



The TOWER

August 2026

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings to you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I pray this finds you and your loved ones doing well. And even if that doesn't quite seem to be the case, I pray you are still finding blessings – even if they're small ones – in the midst of whatever's going on at the moment. Remember that God is always with us and his love endures forever. Knowing and believing this, may each and every one of you be filled with a sense of peace.

Well, I'm back from a wonderful vacation, and I really appreciated the time with our family in Australia. Everyone there is doing well and sends their love. Our grandkids, Noah and Olivia, are really growing, and I'll bet by the next time I'm with them; Noah will be taller than me! I hope you've had some special times for some R & R this summer, too! We all need some time to kick back from the normal routine and just enjoy creation and the life God has blessed us with.

And it's good to be back with you! Needless to say, now I'm trying to get caught up again, and I am sweating The Tower deadline! So, this time, I'd like to take some thoughts that Pastor Sandy shared with us during "reflection time" during the worship service at the North Essendon Uniting Church from July 12th. Her reflection was taken from Psalm 65:9-13, the NSRV translation. The Word of God says: "You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it. You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth. You crown the year with your bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with richness. The pastures of the wilderness overflow; the hills gird themselves with joy; the meadows clothe themselves with flocks; the valleys deck themselves with grain; they shout and sing together for joy."

I think we'd all like to experience the psalmist's thoughts, especially during the hot, dry (and smokey) summer weather, when we long for some cooler temps and rain. And the wagon in our mind's picture might be replaced with a tractor, car, truck, or even a motorcycle during the summer. So, try to visualize the scene of a once dry field (or wilderness), now overflowing with abundance.

Note that the area described here isn't a pristine meadow or a majestic, scenic mountain. No, it's an ordinary place of life, tramped down by the routine "ins and outs" of each day. It's a worn, tired place, but now the psalmist notices abundance; maybe even fresh, new life. Amazing!



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From the Pastor's Desk Cont.

As Pastor Sandy noted, we often assume God is only found in the untouched places we haven't messed up; the successful places and the flourishing parts of life. But Ps. 65 suggests something totally different. God leaves abundance even in the ruts, and now they've become fertile. We know God's grace has always been traveling with us, even in the worn, dry, tired places. It's so easy to forget that sometimes, isn't it?

As we were urged to do that Sunday, for a moment, stop and picture the landscape of your life. Where are the well-worn tracks and not necessarily the dramatic, exciting places? Think about the places you've traveled again and again; the routines, the responsibilities that never seem to end, the places of grief you've traveled that don't let you go, the relationships that require patience, the old regrets, the daily worries and anxieties, the endless responsibilities of caring for a loved one, and maybe just the dull weariness of everyday life. These become the wagon wheel tracks of our lives, pressed down into deep dry ruts by years of living.

The psalmist's words are kind of surprising. It doesn't say God avoids these situations or places. And it doesn't promise these tracks will disappear, no matter how big our faith is, how much we pray, or how well we try to live rightly. Instead, it says: "Your wagon tracks *overflow with richness*."

Being human, we often see only the rut. But the psalm says where God passes, blessing lingers. Where God journeys with us, even the dry, worn places become fertile. Perhaps the richness we perceive isn't measured by success. Perhaps it's gentleness or wisdom or compassion born from suffering. Or maybe it's a deeper trust that, whatever the landscape before us, God is already walking there with us.

Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to live in us; to bring about our transformation. Still, that transformation won't make the tracks disappear. But because of grace, those tracks can become places where love lives, compassion deepens, wisdom grows, forgiveness takes root, patience is learned, and hope quietly refuses to die.

No matter where we find ourselves today or what might be before us, may we turn our hearts toward God and discover that even the places we thought were worn, weary, dried out or dried up have become places where grace has been quietly at work all along. Sit with God and think about this a bit. Yes, the landscape might be the same, but as our hearts inhabit it differently, we'll find the holy blessing. Then we, too, can shout and sing for joy in the abundance Jesus has come to bless us with!

Let's share those signs of rich blessings we discover as the Holy Spirit reveals them to us. Be filled with joy and remember to always give God thanks and praise! Take care and be blessed! Looking forward to seeing you in church and in life throughout the week! You'll be in my prayers.

Love & Prayers, *Pastor Marilyn*

Generous God, you visit the earth and you water it. You soften hard ground with gentle rain. You bring life where we expect only dust. Today we bring before you the well-worn tracks of our lives; places made heavy by grief, paths shaped by worry, routines that exhaust us, relationships that ask more of us than we feel able to give, disappointments we have carried for longer than we imagined. We do not ask you to pretend these places are easy. Instead, help us to discover your presence within them. Where our hearts have become dry, refresh us. Where our spirits have grown weary, grant us rest. Where we see only ruts, help us notice the richness your grace has already begun to grow. Teach us to trust that your love does not avoid the difficult places, but travels them with us, leaving behind peace, compassion, courage, and hope. May your Spirit cultivate within us a quiet confidence that all may indeed be well with our souls, not because life is free from hardship, but because you are faithful in every season. May even the worn places of our lives overflow with the richness of your presence and love. Through Christ who walks every road with us.

Amen.

Picnic Potluck at the Parsonage

Friday, August 14 at 5:30pm

212 E. Fifth Street (church parsonage)

Come and join in on good food and great fun! Terry will be the grill master! Nolan's will provide burgers, brats, and hot dogs along with the buns and condiments, chips, beverages, and table service. You are invited to bring a favorite dish to share. We'll enjoy a yummy meal and each other's great company. After we eat, some might want to play dominos, cards, or other games. We look forward to welcoming you to our lovely home! Hope you can join us!

Save the Date – Prairie North Fall Lay Academy

Saturday, November 7th & Sunday, November 8th

Classes to be offered: Living Our UM Beliefs: United Methodist Heritage

Life Together in the UM Connection: United Methodist Polity

Teaching Biblical Faith: Leading Small Groups

Sacraments: Means of Grace

Location – TBA. Watch for flyer & registration coming soon!

NIC Disability Education Summit

Saturday, September 26th, 9:00am-4:00pm

Bethany of Fox Valley UMC, Aurora

If you are interested in learning more about how we, as individuals or as a church, can become better at offering love and care for those who are disabled or have special needs or how we can make our church more accessible, consider attending this event. Check out the flyer in the church entryway or talk to Pastor Marilyn. Pre-registration is requested for attendees and for those who would like help at the event.

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

We are collecting items for Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.

A Packing Party will be held sometime in October. But now is the time to start shopping and looking for those bargains! Back-to-School items are always good. Also, small toys for girls and boys, toothbrushes, combs and hairbrushes, socks, tee shirts, hats, sunglasses, balls, coloring books, the list goes on and on! Have fun shopping! Or, you can give a monetary gift for items. Remember, no liquids, food, candy, war toys, or camouflage items.



FYI for September Community Pot Luck Attendees

If you have any old tee shirts that you don't want anymore, please bring them with you to the September Community Pot Luck – Sept. 10. Diane Schurch, our area Operation Christmas Child rep will be coming to share about Operation Christmas Child and she is going to teach us how to make jump ropes for the children out of tee shirts. No worries if the shirts are faded, stained, or even have a tiny hole or two. Just make sure they are clean. Thank you!

Monthly Finance Report

Current Account Balances for 6/13/26 thru 7/11/26

<u>Pec UMC Balances as of 07/11/2026</u>		-	-	-	-
<u>Account</u>	<u>6/13/2026</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>7/11/2026</u>
General Fund	\$86,870.31	\$10,327.62	\$7,972.00	\$0.00	\$84,514.69
Building Fund	\$17,852.61	\$0.00	\$84.41	\$0.00	\$17,937.02
Outreach Account	\$1,352.26	\$39.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,313.01
PUMC Men	\$4,377.01	\$495.00	\$315.00	\$0.00	\$4,197.01
Memorial Fund	\$3,531.46	\$0.00	\$0.88	\$0.00	\$3,532.34
Womens Savings Acct	\$8,861.69	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,861.69
Womens Checking	\$2,907.44	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,907.44
	\$125,752.78	\$10,861.87	\$8,372.29	\$0.00	\$123,263.20

The financial situation, especially with regard to the General Fund and the Building Fund, (the accounts used to pay the church bills), has had little change since the end of April. These two accounts have totaled approximately \$100,000 for almost three months. With our church budget at about \$10,000/mo or \$120,000/yr, we are currently in a strong financial situation.

Income has been surprisingly good for the last several weeks.

There has been very little activity in the other financial accounts.

John Stelter, Finance Team

JULY COMMUNITY POTLUCK

Monthly Potluck

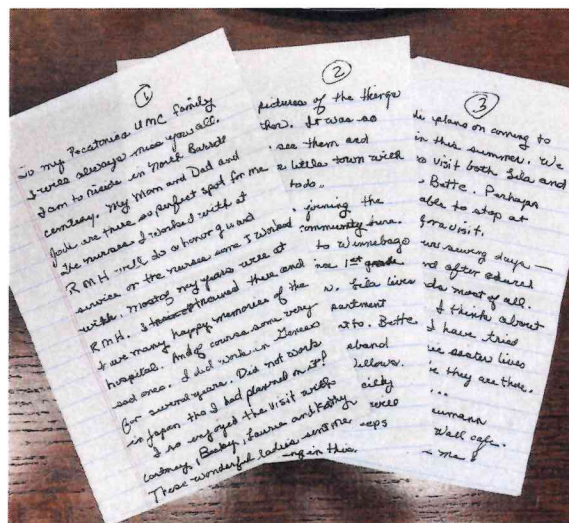
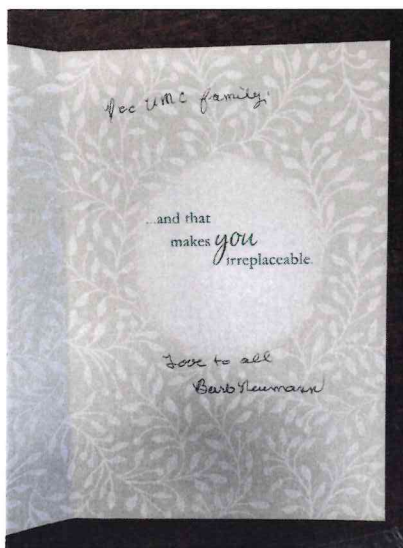
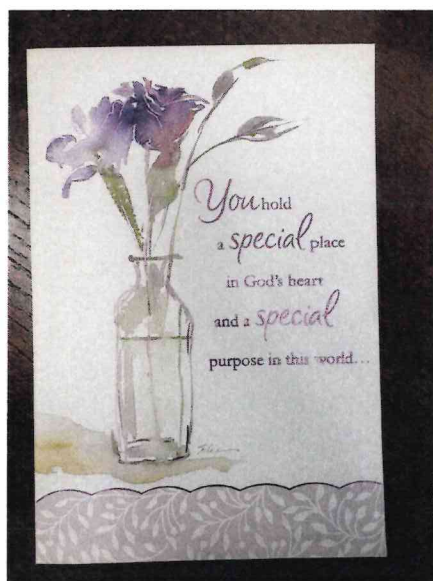


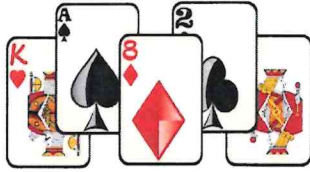
Please join us at the Community Potluck held in our Fellowship Hall on Thursday, August 13th. Doors open at 11:30am and we plan to eat at noon. Please bring a dish to share. Table service and beverages are provided. Plan to enjoy a really good meal and lots of great fellowship! Invite friends and neighbors – everybody's welcome!

Our program for August will be provided by Fatina from European Services at Home. European Service at Home is a privately owned home care services agency, founded in 2001, and focused on home care, home health and wellness management. They are licensed by the State of Illinois, certified by Medicare and bonded and insured. For 15 years, this agency has been offering those in need, in our community, multilingual services for hourly, daily or live-in home care, home health care, respite care, non-emergency transportation, medical equipment and supplies (sales or rentals) and adult day center services in Northern Illinois, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Please plan to join us for good food, great fellowship, and learning about another service agency in our area. For more information call the church or talk to Karne or Pastor Marillyn.

Pec UMC received a special card in the mail from Barb Neuman. The card (including the hand-written letter) is in the back of the church for those interested in reading!





EUCHRE

No Euchre in August.
See you in September!



Dominoes!

Come and join the friends of PEC UMC in playing Dominoes once a month! Players choose your game: Mexican Train or Chicken Foot. Next game is Thursday, July 16th at 1p. Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Happiest Birthday wishes to ...

1st Mark Kleparski
Kelly White
10th Jeff HOLETON
12th Connor Qualls
14th Ann Redding
19th Sonya Suess
23rd McKinley Kleparski
26th John Stelter
31st Laurie Kleparski

And Anniversary wishes to ...

4th Glen and Lola Moist
18th Roman and Amy Salamon



Submissions for The Tower can be mailed, emailed or left in the box outside the Church Office.

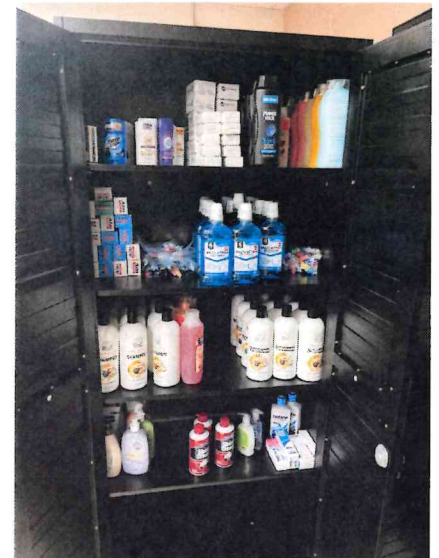
DEADLINE FOR THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER
IS AUGUST 15TH.

The cabinets for the new pantry are here and assembled! Thanks to Dave Hilton and his grandsons for assembling and delivering them! Now we will start shopping to fill them and finalize details for our "grand opening," August 8th! If you'd like to help Wanda and Pastor shop, let them know. If you have a source for really good prices on personal care, cleaning, and paper products, let them know. Or, if you'd like to purchase some items for the pantry and donate them, that would be fine, too.

We will be offering personal care products like toothbrushes and toothpaste, shampoo and other hair care products, deodorant, body wash & bar soap, first aid supplies (like band-aids), feminine care products, baby care products, and diapers. Also, cleaning products like laundry detergent, dish soap, bathroom cleaners, kitchen and floor cleaning products, dust spray, window cleaning products, etc. Paper products like toilet paper, kleenex, and paper towels are also needed.

The Pantry's name is "The Everyday Essentials Pantry"! Please pray for this new mission venture for our church and community and the people who will be blessed by it. Thanks!

Our "soft opening" will be on Saturday, August 8th from 10a-12p. Volunteers are needed greet our guests to make this a success, please arrive at 9:30a.



PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE
United Methodist Men's

Spiritual Congress

September 11 - 13, 2026

Conference Point – On Beautiful Lake Geneva

300 Conference Point Road

Williams Bay, Wisconsin



Walking each day with HOPE

(ISAIAH 40:31)

- **Welcome and Introduction of the theme (by Video): Bishop Dan Schwerin, Northern Illinois Conference**
- **From Church to Club to Community Presence (By video): Rev. Dr. Rick Vance**
- **Holy Communion and Message": Rev. Dr. Norval Brown**
- **Friday Night Opening Message with HOPE: NACP President Mark Dehority**
- **"Walking Each Day with HOPE": UMMF Mark Lubbock and Steve Nailor**

Music by: Alleluia Quartet

The Spiritual Congress will also feature the Christian movie, opportunities for prayer and worship, the annual UMM awards ceremony, a service project with Midwest Mission Distribution Center packing dry food Blessing Bags, an update on local, conference, national UMM initiatives and Scouting, excellent food, and time for camaraderie on the shores of Lake Geneva.

Come for one, two, or all three days with overnight accommodation on site. Enjoy the recently refurbished historic Conference Point on the shores of beautiful Lake Geneva. See the website for additional details and costs.

Register Now at: www.nicummm.org

August 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Worship 9am with Communion followed by Fellowship B.S. 6:30p-7:30p	3	4	5 No Euchre	6 First Lutheran Corn Boil	7	8 Everyday Essentials Pantry "soft opening" Volunteers: 9:30a-12p
9 Worship 9am followed by Fellowship B.S. 6:30p-7:30p	10	11	12	13 Community Potluck 11:30a please bring a dish to share	14	15
16 Worship 9am followed by Fellowship B.S. 6:30p-8:30p	17	18	19	20 Dominoe's 1p	21	22
23 Worship 9am followed by Fellowship B.S. 6:30p-7:30p	24	25 Disciple Bible Study 4p	26 Sewing Group 9a-12p	27	28	29
30 Worship 9am followed by Fellowship B.S. 6:30p-7:30p	31					



www.pecumc.org

secretary@pecumc.org

815-601-8162

Appointments available, please call

Available via phone and email: M-F

Church Office

Pecatonica IL 61063

PO Box 169

Pastor Cell: 815-994-2567

office: 815-239-1110

Appointments available, please call the church

M, T, W: 9am-2pm

Office Hours

Pastor Marilyn Nolan

Pecatonica United Methodist Church

528 Washington St.

PO Box 607

Pecatonica, IL 61063

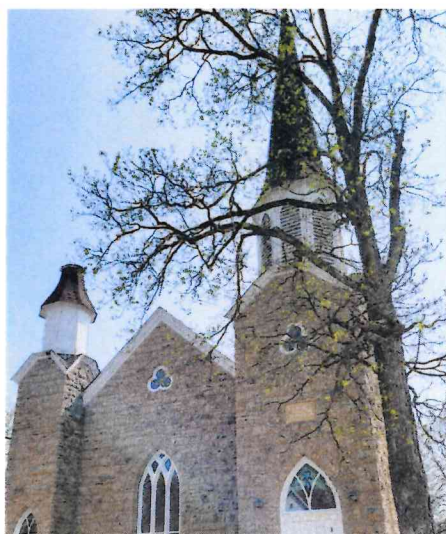
815-239-1110



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

August 2026



Or Current Resident