

THE BURNING BUSH

Last Sunday I preached a sermon on forgiveness that featured my grandmother. You may remember that I reported she always had a beer in her hand when she was home. I think of her every March 17th, not because it is St. Patrick's Day which features the drinking two of her favorites – beer and whiskey, but because it the anniversary of her death. This year, March 17th is the last Sunday in Lent prior to Palm Sunday and the start of Holy Week which seems fitting for a couple of reasons.

My Grandmother started attending Maundy Thursday worship services in the last few years of her life. She, my dad, and I would share a pew and each year the story of that Thursday was shared from the point of view of each of the disciples. After each of the 12 readings, a candle was lit and the overhead lights dimmed. Part way through, communion was shared, and then the readings and the dimming of the lights continued. As the service progressed my grandmother would break down in tears. Those were the only times that I remember seeing her cry. I believe that it was the most important service of the year to my grandmother, and it was for me too.

This year will mark the 33rd anniversary of her passing from this life to the next. My father shared his mother's preference for a bawdier, "dark side" lifestyle and her pessimism. My childhood memories includes my father's proclamations that he would probably die at 33 years of age, like Jesus did. So, this March 17th seems especially poignant to me. That day will be a week shy of my dad being gone 7.5 years.

I hope that I will see you in worship on March 17th and again, on Palm Sunday March 25th when the children will share their gifts with us, and on Maundy Thursday, March 28th, and finally on Easter morning, March 31st. Come and remember that whenever we come to the table that Christ is our host and that we are surrounded by the cloud of witnesses, our loved ones who have passed and who are now at home with God. Come and remember the promise of eternal life. Come and remember that we have good news to share!

Blessings,
Pastor Cindy Bean

SNIPPETS

by Pat

Snippets from the February 15 Session Meeting.

FINANCIALS: Kathy Welch went over the financial reports pointing out that there were two CD's maturing soon and will be reinvested at the best interest rates available.

Mission Statement: "The Church is organized to give seekers the opportunity to study God's Word and learn about Christ, to bring believers together in worship, and to encourage disciples in the service of God through spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ in the world."

CONSENT AGENDA:

- The Session voted to approve the presented consent agenda that consisted of the Meeting Agenda as amended, the 01-21-2024 Session Meeting Minutes and receive the Clerk, Deacon, Pastor and Trustee reports.
- CLERKS REPORT:
 - Correspondence: Thank you notes from Diana Rolando, Steffanie Ulm, Pat Welker, Brady Johnson and The Honor Flight of Fulton County.
 - Email/Text Approvals:
 - A text sent on February 12, 2024, for approval. Tammy Duley would like to use the CE Building on Saturday, May 18 from 12:30-3:30pm. She will be hosting a Graduation Party for Ellie. The Session voted to approve.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

- **Worship Team** – Alissa (chair), Dale, Brady, Sam Sprecher, Diana Rolando & Jane Rutledge.
 - Since Diana is not going to be available to play organ the rest of the month, as she will be taking care of Tony after his injury, Sam Sprecher is going to sit in.
- **Christian Education Team** – Bonnie (chair) & Alissa
 - The Children will be singing for Palm Sunday and are practicing their songs. Also planning for Easter egg hunt and a potluck that day 3/24/24. We will be asking for donations of candy for the Egg hunt. Fish banks will go out on 2/25/24.
 - We are looking for VBS Curriculum.
 - Next Youth Group meeting will be 2/25/24.
- **Stewardship/Finance/Memorial/Personnel Team** – Steffanie (chair) & Dale
 - Plan to introduce themselves to employees and to touch base with them.
- **Fellowship and Mission Team** – Cozy (Chair) & Jodi
 - Discuss the plan for mission dinners -March-June-September-November/December soup supper. The first mission dinner is Apr. 7 following church to support the "Feeding of the Faith Meal Prep".
- **Evangelism Team** – Jodi (chair) & Cozy

- Are changing the Feeding of the Faith Bible study to be a time for fellowship, praise and worship while preparing meals for people with a need.
- **Technology Team** – Brady (chair) & Steffanie
 - We have updated the website to make it easier for the various giving "Fund" options to be selected when giving a one-time gift without requiring the end-user to create an account.
 - The secretary laptop has been reset and is ready for Sunday School/VBS staff to be able to use it as needed. The device is a 10-year-old laptop.
 - The screen backgrounds will be changed as we go into the various seasons. The website that we are getting the backgrounds from is storyloop.com. Storyloop is created for churches with short clips that can be used during church services. If anyone wants to use any of the items on the website, such as children's time, let Brady know.
 - We will be planning on looking into the pulpit microphones, they did not get replaced during the audio upgrade and seem to have a weaker volume than the wireless mics. If they need to be replaced, we will try to have pricing soon.
 - Copier Discussion: Contract will end either September 23 or October 17th. Brady said that we should consider purchasing the copy machine at the end of the contract. The company requires 120 to 60 day written notice to cancel the automatic renewal of our contract. It was decided to gather additional information and discuss further the next steps to take.
- **Nominating Team 2024** – Alissa Holder or Bonnie Suydam – Elders; Pat Welker or Linda Riley – Deacons; At-Large Members – Tony Rolando.
- **Active Member Review** – Complete for 2023.

- **Deacon's Report:**

DEACON'S MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2024

The Deacons met in the CE Building after worship and before the Potluck/Annual Meeting. Meeting opened at 11:35am with prayer by Chair Chris Evans. Those in attendance were Chris, Sue Lane, Glenene Benson, Tammy Duley, Michelle Lane, Pat Welker and Pastor Cindy. December Minutes were approved.

The Treasury Balance for December 31, 2023 was \$303.76. \$100 was used for gift cards (see Gift Basket report below) and a deposit of \$170.50 for Poinsettia plants. January Poinsettia deposit \$37.00 and Deacon Yearly Deposit \$200. 2024 January 31 Balance \$540.76.

Cards Sent:

January

Pat 22

Since the new mailing lists had not been handed out, Pat took care of all the cards for January. Communion: Jan. 7 served 32 in worship. Home Communion with Pastor and Pat was served to 10. Next Communion is February 4. Glenene will bring bread and Chris is going to bring the loaf for Pastor to break. Pastor Cindy will be on vacation so we won't need to use Gluten Free Bread and won't be doing Home Communion. Pastor Laura Reason is going to be doing the service.

The new mailing lists were distributed. Since we only have 5 Deacons, Glenene volunteered to make sure the extra list would be taken care of. It was decided that Michelle would be the Chairperson, Pat will remain as Secretary and Chris is going to be the Treasurer for 2024. Nothing special is going to be done for Valentine's Day this year.

Next meeting will be Sunday, February 25 after worship.

Meeting closed at 11:48am with prayer by Michelle. - Pat Welker, Secretary

- **Pastor's Report** – – February 15, 2024 Interim Pastor's Report

- Worship**

- Led worship including the ordination and installation of officers on January 28th.
 - Secured worship leaders for February 4 and 11th, communicated with them for bulletin content, and asked worship committee people to coordinate things on the day.

- Leadership Development**

- Led officer training on January 21st.

- Moderator**

- Moderated congregational meeting to elect officers on January 21st.
 - Moderated Annual Meeting on January 28th.

- Personal Care**

- No In-home visits other than Home Communion on January 7th. Mostly text conversations with people.
 - **TRUSTEE'S REPORT:** No meeting in January.
 - **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - Mission Study- Alissa has a questionnaire to hand out for people to give their opinions on what they would like to see in a minister. Need to make sure we are set with the distribution of surveys and the collection/collation of survey result.
 - One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday. Fish banks will be distributed and the giving envelopes will be placed in Sanctuary on March 10.
 - **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - Committees discussed their plans for 2024. Steffanie is going to check to make sure there will be July 4th activities in the park, so we can do our cookout. She and Alissa are going to check on the possible revision of the Italian Fest and if we could participate in some way.
 - Want the Deacons to discuss the Nursery concerning ages, etc. Further want Deacons to continue Home Communion and if any families in need of a meal, to make sure to pass

names to the Evangelism Committee (see the Evangelism Committee report above for more details).

- Want the Trustees to consider Smart Thermostats for Manse and Church areas. Pastor Cindy said she had requested a free one from Ameren and it is in the Manse closet.
- This Discussion is being held over until March Meeting concerning having the flag in sanctuary,
- The Session voted to close meeting with prayer at 7:20pm with prayer by Steffanie, followed by the Lord's Prayer recited by all. Next Meeting March 21, (3rd Thursday) at 6pm.

First Presbyterian Church Officers 2024

ELDERS: Brady Johnson, Alissa Holder, Jodi Phillips, Bonnie Suydam, Cozy Hoover, Dale Benson and Steffanie Ulm – Interim Pastor Cindy Bean

DEACONS: Chris Evans, Pat Welker, Glenene Benson, Tammy Duley and Michelle Lane

TRUSTEES: Clark Evans, Joe Herron, Kevin Phillips, Jake Suydam, Kathy Welch, and Tim Ulm

TREASURERS: Kathy Welch and Cindy Daniels

FINANCIAL SECRETARIES: Mickie Ulm and Michelle Lane

CLERK OF SESSION: Pat Welker

Pastoral Care Contact Information

Church Address: 83 N. Cone St. Farmington, IL 61531
Contact Phone: Interim Pastor Cindy Bean (618)316-1171
Email: cindyb825@gmail.com
Office Hours (Contact Pastor Cindy)
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.

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.

Per Capita 2024

The Per Capita amount for each member for 2024 is \$37.25. This is not an assessment or dues, but a covenant relationship with the greater church. This amount is not in our 2024 budget but paid as collected from each member to the Presbytery of Great Rivers. This money is used by the Presbytery to fund all of its administrative and mission projects. We partner with other churches in our Presbytery and are called to share Christ's love by partnering in Service, Uniting in Worship and Risking in Ministry. All organizations need money to enable them to perform and provide all that is expected from them. *So far this year, 15 have paid their Per Capita.* We are asking that everyone consider the important work of the Great Rivers Presbytery and support it by your 2024 Per Capita. Per Capita giving may be mailed directly to Mickie Ulm at 516 Idlewhile Ct., Farmington, [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly), or can be provided during offering at the church in the pew envelopes.

Our Church Life

Presbyterian Women

The Presbyterian Women met and had their potluck on Friday, February 9 at noon, with 10 ladies present. We had great food and fellowship. We discussed the fact that we had received generous donations after our Cookie Exchange in December. We had a \$1,900+ in our treasury. Since our money is in a checking account and receives no interest, we decided to donate \$1,900 to some charities. We donated \$500 to the Church to offset the heat/air we use when we meet. We further voted to donate \$350 to each of the following: Fulton County Salvation Army; Local Food Pantry at New Hope Church; Peoria Rescue Mission; and Sophie's Kitchen, Peoria. We did not have a Bible Study as there were issues with our study material. Instead, we enjoyed fellowship. Next meeting is the 2nd Friday, March 8. Hope to see you there. – Pat Welker

Feed the Faith Bible Study

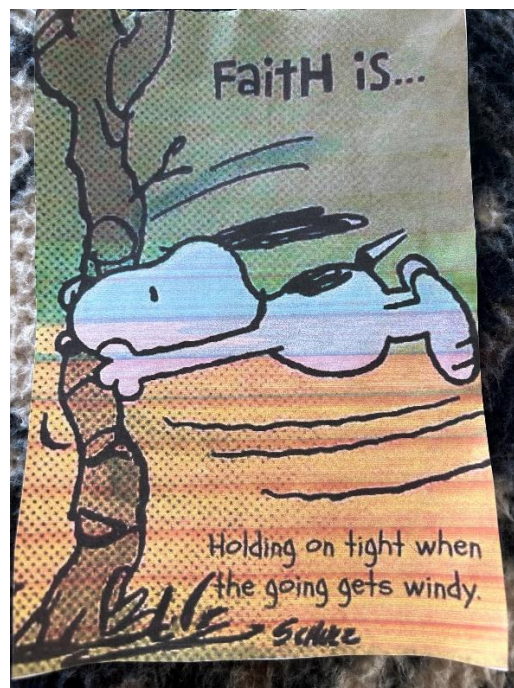
The meeting on February 6, Tuesday at 6:30pm was held. We discussed a change to the Bible Study, hoping to revive interest. The idea is to provide meals for people in the Church and the community that could use a prepared meal. This might include people living alone, those dealing with sickness, death, births and even family illness, etc. The first cooking group was Sunday, February 24 after worship/fellowship. Jodi Phillips organized and there were eight ladies who stayed in the Church kitchen and made meals, salads, bread and desserts. They were delivered to people in the community, including several of us older ladies living alone. I am in fact the beneficiary of a complete meal. A complete meal is something I don't get too much anymore, main dish, salad, bread and dessert. I especially love it when I don't have to cook and I'm sure these others will appreciate it also. So, a big thanks to all the hands involved and I hope this works because it will be very good for the community. To those involved, thanks for all your hard work. – Pat Welker

Ash Wednesday

Pastor Cindy held an Ash Wednesday for us. Unfortunately, there were only 12-15 there to take advantage of this important time. It was a very good service, and I am glad she is trying to help us. There is going to be a Maundy Thursday service with Communion. I hope you all mark your calendars so we can fill a few pews. **Maundy Thursday is March 28.** Hope to see you there.

There will be the ***One Great Hour of Sharing*** envelopes in the sanctuary starting March 10. They will be collected on either Palm Sunday or Easter Sunday.

Palm Sunday, March 24, will be a potluck meal followed by our annual Easter Egg Hunt. In addition, the kids will be singing for us. This is always a fun day so plan to attend. Mark your calendar.



Monthly Calendars

March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 10:30 am Worship Communion	4	5 PEO 7pm	6	7	8 Presbyterian Women 1pm	9
10 10:30 am Worship Youth Group 6-7 pm	11	12	13 Choir Practice 7 pm	14	15	16
17 10:30 am Worship	18	19	20 Choir Practice 7 pm	21 Session 6pm	22	23
24 10:30 am Palm Sunday & Potluck Easter Egg Hunt Youth Group 6-7 pm	25	26	27 Choir Practice 7 pm	28 Maundy Thursday 6:30pm	29 Good Friday	30
31 10:30 am Easter Worship						

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 10:30 am Communion Youth Group 6-7 pm	8	9	10	11	12 Presbyterian Women	13
14 10:30 am Worship	15	16	17	18 Session 6 pm	19	20
21 10:30 am Worship Youth Group 6-7 pm	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 10:30 am Worship	29	30				

Joys & Concerns

March Birthdays

1 Paula Monari; **11** Marianne Taylor; **17** Avery Daniels; **23** Colton Evans; **24** Tim Ulm; **27** Diana Rolando

April Birthdays

3 Brian Elliott **8** Alissa Holder **16** Colby Evans **21** Kevin Phillips **24** Leigh Ann Stephens

March Anniversaries

15 Cindy and Mike Daniels; **23** Monica and Tadd Swanson

April Anniversaries

8 Joe & Melissa Herron



† Prayer Requests †

Joys: Bonnie Suydam is going to be a grandma again!

Prayer Requests: Claire Herron; Allison Smith; Tony Rolando; Kevin Phillips; Haven McMasters; Ralph Bitner; Katie Berry (Doug & Laura Schmied's daughter); Val Waggoner; Eileen (Diana Rolando's mother); Pastor Cathy (Pastor Cindy's friend from NY); Chris Evans' sister, Michelle & brother-in-law, Chris; Dave Moermond; Corbin Rutledge; Sam Rutledge

Bereavement: McMasters and Vermillion families

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

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ

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

**Sunday School 9:15 am
Every Sunday All School Ages**

Per Capita is \$37.25 – Please consider providing this valuable support for the Presbytery

The church needs your help! Please consider volunteering to be on the Misson Study Team!

New Audio Equipment in the sanctuary to help pick up hymns during the service for Facebook/You Tube –
Be Aware – You may be recorded!

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, financial secretary. Her address is 516 Idlewhile Ct., Farmington, IL 61531. OR now you can sign up on Tithe.ly via our church website by clicking "GIVE" on the Home Page. www.firstpresfarmington.com There are many settings of offerings – one-time, monthly, weekly,

**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)**

