Gouverneur First United Methodist Church
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Meet Jesus ~ Follow Jesus ~ Serve Jesus
Love Boldly ~ Serve Joyfully ~ Lead Courageously

First UMC of Gouverneur

Keeping Connected





Monthly Newsletter November and December 2026

Pastor's Message

Seasons Greetings to you and yours-

In this time of preparation, as we enter the Advent season, we wait with hope for Christ's coming and make room in our hearts for the light of his birth.

Here in Northern New York, winter reminds us that we cannot control every storm or know exactly when it will arrive. But we can prepare, care for one another, and hold fast to hope.

As we reflect together, I invite you to hear this message not as a prediction of a particular storm, but as a call to readiness, compassion, and faith.

Our region's history reminds us that hardship can test a community; our faith reminds us that we are not called to face it alone. May this Advent prepare us to welcome Christ by becoming a source of warmth, courage, and help to our neighbors.

Historic nor'easters remain a distinct possibility—not as a prediction of a specific storm or date, but as a reminder that the forces that shaped this region can return. The Great Blizzard of 1888 showed how quickly a powerful storm can isolate communities. The 1998 ice storm brought a different kind of hardship to northern New York: ice-laden trees, broken power lines, and neighbors depending on one another. These events are part of our history, not a timetable for the future.

Gouverneur knows winter is more than a season on the calendar. A storm may close roads, darken homes, and test the strength of families and neighbors. We cannot say when the next one will come, or how severe it will be. We can say that preparation matters: check on older neighbors, keep essential supplies ready, and heed local forecasts.

And when hardship comes, let it call us not only to prepare, but to care. The prophet Isaiah spoke of making a straight path through rough places; Jesus taught his followers to love their neighbors. In a storm, those words become practical: share warmth, offer help, and make sure no one is left facing the cold alone.

Go into this season of hope with joy!

As we wait, may we live with ***faith, hope, and love***. As we share Christ's light, may we encourage and serve one another.

Go forth to ***Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, and Lead Courageously***. May you ***Meet Jesus, Follow Jesus, and Serve Jesus*** in the people and places of your everyday life.

Keep the light of Christ's love burning in your heart. Encourage the weary, comfort the grieving, and share God's Peace wherever you go.

May your holy days, holidays and every day be filled with hope, joy, and the love of Christ.

Peace be with you-
Pastor Kevin

Consecration Sunday – November 22, 2026



Please join us for **Consecration Sunday on November 22**, as we welcome **Rev. Aaron Bouwens** as our guest speaker. This special Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate our church's ministries and reflect on how we can continue to support our mission to **MEET JESUS … FOLLOW JESUS … SERVE JESUS.**

Everyone is invited to a **Consecration Sunday Dinner immediately following worship at 11:00 a.m.** Please contact the church office via email, phone or in person if you plan to attend so we can plan accordingly.

This Month's Special Envelopes:

You have received 2 pre-labeled envelopes for specific ministry donations:

Nov.:General *Dec.-Christmas offering*



Please give as your heart calls.

Announcements:

~ Regular Office Hours are M-F, 9am-1pm
Our office is closed on holidays.
~ COS Meeting on Nov. 18th at 6pm
~ Trustee Meeting on Nov. 19th

- **Grandparents Breakfast on Nov. 21**
- **Thanksgiving Dinner will be held on Thursday, November 26th. Take Outs only. Call ahead to order.**

Delivery drivers are needed on this day. Call Pat at 315-222-5372 if you can help!

News from the North:

Thank you to all who came and supported our yard, soup and bake sale. It was a success!

Please watch for the Blessing Box Collection box in the back of the church. Any non-perishable items may be placed in the box to be delivered and distributed at the FUMC's blessing box.

Thank you to these special event coordinators!

Judy Wood – Fall Craft Show

Pat Williams – organizing bake sale items

Martha and Connie – organizing soup sale

Hospitality Crew for providing snacks for Charge Conference and all those who submitted reports and paperwork.

Never underestimate the difference you make!

Friday Lunch/Blessing Box – Judy Bush and team

WGYB – Denise Baer, Joann Jones, Janet Melillo

RIPIT Ministry – Amber, Pat, and participants

All our lectors, greeters, and music ministers! We are grateful!

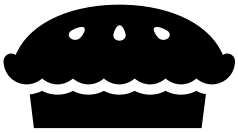
Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Kevin at FUMC Gouverneur	**Every Wednesday at 10-11:30am.**	**Delve into the Word together and nurture faith and understanding.**	**BYOB – Bring your own bible or use one of ours.**

We've Got Your Back!

Please help us grow We've Got Your Back! With winter coming soon, need in our community is growing. We have visitors to the WGYB room every week looking for assistance with items. We need children's outwear. If your child has outgrown their coats and boots, we will happily take them off your hands and redistribute them to folks who are less fortunate. We are also looking for household cleaning products such as dish detergent, laundry detergent, and toilet paper. As we all know, these expenses add up pretty quickly and create a financial burden for those who struggle to make it through the month. Toiletries, socks and underwear are always appreciated as are blankets and throws. Unfortunately we are unable to accept clothing at this time. We don't have the space.

Thanks to those who have generously donated in the past. Your continued support is appreciated.

Calling All Bakers!



We are in need of pie donations for the Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, November 26th. Homemade desserts are also needed for our Christmas Dinner in December. The date is to be determined. Contact Judy Bush please.

Blessing Box Suggestions:

Cereal bars, cream of wheat, dry cereal, prepackaged muffins, fruit cups, shelf stable milk,bread, peanut butter, canned soup,

Don't forget to bring your Grandparent or Grandbuddy to breakfast on Saturday, November 21st, 8:30-10:30. We are in need of homemade muffins, bread, and jams.



♫ Ding Dong! It's time to play bells!

We're going to play bells for Christmas and we need your help! Adults and boys and girls 7th grade or older are encouraged to come for rehearsals on Mondays beginning 11/16/26 at 5:00 PM in the sanctuary. Whether you've played before or not, you're welcome to join us to make a joyful noise. We'll play Christmas music and have a blast. Please let me know if you'd like to join us.



More Upcoming Events

- **Grandparents Breakfast** Saturday November 21st at 8:30-10:30.
- **Angel Tree coming soon!**
- **Thanksgiving Dinner on Nov. 26th. Please let Judy know if you are able to make pies and/or help in the kitchen. Pat is looking for delivery drivers!**
- The Gouverneur Community Chorus will present a **Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 13**, 3:00 PM at the First Presbyterian Church, Church Street, Gouverneur. Singers are welcome to join in rehearsals, Sunday afternoons from 3 - 4:30 PM.



We will once again host the **angel tree** with the names of local children. The angels will list gender and age of children receiving the gift as well as suggested items. Please return all UNWRAPPED items with the angel attached by Sunday, December 13th. Angels will be available at the end of November.

Join us for our Christmas Eve Service on December 24, 2026 at 7:00pm

2026 Advent Series beginning the first Sunday of Advent, November 29th

The Ghosts of Christmas & Christ's Coming

Remember grace ~ See your neighbor ~ Choose a new path ~ Welcome Christ's light



Shared Ministries submitted by Don Schuessler

What do we mean by Shared Ministries? Our church belongs to a group of United Methodist Churches that make up the Upper New York Annual Conference. Annual Conference has a couple of meanings. First, representatives from all our churches come together once a year to share and decide the directions we'll go together as people of Christ. It's an actual conference. Second, the group of all the churches is called an Annual Conference … I guess because of our coming together once a year. Even though all that is true, calling the two things still seems a little goofy to me. But what we do together is NOT goofy. Because together we can do more and go farther. Our churches together support our Bishop and other leaders in the conference office. We support our Camp Aldersgate and the other camping and retreat ministries in the conference. We contribute to many national and international ministries, seeking to alleviate pain and suffering around the globe and bringing joy to millions in very challenging situations. Youth are supported as they move on to more education. Lots and lots and lots of great things happen because our church … and the others in our conference … are faithful in their giving to Shared Ministries. This year, half of our Christmas Offering will go to helping in all these areas through Shared Ministries. The other half will go to supporting our Gouverneur based Ryan's Wish program. Ryan's Wish helps individuals and families in Gouverneur and throughout the North Country as they deal with major health problems, providing funds for travel, housing, and incidentals like meals at hospitals out of the area. Please give generously this Christmas to make the holiday times a bit brighter for many of our brothers and sisters here and around the globe.



Coffee Fellowship

A clip board with a sign-up sheet will be located on the back table in the sanctuary during Sunday worship and will be outside the office afterward. We invite those who feel called to host Fellowship by providing refreshments for the congregation. Coffee Fellowship is important in the life of the church as it fosters small groups and in turn our relationship with Jesus



Directory Last Call!

If you need to update the Directory information, please call or email the office. New directories will be printed for January 2027.

Do you have information for our newsletter? *Want to submit a recipe?*

Need more details on an event? *Need to update your contact information?*

Contact us! **Phone:** (315)287-2440 **Email:** firstumcgouverneur@gmail.com

Website: www.gouverneurumc.org

Over $3,000 was raised at our Fall Craft Show, soup and bake sales combined! Thank you to all who contributed time, talent and treasure!

Stay Informed

Would you like to know more about activities in the United Methodist churches and communities around us? In Upper New York? And beyond? It is easy to subscribe to email news (arriving once per week) from the Northern Flow District and from the United Methodists of Upper New York. Email TammyMcAdam@unyumc.org to request to receive the Northern Flow (and Mohawk) District email news. To receive the email news from the Conference please visit the website and follow the link to subscribe. United Methodists of Upper New York: https://www.unyumc.org/join-our-newsletter

✦ PRAYER CHANGES EVERYTHING ✦

PRAYER CHAIN

Would you like to join our church prayer chain?

When one person needs prayer, our church family can come together in faith and lift that need to God.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE CONTACTED?

☐ **Email** ☐ **Text Message** ☐ **Phone Call**

Return to the church office as soon as possible .

♥ **YOUR INFORMATION**

Name: _____

Email: _____

Cell/Text Number: _____ Phone Number: _____

Preferred contact information (if different):_____

Thank you for being willing to pray!

Together, we can faithfully lift up the needs of our church, our community, and those who need the power and presence of God.

✦ **OUR PRAYERS HAVE POWER**



Grandparents Breakfast

at the UMC

When: Saturday, Novemebr 21st, 2026 8:30am -10:30am

Where: United Methodist Church of Gouverneur

Who: Open to our community of Grandparents and guests

Cost: Free (donations welcome)

Grab a Grandparent or Grandbuddy and join us for a yummy breakfast!



Menu:

Pancakes with Real Maple Syrup

Sausage

Scrambled Eggs

Homemade Toast and Jams

Baked Goods

Coffee & Juice



