

August 2026

**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 2026 Session

Tammie McCarthy Finance Elder
OPEN P&G Elder
Michelle McDowell Ministry Elder
Jason Martin Elder at Large
Amy Peterson Elder at Large
Julie Trepanier Elder at Large
Polly Exferd Clerk of Session
Nikki Giese Session Recorder
Lynn Hollander Treasurer 2026
Wil Andersen - Administrative Assistant
& Financial Secretary

Deacons

Emilie Duffy, Cindy Rysewyk
Wil Andersen, Sam McDowell,
Krista Stewart

Worship Committee

Polly Exferd, Wil Andersen,
Krista Stewart

Christian Ed Committee

Michelle McDowell, Emilie Duffy,
Toni Hendzel

Mission Committee

Wil Andersen, Polly Exferd,
Rosemary Rice, Krista Stewart,
Julie Trepanier

Hospitality Committee

Michelle McDowell, Emilie Duffy
Toni Hendzel

Pulpit Supply Leadership

Pastor Greg Braatz 08/02/2026

Rev. Andrew Sonneborn 08/09/2026

David Rasmussen 08/16/2026

Pastor Greg Braatz 08/23/2026

Rev. Andrew Sonneborn 08/30/2026

Our neighbors in the Neenah/Menasha/Fox Crossing/Appleton areas were hit last week with a devastating tornado.

Through it all, we remain resilient.

We are connected—to one another, to the larger church, and to our God, who brings hope out of chaos.

"Gracious God, we lift all individuals and families enduring the devastating impact of recent floods, fires and tornadoes. Provide immediate comfort to the grieving, strength to the displaced, and safety to those still in harm's way. Guide and protect the first responders and relief workers on the ground. Amen"

"God is our refuge and strength, ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear."

Psalm 46: vs 1-2

Pastor's Corner – Greetings!

This past week the tornado that struck near my home (we are totally fine) weighs heavy on my mind. I talked about this some in my sermon on Sunday. One of the texts for the day was from Paul's letter to the church in Philippi, where he tells the congregation, "Do not be anxious about anything". Paul is trying to reassure that congregation God is always with them, so they need to place their trust in God. Unfortunately, that sentiment can ring hollow when your home or business has just been destroyed. So what should be the Christian response. For that I would like to repeat a small section of my sermon on Sunday,

"The Christian faith has never asked us to pretend these realities do not exist. Our faith never told us to close our eyes to suffering or offering easy answers to life's hardest questions. Rather, our faith provides direction on how to live in the midst of these hardships. Our faith tells us to choose compassion over indifference, generosity over fear, hope over despair, and love over hatred. Our faith tells us to continually pray, to serve, to give, and to stand alongside those who suffer because that is what followers of Jesus do. Every act of kindness, every prayer offered, every hand extended in love becomes a quiet witness that God's kingdom is still breaking into this world.

In an anxiety driven world, how do we live a faithful life?

By moving forward with confidence—not because we know exactly what tomorrow holds, but because we know the One who holds tomorrow.

We live a faithful life by continuing to worship.

We live a faithful life by serving.

We live a faithful life by loving.

We live a faithful life by living hopefully. "

Blessings- Pastor Greg



Military personnel & families including:

Sterling Heyrman – U.S. Navy, James Alwin – U.S. Air Force,
Crystal Cox - US Navy. Payton McNabb - US Army. James Hoppe - US Army.

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

Families and friends of those who have passed away:

General Prayers: Barb, Jenny, Steve, Mary Augustine, Kathy Bancroft,
Bill Boesen, Joel Caulum, Margaret Dakins, Barb Duffy, Eugene Duffy, Mary Ellen,
Becky Fahler, Carol Finn, Diane Fite, Betty Geiger, Carol Grose, Steve Golz,
Ted Haakonson, David Haag, Brynlee Hendzel, Roger Hollander, Brian Kaufman, Rosetta Lehman, Nick Loeffler, Beth
Marty, Jim McDowell, Dick Medd, Kelly Malone, Kairos Ministry, Harlin Nowak, Paul O'Conner, Ashley Pace, Dick
Palmer, Rebecca Proefrock, Judy Sanford, Ruth Saber, Julie Sauve, Fritz Schulz, Cindy Shallow, Donna Staidl, April
Steen, Sue Strandt, Jason Stewart, John VanLannen, Beau W., Robert & Lydia Warrichaiet, Ed Weigelt, and Melinda
Witbro, as we keep them faithfully in our prayers. Amen.

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

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

August 2

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	?
Snack Provider	Polly Exferd
Hostess/Close	Polly Exferd

August 9

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Mike & Wil Andersen
Snack Provider	?
Hostess/Close	?

August 16

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Jenny Wickman
Snack Provider	Lynne Rasmussen
Hostess/Close	Jenny Wickman

August 23

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	Michelle McDowell
Snack Provider	Michelle McDowell
Hostess/Close	

August 30

Duties	Volunteer
Open Church	Polly Exferd
Greeter/Usher	?
Snack Provider	?
Hostess/Close	?

BREAD BY THE BAY

Bread by the Bay is an on-going ministry supported by many area churches. Below is an update from them. Please continue to donate items to the shopping cart at church to help keep the patron shelves stocked.

The Pantry served the following July 7, 2026

Households: 65

Adults: 122

Children: 40

The Pantry served the following July 21, 2026

Households: ~~63~~

Adults: 113

Children: 50

Your continued support is needed and appreciated – Thank you!

Office Manager Announcement

We are very excited to have offered the position of Office Manager on a permanent basis to Wil Anderson and she has accepted! We are thankful for her willingness to jump and help during this period of transition. All reports of how that transition have gone have been excellent, so Wil was offered the position on a permanent basis, and we are excited to have her. Wil will in the office from 8-12 on Monday and Friday and 8-3 on Wednesday.

There is one area where we need the congregation's help. One of the potential issues when a church hires one of its members is separating their job from their on-going life as a member. Example, on Sunday morning Wil is church as a member of the congregation, primarily there for worship. So, please refrain for asking her questions that can and should be handled during office hours. Thank you for this consideration.

Please join me welcoming Wil to our staff!

Pastor Greg

Worship Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 19th worship service led by "The Voices of Peace"-A Southern Gospel Music Ministry. They are returning to us after being here a year ago. You don't want to miss this uplifting hour of music, song and testimony. Check them out at our website:
www.voicesofpeacemusic.net

Mission 3rd quarter Mission giving will support "Shop with a Cop" as our local mission project. this will help our law enforcement with their annual event, which allows children to shop with a police officer, for gifts for their families for Christmas. After shopping they return to City Hall for refreshments and gift wrapping. Always a fun time for the officers and children. Let's be supportive of making Christmas special for them.

Deacons Hello Folks! The Deacon's pantry is beginning to be emptied, and we are asking for some help. Please if you are able, we need 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. And of course, monetary donations are also helpful.
Thank you for any help and God Bless!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

Bert Hollander
Tammie McCarthy
Anna Bourassa

Anniversaries

Scott & Jennifer LaPlant
Jim & Michelle McDowell
Brian & Rosemary Rice
Craig & Michelle Bahrke
Mike & Jenny Wickman

August 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 National Sunflower Day
2 9:00am Deacons 10:30am Worship	3	4 12:30pm Bread by the Bay	5	6 1:00pm Yack & Yarn	7	8
9 10:30am Worship	10 5:00pm Manna Meals	11	12	13 1:00pm Yack & Yarn	14	15
16 10:30am Worship	17	18 12:30pm Bread by the Bay	19	20 1:00pm Yack & Yarn	21 Senior Citizens Day	22
23 Pentecost 10:30am Worship	24 National Waffle Day	25	26 National Dog Day	27 1:00pm Yack & Yarn	28	29
30 Trinity Sunday 10:30am Worship	31					



Recipe Corner

Anyone have a favorite family recipe that you would like to share? Please send to Wil in the office! This recipe is in remembrance of our friend Shirley Sikma from the 1999 "Fuel For The Soul" cookbook.

Chicken Casserole

14 oz croutons	4 Cups Chicken Broth
1 can cream of mushroom soup	4 bay eggs
5 cups diced chicken	1 onion, chopped
3 stalks celery (chopped)	

Mix all together. Put in a 9" x 13" pan. Top with 1 can cream of chicken soup mixed with 1 cup of milk. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.



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.

Psalm 71:23

"My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you, my soul also, which you have redeemed."

Information for next newsletter is due to the office by August 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!

Foods of the Bible

All of the foods listed below are hidden in the word search.

How many can you find?

pomegranate

oil

milk

honey

grain

lamb

flour

manna

yeast

fruit

barley

olive

fig

raisins

whey

wheat

beans

cheese

curds

lentils

quail

cinnamon

C	E	S	E	E	H	C	L	E	N	T	I	L	S	R	R
H	W	F	M	A	N	N	A	N	C	J	O	L	F	T	A
M	F	Y	C	B	M	A	L	M	G	F	L	O	U	R	I
I	T	S	Y	B	A	R	L	E	Y	I	D	L	R	O	S
L	W	H	E	Y	C	D	Y	A	V	G	S	R	L	D	I
K	I	R	A	C	Y	C	O	R	Q	X	D	I	H	L	N
E	U	V	S	J	B	W	C	U	M	O	V	N	B	G	S
N	S	W	T	E	O	G	A	U	T	E	W	X	D	K	Z
S	V	H	B	X	I	I	D	C	I	N	N	A	M	O	N
P	H	E	V	H	L	T	E	F	X	N	T	H	M	C	A
G	Q	A	W	R	N	H	I	S	N	A	E	B	U	Z	H
I	L	T	H	M	G	R	A	I	N	C	P	R	F	Z	Z
P	O	M	E	G	R	A	N	A	T	E	D	C	M	X	D
W	T	Q	A	Y	E	N	O	H	S	S	F	R	U	I	T