



# Voice of the Servant



# January 2026

## FROM THE PASTOR

Church Family and Friends,

Happy New Year! What better way to start the year, but with the Epiphany of the Lord (January 6). Epiphany comes from the Greek epiphanies, literally the “shining forth” of God’s glory in human form at the birth of Christ. We think of it as the day the Wise Men, the Magi, visited the baby Jesus. Christmas is not Christmas without the recognition that the babe born in a manger was God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And, the great news of the Epiphany is Jesus came not just for the Jews, but for all of us Gentiles, too...

*that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Ephesians 3:6*

Hopefully, you have signed up to be a Prayer Warrior and are beginning your year of commitment to pray for your partner. But, even if you don’t have a designated partner, prayer is the best way we can support each other. As a matter of fact, I am promising to pray for all of you while my husband and I spend the cold months (January 6 – March 21) in Arizona. Please do not hesitate to email/text or call me with your prayer requests.

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6*

That said, in my absence, Dale Keilman will be filling the pulpit. Dale is currently in the process of becoming a commissioned pastor. He is an elder at the church in Earlville and will also be covering for them. I know you will be as kind and affirming to him as you are to me. We are blessed that the Lord has called him to our pulpit. You will certainly enjoy getting to know him.

*8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” Isaiah 6:8*

As you face the long winter, remember every day is getting longer. Because God gave us the gift of the seasons we can see the beauty of His creation from four different perspectives. That said, stay safe and just look out the window when you can. Spring is coming!

By grace together,  
Laurie Walker, Covenant Pastor

give love  
spread joy  
create hope  
know peace

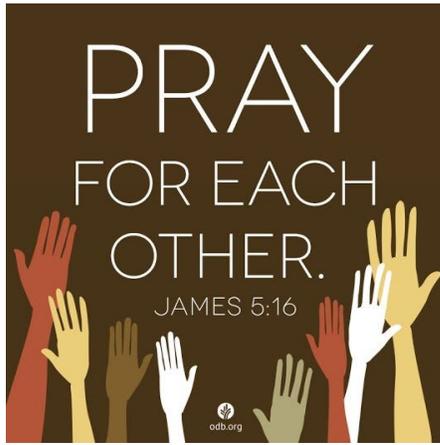
### Points of Interest:

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### Mission Statement

**Empowered by the Holy Spirit through every aspect of our lives, we strive to become more like Christ. Our purpose is to praise and worship God, support each other as a family, and reach out to others to spread the good News of our salvation through Jesus Christ!**



### Gift of Prayer

Prayer Warrior's will begin January 2026 and end October 2026. If you would like to participate, please fill out the forms on the Fellowship Table or Donna can email you a copy.

**You are blessed to pray for one person throughout the year without them knowing who is praying. You can also leave a card or small thoughtful gift on the table in Fellowship hall.**

*Evangelism and Outreach Committee*

### Keeping the Community Warm

We will collect:  
Hats, scarves, & gloves for January and February. They are distributed through the Micropantry and are well received.



### Mission Focus for January

#### CWS (Church World Service) Blankets

Imagine the impact of your compassion. Each blanket and kit serves as a tangible expression of God's love—sharing warmth on a chilly night, relief in a crisis and a reminder that someone truly cares.



We have a lending closet which is available to anyone. There are walkers, wheelchairs, canes, crutches, shower chairs, and other miscellaneous items.

#### Prayer Warrior 2026

**"The Best Gift to Give or Receive is Prayer"**



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthday \_\_\_\_\_  
Anniversary \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorite Holidays \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorite Color \_\_\_\_\_  
Husband or significant other \_\_\_\_\_  
Hobbies & Interests \_\_\_\_\_  
Where in your life so you feel you need prayer?  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Micropantry



The Micropantry can use the following:

- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Canned meats:  | Hearty soups          |
| Tuna           | Canned Veggies        |
| Chicken        | Gravy Packages        |
| Spam           | Granola Bars          |
| Vienna sausage | Shelf Stable Milk     |
| Pork           | Common Spices         |
| Roast beef     | Cooking Oil           |
| Salmon         | Canned/Packaged Meals |

Cans with pull tabs to open will be helpful to those who don't have can openers. Basic hygiene items are always needed. Shampoo, deodorant, soaps, shaving cream, razors, hand creams.

**We have a temperature controlled cooler so perishables can be distributed.**

## Hands of Hope (Joliet Pick-up)

**Pick up Dates January 2 and 16th**

If you can help pick-up, unload and stock the food items at 3 PM please sign-up.

## Produce Sorting

If you are able to help sort fresh produce or maintain the Micropantry, please sign-up.

**Monthly Tuesday Produce**  
TBA

## Facebook Live Presenter

Please prayerfully consider volunteering to record the Facebook live Sunday Worship. If you would like to know more, ask any of the women below.

- 04 Joni Bratney
- 11 Ann Goy
- 18 Ann Goy
- 25 Ann Goy

## Facebook Live

If you are unable to attend worship in person, you can watch it live on Facebook. or recorded.

[www.facebook.com/fpcmendota](http://www.facebook.com/fpcmendota)



*Volunteer to host a coffee hour!*



## Weekly Coffee Hour

Please consider hosting coffee hour at 9:45 AM. Bring a simple dessert, make coffee, pour juice. Cheese and crackers are supplied by the Fellowship Committee. **The sign-up is on the wall outside the kitchen.**

## Coffee Hour

- 04
- 11 Second Sunday Breakfast
- 18
- 25

## Second Sunday Breakfast

**January 11, Second Sunday Breakfast 9:30 AM**  
**Please bring a goodie or dish to pass.**  
We will provide drinks and table service. If you have questions, please contact Joni Bratney.



## December 16, 2025

Session met December 16 at the church. This year's Elder training is based on the book "Sailboat Church" by Joan Gray. We discussed the first two chapters, then Pastor Laurie led us in prayer.

Communion will be served January 4.

**Presbytery report:** In January, we will be electing a commissioner to attend Presbytery and vote on our behalf.

**Communications:** Donna will be marking 10 years serving as our office administrator in January. Please take a moment to thank her for all she does for us. We are blessed by our relationship with her.

**Clerk's Report:** 1) Attended the annual minutes and rolls review at Fox Valley Presbyterian December 13. Both were approved without exception. 2) The Mission grant for which we applied was approved. We will be receiving \$1500. We appreciate Presbytery's support of our Micro pantry ministry. 3) Installation of Officers for 2026 will take place during worship on December 28. 4) Our annual meeting to receive end-of-year reports and the 2026 budget will be held following worship on January 25. Please make every effort to be in attendance.

**Financial Report:** 1) For the month, our expenses are slightly above our income, but for the year-to-date, we are still in the black. 2) Session approved the 2026 budget presented by Treasurer Peggy Etheridge. 3) Session approved annual Christmas bonuses.

**Pastor's Report:** 1) Has been doing some visiting and calling. Will continue calls while she is in Arizona. 2) Has not seen the engaged couple yet, due to their situations, but will be calling them before she leaves. 3) She will ask the Deacons to help with the in-person visiting of shut-ins in her absence.

**Maintenance and Property:** 1) The ignitor for the front steps boiler isn't working. Matt is looking for a replacement ignitor. 2) The thermostats are still being worked on. 3) We received a 3-month credit as a return on garbage service charges.

**Christian Education:** 1) Sunday School materials are ready. 2) Andra is looking for the next Bible Study.

**Worship and Music:** 1) Getting things ready for the Christmas Eve program. 2) Dale Keilman will be covering for Pastor Laurie in her absence.

**Missions:** We are currently doing the Christmas Joy offering and will begin the Blanket offering after Christmas.

**Fellowship and Parish Life:** We need more hosts for fellowship hour. Please sign up on the chart by the kitchen.

**Bill Bratney** closed our meeting with prayer.

Our next regular session meeting will be held on January 20.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Marie Van Rheenen, Clerk of Session



**January Lectionary Readings**

04—Jeremiah 31:7-14, Psalm 147:12-20, Ephesians 1:3-14, John 1(1-9) 10-18  
 11—Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm 29, Acts 10-34-43, Matthew 3:13-17  
 18—Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 40:1-11, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, John 1:29-42  
 25—Isaiah 9:1-4, Psalm 27:1, 4-9, 1 Corinthians 1:10-18, Matthew 4:12-23

# New Year's Eve

## WORD SEARCH

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

Noisemaker  
 Countdown  
 Cheers  
 Horns

Resolution  
 Calendar  
 Party  
 Ball

Celebrate  
 Midnight  
 Cheer  
 Kiss

Fireworks  
 Bubbles  
 Clock  
 Time



# 2026

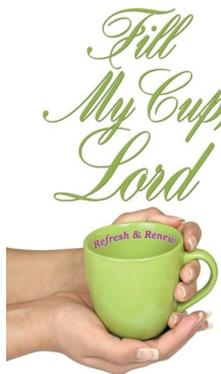
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	2 Office Closed 12:30p HOH Pick-up 3:00p Unload and stock HOH foods	3
4 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship-Communion	5	6 Epiphany of The Lord No Pastor Laurie Jan. 6 to March 21	7	8 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	9 Office Closed	10
11 9:30a Second Sunday Breakfast 10:30a Worship	12	13 12:30 MAMA	14	15 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	16 Office Closed 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	17
18 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship	19 Office Closed Martin Luther King Jr. Newsletter Deadline	20 5p Session	21	22 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	23 Office Closed	24
25 9:45a Fellowship 10:30a Worship Rev. Eric Heinekamp 11:30a Annual Meeting	26	27	28	29 9a Newsletter Folding 10a "Fill My Cup" 6:30p Webelos	30 Office Closed	

Online Giving



Birthdays

- 01 Tess Heckert
- 09 Kim VanRheenen
- 12 John Pohl
- 15 Will Etheridge
- 22 Trenton Stanford
- 22 Deb Stevens
- 31 Ray Smith



Every Thursday  
at 10 AM  
Come and gather with  
us for tea,  
coffee, hot chocolate  
and conversation.  
All are welcome.

Ushers

- 04 Sandy Rebbholz, Kay Christen
- 11 Faye Smith
- 18 Bill & Joni Bratney
- 25 Ron & Melissa Blum



- 18 Gary & Judy Holland
- 25 Howard & Kay Brauhn

Pianists

- 04 Laura Sutton
- 11 Peggy Etheridge
- 18 Jake Schmitt
- 25 Jake Schmitt

Continued Daily Prayers

Julius Hagan—Belgian Missionary  
Kenyan Partners  
Angie (Faye Smith)  
Diane Moore  
Dixie Tonozzi (Ray Smith)  
Finn (Pastor Laurie grandson)  
Jason

Joe (Cindy's boyfriend)  
John Pohl  
Kelly (Gary & Debbie's friend)  
Margina & Larry (Kay Christen)  
Laura (Diane T's Neice)  
Mike Boyle  
Pam Schmidt

Pastor Dave Spaulding's brother  
Pat Schmidt  
Ray Smith  
Sarah Arter  
Sandy & Donald Schultz  
Cheri DeLong (Kay Christen)  
Tim Sondgeroth

Income and Expenses at  
First Presbyterian  
November 2025

	MTD	YTD
Budget	\$7,702	\$84,723
Income	\$4,827	\$79,448
Expenses	\$6,039	\$77,314
Reserves	\$-	\$-

2026 Per Capita \$45 per person

Presbytery	Synod	General Assembly
<b>\$30.11</b>	<b>\$3.81</b>	<b>\$11.08</b>



First Presbyterian Church  
 1003 5th Street  
 Mendota, IL 61342-1911  
 Website: [www.fpcmendota.com](http://www.fpcmendota.com)  
**(815) 538-5603**  
**Pastor: Laurie Walker (815) 274-3444**



Label

In-Person and [www.facebook.com/fpcmendota](http://www.facebook.com/fpcmendota)  
 Check out the Facebook page: [facebook.com/MendotaMicroPantry](https://facebook.com/MendotaMicroPantry)  
**Fellowship will be at 9:45 AM**  
**Worship will be at 10:30 AM**  
**Second Sunday Breakfast 9:30 AM**



2026