



Voice of the Servant



2025

Points of Interest:

- ◆ Kenya Registration, insert
- ◆ Mission Focus, Pg. 2
- ◆ Thank you notes, Pg. 2
- ◆ Session Highlights, Pg. 4
- ◆ September Calendar, Pg. 6



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!



Church Family and Friends,

Isn't it amazing how as soon as students go back to school the weather turns and it feels like fall! We knew fall was near when we started enjoying the fresh sweet corn and vine-ripe tomatoes. Let's take a minute to look back at a summer well spent.

Confirmation classes started for Keagon and Jacob. What a joy it is to see their enthusiasm for the church. Thanks to their mentors, Ron, Kevin, and Ray for agreeing to support them through this journey toward church membership. When I challenged the boys to come up with a mission project, they quickly responded with the idea of advertising the Micro-Pantry at the Sweet Corn Festival. They made signs and loaded up the church wagon with water and snacks and away we went. People were very happy to receive free water and snacks on one of our hottest afternoons. Their act of service let people see the church at its best.

Thanks to Andra for leading our summer Bible Study on the book the Songs of the Son: Reading the Psalms with the Author of Hebrews by Daniel Stevens. We will finish our study on September 3 and hope to have the author, Daniel (son of Debbie and Gary Stevens) join us online to answer our questions. This book has helped all of us to better listen for Jesus' voice when we read the Psalms.

Our church was a great help at Vacation Bible School. We worked with our friends at Zion Methodist and First Methodist to provide a five-night program. Providing Christian education for the young people in our community should always be considered a priority mission project.

Your Pastor Nominating Committee continues their work behind the scenes. Please keep them in your prayers as they search for your next pastor. Small churches are in competition for the limited number of available pastors. We pray for discernment as we seek the future that God has planned for us.

September is the month when your Nominating Committee will be working on developing a slate of church leaders to present to the congregation. The annual congregational meeting for the election of officers is September 28 after church. Please thoughtfully consider how you can share your gifts and talents to further the work of the church.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

By grace together,
Laurie Walker, Covenant Pastor



Opportunity to Visit Kenya!

Applications are available at <https://blackhawkpresbytery.org/2025/08/25/opportunity-to-visit-kenya-in-2026/>—and there is a copy included in this newsletter. Applications are now being accepted for the Blackhawk-Imenti Partnership Trip on September 22 through October 5, 2026. While in Kenya, we will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of the partnership between our presbytery and the three Imenti presbyteries. The purpose of our trip will be to strengthen and grow our partnership. You will also have an opportunity to meet Mendota's partner parish members and see the Maua Street Program in action. While we are in country, we will work together on a Memorandum of Understanding that will chart the presbytery partnership's path into the future. Finally, we will make time to go on safari to marvel at God's beautiful creation! The application includes answers to most frequently asked questions. If you have further questions, please direct them to Pastor Laurie (laurelawalker@gmail.com).

Gift of Prayer

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

Mission Focus for September "Peace & Global Witness"

6 A SEASON OF PEACE

Sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), this monthlong pilgrimage is designed to deepen the pursuit of peace for congregations, small groups, families and individuals. This season is a time of growth, encouragement, challenge, inspiration and education. Participants are invited to define and deepen their calling as peacemakers.

This year's *Path of Peace* reflections will highlight Presbyterians in the United States who have contributed to civic well-being and made a significant impact for the common good in a variety of sectors both within this country and beyond. Drawing upon the resources of the Presbyterian Historical Society, we will be introduced to Presbyterians both well-known and little-known who have challenged injustice, broken down barriers and dividing walls, advocated for the marginalized, stewarded the common good, taught peace and been agents for the transformation of society. We aren't able to include every Presbyterian who has made this kind of significant impact, but we offer a representative sample of those who can encourage and edify us for the work before us. May these reflections provide good news, real hope and genuine inspiration. May these daily reflections remind you what Presbyterians can do and have done to ensure a "path of peace" and well-being for everyone and for all of God's creation.

The Peace of Christ be with us all!

Let us pray —

Loving God,
help us as we work to pursue peace.
May we see your face
in those we meet
in our neighborhoods
and around the world.
Show us how we might be
bringers of peace
to the rich tapestry
you created for all of your people.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.



On behalf of **Illinois Valley Pads**, we extend our heartfelt appreciation for your contribution of \$500 to support our mission of providing safe shelter, nutritious food, and providing access to essential services for those in need.

*Warmest regards,
Carol Alcorn
Executive Director*



We are so grateful for your financial support in our Change for Life fundraiser! What a difference you make to our Center.

Dear *First Presbyterian Church*
Thank you so much for your donation to Abigail Women's Center for the Change for Life. Please know that your gift of \$ 97.30 will go to help provide pregnancy tests, Limited Obstetrical Ultrasounds, Earn While You Learn Classes, formula, diapers and many other baby supplies and clothing up to size 5T, for women and men who are in crisis pregnancy situations.

Our services are of no charge to our clients because of donors like you who are so faithful to support this ministry. I'm sure that you are aware that when a woman sees her baby on ultrasound, at least 85% of women will choose life for their babies.

We cannot thank you enough for your support, and we pray that God will bless you abundantly.

In Christ Jesus,
Shelly J Bell
Shelly J. Bell, Executive Director

Bless your faithfulness



The Micropantry can use the following:

- Canned meats: tuna, chicken, Spam, Vienna sausage
- Hearty soups
- Laundry detergent pods
- Canned vegetables
- Gravy mix packets
- Spaghetti-O's
- Granola Bars
- Shel-stable milk
- Canned milk
- Pancake Mix
- Ravioli-O's

Cans with pull tabs to open will be helpful to those who don't have can openers.

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

We have a temperature controlled cooler so perishables can be distributed.



Hands of Hope (Joliet Pick-up)

Pick up Dates Sept. 5 and Sept. 20

If you can help pick-up, 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.

Monthly Tuesday Produce 11AM

September 9

October 14

November 18

December 23



Family Breakfast

Please bring a non-perishable food item for the Micropantry.

8:30 to 10 AM

Saturday, September 20, 2025



Bring a neighbor!

Join us for a Craft.



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

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

07
14 Second Sunday Breakfast
21
28

Second Sunday Breakfast

**Sept 14, 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.

Your Session met August 20, 2025 at the church.

Pastor Laurie led us in a devotion based on Hebrews 13:8. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His Good News never changes. She then opened our meeting with prayer.

Communion will be served on September 7. The Annual Congregational Meeting for the election of officers for 2026 will be held after worship on September 28. Pastor Laurie Walker will moderate.

The PNC—reports that nothing new is happening. Regarding the three potential candidates mentioned in the last report, none were suitable for our church. PNC has received 2 more matches since the three interviews, neither of the candidates were interested in serving in Mendota. We need to continue in prayer for the PNC and that the right candidate is led to us. Dale Keilman of Earlville Presbyterian is interested in serving as pulpit supply. He is in training to serve communion.

Presbytery Report—the next meeting will be September 9 at Stronghold. One of the topics of discussion will be the Presbytery renaming process.

The Clerk reported the deaths of members Sandy Stanford (6-11-2025) and Kevin Kilanowski (7-23-2025). She is also working on an updated membership list, at the request of the Treasurer.

Financial Report—July saw a large annual donation to the church, which puts donations ahead of budget for the year to date.

Budget and Stewardship reported the date for Stewardship Sunday will be November 16. Andra has materials and will share with Pastor Laurie.

Maintenance and Property—1) still need to talk with Town and Country Services regarding the air conditioning inspection. 2) Donna was able to get everyone together to get the elevator certification complete. 3) We received a notice of renewal for our property insurance. We will see an increase in premiums and deductibles.

Christian Education—1) Andra can download materials for Sunday School. She will be sharing this resource with Pastor Laurie. 2) Pastor Laurie has been working with Keagon and Jacob on confirmation classes. 3) We are considering the next Bible study topic and time.

Personnel and Pastoral Relations—Donna and David Jungnickel have found a home in LaSalle.

Worship and Music—Bill will be working on pulpit supply for the days Pastor Laurie will be out of the Pulpit—October 19, November 2 & 9, and January 26–March 1. Sandy gave Raleigh Shifflette's business card to Bill, as she had a conversation with Raleigh at VBS regarding his willingness to serve as pulpit supply.

Missions—The Season of Peace begins the first Sunday in September. The Peace and Global Witness offering will be collected October 5 – World Communion Sunday.

Fellowship and Parish Life—Kevin Kilanowski's funeral was good, the family helped with clean-up and was very appreciative of what we did; the officiant did a nice job with communion. 2) The Harvest Dinner will be November 16 – Stewardship Sunday - for church family and friends. 3) The Saturday Family breakfast is a nice opportunity to be in community, although it is discouraging that we are not able to draw in more children. For the Saturday, October 25 breakfast, we will have a pumpkin carving and lesson time for the kids.

Pastor's Report—Pastor Laurie 1) participated in the community VBS three of the nights, 2) counseled with the Kilanowski family at Kevin's death, 3) is participating in Bible Study, 4) served communion to two shut-ins, and 5) visited a member with health concerns. She is happy to report that Dixon Church now has a pastor.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Marie Van Rheenen, Clerk of Session

September 07—Jeremiah 18:1-11, Psalm 139:1-6,13-18, Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 1, Philemon 1:1-21, Luke 14:25-33
 September 14—Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28, Psalm 14, Exodus 32:7-14, Psalm 51_1-10, 1 Timothy, 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10
 September 21—Jeremiah 8:18-9:1, Psalm 79:1-9, Amos 8:4-7, Psalm 113, 1 Timothy 2:1-7, Luke 16: 1-13
 September 28—Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15, Psalm 91: 1-6, 14-16, Amos 6:a-, 4-7, Psalm 146, 1 Timothy 6:6-19, Luke 16: 19-31

- BABYLON
- BEERSHEBA
- BEREA
- BETHEL
- BETHLEHEM
- BETHSAIDA
- CAPERNAUM
- CARMEL
- CHORAZIN
- CORINTH
- DAMASCUS
- EDEN

- EDOM
- EGYPT
- ELAM
- EPHESUS
- EPHRAIM
- ETHIOPIA
- GALILEE
- GIBEON
- GOMORRAH
- ISRAEL
- JERUSALEM
- JORDAN

- JUDAH
- LACHISH
- LAODICEA
- NINEVEH
- PERGAMUM
- PHILADELPHIA
- PHILISTIA
- REHOBOTH
- ROME
- SAMARIA
- SARDIS
- SHINAR

- SIDON
- SMYRNA
- SODOM
- SYRIA
- TARSHISH
- THYATIRA
- TYRE
- UR
- ZION

Bible Places

P S H H E E M B K E R A N I H S E T T L H A K T K Y Z Y V Y D P W B V V A V T Z
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SEPTEMBER



2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Office Closed Labor Day	2	3 3:30p Last day of this Bible Study	4 10a "Fill My Cup"	5 Office Closed 12:30p HOH Pick-up 3:00p Unload and stock HOH foods	6
7 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship Communion	8	9 9:00A Piano tuner 9:30a Presbytery at Stronghold 12:30 MAMA 5p Session	10	11 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	12 Office Closed	13
14 9:30 a Second Sunday Breakfast 10:30a Worship	15	16	17	18 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	19 Office Closed 12:30p HOH Pick-up 3:00p Unload and stock HOH foods	20 8:30a—10a Family Pancake Breakfast & Craft
21 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship	22 Newsletter Deadline	23	24	25 9:00a Newsletter Folding 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	26 9-Noon Office Hours	27
28 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship 11:00a Annual Congregational Meeting	29	30 10a Produce Sorting				

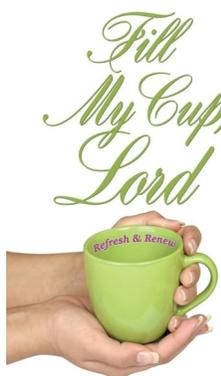
Session Members, please begin to think about your Annual Reports due in two months!

Online Giving



Birthdays

- 05 Chuck Huss
- 05 Rosemary Hamel
- 10 Stephen Dullard
- 12 Jamie Rodriguez
- 13 Susan Kilanowski
- 24 Cindy Baumgardner



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

Ushers

- 07 Kay Christen
- 14 Faye Smith
- 21 Ron & Melissa Blum
- 28 Kevin & Ann Goy



September Anniversaries

- 07 Kenny & Kim VanRheenen (40 Years)
- 10 Bob & Peggy Etheridge

Pianists

- 07 Jake Schmitt
- 14 Jake Schmitt
- 21 Laura Sutton
- 28 Peggy Etheridge

In Our Deepest Sympathy

Nora-Jean Rollins
 Sandra (*Madra Fischer's sister*)
 Kevin Kilanowski



Continued Daily Prayers

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

Janet Sutton
 Jason
 Jim Reilly
 John Pohl
 Kelly (*Gary & Debbie's friend*)
 Margina & Larry (*Kay Christen*)
 Matt Conrad (*Nancy Huss*)
 Mike Boyle

Pam Schmidt
 Pat Schmidt
 Sarah Arter
 Sandy & Donald Schultz
 Cheri DeLong (*Kay Christen0*)
 Tim Sondgeroth
 Trisha Smith

Income and Expenses at First Presbyterian July 2025

	MTD	YTD
Budget	\$ 7,702	\$53,916
Income	\$12,507	\$56,530
Expenses	\$7,229	\$48,367
Reserves	\$-	

Per Capita

2025 Per Capita \$44 per person yearly

Year	Total	Presbytery	Synod	General Assembly
2025	\$44.00	\$29.35	\$3.81	\$10.84



First Presbyterian Church
 1003 5th Street
 Mendota, IL 61342-1911
 Website: www.fpcmendota.com
(815) 538-5603
 Pastor: Laurie Walker (815) 274-3444



Label

In-Person and www.facebook.com/fpcmendota

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

