiling tiles missing in Fellowship Hall. During the recent heavy rains, two of the flat roof drains backed up allowing water to come in. Joe and Skip have traced down the cause: a slow-draining sewage line. The underground line is broken as it exits the church and is partially clogged with tree roots as well. Joe Steiner will be digging, repairing, and cleaning the line in the next few weeks. (Thanks, Joe!) We'll keep our eye on the weather in the meantime. Normal rains don't leak in, but a heavy deluge does.



Thanks to our deacons for providing the Lenten devotional items that are available in the narthex. Lent is our forty-day season to slow down a bit and reflect on our faith and life in light of Jesus' journey to the cross and beyond. He showed us the way to live, full of grace and truth. In Him we see that in life and in death we belong to God, so praise be to Jesus, our Lord and Savior, our Shepherd and Friend, our Redeemer.

Blessings, Wade



It's a Boy!

Congratulations to T.J. and Sydney Frazier on the birth of their son, Atreyu (Trey) Kelechi Walker Frazier on February 12 in Urbana. Trey was born early at 28 weeks at 2 lbs 1 oz, and after an early birth, he and his mother are doing well. Trey will receive care at Carle Hospital for several more weeks. His brother Lennox is happy too. The family lives in Normal, IL. Congratulations to grandmother, Barb Park. May God bless baby Trey and his family.



Meals on Wheels

Our congregation has been delivering Meals on Wheels to our fellow citizens for many years. The CRIS Heathy Aging Center, now owned by Carle Health, prepares the meals and local groups take turns delivering them to homes once a week. One delivery provides meals for the week. About thirty residents in Hoopston receive meals, but that varies. Our church delivers every six weeks or so, at 10:45 a.m. on Tuesdays. We thank those who regularly deliver meals on our behalf: Rita Carter, Julie/Ray Stump, Wayne/Gwen Bandy, Larry/Gloria Jahn, Debby Dixon, Barb Park, Kristy Kelnhofner, Debi Lankford, Chalmers Flint, Carol Sapochetti, Shirley Wagoner, and others. Let Rita Carter know if you would like to help; next delivery is March 21. The CRIS website describes its meal mission:

The home delivered meal program is designed for those 60 and over who are not able to prepare a meal and unable to leave their home. The benefits of Home Delivered meals include: a nutritious noon-time meal, social contact and a friendly visit from volunteer. Nutritional, financial and functional assessments are completed as an added benefit, and referrals are made to appropriate agencies based on individual needs. You must be home to receive the meals and able to heat up your frozen meals and keep the cold food cold. The Home Delivered Meals are affordable to all- suggested donation, sliding scale, based on income. We deliver to all four corners of Vermilion County.

March 2023

First Presbyterian Church
 915 East Orange Street, Hoopston, Illinois 60942
 www.fpchoopston.org 217-283-6229

Sabbath Day of Rest	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Elder for the Month: Sadie Hofer	Prayer for Brad and Sue Burton		1 9:00 Adult Study	2 Season of Lent The forty days before Easter, excluding Sundays, begins Feb 22	3	4
5 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Refreshments 11:30 Older Youth Group to serve at Fair Hope in Danville	6 Pray for Colby Burton	7	8 9:00 Adult Study	9	10 Recycling	11 Time Change
12 Time Change: Spring clocks forward one hour. 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Refreshments 6:00 Younger Youth Group	13 Pray for Tanner Burton	14	15 9:00 Adult Study	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18
19 8:30 Handbell Rehearsal 10:00 WORSHIP Change for Change 11:00 Refreshments 6:00 Older Youth Group	20 1st Day of Spring 6:00 Session Pray for Rita Carter	21 10:30 Meals on Wheels	22 9:00 Adult Study	23 10:00 Presbytery Meeting	24 Recycling	25
26 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Refreshments 6:00 Younger Youth Group	27 Pray for Pat Cabron	28	29 9:00 Adult Study	30	31	Apr 1
Apr 2 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Refreshments	Pray for Michael and Anna Chaffin, Audrey, Lincoln, Levi					

General Fund Giving

	2023	2022	2021
Given as of Feb 28	\$18,819	\$16,317	\$16,656
Year End Total	tbd	\$99,140	\$95,085
Pledges for Year	\$95,082	\$92,000	\$108,458

Change for Change

Our mission offering on **March 19** will support the Grant Township Food Cupboard. The Cupboard has been providing food to our neighbors in need for many, many years. Please give.

Our mission offering on **February 19** was \$214 and supported the HA School's New Teacher Welcome Baskets. Baskets of information about the community and other goodies are given to newly hired teachers before school begins in the fall.



One Great Hour of Sharing

Since 1949 Presbyterians and Christians from many other denominations have witnessed to Christ's love with their support of the One Great Hour of Sharing. The offering is used for disaster relief operations in our state, country, and world. Presbyterians give about \$8 million annually. This special offering will be received on **Easter Sunday, April 9** when we celebrate the miracle of resurrection and Christ's victory over the powers of disaster and death. Help us give hope to our brothers and sisters around the world.



Our Fair Share: Per Capita

The Session encourages every member to contribute a Per Capita gift of \$40.00 this year. Presbyterians fund the administrative costs of the larger church - the GA, Synod, and Presbytery - by asking every congregation to provide a contribution based on its size (\$40 x number of members). Our church is assessed \$3,360 for 2023 based on 84 members. Note "per capita" on your check.



Session Highlights

From the February 20 stated meeting:

- 8 out of 10 present
- Planning team selected for replacing trees in parking lot island and improving the lighting.
- Approved our 2022 PCUSA Annual Statistical Report.
- Approved the renewal of our PCUSA Earth Care Congregation designation.
- Approved baptism of Parker and Miles Robinson for Feb 26.
- Directed the March 19 Change for Change for the Grant Township Food Cupboard.
- Approved Debi Dixon and Debi Lankford to conduct the annual audit of the 2022 books.
- Approved Finance Report for January. All records are in good order.
- Deacons are providing some Lenten devotional materials for adults and children.
- Approved McFarland Funds of \$4,000 to provide four \$1,000 scholarships at DACC.
- We will participate in the Rossville Family Restaurant's Cheeseburgers for Paradise program on May 2. We directed proceeds to support the waitresses and cooks at the restaurant. Every cheeseburger purchased on May 2 will provide \$5 of support.
- Renewed membership of Bill and Joyce Nelson.
- Reviewed Pastor's report and Clerk's report.



Cheeseburgers for Paradise

Our church and many others have signed up to participate in the Rossville Family Restaurant's Cheeseburgers for Paradise program. The program is intended to keep the community aware of the many churches in our area and to provide funding for a good cause.



For every cheeseburger purchased on Tuesday evenings, 5 p.m. to close, the restaurant will donate \$5 to that week's designated church. Many churches are participating. Our church has been scheduled to receive the support on **Tuesday, May 2**, so you might go and eat a cheeseburger at the restaurant on May 2. The Session has chosen to give the funds we raise to the cooks and waitresses at the restaurant. A gift from us.

Lenten Message from Organist

During this season of Lent, my organ postlude each week will be a Lenten hymn which is either not in our hymnal or may be unfamiliar to many of you. My first Lenten hymn on February 26 was "Glory Be to Jesus." This was the very first hymn I learned to play on the piano almost 60 years ago!

Here is a picture I recently took of Trinity Lutheran Church in Bloomington, IL. This was our family home from 1959-1967 at which time my dad accepted a call to be an educational missionary in Hong Kong. Trinity is where I really developed my love of church music.



These are all the churches where my family attended or where I was a member or where I served as an organist/choir director:

1. Zion Lutheran, Ft. Wayne (1952 baptism-1959)
2. Trinity Lutheran, Bloomington, IL (1959-1967)
3. Church of All Nations, Hong Kong (1967-1970)
4. Holy Cross Lutheran, Ft. Wayne, IN (70-74 while in college)
5. Bellwood Presbyterian Church, Bellwood, IL (72-73 as organist and choir accompanist while in college)
6. St John's Lutheran, Chicago (74-76)
7. Bethesda Lutheran, Chicago, (76-86)
8. St. John's, Chicago, Chicago (sub organist 86-89)
9. Resurrection Lutheran on campus of Concordia University, River Forest, IL (organist 89-91)
10. First Christian, Hoopeston (91-2001)
11. First Presbyterian, Hoopeston (2001-present)

As you can see, my background is heavily tilted toward Presbyterian and Lutheran churches!

- Rick Brackmann



In Our Prayers

Those who grieve for: Jerry Miller (E. Carter's family), Shirley Lane (M. Posise's friend), Paul Ziemnisky (R. Carter's friend), Marie Brown, Jim Shields (R. Carter's friend), Marty Kloska, Cheryl Gillins (L. Martin's friend), Phil Voegele (Joyce Nelson's friend), Linda Carlson, Rich Thompson (R. Carter's friend), Melvin Miles (S. Burton's uncle), Ellen Martin-Huff (L. Martin's cousin), John Smock (R. Carter's uncle).

Those with immediate concerns: Jamie Miller (T. Hofer's friend), Laura Flint, Larry Blakeney (J. Steiner's brother), Bob Murphy (M. Betka's dad), Linda Martin, Sydney Frazier and Trey (B. Park's daughter), Rex Redden (R. Stump's friend), Shirley Wagoner, Mike Lancaster (J. Stump's cousin), Larry Betka, Dave Anderson (L. Betka's friend), Wynston Kaufman (2 yr old, S. Burton's friend), Sam Matthews (home fire), Amanda Garman Landers (S. Wagoner's friend), Aleyah Carley (youth, S. Burton's friend), Katherine Cox (D. Dixon's niece), Judy Brockway (K. Kelnhofer's friend), Scott Watson, Barbara Stump (R. Stump's sister-in-law), Vickie Anderson (J. Stump's sister), Landon Potter (S. Burton's cousin), Mark Spidle (J. Stump's friend), Christopher Graham (H. Steiner's nephew), John Schertz (G Jahn's nephew), Karla Von Huben (J. Stump's friend), Marie Seaman (D. Boyer's friend), Tina Skender (C. Flint's daughter).

Those with long-term concerns: Mason Steiner, Scott Drollinger (R. Carter's friend), Dwight Judy (D. Dixon's friend), Patti Ziemnisky (R. Carter's friends), Ann Wise (L. Martin's friend), Kathy Grobowski (L. Martin's friend), Emma Winslow (G. Morgan's friend), Lindsay Boyden (C. Lee's friend), Larry and Jan German (L. Martin's friend), Marcie and A.J. Wright (L. Flint's cousins), Jane Steiner, John Zollar (E. Donley's brother), Beth Farias (L. Martin's cousin), Sue Burton, Crew Feltner (child with leukemia, K. Kelnhofer's friend), Tina and John Hanson (Vi Hanson's children), Patti Root (K. Root's mom), Joyce Cottingham (L. Martin's friend), Mary Kane (K. Root's aunt), Natalie Zollar (E. Donley's niece), Martha Barner, Carole Ronane (J. Stump's friend), Beth Meese (G. Morgan's friend), Sandy Glenn (J. Steiner's cousin), Cookie Galloway (B. Schellhardt's sister), Carol Schrepfer (J. Stump's friend), Ian Anderson (J. Stump's nephew), Karen Peterson (D. Dixon's sister), Troy Flint, John Long (D. Dixon's brother), Brian Lemenager (M. Foster's grandson), Rob Burton Family (J. Stump's brother), John Masengale (S. Burton's dad), Lori Egnaw Vaughan (G. Morgan's friend) and Sophia Voyda (E. Donley's niece).

Those homebound in assisted living or nursing homes: Mike Blankenship, Judy Benjamin, Sam Terrell, and John Haughee.

Those in church leadership: Our Session and Deacons, Rev. Wade, Rev. Ann, Rev. Ruth Santana-Grace and Rev. Shavon Starling-Louis (General Assembly Co-Moderators), Rev. J. Herbert Nelson (G.A. Clerk), Rev. Jean Wollenberg (Presbytery Moderator), Rebecca Blair (Lead Presbyter).

Lenten Seeds and Growth

Reflection by Rebecca Blair who serves on staff as the Lead Presbyterian of Transformation and Stated Clerk of our Presbytery. Reflection was shared on March 1.

Lent calls us to reflect on the aspects of preparation for transformational change witnessed during the forty days that Jesus wandered in the wilderness. There is a compelling metaphor that helps us embrace this wilderness journey that we travel with Jesus. It is the metaphor of the seed. Jesus began his teaching ministry with the parable of the Sower (Matthew 13) and referred to seeds and trees, fruit and branches, throughout his ministry. To see the metaphor of Christian growth and spiritual development contained in a seed is to learn essential lessons about change and transformation.

Seeds Need Good Soil

A seed that lacks appropriate soil may sprout, but will quickly wither and die. Even in the best soil, without water and nutrients, growth will be limited. Without sun and cultivation, plants will decay and spoil. Seeds require a rich, healthy environment in which to grow. In their latency over the winter months, seeds gather nutrition and prepare for spring growth. The quiet introspection of Lent offers us the space in which the seeds of our spiritual lives, the seeds of our growth as disciples may be rooted in the rich soil of risk and security, challenge and inspiration, learning and service.

Growth Happens in Its Own Time

We live in a time-focused cultural economy. Yet, time works differently in natural cycles. Seeds require the amount of time that they require. From God's perspective, the time things take is the right time. The lesson of seeds is a lesson of waiting, of patience, of calm, expectant being as transformative growth happens.

Growth Happens at Its Own Rate

If we plant a package of seeds, we will witness variation and diversity in their rate of growth. Some plants sprout almost immediately and evince a steady rate of growth. Late sprouters often become early bloomers. And sometimes, sprouts that look healthy at first wither and require extra care to thrive. Nothing we do will change this natural diversity. Seeds teach us this lesson of living things, a lesson that applies to our spiritual lives as well, that each unfolds its growth according to its own nature.

Seeds Contain the Past and the Future

Each seed is the product of previous generations and contains within it all the genetic code for the future. Latent within each seed is the germ that prompts transformation. Each generation of plants builds upon the last and lays the foundation for the next generation. Our individual and collective transformation as servant leaders who follow Christ also flows from an essential source according to this cycle. Similarly, the mission and ministry of each of our congregations cyclically grows, matures, and lays the seedbed for its next generation.

Seeds Root Transformation in Calling

Authentic transformation never happens for its own sake, but rather to lead us to something new – new understandings, new spaces, new ideas, new actions, new ways of being. The ultimate purpose of seeds is not the growth itself, but the fruits that emerge from seeds. In understanding the purpose of seeds more clearly, we can also understand more deeply that Lent offers us the time for preparation and renewal rather than sacrifice and denial, a preparation to bring forth the fruits of our callings.



In 2023, as we continue in conversation about the transformations that God is working in our midst as the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois, may we be mindful of and attentive to nurturing the seeds planted in our midst that they may grow and flourish, yielding abundant fruits.

March Birthdays

- 2 Suzi Root
- 2 Debi Lankford
- 9 Nic Hofer
- 11 Brylee Cox
- 12 Kevin Root
- 17 Gemma Cox
- 17 Jane Steiner
- 20 Holly Steiner
- 21 Samantha Meranda
- 22 William Steiner
- 23 Genevieve Brackmann
- 25 Connor Watson



In the Mailbox

For Change for Change offering:

Thank you for your generous gift of \$327.08 to the Blanket Sunday ministry. As families and communities around the world recover from emergencies, you are standing with them. Your contribution provides warmth, comfort, and hope to neighbors near and far. It provides a tangible reminder to migrant families that they are not alone. It wraps refugees in warmth as they arrive in the United States to build a future. It provides comfort to our neighbors who have lost homes and face extreme challenges. Your support means relief and hope. – Rick Santos, Church World Service.



For McFarland Fund support:

The staff and students at John Greer School extend a sincere thank you for your \$300 support of our Read to Feed challenge. Students were encouraged to increase the volume of their reading through Accelerated Reader. A total of \$650 was provided to Heifer International to purchase animals to offset global hunger. We are grateful for this opportunity to partner with faith-based organizations. – Dan Walder, Principal

Red Cross Blood Drive

COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE The American Red Cross will host a blood drive for the community at our church on **Friday, May 12** from 12–4 p.m. There is an especially large need for blood this time of year. Let's help those who need help. For an appointment call 1-800- 733-2767 or visit redcrossblood.org and type in 60942 in the "find a drive" box in the top right corner.



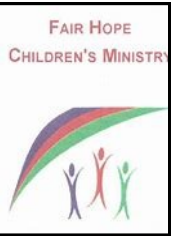
Youth Ministry

The older youth group (6th-12th) will serve at Fair Hope Children's Ministries in Danville on March 5, leaving after worship. They will also meet at the church on March 19 from 6:00–7:30 p.m.

The younger youth group (Pre-5th) will meet from 6:00-7:30 p.m. on March 12 and March 26.

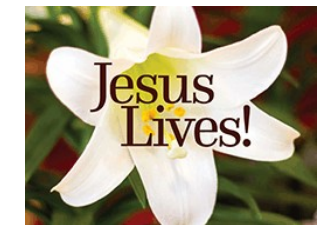
Sadie and Lindsey continue to transform the old preschool room into a multi-purpose Kid's Room for our younger children. We use it for childcare during worship and as a special place for our younger youth group to meet.

We thank Gwen Bandy for working several days to clean the room and for painting the entire room with a fresh coat of paint. The carpets were cleaned as well.



Easter Lilies for Worship

\$18.00 per plant



Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Celebration of: _____

Total plants ordered: _____

Total amount due: _____

Please return this form with your payment to the church office by **April 2**. Lilies may be taken home after Easter service.

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