

First Presbyterian Church of Woodstock

September 2026

Why We Gather

September brings a noticeable change in our congregation's rhythm. Children's Sunday School returns. N.O.W. meals and choir rehearsals begin again. Youth gather around the fire pit, groups resume their familiar patterns, and the church calendar suddenly looks much fuller.

But a full calendar is not the point. We gather because Christian faith was never meant to be lived alone.

Worship is at the center of our life together. Each Sunday, we gather to praise God, hear Scripture, pray, sing, and come to Christ's table. Worship draws us out of our separate lives and forms us into the body of Christ.

But worship has never been the only way the church gathers. Acts tells us that the earliest Christians devoted themselves to teaching, community, shared meals, and prayer. They gathered for worship and in one another's homes, eating together, caring for people in need, and sharing the joys and burdens of life.

The Gospels also show Jesus gathering around tables again and again. Jesus ate with friends and disciples, with strangers and outsiders, and even with people who questioned or opposed him. Around those tables, questions were asked, boundaries were challenged, forgiveness was offered, and people discovered that grace could reach them too.

That continues to be true for us. A Sunday School class, N.O.W. dinner, choir rehearsal, Coffee with the Pastor, committee meeting, or conversation over refreshments can become a place where we are known, listen to one another, and make God's love tangible.

Even our nametags are part of that welcome. Names matter. Wearing a nametag says that we want to know one another and make it easier for others to know us. Because we use temporary nametags, longtime members and first-time visitors are on equal footing. No one must announce, "I'm new here," and no one has to pretend to remember every name. If you have gotten out of the habit, consider this a gentle invitation to begin again.

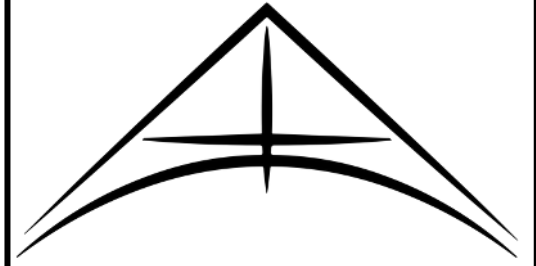
No one is expected to participate in everything. The goal is not to fill every opening in our calendars, but to find places where we can receive what we need, offer what we have, and become more deeply connected to God and one another.

As our fall rhythms begin again, may Christ meet us wherever we gather and continue forming us into a community of grace, courage, and love.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Eric



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF WOODSTOCK



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SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

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

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Carol Hubner

REPORTERS

Eric Corbin, Mark Bundick,
Chris Mathews, Bob Clark,
Pam Moorhouse, Nancy Bingham,
Gary Wilhelm, Ray Thuma, Mary Hill,
Pat Morozink, and Kay Darby

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

Ray Thuma

Hospitality Team

Fred Strauss

Music Ministry

Gary Wilhelm

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

Fishing Mission

Bob Clark

847-274-8247

Book Discussion:

We'll be reading and discussing *Being Presbyterian in a Dysvangelical America*, right after NOW Dinners, beginning 9/16.

Children's Sunday School Is Back!



Rally Day • Sunday, September 13

Join us on Sunday, September 13, as we begin a new Sunday School year with Rally Day! Sunday School meets during worship, immediately following Pastor Eric's Time with the Children.

Sunday School for children in PreK through fifth grade will continue on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. These Sundays will also include a N.O.W. Brunch after worship, offering time for children, families, and the whole congregation to enjoy food and fellowship together.

This year, Sara Roewer and Kate Frick will lead our Sunday School program. They bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm as they help our children explore their faith, build friendships, and discover more about God's love.

We are grateful for Sara and Kate's leadership and for all the families who take part in this ministry. Come ready to learn, laugh, and have fun!

JOIN US FOR

Adult SUNDAY SCHOOL

at 8:30 AM

Grow in Faith Together

REAL PEOPLE. REAL CONVERSATIONS. | GOD'S WORD. RELEVANT TO LIFE. | ENCOURAGEMENT. COMMUNITY. GROWTH.

Everyone is welcome! ♥



Education and Spiritual Growth Committee



Fire Pit Gathering: All Middle and High School youth are invited to a fire pit gathering on September 13th from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. We will roast hot dogs over the fire and make everyone's favorite fireside dessert: s'mores.

We will play games in the grassy area near the fire pit, including Gaga ball, cornhole, and washers. Come play one of our games or bring your own yard games. Hot dogs, chips, condiments, and s'mores fixings will be provided. Bring a chair and join us for friendship and fellowship. For more information, contact Ray and Angela Thuma at rpthuma@sbcglobal.net.

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

Our fall N.O.W. schedule is set! Wednesday dinners begin September 16 and continue weekly through our traditional Thanksgiving feast on November 18. Brunch will be served after worship on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. Have a menu idea or dinner theme? Contact any N.O.W. Team member. We're always glad to hear your suggestions!

September Dates	Type	Menu
Sunday, September 13, 2026	Brunch	Eggs, Sausage, Fruit
Wednesday, September 16, 2026	Dinner	Corn and Brats, Coleslaw
Wednesday, September 23, 2026	Dinner	Taco Salad, Rice, Beans
Sunday, September 27, 2026	Brunch	Breakfast Casseroles, Fruit
Wednesday, September 30, 2026	Dinner	Grilled Pork, Potato Salad

October will include a Scouting America Troop 159 fundraiser, and our annual Chili Cookoff returns in November. Dinners will wrap up with our traditional Thanksgiving feast on November 18.

The N.O.W. Team

Mark Bundick
mbundick@comcast.net
 Jane Jensen
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 Anna Kittle
annagramk@aol.com

John Moorhouse
johnmoorhouse54@gmail.com
 Lee NejdI
nejdlwoodstock@hotmail.com
 Katie Spaldon
kspaldon@gmail.com

Matt Thuma
mrthuma@yahoo.com
 Cheryl Wormley
cherylwormley26@gmail.com

 Have questions, doubts,
or just need a listening ear?

Coffee
 with the
Pastor



COME AS
YOU ARE.



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH
AT 2:00 PM



CONVERSATION,
WELCOME,
AND CONNECTION.



WHEELHOUSE POTTERY & COFFEE
105 E JUDD ST, WOODSTOCK

CARING TOGETHER

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- Tom Schaeffer, 9/1
- Candee McMahon, 9/2
- Gianna Ferrera, 9/3
- Steve Kaye, 9/5
- Anna Kittle, 9/7
- Emersyn Cook, 9/7
- Christopher Gienko, 9/8
- Lily Oliver, 9/11
- Hannah Lara, 9/12
- Lynne Sobczak, 9/13
- Imri Petrik, 9/15
- Landon Huiras, 9/15
- Jack Dahm, 9/16
- Reagan Wormley, 9/18
- Erik Johanson, 9/20
- Sharon Stanger, 9/20
- Ellen Dahm, 9/22
- Larry Collins, 9/23
- Laura Dahm, 9/23
- Fred Strauss, 9/24
- Meghan Reilly, 9/25
- Dick Peters, 9/25
- Harold Hunt, 9/26
- Matilda Botian, 9/26
- Pat Morozink, 9/30

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- Chris & Kathi Carr, 9/3
- Richard & Danielle Rewiaki, 9/9
- Kyle & Tiffany Sobczak, 9/9

IN OUR PRAYERS

*William Heim, Lynne Sobczak,
Lance Sobczak, Sue Sauer,
Dylan Lawler, Sue Arnold,
Anna Kittle, Gary & Laura Spice,
Beth Elbersen, John Krauss,
Brenda Bradley, and the family and
friends of James Higgins*



Our small group of knitters and crocheters will be making our winter hats, scarves, and headbands that will be delivered to District 200 schools. They will be given to any child who needs something warm to wear during the colder months. Come join us! We meet in the Fireside Room on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 10 a.m.

Call Kay Darby at 815-572-1729 for more information.

TLC meets the second Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. in the Fireside Room at church. We gather for devotion, prayer, fellowship, and thoughtful conversation. We conclude with lunch together.

At our September meeting, Samantha Lucina from the McHenry County Sheriff's Office will talk with us about safety outside of our homes. We invite you to join us for our gatherings as we grow in faith, friendship, and care for one another.



Clean-Up Day at First Pres

A BIG thank you to all who helped with cleanup day on Saturday, August 29. From power washing the front entrance to cleaning every chair in the Great Hall, we had a busy crew! The nursery was cleaned from top to bottom and the patio area has never been so free of weeds.

Church Clean-Up Day

EVERY HELPER MADE A DIFFERENCE,
WHETHER OR NOT WE
CAUGHT YOU ON
CAMERA!



The classrooms, choir room, library, and Fireside Room all received a thorough cleaning. The Building & Grounds committee is very grateful to our congregation for helping keep our church looking top-notch!



Compassion, Peace & Justice



Recycling: For many years, we have been recycling alkaline batteries. Together our efforts have kept hundreds of pounds of batteries out of landfills. To recycle your alkaline batteries, simply drop them in the recycling bin created by our youth group and the Compassion, Peace & Justice Committee will arrange to have them delivered to a recycling facility.

Now we are judging the demand for recycling additional materials. If there is sufficient interest, we will expand our recycling operation. For example, we may add a bin for used printer ink cartridges. If you use ink cartridges at home and are looking for a place to recycle them, or if you have some other household recycling need, contact Ray Thuma at rpthuma@sbcglobal.net.

Pollinator Garden Update



The church pollinator garden was planted in the spring of 2023 as part of the Earth Care Congregation initiative within the Compassion, Peace & Justice committee, and in collaboration with the Sunday School program. A generous donation from Angie and Charlie Boe helped make this project a reality.



The native plants were purchased from The Land Conservancy of McHenry County, and they have thrived these past three years (see photo from late June when the garden was at its peak). The Land Conservancy recently provided a "Conservation @ Work" sign which has been installed and states the garden's purpose:

to attract birds, bees, and butterflies, improve the soil, and clean stormwater, among other benefits.

Come by the patio area and take a look at the sign and the garden, which you'll notice has begun to wind down for the season. The seed heads and plants will be left to overwinter, providing habitat for hibernating insects, winter food for wildlife, and enrichment for the soil.



Pollinator garden in late June

CARING TOGETHER

Woodstock Area Community Ministry (WACM) NEWS

Area residents are referred to WACM's Direct Assistance Program (DAP) through social service agencies, nonprofits, and townships as well as local churches when they are looking for financial assistance. A woman recently received help to pay a security deposit so she and her two children can have a safe place to live. Several families received help with utility bills to prevent a disconnection of service. Help with brake repairs allows a woman to travel safely to and from work. These are just some of the ways WACM's DAP helped Woodstock District 200 households in August. WACM relies on contributions from member churches as well as individual donations and other gifts to provide this financial support in our community. Thank you to First Presbyterian for your support of WACM.



Woodstock Food Pantry

Good news for the Woodstock Food Pantry. We received the go-ahead to begin renovations at 708 Washington Street! Another reason to celebrate is that we are now just \$15,000 shy of our \$1.25 million goal!



We're keeping our fingers crossed that we can reach our goal within the next month.

The pantry feels blessed to have such strong support from our congregation. Your prayers and monetary assistance have been crucial to our success. If you have any questions regarding the food pantry, please feel free to contact Pam Moorhouse.

Thank you all!

September Red Wagon Donations

Please continue to remember those who face food insecurity and support the Woodstock Food Pantry through your Red Wagon donations. The number of people served by the pantry continues to grow, and all donations are greatly appreciated.



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

To contribute financially online, visit fpcwoodstock.org/giving and type 'Food Pantry' in the notes.



**WORLD COMMUNION
OFFERING**

September 6 - October 4, 2026

"Cultivating reconciliation around Christ's table open to all."

The PC(USA) General Assembly approved several changes to the churchwide Special Offerings which took effect January 1, 2026. As a result, the Peace & Global Witness Offering has been transformed into the World Communion Offering.

Please consider supporting the World Communion Offering and help us reach our goal of \$1,800. Funds collected are used to cultivate reconciliation by supporting racial and gender justice, peacemaking efforts, global witness, and nurturing ecumenical and interfaith relations. Thank you from the Compassion, Peace & Justice Committee!

Session Notes

- The Session is looking into staffing the Nursery during Sunday services. If you are interested in volunteering for nursery duty on a rotating basis, or in using this service for a child or grandchild, please let an Elder or Pastor Eric know.
- Plans are being made to construct a pavilion on the south side of the main church building. Money toward this project was donated by Marty and Lynne Sobczak.
- On 9/9, choir rehearsals begin. There is an informational meeting planned for 9/13 for those interested in joining the Bell Choir. Anyone interested in either of these musical opportunities should contact the Director of Music, Gary Wilhelm.

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

(Buildings & 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

Finance Team Update

July Year-to-Date Actual vs. Budget

*Thanks For
Your Support*

Year-to-date net revenue, while negative by \$19,000, is favorable to budget by \$40,000. We appreciate the generosity of our congregation as July year-to-date contributions are favorable to budget by \$14,000. Expenses are favorable to budget by \$28,000 – mostly due to Building & Grounds favorable by \$16,000 with the additional favorability across the other categories.

Investment Accounts Performance

<u>Account</u>	<u>Year-End 2025</u>	<u>1st Qtr 2026</u>	<u>July 2026</u>	<u>2026 YTD Total Return</u>
New Covenant - McCullough Endowment		1,193,323	1,292,666	
Quarterly Distribution		<u>12,493</u>	<u>13,805</u>	
Total	1,238,777	1,205,816	1,306,471	67,694
Benjamin F Edwards	246,835	253,149	258,730	11,895
Total	1,485,612	1,458,965	1,565,201	79,589

I am pleased to report positive year-to-date returns for our investment accounts. The 2026 year-to-date total return for our investment accounts was \$80,000 – made up of ~\$68,000 for the McCullough Endowment account and ~\$12,000 for the Benjamin F. Edwards account.

The McCullough Endowment account is a Balanced Growth (60 percent equities/40 percent fixed income) investment. We take an annual four percent distribution, paid quarterly, to be used as directed by Session.

The Benjamin F. Edwards account has been invested in short-term brokerage CDs and a money-market mutual fund with the objective of maintaining principal while generating a modest return that exceeds the rates available on bank deposits at Advia and keeps funds available for distributions as necessary and directed by Session.

There have been no distributions from this account so far in 2026.

—Bob Clark, Finance Team Lead



September Worship Schedule

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

Date	Text	Liturgist	A/V	Greeters and Ushers	Acolyte	Streaming Operator	Hosting Fellowship
9/6	<u>Romans 13:8-14 and Matthew 18:15-20</u>	Cheryl Wormley	Kristi & Christopher Corbin	Sue Krause and Mary Hill	Gianna Ferrera	John Moorhouse	Pam & John Moorhouse
9/13	<u>Romans 14:1-12 and Matthew 18:21-35</u>	Addison Sobczak	Brayden Sobczak	Rick & Pat Morozink	Lucas Moorhouse	Ray Thuma	NOW Brunch
9/20	<u>Philippians 1:21-30 and Matthew 20:1-16</u>	Dawn Cook	Erin & Colin Kaye	Mary Carol & Al Dunker	Emersyn Cook	Fred Strauss	Faith Corbin
9/27	<u>Philippians 2:1-13 and Matthew 21:23-32</u>	Renée Simes	Brayden Sobczak	Matilda Botian & Sara Roewer	Dylan Lawler	Tom Schaeffer	NOW Brunch

Choir Time



Wednesday choir rehearsals begin September 9 at 7:00 p.m. Anyone interested in playing in the bell choir is invited to an informational meeting after worship on Sunday, September 13. Bell choir rehearsals are tentatively scheduled to begin September 16; time to be determined.

Half-Sheet Orders of Worship

We are now producing a simple half-sheet order of worship available each Sunday for those who would find it helpful. Because our worship service is guided primarily through the screens, these printed sheets are not full bulletins, but they do provide the basic flow of the service for visitors, newcomers, or anyone who appreciates having the order in hand. They are available on the hymnal cart near the entrance to the Great Hall.

Sign Up to HOST Fellowship

ON SUNDAYS AFTER THE SERVICE

You'll help by:



MAKING THE COFFEE



BRINGING SWEET TREATS
cookies, brownies, muffins--
whatever you love to share!



SERVING LEMONADE AND JUICE
to keep everyone refreshed



CLEANING UP
together we leave the space ready
for the week ahead



ENJOYING THE FELLOWSHIP!
it's the best part!



Hosting
is a pleasure!

A member of the
hospitality team can
help if needed.



Please Contact
Pam Moorhouse
pammoorhouse54@gmail.com



SEPTEMBER 2026

CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 1:30p Drop-In Grief Group 5p Girl Scouts Troop 2051 7p B & G meeting	2 8:30a Lectionary Study 10a No-Name Knitters	3 10a Education and Spiritual Growth 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting	4	5 10a James Higgins visitation 11a James Higgins memorial service
6 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship	7 <i>Office Closed</i>	8 10a TLC Ladies 11:30a Finance Team 4p Deacons	9 8:30a Lectionary Study 7p Choir Rehearsal	10 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting	11	12
13 Rally Day 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship 9:45a Sunday School: PreK-5th 10:30a NOW Brunch 4p Youth Group - Fire Pit gathering	14 <i>Labor Day</i>	15 5p Girl Scouts Troop 2051	16 8:30a Lectionary Study 10a No-Name Knitters 5:15p NOW Dinner 6p Book Discussion 7p Choir Rehearsal	17 3p Hospitality Team 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting	18 2p Coffee with the Pastor at Wheelhouse Coffee	19 9a Highway Cleanup
20 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship 11a Session	21 International Day of Peace	22 6p Compassion, Peace and Justice	23 8:30a Lectionary Study 5:15p NOW Dinner 6p Book Discussion 7p Choir Rehearsal	24 6p Worship Arts meeting 7p Scouting America Troop 159 meeting	25	26
27 8:30a Adult Sunday School 9:30a Worship 9:45a Sunday School: PreK-5th 10:30a NOW Brunch	28 Meals on Wheels deliveries	29 5p Girl Scouts Troop 2051	30 8:30a Lectionary Study 5:15p NOW Dinner 6p Book Discussion 7p Choir Rehearsal			

SEPTEMBER 2026

Love
GOD
Love
People



CELEBRATING AND SHARING GOD'S LOVE

MINISTERS
*All members and
friends of the
congregation*

STAFF
*Rev. Eric Corbin
Pastor*

*Carol Hubner
Office and Finance
Administrator*

*Gary Wilhelm
Director of Music*

*Harrison Cole
Accompanist*

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Return Service Requested

