

THE Bridge

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8:30 AM

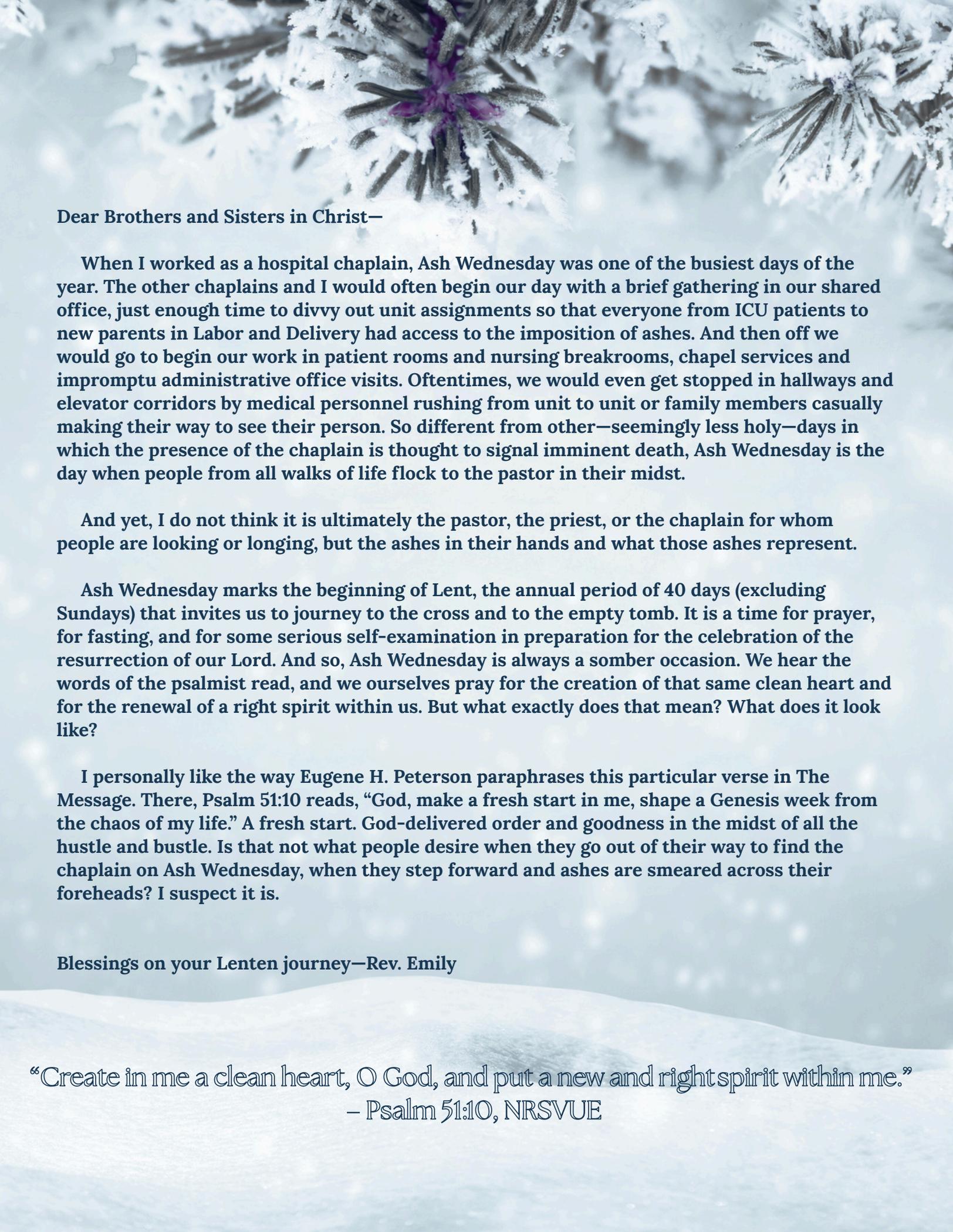
SUNDAY SERVICE

Service is streamed live on Facebook. A recording of the stream will be made available on YouTube following the service.

9:30 AM

COFFEE HOUR

Coffee Hour and Fellowship will be held in the Fellowship Hall immediately following service. Join us for coffee, snacks, and conversation.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ—

When I worked as a hospital chaplain, Ash Wednesday was one of the busiest days of the year. The other chaplains and I would often begin our day with a brief gathering in our shared office, just enough time to divvy out unit assignments so that everyone from ICU patients to new parents in Labor and Delivery had access to the imposition of ashes. And then off we would go to begin our work in patient rooms and nursing breakrooms, chapel services and impromptu administrative office visits. Oftentimes, we would even get stopped in hallways and elevator corridors by medical personnel rushing from unit to unit or family members casually making their way to see their person. So different from other—seemingly less holy—days in which the presence of the chaplain is thought to signal imminent death, Ash Wednesday is the day when people from all walks of life flock to the pastor in their midst.

And yet, I do not think it is ultimately the pastor, the priest, or the chaplain for whom people are looking or longing, but the ashes in their hands and what those ashes represent.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the annual period of 40 days (excluding Sundays) that invites us to journey to the cross and to the empty tomb. It is a time for prayer, for fasting, and for some serious self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord. And so, Ash Wednesday is always a somber occasion. We hear the words of the psalmist read, and we ourselves pray for the creation of that same clean heart and for the renewal of a right spirit within us. But what exactly does that mean? What does it look like?

I personally like the way Eugene H. Peterson paraphrases this particular verse in *The Message*. There, Psalm 51:10 reads, “God, make a fresh start in me, shape a Genesis week from the chaos of my life.” A fresh start. God-delivered order and goodness in the midst of all the hustle and bustle. Is that not what people desire when they go out of their way to find the chaplain on Ash Wednesday, when they step forward and ashes are smeared across their foreheads? I suspect it is.

Blessings on your Lenten journey—Rev. Emily

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.”
— Psalm 51:10, NRSVUE

Dear Members,

We are writing to inform you of a recent security incident.

What happened – On January 12, we learned that an unauthorized third party obtained access to member information as a result of a phishing attack. A fraudulent email, appearing to come from Pastor Emily, requested a copy of the directory. Believing the request to be legitimate, the recipient shared the information.

What information was involved - The information contained in the member directory.

What we are doing - We are providing further training to our staff and raising awareness of scams targeting churches among members and friends of the church. We confirmed with our IT consultant that our antivirus protection is current and adequate. We are seeking quotes from our insurance company for cyber liability insurance.

What you can do - We recommend that you:

1. Be cautious of unexpected emails or messages requesting personal information
2. Avoid clicking on suspicious links or attachments
3. Consider changing your password if you use the same one elsewhere (although no password information was released)
4. Monitor your accounts for unusual activity

To report scams and fraud, there are resources available online, including:

1. FTC (Federal Trade Commission): Report fraud and scams at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov).
2. Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ): Visit the DOJ Consumer Protection page or call [1-800-422-7128](tel:1-800-422-7128) to report issues and get directed to the right agency.

Please know that our church will never ask for money via text or email. If you ever receive a message asking for help or gift cards, please do not respond.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Emily at [\(219\) 669-4797](tel:2196694797) or pastoremily@winnchurch.org. We regret this incident and appreciate your understanding.

-The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Winneconne

Wise as Serpents: Navigating the Digital World and Fraud Prevention

On 01/23/2026, the Winnebago Presbytery issued an alert identifying a “Nationwide Scam Targeting Churches” and noted, “Over the past six days, churches across the United States and their members are being targeted by a growing scam in which fraudsters send text and emails messages impersonating a pastor or church leader...”

As we know, our congregation was recently targeted as described in the alert. As part of our response, we have coordinated with the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office to provide education about digital scams and fraud prevention. We will extend this invitation to our fellow faith communities in the Winneconne area. We hope you can join us!

Wednesday, February 25th, 2026

First Presbyterian Church of Winneconne - 32 S Third Ave. (fellowship hall)

4:45 PM -5:15 PM - All are welcome for a community meal provided by the Session

5:15 PM – 6:30 PM - Presentation by investigators from the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office

February

Reverend Emily's office hours are every Monday and Tuesday from 9:30am - 3:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30 am - Worship with communion	2	3 12:00 pm - Sack Lunch & Sacred Stories Bible Study	4 6:45 pm - Choir Rehearsal	5	6	7
8 8:30 am - Worship 9:30 am - Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Fellowship	9	10 12:00 pm - Sack Lunch & Sacred Stories Bible Study	11 6:45 pm - Choir Rehearsal	12	13	14
15 8:30 am - Worship	16	17 6:00 pm - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper & Ash Wednesday Worship	18 6:45 pm - Choir Rehearsal	19	20	21
22 8:30 am - Worship (no choir) 12:00 - 4:00 pm Bible Baptist in Fellowship Hall	23 6:15 pm - Session Meeting	24 12:00 pm - Sack Lunch & Sacred Stories Bible Study	25 4:45-6:30 pm - Dinner and Fraud Prevention Presentation 6:45 pm - Choir Rehearsal	26	27	28 10 am - 2 pm Thrift and Gift



RULING ELDERS

BOB DINSE
TREASURER

N HALL
PERSONNEL

JASON HARMON
BUILDING GROUNDS AND
INFRASTRUCTURE

JESSICA HARRISON
WORSHIP & MUSIC
FAITH FORMATION

KRISTINA MOSLEY
WORSHIP & MUSIC
MISSION AND OUTREACH

ROBERT MOSLEY
MISSION AND OUTREACH

MARILYN PAULSON
MEMBER CARE LIAISON

CLERK OF SESSION
JACK WIRCH

MEMBER CARE/DEACONS

KAREN ANGELL
PEGGY BALFANZ
SANDRA BUSER
ANNIE LEONARD
RONDA MARQUARDT
ROXY SCHULTZ

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session met on January 20th.

The following actions were taken:

- Agreed on the following Ministry Team assignments:
 - Building, Grounds and Infrastructure - Jason Harmon
 - Deacon Liaison - Marilyn Paulson
 - Mission / Outreach - Kristina Mosley & Robert Mosley
 - Personnel - Nichole Hall
 - Worship / Faith Formation - Jessica Harrison & Kristina Mosley

The goal is to identify or recruit members of the congregation to serve on these teams in 2026. An effort will be made to create a Finance Team also.

- Approved the 2025 Annual Statistical Report for the denomination.
- Elected Jack Wirch as the new Clerk of Session.
- Voted to renew the church membership with the Winneconne Chamber of Commerce for 2026.

Worship and Faith Formation

WORSHIP TEAM 2026 PLANNING

Jessica Harrison and Kristina Mosley are the Session team leaders for Music/Worship/Faith Formation this year. Marilyn Paulson is now the Session Liaison to Deacons/Member Care.

Music Notes:

- The Harmon's and choir will generally continue to have the fourth Sundays off.
- The Choir will present "The Seven Last Words" for Maundy Thursday worship.
- The final spring rehearsal will be May 6. Final spring presentation in worship May 10. Rehearsals will resume September 2 and worship presentations September 13.

Worship Notes:

- Pulpit supply is secured for Rev. Emily's study leaves and vacation.
- A joint worship service will be held at Winneconne with FPC Weyauwega congregation on August 2nd.
- A Pet Blessing service will be held on October 10.

Faith Formation Notes:

- The final spring session of Sack Lunch and Sacred Stories will be May 19. It will resume in the fall.

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

On Sunday, February 8, the Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held in Fellowship Hall following worship. Deacons will host the fellowship time as part of the gathering.

A Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and Ash Wednesday Worship will be held on Tuesday, February 17 at 6:00 pm.

FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES-

SACK LUNCH AND SACRED STORIES: The weekly Bible study will resume on January 6. All are invited to join Rev. Emily and others each Tuesday from noon to 1:00 pm. Bring a sack lunch, your favorite Bible, and join in a discussion about some of the scriptures for upcoming Sunday worship.

CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING

You are invited to consider serving as a liturgist or an usher on Sunday mornings. Sign-ups are in the narthex, or you can let Rev. Emily know of your willingness to help. We would love to see some new faces this year!

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

This year's devotional, entitled "Discipleship in a Divided Age: A Lenten Journey through Matthew's Gospel", by Presbyterian Outlook editor, Rev. Teri McDowell Ott. She "invites readers to journey through Matthew's Gospel to discover how Jesus leads us toward humility, courage, compassion and faithful discipleship amid the fractures of our age". The devotional guides readers through daily reflections, weekly spiritual practices, guided questions, and prayer. The link for the full devotional is here ([link](#)). Hard copies will be available beginning February 15. The weekly email updates during Lent will have links to each week's readings.

Kit Kat Bars

Submitted by Renie Streich

Ingredients

8 oz of Waverly crackers (any square or rectangular crackers that fit together tightly in the pan)

1 cup butter

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup white sugar

1 cup brown sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk

1 and $\frac{1}{4}$ cups graham cracker crumbs

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup peanut oil

1 cup milk chocolate chips

1 cup butterscotch chips

Directions

Spray the bottom of an 9 x 13 pan.

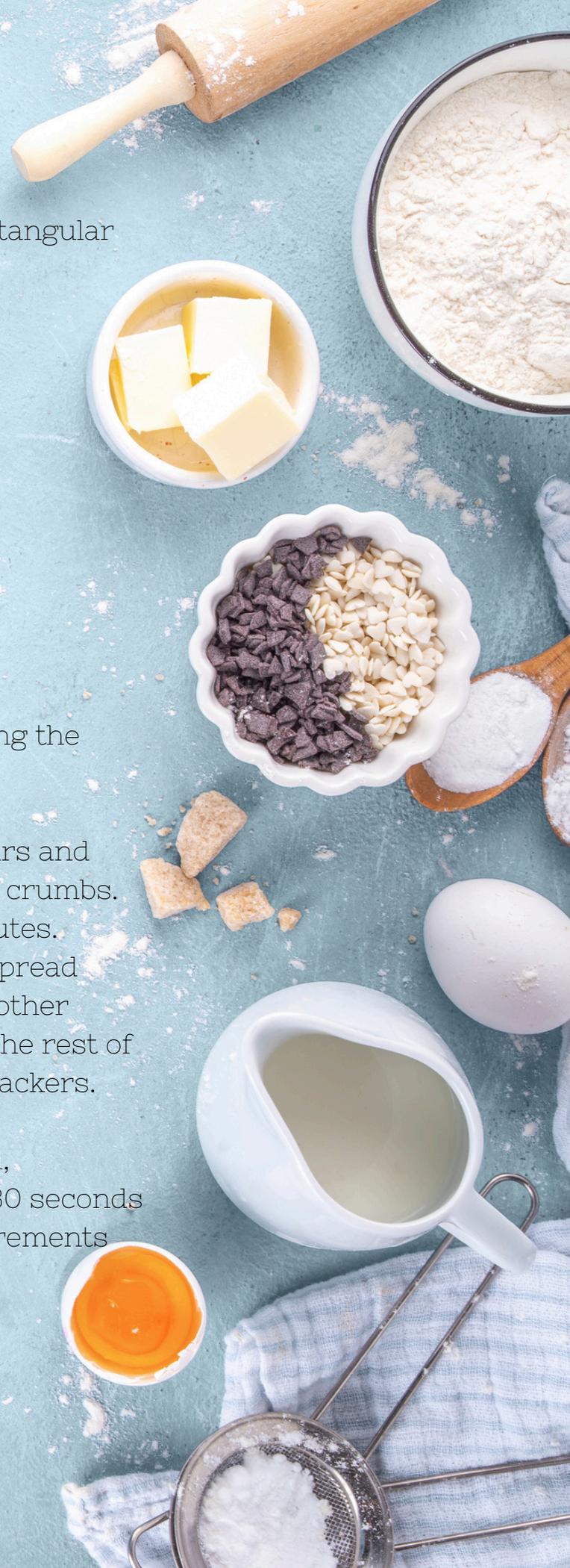
Spread the crackers in a single layer covering the bottom of the pan.

In a saucepan, melt the butter. Add the sugars and blend. Add the milk and the graham cracker crumbs. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly for 5 minutes. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ of the mixture over the crackers. Spread carefully covering all the crackers. Place another layer of crackers over the mixture. Spread the rest of the sugar mixture. Place another layer of crackers.

In a microwave safe bowl, add the peanut oil, chocolate and butterscotch chips. Heat for 30 seconds and stir. Continue to heat in 30 seconds increments until fully melted. Spread over crackers.

Chill in refrigerator until firm.

Cut into narrow pieces, like a Kit Kat bar.



Deacons/Member Care

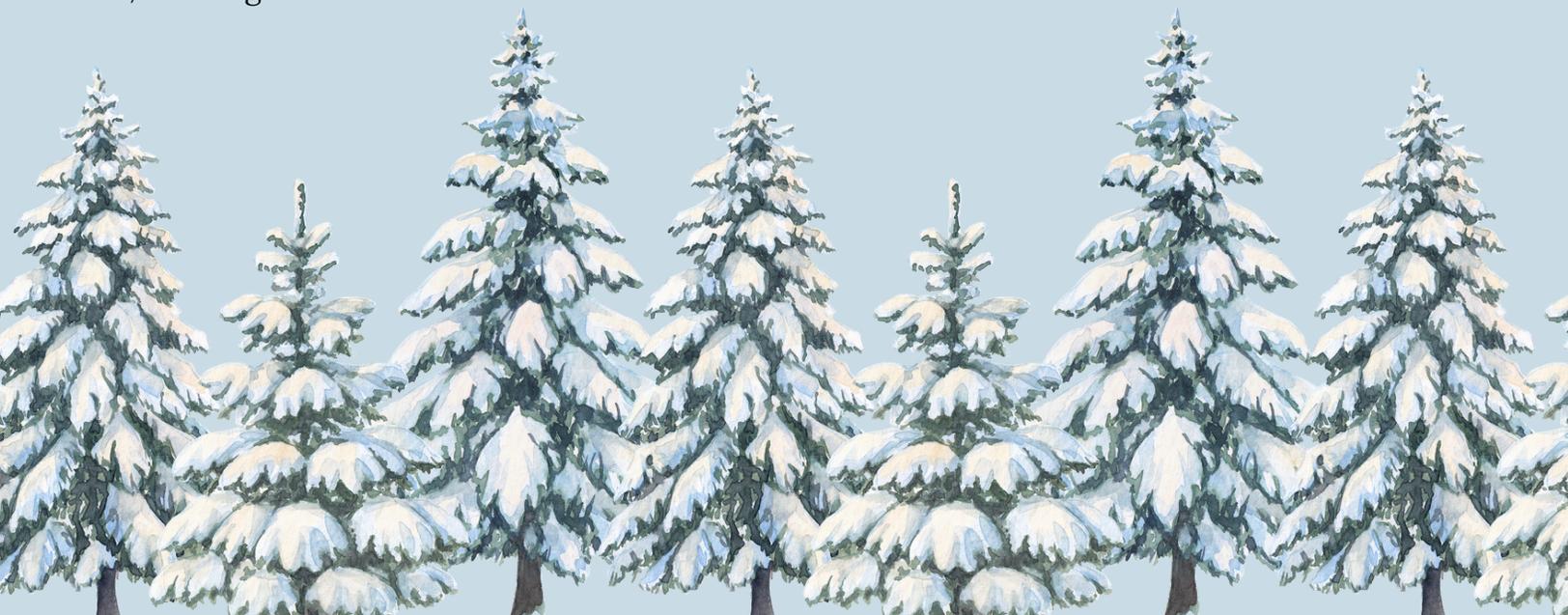
How are those resolutions you made for the “New Year” working for you? Many of us start out with great intentions, and within a month we tend to fall, drop the ball, give up the goal, or throw in the towel. If that happens to you, how about trying something different. Instead of making a promise that loses its luster within a month, why not consider changing something. Find a new hobby, take on a repair or household project you’ve been putting off, learn to bake sourdough bread, visit someone who may be lonely, try some new family meals, tackle a de-cluttering activity you’ve thought about starting.

Keep your stress level down by being gentle with yourself, decide what you can manage and what is too much. If helping at the Thrift ‘n Gift fits your time and interest, sign up. If volunteering in a classroom brings you joy, call the school and go hang with the students. If doing carpentry or woodworking appeals, take your talents to a senior living center. Join a book or gardening club. Do something that builds community, creates pleasant connections with others in our church family and beyond. We all need to stay in touch with friends and neighbors, show compassion and support for those in need.

February is the month of our annual Health and Hygiene Drive. Take an active role in gathering products for the collection, talk to people and ask and offer to pick things up and bring them to the church foyer. Specific start and end dates and a list of needed products will be posted there.

The Deacons will continue to provide fellowship snacks and beverages on the second Sunday of every month. Church Members are always welcome to set up a table and bring a few treats on other Sundays if you choose.

It was agreed that we will hold our monthly meetings on the second Tuesdays. Annie Leonard will write our submissions for the Bridge each month and will prepare the End of the year report for FPC as well. Please feel free to reach out to a deacon if you have a need or would like to be visited. We are here to serve, and appreciate opportunities to bring comfort, conversation, a cup of soup, a prayer, a smile, or a hug.





DECEMBER 2025

TOTAL INCOME (w/o pass thru)	\$	16,457.54
TOTAL EXPENSES (w/o pass thru)	\$	11,229.91
GAIN	\$	5,227.63

YTD INCOME (w/o pass thru)	\$	97,025.96
YTD EXPENSES (w/o pass thru)	\$	122,683.59
DEFICIT FOR 2025	\$	25,657.63

Reconciled Bank Balance 12/31/25 \$ 24,116.24

New Covenant Fund Balance 12/31/25 \$ 98,781.35

Vanguard Federal Money Market Fund Balance 12/31/25 \$ 314,734.05



Visit our website often to get access to past sermons, musical selections from the Harmons, and stay up to date with our church calendar. Click the button below to be taken to our website. Click the "Online Giving" button to be automatically directed to the Online Giving page.

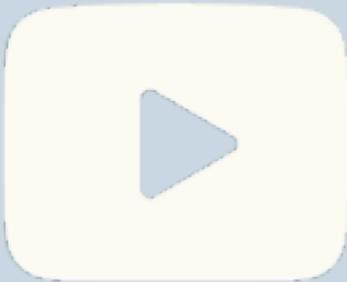
[FPC WEBSITE](#)

[ONLINE GIVING](#)



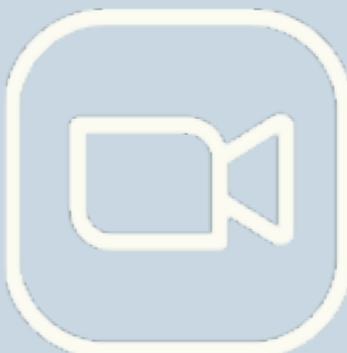
If you don't want to worship in person, please join us in live worship every Sunday, streamed from our Facebook page at 9:00am. FPC of Winneconne regularly posts pictures, videos, church information, and events on our page. Please "like" our Facebook page for updates.

[FPC FACEBOOK](#)



YouTube gives you access to all of the videos we have produced. Here you can find past worship services and musical selections from the Harmons. Missed our live Sunday Service? Recordings are posted for viewing following the service on our YouTube Channel.

[FPC YOUTUBE](#)



Various church-related meetings, special gatherings, and Bible Study will be held via Zoom. Links will be provided in our weekly email as scheduled.