



The Circuit Rider

Princeton First United Methodist Church
316 S. Church Street ♦ Princeton, IL 61356
princetonfirstumc.org

Sunday Worship
Sundays 9:00a.m.
Holy Communion the
first Sunday of October

Church Office: Mon -Thurs 9:00---4:00
Phone: 815.872.2821
Email: office@princetonfirstumc.org

♦ OCTOBER 2026 ♦

Pastor Kevin's Thoughts

Dear Princeton First Church Family,

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 reminds us (painted on the wall in the library) there is a time for every season, including a season of change. Bob Dylan in 1964 wrote the song, The times they are a-Changin. Yes, he is correct they are a-Changin.

In every one of God's churches, change is the only constant. I have been known to say the only constant is change; also remember change is not permanent only change is. Meaning Clergy, Choir Directors, Music Directors as well as congregations all change. Persons move in, families move out for various reasons, children from Sunday School change schools (College) get married and move away or Our Loving Lord calls our Loved one's home, it being friends, or family. No matter what the reason, change is the only constant. As Sonny (wrote), and Sonny & Cher sung to us in 1967 and beyond, "The beat goes on".

It has been a unique privilege to walk alongside you during this season of transition. Interim ministry is all about preparing the soil for what God wants to do next, and I am so grateful for how faithfully you have continued to serve, pray, and love one another during this transition and my time here. Transitions can bring a mix of emotions, but they are also filled with holy anticipation. As we prepare to turn the page, I want to share some exciting updates regarding the pastoral transition.

Celebrating Your New Chapter: I am thrilled to officially welcome your incoming pastor, **Rev. Dr. Megan Smick**, who will begin her ministry with you on **1 November**.

My Final Sunday October 25: My time serving as your interim pastor will conclude on October 31. It has been a true joy to fill in, and I will be cheering you on from afar.

To ensure a healthy start for Rev. Dr Smick, church leadership and I are working closely on a smooth transition plan. Please continue to pray for her family as they pack, move, and prepare to join our community. As well as continue to pray for Pastor Hickok and his family on his well-deserved retirement after many years of service. May his retirement be a joyful time cheering on the Illini, White Sox, Notre Dame, & San Diego State as well as watching NASCAR.

Change can be unsettling, but the mission of Princeton First UMC remains exactly the same. Let's finish this interim season as well as 2026 strong, showing up for worship, (especially any and all that have been unhappy with this situation or process), serving our neighbors, and preparing a warm, open-hearted welcome for your new shepherd. Let's show **all** the same Grace God has shown us!

*Yours in In Christ,
Pastor Kevin Mason*

October at a Glance

October 4 - 6:00 Youth Group
October 13 - 10:00 Book Discussion Group
1:30 Care Team
7:00 Church Council Meeting
October 15 - 10:30 Witness Committee
11:30-5:30 Blood Drive
October 22 - 6:30 Finance Committee

Holy Communion

The sacrament of Holy Communion will be served on the first weekend of October **Sunday the 4th**. If you prefer to take communion at home with the live broadcast, you are welcome to pick up a communion pack from the office during the week before.



Our Table

Our Table will meet twice in October to provide a meal and fellowship to anyone who would like to attend. Everyone is invited to come on Mondays, **October 12 and 26 from 5:00 – 6:00 pm.**



Pastor Kevin

Pastor Kevin. Please call 815-993-6452 ANY TIME for prayers, concerns, questions and any spiritual needs. Office hours are on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday or by appointment when needed. Please contact Kevin or Shelly in the church office. Thank you and God Bless.

Pastor Mike Retirement

Pastor Mike will be retiring on October 1. There wasn't time to throw him a going away party before he moves, so if you would like to send Linda and him a card, their address is:
P.O. Box 22, Honor, MI 49640.
Our new pastor, Reverend Doctor Megan Smick, will be starting November 1.

Red Cross Blood Drive

The Red Cross will sponsor their next blood drive on **Thursday, October 15 from 11:30 - 5:30 pm in Cushing Hall**. Did you know that every donation can save up to three lives when given to someone in need?

Consider signing up online using the following link to reserve your time and help make sure enough blood is on hand when the need is great.:

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive>

A Few Notes To Remember

- **Coffee Hour Treats:** If you enjoy the goodies after Sunday worship and would like to continue having coffee hour, *we need people to donate store bought or homemade cookies or bars*. Please sign up on the sheet outside the office.
- **Wear Your Nametags:** We encourage you to please wear your name tags on the stand by the sanctuary doors. Pastor Kevin would like to get to learn your names. It also helps others who are newer to this church become familiar with your names and faces.
- **Donation Shopping Cart Reminder:** We are always accepting food items for Tri-County Food Pantry. Items most needed are: Hamburger Helper, peanut butter, canned fruit in syrup, canned chicken, white or brown rice, canned ravioli, and any kind of snacks.

OCTOBER CHANGE THE WORLD

The October Change the World will be donated to **The Believe Foundation**. The Believe Foundation is a local non-profit organization founded by Mary VanKeulen, the owner of Sophisticuts Salon in Princeton. The purpose of this organization is to support women, men and children throughout their cancer journey. They provide wigs and wig care essentials, hats, head coverings, skin care products, body care products, mastectomy items and gas cards all free of charge to anyone currently fighting the battle with cancer. They help anyone who seeks their assistance and you are treated with understanding and compassion. All the funds that are collected go entirely to keeping the inventory of supplies well stocked for those who are in need. Anyone seeking their help may call Sophisticuts Salon at 815-875-4332.

Any help you can give to this worthy organization will be deeply appreciated. There will be fliers next to the donation jar explaining their purpose and services.

CHANGE THE WORLD SEPTEMBER REPORT

As of September 20, **we raised \$280.26 for C.A.M.P. (Central American Mission Projects)**. CAMP organizes mission work trips to Central America with the goal of not only construction of health service buildings and housing, but also for school supplies, backpacks, children's shoes, coordination of health services and social needs. Mission trips are scheduled several times per year. 100% of all designated project funds go directly to the projects-none is used for administrative purposes. Thank you so much for your generosity!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Children's Sunday School returned this month and we had so much fun! We learned about Joseph and his coat of many colors and Joseph interpreting different dreams. The kids designed their own coat of many colors, completed a puzzle about themselves that a friend had to put back together, and filled in letters to a mystery bible verse that went along with our story. This month, we had a Connect 4 tournament! Morgan was the champion of Connect 4!

I am in need of adults willing to help with Children's Sunday School/nursery. If you are interested and available to help the 2nd Sunday of each month OR the 4th Sunday of each month, please contact Amanda Noord.

-Amanda Noord, Children's Sunday School Director



YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group is for anyone interested in grades 6-12 and will be held at church on Sunday Oct. 4 and Sunday Oct. 18 from 6-7.

UPCOMING NORTHERN ILLINOIS CONFERENCE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Saturdays, **Oct. 10 & 17, 8:30 am - 2:30 pm**

Disciples UMC, 102 N. Maple Ave., Mt. Morris

The classes being offered are “Lay Servant Basic Course”, “Called to Preach”, and “Opening Ourselves to Grace” (Video Series). The cost is \$40 which includes a light lunch. All books may be purchased at your favorite bookseller.

The registration link is: <https://www.umcnic.org/calendar/prairie-south-lay-academy-fall-2026>. Flyers are on the table outside the office.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

The United Women in Faith met on September 16th in Cushing Hall. After a short meeting, the guest speaker, Alayna Blake, representing The Believe Foundation gave a presentation on what this local non-profit organization offers. She spoke about what the mission of the organization is and what it provides free of charge for anyone who is battling cancer. Hostesses for the day were Myrna Roggy and Anna Roadhouse. Thank you to all who attended.

Ruth Denault - president



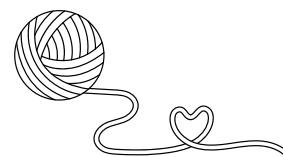
ECUMENICAL WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Ecumenical Women's Bible Study meets every Monday at 10:00 am in the conference room at the church. We will start a new study called “Discovering God's Will”. Determining God's will can be a difficult process. In this study we will explore steps of decision making. In this study we will explore two points: 1) God has a personal vision for your life and 2) He wants you to know it even more than you do. All women are invited to attend regardless of Church affiliation. This is a “drop-in” group which means that you come when you can. You are not required to be there each week. For more information you can contact Janet Becker at beckerjn71@gmail.com.



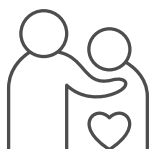
All Saints Sunday November 1

We want to remember your loved ones who have passed in the last year. If you have a picture you could give to the church office either by email or bringing it in to scan, we can include them in the annual recognition. **Please have these pictures in no later than Oct. 18.** Kind reminder – this is for those who've passed since the last All Saints Day one year ago.



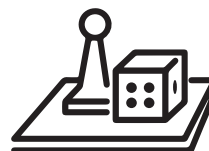
Knitter's Group

Calling All Knitters and Crocheters! All skill levels are invited to come knit, crochet, loom or just chat on **Tuesdays at 2:30 pm** in the conference room.



GRIEF SHARE

A video seminar series and support group meets on Mondays through November 9 from 1-3 pm in Fellowship Hall at the Evangelical Covenant Church in Princeton for those grieving the loss of a loved one. There is no fee for the course. There is an optional workbook for \$25. For more information, call 815-875-2124.



Princeton Board Games Group

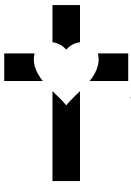
This group meets on Fridays at 6:00 pm in Cushing Hall. Everyone who's interested in learning more about modern board gaming and any player level is welcome to join this friendly group. Any questions, talk to Jon McCutchan, Carla Towne, or Teresa Stanley.



BOOK GROUP

The next Church Book Club will meet in the conference room **October 13 at 10am**. We will not have an assigned book. We will be doing some reorganizing and invite input from current and future readers. Please bring a list of suggestions for books, activities, refreshments, and any other ideas to discuss. Hope to see you there.

-Deb Lawson



OUR STORIES, HIS GLORY

Monthly Stories of God's Presence from our Congregation

My journey really began when I was young. My grandmother took me to Sunday School when I spent the weekend with her. As I got older we started attending church as a family. I felt a longing to want to know more, I went through confirmation and later joined the choir. I continued going to church through high school but never felt a deep relationship with God. I believe God was always there by my side because I felt a tendency to do the right thing. That little voice telling me not do something I felt was wrong.

After graduation we moved away, I felt disconnected from church and starting acting up. I believe God protected me throughout that time. I met my my husband-to-be and needed to attend church required classes, a new church in a new town. We attended for the time required and one day they asked if anyone felt compelled to come forward. I felt myself get up and go forward I remember hands being laid on me and me asking for forgiveness of my sins and accepting Christ as my Savior. Since then I have been a faith journey to a place where I sensed I belonged. I still strayed off of my directed path. We raised a family and didn't bring the kids to church. I felt guilty. We ended the marriage and I continued on the wrong path.

My parents were coming to the Methodist Church so I started attending. I believe God answered many of my prayers as I searched for the answers. I was asked to go on the "Walk to Emmaus." My faith has continued to grow, through devotions, Bible study and prayer. I also feel a connection to my church family. God continues to talk to me and I have learned to trust him more.

-Cindy Mansnerus



FROM THE GREEN TEAM

A summary of 'A Beginner's Guide to Induction Cooktops'

by Matt Berical from One5C.

Is there an induction cooktop in your future? Currently 68% of American homes cook with electric ranges and 38% gas. However, over the last fifty years induction cooking with electromagnetic energy has become the preferred method in many kitchens. They are more efficient, healthier, faster, and more precise than conventional cooktops.

Induction cooktops are available as portable, single-burner models or as full-sized stoves. Full-sized induction cooktops range in price from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Portable versions cost about \$70. Instead of burners, they usually have four or five flat circular “zones” that range in circumference from 30 to 36 inches. They are controlled by knobs, a touchscreen, or a combination of the two. They are designed to last roughly ten years or a bit more. In contrast, electric stoves last about 13 years and gas around 15.

Cooking with electromagnetic energy involves creating a field under one of the zones. Cookware placed on the zone will heat up, but the zone surface will remain cool. This is a great safety feature when young children are helping cook or a person who has impaired memory may leave a hot burner turned on.

Induction cooking is more efficient than electrical and much more efficient than gas. There are no dangerous fumes for which gas stoves are notorious.

Induction stoves can usually be installed using the current electric stove service. But often when replacing a gas stove, you will need to upgrade to a 220 or 240 volt circuit that produces 40-50 amps of power. The good news is that you may be eligible for federal rebates or tax credit for your cash lay out. Under the Inflation Reduction Act, induction cooktops and ranges qualify for a rebate of up to \$840. (This may be impacted by recent changes in policy.)

Surprisingly, much of your current cookware will work on induction cooktops; however, cookware must have magnet elements in their base.



FINANCE REPORT FOR AUGUST 2026

	July	Year to Date	Percent of Budget	Percent of Year
Income	\$19,211	\$204,647	64%	67%
Expenses	\$25,742	\$232,132	59%	67%
Net income	(\$6,531)	(\$27,485)		



PRAYER CORNER

Remember in your prayers...Family of Richard Grubb (Janet Becker's brother), Susannah Tournear (health issues), John Sayers (health issues), David Cross (Friend of the Eddy's – health issues), Lee Wahlgren (recovery from surgery), Betty Sutliff (health issues), Pam Cochran (Jeany Gewin's friend –health issues), Marcia Hudson (health issues), Bob Parker (health issues), storm victims in our nation, those with cancer, or illness in our congregation, those awaiting tests/results, those recovering from surgery & treatments, the lonely, the homeless, refugees, immigrants, military personnel, health care workers, law enforcement, fire and emergency personnel.

****IF YOUR LOVED ONE IS IN THE HOSPITAL OR AT A NURSING HOME, PLEASE LET THE CHURCH KNOW WHERE THEY ARE AND THEIR STATUS. MOST HOSPITALS/NURSING HOMES DON'T LET THE CHURCH KNOW WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE IS ADMITTED.**



Altar Flowers

If you're interested in providing flowers for the altar, let the church office know. Flowers are a beautiful part of God's creation, and people love seeing them in the Chancel area. You can order them from a florist, or pick them from your garden. Share the beauty with others as we worship God!



Treats for Social Hour

Volunteers are needed! The church provides the coffee, lemonade and water, but we rely on your baking skills/donations for the treats. Please consider signing up on the sheet outside the office, if you can provide treats of your choice. Thank you!



Donation Cart

If you have items to donate to Tri-County Food Pantry, please feel free to bring them in and drop them in the shopping cart located in Cushing Hall. The need is great, and all gifts are appreciated.

Worship Videos Online

The Sunday worship videos are always available on PFUMC's youtube.com channel. Open the YouTube app on your device, or type www.youtube.com into your internet browser. Then search for 'Princeton IL First United Methodist Church'. When you see one of our videos show up on your screen, click on it. If that's not the one you want to view, simply click on where it says 'First United Methodist Church' under the video that's playing. Then you'll be able to see the whole selection of videos you can choose.

Worship Videos are live Sundays on the church's Facebook page.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FINANCIAL PERSEVERANCE

On behalf of the PFUMC Finance Committee, we would like to say a big 'thank you' to all the people who have continued to contribute financially to the ministries of our church. Below are some of the ways in which you can give to the church.

1. Via mail – 316 S. Church Street, Princeton.
2. In the locked white mailbox by the main glass doors of the building.
3. Via your bank's on-line bill pay program. A physical check is then mailed to the church.
4. An automatic withdrawal (EFT/ACH) taken from your checking, savings or investment account. This can be done through your bank, or at our bank. **Contact Shelly Grabill for the bank information (i.e. routing number and acct. number).**
5. Through PayPal. Just visit our website (princetonfirstumc.org) and click on the 'giving' button. Then follow the instructions. You can set it up for a one-time use, or on-going. See Shelly if you have difficulties.

We continue to do ministry because of God's grace and your support.

REMEMBERING PFUMC IN YOUR WILL

We never like to think about the time when we won't be here, but it comes for all of us. Thankfully, we know the next phase of our life is a joyful one – being reunited with loved ones and with God. But we will all leave behind both the 'stuff' of this life and a legacy. What better way to combine both than by including your church in your will. Hopefully you have wonderful people to leave gifts to as well, but if you include PFUMC in your will, you'll be ensuring important ministry will continue long into the future because of your generosity. See a member of the Endowment Committee if you have questions.

OCTOBER

Celebrations

Birthdays

2	Christine Anderson Joe Birkey Debbie Brewer	11	Ruth Denault	22	John Plumley Joan Simpson
3	Kelly Loftus	12	Alaina Anderson	23	Landon Bush
4	Guy Marella Scott Piper Jim Smith	13	Tina Eckdahl	24	Georgia Schlender Stuart VandeVenter
6	Lynn Rausch Nathaniel Faber	15	Gerald Leadley Bryce Taylor	27	Sandy Steele
7	Betsy Beams	19	Marissa Cruse Adam Faber Lynette VandeVenter	28	JoAnn Patterson Jerry Piper
8	Lou Ann Birkey Todd Ericson Glenda Johnson			31	Robert Merth

Anniversaries

1	James and Jeanette Bystry	18	John and Darlene Plumley
4	Scott and Jane Robbins	21	Cal and Christy Gramer
5	Kenneth and Eloise Stabler	25	Bob and Sherri Parker
9	Scott and Christine Anderson	27	Frank and Rita Dunlap
10	Randy and Sally Farrell Dan and Cara Kniss		

October 2026 at First United Methodist Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	October Change the World: The Believe Foundation			1	2	3
4 9 am Worship <i>in-person or live-stream</i> with Holy Communion Children's Sunday School 10:15 Righteous Renegades 6:00-7:00 Youth Group	5 10 - Women's Bible Study	6 2:30 Knitters Group 5:30 Handbells Practice	7 6:30 Choir practice	8	9 Church Office Closed 6:00 Board Games Group	10
11 9 am Worship <i>in-person or live-stream</i> Choir Sings Children's Sunday School 10:15 Righteous Renegades	12 10 - Women's Bible Study 5 pm Our Table Meal 	13 10:00 Book Group 1:30 Care Team 2:30 Knitters Group 5:30 Handbells Practice 7:00 Church Council	14 6:30 Choir practice	15 10:30 Witness Committee 11:30 - 5:30 Red Cross Blood Drive	16 Church Office Closed 6:00 Board Games Group	17
18 9 am Worship <i>in-person or live-stream</i> Handbells Play Children's Sunday School 10:15 Righteous Renegades 6:00-7:00 Youth Group	19 10 - Women's Bible Study	20 2:30 Knitters Group	21 6:30 Choir practice	22	23 Church Office Closed 6:00 Board Games Group	24
25 9 am Worship <i>in-person or live-stream</i> Choir Sings Children's Sunday School 10:15 Righteous Renegades	26 10 - Women's Bible Study 5 pm Our Table Meal 	27 2:30 Knitters Group 5:30 Handbells Practice	28 6:30 Choir practice	29 6:30 Finance Committee	30 Church Office Closed 6:00 Board Games Group	31 Halloween



The First United Methodist Church of Princeton, Illinois

Sunday Worship

9:00 a.m.

Kevin Mason

Pastor

Fallon Bush

Treasurer

Josh Bush

A/V Technology Director

Charles Gebeck

Organist

Shelly Grabill

Office Manager & Financial Secretary

Amanda Noord

Children's Sunday School Leader

Shelley Orwig

Youth Sunday School Leader

Elizabeth Schlender

Communications Director

Chris Rucinski

Nursery

Church Office

(815) 872-2821

Church General E-mail

office@princetonfirstumc.org

Church Website

princetonfirstumc.org

The First United Methodist Church of Princeton
316 South Church Street
Princeton, IL 61356

POSTMASTER:
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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