

First United Presbyterian Church
201 W. Evergreen St.
PO Box 259
Elmwood, IL 61529

elmwoodpresbyterian@gmail.com
rev.marla.elmwood.pc@gmail.com
www.firstpresbyterianofelmwood.org

Lanplighter



February 2026

For God so loVed the world
thAt He gave His
onLy

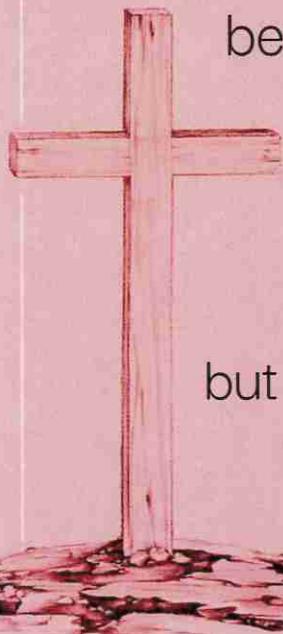
begottEN

SoN,

thaT whoever
belIeves

iNHim should not perish
but havE everlasting life.

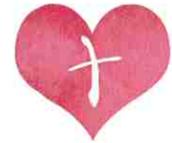
John 3:16, NIV



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CALENDAR



February 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Scout Sunday 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service Deacons Mtg following worship	2	3 Women's Zoom Study #5 @ 7pm	4 Quilt Club 8AM-4PM Cub Scouts 6:30 PM	5 Prayer Group 9:00 AM	6	7
8 Souper Bowl of Caring (offering to be collected) Communion 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 10:30 AM Children's S. S. Annual Cong Mtg. after worship	9 EBW 6:00 PM	10 Women's Zoom Study #6 @ 7pm PGR Assembly 6-8pm	11	12 Prayer Group 9:00 AM Session Meeting 6:30 PM	13	14 
15 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service Worship Committee Mtg. following Worship	16 Brandi will be out of the office thru the 28th Pastor Marla will be out of the office thru the 23rd	17 Women's Zoom Study #7 @ 7pm	18 Quilt Club 8AM-4PM Cub Scouts 6:30 PM	19 Prayer Group 9:00 AM	20	21
22 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service Coffee Hour Rev. Dr. Tim Bauler will be preaching	23 6:00 PM PEO Brandi will be out of the office thru the 28th	24 *Pastor back in the office Women's Zoom Study #8 @ 7pm *last one	25 Lenten Study #1 @ 7pm in the Yates City sanctuary	26 Prayer Group 9:00 AM	27	28

SCHEDULES

FEBRUARY

Announcements

Elder of the Month

Ron Cox

Elder to be Liturgist & Assist Treasurer

February 1st Gene Gibson
 February 8th Brandy Stevens
 February 15th Ron Cox
 February 22nd Marty Tarter



3rd: Greg Hotz
 4th: Caroline Colgan
 22nd: Scott Stalter
 25th: Louise Boyer



Thursday morning Bible Study & Prayer Group
 Thursday's @ 9am in the Fellowship Hall.



Adult Sunday School

Adult Sunday School meets
 Sunday Mornings @ 9:00am
 Everyone is Welcome!



Children's Sunday School
 for ages 4 - 7 will meet on
 the 2nd Sunday of every month
 @ 10:30am during worship



- Boy Scout Sunday - February 1st
 We will be recognizing the boys
 from Pack #3058 during worship.
 Refreshments afterwards!



TACKLE HUNGER

- Souper Bowl Sunday - February 8th

We will be collecting cans of soup, soup making supplies,
 and monetary donations on Sunday, February 8th,
 Souper Bowl Sunday, to be given to a local organization.

BE A GAME CHANGER!

When you give a donation you are providing food
 for the hungry and compassion to those in need.
 And that's the best way to change the game.



Deacons Meeting
 February 1st @ 11:30



OUT OF
office

*Brandi will be out of the office
February 16th thru the 27th*

OUT
of
OFFICE

Pastor Marla will be out of the office
February 16th thru the 23rd



Rev. Dr. Tim Bauler will be
Filling the Pulpit on February 22nd



THEY WALKED WITH GOD



Women's Zoom Bible Study

Tuesday's @ 7pm

They Walked with God takes a closer look at forty of the most inspirational characters in the Bible and shares a powerful message: if God can find a place for each character in the Bible, he's carved out a spot for you, too. Pastor Max Lucado weaves together stories from Scripture with reflections that offer a modern perspective, bringing life to the characters. You'll be encouraged as you get to know them. So jump on the zoom link and join us!

Jan 6th	Sarah
Jan 13th	Simon and Mary
Jan 20th	The Canaanite Woman
Jan 27th	The Crippled Man at the Gate
Feb 3rd	The Gadarene Demoniac
Feb 10th	The Leper Jesus Healed
Feb 17th	The Woman Caught in Adultery
Feb 24th	The Woman Who Washed Jesus' Feet (LAST MEETING)

LENTEN STUDY

Wednesday Evenings @ 7pm

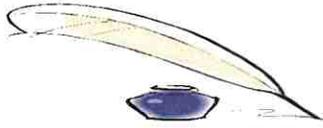
FINDING JESUS IN THE PSALMS: A LENTEN JOURNEY by Barb Roose

Join us as we, Presbyterians, unite for a 5-week Lenten Study. We will journey together through a meaningful encounter with the Psalms through the season of Lent. Combining an interpretation of the Psalms with real life stories, the study moves through the familiar words of Psalm 23 toward the painful cries of Psalm 22 uttered by Jesus on the cross. The study includes reflections on the life of King David and the original context of the writings, along with connections between the Psalms and the life and death of Jesus the Messiah.

Wednesday evenings 7pm at Faith Presbyterian in Yates City

- Feb 25th #1 Why Do We Need to Find Jesus in the Psalms? (Psalm 2, Romans 8)
- Mar 4th #2 Finding Jesus with Us in Our Hard Places (Psalm 16)
- Mar 11 #3 Finding Jesus as Our Shepherd (Psalm 23, John 10:1-8)
- Mar 18th #4 Finding Jesus as Our Hope (Psalm 110, Psalm 100, Hebrews 7)
- Mar 25th #5 Finding Jesus as Our Strength (Psalm 69, Matthew 26, John 18)
- #6 Finding Jesus as Our Savior (Psalm 22, Matt 27, John 20)





FROM THE PASTOR

February 2026

Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always "me first," doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others, doesn't revel when others grovel. Love takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, always trusts God, always looks for the best, never looks back, but keeps going to the end. Love never dies.

I Corinthians 13:4-7 The Message

Greetings to each of you as we enter this month of LOVE!

The month of February is best known for the secular holiday Valentine's Day. It's always on the 14th of the month and is celebrated by most people in one fashion or another. In the Christian church we oftentimes see the beginning of Lent occurring in Feb. This year Ash Wednesday is Feb 18th with the first Sunday of Lent being Feb 22th. To say we celebrate Lent is an overstatement – for we observe it -- and it's a somber, reflective time of examining our lives, our thoughts, our behaviors. We confess and ask for forgiveness of our Lord, and we resolve in our hearts to live more like a person who has Christ in our lives and the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

To help us along our Lenten Journey we will have a Lenten Study each Wednesday beginning Feb 25th at the Yates City church. We will be looking closer at the Psalms and how they guide us on the journey to the cross of Christ.

BUT before we go into that somber time, we have the joy of Feb 14th! You see the scripture above from I Corinthians 13, a well-known passage. Many times, it is used in Christian Wedding ceremonies but the truth is that when Paul wrote these words, he was speaking to a church that was jumping the rails and having internal and external troubles!

As is common with many scripture texts, we can read this and understand the ancient setting but also see that it applies to The Church, to Marriages, and to Our Individual Christian lives. I used The Message translation here to emphasize the personal-ness (is that a word?!). What I mean is the teaching can be applied to us, personally. We can ask ourselves the questions: Do I care more for others than myself? Do I want what I don't have (envy)? Am I arrogant, do I fly off the handle and keep score on my brothers and sisters who I feel have wronged me?

These questions can guide us as we look to answer in the affirmative: Do I trust God and look for the best? Love is a powerful answer to many of the struggles, questions and difficulties we face each day. Use the list above to remind yourself that Christ first loved us. Let us love each other.

Blessings,
Pastor Marla

First United Presbyterian Church, Elmwood, IL
Session Meeting Minutes December 11, 2025

A regular meeting of the Session of First United Presbyterian Church of Elmwood was held in the Fellowship Hall on December 11, 2025. The meeting was opened with devotions and prayer by Brandy Stevens at 6:30p.m.

Elders present: 2025 – Anita Asbell and Steve Winslow
2026 – Brandy Stevens and Marty Tarter
2027 – Larry Criswell and Calie Stalter

constituting a quorum. Absent was Ron Cox. Rev. Marla Bauler moderated the meeting. The guidelines for a quorum were established at the January 9, 2025 Session Meeting as the presence of 50% of currently serving Elders.

Elder Training: Simplicity – inward and outward by Anita Asbell.

The meeting agenda was reviewed and approved.

No Deacons Report.

Clerk's Report

The minutes from the November 13, 2025 Session meeting, the November 12, 2025 Special Congregational meeting and the December 7, 2025 Special Congregational meeting were reviewed. Seconded. Approved.
No Correspondence to review.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report for November 2025 was reviewed. Approved.
The 2026 Annual Budget was reviewed. Approved.
As of this date the farm check has not been received.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Marla gave a formal report which listed her monthly ministry activities.
Communion was served to 26 members of the congregation on December 7, 2025.
Pastor Marla will be out of the office on December 12th thru the 14th.

Committee Reports

Personnel: Chair – Ron Cox

Our longtime and faithful organist, Pat Althiser has officially retired from her many years of service. Pat has been a true blessing not only playing in our church each Sunday morning, but also in all the weddings and funerals she played. This was her mission and she will be missed.

Finance: Co-Chairs – Larry Criswell and Marty Tarter

It has been suggested by the treasurer that we move \$10,000 from the investment account to the church savings account. Motion made. Seconded. Approved. We also will be moving \$10,000 from the investment account over to the checking account to cover the cost of the gutters and stained-glass window lighting. Motion made. Seconded. Approved. As we have recently found ourselves significantly needing funds to pay the church bills (as has happened every year for the past several years), we borrowed money from the Missions Account. Motion made to replace \$4,000 back into Missions. Seconded. Approved

Worship/Membership/Christian Ed: Co-Chairs – Calie Stalter & Anita Asbell

Worship: Committee oversaw the Hanging of the Greens. A light meal was also provided. Thanks to all who stayed and helped to decorate. Once again, all is beautiful.

Membership: No report.

Christian Ed: Adult Sunday School continue their studies. Children's Sunday School meets the second Sunday of each month.

Adult Sunday School reports the following financial accounting:

*Beginning Balance as of November 1, 2025 = \$1,234.87.

Deposits: \$140; \$2,650; \$149; \$30

Ending Balance as of November 30, 2025 = \$4,203.87.

Marketing and Evangelism: Chair – Chair – Brandy Stevens

Brandy broached the subject of possibly ordering new t-shirts for whoever would like to have one – at their cost. This would be a great idea for when we are out in the community – such as Trunk-or-Treat. We will revisit this after the new year.

Missions: Chair – Marty Tarter

All quarterly pledges have been fulfilled for the 2025 year.

Building and Grounds: Co-Chairs – Steve Winslow and Larry Criswell

The new gutters have been installed.

The lighting beneath the stained glass has been replaced.

The City of Elmwood will be replacing the water meter.

New Business

A reminder to all the Elders that the Annual reports are due January 7, 2026.

We were approached several months ago and asked if we would care to donate to the Community Wellness Center and YMCA project. Now that more information has been obtained, the discussions will begin early in 2026.

A letter was received by a member of our congregation regarding the action taken by Session during the September 2025 meeting. After a lengthy review and discussion of the contents of this letter, it has been determined that the Session's decision made that night will stand as is. Unfortunately, our church has found itself under significant dire-straits when it comes to our finances.

Our treasurer has been having to rob Peter to pay Paul and then figure out a way to pay Paul back. Our investments continue to grow even with transferring the money from this investment fund. Rest assured that Session has prayed over these issues and feel, for now, this is the best way. We appreciate everyone's concern and prayers as we members of the Session, voted on by our congregation, try to do what is best for our church.

There being no further business to come before the session, the meeting adjourned with a short prayer offered by Pastor Marla at 8:10 p.m.

The next session meeting is January 8, 2026 with Devotions & Prayer by Rev. Marla Bauler.

Submitted with prayer by,

Anita W. Asbell
Clerk of the Session
bdt

Moderator,

Rev. Marla Bauler

First United Presbyterian Church, Elmwood, IL
Special Congregational Meeting November 23, 2025

Moderator Rev. Marla Bauler

The Congregational Meeting to elect the Nominating Committee was opened with prayer at 11:17 a.m. by Pastor Marla Bauler. Members in attendance totaled 20, which represented a quorum. The church By-laws give guidelines for a quorum as the presence of 20% of current church membership.

Pastor Explained the purpose of this meeting is to elect three members of the congregation to serve as "At Large" members of the Nominating Committee for one year. The following three volunteered: Susan Flinn, Brett Stevens and Gene Gibson. The Session has appointed Brandy Stevens as chair of the committee and the Deacons have appointed Amy Kepple as their representative.

A motion was made to accept these nominations. Seconded and Approved.

The committee will report back to the congregation with their nominees for two Elders and three Deacons on December 7, 2025.

The second part of the meeting was to approve the 2026 Pastor's Terms of Call. Once approved, the information will need to be forwarded to the Commission on Ministry for their records.

Emily Roberts, representing the Finance Committee explained to the congregation that the Finance committee met November 16, 2025 to discuss and approve the 2026 Terms of Call. The minimum standards (2.5% increase as suggested by Presbytery) for the 2026 year.

The Finance committee moved to approve these terms. Motion seconded and approved.

The meeting was then closed with prayer by Pastor Marla at 11:23 a.m.

Moderator,

Pastor Marla Bauler

Sincerely,

Anita W Asbell
AA/bdt

First United Presbyterian Church, Elmwood, IL
Special Congregational Meeting December 7, 2025

Moderator Rev. Marla Bauler

The Congregational Meeting to hear from the Nominating Committee was opened with prayer at 11:40 a.m. by Pastor Marla Bauler. Members in attendance totaled 21, which represented a quorum. The church By-laws give guidelines for a quorum as the presence of 20% of current church membership.

Spokesperson for the Nominating Committee, Brett Stevens, stated the following nominations:

Elder: Gene Gibson, Emily Roberts

Deacons: Louise Boyer, Peggy Gibson, Brett Stevens

Pastor Marla then asked for nominations from the floor. As there were none, a motion was made to close the nominations. Seconded. Approved.

Motion made, seconded and approved to elect the above listed slate of officers. Installation will be December 21, 2025.

The meeting was then closed with prayer by Pastor Marla at 11:45 a.m.

Moderator,

Pastor Marla Bauler

Sincerely,

Anita W Asbell
bdt