

December 2025

Join us
Sundays at 10:30 AM
for Worship Service
Office Hours 9 a.m.-12 p.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

David Rasmussen 12/07/2025

Gina Struensee 12/14/2025

David Rasmussen 12/21/2025

Gina Struensee 12/24/2025

David Rasmussen 12/28/2025

THE MEANING OF THE FOUR ADVENT CANDLES

1st Candle-Hope
We remember God's promises and look forward with faith, just as the prophets longed for the Messiah.

2nd Candle-Peace
We reflect on the peace Christ brings—peace in our hearts, our homes, and the world.

3rd Candle-Joy
The rose candle invites us to rejoice as Christmas draws near, celebrating the joy of the Gospel.

4th Candle-Love
We honor God's perfect love revealed in Jesus and are called to share that love with others.

Together, these candles guide us in welcoming Christ with a ready, hopeful, and loving heart.

Birthdays and Anniversaries



December

Birthdays

Mike Werner
Nikki Giese
Michelle McDowell
Cindy Rysewyk
Jim McDowell
Paula Place



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: **The family of Shirley Sikma**

General Prayers: Aaron, **Barb**, Debbie, **Engrid**, **Steve**, Mary Augustine, Kathy Bancroft, Joel Caulum, Bill Boesen, Margaret Dakins, Margret Drewry, Eugene Duffy, Mary Elliott, Becky Fahler, Carol Finn, Betty Geiger, Carol Grose, Steve Golz, Ted Haakonson, David Haag, Brynlee Hendzel, Roger Hollander, Nancy Kamke, Rosetta Lehman, Nick Loeffler, Bud McAtee, **Jim McDowell**, Dick Medd, Butch Mehlberg, Margie Murphy, Harlin Nowak, Joan Nowak, **Paul O' Conner**, 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, **Dave Struensee**, 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!

Bulletin sponsorships letters have gone out for 2026, if you received a letter please get that back to the office as soon as you can. Once those letters are back Stacy will get a new sign up sheet out in the narthex. Thank you!

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

December 7

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Krista Stewart
Snack Provider	Michelle M.
Hostess/Close	Michelle M.

December 14

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Paula Place
Snack Provider	Toni Hendzel
Hostess/Close	Toni Hendzel

December 21

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Michelle M
Snack Provider	Lynn Rasmussen
Hostess/Close	Martha Krueger

December 28

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Krista Stewart
Snack Provider	Toni Hendzel
Hostess/Close	Toni Hendzel

On November 2nd, 2025, we celebrated All Saints Day, Holy Communion, and the Food drive for our Deacon's Pantry. Please enjoy the photo gallery of that day and remember what it felt like celebrating this day of remembrance and of giving.



CE/Communications Team

The 2026 Sign-Up Genius is open & we would love for members of our congregation to volunteer their 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.

Isaiah 7:14

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

Mission Committee Mission 4th quarter local mission giving will go to support "Adopt a Family" for Christmas. Please be generous with your mission giving to support to help families who are in need, especially during the cold months and with the holidays approaching.

Deacons Food Drive: for the rest of this month, we will be doing a food drive to help fill the shelves in preparation for the Christmas holiday. We are also looking for names of families to bless with a Christmas food basket. Thank you for any help and God Bless!

Worship

Looking for readers/candle lighters for each Sunday in Advent and for Christmas eve. If interested, please let Stacy or Polly know.

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.

Sign up for "Bring your own" Poinsettia on Christmas Eve is on the back table. Fill in the information required. Drop off your plant anytime after December 18th. Stacy is in the office from 9am to 12pm to let you into the building.

December 24th-Christmas Eve Service has been set for 7:00pm.

Sunday December 28th, a Casual Worship/Breakfast is planned to take place in the fireside Lounge. A light breakfast will be served at 10:00am followed by a fireside worship service at 10:30am,

Oconto Elks Annual Venison Stew Feed



When: Saturday December 7th

**Where: First American Lutheran Church
511 Madison St Oconto WI 54153**

Time: 11:00a.m. Elks Memorial Service

Dinner to follow immediately after the service 11:30

ALL ARE WELCOME!

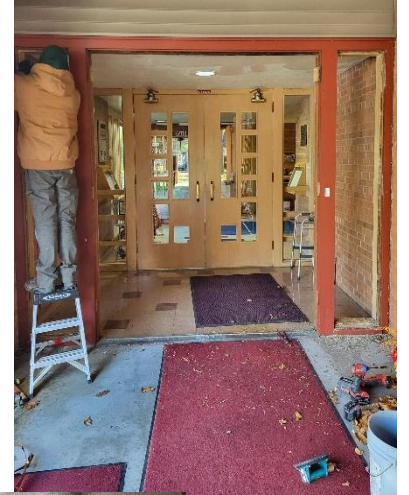
NO CHARGE



HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH

Thank you, Property and Grounds!

Earlier this year, a grant was applied for and was received earlier this fall, through our Presbytery, to replace the 3 main entrance doors to our church. We are very grateful for the grant money we received, which was only to be used for replacing the original doors to the new doors that now adorn our entryway. Come, and celebrate this new beginning we have been long awaiting for .



John 10:9

"I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture."

Our giving tree is slowly filling up, but can still use more hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, kids socks and underwear. Many of these items will be given to the schools as well as used in our Christmas gift boxes. We appreciate your support in giving through the Christmas season.





Recipe Corner

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

Seasoned Pretzels

- 1 lb. bag Pretzels
- ¼ C. canola oil
- 2 tsp. dry ranch dressing
- 1 tsp. dill weed
- ½ tsp. garlic powder (or to taste)

Combine oil and seasonings in a small bowl. Put pretzels in a gallon size zip lock bag. Pour seasoned oil over pretzels. Seal bag and gently shake so as not to break pretzels and evenly distribute oil. Pour them on a jelly roll pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 12-13 minutes, stirring once. Watch carefully. Cool on rack and serve!



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 in full swing. We are in need of your help with donations of gifts or monetary donations or your kindness in helping set up/take down, shopping for the families. If you would like to help in anyway and have any questions, please talk to Stacy in the church office. Thank you!

December 2025

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1 World AIDS Day Cyber Monday	2 12:30pm Bread by the Bay, Giving Tuesday	3	4 1:00pm Yak & Yarn	5	6 Oconto ELKS Annual Venison Stew Feed 11:00am First American Church	7 9:00am Deacons 10:30am 2 nd Sunday of Advent Worship
8	9	10 Human Rights Day	11 1:00pm Yak & Yarn	12	13	14 10:30am 3 rd Sunday of Advent Worship
15 Bill of Rights Day Worship Committee meeting 1:00pm	16 12:30pm Bread by the Bay	17	18 1:00pm Yak & Yarn	19	20 Toys for Tots Distribution Day 10:00am-3:00pm	21 10:30am 4 th Sunday of Advent Worship
22	23	24 6:30pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Nativity of the Lord, Christmas Day Office closed	26 Office closed Kwanzaa	27	28 10:30am 1 st Sunday of Christmas Worship
29	30 Bacon Day	31 New Year's Eve				



Information for next newsletter is due to the office by January 23rd. If you have something you would like to see in the newsletter, please get that to Stacy by that date. Thank you!