

The Caller

First United Methodist Church

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March 2026



Reminder to “Spring Forward” on March 8

Before bed on Saturday, March 8, please remember to set your clocks FORWARD one hour, or you will be an hour late and miss worship.



UWF Potato Bake on March 15

Mark your calendar for the United Women in Faith Potato Bake on Sunday, March 15 at 11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Easter Candy donations by March 22

Grace Place would appreciate Easter Candy donations to help fill Easter eggs.

Mission Breakfast on March 29

The Council of Bishops is asking ALL the United Methodist churches in the United States to UNITE in the weeks following Easter to raise money for a goal of endowing 500 scholarships for pastors outside the U.S. to receive education equivalent to that which our U.S. pastors receive. The goal is well-prepared leaders who can serve in some of the most challenging missional communities around the world. The Missions/Outreach Team has chosen this initiative as our recipient of funds from our March 29 Missions Breakfast. The breakfast will be eggs, sausage, fruit, and beverages and maybe some sweets if our regular makers agree to do those! Breakfast will be served from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. on Palm Sunday.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center to volunteer to provide items needed for the breakfast. You will be hearing more about this initiative in the weeks to come, and the weeks following Easter.

Easter Flowers orders due March 31

The Worship Ministry Team will have multicolored tulips and daffodils on the altar for Easter Sunday morning, April 5. You may order plants at \$10.00 each in memory of or in honor of a loved one. Please fill out a form at the Welcome Center and return it to the church office by Tuesday, March 31.

Lenten Lay Breakfast Series Continues

Strom Center will be the host for the series. Each Friday breakfast will begin at 6:30 a.m. with the program running from 7:15 - 7:45 a.m.

March 6	Faith United Presbyterian Church
March 13	Fairview Center Church
March 20	High Point Church
March 27	Heritage Bible Church
April 3	Immaculate Conception Church

Pastor's Letter



Before and during Lent, I have been preaching about discipleship: the call to follow, letting go so that we can pick up and GO a new direction, serving and putting our love in action, and in March, I will spend time talking about *making* disciples.

The question is, do we know what it is to BE a disciple? And then, what it takes to MAKE one? To be honest, these are hard questions!

Being a disciple means following and learning from Jesus. I spoke recently about being “yoked” with Jesus—and if we do that, we are pulling the same direction and we are literally walking side-by-side with Jesus. But how do we DO that?

As I wrestle with these questions, here are some thoughts. A disciple prays. Jesus prayed and went to have alone/quiet time with God. A disciple reads scripture. When Jesus was tempted by the devil, he fought the temptations by using the Word of God. A disciple worships, because that is what we are made for—to learn to love and adore the one with whom we will spend eternity. A disciple never stops learning. Confirmation is not graduation. There is no expiration date on discipleship. A disciple serves. Jesus showed us that very clearly when he washed the feet of the disciples and told us to do likewise. A disciple loves. The Great Commandment is to love God, love people, and love yourself. I think giving to the work of the Kingdom is important. Jesus paid it ALL, ALL to him I owe—not just ten percent! Everything I have is only mine as it is on loan from God who really owns it all anyway. And the Great Commission says that we are to “GO, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing, and teaching obedience to the commandments.” That means *inviting* and *teaching*. And one last thing that comes to mind is that a disciple exhibits the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. What is at the root shows in the fruit. If we are planted in good soil, we should be growing good fruit.

That is a lot! So, if you have not already chosen ONE thing to grow in during Lent, look at those areas and choose something to do to grow as a disciple.

There are many good resources to help in all of these areas. I just discovered a free app called “Lectio 365” that can help with both prayer and scripture engagement. The Bible Project is a very trustworthy source of sound teaching. They have both a website and an app. Serving should be fun! Find a place and a way to serve that is in your area of expertise or try something totally new. Invitation is an area most of us could grow in. Who are you

praying for? Pray for an opportunity to invite someone to worship. Worship. We've been missing people due to cold and colds, please come! Give. We cannot out-give God! And look inside and see what fruit needs some tending in your life. If you need more advice or encouragement, let's talk!

Alpha Class continues

During the month of March, our Alpha class will continue to meet in the Chapel on Tuesday evenings at 6:30. We began in January, and are six sessions in, but it is not something you cannot understand if you have missed some weeks. I can even send you the earlier videos. I had intended to end before Easter, but that would have made us miss the final seven sessions. Someone in the class recently said, "This is a really great class!" So, from March 10, we will continue to meet, though I will skip Holy Week (as there are extra services that week) and the first Tuesday of each month has other meetings. So, the schedule would end on June 9, barring any other unforeseen changes. Remaining sessions are: *How does God Guide us? Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? How can I make the most of the rest of my life? How can I resist evil, Why and How should I tell others? Does God heal today? And What about the church?*



HOLY WEEK

- March 29 Palm Sunday
Mission Breakfast from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall
Youth will carry palms during the worship service
- April 2 Maundy Thursday service at Fairview Center at 7:00 p.m.
- April 3 Good Friday Prayer Stations in the Sanctuary from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
- April 5 Easter Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.
Easter Egg Hunt following the worship service

Thank you

The Worship Committee wishes to thank everyone who participated in the soup supper on February 18. Whether you provided food, helped set up or clean up, did the dishes, served food, or came to share a meal and fellowship before the Ash Wednesday service, THANK YOU! Together we raised \$646.00 for two local food pantries which will be added to the \$594.48 donated from the Souper Bowl offering with a total of \$1,240.48 to be divided between Jamieson Community Center and Helping Hands food pantries. We're grateful for everyone's help.

Grace Place, our youth Sunday School

Mason Ewing won the big candy bar this month! Congrats to Mason!

We used some of our Sunday School time to make Valentines for our homebound friends. Our younger students were studying about John the Baptist while the older students were still working through the book of James. But for now, we are learning about the Lenten Season and how through prayer, fasting, and giving alms we can grow closer to God. We will be on a journey to learn more about what Jesus' life was like during his last days. We will study how he suffered and died for us on the cross so that we could experience forgiveness of our sins and have eternal life. During our lesson on forgiveness, we made treats out of graham crackers, white frosting, red licorice, and M & M's. It was a very tasty lesson! Can't wait to get to the lesson on resurrection!



Blessings,
Miss Chris and the Grace Place Gang

Senior Ministries

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 I Corinthians. Bring your Bible and join us. All are welcome to come for either one, or both.

In the Atrium you can find prayer shawls and pillows displayed. You are invited to select something 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 contact Joyce Clark at 309-299-5682.

Dream Team is planning to have one more Saturday morning presentation of information helpful to all adults. The next date is March 28. It will be in the Chapel from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Staci Bass from our local Y will be sharing. Watch for flyers that will give more information.

Healing Touch – is non-invasive and effective.

A 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.

New Bell Choir and Sanctuary Choir Director



Vea Vavrosky comes to us as our new Bell Choir and Sanctuary Choir director. He grew up in Reynolds, Illinois and graduated from Rockridge High School in 2021, and went to Monmouth College where he graduated last spring. He is currently in his first-year teaching K-4 music in Knoxville. He was looking for some more challenging music to engage in and is looking forward to leading our two choirs. Vea sings tenor and continues to sing in the Concert Choir at Monmouth College. He also enjoys directing and acting. His favorite church choir song is "River in Judea" and his favorite music memory is from his junior year in college when the choir toured in Greece. We look

forward to getting to know Vea, and we welcome him wholeheartedly to First United Methodist Church in Monmouth!

Thank you

Thank you to Rhonda Nelson from the Illinois Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association for presenting an informative program on January 31. Useful information was given about the difference between normal aging and Alzheimer's and common warning signs. Thank you Rhonda.

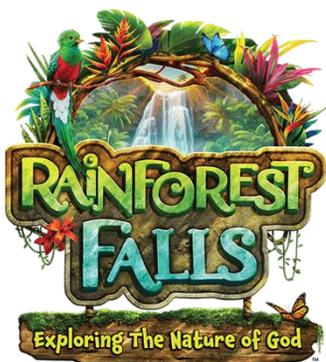


Illinois Great Rivers Conference West District Personal Growth Seminar

On Thursday, March 26 the West District will hold a Personal Growth Seminar. It will begin at 9:30 a.m. with hospitality and then from 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. the program "Under the Skin" The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives, and on the Health of our Nation will be given by Linda Villarosa. Bring finger foods to share for lunch. The seminar will be at Bethel Wesley United Methodist Church at 1201 13th Street in Moline.

Vacation Bible School

Please note the dates of VBS have changed. VBS will now be Sunday, August 2 – Thursday, August 6.



Join us as we spend the week discovering the nature of God. We'll explore what it means to be rooted in a relationship with God, our creator, a safe place in life's storms.

We hope you will consider serving in one of the areas during the week. Volunteers are needed to decorate, be group leaders, lead or assist with the stations, help with registration, add photos to the newsletter or take photos during the evening. See Chris Moore or Deb Moore if you have any questions or to volunteer.

March Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Alexa Anderson
Ava Anderson
Shelly Forrest
Nate Anderson | 20 | Adam Carlson
Tamia King
Kim Sandstrom |
| 4 | Ray Clark
Jamie Ray
Greg Ray | 21 | Ron Stombaugh
Brent Chandler |
| 5 | Phil Porter | 23 | Janet Stevenson |
| 7 | McKenna Carlson | 24 | Dillon Frieden |
| 9 | Rusty Boostrom | 26 | Kevin Murk
Jen Rexroat
Rogan Rexroat |
| 10 | Marion Duncan | 28 | Dave Bates
Hank Crede
Lane Frieden |
| 11 | Rayven Petri
Mitch Forrest | 29 | Ann Edwards
Sue Wilson |
| 13 | John Perrin
Martha Hillman | 30 | Jeff Moore
Jimmy Halstrom |
| 15 | Ken Boyer | 31 | Teresa Armstrong
Abby St. George |
| 18 | Norman Skov
Lindsey Munson | | |
| 19 | Joy Ladzinski | | |



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 and
Hannah Clark

Sanctuary and Bell Choir Director -
Vea Vavrosky

Organist - Elizabeth Walker

Keyboard - Joy Boostrom

Certified Lay Speaker - Anita Anderson

Custodians - Doug Ray and Mitch Ray

First United Methodists Church of Monmouth MARCH 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 2:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry in the Chapel Youth Group	2 	3 6:00 pm Trustees meeting in Lounge 7:00 pm Worship meeting in Lounge	4 <u>EVERY WEDNESDAY</u> Prayer Group 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM Bell Choir 6:00 PM Sanctuary Choir 7:00 PM	5 	6 6:30 a.m. Lenten Lay Breakfast 7:15 Faith UP has the program at Strom Center	7
8 Youth Group	9 6:00 pm Finance in the Lounge 7:00 pm Ad Council in the Lounge	10 6:30 Alpha Study in Chapel	11 10:30 am Deborah Circle in the lounge	12 	13 6:30 a.m. Lenten Lay Breakfast 7:15 Fairview Center has the program at Strom Center	14
15 11:00 Potato Bake 2:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry in the Chapel Youth Group	16 5:30 pm Mission & Outreach meeting in the Chapel	17 6:30 Alpha Study in Chapel	18 	19 	20 6:30 a.m. Lenten Lay Breakfast 7:15 High Point has the program at Strom	21
22 Youth Group	23 April caller info due	24 6:30 Alpha Study in Chapel	25 	26 	27 6:30 a.m. Lenten Heritage has the program at Strom Center	28 9-10:00 am Informative workshop in the Chapel
29 8-9:00 am Mission Breakfast Youth Group	30 	31 	 	 	 	