



# Voice of the Servant



# May

# 2025

## Points of Interest:

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- ◆ Session Highlights, Pg. 4
- ◆ Poem, Pg. 5



## Mission Statement

**Empowered by the Holy Spirit through every aspect of our lives, we strive to become more like Christ. Our purpose is to praise and worship God, support each other as a family, and reach out to others to spread the good News of our salvation through Jesus Christ!**

## FROM THE PASTOR

Church Family and Friends,

What important Lenten celebrations we had together! From Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday and the debut of the Earlville UPC Choir, and to the Family Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday. What a joy it was to share pancakes in fellowship with neighboring families and watch the joy of the egg hunting followed by the Easter story. We pray that we planted many seeds that day that will bear fruit in the lives of those eager egg-hunters. All this culminated in our Easter Service with the UPC Choir expanding with six of our own singers. It was a joyous day celebrating the gift of new life and realizing what it means to be freed in Christ Jesus.

Alas, Easter is not over! Don't put away your Easter decorations! Keep reminding yourself of how Jesus turned the world upside down by defeating sin and death and what it means for us today. We remain in the Easter season for forty days, remembering that is how long Jesus appeared to His disciples before His ascension celebrated on May 29 this year.

Let us together make May a month of spreading the good news of Easter. Please help us reach out to the young people in our community to encourage them to take advantage of the Stronghold Camp scholarships we are offering. Numerous camps are offered for different ages and for different interests. See the camp flyers on the church table or go to Stronghold Camps. We are blessed to have the Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center in Oregon, IL as a resource for our church. Please note that the camp is also available for family camp and can be rented for weddings.

We are also recruiting students for confirmation classes. At this time, we have three (plus two from Earlville UPC) high schoolers and two middle schoolers who have expressed interest. Classes will be held on Sundays, right after church. This is a great way for young people to learn more about the church and decide if they want to make the commitment to be part of God's church family.

As our world gets greener every day, let us be reminded of God's goodness and His gift of new life. May we today and every day reflect the good news of Easter.

*<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. (1 Peter 1:3-4a)*

By grace together,  
Laurie Walker, Covenant Pastor





**Family Breakfast**  
 Please bring a non-perishable food item for the Micropantry.  
 8:30 to 10 AM  
**Saturday,**  
**May 17, 2024**




**Bring a friend or a neighbor!**  
**Join us for a Craft.**

Please contact Bill & Joni Bratney  
 for more information of how to help.

**Missions**



**BABY BOTTLE  
CAMPAIGN**

**May 11, Mother's Day through June 15, Father's Day**

We will be filling baby bottles with change and bills for Abigail's Women's Center.

**Abigail Women's Center**

A non-profit organization with a goal to serve and benefit our community. It is our passion and commitment to provide compassionate care, practical help, and accurate information to men and women facing pregnancy decisions.

**Helping Since 1997**

Abigail Women's Center provides services and referrals to women who are:

- In a crisis pregnancy
- At risk for unplanned pregnancy
- In financial straits that put their unborn child's health at risk.

**Easter Egg Hunt**

Thank you to all who donated candy and helped fill 1000 Easter eggs.  
 There were 20+ children and it was a very successful day.  
 Children also watched a video of the Easter Story.





Cans with pull tabs to open will be helpful to those who don't have can openers or are homeless. Yes, we have a few who are currently using Micropantry for meals, so be kind when talking or donating.

Hearty Soups	Canned tuna	Stews	Mustard	Ketchup
Cake mix	Cookie Mix	Frosting	Mayo	Shelf stable milk
Boxed meals	Spam	Tuna	Relish	Basic Biscuit mix
Fruits	Stuffing	Chicken	Oils	Baking Powder
Bar soap	Boxed Meals	Spices	Shortening	Baking Soda

Basic hygiene items are always needed. Shampoo, deodorant, soaps, shaving cream, razors, hand creams.

We have a temperature controlled cooler so bread, butter, milk, eggs and cheeses are always a blessing to those in need. Thank you to all who help keep this Micropantry going strong.

## Hands of Hope (Joliet Pick-up)

**May 2 and May 16**

**Pick-up dates— If you are able to go to Joliet any of these dates and pick up free food for our pantry, please sign-up in Fellowship Hall.**

**If you can help unload and stock the food items at 3 PM please sign-up.**

### Produce Sorting

If you are able to help sort fresh produce or maintain the Micropantry, please sign-up.

### Tuesdays Produce

- May 6
- May 20
- June 3
- June 17



**Church World Service**  
Rev. Dr. Tiffany DeTienne  
Development Operations Coordinator

P (913) 415-1443  
tdetienna@cwsglobal.org

PO Box 968  
Elkhart, IN 46615

First Presbyterian Church,  
We are so grateful for your support of The CW's Blankets Program! The \$270 gift you sent will help to provide individuals in need with a tangible sign of God's love. Thank you for continuing to look out for your neighbors in need, both near and far!  
Peace,  
Tiffany

## Weekly Coffee Hour

Please consider hosting coffee hour after worship on Sundays. Bring a simple dessert, make coffee, pour juice. Cheese and crackers are supplied by the Fellowship Committee.  
**The sign-up is on the wall outside the Kitchen.**

## Coffee Hour

- 04
- 11 Second Sunday
- 18 Lucille Knuth
- 25

## Second Sunday Breakfast

**May 11, Second Sunday Breakfast 9:30 AM**  
**Please bring a goodie or dish to pass.**  
We will provide drinks and table service. If you have questions, please contact Joni Bratney.

## Session met April 8 at the church.

Bill Bratney led us in a devotion based on 1 Corinthians 13:4 - Love is Kind. Kim prayed to open our meeting. PNC Report: The written MDP was presented. Session voted to approve the draft and authorize Peggy and the PNC to move forward with posting our MDP. Once approved online by the Clerk of Session on behalf of session and by the COM, it will be on the CLC website for prospective pastor candidates to see.

**Communications:** 1) Palm branches and Easter flowers have been ordered. 2) Received a thank you note from Peggy Etheridge and the rest of Joyce Burrigh's family in appreciation of all that was done for Joyce's service and dinner.

**Financial Report:** Our income was lower than expenses for the month, but we are doing okay for year-to-date finances.

**Pastor's Report:** 1) Pastor Laurie inquired as to how it is going with the change in our worship schedule. 2) Discussed the possibility of returning to using readers/liturgists periodically. Pastor encourages anyone who is interested in reading Scripture during worship to speak with her. 3) Took shut-in communion and had nice chats. 4) Discussed the upcoming Elder sacrament training which would allow Elders to serve communion. 5) Updated us as to VBS. It will be held at 1<sup>st</sup> UMC this year, kicking off on July 20, then held July 21-24. It will be themed "Road Trip VBS". As always, volunteers are welcome.

**Maintenance and Property:** 1) Discussed the need to set up an account as a non-profit with Ace Hardware. 2) Mortenson Roofing offers spring roof inspections. We will wait to do this, as we just had the roof inspected and worked on in the fall. 3) The elevator needs to have a third-party inspection to be certified. Donna is working on this. 4) Surf internet and phone is up and working.

**Worship and Music :** Cathy Burke will be filling the pulpit two weeks - April 27 and May 25—in Pastor Laurie's absence.

**Missions:** 1) Regarding the Youth Triennium—some of the Earlville youth are interested. 2) Stronghold flyers are available. 3) We will be doing the Abigail's Change bottles Mother's Day through Father's Day. 4) The Kenya Mission Trip has been postponed for a year to help with planning and scheduling.

**Old Business:** Pastor Laurie is working on fact finding for possible work to get our organ usable.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Marie Van Rheenen, Clerk of Session

1818  
First Presbyterian Church  
1003 5th St  
Mendota, IL 61342-1911

	<b>Your congregation</b>		<b>Nationally</b>	
	2023	2024	2023	2024
	<i>(end of year)</i>	<i>(as of 12/31/24 preliminary, subject to audit)</i>	<i>(end of year)</i>	<i>(as of 12/31/24 preliminary, subject to audit)</i>

	2023	2024	2023	2024
	<i>(end of year)</i>	<i>(as of 12/31/24 preliminary, subject to audit)</i>	<i>(end of year)</i>	<i>(as of 12/31/24 preliminary, subject to audit)</i>
Christmas Joy Offering	\$295.00	\$400.00	\$2,417,914	\$2,636,860
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$235.00	\$401.00	\$6,521,210	\$5,970,427
Pentecost Offering	\$277.20	\$162.00	\$786,246 *	\$860,066 *
Peace & Global Witness Offering	\$293.96	\$224.45	\$818,329 *	\$913,626 *
Presbyterian Giving Catalog	\$25.00	\$90.00	\$1,430,217	\$1,400,241
Special Offerings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$36,709



Prayer Warrior's

Pray daily for your secret Prayer Warrior. Maybe send a card from time to time to let them know they are in your thoughts and prayers. If you want to leave a card or small gift, you can leave it on the table in fellowship hall.

*Evangelism and Outreach Committee*

May Lectionary Readings

04—Acts 9:1-6 (7-20), Psalm 30, Isaiah 6:1-3, Psalm 90:13-17, Revelations 5:11-14,  
John 21:1-19  
11—Acts 9:36-43, Psalm 23, Isaiah 53:1-6, Psalm 114, Revelation 7:9-17, John 10:22-30  
18—Acts 11:1-18, Psalm 148, Leviticus 19:9-18, Psalm 24:1-6, Revelation 21:1-6, John 13:31-35  
25—Acts 16:9-16, Psalm 67, Deuteronomy 34: 1-12, Psalm 109:21-31, Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5,  
John 5:1-9

“On Turning 80”

*Written by: Sandra Rebbholz, 2025*

Some people look at getting older with dread and some fears.

But I've found it's really about your attitude and not the number of years.

I'm happy to still be able to do many things I've always done.

I think it's important to do things I enjoy—laugh and have fun.

I remember when I let my hair go completely white.

I began to notice that younger people viewed me in a different light.

They started to call me ma'am and honey a lot more.

Waitresses, clerks, checkers at the grocery store.

If only I could tell them about some of the things I've done, seen, and had.

They may start to realize living long and getting old might not be so bad.

I know when many look at an older person, it's the lines of age they see.

But, even so on the inside I still feel like the younger me.

I still love to dance to good old rock and roll, and it seems, that's why my friends nicknamed me the dancing queen.

As I reflect back on the 80 years of my life,

I feel so blest to have been a mother of three sons and for 56 years a loving man's wife.

Wow! How our family has grown—my sons and their wives now with children and grandchildren of their own.

Having six grandchildren and four great grands is such a gift.

Brings a great appreciation for this life I have lived.

Awhile back, a friend said to me, “You don't know what a blest life you've had.”

Thinking of this really puts things into prospective on the days I feel a little down or sad.

Being 80 has really made me think of my own mortality.

No one lives forever and that's just a reality.

It does bring me comfort to know that one day I'll get to see all my loved ones who have gone to heaven before me.

I could give you a lot more advice that you'd never ask for.

But, always remember the most important things in life can't be bought in a store.

So, keep your faith in God and love for one another strong.

These things will give you strength when life sometimes goes wrong.

So, here's to me on turning 80.

I guess now I can officially be called an “Old Lady.”

# May

# 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	<b>2</b> Office Closed 12:30p HOH Pick-up 3p Unload and stock HOH foods	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship Communion (Laurie Walker)	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 10a Produce Sorting 12:30 MAMA	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 10a "Fill My Cup"	<b>9</b> Office Closed	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> <b>Mother's Day</b> 9:30a Second Sunday Breakfast 10:30a Worship (Laurie Walker) 2p Piano Recital/Ice cream Social	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 9:30a Presbytery Meeting Elgin First Pres. Or Zoom 7p Session	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	<b>16</b> Office Closed 12:30p HOH Pick-up 3p Unload and stock HOH foods	<b>17</b> 8:30a—10a Family Pancake Breakfast & Craft
<b>18</b> 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship (Laurie Walker)	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 10a Produce Sorting	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	<b>23</b> 9-Noon Office Hours <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship (Cathy Burke)	<b>26</b> Office Closed Memorial Day	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	<b>30</b> 9-Noon Office Hours <b>10a Newsletter Folding</b>	<b>31</b>



**Online Giving**



**New Address**

**Suzan Wilburn**  
 241 FM 21  
 Pittsburg, TX 75686



**May Birthdays**

- 02 Faye Smith
- 03 Tyler Blum
- 06 Sean Dullard
- 11 Jamie Stanford
- 13 Tyler Cox
- 16 Riley Stanford
- 20 Art Beck
- 21 Jasmine Matteson
- 31 Bob Etheridge

**May Anniversaries**

- 27 Jason & Jennifer Donahue
- 27 Ray & Faye Smith

I want to thank Pastor Laurie and my Church family for the support I received when my brother died. My Prayer Warrior, cards, phone calls and emails all helped heal my aching heart.  
 Thank you so much. Diane T.

**Continued Daily Prayers**

**Julius Hagan—Belgian Missionary**  
**Kenyan Partners**  
 Angie (Faye Smith)  
 Diane Moore  
 Dixie Tonzzi (Ray Smith)  
 Eileen (Moriah's Grandmother)  
 Finn (Pastor Laurie grandson)

**Jason**  
 Joe (Cindy's boyfriend)  
 John Pohl  
 Kelly (Gary & Debbie's friend)  
 Margina & Larry (Kay Christen)  
 Mike Boyle  
 Pam Schmidt

**Pastor Dave Spaulding's brother**  
 Pat Schmidt  
 Sarah Arter  
 Sandy & Donald Schultz  
 Cheri DeLong (Kay Christen)  
 Tim Sondgeroth  
 Trisha Smith

*Fill My Cup, Lord*



**Every Thursday at 10 AM**  
 Come and gather with us for tea, coffee, hot chocolate and conversation.  
**All are welcome.**

**Ushers**

- 04 Carol Erwin, Kay Christen
- 11 Kevin & Ann Goy
- 18 Lucille,
- 25 Faye Smith



**Pianists**

- 04 Jake Schmitt
- 11 Jake Schmitt
- 18 Laura Sutton
- 25 Peggy Etheridge

**Income and Expenses at First Presbyterian March 2025**

	MTD
Budget	\$ 7,702
Income	\$3,661
Expenses	\$7,186
Reserves	\$-

**Per Capita**

**2025 Per Capita**  
**\$44 per person yearly**



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**(815) 538-5603**  
 Pastor: Laurie Walker (815) 274-3444



Label

In-Person and [www.facebook.com/fpcmendota](http://www.facebook.com/fpcmendota)

**Fellowship will be at 9:45 AM**  
**Worship will be at 10:30 AM**  
**Second Sunday Breakfast 9:30 AM**

May

Happy   
*Mother's*  
 Day

2025

