

November 2025

**Join us
Sundays at 10:30 AM
for Worship Service
Office Hours:
M-Th 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
Friday 9 a.m.-11 a.m.
Email: office@fpcocoonto.org
(920)835-3922**



*Please give securely online at
www.fpcocoonto.org*

The Messenger

FPC Oconto Monthly Newsletter

FPC Oconto Leadership 2025 Session

Tammie McCarthy Finance Elder
Jim McDowell P&G Elder
Michelle McDowell Ministry Elder
Mike Duffy Elder at Large
Toni Hendzel Elder at Large
Krista Stewart Elder at Large
Polly Exferd Clerk of Session
Nikki Giese Session Recorder
Lynn Hollander Treasurer 2025
Stacy Suarez Administrative Assistant
& Financial Secretary

Deacons

Bert Hollander, Jennifer Wickman
Emilie Duffy, Cindy Ryswek
Wil Andersen, Sam McDowell

Worship Committee

Polly Exferd, Wil Andersen,
Pete Gabrielson, Krista Stewart

Christian Ed Committee

Michelle McDowell, Emilie Duffy,
Toni Hendzel

Mission Committee

Wil Andersen, Polly Exferd,
Rosemary Rice, Krista Stewart

Hospitality Committee

Michelle McDowell, Emilie Duffy
Toni Hendzel

Pulpit Supply Leadership

Rev. Rebecca Proefrock 11/02/2025

Gina Struensee 11/09/2025

David Rasmussen 11/16/2025

Gina Struensee 11/23/2025

David Rasmussen 11/30/2025

From Clerk of Session

Sunday, November 2, a congregational meeting will be held, following worship, to nominate and elect 4 Elders, 2 Deacons, Nominating Committee for 2026 and Church Treasurer. This is a very important time in the life of our church, and we really need you. As we look to the future with hope, we ask you to prayerfully consider supporting one of these key positions and joining us in our growth.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

November

Birthdays

Elizabeth Huempfer
Lauren McDowell
Margret Drewry
Stephanie Heyrman
Lynn Hollander
Emberleigh Reed
Mary Augustine
FPC of Oconto



Anniversaries

Steve Borkovec & Val Saidl-Borkovec

Correction for October birthdays:

Evan Wickman

Reminder if you don't want your birthday in the newsletter let the office know



All Military personnel & families including:

Sterling Heyrman stationed in San Diego, CA on the USS Montgomery

James Alwin stationed in Columbus MS at Columbus Air Force Base.

Local Congregations in Pastoral transition: Presbyterian Churches in Abbotsford, Marinette, Oconto, and Shawano

The families and friends of those who have passed away:

General Prayers: Aaron, Jenny, Mary Augustine, Kathy Bancroft, Bill Boesen, **Joel Caulum**, Margaret Dakins, Margret Drewry, Eugene Duffy, Mary Elliott, Becky Fahler, Carol Finn, Betty Geiger, Carol Grose, Steve Golz, Ted Haakonson, David Haag, Brynlee Hendzel, Liz Hinds, Roger Hollander, **Nancy Kamke**, Rosetta Lehman, Nick Loeffler, Bud McAtee, Stella McCarthy, Dick Medd, **Butch Mehlberg**, Margie Murphy, Harlin Nowak, Joan Nowak, Ron Palmer, Kyle Patrick, Matt Rastall & family, Mike Rehberg, Judy Sanford, Ruth Saber, Jo Schulz, Cindy Shallow, Shirley Sikma, April Steen, Sue Strandt, Jason Stewart, **John VanLannen**, Beau W., Robert & Lydia Warrichaiet, Ed Weigelt, Melinda Witbro, and Pastor Mary Zupansic.

Need to add someone to the prayer list? Is an update needed on the prayer list? Please contact Stacy in the church office with additions or corrections – Thank you!
you!



VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

November 2	
Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Nikki Giese
Snack Provider	Sam McDowell
Hostess/Close	Wil Anderson

November 9	
Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Tammie McCarthy
Snack Provider	Toni Hendzel
Hostess/Close	Toni Hendzel

November 16	
Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Paula Place
Snack Provider	Michelle M.
Hostess/Close	Michelle M.

November 23	
Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Nikki Giese
Snack Provider	Rosemary Rice
Hostess/Close	Martha Krueger

November 30	
Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	?
Snack Provider	Emilie Duffy
Hostess/Close	Emilie Duffy



The church is celebrating its **167th** Birthday on November 17. Here is a little information about the church. The state of Wisconsin was admitted to the union as the 30th state in 1848. The City of Oconto was incorporated in 1869. 166 years ago, on November 15, 1858, a group of like-minded Christians gathered at the home of Mrs. SA Turner establishing and organizing this Presbyterian congregation. The first house of worship was in 1863. The first house of worship was erected on the corner of main and State Streets. First Church Dedication 1865-1874; dedicated early in the summer of 1865. In January of 1874, the first church was destroyed by fire. The second church dedication was in 1874, on the same lot, a brick veneer building was erected. This church was dedicated on November 19, 1876. Fire destroyed this second church in December 22 of 1890. Third Church Erected and Dedicated a third church an impressive Romanesque-styled edifice of brick and stone was erected, dedicated on the first anniversary of the fire, December 22, 1891. The Romanesque-styled church was used until 1961 when the present church was built. And worship continues here.



Happy Birthday FPC Oconto



Worship

Sunday November 2nd, All Saints Day-remembering our members and loved ones who have passed away since November of 2024, during a special candle lighting service. **Advent** begins on Sunday November 30th. Looking for readers/candle lighters for each Sunday in Advent and for Christmas eve. If interested, please let Polly or Stacy know. **Decorating for Advent/Christmas** begins on Friday/Saturday after Thanksgiving. If you can help with starting the process for the first Sunday of Advent, please let Polly know you can help.

The Christmas Tree will go up anytime during the week of December 1st and be completed by Saturday December 6th along with any remaining décor that needs to be done. All help greatly appreciated. **December 24th-Christmas Eve Service** has been set for 7:00pm.

Mission Committee

Our mission for the 3rd quarter collected funds for Oconto's own Shop with a Cop. On Sunday, November 9, please join us as we present a check to the Oconto police department.

The 4th quarter mission funds will go to adopting a family for the holidays. Please be generous in your giving to this worthy cause.

CE/Communication We will be having soup for donation after service on November 16th with all proceeds going to Adopt-A-Family.

Also, the 2026 Sign-Up Genius is open & we would love for members of our congregation to volunteer your time and talent. Just a reminder that if you can't fulfill your duty to please find a replacement and let the office know so it can be changed. If spots need to be filled, we will update the duties by entering people in as needed. If you have any questions, please talk to Michelle McDowell.

Proverbs 3:5-6

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And lean not on your own
understanding; In all your ways
acknowledge Him, and He shall direct
your path."*

Hello Folks! The cold weather is approaching, as well as the holidays. Our requests are already picking up. Our Deacon's pantry is beginning to be emptied, and we are asking for some help. Please if you are able, we are in need of canned items like soup, veggies, canned meats, pasta, pasta sauce, personal hygiene items, cleaning items, paper products, cake mixes, puddings, Jello's, rice, box dinners, even cash or gift cards. We have helped several families over the summer and the shelves have been depleted so any help would be great. Thank you for any help and God Bless.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH-Pulpit Supply

As we proceed forward into the season of "Thanksgiving", it is only right that we show "appreciation" and "give thanks" to our pulpit supply, Pastor Rebecca Proefrock, Gina Struensee and David Rasmussen, who have faithfully committed themselves to help see us thru this time of transition. We are so grateful for their continuous leadership, guidance, kindness, compassion and mostly for providing us with worshipful services over the past 20 months. They have certainly been a blessing to our congregation and for that we give you thanks.

Pastor Rebecca Proefrock is a graduate of both McCormick Theological Seminary and the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago (LSTC). She has taught at St. Norbert College in the religious studies department and has done both chaplain and interim pastoral work. Following her husband's aneurysm in 2014, she shifted gears and returned full time to her other great passion -- music. Currently, she plays in several regional symphonies, and maintains two studios where she teaches violin, viola, voice, and piano. She also runs a mystery-only book club [3rd Sunday of the month, meets at St. Brendan's in Green Bay at 6pm!] and Unwind, a craft group for anything and everything [last Sunday of the month, her house]. She is thrilled that she may have been of service to her new friends in Oconto and wants you to always remember the 3 Golden Rules: love God, love your neighbor, watch out for deer.

David Rasmussen I'm 33 years old from Green Bay, Wisconsin. I have two sisters and one brother. Growing up we had various animals, always dogs and cats, sometimes chickens, pigs, cows, and a rabbit once. I used to think I wanted to be a farmer when I grew up. Sometimes when I was younger, I wanted to be a pastor as well, I would officiate weddings under the apple tree at my elementary school. I was raised in a small Presbyterian Church and Christian faith has always been a part of my life, though at some points it was pretty distant. Several life events like a horrendous car accident and especially getting sober have deepened my faith, and I've learned that the only constant is God. I had a chance to preach a few times in my church after our long-time pastor retired and found that I have a passion for sharing the gospel with others. I'm very grateful for the opportunities I've had in Oconto and elsewhere to share the word in the last year or so, it's truly been a blessing. I've spent most of my adult life in the greenhouse business, working for Schroeder's Flowers for over 11 years and for a horticultural company for a couple years after that. I currently work as a waiter in a supper club as I try to sift out what I'm supposed to be doing with my life. I have worked part time jobs on and off at bars and restaurants for many years. I also have a rental duplex which is generally the bane of my existence. I enjoy reading, being outdoors, traveling, skiing, mini golf, swimming, watching the Packers, gardening, cooking, entertaining, and deep conversations with people.

Gina Struensee is married to Dave, and we have two grown children, Jake, and Nate. We live with two cats, or should I say, the cats allow us to care for them. I graduated from DUBUQUE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY with an MDIV Master of Divinity Degree. I work as a hospice chaplain and truly enjoy helping fill the pulpit in Oconto. When I am not working, I enjoy reading, playing board games, crafting, and hanging out with my family.



Jeremiah 3:15 (NRSVA)

"I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding."



Recipe Corner

We are going to be starting up the recipe corner again and Stacy would like anyone that has a favorite family recipe to please send it her way. This recipe is one of Polly's favorite fudge recipes.

Chocolate Cherry Fudge

- 1 14 oz can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 12 oz pkg semi-sweet chocolate chips
- ½ C. coarsely chopped almonds
- ½ C. candied cherries
- 1/ C. almond extract

Microwave milk, on high power for 1-1/2 min., until melted and smooth when stirred. Stir in almonds, cherries and extract. Blend then spread into a greased 9x9 pan. Chill until firm. Cut into squares, and store in airtight container and refrigerate.



Yack and Yarn Club

Do you enjoy crocheting, knitting, diamond painting, jewelry making, tatting, embroidery, etc.? The list is endless. Want to learn to crochet or knit? Bring your craft, hooks, yarn, and needles - relax, work on a project, share ideas, and enjoy some great conversations around the table. Bring a friend or neighbor. All are welcome. Come and join us in the Fireside Lounge at First Presbyterian Church on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 thru 4:00. Beverage and snacks available. For more information, please call the church office.



Toys for Tots is starting their campaign up for the 2025 Christmas season. There will be a box out in the narthex for anyone that would like to contribute to the campaign. If you would like to volunteer in anyway, please talk to Stacy in the church office. We will be starting to take names November 1st and go until November 28th. If you know of someone that needs help, please have them contact Stacy. Thank you!

November 2025

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1 All Saints' Day Autistics Speaking Day	2 9:00am Deacons 10:30am Worship Daylight Savings Time Ends
3 5:00pm GFWC OWC National Housewife's Day	4 Election Day 12:30pm Bread by the Bay	5	6 1:00pm Yack & Yarn National Men Make Dinner Day	7	8	9 10:30am Worship Microtia Awareness Day
10 National Vanilla Cupcake Day	11 Veterans Day	12	13 1:00pm Yack & Yarn	14	15 Church Birthday	16 10:30am Worship National Button Day
17	18 12:30pm Bread by the Bay	19	20 1:00pm Yack & Yarn	21 National Red Mitten Day	22	23 10:30am Worship National Adoption Day
24	25 National Parfait Day	26	27 Thanksgiving Day National Baklava Day	28 Black Friday National French Toast Day	29	30 First Sunday of Advent 10:30am Worship



Information for next newsletter is due to the office by December 19th. If you have a recipe to share, please get it to me by that date also. If you have something you would like to see in the newsletter, please get that to Stacy by that date. Thank you!