



The TOWER

September 2026

From the Pastor's Desk

My Dear Friends of Jesus,

Greetings to each and every one of you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I pray this finds you and your loved ones doing well, with your souls at peace in the Lord. Those who are struggling in any way, know you are in my prayers. And if you need to talk, I'm always here to listen. And if you have specific prayer requests, please reach out so I can join you in prayer.

Last month I shared with you a meditation the pastor shared with us during worship while I was in Australia. This month – about a month after I returned home, it finally happened! Someone wrote about Tim Tams (the official cookie of Australia, or biscuit as they are called there)! The cookies were referenced in a devotion written for the *Upper Room* (August 13th). No, the author didn't name them, but without a doubt, that's what he meant. They are such yummy cookies! And I always look forward to sharing a little of this thing I've grown to love during Fellowship Time when I return home.

We all have things in this world we love. Often, it's a favorite food. It might be a favorite book, a song, a piece of clothing, a home decoration, a tool or kitchen gadget that's especially helpful or handy, or maybe it's a favorite activity or place to visit. And isn't it fun to share your "find" with a loved one or to tell them all about it and give information so they can acquire or experience it, too? I know I love doing this for my loved ones and special friends. It's fun to share things I love with those I love, and I'll bet it's fun for you, too. It was the same for this author's experience. His brother enjoyed sharing this new-found special treat with his family and friends on his return from the Land Down Under.

Thinking about the ease and enjoyment of sharing things like cookies got this author thinking. He made a really good point I think I need to take to heart, and maybe you do, too. Are we as eager, willing, and excited to share the good news about our faith and the blessings of love, forgiveness, and salvation we've been given through our belief in Jesus Christ as we are to share a favorite cookie?

Let's consider this all for a bit. Yes, it's easy to talk to family, friends, and sometimes even strangers about things of this world that we love. What can I say – these things can be good conversation starters or help us over some awkward moments. But sharing about Jesus and our faith can be difficult. We wonder if our words or experience will be adequate. What if the other person is from another faith, or worse yet – they have no faith at all? What if I offend them or they ask me something I can't answer. Then what? Do you know what I mean? Are you in the same mindset here?



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Still, Jesus spent 3 years preparing his disciples for those moments – and he prepares us in what's written in the Bible, especially the 4 gospels. Before he ascended into heaven to sit at God's right hand, Jesus gave his disciples the Great Commission, and as followers today, it's our GC, too. Matthew 28:19-20: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

If we're willing to share not just our cookies (or whatever), with others, we need to share Jesus with them, too. What greater gift of love is there than that? Don't be worried about what to say – the Holy Spirit will guide you. If you have the courage to do what Jesus calls you to do and you trust God enough and lift up a little prayer for guidance, Jesus will grant that request! Trust God!

In John 14:6, Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." That makes getting to heaven to be with Jesus to "the very end of the age" sound like it's going to be hard. Yes, even with Jesus being the only way and knowing the gate is narrow (Matthew 7:13-14), Jesus wants as many as possible to live with him forever in the kingdom of God. Even if it sounds kind of hard to get there, the Holy Spirit will not only work in our lives to make sure we get in but will help us help others to know about Jesus so Jesus can show them the way, too.

Maybe for starters, we should just keep sharing those amazing cookies and good things we love with others. Who knows? Maybe it'll open the door for us to share with them about our faith in Jesus Christ. Maybe they've been looking for something more in life than the best cookie possible. But how will they find what they're really looking for unless someone has faith enough and cares about them enough to share this good news? As the UR author said: "Christ's love inspires me (us) to share the good news with everyone I (we) meet." Love will lead us to share Jesus!

Yes, I love cookies and I love Tim Tams and I love sharing good things with others. But I love Jesus more, and so naturally I love sharing about my faith and the gospel story with those I meet. I may not always have the most eloquent words, and I may not always get it 100% correct, but I believe God just wants us to have a willing heart and give it a go. Like with our belongings, if we share because of love, the Holy Spirit will take over and do the rest. For this, and so much more, we just have to praise God and give him all the glory!

Take care and God bless you and all those you love. Hope to see you in church!

Love & Prayers, *Pastor Marilyn*

P.S.: If you'd like to try a Tim Tam or if you just want another one, let me know coz I still have a few that I'd be willing to share. And if you need a prayer, I'm always ready to share one of those with you, too! Let's keep spreading the love around!

What's Happening at Pec UMC

Blessing of Backpacks for Students & Teachers

Sunday, September 13th during Worship.

Bring your backpacks for a special blessing!

Stay for a pot-luck meal following worship!

Bring a dish to share.

Tableware & beverages provided.

Help Wanted!

Volunteers needed to sit at our table to promote the Everyday Essentials Pantry.

Pecatonica Labor Day Fun Fest

(downtown Pec)

Saturday. September 5th at 3:00pm

Pastor Marilyn's Fudge

At our Christmas in July Sunday, I made my fudge recipe that I always make at Christmas, and it was a hit! Several people wondered if I share recipes, and I do! So many asked about it, I decided to just put it in the Tower. It is a super easy recipe, and it's never failed me yet! It's a good one to make with your kids or grandkids, too! Try it and enjoy!

**Pastor Marilyn's Never Fail Fudge**

Prepare an 8x8 or 9x9 square pan by lining it with a sheet of waxed or parchment paper – be sure it extends up on all of the sides. In a medium to large microwave safe bowl melt a tablespoon of white shortening or butter. Then put 3 cups of semi-sweet chocolate chips in the bowl. Stir and microwave in 45 sec. – 1 minute increments. Stir after each time. Keep doing this until all the chips are melted and the mixture is smooth. It usually takes 2-3 minutes to do this. Then stir in 1 can of sweetened condensed milk (make sure it's condensed milk and not evaporated milk). You can do this when the chips are almost melted and you still have to microwave one more time, too. Stir until smooth. Then add 1 teaspoon of vanilla and a dash of salt. Stir till smooth and then pour into the pan and spread out evenly. Cover with plastic wrap or foil and refrigerate until firm – usually at least an hour or so. Have fun licking the bowl! When firm, cut into squares – this is a rich fudge, so I usually don't cut them too big. Keep any leftovers in a covered container in the fridge. That's it! Enjoy!!!

Pastor Out of Office Sept. 29-30

Pastor Marilyn will be attending the School of Leadership in Green Lake, WI Sept. 29 & 30. If you need to speak with her, call her cell phone number (815-994-2567) and leave a message. She will return your call ASAP. Thank you!

World Communion Sunday, October 4th

Mark your calendar and plan to be with us for World Communion Sunday on October 4th. This is the Sunday Christians all around the world gather at the Lord's table to share the bread (whatever kind it might be for that culture) and the cup of blessing. Steve Nailor will be our guest preacher and Pastor Marilyn will officiate the celebration of Communion.



Monthly Finance Report

Current Account Balances for 7/11/26 thru 8/15/26

Pec UMC Balances as of 08/15/2026		-	-	-	-
Account	7/11/2026	Disbursements	Deposits	Transfers	8/15/2026
General Fund	\$84,514.69	\$14,170.89	\$9,859.50	\$0.00	\$80,203.30
Building Fund	\$17,937.02	\$0.00	\$323.50	\$0.00	\$18,260.52
Outreach Account	\$1,313.02	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,313.02
PUMC Men	\$4,197.01	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,197.01
Memorial Fund	\$3,532.34	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,532.34
Womens Savings Acct	\$8,863.90	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,863.90
Womens Checking	\$2,907.44	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,907.44
	\$123,265.42	\$14,170.89	\$10,183.00	\$0.00	\$119,277.53

The time period since the last report covers five weeks, so the General Fund activity is a little more in this report. Still, we are doing well. The General Fund plus the Building Fund is up \$4228 this year. They have totaled about \$100,000 for the last several months.

There has been very little financial activity in the other financial accounts, but church activity has been increasing lately, so I expect financial activity to increase as well.

John Stelter, Finance Team



Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Packing Party & Church Potluck - October 25th



We will pack shoeboxes right after church on Sunday, October 25th. Be sure to stay and help! In the meantime, shop for items and bring them in or even pack a box or two on your own. It's a lot of fun! There is information on the shoebox table about what goes in the boxes and tips on packing them. Be sure to pray for the children!

Good things to buy and include in the boxes are school supplies, small toys for girls and boys, socks and tee shirts, combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, hand towels & washcloths, sewing items for the older girls and small hand tools for the older boys, balls (esp. soccer balls & pumps), stuffed animals, coloring books, baby dolls and Barbies for the girls and matchbox cars and trucks for the boys. The list goes on and on – anything you think will bring these kids joy and show them the love of Jesus. You never know what the Spirit will do through your gifts – it could change lives!

Then be sure to stay and share a potluck meal with your church family. Table service and beverages will be provided. Bring a dish or two to share. Enjoy a delicious meal and wonderful company! We have so much to celebrate and be thankful for! God is good!

SEPTEMBER COMMUNITY POTLUCK

Monthly Potluck



The September Community Potluck will take place on Thursday, September 10th. Doors will open at 11:30am, and we'll plan to eat at noon. You are invited to bring a dish to share. Table service and beverages are provided by the church. Invite family, friends, and neighbors to join us – everyone is welcome!

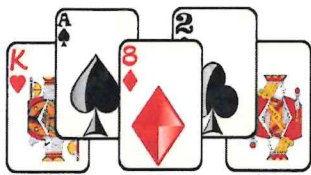
Diane Schurch will be our guest presenter following the meal. She will let us know about the new things happening with Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry. She will also teach us how to make jump ropes for the children out of old tee shirts. If you have some tee shirts you no longer wear, bring them with you! Hope to see you on September 10th!

September Picnic at the Parsonage

Terry and I had so much fun and enjoyed everyone's company (and all the delicious food, too!) so much at our first Picnic at the Parsonage, we want to do it again! So, this is your official invitation! Please join us on Friday, September 18th at 5:30pm at the church parsonage at 212 E. Fifth St.

Good news – for those of you who were here last time – we have a new grill, so hopefully the meat will be done in a timelier manner and more to the Grill Master's usual "expertise!" We'll provide meat, buns, condiments, beverages, table service, and a few other extras. You're invited to bring a dish to share if you want. Later, for those who want to stay, we might get out the dominos! Please plan to join us!





EUCHRE

Come and join the friends of PEC UMC in playing Euchre once a month. Next game day is Wednesday, September 2nd. Join them for dessert at 12:30pm and play cards from 1 to 3 pm. \$2.00 donations are appreciated, and prizes are awarded. Come and join the fun! Invite a friend!



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, September 17th at 1p. Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Happiest Birthday wishes to ...

4th Neil T. Suess
6th Dallas Hilton
9th Ryan Salamon
13th Emma White
24th Meghan Salamon

And Anniversary wishes to ...

2nd Fred & Janet Schubert
8th Russ & Sue Sarver
10th Neil Sr. & Sonya Suess
17th Larry & Lois Holteon



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

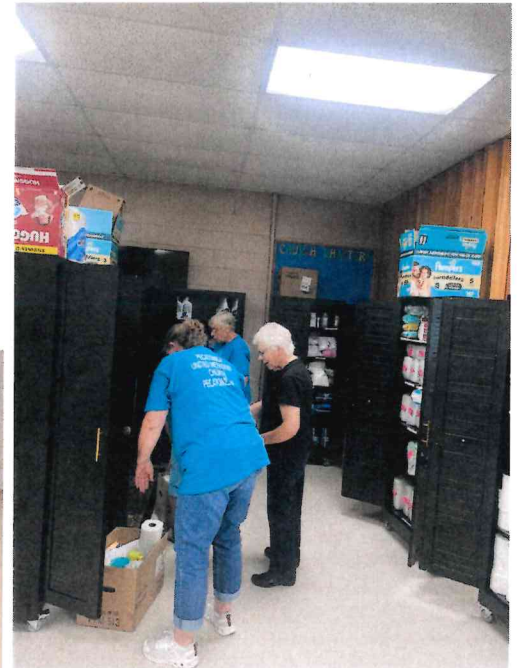
DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

IS SEPTEMBER 15TH.

Our first Everyday Essentials Pantry distribution was a huge success! We served 38 families (132 people)! Everyone was so patient and appreciative of what they received. Eight people from our church helped to make the event happen! Thank you SO much!

Our next Everyday Essentials Pantry distribution date will be Saturday, September 12th from 10:00am-noon. Once again, we invite you to help with the distribution. All helpers need to be here around 9:30am. Some people are needed to fill the orders, some are needed to sit at the registration table and help people fill out their request, and some are needed to greet people.

If you would like to donate items for the pantry, check out what we stock. If you would like to give a monetary donation, please note "EE Pantry" on your check or envelope. Cleaning items were very popular at our first distribution. Also, toilet paper and paper towels are always needed as every guest gets those items. Also, if you know a family or individual who could be blessed by items from the pantry, please invite them to come! And continue to pray for God's blessing on our new ministry to our community!



Fall Celebration of the Prairie North District Northern Illinois Conference



United
Women
in Faith

Saturday, September 26, 2026
9:00 Registration, 9:30 Program
Freeport: First United Methodist Church
503 W Lily Creek Rd., Freeport

Join us for our Annual Fall Celebration. The theme is: When Did We ... referring to *Matthew 25:35-40*.

Our guest speaker will be James Hutson, Executive Director of Winnebago County CASA. CASA is A Court Appointed Special Advocate, who is a trained community member appointed by a Juvenile Court judge to represent the best interests of a child who has experienced abuse or neglect and whose case is brought before the court— Winnebago County CASA empowers volunteer CASAs about the organization and what good they do for children in need. Maybe you will discover that you can be a part of the program. We will also accept donations for the organization.

During our meeting, we will discuss the business of the Prairie North District. The Business Meeting Documents will be emailed to you through our regular email system. If you have received Laura Werner at 815/276-5773 with your please contact us and mailing address. You can call or text the office or text.



We look forward to seeing all of you on September 26th.

Matthew 25:35-40— For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty me. That you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed food, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these

Registration is due by Friday, September 16th

Mail registration & checks to Linda Truckenmiller-Krum, Prairie North District Treasurer, 1502 W. Lincoln Blvd., Freeport, IL 61022. Registration fee is \$15.00 and donations to the District Pledge to Mission are welcomed. Make checks to payable to UWF Prairie North.

Or you can email your information to mslstk@yahoo.com and bring payment to the meeting.

Name: (organizer) _____

Church/UWF unit: _____

Email address: _____

Phone Number: _____

The Ladies of the Freeport: First United Women in Faith will be making lunch for us, so please let us know if you need a _____ Gluten Free or _____ Vegetarian Option

Number of People attending from your Church/Unit: _____

Registration for Prairie North District Fall Meeting (\$15/person) \$ _____

Donations toward Prairie North District Pledge to Mission \$ _____

(our District Pledge to Mission total is \$30,000)

Total check amount \$ _____

Names of those attending:

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Disciple Bible Study 4p	2 Euchre Party 1230p dessert 1p-3p cards	3	4	5 Labor Day Fest downtown Pec at 3p
6 9a Worship with Communion followed by Fellowship Boy Scouts 6:30p-7:30p	7 Labor Day	8 Council Meeting 615p Finance 630p Committees 7p Full Council Disciple Bible Study 4p	9	10 Community Potluck 11:30a Please bring a dish to share	11 UMM Spiritual Congress now through Sept. 13th	12 Everyday Essentials Pantry open 10a-12p
13 9a Worship & Blessing of the backpacks followed by all church potluck B.S. 6:30p-7:30p	14	15 Disciple Bible Study 4p	16	17 Dominoes Group at 1p	18	19 Fresh Expressions, Grace UMC, Rockford 9a-3p
20 9a Worship followed by Fellowship Boy Scouts 6:30p-8:30p	21	22 Disciple Bible Study 4p	23	24	25	26 UWF Fall Celebration at First UMC Freeport at 9a
27 9a Worship followed by Fellowship Boy Scouts 6:30p-7:30p	28	29 Pastor out of office Disciple Bible Study 4p	30 Pastor out of office Sewing Group 9a-12p			



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

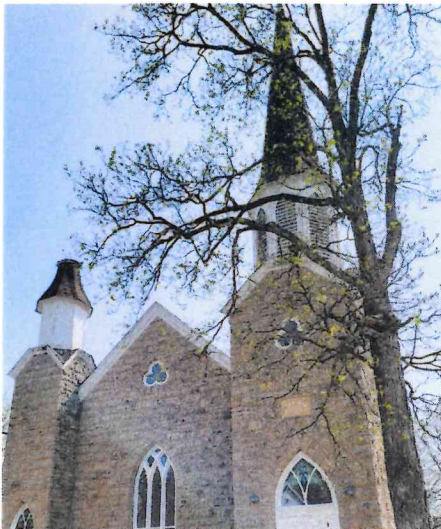
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Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

September 2026



Or Current Resident