

The Caller

First United Methodist Church

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www.comejourneywithus.com

November 2025



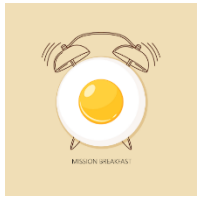
All Saints Sunday

Our church will celebrate **All Saints Sunday on November 2** during worship service. During the service, we will recognize our members or regular attendees who died after November 1, 2024, with an individual rose

Operation Christmas Child

This year, we have an additional opportunity to change the lives of children in faraway places through a mission called "Operation Christmas Child." Fill a shoe box for a child and bring it back to the church by **Sunday, November 9**. For suggestions on items to include and exclude, please visit the Welcome Center or go to www.samaritanspurse.org for the complete information. Kunes Car Dealership will cover the cost of shipping.

November Mission Breakfast



On **Sunday November 16**, the Mission/Outreach Team is sponsoring a breakfast from 8:00-9:00 a.m. The egg casseroles were such a hit, we are once again asking for donations of casseroles, coffee cakes/sticky buns, fruit, juice and milk. Proceeds from this breakfast will go to the Jamieson Center for holiday needs.

Noisy Offering

We will have a Noisy Offering of Coins **Sunday, November 23** with proceeds going to Jamieson Center and Helping Hands food pantry.



Scrip Gift Cards

Find something for everyone on your Christmas list with gift cards available from over 750 top brands. Every gift card purchased through the scrip program immediately raises funds for our church. Share the joy with family and friends this holiday season. See LeAnn in the church office to order cards by **Tuesday, December 2**. A list of participating retailers is attached to the email with this *Caller* and available at the Welcome Center.

Christmas Love Gift for Staff

In appreciation for all the staff does, the Staff/Parish Ministry team is asking the congregation to consider contributing to a Christmas Love Gift to be divided among the staff. Donations can be dropped off in the church office or placed in the offering plate on Sunday mornings through **December 14**. Please make checks out to the church and mark "Staff Love Gift" on the memo line.

News from the Worship Committee

There are many exciting events coming up that the Worship Committee has planned!

*An **ornament sale** will be held in the Atrium on **Sunday, November 9**. The glass ornaments were made by Pat Bates using pieces of stained glass from our previous church. The ornaments will be \$10, \$20, \$30 or \$50 depending on size and detail of ornament. No pre-sales will be offered but if you are going to be gone on November 9, ask a friend to purchase one for you. Ornaments will be offered one to a family.

*A special service called "**The Ragman**" will be the focus of worship on **November 16**. There will be a special message and music — all geared to help us think about the parts of our lives that might need a little decluttering. You won't want to miss it!

***Hanging of the Greens** will be **Sunday, November 23** following worship. When all is decorated, a light lunch will be served in Fellowship Hall and a free will offering will be accepted. Peg Perrin will be coordinating this event. Many hands make light work!

*We are considering offering two services on **Christmas Eve**. The first service, at 5:00 p.m., will be similar to services in the past, and will conclude with the candle-lit singing of Silent Night. A **second service** will begin at 8:00 p.m. This will be an "unplugged" service — and will include a time of guided prayer, but no live music. There will be singing during this service as well, Silent Night included, but acapella. We'll keep you updated in the December Caller.

***Unhanging of the Greens** will be on Sunday, January 11 following the worship service. Also on January 11, the Worship Committee will sponsor a "**Come to Church Comfy Day!**" Wear your sweats, work-out clothes or other comfortable clothing for worship and stay to help with taking down the Christmas decorations. The Worship Committee meets the first Tuesday of every month. If you have a worship idea to pass along, please talk to Cathy Sheagren.

Grace, Gratitude, and Giving: The Keys to Life

At one of my ordination interviews, I was taken aback by a question about grace, and I said, "Really?! Grace is EVERYTHING!" And it is! But so is gratitude.

In gratitude I find joy, peace, hope, and so many life-giving things! I made my physical therapist laugh recently when I told her, "I'm grateful for all of the people who fell before me so that my surgeon would know exactly what to do and how to fix my arm." She said she had never thought of it that way.



When each of my parents died, I had a mental list of things for which I was grateful. The top of the list was their faith in God that allows me to have confidence that one day, we will be together again. While I miss them now, I know that our separation is only temporary.

I am also grateful that we loved each other and told each other so. I am grateful for all the ways that they taught me and provided for me over the years. They left me a legacy of faith and a midwestern work ethic. To this day, any time I think of them, I say, "Thank you, God! Thank you for their presence in my life!"

Gratitude gets me through the hard moments.

But gratitude is more than a pleasant *feeling*. For followers of Christ, gratitude is a way of seeing the world. It shapes how we pray, how we serve, and how we live in community. God's Word reminds us, "***Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you***" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Gratitude is not a response to having a perfect life—it is a spiritual mindset that opens us to God's presence in every part of life.

When we practice gratitude, we begin to notice grace more often. We recognize blessings even in ordinary moments. It reorients us from an attitude of scarcity to one of abundance—reminding us that everything we have and everything we are comes from God.

Gratitude is life because it awakens joy. It breathes hope into difficult seasons. And when gratitude flows through us, *generosity* naturally follows as well. We find ourselves eager to share, to give, to bless—just as God has blessed us.

In this season, let's challenge ourselves to make gratitude a daily practice. Begin and end each day by naming just one moment of grace—how God gifted us that day. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving. Write a note to thank someone. Speak a kind word. Notice the ways God is moving, even in small details. And as the Apostle Paul wrote, we do not have to be thankful *for* all things, but ***IN*** all things, there are always blessings to be found.

May gratitude be the rhythm of our living and the heartbeat of our faith.

Speaking of Gratitude

I wish to thank the SPRC for their kind words and card to kick off pastor appreciation month which was followed by many more uplifting expressions from many of you. I appreciate all the gifts, the UWF meal that Janet Stevenson cooked for us, the cards, and the words of encouragement. Thank you all!

- Thank you for your generosity to the September mission breakfast that allowed us to send \$653 to the WIU Wesley Foundation to help in the mission of reaching college students.
- Blanket Sunday provided nearly 70 blankets for people in need.
- Thank you for all of the ways that you all came together to make this year's Hog Roast a huge success! The current total income is about \$5,000.00.



Trick or Treat Outreach

On Friday, October 24, Mark and Susie Clark and Pastor Shelly were out at the Square handing out candy and invitations to 300 kids and their parents. The Warren County Public library organized the event with an “Addams Family” theme—so you might recognize Uncle Fester, Thing, and Cousin It in the picture!



In the current Netflix series about this family, the odd characters are called “Outcasts.” So, our sign and our note said that Jesus loved the Outcasts and We Do Too!

We are the Body Service

The Hospitality Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in the special We are the Body Service on September 28. If you were unable to attend or maybe decided later there was an area of service you would like to sign up for, here is the list. Read it over and if you would like to be added to a contact list for a specific area, please contact Laurie Todd or the church office.

- *Greeter - Sunday morning or special events
- *Welcome Center on Sunday morning
- *Provide rides to and from Sunday worship or appointments during the week for those that need transportation
- *Liturgist
- *Communion preparation once a month
- *Learn how to operate the audio-visual equipment for Sunday worship
- *Praise Band
- *Sanctuary Choir
- *Bell Choir
- *Adult Sunday School leader
- *Sermon delivery to those that do not have the ability to attend on Sundays.
- *Greeting Card Ministry
- *Prayer Shawl Ministry
- *I am willing to spend time praying

Santa for Seniors

Strom Center and Security Savings Bank will once again be collecting and distributing gifts to our local senior citizens 60 and over and disabled adults in Warren and Henderson counties who do not have family around at Christmas time.

Do you know someone who is alone during the holiday? Please stop by either the Monmouth or Oquawka offices or call Strom Center at 734-5677 to fill out an application or

have an application mailed to you today! There are also applications on the table across from the church office. Application deadline: by **Friday, November 14**. Applications and or donations can be dropped off or mailed to: Strom Center, Attn: Lisa Ray, 211 South A Street, Monmouth.

Tags will be hung on a Christmas tree in the lobby at Security Savings Bank in Monmouth beginning November 28 where members of the surrounding communities can pick from. Those who pick a tag will need to take it to the customer service desk at Security Savings where the tag will be logged, and more information will be given.

Thank you in advance for helping us help seniors have a Blessed Christmas!

Giving Opportunity

As the Christmas season is approaching, we invite you to take part in the annual local mission giving opportunity. The Charlie Brown tree is in the Atrium for decorations of NEW waterproof gloves/mittens, hats, personal size blankets, socks, and underwear. All items collected will be delivered to Jamieson Center on **December 1**. Volunteers are needed Monday, December 15 through Wednesday, December 17 to assist with the Christmas Store. You may sign up for a slot from 8:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. or 12:30–4:00 p.m.

Volunteers can contact Melissa at 309-734-4251 or jccpublicrelations5@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for ensuring area families have a Merry Christmas!

Grace Place, our youth Sunday School

Solomon Raymond won the big candy bar this month. Congratulations to Solomon!



We have started a new Junior High Sunday School class with Miss Chris and Mr. Bill. The High Schoolers are meeting with Pastor Shelly and Mitch in the Youth Room. Our Pre-K through 2nd graders are in class with Miss Melinda and Miss Mandy.

Right now, we are practicing for our Christmas Program which is **Sunday, December 14**, during worship. We hope everyone can come and see our talented young people and worship with us as the youth bring the story of the birth of Jesus alive through prophecy, Scripture, and music.

Blessings-

Miss Chris and the Grace Place Gang

Healing Touch – is non-invasive and effective.

A growing number of people have chosen to experience healing touch and have found it to be beneficial. Some of the benefits include relieving stress and depression, reducing pain, supporting the body during chemotherapy, strengthening the immune system and enhancing recovery following surgery. If you would like to schedule an appointment, call Chris Moore (309-337-4162) or Joyce Clark (309-299-5682). There is no charge for a session.

Senior News

Weekly prayer time is held in the chapel at 9:30 on Wednesday mornings. It is followed by Bible Study from 10:00-11:00. Currently we are studying the book of Romans. Bring your Bible and join us. All are welcome to come for either one, or both.

In the Atrium you can find prayer shawls displayed. You are invited to select one that you can give to someone for whom it might bring comfort.

Weekly sermons are delivered to over 30 people and communion is available upon request. If you would like to assist in this ministry, please let Joyce Clark know at 309-299-5682.

Church Women United World Community Day

Church Women United's special **World Community Day** will be hosted by the **Fairview Center United Methodist Church**, 1495-90th Street, at noon on **Friday, November 7**. The Luncheon will be furnished by the CWU Board. Also, there will be a business meeting, and the program is entitled "*Choose Kindness/Be Kind At ALL Times*", focusing on justice and peace in our global community. ALL WOMEN are invited to this special gathering and bring a friend!

November Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Karter Kelly | 19 Mollie Clark |
| John Chandler | 20 Robert Rehn |
| 2 Henrik Bergren | Gene Stavenhagen |
| 3 Tyler Sells | 22 Jim Halcomb |
| 7 Karen Robinson | Mary Jane O'Brien |
| 8 Ken St. George | Jane Watkins |
| 9 Garrison Todd | 23 Anita Sells |
| 11 Drew Carlson | 25 Lynn McVey |
| Diana DeCrane | 28 Jessica Way |
| 14 Tammy Halcomb | Don Willhardt |
| 15 Claire Oetting | 29 Donna Martin |
| 17 Stephanie Sims | |



Ministry Teams

Directing Pastor - Rev. Shelly Forrest

Secretary/Financial Secretary - LeAnn Murk
Treasurer - Melinda Todd
Senior Ministries Coordinator - Joyce Clark
Education Director - Chris Moore
Youth Coordinators - Adam & Michelle Carlson
Nursery Attendant - Julianne Drum

Certified Lay Speaker - Anita Anderson
Sanctuary Choir, Bell Choir and Praise
Team Director - Adelia McGee
Organist - Elizabeth Walker
Keyboard - Joy Boostrom
Custodians - Doug Ray and Mitch Ray

First United Methodists Church of Monmouth

NOVEMBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<u>EVERY WEDNESDAY</u> Prayer Group 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Bell Choir 6:00 pm Sanctuary Choir 7:00 pm			1
2 All Saints Sunday 2:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry in Chapel Youth Group	3	4 4:30 PM Bible Study in the Chapel 7:00 pm Worship meeting in Lounge	5	6 1:30 pm UWF Exec. meeting in the Lounge 5:00 pm SPRC in the Lounge	7	8
9 Stained Glass Ornament Sale Youth Group	10 6:00 pm Finance in the Lounge 7:00 pm Ad Council in the Lounge	11 4:30 PM Bible Study in the Chapel	12 9:30 am Deborah Circle in the Lounge	13 6:00 pm Trustees meeting in lounge	14	15
16 8-9:00 am Mission Breakfast 2:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry in Chapel Youth Group	17	18 4:30 PM Bible Study in the Chapel	19	20	21	22
23 Noisy Offering Hanging of the Greens Youth Group	24	25 4:30 PM Bible Study in the Chapel	26	27 Thanksgiving Day Church Office Closed	28 Church Office Closed	29
30 No Youth Group						