

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

# Good News

FEBRUARY 2026



*Smithville*  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

TO LOVE  
CHRIST  
TO SERVE  
CHRIST  
TO SHARE  
CHRIST  
NO MATTER  
WHAT IT  
TAKES



SMITHVILLE UMC

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*from the desk of Pastor James*



Dear Smithville UMC,

We have spent the last several months asking, what makes us healthy? What makes us healthy as individuals? As a church? and as the body of Christ? We explored five different ways to understand health. While all of these are connected within us and influence each other, they can be split to help us focus and work on being healthier.

- 1.) Physically (Physical/body)
- 2.) Mentally (Mental/brain)
- 3.) Emotionally (Emotions/heart)
- 4.) Volitionally (Volition/will)
- 5.) Spiritually (Spiritual/soul)

In Philippians 2:12-13, Paul calls us to obey the Lord and work towards our salvation through fear and trembling. We as Americans, and as humans in general, tend to read this as an individual, you on your own do the work. However, this is a plural “you” in Greek. It would be better to say that Paul is calling us to work out OUR salvation as the body of Christ, in fear and trembling as a community together.

Here Paul is telling us that as we grow in God, as we work to be healthier, as we work to be healthier individuals so that we can be a healthier Body of Christ, we are called to do so together. We are called to work with one another, to support one another, to care for one another. As we look to enter Lent, let us recommit ourselves to work with one another as the Body of Christ as we continue to grow in our relationship with God. Let us continue to be healthier in these 5 aspects so that we can be healthier, better, living sacrifices that live out God’s call in the world. Let us continue to be a healthier community in Christ so that we can transform the world and bring it just a little closer to God’s kingdom.

Blessings,  
Pastor James



I hope that you all found yourselves staying safe and warm during the snow we had in January. It has been a while since we saw such a big snow and I don't know about you, but our 7-year-old was a huge fan! She and her dad love the snow, so they were really looking forward to it. They had their snow clothes ready before the first flake ever fell and I made sure I had the hot coco and marshmallows on standby for when they were on a play break. To be honest, we actually enjoyed the change of pace. We played games, ate soup that I made and watched it snow all day. We had prepared for the snow so when it came, we were ready. And not just for the "fun" stuff. We had the blankets and candles and extra water (just in case) set aside. The snowblower was ready to go, filled with gas with extra in the can, and we just had things prepared "in case."

But getting ready for even a day long snow got me to thinking....are we as ready to be with Jesus as we are ready for this snow? People were taking that storm pretty seriously. The news talked about it for days and days, the governor declared a state of emergency in preparation for it, the road crews took on extra hours and worked so hard, the line men were ready for power outages, the churches were ready for on-line services, and people stocked up on food and the essentials. Wow! All of that for a 1-day event.

My question is, do we put that much effort in when we are preparing for eternity? When we stop and look at our spiritual lives, are we putting in the time and effort and care it takes to prepare ourselves for our forever home?

Now I realize we cannot go to the grocery store to stock up on the fruits of the spirit or go to the mall to buy the armor of God...if only it were that simple! But, as someone that loves Jesus, I want to do an inventory of my life to make sure that I am being who he has called me to be. Am I spending time soaking up the truth of his Word? Am I loving the Lord and loving my neighbor? Am I living like I believe that God's Word is holy and true? Am I seeking to honor him? To obey him? To put his call before my comfort? To find joy in this journey of faith he has placed me on?

Being a disciple of Jesus takes a willingness to prepare ourselves. To be ready to share the love and hope and truth of the Gospel of Jesus with anyone he sends our way. So my friends, now that the snow (and soon the winter) has passed, I encourage you to find ways to prepare your own heart for a deeper connection with God. Don't be afraid to ask God what areas of your life need some work...I know it feels scary to ask God to do a new thing in us... but remember...he has created us, he has put a new spirit within us, and he will be faithful wherever he leads us. So let's prepare our hearts to enjoy the journey.

# Offering and Attendance

## Sunday, December 7, 2025—Offering

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Loose Collection ..... | 65.00           |
| General Fund.....      | <u>5,795.00</u> |
|                        | \$5,860.00      |

### Items Not in General Budget:

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Building Fund ..... | 990.00       |
| Pastor gift .....   | 100.00       |
| Advent book.....    | <u>10.00</u> |
|                     | \$6,960.00   |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| In-person Worship Service | 47        |
| ONLINE Worship Service    | views 158 |

## Sunday, December 14, 2025 -Offering

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Loose Collection ..... | 50.00           |
| General Fund.....      | <u>1,920.00</u> |
|                        | \$1,970.00      |

|                               |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Sign Campaign.....            | 60.00         |
| Rental .....                  | 80.00         |
| Lib Prep rental .....         | 4500.00       |
| Parsonage cleaning reimb..... | <u>700.00</u> |
|                               | \$7,310.00    |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| In-person Worship Service | 41        |
| ONLINE Worship Service    | views 331 |

## Sunday, December 21, 2025—Offering

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Loose Collection ..... | 20.00           |
| General Fund.....      | <u>3,180.00</u> |
|                        | 3,200.00        |

### Items Not in General Budget:

|                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Building Fund .....   | 350.00      |
| Sign .....            | 70.00       |
| Rental.....           | 320.00      |
| Pastors' payroll..... | 762.50      |
| Parsonage rental..... | 500.00      |
| Advent book.....      | <u>5.00</u> |
|                       | \$5,207.00  |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| In-person Worship Service | 49        |
| ONLINE Worship Service    | views 243 |

## Sunday, December 28, 2025—Offering

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Loose Collection ..... | 95.00           |
| General Fund.....      | <u>1,380.00</u> |
|                        | \$1,475.00      |

### Items Not in General Budget:

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Building Fund .....   | 245.00           |
| COTC .....            | 30.52            |
| Helping Hands.....    | 1,000.00         |
| Special donation..... | <u>40,000.00</u> |
|                       | \$42,750.52      |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| In-person Worship Service | 37        |
| ONLINE Worship Service    | views 247 |

## Sunday, January 4, 2026—Offering

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Loose Collection ..... | -0-             |
| General Fund.....      | <u>4,315.00</u> |
|                        | \$4,315.00      |

### Items Not in General Budget:

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Building Fund ..... | 235.00       |
| Sign .....          | 30.00        |
| Capital Camp.....   | <u>25.00</u> |
|                     | \$4,605.00   |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| In-person Worship Service | 39        |
| ONLINE Worship Service    | views 195 |

## Sunday, January 11, 2025 -Offering

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Loose Collection ..... | 20.00           |
| General Fund.....      | <u>1,400.00</u> |
|                        | \$1,420.00      |

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Building Fund ..... | <u>125.00</u> |
|                     | \$1,545.00    |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| In-person Worship Service | 41        |
| ONLINE Worship Service    | views 293 |

## Sunday, January 18, 2026—Offering

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Loose Collection ..... | -0-             |
| General Fund.....      | <u>6,540.00</u> |
|                        | 6,540.00        |

### Items Not in General Budget:

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Building Fund ..... | 280.00        |
| Sign .....          | 580.00        |
| Gym Rental.....     | <u>100.00</u> |
|                     | 7,500.00      |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| In-person Worship Service | 32        |
| ONLINE Worship Service    | views 370 |

## Sunday, January 25, 2025—Church Canceled

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| General Fund..... | 1,035.00 |
|-------------------|----------|

### Apple Ck UMC

|                     |        |
|---------------------|--------|
| staff dinner .....  | 68.50  |
| pastor payroll..... | 762.50 |

### Church of the Cross UMC

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| parsonage rent.....      | 500.00 |
| parsonage utilities..... | 331.66 |

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Liberty Prep rent..... | <u>3,700.00</u> |
|                        | 6,397.66        |

# Smithville United Methodist Church

## Finances at a Glance

### Dec 2025

|  | Monthly Beginning Balance | Monthly Income | Rentals     | Monthly Expenses | Monthly Ending Balance |
|--|---------------------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|------------------------|
| <b>General Fund</b>  | \$ 42,240.43              | \$ 12,506.90   | \$ 5,400.00 | \$ 20,131.39     | \$ 40,015.94           |
| <b>12 Paid \$20,558.04 behind 0 Apportionment of \$1713.17</b> |                           |                |             |                  |                        |
| <b>Designated Accounts</b>                                     | \$ 31,736.65              | \$ 25,130.00   | \$ -        | \$ 2,559.46      | \$ 54,307.19           |
| <b>Building Fund</b>   | \$ 23,228.37              | \$ 17,585.00   | \$ -        | \$ -             | \$ 40,813.37           |

#### Yearly Financial Summary

|                          | YTD Monthly Income Needed for Budget | Actual YTD Usable Income - including rental | Actual YTD Expenses |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 2025 Budget \$196,057.00 | \$ 16,338.08                         | \$ 262,397.22                               | \$ 234,581.19       |

| Investments              | Last Month           | Net Change       | Current Month        |
|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| General Reserve Fund     | \$ 25,637.34         | \$ 133.88        | \$ 25,771.22         |
| Mission                  | \$ 17,407.62         | \$ 90.89         | \$ 17,498.51         |
| Education Grant          | \$ 120,708.61        | \$ 630.28        | \$ 121,338.89        |
| <b>Total Investments</b> | <b>\$ 163,753.57</b> | <b>\$ 855.05</b> | <b>\$ 164,608.62</b> |

## UMC Lenten Rotation Schedule 2026

### Sunday Services- 4pm



| Date                  | Host   | Preaching              | Scripture  |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Feb 22                | Church of the Cross UMC<br>5100 Cleveland RD<br>Wooster, OH 44691  | Rev. Brian Sheetz      | Preachers Choice   |
| March 1               | Moreland UMC<br><br>138 Moreland Rd,<br>Wooster, OH 44691          | Pastor John Finn       | How David and Jesus Dealt<br>with Conflict?<br>1 Samuel 17<br>John 18: 1-14    |
| March 8               | Smithville UMC<br><br>243 N Milton St,<br>Smithville OH, 44677     | Pastor David Rittgers  | "How David and Jesus<br>view the Temple"<br>2 Samuel 7: 1-17<br>John 2: 13-25  |
| March 15              | New Pittsburg UMC<br><br>9670 Ashland Rd,<br>Wooster, OH 44691     | Pastor Aimee Hare      | "How do we treat those who<br>betray us?"<br>1 Samuel 24: 1-7<br>Mark 14: 1-31 |
| March 22              | Oak Chapel UMC<br><br>4203 W Old Lincoln Way,<br>Wooster, OH 44691 | Pastor James Lance     | Last words of David and<br>Jesus<br>2 Samuel 23: 1-7<br>Luke 23: 26-46         |
| March 29              | Wooster UMC<br><br>243 N Market St,<br>Wooster OH, 44691           | Rev. Kimberly Arbaugh  | Preachers Choice   |
| April 3<br>Friday 7pm | Oak Chapel UMC<br><br>4203 W Old Lincoln Way,<br>Wooster, OH 44691 | Good Friday<br>Cantata | Good Friday<br>Cantata   |

Maturing from Good as King David to being Great as Lord Jesus!

Sermon Series- This year, our four pastors (Pastor John, Pastor David, Pastor Aimee, Pastor James), will be preaching on a shared theme (The guest preachers are invited to preach as they feel called) for the Lenten rotation services. This shared theme will only be for the Lenten rotation services. Each pastor(s), will have their own Lenten plans/sermon series at their church(es).

Our shared theme for the Lenten rotation services this year is Maturing from as Good as David to being as Great as Jesus! We will be looking at four times where we see King David and Lord Jesus in similar scenarios or similar themes and how they responded. We will study their responses and what they teach us, on how to mature, and be greater than we are now. We will work to move from being as Good as King David, to being closer to Great like Lord Jesus.

## Month's Events

### Talk To Us

330-669-2371  
smithvilleum@gmail.com

243 N Milton Street  
PO Box 375  
Smithville, Ohio 44677

[www.sumc-ohio.org](http://www.sumc-ohio.org)

### Hygiene Closet

Sunday, February 15  
4 PM

### Save The Date for

**Ministries at Liberty Preparatory High School**

Baccalaureate - Thursday, May 21

Graduation - Friday, May 29

**Offering for the Lent Services in 2026 will be split  
between  
People to People (Wooster) and  
Urban Mission Ministries (Steubenville)**

**People to People (Wooster)**

People to People Ministries is an Emergency Needs Ministry and is available to residents of Wayne County when there is no place to turn. It was established in 1978 by the Wayne County Ministerial Association and a few caring community citizens to help families facing emergencies. The Ministry believes each person in our society has the need for adequate food, shelter and clothing. The Ministry also believes in any society a number of individuals will experience a crisis during their lifetime in which they are unable to obtain these life essentials. The purpose of People to People is to provide an immediate, realistic and compassionate response to people with these basic needs when the needs are not being met through any other programs.

People to People is a nonprofit ministry supported by donations from churches, civic organizations, private donations and the Wayne County Foundation and does not solicit government funds.

People to People is open Monday to Friday - various hours.

Services provided:

- **Food** – 3 day emergency supply of groceries every 30 days
- **Clothing** - 5 times per year or in an emergency + Back to School program
- **Household items** + blankets, sheets etc. 1 x per year
- **Financial assistance** with rent or security deposits, disconnection of utilities, prescriptions per personal situation

As former Director, Joe Szeker has stated - " We strive to bring the love of JESUS to our community and serve our fellow residents with dignity and respect, and to help people to understand GOD created all of us for a PURPOSE, and encouraging them to overcome the adversities life can sometime bring."

**Urban Mission Ministries (Steubenville)**

Urban Mission Ministries serves as a catalyst for transformation in our community by reimagining what a faith-based social service organization can be. We envision neighborhoods filled with abundance, purpose, and possibility. Grounded in relationships built on trust, love, and belonging, our ministries create spaces where people can experience healing, restoration, and genuine transformation within a supportive community.

Our current ministries include:

- **Fresh Market Food Pantry**, open five days a week
- **Urban Thrift & Opportunity Center**
- **Mission Rejoice** (worship + hot meals)
- **Unity Kitchen Hot Meal Service**
- **Clothing vouchers & hygiene kits**
- **Minority Health Month services**, including free mammograms and prostate screenings

We believe communities are only as strong as their most vulnerable members. Access to nutritious food helps build a healthier and more resilient community, while the Urban Thrift Center gives new life to donated items through reuse and repurposing, provides training and employment opportunities, and offers neighbors a Fresh Start. Together, our ministries create a welcoming "third space" where people can encounter God's love—not only through worship and Bible study, but also through shared community life.

Preaching Schedule for  
Pastor Aimee and Pastor James

February 1- February 15  
Pastor Aimee- SUMC/ COTC  
Pastor James- AC/Moreland

February 22- March 8  
Pastor Aimee- AC/Moreland  
Pastor James- SUMC/ COTC

# SERMON CORNER

## February 1 Pastor Aimee

"One Act of Kindness"

John 4:1-42

## February 8 Pastor Aimee

"Do we really want to be free?"

John 5: 1-18 and John 8: 31-47

## February 15 Steve and Deb Gilson

## February 22 Pastor James

"Do we walk in the light?"

John 11: 1-16 and John 11: 38-57

**THANK YOU!**

Dear SUMC Congregation,  
Thank you for your generous gift at Christmas. I love being able to serve God through music! I appreciate your support and encouragement as we worship God together through His gift of music!  
Thank you!  
Blessings,  
Priscilla Gresser

Pastor James, Pastor Aimee and members of the Smithville United Methodist Church,  
Thank you for providing a fantastic breakfast for our students returning from winter break! We appreciate all the kindness and generosity the church shows Liberty Prep staff and students throughout the year!  
Mr. Weisend, Mrs. Rodgers, staff and students

Thank you for the generous monetary gift at Christmas. I enjoy volunteering as a musician for Smithville UMC. It's a pleasure to work with the other musicians and to worship the Lord through music!

Sincerely,  
Jerri Lynn Baxstrom

Thank you for your thoughtful and generous Christmas gift. It's a joy to serve with you.  
Blessings,  
Charline

Dear Church Family,  
Thank you so very much for the generous Christmas gift. It is a privilege to provide music to all of you each Sunday. I'm looking forward to another year of worship and praise! Again, thank you for your generosity and gratitude for my music.  
Stacey

SUMC Family,  
Thank you for your generous gift at Christmas! Thank you for your words and notes of encouragement throughout the year. Those mean more than words can say, but more important thank you for your prayers as we serve a Great God together.  
Love in Christ!  
Kathy B.

Dear Church Family,  
It is such a blessing to be part of this church family and to worship with you each week. Thank you so much for the nice Christmas gift. I really appreciate it. Have a blessed New Year.  
Carol Thompson

Office Hours and Visitation Schedule for  
Pastor Aimee  
Beginning February



Sunday: 8:30am-12:30 (services)

Monday: 10am-1:00pm – Church of the Cross Office  
2:00pm-5:00pm – Visitations

**Tuesday: 10:00am-1:00pm – Smithville Office**  
2:00pm – 5:00pm – Visitations

Wednesday: 10:00am-1:00pm – Moreland Office  
1:30pm – 3:30pm – Apple Creek Office

Monday and Tuesday 1-2pm will either be at office hours or visitation depending on need that week. Visitation will be for any and all church members in need (for all four churches). If visiting a nursing home, Pastor Aimee will attempt to visit all church members from all four churches in that nursing home (Depending on if they are awake, able to visit, with nurses/doctors, etc...). could also include private home visits, hospital visits, coffee shops and other third location visits with church members.

**On Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, Bishop Jung plans on visiting our churches.**

Here is the TENTATIVE schedule for the visits:

- 8:15 to 9:00 a.m. – James Lance or Aimee Hare pick up the Bishop at his hotel in North Canton
- 9:00 to 9:15 a.m. - visit & pray at Apple Creek UMC
- 9:15 to 9:30 a.m. - travel to Moreland UMC
- 9:30 to 9:45 a.m. - visit & pray at Moreland UMC
- 9:45 to 10:15 a.m. - travel to Wooster COTC
- 10:15 to 10:30 a.m. - visit & pray at COTC UMC
- **10:30 - 10:45 a.m. - travel to Smithville UMC**
- 10:45 to 11:30 a.m. - conversation, visit and pray with all 4 churches (Apple Creek, Moreland, COTC and Smithville)

Please be sure to invite your church leadership & as many from the congregation to attend your scheduled time.

- We want to get this schedule to you now, so that each church has time to plan & invite folks to join.
- As you & your congregation prepare for the visit, please plan to respond to the following questions posed by Bishop Jung:

1. Do they have faith?
2. Do they have fire?
3. Do they have fruit?



*Happy Birthday*

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Allan Bevere     | 18 Martha Byall     |
| 3 Diane Hardman    | 20 Dan Reinarts     |
| 5 Carol Thompson   | 23 Scott Buchwalter |
| 7 Heidi Hartzler   | 25 James Evans      |
| 9 Oliver Grimes    | 26 Wanda Daisson    |
| 10 Ronald Leach    | 27 Alex Tilton      |
| 11 Judy Davisson   | Grace Turner        |
| Cathy Rhymer       | 28 Sandy Baxstrom   |
| 14 Madison Gingery |                     |
| 15 Kaleb Tilton    |                     |
| Katie Tilton       |                     |

*Happy Anniversary*

- |    |                                |
|----|--------------------------------|
| 11 | Rev. Josh and Eileen Arrington |
| 14 | Tracy and Helen Hicks          |
|    | Rev. Keith and Betty Peachey   |
| 20 | Tom and Cathy Rolf             |