

First United Presbyterian Church
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Lamplighter

March 2026



LENT

A SEASON OF REFLECTION,
RENEWAL, AND PREPARATION



March 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>1</p> <p>Second Sunday in <i>Lent</i></p> <p>Communion</p> <p>9:00 AM Adult S. S. 10:30 AM Worship Service</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Pastor Presb COT Mtg 12:30 PM</p> <p>Women's Zoom Study #9 @ 7pm</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Quilt Club 8am – 4pm</p> <p>Lenten Study #2 @ 7pm at Yates City</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Bible Study 9:00 AM</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Third Sunday in <i>Lent</i></p> <p>9:00 AM Adult S. S. 10:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>Deacons Mtg</p> <p>*Daylight Saving Time begins</p>	<p>9</p> <p>EBW 6:00 PM</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Women's Zoom Study #10 @ 7pm *last one</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Lenten Study #3 @ 7pm at Yates City</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Bible Study 9:00 AM</p> <p>Session Meeting 6:30 PM</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Fourth Sunday in <i>Lent</i></p> <p>9:00 AM Adult S. S. 10:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>Worship Cmmtt Mtg</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Pastor Peoria Area Church Gathering, United PC, Peoria 7:00 PM</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Lenten Study #4 @ 7pm at Yates City</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Bible Study 9:00 AM</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Fifth Sunday in <i>Lent</i></p> <p>9:00 AM Adult S. S. 10:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>Coffee Hour</p> <p>Blue & Gold Banquet</p>	<p>23</p> <p>PEO 6:00 PM</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Pastor Presb COT Mtg 12:30 PM</p> <p>PEO – Butter Braids 10:30am-5:30pm</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Pastor EDA Mtg 12:00 PM</p> <p>Lenten Study #5 & #6 @ 7pm at Yates City</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Bible Study 9:00 AM</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p><i>PALM</i> Sunday</p> <p>9:00 AM Adult S. S. 10:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>Coffee Hour</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>				

SCHEDULES

March Elder

Calie Stalter

Eler to be Liturgist & Assist Treasurer

March 1st Brandy Stevens
March 8th Calie Stalter
March 15th Larry Criswell
March 22ndGene Gibson
March 29thEmily Roberts

Birthdays & Anniversaries

March 2nd – Marty Tarter
Gene & Peggy Gibson

March 10th – Sandra Smith

March 12th – Cindy Alcaraz

March 14th – Gene Vaughan

March 22nd – Bryce Beckstrom

March 29th – Kate Meyers

Bible Study

Thursday Mornings at 9:00 AM
in the Fellowship Hall - Everyone is Welcome!

Adult Sunday School

Sunday Mornings at 9:00 AM
Everyone is Welcome!

Children’s Sunday School

Children’s Sunday School will not meet
on March 8th..

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women’s Zoom Bible Study

** Tuesday nights @ 7:00 PM **

March 3rd #9 – The Woman with the Issue of Blood

March 10th #10 – Two Criminals (last meeting)

Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 8th ... Change your clocks ahead 1 hour
at 2:00 AM, or before you go to bed 😊

Children’s Sunday School will not meet
on March 8th.



March 8th
following worship



SESSION MEETING
March 12th @ 6:30pm

We extend our Christian sympathy to
Bryce Beckstrom upon the passing of
his father, Larry Beckstrom on February 27th.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A PRESBYTERIAN GATHERING, PEORIA AREA

Greetings to you through our Lord Jesus Christ,

My name is Mary Watts and I am serving on the Commission on Congregational Life. I am organizing the first gathering of the Peoria area cohort.

This will be a gathering of all Presbyterian churches in the basic area of Peoria to talk about things that your church does well, what things that your church wishes that they could do and for asking for ideas of how to do some things that aren't going as well as you would like. It's for joining together in areas where your numbers are too small to do much or to look for ways that you could join or combine to work together in areas. Some of these areas could be senior dinners, youth group activities, quilters groups and family game nights just to name a few.

The date for the first gathering is March 16th at 7:00 pm. It will be hosted by the United Presbyterian Church located at 2400 W. Northmoor, Peoria IL. It will be a dessert potluck, so bring a dessert to share with everyone. (Plates, utensils and silverware will be provided. Coffee, tea and water will be furnished as well.)

Anyone who is interested from your church is invited to attend. Bring a car load with you to this gathering. Everyone is welcome! Please let all groups within your church know of this gathering so they can decide to send someone.

Our Lead Presbyter, Ann Schwartz will be attending to help explain the purpose of the cohort gatherings and what we hope for the outcome to be from them.

The presbytery is organizing this first cohort gathering but from then on you will organize when you meet, how often and on what dates and times. You will take ownership of your cohort and organize yourselves as you see fit.

Please send your r.s.v.p. to Mary Watts at wattsmary1952@gmail.com so I can be sure that you 1) got this email, 2) that you are sending someone to attend and so that 3) I will have enough silverware, plates and napkins to serve all of those attending.

Thank you. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

Yours through Christ,
Mary Watts.

THANK YOU

Tim & I would like to thank everyone for the prayers, calls, texts and visits following his heart attack. Thank you to Pastor Marla for keeping me sane at the hospital and for praying with Tim & I. The Deacons went above and beyond by providing quite a few meals for us. Thank you to the session for putting me on administrative leave so I could focus on taking care of Tim. ALL the support was greatly appreciated! I was reminded yet again how truly blessed I am to work for a such an incredible church with an amazing Pastor & congregation. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Brandi Teel

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 11th #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)





LENTEN SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday, March 29th 10:30am worship

Maundy Thursday Service, April 2nd

6pm light supper, 6:45pm worship around the table

Community Good Friday Service, April 3rd

6:30pm Fellowship time, 7pm Worship

hosted by First Pres with Fr. Jim Pankiewicz preaching

Community Easter Sunrise Service, April 5th @ 7am

hosted by Crossroads Assembly of God church

with Rev. Austin Miller preaching.

Easter Service, April 5th 10:30 am worship,

Easter Egg Hunt following



March 2026

9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. John 1:9-12

Hello Dear Friends,

The month of March is well upon us! And that means that the Lenten Season of the Church year is also well upon us. We remember that Lent is the season that's intended for us to reflect, confess, pray, repent and worship our God. It's the time for us to "get right" (in other words, to get our actions, thoughts and deeds) right with our Lord. I urge you not to let this special season pass you by without taking advantage of examining your own life.

You may notice that the scripture I've chosen to use above is one that's typically associated with Advent – it reminds us of Jesus as the Light of the World. But if you re-read this, I'm sure you can see the connection it has to the Lenten season, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter Sunday.

Based on the scripture above, perhaps we can ask ourselves whether we recognize our Lord as the True Light in our lives or if we're just attending church out of habit or social reasons. Do we receive him? Do we believe in him and are we called by his name? This is where our actions and thoughts can really shed light on the authenticity of our faith. Don't shrink from these questions, instead ponder them. If your answer is making you uncomfortable, then seek the Lord on how to change these things – examine, repent and pray.

Because we all want to be called *The Children of God*. What higher honor can be given to each of us lowly humans!? Let us seek the face of the Lord during this month and be ready to deliberately change our sinful ways so that we will not only be called, but also live and demonstrate the life of *A Child of God*.

Blessings,

Rev. Marla Bauler

First United Presbyterian Church, Elmwood, IL
Session Meeting Minutes January 8, 2026

A regular meeting of the Session of First United Presbyterian Church of Elmwood was held in the Fellowship Hall on January 8, 2026. The meeting was opened with devotions and prayer by Calie Stalter at 6:40 p.m.

Elders present: 2026 – Brandy Stevens and Marty Tarter
2027 – Calie Stalter
2028 – Gene Gibson and Emily Roberts.

constituting a quorum. Absent was Ron Cox and Larry Criswell. 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.

Examination of new Elders – Gene Gibson and Emily Roberts.

Elder Training: Pastor Marla began with Mathew 18. Mandatory Reporting for Elders, Deacons, Pastor, and Sunday School Teachers.

Motion made to give voice to Anita Asbell, Clerk of Session for the year.

The meeting agenda was reviewed and approved.

Motion made, seconded and approved the following items:

- Anita Asbell as CLERK OF SESSION for one year.
- Emily Roberts as TREASURER for one year.
- Amy Kepple as ASSISTANT TREASURER for one year.
- Marty Tarter and Gene Gibson as PRESBYTERY COMMISSIONERS for one year.
- Dates for COMMUNION for 2026: January 4, February 8, March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7, July 5, August 2, September 6, October 4, November 1, and December 6. Also to include Maundy Thursday April 2 and Christmas Eve service December 24.
- SESSION RULE OF QUORUM as 50% of currently serving elders.

Reorganization of Committee Chairs:

- Personnel – Ron Cox
- Finance – Chair: Emily Roberts
- Worship – Chair: Calie Stalter
- Christian Ed and Membership have been combined and will now be called CHURCH LIFE.
Co-Chairs: Marty Tarter and Calie Stalter.
- Building and Grounds – Co-Chairs: Larry Criswell and Gene Gibson
- Missions, Marketing (community outreach) and Evangelism have been combined and will be called CHRISTIAN OUTREACH. Co-Chairs: Marty Tarter and Brandy Stevens.

Motion was made to approve all structural changes to these committees. Seconded. Approved.

No Deacons Report.

Clerk's Report

The minutes from the December 11, 2025 Session meeting were reviewed. Approved.
No correspondence to review.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report for December 2025 was reviewed. Approved.
Reviewed the authorized signers on the Farmers State Bank accounts. No changes made.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Marla shared a printed report which listed her monthly ministry activities.
Communion was served to 45 members of the congregation during the Christmas Eve Service, and to 32 members of the congregation on January 4, 2026.
Deacons Peggy Gibson (ordained and installed) and Brett Stevens (installed) and Elder Gene Gibson (ordained and installed) on December 21, 2025, while Elder Emily Roberts (installed) and Deacon Louise Boyer (ordained and installed) on January 4, 2026. Advent study, Women's Zoom study, food boxes for Christmas were also part of her month.
Time off February 16 – 23, Continuing Ed time April 28 – 30 and vacation time May 8 – 20th was requested. Motion made. Seconded. Approved.
Requested that the May session meeting be moved to May 7th. Motion made. Seconded. Approved.

Committee Reports

Personnel: Chair – Ron Cox

Judy Groeper has agreed to be our church musician. Thank you Judy! Since Pat Althiser has submitted her resignation, we discussed what we could do to celebrate her retirement after 67 years of playing for us.

Finance: Chair – Marty Tarter

No report other than what was reported under Treasurer's Report.

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

Worship: Committee made sure candles were ready for Christmas Eve service. Meetings now to be held on the 3rd Sunday of each month.

Membership: Nothing to report.

Christian Ed: The Adult Sunday School continues their study of John.
Adult Sunday School reports the following financial accounting:

*Beginning Balance as of 12/01/2025 = \$4,203.87.

Deposits: \$37; \$535; \$136 Interest: \$6.20

Spent: \$700 (Christmas Gifts for families)

\$900 (\$600 in Kroger gift cards for Abby Segal - 6 cards at \$100 each
and \$300 in Kroger gift cards for Judy McLamore - 6 cards at \$50 each)

Ending Balance as of 12/31/25 = \$3,318.07.

Marketing and Evangelism: Chair – Brandy Stevens - No report.

Missions: Chair – Marty Tarter

The annual donations were discussed with session members and there will be no changes to the amounts or the recipients. The new Christian Outreach committee will meet January 18, 2026.

Building and Grounds: Chair – Larry Criswell

Waiting for the estimate regarding the landscape maintenance.

Ratify Electronic Votes:

E-voted taken on November 29th and December 13th to cancel worship due to inclement weather on November 30th and December 14th. Motion made, seconded and approved.

E-vote taken on December 17th to make a donation to PEO in Pat Vaughan's name for being our musician once a month since July and for playing on Christmas Eve. (she refused payments). Motion made, seconded and approved.

E-vote taken on December 16th to pay Anni Reinking the full pulpit supply fee of \$125 for the Sunday she was scheduled to preach but church was cancelled December 14th.

New Business

Motion to give blanket approval for the use of the church building in 2026 for the following: PEO (Philanthropic Educational Organization); EBW (Elmwood Business Women); EDA (Elmwood Development Association); ECF (Elmwood Community Foundation); Prairie Quilters of Central IL, American Red Cross; Elmwood Fire Department, BYE Ambulance Service (Brimfield, Yates City, Elmwood), 4-H, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Daisies, Brownies, and Elmwood School events (with adult sponsors/volunteers present). Seconded. Approved.

Reviewed and discussed Gene Vaughan's email of January 2 regarding the Adult Sunday School Class's proposal for events and speaker for May 7, National Day of Prayer. This will be discussed further once more information has been received.

There being no further business to come before the session, the meeting adjourned with a short prayer offered by Pastor Marla at 8:05 p.m.

The next session meeting is February 12, 2026 with Devotions & Prayer by Ron Cox.

Moderator,

Rev. Marla Bauler

Submitted with prayer by,

Anita W. Asbell
Clerk of the Session
bdt

The Annual Congregational Meeting
of the First United Presbyterian Church of Elmwood, IL
February 08, 2025
Fiscal year 1-01-25 thru 12-31-25

The Annual Congregational Meeting was constitutionally called to order and opened with prayer by Pastor Marla Bauler at 11:40 a.m. on February 8, 2026.

In attendance were twenty-four (24) members of the church, constituting a quorum. The guidelines for a quorum are defined in the Church's By-Laws, as approved on November 10, 2019. (20% of active membership).

Pastor Marla explained how the meeting would proceed, and reminded the congregation that according to the By-Laws, the Session will approve all congregational meeting minutes at the next occurring session meeting.

Annual Reports

The following committee reports were addressed by each respective chairperson in attendance and reviewed: Christian Education/Worship/Membership, Mission, Personnel, Building & Grounds, Marketing/Evangelism, Clerk of Session, Treasurer's Report, Finance, Deacons, Pastor's Report, Audit Report and Nominating. Motion made to approve reports. Seconded. Approved.

Items Requiring Congregational Vote

The annual budget was reviewed with no questions or comments from the congregation. Motion was made to approve the 2026 Budget. Seconded. Approved.

The Pastor's Terms of Call for 2026 were reviewed. Note – Terms of Call were approved November 23, 2025.

Memorial Service

In Remembrance: Nancy Howard – passed away on October 7, 2025.
Several members of the church shared thoughts about Nancy with the congregation.

A Memorial prayer was given for the family and acknowledgement was made of how grateful we are for Nancy's membership in the church.

Having no further business to discuss, a motion was made to close the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved. The meeting was closed with prayer at 11:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Moderator,

Anita W Asbell, Clerk of Session
AA/bt

Rev. Marla Bauler