



Our Life Together

Recalling Our Easter Celebration



The First Federated Church of Peoria

A Federated Church of Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ.



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Life Together

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First Federated Church

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Peoria, Illinois 61604

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Office Hours

8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Monday - Friday

Worship Services

8 am Sunday Service
10 am Sunday Service
Reservations not required

Visit Our Website

ffcpeoria.com

Our lives have been stretched to the breaking point these past 16 months. (It seems like sooooo much longer.) But, it looks like we are moving back into a sense of normalcy. Graduations have returned. As have weddings and funerals. Vacation plans are being made, barbecues are occurring, going to restaurants has returned, corporate travel is being anticipated.

But, we are not there, yet. I am looking forward to when we can sing in worship, eat and have fellowship time, shake hands and hug people, and all of the little things that we used to do. I am especially looking forward to throwing every one of my masks away!

Except, I am exhausted. This period of time has taken a lot out of me. Maybe it has taken a lot out of you, too. But, it was our loving responsibility for one another and for our neighbor to exercise such measures of precaution. Still, it created a lot of stress.

My professor, Walter Brueggemann, notes that the Bible tells of many instances where the community of faith was under stress or duress – both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. What he goes on to note is that we are in a circumstance of stress, too, and that to get through this pandemic, we can adopt the same practices of our biblical ancestors. We can summon our faith to see us through by maintaining with intentional resolve, faithful practices, and disciplines that belong to our baptism. There is an antidote to despair in the regular practices of the disciplines of faith. These practices that fend off despair include at least the items that follow.

1. In times like this, people of faith tell sustaining stories. In ancient Israel they told the big stories of God's faithfulness, accounts of deliverance, and transformation. These are the stories that evoked the characteristic mantra of wonder in Israel: "For his steadfast love endures forever" (Psalm 136:1, 2, 3, ff.; also see the "wonderful works" that defy explanation in Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31).
2. In times like these, people of faith sing defiant songs. Singing constitutes a defiant act that refuses to permit life to be defined by circumstance. Think of the Civil Rights marches and the singing of "We Shall Overcome." Think of the rallying song of the Civil War, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Think of such hymns as, "Love Lifted Me" and "On Eagle's Wings."
3. In times like these, people of faith pray without ceasing. The prayers of Israel are prayers of praise

and thanks, voicing God as having faithful, powerful agency in the world (see Psalm 77).

4. In times like these, people of faith perform story, song, and prayer. Acts of worship defy the forces of destruction and chaos just like a candle defies the darkness. That does not imply that worship has to be a public gathering. Rather, it is something you practice as part of your daily life. Notice how many times Peter and Paul prayed while in prison (see Acts 5:17-20; Acts 12:5-17; Acts 16:16-40).
5. In times like these, people of faith practice "neighborly obedience." The prophet Zechariah (7:9 -10) tells us to: "Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor, and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another." It is the remembrance of covenantal fidelity to and for one another. Even pandemic situations do not diminish the urgency of the life of the neighbor!

Brueggemann notes for us that even in dire circumstances, we are called to be a faithful people. We refuse despair because doing so...

...is an act of both remembering and hoping. At the same time these disciplines refuse denial because they look circumstance full in the face. For every praise, there is a lament. For every thanks, there is voiced need. For every act of neighbor, there is a sense of the legitimacy of self. By such resolved practices, faithful people are not overwhelmed by circumstance. They rather redefine circumstance as a venue for a chance to live differently by fidelity that yields energy, courage, and even joy. I am not, dear reader, making this stuff up; you can see it every day among the faithful!

Amen, Walter. Amen.




- 1) *Adapted from an article by Walter Brueggemann composed for Church Anew, a ministry of St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie, MN.*

Pastor David Ezekiel

Transitional Minister

Pastor David Ezekiel ☎ 309-685-5258, X-101 📧 dezekiel@ffcpeoria.com

Over the course of the last year, a lot of things have changed while we have been isolating to avoid the Covid pandemic. One of the not so good changes is that our church roof has become a crisis in need of replacement. It certainly would not be good, once we all return to our church sanctuary, to find that it is now leaking on us on Sunday mornings! The leaky roof is also making it impossible to play our organ as rain has damaged some of the pipes.

The Raise Our Roof fundraiser campaign was started to raise funds to pay for a new slate roof over the sanctuary and the older parts of our church building where the roof needs help, in all about half of the entire roof. The people listed below have already contributed to the Raise Our Roof fundraiser: Thank you very much

for your support! We are already 3/4ths of the way to our goal of \$350,000. As our fundraiser continues, if we are blessed enough to exceed our goal any excess money will be set aside for the day we need to replace the other half of the slate roof over the newer wing of the church, including our classrooms.

If you have not yet made a donation, please prayerfully consider joining your church friends and neighbors in making a contribution. You even have the option of paying your commitment over 3 years. It takes help from all of us to Raise Our Roof!



Contributions In Memory of . . .

Our Contributors

Represents commitments received by 5/28/2021

Thank You

From Our Worship Committee

Our Worship Committee meets monthly to oversee our worship processes. They work diligently to ensure our both our engagement in the worship service and our safety and peace of mind in attending in-person.

The guidelines presented by the committee have been researched and follow CDC guidelines. Thank you all for your continued corporation and support. We pray the soon we can gather without restrictions.

Worship Attendance Guidelines

Instructions for Attending Worship

If You Are Experiencing Any Of The Following,
Please Do Not Come To Worship
Instead, You May Want To Contact
Your Health Care Provider Or A Family Member.

Fever or chills? Cough?
Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing?
Fatigue? Muscle or body aches?
Headache or Sore throat? New loss of taste or smell?
Congestion/runny nose? Nausea/vomiting? Diarrhea?

When Coming To Church For Worship

Arrive 15 to 20 minutes before the start of service.

Enter through any available door, please be respectful of distancing, masks are strongly encouraged, but not mandatory.

Everyone is asked to sign in on the sheets provided at both entrances to the Sanctuary.

Preaching Schedule

For the summer, I am developing a series of messages about our Biblical Ancestors. They were heroic characters: larger than life, courageous in the face of death, faith-filled, singularly resolved, wise, and wealthy. Yet, the Bible also tells us how deeply flawed they were: selfish, scheming, murderers, adulterers, liars. What enshrined their place in God's Hall-of-Fame was that they were willing to be used by God to achieve heaven's purpose. The Creator accepted who they were, worked with them, and did not give up on them. Just that alone should strengthen our own faith in that God also accepts us as just as we are. (Do you hear the notes of that old hymn playing in the background: *Just as I Am...*)? In seeing them, we see ourselves. By looking into the spiritual DNA of our ancestors, we will be able to gain glimpses and insights as to who we are. And from each of them, we shall learn of the complexities, contours, and layers of faith that can shape us into becoming the people God dreams for us to become.

June 6th	Abraham: Living on Social Insecurity (Genesis 12:1-10; Hebrews 11:8-19)
June 13th	Rebekah: Keeping the Faith Alive (Genesis 24 – 27)
June 20th	Jacob: Wrestling with God (Genesis 32:22-31)
June 27th	Joseph: Detours on the Path to Our Dreams (Genesis 50:1-12)
July 4th	Moses: The Making of a Nation (Deuteronomy 4)
July 11th	Samson: What Could Have Been (Judges 16:4-31)
July 18th	Ruth: Relying on One Another (Ruth 1:1-18)
July 25th	Samuel: Learning how to Listen to God (1 Samuel 3:1-10)
August 1st	David: A Man after God's Own Heart (1 Samuel 13:14)
August 8th	Solomon: Asking for Wisdom (2 Kings 3:5-14)
August 15th	Elisha: Realities We do not See (2 Kings 6:8-23)
August 22nd	Amos: Hearing the Hard Realities (Amos 5:6ff)
August 29th	Vashti: The Woman Who Just Said "No!" (Esther 1)
September 6th	Esther: Living Your Destiny (Esther 4:1-16)



FFC Rummage Sale Is On!

Rummage Sale Dates

- Friday, August 13th & Saturday, August 14th
- All proceeds go to benefit the Missions of FFC.

Collection Dates and Times ~ Beginning Friday, June 11th

- Fridays: 9 am to Noon / Sundays: 8:45 to 9:45 am
- Central Room Door of Life Together Center

Accepting all household items:

- Jewelry, Art, Tools, Furniture, Stereos, Toys, Antiques, All kitchen & small appliances, books, kids clothes, purses, ETC.
- We will NOT ACCEPT: adult clothes, TV's, computer monitors.

Volunteer Today!

Looking to build our volunteer team! Contact Susi Butler at through the church office

Snack Packs / T.J. Food Pantry

Our committee is packing approximately 160 packs that are delivered to Neighborhood House each week. Whittier is still remote learning and are not in need of snacks at this time.

Activity in the T.J. Food Pantry is slow at this time as the children are still remote learning. Our neighborhood community may not be aware that it is available to everyone in our area, not just T.J. families.

Ongoing FFC Missions

Friendship House Food Pantry

- Canned goods and personal care items are always needed; see the list by the North door.
- Collection bins are by the Catering Kitchen & in the Narthex.

The Center For The Prevention of Abuse

- Personal care items, snack items, etc. Please see the list by the North door.
- Collection baskets are by the North door of the church & in the Narthex.

Music Ministry

Our Worship & Music Ministry

Thank you all for your patience. It looks like we will be moving into unrestricted waters ~ keep up those prayers, we may be singing in person soon.

Thank you to Marcia Richardson, our pianist, the many members of our Choir, and our wonderful students, their efforts have made our worship music truly special.

Thanks also to Andy Braun for his technical knowledge that allows us to live-stream our services to everyone via our YouTube Channel.



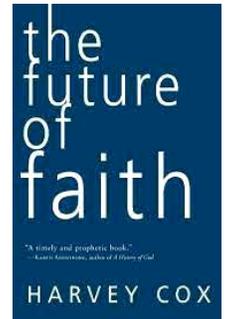
Russel Boulton
Director, Worship and Music

☎ 309-685-5258, x.104 📧 rboulton@ffcpeoria.com

Young Families Group ▪

Adults under 50, single, married, or with a family. This group enjoys gathering in fellowship together. All are welcome and have a place in helping us create this community. For more information about the group or events, please contact the church office at 309-685-5258 or check our e-newsletter, the 1stNews, emailed each Friday afternoon.

EVENT: Book Study. *The Future of Faith* by Harvey Cox. We will meet every other Wednesday continuing to June 30th, 6 to 7 pm in the Life Together Center. Childcare is available! Contact Jessica Sheley for more information at jsheley@ffcpeoria.com



First Federated Women's Club ▪

Women's Club will resume their monthly meetings beginning in September with a slight change.

The board has decided to structure our meetings on a smaller scale. Our meetings will continue to be on the 4th Wednesday each month, beginning on Wednesday September 22nd at 1 pm, coffee and a light refreshment will replace our luncheon. A speaker, program or activity will be presented at each meeting.

We are excited and grateful that Women's Club will be resuming for the 2021-2022 year and hope to see you there. All women of the church and guests are welcome. If you have any questions contact Ann Ragsdale through the church at 309-685-5258.

The FFC Book Club ▪

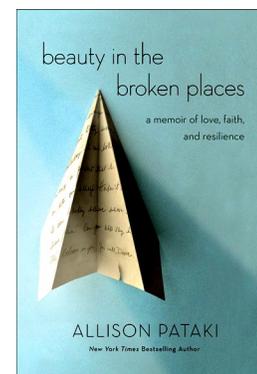
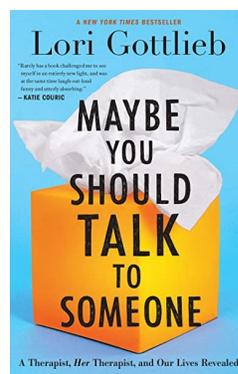
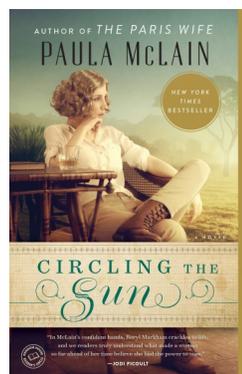
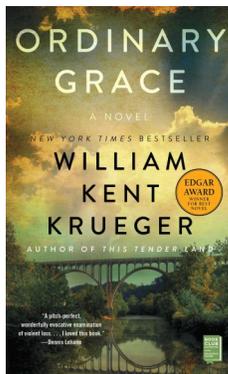
The Book Club is currently meeting by Zoom on the fourth Saturday of each month at 10 am. Contact the church office if interested in the book club. The book list is as follows:

June 26th ~ Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger

July 24th ~ Circling The Sun by Paula McLain

August 28th ~ Maybe You Should Talk To Someone by Lisa Gottlieb

September 25th ~ Beauty In Broken Places: A Memoir of Life, Faith, and Resilience by Allison Pataki



Additional events for some of the above groups may be added. These events will be publicized in our E-newsletter, the 1stNews, which is emailed to subscribers each Friday afternoon. You may subscribe to the 1stNews on our website: ffcpeoria.com/newsletter/ or by contacting the church office at 309-685-5258, X-100 or cwalter@ffcpeoria.com.

*The following groups have not begun gathering formally.
We will keep you posted on their status going forward.*

Saturday Night Live, Outdoor Enthusiasts Group, Knitting / Crocheting Ministry, and Old Buddies Breakfast

A Matter of Record

New Members ~ Welcome!

Completed This Part Of Life

May 16th, 2021

*Do you have a birth, wedding, or bereavement you would like to share with your church family?
Please contact the church office at 309-685-5258 or info@ffcpeoria.com.*



Church Membership

- If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a member of First Federated Church please contact the church 309-685-5258 or email cwalter@ffcpeoria.com.

Congratulations To Our Graduates!



Graduating From Richwoods High School
She will be attending college in the fall.



Graduating From Butler University

She earned a Bachelor of Art degree with an Art + Design major
and 2 minors in Marketing, and Creative Media and Entertainment.



Graduating From Dunlap High School
He will be attending the University of Illinois and
majoring in Bioengineering / Pre-med.



Graduating From Dunlap High School
He will be attending the University of Illinois
majoring in Mechanical Engineering



Graduating From Metamora Township High School
Alana is planning to attend Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois.
She will be playing basketball for the Flyers and majoring in Environmental Science.



Graduating From Metamora Township High School
Ian plans to study biochemistry and run cross country and
track at Bradley University starting in the fall.

*Good Luck!
Our Prayers
Go With You*



stephen MINISTRY

STEPHEN MINISTRY, REV. STEPHEN BARCH & OUR BOARD OF DEACONS

First Federated Church will be welcoming Stephen Ministries to our campus.

Stephen Ministries is a not-for-profit Christian education organization founded in 1975 that produces training and resources known for their excellence, practicality, psychological integrity, and theological depth. These resources cover topics such as caring ministry, assertive relating, spiritual gifts discovery, grief support, spiritual growth, and more.

Congregations and other organizations use these resources to strengthen and expand ministry. Individuals use them to improve their ability to relate to and care for others, grow in faith, and journey through life crises.

Rev. Steve has already begun his training and our Board of Deacons will begin soon.

Keep the success of this and all FFC programs in your prayers.

For more information on Stephen Ministries you may visit: stephenministries.org

Pastoral Care ~ Prayer Ministry

Pastoral Calls, Hospital Visits, or Home Communion

- Give the office a call at 685-5258
- If you or others you know are in need of pastoral care or support, please contact the church office.
- If you are admitted to an area hospital, don't forget to mention to Admitting that you are with First Federated Church.
- Communion served at your home? Please call the church and we will arrange for Rev. Barch to come to your home.

Shut-In Ministries

- If you are home-bound and would like church bulletins and sermons mailed to you each week please contact the church office at 309-685-5258.



Rev. Steve Barch
Pastoral Care Minister

☎ 309-685-5258, X-103 ✉ sbarch@ffcpeoria.com

Prayer Ministries

- Our Prayer Teams
 - We can add your prayer request to a congregation-wide prayer list, Rev. Steve's Prayer Team list, or the "just the staff" list. Your request will be kept as confidential as you choose.
 - Rev. Steve Barch emails a list out weekly to his Prayer Team Members; this list is kept confidential within his group.
- Special Prayer Bulletins
 - Health concerns, up-coming surgery ~ please let us know. We can notify the congregation usually within minutes of your request.
 - Contact the church office at 309-685-5258 or cwalter@ffcpeoria.com if you would like an email sent to the congregation with your prayer request.
- Prayer Bulletin: Blessings Delivered
 - The birth of a child is a blessing delivered, please let us know when you have an addition to your family, and our faith family as well.
 - Contact the church office at cwalter@ffcpeoria.com, include photos and information.



Saturday, May 1st ~ All Church Work Day

This is a photo of most, but not all of the 17 people who spent their Saturday morning clearing brush, spreading mulch, weeding flower beds, and planting flowers and bushes at the Church and Life Together Center as part of FFC's annual spring work day.



Thank You, Sheila Snarr, for sharing your special decorating talents.



These display cases, having been updated for Easter, are in the hallway outside of the boardroom in our Life Together Center.

Catching Up With Children & Youth Ministries

Classes of 2021 ~ Graduation Party Time!

Sunday, May 23rd a Graduation Party was held for our outgoing Senior Highs on the patio at the Life Together Center.



Stronghold ~ Class of 2021 ~ March 6th, 7th & 8th



Jessica Sheley
Director of Children's Ministries
☎ 309-685-5258 X-105 ✉ jsheley@ffcpeoria.com



A group of our 6th, 7th and 8th graders enjoyed a fun night at Escape 60! We made it out of the room with 2 minutes to spare!



Lisa Hackett
Director of Youth Ministries
☎ 309-685-5258 X-105 ✉ lhackett@ffcpeoria.com

FAITH IN ACTION

FFC Youth Mission Week

*For we are coworkers in God's service;
you are God's field, God's building.*

1 Corinthians 3:9

**Monday, June 14th
Through
Thursday, 17th
9:00 to 11:30 am**

We will gather at FFC
each morning
Donuts and Coffee
will be provided



Schedule for the Week:

Monday

Work inside FFC

Tuesday

Fulfilling wish lists and buying for local organizations (Neighborhood House)

Wednesday

Pack up items for local organizations & make fleece blankets for Crittenton Center

Thursday

Help with Snack Pack & Yardwork around the church



Join Us For Summer Camp!

*Still Time To Register for
a Summer of Fun!*

- Our Summer Camps offer activities for ages 2 years old to 10 years to keep your child active, learning, and entertained through the summer months.
- We will plan each week around a different theme: Outer Space, Animals, Science, and Fairy Tales.
- Snacks and lunch are included.

Summer Camps will begin Monday, June 7th, and end on Friday, July 30th.

This Year's Weekly Themes Include:

Summer Kick Off, Outer Space, Animals, Rain Forest, Science, Pirates, Fairy Tales, Superheroes & Princesses, Back To School / Carnival



Registration Information

- Registration Forms and Pricing Information can be found:
- On our website: Pricing information and a registration forms are available as downloads.
www.ffcpeoria.com/preschools-peoria-il/
- Forms are available for pick up at the church office or we can mail them out to you upon request.
- We will enroll until we are full.
- If you have any questions, please contact Brittany at 309-685-5258 or barnold@ffcpeoria.com.

Join Us For The 2021 - 2022 School Year!

Registration Information

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- On our website: Pricing information and a registration forms are available as downloads.
www.ffcpeoria.com/preschools-peoria-il/
- Forms are available for pick up at the church office or we can mail them out to you upon request.
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Brittany Arnold
Director, The Preschools at FFC



First Federated Church of Peoria

www.ffcpeoria.com

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P 309-685-5258 • F 309-685-5451 • info@ffcpeoria.com



2021 VBS!

Sunday, July 11th to Thursday, July 15th



VBS Donation List

Check out this list of needed VBS items. If you can donate contact Jessica Sheley at jsheley@ffcpeoria.com

Bottled water	Pocket sized tissue packets	Red and yellow yarn
Gallon sized baggies	Masking tape	18 oz. plastic cups
Sandwich sized baggies	Plastic spoons (200)	16 oz. plastic cups
Band aids	Pipe cleaners	

Plan NOW to become a part of our *LIFE TOGETHER!*



First Federated Church of Peoria

3601 N Sheridan Road, Peoria, IL 61604
309-685-5258 • www.ffcpeoria.com

Welcome

PROGRAM & SUPPORT STAFF

Transitional Minister

Pastor David Ezekiel . . . X101 dezekiel@ffcpeoria.com

Minister of Pastoral Care

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Organist: Marcia Richardson

Preschool Director

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Director of Children's Ministries

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Director of Youth Ministries

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Administrative Manager

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Maintenance

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Secretary

Cecelia Walter . . . X.100 cwalter@ffcpeoria.com

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Life Together Center Event Planning Information

Please visit: ffcpeoria.com/serve/life-together-center/