



2025

THE CHURCH'S LIFE
News of the First Presbyterian Church
408 North Bergamont Boulevard
Oregon, Wisconsin 53575
Office: 608.835.3082
Email: info@fpcoregonwi.org
Website: www.fpcoregonwi.org

From the Pastor's Desk



Darling people of FPC,

Last week we discussed our thoughts as a congregation for 2025 at our annual meeting. We asked ourselves two big questions - "Who are we?" and "Who do we want to be?". Although this was asked about us as a congregation, this is something that we can think of with regards to our own selves.

Because no matter how many times I'll say I'll go to the gym or another metric to track a resolution - the question really is, "Who do I want to be when I get to 2026?". It's the question for all of us, when we reflect on 2025 how do we want to be known? Are we known for our kindness and grace? Are we known for the days we extended mercy to the least of these? Are we known for who and how we cared? Or are we proud of how we've changed our diet or our exercise habits?

As we get more settled into 2025 and stop writing the wrong year on our checks, I wonder what it would look like to spend a few moments this month reflecting on who you were in 2024 and how you grew? There's a lot going on in the world today, it's easy to fall into the depths of the newspaper or the internet. But before we accept the overwhelm, I want you to reflect on the accomplishments and the joy of last year. There is joy and delight in our life and there are little moments that we can reflect on to say "that was really neat". As you think of the moments in 2024 where you felt accomplishment or joy, I'd love to hear from you. What last year made you feel loved or accomplished? What part of 2024 helped you feel like you grew in those 366 days? Where was God in your life in the chapter that was 2024.

All my care,
Pastor Jo

Coffee with Pastor Jo February 24th, 9 - 11 AM

Join Pastor Jo for coffee and conversation at the Kickback Cafe on January 13, from 10am—Noon..



Jan.—Feb. Sermon Series

Sermon Series - As we begin 2025 together, we will be sharing in our exploration of the book of Job. Job tells the story of a man who experiences incredible grief and tragedy in his life and through the story he begins to question where suffering and grace coincide. The theme of the series will be Finding Hope in the Midst of Grief. I

hope this series offers a new perspective on hope and the role we play in our lives as we work with God in our darkest moments.

Christian Ed

Adult Education - February 9th



Have you heard the terms Legacy Gifts or Planned Gifts and wondered how you might donate such gifts to FPC? At our next Adult Education session, Sunday, February 9, John Mehl will explain these terms and make suggestions on how you can arrange contributions now that will be provided to FPC in the future. We will meet after worship in the Session Room.



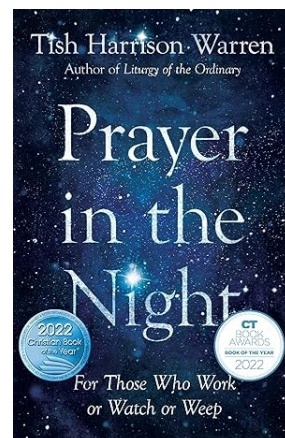
Sunday School February 16

There will be Sunday School on February 16. Youth will be invited to leave worship after the Children's Message with two adults for a lesson, craft and music. The playground has age specific activities each week and children are encouraged to take a worship bag to their seat.

Adult Ed—March 9

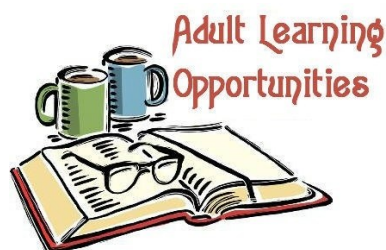
On March 9 after worship, Pastor Jo will be leading a discussion on the book *Prayer in the Night* by Tish Harrison Warren (<https://www.amazon.com/Prayer-Night-Those-Work-Watch/dp/0830846794>).

The book is framed around the nighttime prayer of Compline. The author explores themes of human vulnerability, suffering and God's seeming absence. Like our other book discussion, if you read nothing or you read the whole thing, you are encouraged to come!



Mark Your Calendars for Lent Thursdays starting March 13

Instead of a traditional Bible Study during Lent, we will be having a weekly "Bake and Pray". You are invited to bring lunch or snacks on Thursdays from 12-2pm at church, starting on March 13. We will make bread, pray, talk, and eat together. Pastor Jo is already checking their bread recipes! Come every Thursday, or when your schedule allows, all are welcome.

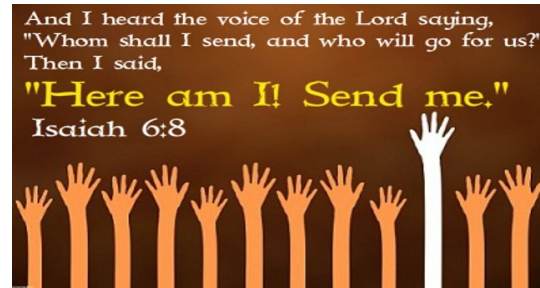


Adult Education Coordinator Needed

We have Adult Ed the second Sunday of each month and need someone to coordinate the monthly gathering. The topics/presenters are in place through the program year.

The coordinator would make sure the information is in the monthly newsletter and the weekly O4D. They would also communicate with the presenter and help with set up needs of a microphone, screen, etc. They would also help the day of the presentation with set up. Ideally, the coordinator would work with the CE committee to schedule fall programming.

It is not a big time commitment and most is done at your convenience. Please consider this volunteer opportunity and contact Judy Belanus with interest or questions.



Visioning from the Annual Meeting

During our Annual Meeting on January 26th, we discussed two major questions: "Who are we as FPC?" and "Who do we want to be?".

When reflecting on **who we are** we noted the following:

- We are a congregation that cares.
- We are a congregation that is generous with both resources and time.
- We are a welcoming congregation and new people feel welcomed.
- We are a kind congregation.
- We are a compassionate group of people.

When reflecting on **who we want to be** we said:

- We want to be a community and congregation that is flexible.
- We want to be a congregation that is engaged with nearby communities.
- We want to be a congregation that offers zoom options for participation of all people.
- We want to be able to communicate and share ideas with each other.
- We want to be merciful to each other and our community.

2025 Per Capita

It's a new year so you know we have to talk a bit about our Per Capita offerings for 2025, which like a lot of expenses, has gone up to \$40.00. Remember, as your resources allow, we need you to contribute \$40.00 for each family member who is a member of our church. This is the amount we pay directly to Presbytery, which uses \$23.66, sends \$5.50 to the Synod and \$10.84 to the General Assembly.



You have three ways to make your offering: a check to the church left in the offering plate on Sunday, a check mailed to the church, or via our online giving page. Thank you for continuing to support the greater Presbyterian Church.

Mission

Many thanks to Wendy Goist Jones for her excellent leadership of the Mission Committee the last seven years! I will be a Mission Chair this year, with the continued, efficient assistance of co-chair Cindy Mehl. Thanks, Cindy!

Our first PPOW delivery of 2025 was Friday, January 17, serving nine families. The overall value of the delivery was \$576.43-\$64.05 per family! With the recurring generous donations of cash and food items totaling \$279.35, only \$297.08 will be coming out of our budgeted funds this month. Nearly HALF was donated!! Amazing! Thank you!

We received thank you letters from the Oregon Area Food Pantry and St. Vincent de Paul for our end of year donations. I also received the 2024 Impact Report from St. Vincent de Paul, and wanted to share some statistics of all they do to make life better for so many in our area.

- Dane County saw an 18% increase in homelessness from 2023 to 2024.
- Thousands in our area pay more than half their income in rent, putting them at risk of eviction and making hard choices between rent, food, and medicine.
- St. Vincent de Paul provided more than \$678,000 worth of clothing, furniture, and household goods directly to people via the voucher program from store donations.
- The St. Vincent Food Pantry gave out over \$4 million in food, personal care supplies and diapers to local households; demand increased 19%..
- The Charitable Pharmacy served 461 patients with 7680 prescriptions with retail value of \$757,452.

Sue McGuigan



PPOW Collection for February

The February collection for PPOW is cereal. Since we give two boxes of cereal every month we are always in need of cereal. Any of the less sugary kinds are fine. Aldi and sales at Pick N

Save are always good places for good prices. And thanks for all the mac and cheese you donated in January. We give two boxes of that every month, too.

Alert! We need more paper grocery bags! If you have them to donate, we'd appreciate that.





Did You Know? Little Known Facts about PPOW

On a regular basis (monthly, every other month, seasonal, as needed) congregation members donate some of the staples that are delivered to our PPOW families. It might be a monthly purchase of beans, rice and canned vegetables. Or maybe it is canned chicken every other month. All our ground beef is donated, usually when HyVee has a sale (that can be every two or three months.) Seasonal items are often donated such as hot chocolate mix and marshmallows, 50 pound bags of potatoes and onions and special treats at Christmas time. A number of folks give cash that supplements the PPOW budget. These donations are the foundation of the PPOW program.

Session News—January

At the January 23, 2025 Session meeting, the following items were approved:



Approved the 2025 budget.

Approved the elimination of several "cash funds" and the transfer of monies in those funds to the "Future Major Maintenance Fund".

Approved the elimination of the Fellowship Fund (part of cash funds) to the Connections Committee.

Approved the distribution of Mission Funds in the 2025 budget - General Assembly 18%; Synod Mission 12%; John Knox Presbytery Mission 70%.

Elected Judy Belanus as Commissioner to the February 15 John Knox Presbytery meeting.

Elected Dave Hanson as Clerk of Session

Elected Lori Johnson as Treasurer

Approved Mike Johnson, Sue McGuigan, and John Mehl as check signatories

Approved the following committee assignments for 2025:

- Christian Education - Judy Belanus
- Connections - Nancy Sheldon
- Deacon Liaison - Nancy Cox
- Finance - John Mehl
- Mission - Sue McGuigan
- Personnel - Mike Johnson
- Property - Dave Mares/Tom Niebauer (Dave Hanson session liaison)
- Worship - Nancy Cox

Tom Niebauer



February Birthdays

1: Sandra Champagne
 4: Amanda Quam
 5: Dolly Ledin
 18: Matt Dalstrom
 24: Susan Niebauer
 26: Linda Clark

December Financial Snapshot

First Presbyterian Church of Oregon

Monthly Financial Summary

as of December 31, 2024

	Monthly Amount	Year-to-date Actual	Year-to-date Budget
Pledges Committed (Annual Budget \$117,440)			
Operating Cash Revenue from Pledges	\$ 13,413	\$ 133,023	\$ 109,560
Operating Income	December	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Income	\$ 15,513	\$ 153,963	\$ 122,960
Deduct: Total Expenses	\$ 16,340	\$ 174,295	\$ 176,023
Adjustments to Cash:			
Add: Transfer from Current Assets	\$ -	\$ 4,216	\$ -
Add: Transfer from Reserve Funds	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ -
Deduct: Transfer PPOW Donations to Mission Fund	\$ 2,524	\$ 2,524	\$ -
Deduct: Transfer Memorial Fund Donations	\$ -	\$ 670	\$ -
Deduct: Principal Payment on Debt	\$ 919	\$ 10,275	\$ -
Net Operating Income (Loss) ADJUSTED	<u>\$ (4,269)</u>	<u>\$ (19,585)</u>	<u>\$ (53,063)</u>
Cash Balance-Operating Fund	December	Year-to-date	
Beginning Balance	\$ 12,893	\$ 28,678	
Ending Balance	<u>\$ 7,597</u>	<u>\$ 7,597</u>	
Increase in Available Operating Funds	<u>\$ (5,297)</u>	<u>\$ (21,081)</u>	

Per Capita for 2025 — The Per Capita payment for each FPC member this year is \$40.00 per person, an increase from last year. As you are able, please place your check made out to FPC in the offering plate or mail it to the church, or you may pay via our online giving page. Your per capita payment is much appreciated by the church and John Knox Presbytery.