

# MINUTE FOR MISSION

NORTH/MIDWEST REGION (WINNECONNE, WISCONSIN)

## THE PENTECOST OFFERING — THE LITTLE CHURCH THAT COULD

Few things disturb a community more than the sudden passing of one of its young people. This was certainly true of Winneconne, Wisconsin, population about 2,000.

But when people learned of a local teen who had committed suicide, First Presbyterian Church of Winneconne decided it needed to do something. In response to the reaction of the community, the congregation of less than 100 members took on the subject of mental health in an effort to support the local youth.

The church decided to use its resources to make a difference in the lives of the community's young people. Working with local and regional counseling centers to determine the best response, they established an endowment to fund mental health screenings for every middle and high school student in their district. Teen behavior can be puzzling on any given day, and it is often hard to determine if there is an underlying issue that needs to be addressed. The screenings provided by this endowment identify certain behaviors and responses to help head off serious outcomes.

The Winneconne Community School District's Emotional Wellness/Mental Health Fund is part of the Winneconne Area Community Foundation. It is professionally managed, and the screenings are done by staff from the Samaritan Counseling Center.

The congregation's pastor, Rev. Rose McCurdy, accepted the call to serve in Winneconne after the fund was in place, but she shares this story as a mark of the congregation's faithful support of God's children. "It's genius!" she said, remarking on

their commitment to serve. “This small church sold their unused manse and put all of that money into the endowment. It’s loving, creative, and it’s a sustaining thing outside of the congregation itself,” she added.

The church wanted to make sure no youth slipped through the cracks, and that all had an opportunity to grow into the person God created them to be. Committed to this ministry, church members continue to make donations to the fund through opportunities like the Pentecost Offering.

Small but mighty. Their church might be small, but the support given to their community is mighty!

By supporting the Pentecost Offering, we are helping to shape a positive future for young lives, for our church, and for our world. And forty percent of the Offering will stay right here to support (LOCAL PROGRAM/S). Please give generously because as has always been the case, when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

*Let us pray,*

*Protecting Spirit,*

*open our eyes to see your children in need,  
and embolden our hearts so we might act,  
so children, youth and young adults  
in our community and around the world  
might live and thrive,  
proclaiming your glory,  
and doing your good work.*

*May our gifts that we offer in your name  
shape the future of your Church.*

*Amen.*