

The WFPC News

The Winnebago First Presbyterian Church Newsletter for February 2026

**First Presbyterian Church of Winnebago:
Where community, faith, family, and friends come together.**

“Our Lenten Journey”

by Pastor Lisa Lopez-Meyer

*“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?”
-Psalm 42:1-2*

The season of Lent is almost upon us, and with it, a new opportunity to seek the Lord. The season marks 40 days (plus Sundays) before Holy Week, the time of remembrance of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Lent has traditionally been a somber and reflective time in the life of the church, when we focus on repenting from our sins, growing in our faith, and finding our strength in God.

What’s happening at WFPC this Lent?

We start the season on **Wednesday, February 18**, by gathering for a **Soup Supper at 5:30 pm**, followed by our traditional **Ash Wednesday Service at 6:30 pm** in the Sanctuary. We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper together and offer imposition of ashes for anyone who wishes to receive them.

We are also once again joining area churches in hosting Community Lenten Services on Wednesdays during Lent at 6:30 pm this year. The schedule is as follows:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| February 25 | Dimensions Living Winnebago |
| March 4 | Middle Creek Presbyterian Church |
| March 11 | First Presbyterian Church Winnebago |
| March 18 | Winnebago United Methodist Church |
| March 25 | Seward Congregational Church |

In addition, **Sunday Sermons** during Lent will reflect on one of the most requested questions to explore from our congregation “Why do bad things happen to good people?” While there is no one simple answer, many biblical passages provide spiritual perspectives that can help us during our own times of trial.

Last but not least, this Lent we invite you to refresh your own foundational practice of **spiritual disciplines**. Do you struggle with **prayer**? **Use the psalms as your starting point for prayer**. Some psalms to get you started: Psalm 51 for confession, Psalm 27 for hope, Psalm 29 and 103 for adoration, Psalm 101 for dedication to the Lord, Psalm 102 and 130 for lament and help, Psalm 136 for Thanksgiving.

Would you like to **read a whole book of the bible this Lent**? Try **Psalms** as well. Four psalms a day will have you finishing before Easter (and feel free to give 119 a day for itself alone).

Would you like to practice some **outreach** this Lent? Here’s one idea: **each week pick one person you’d like to encourage or bless and reach out to them**. Think about what would be most loving in each situation: you might spend time with someone you know is lonely, send a card with a personal prayer to someone who needs prayer, or give a gift to someone who is struggling financially. We also **invite you especially to pray for those who do not know the Lord**, by name and in general.

Session Updates

by Stefanie Kluck

The Session met via Zoom on Monday, January 5, 2025. All Session members were present.

Pastor Lisa led us through devotions by reading Isaiah 40:9-31, referred to as the “Book of Comfort”. It reminds us of God’s unrivaled greatness and that he provides strength to the weary. Pastor Lisa led Session in an opening prayer.

The clerks’, pastor’s, and treasurer’s reports were received.

Action items included:

- Reviewed Communion guidelines for Elders assisting at the table.
- Approved the installation of the remaining 2026 officers to take place during the service on Sunday, January 11, 2026.
- Discussed the agenda and plans for the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 25.
- Discussed process for sharing and addressing feedback received publicly or privately. Members are encouraged to speak with the Pastor directly. They may ask for an Elder to be present at a meeting or are also welcome to attend a Session meeting.

The next Session meeting is February 2, at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall.

Stewardship updates

December Income -Expenses: -\$8,881.03

2025 Giving-Expenses: -\$24,492.67

Giving Shortfall in 2025 was covered through investment income. Our operating fund continues to have a positive balance, but we are taking steps to minimize any shortfall in 2026.

Trustees

by Gwen Vietmeier

The Trustees met at church for a meeting on January 13 at 5 pm. All members were present.

Incoming Trustees, Lisa Mitchell and Jim Morrison, were welcomed to the meeting. The group will continue to meet on the second Tuesday of each month. The meeting time will be flexible and

determined by the specific agenda items each month. Rick will continue as moderator and Gwen as secretary.

Rick walked us through the operation of the boiler, thermostats, air conditioning system, and sound system. We discussed snow removal on Sundays and inspected the tv monitor in the preschool room with plans to mount it to the wall. Arranged to meet with Randee’s Music to discuss the sound system.

Maintenance and repairs during the month:

- Repaired toilet flush handles.
- Adjusted a radiator valve in the preschool room.
- Serviced the upright vacuum and disposed of a non-working vacuum.
- Installed a new washer to a water supply line.
- Repaired trim in the sanctuary.

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 10 at 5 pm.



Deacon Ministry

Marilyn called to order with one member absent and one member calling in by phone. New Deacons were welcomed. Sharon Smith opened the meeting with prayer. Marcee Keilback led the devotional.

The Minutes, Treasurer and Sunshine reports were received.

New Business and outreach activities:

- Gift cards were approved for a family in need. Deacon of the Month list revised for 2026.
- Care List revised for new Deacons.
- Deacons will serve Fellowship in October
- Evangelism/outreach ideas were discussed for 2026.
- Communion for care list set for Feb/March.
- February Deacon - Marilyn.
- Communion:

February 1 and Ash Wednesday February 18.
Our Care list will serve communion on Feb 1.

The next meeting is February 17th at 6:30 pm.

PW-Ruth Circle

by Sue Jansen

- Presbyterian Women/Ruth Circle will meet at 10 a.m. February 17, 2026 in the Church Fellowship Hall.
- Blanket Sunday will be February 22. Susan Gambrel will be providing minutes for mission during February. The Puppeteers will perform a skit that day, donations provide warm blankets for those in need. Blanket Sunday is a Church World Service project. 2025 donations totaled \$540.

Youth Group

Saturday, February 7, 2026

Volunteering at Northern IL Food Bank, 1397 Sandy Hollow Rd in Rockford 9-11:30 am shift. Arrive 15 min before shift, or carpool from church at 8:20 am Food Distribution event, dress warmly, closed shoes.

Sunday, February 25, 2026

Lent for Teens: Join us as we embrace the Lenten season with some reflection about our life with God and fellowship time with others 6:30 pm, Youth Room.

Fellowship

by Bev Williams

February fellowship will be on February 15 and will be hosted by the Scouts in honor of Scout Sunday.



Anyone can help with Worship!

We are looking for members who would like to serve as liturgists and Scripture readers during services. See Pastor Lisa if you are interested in liturgist or reading.

Welcome to our newest members!



Bob Edmonds, Jan Graves and Jack Graves made their membership commitments to First Presbyterian Church in 2025. We rejoice to have them with us and look forward to working together for the glory of God!"

Contact Information:

Rev. Lisa Lopez-Meyer (Pastor Lisa)
(815)742-7503 or thewfpcpastor@gmail.com

Clerk of Session - Stefanie Kluck
stefaniehassel@gmail.com

Deacons - Marilyn Larsen
marilyn.larsen94@gmail.com

Trustees- Rick Carr
rscarr@comcast.net

PW-Ruth Circle - Sue Jansen
LSJan@yahoo.com

Newsletter items for March
are due by February 11th.

On the web at: thewfpc.org and Facebook: @thewfpc208
Located at: 208 W. Winnebago St. Handicap accessible



• • • • •
NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PD.
PERMIT #5
WINNEBAGO, IL 61088
P.O. BOX 38
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WINNEBAGO
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED