



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
410 Second Ave, Box 441
Sterling, IL 61081



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First Presbyterian Church
410 Second Ave.
P.O. Box 441
Sterling, IL 61081
(815) 625-0452

A heart for God in the heart of Sterling.
hello@firstpresbyteriansterling.org
www.firstpresbyteriansterling.org
Look for us on Facebook!



First Presbyterian Church Sterling, Illinois

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Please enjoy this month's newsletter.

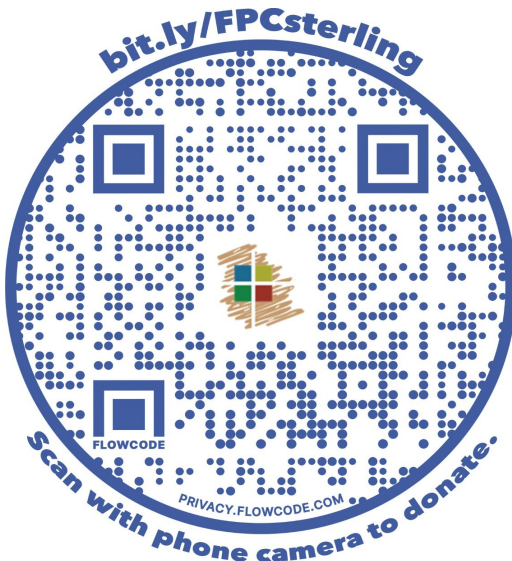
Don't forget to check us out on Facebook. There is a lot of information in there that is regularly updated!

Please call the office anytime with any questions.
815-625-0452.
Normal hours– M-F 9-1

Rev. Katie's Sabbath days are **Monday and Saturday**.

Office closed on
Memorial Day **May 25**
Christine is out of the office **May 12**

Session meeting: **May 19**
Men's Prayer breakfast **May 21**
Mission meeting: **May 26**



Weekly Volunteer Opportunities

Fellowship Host Bring snacks to share, and clean up afterwards.

Greeter Welcome folks as they arrive each week to worship.

Liturgist—Assist in leading worship

Sign-up sheets are in the narthex.
Or, call the office, 815-625-0452,
and we can sign you up! ²



Note from Pastor Katie

When I worked for Apple, a little over a decade ago, I learned about a nonprofit called Music & Memory (www.musicandmemory.org). They had done research on the positive effect of personalized music on people experiencing memory loss, dementia, and cognitive decline. They would take small music players to people in nursing homes and memory care units. The players were filled with music from each person's generation. As people listened to the music, they were able to recognize others more easily, engage in conversation, and some even danced.

The music, they found, tapped into long-stored experiences, triggering recognition, connection, and engagement. By using music as an external stimulus, we can activate pathways in the brain, helping to stimulate cognition, spark awareness, and bring moments of clarity and joy even for those who may otherwise seem unreachable."

It was truly amazing to watch the videos of their work.

As one who lives with anxiety and depression, I wondered if music would have the same effect on me, and others, in very low or highly charged times. So I began to create own playlist. I figured, at the very least, that I would have a playlist to help me later on life when I began to experience memory loss.

I'm pretty selective about my songs, as I've chosen ones that I can tell hit deeper in me than just liking the sound or the words. When these songs come on, I can feel them in my soul. If I'm in a low spot, the songs immediately bring me back to the present and stop the spiraling that happens with depression. If I'm in a good place, the songs bring even more joy...and remind me of what I have gotten through in my journey, which gives me strength.

While medication and therapy are still necessary parts of my journey with depression and anxiety, my "music and memory" playlist on my phone is another *"tool in my toolbox"*.

Here's my current playlist. It's a work in progress. In fact, I just recently decided to add in the John Coltrane album. It was a big part of my devotionals during the COVID shut downs.

- *Eye of the Tiger by Survivor*
- *The Altar by Nichole Norseman*
- *All the Poor and Powerless by All Sons & Daughters*
- *I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free by Nina Simone*
- *A Love Supreme (Parts I-IV) by John Coltrane*

What songs would you include in your music and memory playlist?

Katie

SESSION CORNER

Average attendance for March was 64; Easter attendance 72, Maundy Thursday attendance 27.

The church is continuing to work with the State Of Illinois concerning reimbursement for the security grant.

The church paid the final installment for the elevator repair. There were sufficient funds in the elevator fund, and there are additional funds available to help pay future expenses.

The mission committee continues to collect Kleenex boxes for donation to the Hospice of the Rock River Valley through May 3.

Session approved having an individual work with the session and other leaders guiding them through the process of determining the church's purpose, vision, and values. He worked with Oakhurst while Katie was there, and it was very beneficial.

Mission Committee Report Important dates

Our Mission Committee continues to seek meaningful ways to serve our community, as we move into spring. We are currently collecting packages and boxes of all types large boxes, small boxes, and individual packets—are welcome.

We also continue to stock the **Little Pantry** out front. We are deeply grateful for the generous donations received over the past several months. All non perishable items are appreciated as we work to keep this ministry available to our neighbors.

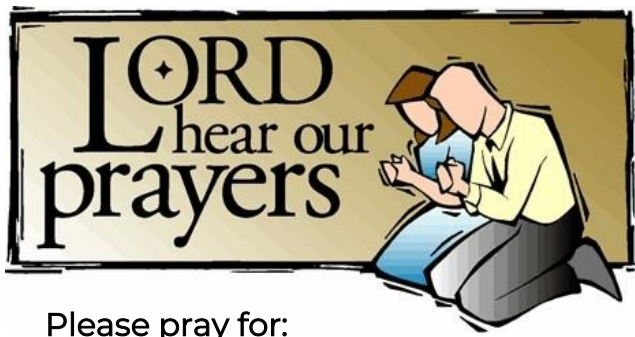
Looking ahead, the committee is preparing for several community events in June. We will sponsor a booth at the **Pride Event in Dixon, on June 13**, at Page Park, in partnership with the Dixon and Morrison Presbyterian churches. A photo booth will be available for attendees to use with their cell phones, and we will be handing out pamphlets and stickers.

We will also host a booth at the **Juneteenth Celebration, on June 20**, at Grandon Civic Center, organized by the Diversity Committee of the Sauk Valley. Pamphlets and stickers will again be available as we show our support and presence in the community.

This summer, the Mission Committee will sponsor the **concessions at the Sterling Municipal Band concerts** at Grandon Civic Center on **June 17 and July 22**. Volunteers are welcome, and we will be asking the congregation for **pie and cookie donations** to support these events. All proceeds will benefit the **Buddy Bag Program**, which continues to serve local children in need.

In addition, the committee voted to make a **\$250 donation to Stronghold** to support their summer camp program.

We hope to see you at these upcoming events as we continue to serve, connect, and support our neighbors.



Please pray for:

Marlene Jennings,
Mary-Terrie Snavelly,
Ron & Jackie Williams,
Judy Aggen, Guy Edge,
Lee Wright, Tim Weir,
Cynthia Miller,
Judy Lowe, Rob Boze



April/May

04/19 Tony Regalado
04/29 Amy & Tony Regalado (A)
05/01 Wesley Royce
05/05 Kraig Knutsen
05/07 Samantha (Pashon) O'Keefe
John & Deborah Haglund (A)
05/13 David & Pat Twining (A)
05/14 Jeff Brown
05/16 Emma Boze
Rev. Katie Ricks
05/17 Brad & Cindy Cassens (A)
Rodney & Nancy Weber (A)
05/19 Jane Pease
Ronald Williams
05/22 Donald Vogel
05/24 Sherry Asbury
05/26 Donald Rastede
05/28 Audrey Nesbitt
05/30 Erik & Nicole Oberg (A)
05/31 Dr. Jason Reter

Buddy Bags Continues to Thrive

Our Buddy Bag Program continues to be busy here in the month of April. We are averaging about 180 bags per week for our Sterling students. Each bag contains a can of Chef Boyardee, a packet of macaroni and cheese, a pudding cup, an applesauce cup, a cup of peaches, an oatmeal packet, a Nutrigrain bar, and a package of peanut butter and cheese crackers.

This month we had a special added treat as a generous donor brought us boxes of candy bars from her granddaughter's fundraiser!

Each bag currently costs 3.23, so costs add up quickly. We want to shout out a big THANK YOU to all the generous individuals and businesses who continue to support our program.

Also, a big thanks to those who faithfully come together to pack the bags each week as well as the Sterling school staff who deliver and distribute the bags to the children. Financial donations can be mailed to First Presbyterian Church at 410 Second Avenue Box 441 Sterling, IL 61081. We also are grateful for food donations which can be brought to the Church or we can arrange to pick them up. Any questions, call the church office and speak to Christine at 815-625-0452.

Building Blocks



Date	Theme	Scripture
May 3	Question	John 14:1-14
May 10	Witness	Acts 17:22-31
May 17	Trust	Acts 1:6-14
May 24	Spirit	Acts 2:1-21

May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					01	02 11:00a- Ann Henderson Funeral and luncheon
03 9:30a-Worship & Fellowship 6:30p-Boy Scouts	04 6:00p-Cub Scouts	05 6:00p-AA	06 9:30a- Fellowship 10:00a- Bible Study 11:30a-Buddy Bags (Wesley UMC) 3:00p-Girl Scouts	07 6:00p- Youth Outlook	08	09 10:00a-LSSI
10 9:30a-Worship & Fellowship 6:30p-Boy Scouts	11 6:00p-Cub Scouts	12 6:00p-AA	13 9:30a- Fellowship 10:00a- Bible Study Tri-Lutheran kids are packing Buddy Bags	14 6:00p- Youth Outlook	15	16 10:00a-LSSI
17 9:30a-Worship & Fellowship 6:30p-Boy Scouts	18 6:00p-Cub Scouts	19 6:00p-AA 6:00p-Session	20 9:30a- Fellowship 10:00a- Bible Study 11:30a-Buddy Bags (Wesley UMC) 3:00p-Girl Scouts	21 8:00A – Men's Prayer Breakfast, Benny's restaurant 6:00p- Youth	22	23 10:00a-LSSI
24 9:30a -Worship & Fellowship 6:30p-Boy Scouts	25 6:00p-Cub Scouts	26 6:00p-AA 6:00p- Mission	27 9:30a- Fellowship 10:00a- Bible Study 11:30a-Buddy Bags (Wesley UMC)	28 6:00p- Youth Outlook	29	30 10:00a-LSSI
31 9:30a -Worship & Fellowship 6:30p-Boy Scouts						6