

First Presbyterian Church of Woodstock

March 2026 Newsletter

The Middle of the Journey

By the time March arrives, the season of Lent is already underway. Ash Wednesday has passed, the ashes have long since been washed away, and the quiet work of the season continues.

That is often how the spiritual life unfolds. Beginnings get our attention. A new year. A meaningful service. A moment of decision. But the deeper work of faith usually happens somewhere in the middle, in the quieter days that follow.

Lent is not simply about one day of ashes or one decision to “give something up.” It is a longer journey of paying attention. It invites us to notice where our lives feel out of balance, where compassion is needed, and where God might be inviting us to begin again.

In the Gospel stories we read during Lent, Jesus often walks with people who are in the middle of their own journeys. A woman at a well who has known disappointment. A man born blind learning to see the world differently. A grieving family wondering if hope is still possible. Again and again, Jesus meets people not at the beginning or the end of their story, but right in the middle of it.

That is good news for us, because most of life is lived there. We are rarely at neat spiritual starting lines or dramatic finish lines. More often we are simply walking the road in front of us, doing our best to live faithfully, learning as we go.

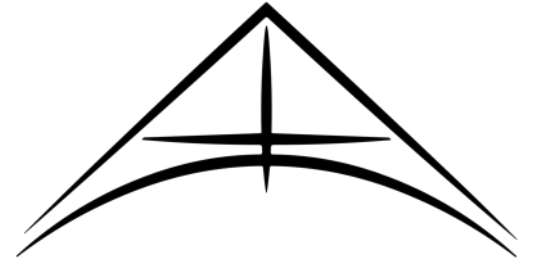
Lent reminds us that God meets us there. Not only in dramatic moments, but in ordinary days. Not only when our faith feels strong, but when we are searching and wondering.

As we continue this Lenten journey together, may we keep our hearts open to the quiet ways God is shaping us. And may these weeks lead us, step by step, toward the hope and new life we celebrate at Easter.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Eric



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF WOODSTOCK



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LENT

PRAY



FAST



GIVE



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

In the Great Hall @ 9:30 a.m. or online
at fpcwoodstock.org/worship

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Carol Hubner

REPORTERS

Mark Bundick, Bob Clark, Eric Corbin,
Erin Kaye, Sue Krause, Chris Mathews,
Pam Moorhouse, Pat Morozink
and Jim Wormley

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

Saturdays 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 grace, we experience God's love through right relationship with Jesus Christ.

Contact John Moorhouse,
815-236-7408.

LECTIONARY STUDY

Wednesdays 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



Come enjoy a pint of Woodstock's finest craft beer and help us make sure no neighbor goes hungry or without light or heat this spring.

Luck is what happens when a community comes together! 🍀

Join us at Kishwaukee Brewing Co. on Sunday, March 15, for a St. Paddy's celebration with a mission. We're raising vital funds for the Woodstock Food Pantry to help keep our local community fed.



March 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.



Cereal, Pancake Mix, Oatmeal, Syrup

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

N.O.W. (Nurture on Wednesday) Team News

The N.O.W. Team’s Spring 2026 season rolls on. Thanks to all who have come out to enjoy our offerings. So far this season, our “Soup Starter” experiment was well received, as people enjoyed sampling lots of different soups. We’re blessed to have Tom Lafontaine helping out the team. And attendance has been good for both dinners and brunch. Thank you for coming out and supporting the N.O.W. Team!

Here’s a quick look at our March menus.

Dinner and Brunch Dates	Event	Host	Menu
Wednesday, March 4, 2026	Dinner	N.O.W. Team	Taco bar, refried beans
Sunday, March 08, 2026	Brunch	N.O.W. Team	Eggs, Sausage, Fruit
Wednesday, March 11, 2026	Dinner	N.O.W. Team	Ham, scalloped potatoes, Dessert Bakeoff
Wednesday, March 18, 2026	Dinner	N.O.W. Team	All American Diner, root beer floats
Wednesday, March 25, 2026	Dinner	Men’s Bible Study	Fried Chicken
Sunday, March 29, 2026	Brunch	N.O.W. Team	Waffles and eggs

Don’t miss the *Wednesday, March 11 FPCW Dessert Bakeoff*. Whip up your favorite and claim this year’s Dessert Bakeoff trophy!

Wednesday, March 25 will be our last dinner of the Spring 2026 Season, but brunches will continue for two additional Sundays.

After those brunches, the N.O.W. Team will be meeting to review how the spring went, and start planning for the summer. Ideas, menu suggestions, etc. are welcome; just talk to any N.O.W. team member.



**2025 Dessert Bakeoff Winner
Faith Corbin**

The N.O.W. Team

- Cheryl Wormley** (indepublisher@comcast.net) **John Moorhouse** (johnmoorhouse54@gmail.com)
Lee Nedjl (nejdlwoodstock@hotmail.com) **Katie Spaldon** (kspaldon@gmail.com)
Matt Thuma (mrthuma@yahoo.com) **Jane Jensen** (jensenjane74@gmail.com)
Linda Hansen (lkhanen53@gmail.com) **Mark Bundick** (mbundick@comcast.net)

Fulfill your Pledge, Avoid Income Taxes



Stock market values have generally moved upward in recent years. If you own mutual funds or stocks that have appreciated, consider using them to fulfill your pledge. The gift of securities to a nonprofit entity, such as your church, is a way to fulfill your pledge and avoid income taxes on the gain. Contact Treasurer **John Moorhouse** or **Bob Clark** of the Finance Committee for assistance in making your gift.

CARING TOGETHER

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- Lydia Dunker, 3/4
- Larry Stanger, 3/6
- Lucas Moorhouse, 3/7
- Barbara Bundick, 3/8
- Gwen Wormley, 3/9
- Hank Olesen, 3/11
- Mary Carol Dunker, 3/14
- Nicole Huiras, 3/15
- Chris Gienko, 3/17
- Eric Corbin, 3/21
- Emery Huiras, 3/22
- Carol Halma, 3/24
- Justin Thuma, 3/25

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- Ray & Angela Thuma 3/2
- Chris & Ellen Dahm, 3/22
- Harold & Sue Hunt, 3/27
- John & Marla Rigby, 3/29

IN OUR PRAYERS

*William Heim, John Hudson,
Jane Jensen, John Krauss,
Lynne Sobczak, Lance Sobczak,
Karen Thennes, Sue Sauer,
Dylan Lawler, Sue Arnold, and
Melinda Gallant*

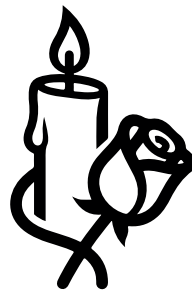


Grief Support

The Grief Support group led by **Roxie Kaminski** over the Christmas Holidays was found to be helpful and healing by those attending, as well as by Roxie herself. Roxie has generously offered to lead two more sessions in 2026.

There will be a six-week session offered in the summer and an eight-week session over the 2026 holiday season. These sessions will be open to anyone in the congregation and will be closed to new members after the sessions have begun to create a feeling of safety and trust within the group.

Birthdays, death anniversaries and other events can trigger powerful feelings that can be difficult to handle alone. Acknowledging this, Pastor Eric will start a monthly grief group which will be open to new members at any time. Dates and details for both groups will be decided soon.



We would love your thoughts and input. Please reach out to Pastor Eric or any member of the CPJ committee with your suggestions and questions. For those who would like a grief guide for independent study, a book by Lisa Orris, *Never Apologize for Your Tears*, is available in the gathering area.

Sunday School

Greetings, Sunday School Families!

We're excited to continue our Sunday School year and can't wait to see everyone! Our next class is Sunday, March 8, following Pastor Eric's Time with Children during the 9:30 a.m. worship service.

Remaining Sunday School Dates:

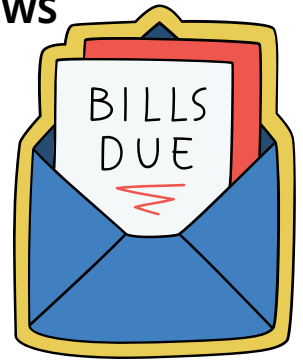
- March 8
- March 22
- April 12
- April 26
- May 10

Thank you to all the children and families who make this ministry such a joy. We look forward to seeing you Sunday!

Peace,
Erin & Jackie

Woodstock Area Community Ministry (WACM) NEWS

A Help-a-Neighbor fundraising campaign is underway to support WACM's *Direct Assistance Program*. Recent requests for financial assistance to Woodstock residents have resulted in \$4000-\$6000 issued monthly. Most of that assistance has gone toward rent payments or utility bills that are past due. Other assistance has provided a gasoline voucher or a purchase of clothing or boots.



Please consider donating to the Woodstock Area Community Ministry (WACM) at www.wacmgroups.org. WACM relies on the support of its member churches, including First Presbyterian. Thank you for supporting Woodstock neighbors in need.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING



Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The work done in support of the causes supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) – disaster, hunger,

poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration and refugees — serves individuals and communities in need.

This work provides people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Typically received during the season of Lent, this Offering helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. First Presbyterian Church of Woodstock has pledged \$1800 this year to support this World Wide initiative of PCUSA. Please prayerfully consider making a special offering donation to OGHS.

Contributions will be collected during Lent (March 18 through Easter, April 5). You may contribute through the special envelope if you have those, through a check made out to First Presbyterian Church of Woodstock with OGHS on the memo line or through the [church website donation page](#).

Thank you for your generous support of a world of people in need!

CARING TOGETHER

No Name Knitters

We have all been experiencing the cold weather. Our knitters' and crocheters' handmade prayer shawls and lapghans provide sustaining warmth for the body, as well as the soul! If you, or someone in your family, would be comforted by one of our items, we encourage you to contact one of our group, or Kay Darby at 815-572-1729.



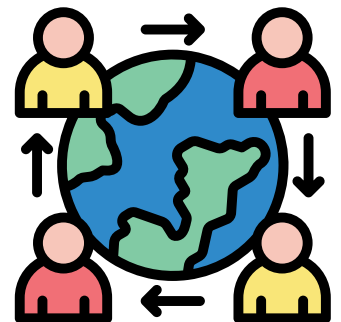
FUNDING LOCAL MISSIONS

Historically, our congregation has supported local mission initiatives through a combination of special fundraising events like the rummage sale (which supports WACM and the Woodstock Food Pantry) and the Christmas craft sale (which supports our youth programs). Prior to the 2026 changes in the structure of PC(USA) Special Offerings, local groups also received gifts through a percentage of the Special Offerings collected each year.

For a number of years, we have budgeted a \$10,000 Mission Gift to support PC(USA) and Blackhawk Presbytery. After conversation with the Presbytery, the Session and the Compassion, Peace, and Justice (CPJ) Committee have chosen this year to realign that giving. This year, \$5,000 will support the wider church, shared equally between Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and PC(USA) Self-Development of People. We have long supported the ministry and work of the Presbytery through full payment of our apportioned per-capita and will continue to do so. This adjustment allows us to dedicate the remaining \$5,000 to mission needs in our local community.

The Session, upon recommendation of the CPJ Committee, has designated these funds for LOCAL MISSION support. The need in the community is always present, and many organizations would welcome partnership. CPJ maintains a structure to vet potential recipients. Eligible organizations are registered 501(c)(3) nonprofits serving residents of Woodstock School District 200. Each selected organization also needs a congregational "champion." This person helps communicate the ministry's impact, assists with the qualification process, and serves as a liaison between the congregation and the recipient of mission funds.

If you have an organization in mind that would benefit from a mission gift from our congregation, please let a member of CPJ or Pastor Eric know so we can follow up and learn more about their work and needs.





March Session Highlights

SESSION MEETING

- Blackhawk Presbytery will change its name to *Illinois Prairie Presbytery* on March 13, 2026.
- The Building and Grounds Committee will be setting aside a date for a Spring Cleanup Day soon. Highway cleanup dates are also being set up. More information to come soon.
- Copies of the Annual Report presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting are available in the gathering area for those who were not able to attend on February 8.

After the congregational vote at the Annual Meeting, the current Deacons and Elders are:

DEACONS (Six) - (Bold=second term)

<i>Class of 2026</i>	<i>Class of 2027</i>	<i>Class of 2028</i>
Kristen Matter	Carol Brefeld	Mary Carol Dunker
Barb Parrish	Tom Schaeffer	
	Cheryl Wormley	

ELDERS (Six) - (Bold=second term)

<i>Class of 2026</i>	<i>Class of 2027</i>	<i>Class of 2028</i>
Chris Dahm Buildings & Grounds Staff Management	Bob Clark Finance Staff Management	Tiffany Sobczak Worship, Music, & Arts
Chris Mathews Compassion, Peace, & Justice	Fred Strauss Congregational Life	
	Ray Thuma Education & Spiritual Growth	

Compassion, Peace & Justice (Awareness, Service)
Chris Mathews
cwmathews8@gmail.com

Congregational Life (Hospitality, NOW Team)
Fred Strauss
showski1@aol.com
815-728-1430

Education & Spiritual Growth (Adult, Youth, Child, Intergenerational)
Ray Thuma
rpthuma@sbcglobal.net

Ministry Support (Finance, Staff Management)
Bob Clark
robtmclark@aol.com

(Building & Grounds, Staff Management)
Chris Dahm
cdahm@dahmco.com
815-378-0273

Worship, Music and Arts (Worship Arts, Worship Leadership, Audio-Visual)
Tiffany Sobczak
815-790-9360
tsobczak82@gmail.com

Clerk of Session
Chris Mathews
clerk@fpcwoodstock.org

March Worship Schedule

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

Date	Text	Liturgist	A/V	Greeters and Ushers	Acolyte	Hosting Fellowship
3/1	<u>John 3:1-17</u>	Addison Sobczak	John Moorhouse	Pam & Brooke Mathison		Pam & John Moorhouse
3/8	<u>John 4:5-42</u>	Jim Wormley	Kristi & Christopher Corbin	Mary Hill and Sue Krause	Ryan Traimany	<i>Brunch</i>
3/15	<u>John 9:1-41</u>	Erin Kaye	Dave Johanson	Cheryl Wormley and Beth Elbersen	Braden Ferrera	Nancy & Steve Bingham
3/22	<u>John 11:1-45</u>	Sue Krause	Brayden S., Elin K.	Fred Strauss & Carol Brefeld	Dylan Lawler	<i>Brunch</i>
3/29	<u>Matthew 21:1-11</u>	Dawn Cook	Dave Johanson	Matilda Botian & Sara Roewer	Emersyn Cook	Faith Corbin



Sale Dates April 23, 24, & 25, 2026

Get ready, set, go!

Cleaning and sorting will begin the week of:

- March 8 - Bedrooms
- March 15 - Kitchen
- March 22 - Living Areas
- March 29 - Bathroom

Watch for more details in each mid-week news.

Please remember all items must be clean and in working order. We appreciate including a suggested price for any large or special items (furniture, electronics, collectables).



Just a reminder! *Per capita apportionment is like a utility bill: just as we pay for essential services to stay connected, we contribute per capita so the Presbyterian system can serve us all. It links our congregations, reflects our unity in Christ, and shares costs fairly across the whole church.*

In 2026, the per capita for Blackhawk Presbytery congregations is \$45 per member. We appreciate your support in helping cover this annual amount paid to our presbytery on behalf of each FPCW member.

You may give online at fpcwoodstock.org/giving by selecting "Per Capita," or write "Per Capita" on the memo line of your check. Thank you!

MARCH 2026

Celebrating women's leadership, courage, and faith this Women's History Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Choir Sings 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship 4p Family karaoke/games and pizza</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>5p Girl Scout Troop 2051 meeting</p>	<p>4</p> <p>8:30a Lectionary Study 10a No-Name Knitters 5:15p NOW Dinner 7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>5</p> <p>5:45p Education and Spiritual Growth 7p Worship Arts Mtg 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7a Men's Bible Study</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Choir Sings 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship 9:45a Sunday School: PreK-5th 10:30a NOW Brunch 11a Confirmation Class <i>Daylight Saving Time Begins</i></p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>10a TLC Ladies 4p Deacons</p>	<p>11</p> <p>8:30a Lectionary Study 5:15p NOW Dinner 7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>12</p> <p>2:30p Finance Team 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7a Men's Bible Study</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Choir Sings 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship 11a Session</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>5p Girl Scout Troop 2051 meeting</p> <p><i>St. Patrick's Day</i></p>	<p>18</p> <p>8:30a Lectionary Study 5:15p NOW Dinner 6p No-Name Knitters 7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>19</p> <p>3p Hospitality Team 6p Compassion, Peace and Justice 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7a Men's Bible Study</p>
<p>22</p> <p>8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>8:30a Lectionary Study 5:15p NOW Dinner 7p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting 7p Worship Arts Mtg</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>7a Men's Bible Study</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Choir Sings 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship 9:45a Sunday School: PreK-5th 10:30a NOW Brunch 11a Confirmation Class <i>Palm Sunday</i></p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>5p Girl Scout Troop 2051 meeting</p>				

MARCH 2026



CELEBRATING AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE

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*

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