

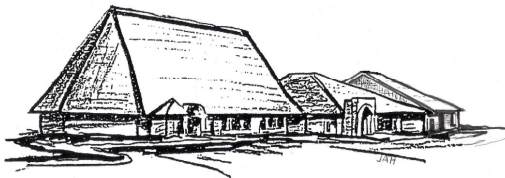
FIRST FOCUS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2000 E. COLLEGE AVE.
NORMAL, IL 61761
309-452-4459

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NORMAL, IL 61761
PERMIT NO. 104

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS A
LIFELINE FOR EVERYDAY PEOPLE
TO FIND, LOVE AND SERVE JESUS.**



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

MARCH 28

Palm Sunday

Worship/Communion
8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
Church School - 9:45 a.m.

APRIL 1

Maundy Thursday

Supper - 6:15 p.m.
Worship - 7:00 p.m.

APRIL 4

Easter

Worship/Communion
6:30 a.m. /8:30 a.m. /11:00 a.m.
Easter Breakfast - Great Hall
7:00 - 10:30 a.m.

APRIL 11

Worship

8:30 a.m. /11:00 a.m.
Church School - 9:45 a.m.

**CHILDCARE is available at worship
services through kindergarten age.
WORSHIP BAGS are offered for children
in worship and can be found
in the main hallway desk.**

Pastor's Corner

Ask any child, "What's your favorite holiday?" and odds are they aren't going to say Easter. For most kids, the happeningest holiday is Christmas. Christmas: with its scores of shiny decorations, singable songs and cashloads of candies, cookies and cakes. Not to mention the presents! What's Easter got? Chocolate bunnies and eggs? A lot of blah-blah-blah at church? For a kid, that's not nearly as much fun as Christmas.

In the youth ministry world, we talk about how it is a sin to bore a kid with the Gospel. So if we are boring kids with Easter, we've got some changes to make. American-Orthodox writer, Frederica Mathewes-Green shares a letter she received from a Jewish friend about the hullabaloo we all create at Christmas. He writes, "*Looking at the Christmas thing as a man raised in a Jewish home, the big celebration in Christianity should be Easter. No Easter, no Christianity. So all the focus on Christmas, at least to me, seems misdirected. Why Christians don't whoop it up more at Easter is a mystery to me. How inspirational! How joyful! That is the time to toast each other, lay on gifts, attend worship services, pack on the rich food. Something really substantial and holy to remember.*"

No Easter, no Christianity. He makes a good point. Christmas is indeed a wonderful holiday, worthy of all the celebrations surrounding it. But without Easter, there would be no Christmas-, no grounds for giving gifts, no cause for cookies, certainly no sense in singing "Silent night, holy night..." To be sure, Christmas changed a good few things. But Easter changes everything!

Easter is the grand celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. Easter means that Jesus wins and death loses! Through Christ's rising from the dead, "death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

Easter changes everything! So why don't we whoop it up a little more? Let's toast each other! Let's give God and one another the gifts of ourselves, our time, our joy and our love. Let's join together in worship and sing at the top of our communal lungs...

***Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!***

Pastor Becca



DINNER WILL BE SERVED IN THE GREAT HALL AT 6:15 P.M., MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 1. EVERYONE IS WELCOME. THE WORSHIP SERVICE WILL BE IN THE SANCTUARY AT 7:00 P.M.



**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
SPRING GATHERING
APRIL 16**

Broadway Presbyterian Church,
Rock Island
"Living the Gospel of Peace"
\$8/person

RSVP by April 12 to Lois Larson
309-764-3968 or lqarlar@qconline.com

Laura Gowdy (452-2051) can provide transportation for up to 5 people.

**ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
LENT 2010**

Check us out online!
Whether you're able to attend the class or not, learn all about how to practice the Spiritual Disciplines at home!



<http://fpcextrememakeover.blogspot.com>

Sundays 9:45 -10:45 a.m., Great Hall
Warm-Up, Cardio & Cool Down
What, Why & How of the Spiritual Disciplines

DATE	SUNDAY TOPIC
3/28	Obedience & Celebration
4/4	Easter Breakfast

NewsLetter
DEADLINE
March 31

**SPRING GATHERING
OF MEN
LUNCH SERIES**

April 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
\$8/person

Second Presbyterian Church
Questions: Contact Don Crittenden, 828-6297



**SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY
at church
SATURDAY, MARCH 27
8:00 a.m. – Noon**
**Any & all volunteers
are welcome!**

Submitted by Kurt Swearingen

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN



FOR YOURSELF OR
YOUR CHILD(REN),
PLEASE CONTACT
PASTORS GAYLORD OR BRUNER



MARCH
HOME SWEET HOME MISSION

APRIL
CLARE HOUSE

MAY
HOME SWEET HOME MISSION

Please leave **NON-PERISHABLE**
donations in the containers between the
sets of double doors at either entrance of
the building.



Friday, April 9
5:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Parents, have a night out while
their children play at church
supervised by
our great childcare workers.

Fee is \$5/family.

Signup: kbecker@firstpresnormal.org



MEN'S PRAYER & SHARE GROUP

Monday, March 29

6:45 - 7:15 a.m.

Lounge

This group meets every two weeks to discuss
various topics. Next meeting: April 12



John Johnston;

Joyce Kaye, father in hospice;

Ralph Rodriguez, pancreatitis;

Hannah Hunter, niece of Carol Kehl;

Larry Alvey, friend of Sharon Albee;

Andy Sadoun, deployed to Iraq, Kehl

Family friend; **Paul & Annette Rutledge**,
friends of Shelley Bruning;

Kathy Carmody, cancer, friend of Fred &

Joan Chapman; **Margaret Foster**;

Tammy, friend of Karen Zappa, H1N1
complications; **Jackson Jones**, nephew of

Faith Ten Haken, heart surgery; **Roger**

Benckendorf, brother of Kurt; **Doug Miller**,

cancer, brother of Faith Ten Haken;

Karen Lindquist, lung cancer, sister of

Julie Buckles

WORSHIP
ATTENDANCE

3/14 - 305

3/21 - 298





KNITTING CLINIC
Saturday, **April 10**
Great Hall
9:00 -11:00 a.m.

Come learn to knit, get help with a beginning project or just sit and knit with others.

If you are interested in learning to crochet, please make that known, too!
Contact: becky.mentzer@gmail.com.

Join us on the 2nd Sunday of the month in the chapel at 9:45 a.m.

We knit, crochet and participate in blessing finished prayer shawls and other items.



The Connections Committee is sponsoring a **VITAMIN DRIVE** prior to Sue Baller-Shepard's trip to China. Please bring children's vitamins (liquid or chewable) to the designated area in the church hallway through April 4.

Would you like to help the orphanages in another way? Please contact Sue for a list of other items that are needed.



BOOK STUDY GROUP
THURSDAYS - 9:00 A.M.

MEN'S' BIBLE STUDY
SATURDAYS - 8:00 A.M.
COFFEEHOUSE
UPTOWN NORMAL

DEAR FRIENDS,

Over a year ago, March 10, 2009, Sue was diagnosed with colon cancer. Today we are continuing to celebrate the "absolute best news possible" as reported from the scan done at the end of January. Sue is in complete remission; the word "cure" has even been used by some.

We have expressed our gratitude to you before and we wish to do so again. Your powerful prayers and generosity of every kind of resource have sustained and uplifted us at every turn. Even as you have had difficulties of your own to endure, you have witnessed to us with love and grace. You are church in the best sense of the word.



We are so very, very grateful to you all.

Blessings, Sue & Chet O'Neal



TO EVERYONE AT FPC

Special thanks and blessing to each of you for your concern, prayers, cards, calls and food during my recuperation from my kidney transplant!

God's angels were looking after me and surprised me with a wonderful Christmas and birthday blessing!

A quote from one of my cards says – *"God can change anything, heal any heart, and transform any situation. All we have to do is ask for His help and trust that whatever happens is part of His answer and part of His perfect plan for our lives."*

And scripture talks about "a new creation – the old life is gone; a new one has begun!" I'm blessed to start a "new" life – God is awesome!

Thanks again! Judy Lindsay

APRIL BIRTHDAYS



April 1	Trey Mortimer, Mathew Carlson
April 2	Ginny Clarahan
April 3	Michelle Pate, Kennady Stombaugh
April 4	John Brue, Chloe McMorris
April 5	Heather VanSchelt, Mark Briggs, Rob Melchiorre
April 6	Dick Erzen
April 7	Katie Seyller, Matt Wiesemann, Ryan Han
April 8	Norm Larsen, Steve Gruenberg, Amanda Cryer
April 9	Mike & Sheila Melzer
April 10	Nancy Guthoff, Marc Toulon, Caitlin Tippy
April 11	Joyce Kaye, Deb Presley, Morgan Bishop
April 12	Tom Huskisson, Alissa Briggs
April 13	Bill Laughlin, Sally Bailey, Bruce Hawkins, Nate Holland
April 14	Lindsay Stotler
April 15	Sherry Smith, Ginny Nappi, Brett Winters, Drew Underhill
April 16	Buelah Hensey, Dena Bencoter
April 17	Sam Redd
April 18	Ann Landis, Poonam McAllister, Sam Leamer
April 19	John Blanks, London Shaw
April 20	Jim Roderick
April 21	Freda Walker, Sam Hensey, JoAnn Freeman, Ralph Rodriguez, Matt Litwiller
April 22	Elizabeth Smith
April 23	Mary Lou Kimball, Devan Bishop, Lily Frey
April 24	Rob Mentzer
April 26	Ali Fairchild
April 28	Nathan Pokrzywinski
April 29	David Thiele
April 30	Rob Laughlin, Jacque Hansing

With Session approval, FPC will be offering support for a new initiative in West Bloomington to promote that area's revitalization.

Drawing on funds from the Irene Nordine estate, we will support efforts by the new **WEST BLOOMINGTON REVITALIZATION PROJECT** to promote micro and small business development, new and rehabilitated housing, education and social programs for youth and seniors, as well as initiatives to expand environmental programs and community gardens and to promote safe streets.



Collectively, and over time, these initiatives are designed to restore what was once the heart of our community's industrial and transportation base. Partnerships already forming with public and private groups beyond the immediate area, encompassing other parts of our twin cities, offer the prospect of important, wider impacts over time.

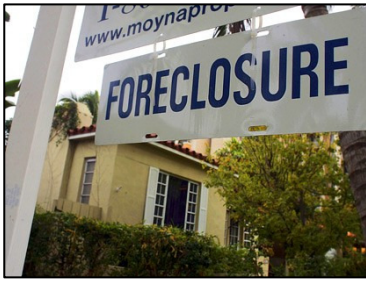
The revitalization project has matured over the past three years, with support and direction from State Farm Insurance, the City of Bloomington, and mainly the West Bloomington Community.

Overall planning was carried out through citizen surveys and focus groups, and in two large meetings at the Mt Pisgah church; leadership has also come from Jesus House and First Christian Church, Bloomington.

We hope and trust that our support will promote interests from other parts of the faith community for efforts to promote positive and sustainable change in West Bloomington and beyond.

Submitted by Bob Hunt

***Have you remembered the church
in your will?***



ILLINOIS PEOPLE'S ACTION/CIOP
is hosting a community meeting with the
U.S. Treasury
Saturday, April 10
10:30 a.m. – Noon
New Hope International Ministries
3616 N. Sheridan, Peoria

Here's why you should come:

Nearly 15 million Americans are currently unemployed.¹ The unemployment rate in Bloomington-Normal is currently 7.7%. Unemployment is now the #1 reason American families are facing foreclosure. More than 5 million U.S. households are behind on their mortgages and risk foreclosure.²

There are currently 473 homes in some stage of foreclosure in Bloomington-Normal.

Did you know that if you live within 1/8 mile of a foreclosed home, your property value decreases by as much as 10%?

The U.S. Department of Treasury oversees the nation's mortgage modification program. So far that program has cost \$75 billion and has only provided 116,000 homeowners with permanent modifications.

For more information, contact:

Rev. Tony Pierce or Rev. Cliff Parks,
Heaven's View Christian Church
(309) 682-2360

or

The IPA/CIOP Office: (309) 827-9627

Submitted by Jack Porter

¹ Economic Policy Institute

² Program Will Pay Homeowners to Sell at a Loss.
New York Times. March 7, 2010.

FIRST PEACEMAKERS would like to
SPONSOR FAMILIES to the
2010 PEACEMAKING SEMINAR
RE-MEMBERING PEACE:
STILL THE BELIEVERS' CALLING



August 25-28
Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico

www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/conferences/2010.htm

Contact Andy Heikes for more information.

LAURIE LARSEN WINS
NATIONAL WRITING CONTEST



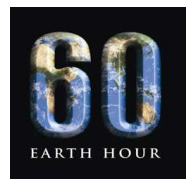
Laurie is a published author, and she traveled to New Orleans in early March to accept the EPIC award for her novel, *Preacher Man*. The EPIC award honors excellence in electronically published books, and *Preacher Man* won the award in the Spiritual and Metaphysical Romance category. Laurie has donated a copy of her award-winning novel to the church library for those who want to check it out!

WORLDWIDE EVENT

When: Saturday **March 27**,
8:00 – 9:00 p.m.

What: A chance to save electricity to help the Earth

How: Turn off all lights, computers, TVs, video game systems, etc. for 1 hr.



How will you survive 1 hr? Here are some ideas: Light candles, play a game as a family, talk to one another, think up ways to save electricity every day, pray.

Submitted by Chelsea Pokrzywinski

**Sunday Morning
Adult Christian Education
Spring 2010**

BODY-BUILDING

A series of classes designed to equip & enrich men and women with the necessary tools to find, love, and serve Jesus Christ.



Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplined life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever.

1 Timothy 4:8 (The Message)

Try one of our Body Building courses designed to help you learn more about the Christian faith, deepen your relationships, and prevent the inevitable burnout caused by spiritual drought.

There are a variety of experiences to choose from. Determine which Body Building workout is best for you!

**Body Building
Preview Sunday**

Interested in Adult Ed, but unsure which workout will get you the best results?
Curious which class is the best fit for YOU?

Come hear about all your options & make your choice!

**Sunday, April 11
Great Hall**

Quench Café

Just like the kids in *Believers' Bay*, grownups will enjoy learning more about how the Bible is relevant to our everyday lives. Coffee & Bagels will keep you going strong all morning long!



Topic: Adventures in Acts

Learn from Peter, Paul and all the early Christians what it means to follow Jesus through thick and thin!

**Sundays, April 18-May 23
Downstairs Kitchen**

Strength Training

A chance to do some “heavy lifting” and engage in deeper Biblical, historical and theological study.



Living the Questions

An open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give people all the answers. Offering a chance to interact with one another in exploring what's next for Christianity.

**Sundays, April 18-May 23
Great Hall**

Cross Training

A wide variety of Biblically-based classes that speak to the everyday issues of life

Digging into Daniel

Follow along with the spring sermon series on the Book of Daniel. Get more out of the sermons each week as you dig deeper into the Scriptures together

**Sundays, April 18-May 23
Library**



In the Name of Jesus

A six-week study of Henri Nouwen's book

*In the Name of Jesus:
Reflections on Christian
Leadership*

**Sundays, April 18-May 23
Office Lobby**

Copies of the book available at the
Adult Discipleship table
for \$10 each.

