

THE BURNING BUSH

Greetings,

The Easter Message of Hope

Someone once wrote: Totally without hope one cannot live. To live without hope is to cease to live. And I believe there is a great deal of truth in those words.

In the difficult and often confusing world in which we live today, hope, for many people, is something that seems to be short supply. In fact, I would even go so far as to say that in a world of pain, grief and sorrow, of complex family relationships, of problems at work - alongside many other hardships of life causing sadness, loneliness and depression - hope, for many people, has died a death!

But hope, I believe, is one of the key Christian attributes and one of the most important gifts we can give to the world today.

Nothing brings hope back to life like Easter. For the Easter message gives us hope in a bewildering world and hope to face the uncertainties of the future. This special day never arrives without its refreshing reminder that there is life beyond this one: True life. Eternal life. Glorious life. Those who live on the 'outside' of hope need an injection of hope (a hope transfusion perhaps!) and Easter certainly gives it.

The Easter message is well known - there is no need to prolong it, complicate it or try to explain or defend it. The facts speak for themselves:

- Jesus said He would be in the heart of the earth for three days and nights (Matthew 12:40)
- Later, He said He would suffer ... be killed, and be raised up on the third day (Matthew 16:21)
- Betrayed by Judas, He was placed under arrest, hurriedly pushed through several trials and declared guilty - first of blasphemy and then of treason (Luke 22:70; 23:24)
- Finally, all the disciples left Him and fled (Matthew 26:56)
- Alone and forsaken, He endured the torture of scourging, the humiliation of insults and mockery and the agony of that walk to Golgotha (Mark 15:15-22)
- The horrors of crucifixion followed, leaving Him suspended for six excruciating hours - the last three of which were spent in eerie darkness that fell over the whole land (Mark 15:33).
- Then - He died. (Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30)
- Two men, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, took Him down from the cross, prepared the body for burial and placed it in the garden in a new tomb. (John 19:38-41)
- Because He had predicted, After three days I am to rise again, the chief priests and the Pharisees had the tomb secured by a large stone, set a seal on the stone, and arranged for a Roman guard to watch over the tomb. (Matthew 27:62-66)

- Before dawn on the third day, a miracle occurred. When astonished people visited the tomb that morning, they found the stone rolled away and the body gone. They were asked by angels, Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen just as He said. (Luke 24:5-6; Matthew 28:6)

I cannot fully explain all that happened on that first Easter day in this short column, but the simple fact is that there is something magnificent, therapeutic and reassuring about Easter morning - Hope. And this hope in the resurrected Christ silences the empty message of sceptics and cynics alike. How? Because the evidence of the resurrected Christ can be found in the testimony of many thousands of people who have had their lives transformed by the indwelling presence of Jesus through a personal trust and faith in Him.

Our identity, at this time of Easter celebration, is strengthened as we stand together and proclaim: Alleluia! Christ is risen - He is risen indeed. Alleluia! <http://www.billericaychurches.org>

SNIPPETS

by Pat

Snippets from the March 17 Session Meeting:

CLERK'S REPORT –

- Correspondence: None
- Email/Text Votes:
 - Email (text for Nyle) on March 7 requesting use of the CE Building by Beth Martin for a Graduation Party. Will use on May 15, Sunday from 2-6pm. All approved with Beth abstaining.
 - Email (text for Nyle) on March 11 requesting use of the CE Building by Missy Herron for a Graduation Party. Will use on May 21, Saturday from 3-6pm. All approved. NOTE: This is being changed to May 22, Sunday from 3-6pm.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

- **Worship Team – Liz (chair), Beth, Tony, Sam Sprecher, Diana Rolando & Sam Rutledge.**
 - Rev Laura preached 3/6 and had told Liz she didn't want to preach too often because she is taking care of an elderly friend. UPDATE: Pastor Brandon said that Pastor Laura had reconsidered and had spoken with the person she is caring for, and is actually willing to fill our pulpit on occasion.
 - Jane will continue to change the outside sign weekly to update who our guest speaker is.
 - 3/13: Dean Warner...Crystal for children's message.
 - 3/20: Liz Weber....Alissa for children's time.
 - 3/27: Dean Warner....Alissa for children's time
 - 4/3: Chris Roland...Bonnie for children's time
 - 4/10: Dean Warner....Crystal for children's time
 - 4/14: (Maundy Thurs): Rev Jennifer Sakata
 - 4/17: (Easter) Sue Krummel....she'll do children's time
 - 4/24: Dean Warner....Bonnie for children's time

- 5/1:
- 5/8: Dean Warner....Crystal for children's time
- 5/15: Rev Jennifer Sakata....
- 5/22: Dean Warner...need volunteer
- 5/29: Sue Krummel....she'll do children's time
- Rev Laura has been helping Brady with material for our bulletins and Diana has been helping with song choices.
- Some of our pulpit supply people want to just do the scriptures and sermon, others want to do it all, I have left this up to them and we will fill in where needed.
- It was decided that collection plates would again be passed through the congregation during worship. Ushers will be found each Sunday.
- **Christian Education Team – Beth (chair) & Alissa**
 - No report.
- **Stewardship/Finance/Memorial/Personnel Team – Steffanie (chair), Liz & Alissa**
 - Personnel - Pastor Andy's last Sunday preaching was February 27th, followed by his last day in office of February 28th. We have been working closely with Brady for all of the technology updates - passwords, etc. Personnel team has taken over the weekly email announcements. Kathy Welch and Crystal Gomes will be working on the April Burning Bush with support from Personnel team as needed. Still trying to get through all the paperwork from our insurance company concerning background checks on employees. Kathy Welch and I have been cleaning the church.
 - Memorials – Memorials were received from Jean Peterson, Dianna Threw and Larry Chatten.
 - Finance – At the beginning of the meeting, Kathy went over Cindy and Mickie's reports, see above.
 - Stewardship - no report.
- **Fellowship and Mission Team – Tony (chair), Nyle & Liz**
 - The Session voted to approve the Fellowship Team's decision to restart Fellowship on Sunday, March 27, after worship.
- **Evangelism Team – Steffanie (chair) & Brady**
 - No report.
- **Technology Team – Brady (chair) & Nyle**
 - Firstpresfarmington@gmail.com account password has been reset and the recovery email is set for firstpresfarmingtonit@gmail.com and Brady's cellphone. Personnel committee has the login information for the secretary email and laptop.
 - The sanctuary iPad for streaming's apple id has been changed from Pastor Andy's account on 2/20. The Facebook account for Stream's password has also been reset and Pastor Andy has been removed as Administrator from the Church Facebook page as of 3/1.
 - The Church WiFi passwords have been changed.
 - The Session agreed that the Zoom account should be changed to the free version at the next invoice date of May 13. This is because the Zoom account is still linked to Pastor Andy's card. Would either have to change the card before that date or deactivate the account. The password has not been changed yet until card gets updated.

“First Pres Scheduling Calendar” has been created under the firstpresfarmington@gmail.com account. Currently, Steffanie and Liz have access to update the calendar. This calendar is being used for who is filling the pulpit, facility use, etc. Over the last year, the only items that have been posted to the FB page are Sunday Worship Services and Pastor Andy’s Midweek Devotionals. It was brought up that the volume on FB is really hard to hear if watching at home. Brady said that’s because of the speaker being away from the main microphones.

- **Nominating Team** – Steffanie (chair), Deacon, At-Large
 - No report.
- **Deacon’s Report**

FEBRUARY 20, 2022
(As corrected, see **)

Deacons met on Sunday, February 20 in the CE Building after worship. Meeting opened at 11:25am with prayer by Chair Chris Evans. Those in attendance were Chris Evans, Sue Lane, Missy Herron, Marianne Taylor and Pat Welker, as well as Pastor Andy. Linda Riley also joined us, after talking with Chris about becoming a Deacon again.

Minutes from January meeting were approved. Treasurer’s report has a balance of \$218.09 after the HyVee bill for poinsettias was paid.

Cards sent: Since the January meeting Chris sent 2 cards, Sue 3, Missy 2, Marianne 2 and Pat 24. The mailing lists were updated and distributed but Pastor Andy said he had some additional changes/additions. He is going to update the lists and email them to us as well as make some copies and put them in the Deacons mail slot in the office. Motion/second to purchase a roll of 100 stamps and put them on bookshelf in CE Building for use by Deacons.

February 6, Sunday, Communion served to 27. Pastor Laura Reason will have worship on Sunday, March 6 and serve Communion. Chris is going to provide the bread and Linda is going to assist. Sue will take care of changing paraments. She is going to check into which paraments are to be on the sanctuary cross. Chris will have Trustees help with changing them.

**March 2 is Ash Wednesday, March 6, Sunday, first day of Lent, April 10 is Palm Sunday, April 17, Easter Communion.

Missy is going to check with HyVee to see when they are going to send out their order list for Easter Flowers. The flowers will be placed in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, so want to pass order sheet through congregation at least 2 Sundays prior. Then we need to make sure that the list of Memorials is typed up and printed off to distribute on Easter.

We decided to discuss how we will visit/honor our shut-ins going forward, since Pastor Andy will be leaving at the end of February. We will discuss at the March meeting,

Meeting closed at 11:48 am with prayer by Pastor Andy.

After the meeting was adjourned, Pastor Andy said that we need to have the Session call a Congregational Meeting to elect/install Linda as a Deacon. He is going to find out if Pastor Laura is up for doing this on March 6 when she will be in the pulpit.

Pat Welker, Secretary

** Removed April 3 Communion from list as there is none scheduled for that date.

- **Trustees’ Report**

- No report.
- **Pastor's Report**
 - No Report

OLD BUSINESS: (identified as ongoing issues that need to be addressed)

- N. Zobrist and Sons, Inc replacing doors in CE Building.

NEW BUSINESS: (items that need to be addressed.)

- We learned that Baptisms can only be performed by an ordained minister of Presbytery USA,
- It was learned that Pastor Linda Philabaun has made herself available to the Presbytery Pulpit Supply list and can be asked to fill the pulpit.
- Clerk stated that the Weekly Post Newspaper has been notified of the Pastoral change for our church. The list of local Churches/Pastors is published in the paper.

First Presbyterian Church Officers 2022

ELDERS: Liz Johnson, Tony Rolando, Brady Johnson, Beth Martin, Alissa Holder, Nyle Staley and Steffanie Ulm – Ministry Partner – Rev. Brandon Ouellette

DEACONS: Chris Evans, Marianne Taylor, Melissa Herron, Linda Riley, Pat Welker and Sue Lane

TRUSTEES: Clark Evans, Ben Vermillion, Joe Herron, and Kevin Phillips
(2 open trustee spots)

TREASURERS: Kathy Welch and Cindy Daniels

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: Mickie Ulm

CLERK OF SESSION: Pat Welker

Pastoral Care Contact Information

Church Address: 83 N. Cone St. Farmington, IL 61531
 Contact Phone: Pat Welker (309)338-4575 or
 Steffanie Ulm (309)678-3686
 Office Phone: 309-245-2914(messages checked weekly)
 Email: firstpresfarmington@gmail.com

Mission Giving

Food Pantry

The Farmington Food Pantry is open on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 12:30pm – 1:30 pm. The Food Pantry is located at New Hope Fellowship Church 1102 N. State Route 78, Farmington, IL 61531. You do not even need to get out of your car. It is open to anyone in the Farmington area school district or who lives in Elmwood. There is no income requirement. You can now follow the Food Pantry on Facebook at Farmington IL Food Pantry.

Per Capita for 2022

The Per Capita amount for each member of the Farmington Presbyterian Church for 2022 is \$35.25. This is not an assessment or dues, but a covenantal relationship with the greater Church. This amount is not in our 2022 budget, but paid as collected from each member to the Presbytery of Great Rivers. This money is used by the Presbytery and the denomination to fund all of its administrative and mission projects.

We are asking that everyone consider the important work of the Great Rivers Presbytery and support it by paying the 2022 Per Capita apportionment. To date we have received 33% or 33 members' per capita for 2022. Per Capita giving may be mailed directly to Mickie Ulm at 516 Idlewhile Ct. Farmington, IL 61531, or can be sent directly to the church at 83 N. Cone St. Farmington, IL 61531.

Little Free Pantry

On the east side of the CE building, just south of the door, is a Little Free Pantry that the local Girl Scouts put together. This little free pantry is open and free for anyone, anytime. Feel free to drop off any food to help keep it stocked. Also, feel free to take any food that you might need, no questions asked. This food pantry supports those in our community who might need some extra food on those days when the Food Pantry is closed.

Our Church Life

Presbyterian Women

On Friday, March 11, 2022, meeting of the Presbyterian Women was held in the CE Building at 1pm with 9 ladies present to enjoy the fellowship. There was a short business meeting and our Bible Study.

We had our business meeting and Bible Study. This was followed by our fellowship. It happened to be Marianne's Birthday, so Donna DeGroot had made a cake to celebrate. It was a delicious cake that we all enjoyed. I did notice that we all complained that the serving was too big, yet we all ate it.

The next meeting will be Friday, April 8 at 1pm. We will have our Bible Study, business meeting followed by a dessert provided by Cheryl Fryman. The Bible Study will be led by Pat Welker and the Least Coin given by Blanche.

Remember that all women of the congregation are invited to join the meeting. We have wonderful fellowship and would love to have you join us.

FCHS Basketball News

Ethan and Emma Evans played in the 15th Canton Kiwanis Senior All-Star basketball games on Saturday, March 19th at Spoon River College. Corbin Rutledge was also chosen to play in the game but was unable to attend. The North teams, which our Farmington students were on, won both the girls and boys games. This was a fun event to end the basketball season. It was great to see students that have played against each other from different teams year after year play together on the same team and become teammates for the event. – Christine Evans

FCHS Disney Band Trip

After years of selling Fannie May and a delay from COVID, the Farmington High School Golden Wave Band & Chorus made it to Disney World in Orlando, Florida. We left on a charter bus from the school at 8 a.m. on Monday, March 7th. 51 people were on the trip, including Melody Martin (Band & Chorus member), Grace Berry (Chorus member), Emma Evans (Band member) and Beth Martin (Chaperone).

We arrived at Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World the next morning. We spent the day there and then went to our hotel to rest.

The following day there were workshops for each of the groups. People from the Disney organization worked separately with both the Band & Chorus. The rest of the day was for the beach. After a stop at Ron Jon's surf store, we spent time on the water at Cocoa Beach.

On Thursday, the groups began their day at Epcot but took a trip to Disney Springs for the performance of the Chorus. Despite the rain, the chorus gave a good performance which was sent out on Facebook Live.

Friday was the day for the Marching Band performance. The groups were at the Magic Kingdom for the day. The Golden Wave Marching Band marched through frontier land and on in front of the castle then down main street in the Magic Kingdom. This was the last time the Seniors in the band would march as Farmers. It was thrilling to see.

At the end of a long day, we loaded up on the buses and headed for Illinois. We arrived, safe and sound, on Saturday afternoon. – Elizabeth Martin

Pulpit Supply

Since we no longer have a Pastor, the pulpit is being filled by different people each week. The first week, March 6, was Pastor Laura Reason, from COM of Presbytery. She has been helping out Session during the transition. She gave a message about Psalms 91. It is about God keeping us under his wings. He will keep his people safe and punish the wicked. He sends angels to guard us

and keep us from disaster. The song “On Eagle’s Wings” is a devotional Hymn written about Psalm 91. As a side note: Clark and Chris Evans had just lost their nephew to cancer. He was a musician and singer and that was one of his favorite songs to sing. How can you not believe that God is there with us?

March 13, was Dean Warner and he can be counted on to give us a great message. His message was about Jonah and the Whale and why he was swallowed up then spewed out. God was getting his attention and I imagine if that happened to us, we would be paying attention also. We are here in this Church for a reason, going forward. Listen to what God is asking us to do.

March 20, Liz Weber filled the pulpit. She is not an ordained minister but that hasn’t stopped her from spreading the word. She said she felt the need to give her message about the Prodigal Son. That is one I have trouble with, as I judge the prodigal son differently than the father. It doesn’t seem right for him to be welcomed back with parties when the son who stayed home and worked all those years was taken for granted. But then was he really? Every time I hear the story, I get a little better understanding of why it worked the way it did and what God is trying to tell me. I am definitely a work in progress.

March 27 was Dean again. This time his message was about the Ark of the Covenant and what is in it as well as why. Do you know the 3 things that are in there? After hearing Dean’s message, I can tell you what they are: A gold jar of Manna, Aaron’s staff and the two tablets containing the 10 Commandments. All 3 of these items were given to us by God so we would always remember what he did for his people. The way the Ark was made is also very significant. Dean explained how all these things lead to Jesus and how he brought us eternal life.

You should really try to make these worship services, because these people really do a great job. In the coming weeks we will have people we have not heard before. I’m sure we will find something great in their messages they are giving us. Hope to see you there.

Also, during this time, we have different people leading Children’s Time. Crystal Gomes, Alissa Holder and Bonnie Suydam are signed up so far. But if this is something you would like to try, speak up. The kids are very open and willing to listen. Just let Liz Johnson know if you would be willing to help out. – Pat Welker

Fellowship

This past Sunday, March 27, was the first Fellowship we have had for a couple years. Nyle Staley furnished Amish made donuts and boy were they good. He brought 4 dozen and needed every one of them. There were lots of folks enjoying the treats as well as having good conversations. I am so glad this is starting again. Treats for April 3 will be furnished by the Rolando’s. A sign-up sheet will be passed during worship to have treats furnished for the coming Sundays. – Pat Welker

Maundy Thursday

We are going to have a April 14 Maundy Thursday Service at 6:30pm. The message will be delivered by Rev. Jennifer Sakata. I have never heard her preach so am looking forward to hearing her message. Please join us for worship on this special date.

Monthly Calendars

April 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 10:30 AM Chris Roland – Guest Preacher	4	5	6	7	8 PW 1PM	9
10 10:30 AM Palm Sunday Dean Warner Guest Preacher Choir Sings Easter Egg Hunt	11	12	13	14 Maundy Thursday 6:30PM Communion Rev Jennifer Sakata (guest preacher))	15 Good Friday	16 Church Clean Up Day 2:00 PM CE Building Windows Yard & Garden
17 10:30AM Easter Rev. Sue Krummel Choir Sings	18	19	20	21 Session 6:00pm	22	23
24 10:30AM Dean Warner Guest Preacher	25 BB Deadline	26	27	28	29	30

May 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:30AM Communion	2	3 PEO 5:30PM	4	5	6	7
8 10:30AM Mother's Day Dean Warner Guest Preacher	9	10	11	12	13 PW 12PM	14
15 10:30AM Rev Jennifer Sakata Guest Preacher FCHS Graduation Martins Reserved CE Building	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 10:30AM Dean Warner Guest Preacher Herrons Reserved CE Building	23 BB deadline	24	25	26	27	28
29 10:30 AM Rev. Sue Krummel Guest Preacher	30	31	June 1	June 2	June 3	June 4

Joys & Concerns



April Birthdays

3 Brian Elliott 8 Alissa Holder 16 Colby Evans 21 Kevin Phillips

May Birthday

1 Emily Phillips 2 Ed Fryman 5 Annie Swanson 11 Emma Evans; Ethan Evans; Crystal Gomes 12 Monica Swanson 15 Jayme Johnson 22 Blake Johnson 24 Craig Duley 27 Paul Watters

April Anniversaries

8 Joe & Melissa Herron

May Anniversaries

25 Jay & Steffanie Ulm 27 Kent & Kathy Kowal

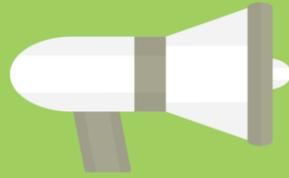
† Prayer Request †

Joys: Tammy Duley is grateful for her special friends and the ongoing help she has been receiving. Claire Herron getting good report @ endocrinologist. Many returning and new faces @ Sunday services. Landry Duley shaving his head in support of his mom.

Concerns: Corbin Rutledge, Sam Rutledge, Tammy Duley, Paula (Pauline Sprowls daughter), Bonnie's co-worker's Michelle & Michelle in their separate cancer recovery journeys,

Bereavement: Barb Deakin, sister-in-law of Sue Lane, Joseph Christensen, nephew of Clark & Chris Evans.

Those in Assisted Living: Wilma Brentz at Courtyard Estates; Leigh Ann Taylor, The Loft; Eileen (Diana Rolando's mom) Red Oak Estates, Pat Threw, Proctor Home.



UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

We try to keep our BB prayer list as current as possible. Please notify the office to update a prayer request listed, to add a new prayer request, or to remove a prayer request. Please contact us at firstpresfarmington@gmail.com

Check out the “Farmington Council of Churches” Facebook page. Make sure to like the page so that you receive notifications and updates. We will use this page to post community events and information. This is also where you will also be able to watch the Council’s Facebook Live worship services.

Did you know that our church is on Facebook and YouTube? Like and Subscribe to our pages to keep up-to-date on the latest happenings!

Moving...Please be sure to provide your new contact information to the church office or a session member.

We thank you for sending in your tithes and offerings, especially. You may either bring your tithes and offerings to worship or you may send your tithes and offerings directly to Mickie Ulm, our financial secretary. Her address is 516 Idlewhile Ct. Farmington, IL 61531.

Guest Preachers for the Month of April

April 3rd – Rev. Chris Roland

April 10th – Palm Sunday - Dean Warner

April 14th – Maundy Thursday – Rev. Jennifer Sakata

April 17th – Easter – Rev. Sue Krummel

April 24th – Dean Warner

If you would like to add something to next month’s Burning Bush, please submit it to the office by the last Monday of the month. We prefer receiving it by email at firstpresfarmington@gmail.com or by dropping it off in the office.

Volunteers Needed!! Saturday, April 16th – Church Clean Up – 2 PM

**The Burning Bush
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
83 North Cone Street
Farmington IL 61531-1248**



COME WORSHIP WITH US:
First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, IL
Worship Service is at 10:30AM, Sunday
mornings, on Facebook Live and in person

Video of worship service will be posted on:
YouTube: First Presbyterian Church of
Farmington, IL
&
On the website:
www.firstpresfarmington.com

Blessings on:

**“In the
Beginning
was the
Word, and
the Word
was with
God, and
the Word
was God.”
(John 1:1)**

