

# First Presbyterian Church of Woodstock

## December 2025 Newsletter

### Making Room for Advent

As we step into December, I'm struck again by how Advent invites us to slow down just when the world seems determined to speed up. Everywhere we turn, there are countdowns, to-do lists, sales, and jingles urging us toward more. Yet Advent whispers a different invitation: *make room*.

Make room for wonder.

Make room for compassion.

Make room for the One who comes quietly, persistently, and lovingly into our lives.

Each Sunday this month, as we light another candle, we're reminded that God's light grows not through spectacle but through steady, faithful presence. **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love** aren't tinsel we hang for a season; they're practices we return to again and again. And each one is needed in this world.

For some, this season is full of celebration. For others, it carries shadows of grief or longing. Wherever you find yourself this December, know that this community holds space for you. Worship, the Blue Christmas service, the cantata, the shared meals – all of it reminds us that we don't walk any road alone.

One way we make room for God's presence is by sharing Christ's light with others. Whether it's participating in the Giving Tree, singing in worship, lending a hand at one of our Advent gatherings, or simply offering kindness to a neighbor, these small acts of love shine brightly. They become reminders that God's light has a way of reaching even the darkest corners – sometimes through us.

I'm grateful for each of you, and for the privilege of walking this season together. Together we prepare the way of the Lord, celebrating the gift of God's love and sharing that love with the world.

If you're unable to join us in person, please know you can always connect online at [fpcwoodstock.org/worship](https://fpcwoodstock.org/worship). I'd love to hear from you about your worship experience, whether you join us virtually or in person.

My prayer is that this Advent becomes a time for noticing the *Holy* that is already here: in the quiet moments, in shared acts of generosity, in the courage to hope when days feel long. May your December be shaped by the peace and joy that Christ brings, and may you sense God moving gently through your life in ways both familiar and new.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Eric



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### SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

In the Great Hall @ 9:30 a.m. or online at [fpcwoodstock.org/worship](https://fpcwoodstock.org/worship)

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Carol Hubner

### REPORTERS

Eric Corbin, Mark Bundick, Bob Clark,  
Kay Darby, Joyce Maynard,  
Chris Mathews, Pam Moorhouse,  
Pat Morozink, Lynne Sobczak,

## TOGETHER TO LAUGH AND LEARN

### Men's Bible Study

John Moorhouse

815-236-7408

### Lectionary Bible Study

Velma Downes

815-245-4043

### Adult Spiritual Growth Groups

Ray Thuma

### Hospitality Team

Fred Strauss

### Music Ministry

Christy Johanson

815-382-5234

### No-Name Knitters

Kay Darby

815-572-1729

### T.L.C.

(Tender Loving Care)

Mary Hill

815-338-6051

### Meals-On-Wheels

Carol Hubner

815-338-2627

### WACM Local Mission Team

Pat Morozink

815-338-7769

### Food Pantry

Joyce Maynard

815-338-7265

### Diaper Distribution

Nancy Bingham

815-823-5107

### Fishing Mission

Bob Clark

847-274-8247

### MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Saturday, at 7:00 a.m.

All are welcome to join with us during this time of learning and fellowship, trusting that God is in charge and, by God's grace, we experience God's love through right relationship with Jesus Christ.

Contact John Moorhouse,  
815-236-7408.

### LECTIONARY STUDY

Wednesday, at 8:30 a.m.

The group gathers via Google Meet. We select a single reading from the Revised Common Lectionary and take turns leading the discussion.

Join us for lively discussion, thoughtful readings and good fellowship.

Contact Velma Downes to be added to the mailing list or for more information.

### Woodstock Food Pantry

Please keep in mind those who face food insecurity and continue to support the Woodstock Food Pantry with donations for the Red Wagon. Our client numbers continue to grow and any and all donations are greatly appreciated.

Please learn more about WFP and its mission by visiting their website at [www.woodstockfoodpantry.org](http://www.woodstockfoodpantry.org) and access their informational video at <https://youtu.be/ReNWpj6GCzA>.



### December Red Wagon Donations

A BIG thank you to all who continue to keep our red wagon filled! The Woodstock Food Pantry is extremely grateful for our congregation's commitment to fighting hunger in our community and assisting in their efforts.

Chicken Noodle Soup,  
Cream of Mushroom Soup, Tomato Soup,  
Cream of Chicken Soup, Vegetable Soup,  
Ramen Noodles

To contribute financially online,  
[click here](#) and type "Food Pantry" in the notes.



## N.O.W. Team News

With our upcoming Sunday, December 7 brunch, the N.O.W. team will close out our Fall 2025 Season.

Since our fall kickoff “Corn and Brats” in September, we’ve served 11 dinners, and 7 brunches, feeding an average of 51 people per event. Our Thanksgiving dinner had 80 people feasting on turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, lots of great side dishes (provided by our diners!) and, of course, yummy desserts.

Additionally, we had our 4th Annual Chili Cookoff (won by Mark Bundick), and an excellent fried chicken dinner served up by the Men’s Bible Study. Let’s not forget the Hospitality Team who provided pizza for FPCW’s “Deck the Halls” event on November 23. Finally, you also came out and supported our fundraiser dinners for the FPCW Youth Group, raising funds for their January retreat and Scouting America Troop 159, raising funds for their 2026 trip out to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. Both of them did very well; thank you for your generosity!

The team will meet after the December 7 brunch to plan out the spring season. We’ll probably kick off with dinner on Wednesday, January 7. One early event will be our annual “Souper Bowl,” sometime in February. We’ll publish our plans in the January 2026 newsletter, and will continue to provide menu notices in the Mid-Week News.

We are thankful for all of you who dined with us, or donated sides or desserts during the fall. We’d love to see you again in the spring, so please keep the N.O.W. team in mind as you plan your 2026 calendars.

If you have ideas or suggestions for future dinner or brunch dishes or themes for our events, please let any N.O.W. team member know.

### The N.O.W. Team

Cheryl Wormley ([indepublisher@comcast.net](mailto:indepublisher@comcast.net))

Lee Nejd ([nejdlwoodstock@hotmail.com](mailto:nejdlwoodstock@hotmail.com))

Matt Thuma ([mrthuma@yahoo.com](mailto:mrthuma@yahoo.com))

Linda Hansen ([lkhanzen53@gmail.com](mailto:lkhanzen53@gmail.com))

John Moorhouse ([johnmoorhouse54@gmail.com](mailto:johnmoorhouse54@gmail.com))

Katie Spaldon ([kspaldon@gmail.com](mailto:kspaldon@gmail.com))

Jane Jensen ([jensenjane74@gmail.com](mailto:jensenjane74@gmail.com))

Mark Bundick ([mbundick@comcast.net](mailto:mbundick@comcast.net))



## Education Highlights

Adult Sunday School begins its next quarter on the first Sunday in December, using *The Present Word* curriculum. All are welcome to join the group at 8:30 am in the Fireside Room.

Our Book Discussion on *Messy Spirituality* by Mike Yaconelli just wrapped up. Advent devotionals are now available in the Gathering Area. A PDF version is available, if you’d prefer. Check with Pastor Eric if you’d like that version.

Seven youth and adults will be travelling to Camp Timber-lee for the junior high “winterXtreme” retreat, scheduled for January 23–25.

## Pay your pledge, reduce your income tax!

Those of us age 70 ½ or older can use our IRAs to pay our pledges. There is no income tax on those payments. Simply direct your IRA custodian to make your pledge payment(s) directly to First Presbyterian Church – Woodstock.

You will be glad you paid your pledge using funds from your IRA.

Jim Wormley

Generosity Team Member

P.S. As always, confirm with your tax advisor.



# CARING TOGETHER

## December Birthdays

Chris Dahm 12/1  
Elin Kaye 12/3  
Noa Moorhouse 12/2  
Aidan Greenlee 12/5  
Collin Greenlee 12/9  
Matt Thuma 12/13  
Chris Carr 12/16  
Barb Parrish 12/26  
Pam Mathison 12/28  
Sue Hunt 12/30

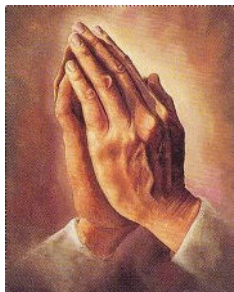
## December Anniversaries

Dan & Joyce Chwalisz  
December 24

## In Our Prayers

Paul Thuma, William Heim, Val Ayers, Patty Christian, Jane Jensen, Caryl and Dan Lemanski, the family of Jean Chase, Heidi Barber, Pat Clickner, Barb Parrish, Dan Chwalisz, Glynn Bradley, Jim Wormley, Barb Bundick, Mark Bundick, Sue Krause

*To add to or remove a name from the prayer list, please contact the church office.*



Hello! Carol Hubner here. I'm so happy to have met so many of you already, and I'm looking forward to getting to know each of you better when you stop by the church for any of our many activities.

My regular office hours are **Monday through Thursday, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.** You may also see me here earlier or later depending on the needs of the day.

I'm excited to be part of this community and look forward to connecting with you!

You can reach me at [carol@fpcwoodstock.org](mailto:carol@fpcwoodstock.org) or 815-338-2627.



You'll find Pastor Eric in the office at various times throughout the week, but you're most likely to catch him during his regular office hours: **Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:00-2:00** and **Wednesdays & Fridays, 2:00-5:00.** These hours may shift occasionally if he's called away for visits or meetings, but he's always glad to arrange another time. You can request a meeting anytime at [fpcwoodstock.org/meetwitheric](http://fpcwoodstock.org/meetwitheric).

## Chrismon Service

On Sunday, November 30, we held our annual Chrismon Service.

Everyone enjoyed this beautiful time when we decorated the tree with ancient Christian symbols that point us toward the hope and promise of Christmas. If you'd like a list of the Chrismons and their meanings, [click here](#).



## Blue Christmas Service

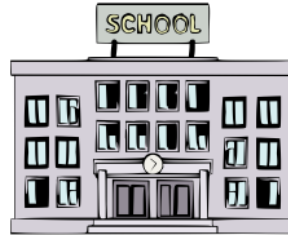
Join us for a Time of Healing and Peace at our Blue Christmas Service on Wednesday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m. Bring whatever you've been carrying this season and pause with us for a quiet moment of comfort and calm during the holidays.

## Advent Worship Schedule

12/7 at 9:30 a.m. Communion – All are welcome at Christ's table  
12/14 at 9:30 a.m. Cantata – Craft and Bake Sale to support the Youth Group  
12/17 at 7:00 p.m. Blue Christmas – A time of comfort & hope for those facing grief or sadness  
12/21 at 9:30 a.m. Special Music  
12/24 at 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve  
12/28 at 9:30 a.m. Christmas Stories & Hymn Sing  
1/4 at 9:30 a.m. Epiphany

## WACM NEWS

Residents living in D-200 school boundaries are eligible for financial assistance through WACM's Direct Assistance Program (DAP) when an emergency need arises.



The needs are as varied as the individuals requesting help. For a senior citizen, a \$25 gasoline voucher makes driving to medical appointments affordable.

For a recovery home resident, a voucher to buy steel toe boots provides funds to buy the proper footwear for a new job.

For a homeowner, a payment to the city prevents a water shutoff and keeps the household running smoothly while recovering from an injury.



For a single mother with young children, past due rent assistance helps the family stay in their home. By supporting WACM, you are supporting Woodstock residents in need.

Thank you for your support!

## DEACONS

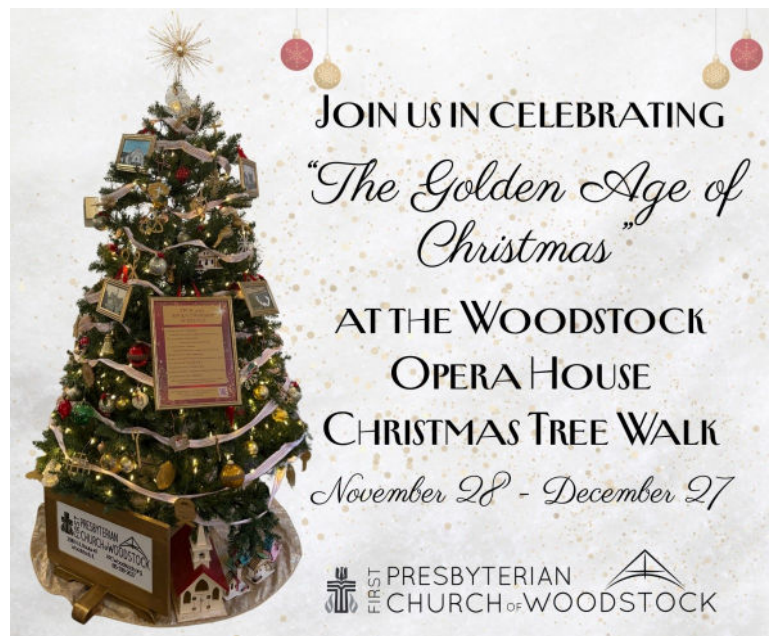
December is a month to reflect on everything we're thankful for. We, as a church, have much to be thankful for, such as the building we worship in, our different groups and classes we have, the children who always bring smiles, and, of course, each other. Let's be encouraged to pray and reach out to our friends on our prayer list. A simple card, phone call, text or email to let them know they're being thought of can brighten their day.

If you have a prayer request or a joy to celebrate please reach out to the Deacons. We would love to pray for your concerns and/or celebrate the joys with you!

<a href="#"><u>Carol Brefeld</u></a>	815-653-3005
<a href="#"><u>Ana Corbin</u></a>	815-575-9472
<a href="#"><u>Mary Carol Dunker</u></a>	815-245-4829
<a href="#"><u>Kristen Matter</u></a>	847-609-8340
<a href="#"><u>Barb Parrish</u></a>	815-353-2749
<a href="#"><u>Tom Schaeffer</u></a>	717-994-3819
<a href="#"><u>Cheryl Wormley</u></a>	815-519-7402

## Woodstock Opera House Christmas Tree Walk

First Pres was selected to decorate a tree for the Woodstock Opera House Christmas Tree Walk. This year's theme is "The Golden Age of Christmas," celebrating the cozy nostalgia of 1940s-50s Christmas classics.



Our team, Tiffany, Carol, Christie, Beth, Fred, and Mark, had the joy of decorating the Christmas tree on behalf of First Pres. It turned out beautiful! You can see it on display at the Woodstock Opera House throughout the holiday season!

Thanks so much, team!

## CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



Each year during Advent and the Christmas season, we lift up retired, present, and future leaders of the Presbyterian church by supporting the Christmas Joy Offering. The money provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. This special offering will be collected November 30 – December 21, with a goal of \$1,500.

Thank you!

## Craft Fair and Bake Sale

Our usual Craft Fair fundraiser in December is going to feature an additional Bake Sale this year. Proceeds will support our Youth group.

We are hoping for a lot of contributed baked goodies from the congregation.

Please plan ahead to create those wonderful crafts to be sold. If you have no particular craft skills to donate, perhaps a baked item(s) could be your contribution.

Don't be shy about bringing a craft as well as a baked item to this year's sale. The sale will take place on Sunday, **December 14th**, immediately following the Christmas cantata.

Mark your calendars!



## GIVING TREE



There are still a few tags left on the Giving Tree in our church's entryway. Tags have been placed on the little Christmas tree with gift suggestions for the local families we are supporting this Christmas. Please take a tag or two, sign the registration sheet with your name and the tag number and have fun shopping for someone whose family is struggling. Wrap the gift, attach the entire tag (don't cut anything off) and bring it back to the tree by Sunday, Dec. 21st. The gifts will be delivered quietly before Christmas by our FPC elves.

## Hospitality Team Update

The Hospitality team helped liven up the tree decorating festivities last Sunday by providing pizza and beverages for all who stayed to decorate the tree. A fun time was had by all!

Please consider signing up for coffee fellowship. We are happy to walk you through it and lend a hand. We all enjoy gathering after the service to visit but would really appreciate a few more volunteers to take a Sunday. Please see Pam Moorhouse for more information.



## December Session Highlights -

- FPCW has been selected to participate in the annual Christmas Tree Walk at the Woodstock Opera House. The theme this year is The Golden Age of Christmas. Plan to stop by the exhibit this holiday season and check out our tree.
- Seven junior high members of the youth group will go to Camp Timber-lee January 23-25 this year.
- Session has approved Communion dates for 2026. Communion will continue to be served the first Sunday of each month.
- Church committees have started to work on their budgets for 2026. The goal for submission is early December so the budget can be completed and approved by the New Year.

**Compassion,  
Peace & Justice**  
(Awareness, Service)

Chris Mathews

[cwmathews8@gmail.com](mailto:cwmathews8@gmail.com)

**Congregational Life**  
(Hospitality, NOW Team)

Fred Strauss

[showski1@aol.com](mailto:showski1@aol.com)

815-728-1430

**Education & Spiritual  
Growth**

(Adult, Youth, Child,  
Intergenerational)

Ray Thuma

[rpthuma@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rpthuma@sbcglobal.net)

Addison Sobczak

**Ministry Support**  
(Finance, Staff  
Management)

Bob Clark

[robtmclark@aol.com](mailto:robtmclark@aol.com)

(Building & Grounds,  
Staff Management)

Chris Dahm

[cdahm@dahmco.com](mailto:cdahm@dahmco.com)

815-378-0273

**Worship, Music and Arts**  
(Worship Arts, Worship  
Leadership, Audio-Visual)

Tiffany Sobczak

815-790-9360

[tsobczak82@gmail.com](mailto:tsobczak82@gmail.com)

**Clerk of Session**

Chris Mathews

[clerk@fpcwoodstock.org](mailto:clerk@fpcwoodstock.org)

## DECEMBER Worship Schedule

We are grateful for all who serve in worship leadership each week. Below is the December schedule:

Date	Text	Liturgist	A/V	Greeters and Ushers	Acolyte	Hosting Fellowship
12/7	<a href="#">Matthew 3:1-12</a>	Sue Krause	Brayden Sobczak	Cheryl Wormley and Beth Elbersen	Levi Traimany	Brunch
12/14	<a href="#">Matthew 11:2-11</a>	Angie Boe	Kristi & Christopher Corbin + Dave Johanson	Mary Carol & Al Dunker + Pam Moorhouse		Cantata
12/17	Blue Christmas Service	Cheryl Wormley	Dave Johanson	Fred Strauss and Carol Brefeld		
12/21	<a href="#">Matthew 1:18-25</a>	Addison Sobczak	Dave Johanson	Rick & Pat Morozink	Colin Kaye	Nejdl
12/24 Christmas Eve	<a href="#">Luke 2:1-20</a>	Jim Wormley	Brayden S., Elin K.	Tom Schaeffer & Chris Mathews + Cheryl Wormley		
12/28	<i>Stories and Songs</i>	Tom Schaeffer	Brayden S., Elin K.	Tiffany & Addison Sobczak		Hot Chocolate bar before

### Sunday School – Cantata Reminders

- Dress Rehearsal: Saturday, December 13 at 9:45 AM at the church.
- Program Day Arrival: Please have children at church by 9:15 AM on Sunday, December 14. There are no costumes this year, so children can dress however you want them to appear!

We are also continuing our tradition of sharing cookies during the coffee fellowship after the Cantata. If you're able, **please bring a plate of cookies to share**. Store-bought or homemade - whatever works best for you. Thank you for helping make this a warm and joyful celebration for our church family!

Warmly,  
Erin & Jackie



Picture from 2024 Cantata

No Name *knitters*



### NO NAME KNITTERS

"Oh, the weather outside is frightful"..... but we delivered a big bag of nice warm hats, headbands, and scarves to the School District office. We received a thank you from one of the elementary schools already, telling us how much the items were appreciated! It fills our hearts to know there is a need, and we can help!

Christmas blessings from the No Name Knitters to all of you!

# DECEMBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 1p Grief Group	2	3 8:30a Lectionary Study 10a No-Name Knitters 4p Diaper Distribution 7p Choir Rehearsal	4 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting	5	6
7 9:30a Worship 9:45a Sunday School: PreK-5th 10:30a NOW Brunch 11a Confirmation Class 11a Craft and Cocoa - Youth 11a NOW meeting	8 1p Grief Group	9 10a TLC Ladies 5p Deacons/Session joint meeting 5p Girl Scout Troop 2051 meeting 5:30p Education and Spiritual Growth	10 8:30a Lectionary Study 7p Choir Rehearsal	11 2:30p Finance Team 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting	12	13 9a Cantata Dress Rehearsal 9a Set up for Craft fair
14 Christmas Cantata 9:30a Worship 9:45a Sunday School: PreK-5th	15 Meals on Wheels 1p Grief Group	16	17	18	19 Troop 159 Lock-In	20
21 9:30a Worship 10:30a Choir rehearsal 11a Session	22 1p Grief Group	23 5p Girl Scout Troop 2051 meeting	24 8:30a Lectionary Study 6p No-Name Knitters 7p Blue Christmas service 5p Christmas Eve worship	25 3p Hospitality Team 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting	26	27
28 9:30a Worship	29 1p Grief Group	30	31 <i>Christmas Day</i>			

# DECEMBER 2025

## MINISTERS

All members and friends  
of the congregation

## STAFF

*Rev. Eric Corbin*  
Pastor

*Carol Hubner*  
Office Administrator

*Christy Johanson*  
Worship Arts  
Coordinator

*Harrison Cole*  
Accompanist



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WOODSTOCK

*CELEBRATING AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE*

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Visit us on Facebook:

[www.fpcwoodstock.org](http://www.fpcwoodstock.org)

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