

# *The Caller*

## First United Methodist Church

221 East Broadway, Monmouth, IL 61462

309 734-9437

1umc@frontiernet.net

www.comejourneywithus.com

April 2026



### **Holy Week Schedule**

#### **Maundy Thursday – April 2 - 7:00 p.m. at Fairview Center Church**

This will be a beautiful service of scripture, song, and communion.

#### **Good Friday - April 3 - Noon - 2:00 p.m.**

Our Sanctuary will have a series of prayer stations where you can quietly read the scriptures that take us through the events of Holy Week. There will be visual pictures and reflective prayer activities to do at each station while beautiful songs about the cross play in the background.

#### **Easter Sunday - April 5**

Worship will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

### **Children's Easter Egg Hunt**

The Easter Egg Hunt will begin on the second floor right after the worship service.

### **College Care Packages**

If you have a college student in your family, you may turn in their name and address to the church office by **Tuesday, April 7**. On **Tuesday, April 14**, boxes will be filled and sent to college students. If you would like to make cookies, please sign up at the Welcome Center. Monetary donations would be appreciated to help pay postage.



## Local Author Visit – April 8

Judy Ann Krell Morse will be here on **Wednesday, April 8**. Judy Ann is a mother, pastor and an author. Through stories and pictures, she will share how God is “always present in both the dramatic and mundane events of life”. Doors to the chapel will open at 11:00 a.m., and the presentation will begin at 11:15. Her two devotional books will be available for purchase for \$11.00 each, with 30% of sales going back to Deborah Circle.

## We Do Windows – April 26 Outreach

Jesus washed feet, we’re going to wash windows. On **Sunday, April 26** we need willing servants to meet at the church at 1:45 where we will gather in the Atrium, get instructions, pray, and be sent out in our immediate neighborhood. We are going to ask if we can wash people’s front door windows and then ask if they have any prayer requests. We will wrap up back at the church at 4:00 to hear and pray for issues we heard or saw. Please bring Windex or glass cleaner with you. The church is providing paper towels.



## World Day of Prayer – May 1

Mark your calendar for an opportunity ladies! On **Friday, May 1 at 1:30**, our church will be hosting Church Women United's World Day of Prayer, with the theme, "*I Will Give You Rest: Come*" from Matthew 11:28-30. World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement of Christian women of many traditions, who come together to observe a common day of prayer. ALL women in the community are welcome!

## Buchanan Community Chorus in our Sanctuary – May 2

The Buchanan Community Chorus will present their spring concert on May 1 and 2. The May 2 concert is in our Sanctuary at 2:00 p.m.



## Graduation Sunday – May 3

**May 3** will be Graduation Sunday. If you or someone in your family is graduating from high school, junior college, college or graduate school, please call the church office. We don't want to miss anyone! Graduate information forms are at the Welcome Center and are due **Sunday, April 26**.

## Mother's Day – May 10

This year Mother's Day is **Sunday, May 10**. If you wish to honor that special Mom or "mother-like" person in your life, please include a suggested \$10.00 donation. This year, donations from Mother's Day and Father's Day will be divided between Strom Center for Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Support and the Recharge Teen Center in Monmouth. List the name as you would like to see it in the Mother's Day Sunday bulletin and return the form to the office by Tuesday, **May 5**. Forms are available at the Welcome Center in the Atrium.

# United Methodist Connectional Update



*Together, we want to build sustainable support by endowing theological education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. This spring, United Methodists around the world are stepping into a shared movement—and the Illinois Great Rivers Conference is invited to step in*

together.

Following Easter, congregations across the Conference are asked to join a six-week emphasis that connects us with more than 30,000 United Methodist churches worldwide, grounded in a shared mission and a hopeful future.

Through the [Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, Lead Courageously & Miracle Sunday Initiative](#), United Methodists are investing in theological education beyond the United States—supporting pastors, forming disciples, and strengthening the bonds that hold us together as a connectional church.

## The UMC in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines

Our church has weathered a global pandemic, navigated disaffiliation, and responded with compassion amid conflict, war, and disaster. Now, congregations are invited to embrace a renewed vision and engage in the mission of preparing 500 students annually for pastoral ministry.

A leadership gap persists in The United Methodist Church. In the U.S., 71 percent of clergy hold a master's degree in theology, supported by robust denominational funding and healthy seminary endowments. Outside the U.S., in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines, fewer than 5 percent of clergy have such preparation. Over 20 theological schools in these regions receive little or no endowment and face significant challenges:

- Seminaries are often too far away or too expensive
- There is a shortage of well-trained professors and library resources in the language needed
- Courses of Study must be developed in local languages
- Scholarships are needed for both initial and post-graduate studies
- Professors are needed who can teach and equip in a Wesleyan mindset and identity

The UMC is growing in these regions, with clergy and laity engaged in God's mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Yet too many barriers prevent quality theological education that could transform communities around the globe.

By raising funds for The Endowment for Theological Education outside the U.S., we aim to equip 500 additional graduates each year to Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, and Lead Courageously. Together, we can provide our future leaders with the tools and resources they need—rooted in a Wesleyan mindset of joining knowledge and vital piety—to impact lives and communities for generations to come.

## Empower Ministry. Inspire Hope. Support Global Leaders.

United Methodists around the world have received a call to full-time ministry. They want to be equipped. Outside the USA, there are vast geographical areas and multiple languages, huge distances to a Methodist seminary, limited financial resources, few trained teachers, and small libraries.

Africa University is the only institution with a substantial endowment. But most candidates for a new generation of United Methodist clergy are trained in other institutions in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. Their theological education will form trusted leaders. They need our support. Together, we aim to establish sustainable support by investing in theological education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines.

**Money raised at our March Mission Breakfast will support this endeavor, but you are welcome and encouraged to add to that support any time before May 17, which is “Miracle Sunday.” If you wish to contribute to this worthy endeavor, please write “Miracle Sunday” on your check’s memo blank, or give online.**

## **Living Our Mission: Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, Lead Courageously**



As United Methodists, we are continually reminded that our faith is not only something we believe—it is something we live. We seek to put our faith in action. Discipleship is not either/or, it is both/and. Faith AND action.

In recent months, our bishops have released a new vision statement. That vision is for us to *Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, and Lead Courageously*. These are not just inspiring words; they are a way of life shaped by the example of Jesus Christ and empowered by God’s grace. I have been asked to preach on this mission in the weeks following Easter.

### **Love Boldly**

In a world that can often feel divided and uncertain, we are called to love without hesitation or condition. Bold love looks like welcoming the stranger, offering grace when it’s hard, and choosing compassion over judgment. It means seeing every person as a beloved child of God. When we love boldly, we reflect Christ’s radical, all-inclusive love—a love that crosses boundaries and transforms hearts.

### **Serve Joyfully**

Service is at the heart of who we are as followers of Jesus. But we are not called to serve out of obligation—we are called to serve with joy. Joyful service flows from gratitude for what God has done in our lives. Whether it’s volunteering in our community, supporting missions, caring for a neighbor, or simply offering a listening ear, each act of service becomes an expression of God’s *love in action*. And in that service, we often discover that we are blessed just as much as the ones we serve.

### **Lead Courageously**

Leadership in the way of Christ is not about power or recognition—it is about faithfulness, humility, and courage. We are each called to lead in our own unique ways: in our families, our workplaces, our church, and our community. Courageous leadership means standing up for justice, speaking truth with love, and stepping forward in faith even when the path is uncertain. It means trusting that God equips us for the work we are called to do. Courage does not mean *not* being afraid. It means acting regardless of our fear.

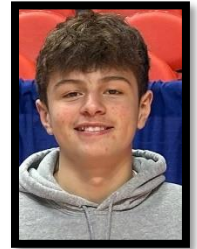
We are not just called to follow Jesus. We are called to lead others to Jesus.

Together, these three movements—loving, serving, and leading—shape who we are as a church. As we lean into this vision, these words and actions guide our ministries, inspire our outreach, and deepen our discipleship. They remind us that our faith is active, vital, and meant to be shared.

As we continue this journey together, may we open our hearts to love more deeply, extend our hands in joyful service, and step forward with courage wherever God leads us.

## Grace Place, our youth Sunday School

Cohen Anderson won the big candy bar this month. Congrats to Cohen!



We are continuing our study on the season of Lent and the last days of Jesus' life. We have been discussing the characters of Easter: the crowds, the disciples, the rulers, and the soldiers. Jesus encountered crowds with drastically different responses to Him as God's Son. Then we talked about the disciples and how they reacted to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, his arrest, and crucifixion. Next, we studied the religious leaders of Jesus' time: the chief priests, the elders, the Sanhedrin, and Pontius Pilate. There was a big discussion about what characteristics a good leader should possess! Finally, we learned how the Roman soldiers reacted to Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

The youth each planted some green bean seeds with the help of Mr. Bill...wondering whose seeds will sprout first. We did take some time out to play a relay game with our plastic Easter eggs before the youth filled them for our Easter Egg hunt.



A big thank you to all who donated candy or made a monetary donation for the candy. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. And a big thank you to our youth for filling the Easter eggs!!!

Everyone did a great job on Palm Sunday. We are so proud of our youth.

Thank you!

Blessings from 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 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 the book of 1 Corinthians. Bring your Bible and join us. All are welcome to come for either one, or both.

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

Strom Center is in the process of planning and scheduling their Stress-Busting Program. It is a program which provides support to family caregivers and/or persons with chronic illness. Stress management techniques and problem-solving skills will be included in the program. There is NO cost, but there are many benefits. If you are interested and/or desire more information call Carol at Strom - 309-734-5677.

## Thank you Staci Bass

The Dream Team held their third session on Saturday, March 28. Staci Bass from the Warren County YMCA spoke on balance and gaining strength. Thank you Staci for helping us learn how to improve ourselves either at the YMCA or at home.



## Thank you

Thank you to Mitch Ray, Kenny St. George, Ron Moore and Mike Moore for spending the afternoon on ladders to install the acoustical panels in Fellowship Hall. Also, thank you to Rich Thomas, Terri St. George and LeAnn Murk for getting all the panels ready to be installed. They had to install 192 Rotofast clips in the panels and then attach the hooks and magnets so the panels were ready to be installed. We put up 24 panels that are 10 feet long and attached them to the ceiling.



If you see something that needs to be addressed by the Trustees, please let us know. There are currently 12 Trustees and we meet on the first Tuesday of the month.

## Monmouth College Wind Ensemble Concert in our Sanctuary

The Monmouth College Wind Ensemble moved their equipment into our Sanctuary on Monday, March 23. They held rehearsals in the Sanctuary that week and performed on Friday, March 27. It was a great concert that many of you attended.



Currently the Buchanan Community Chorus is rehearsing in our building on Monday evenings. They will be sharing their talents with the community the first weekend in May. They will be presenting their concert in our Sanctuary on Saturday, May 2 at 2:00 p.m.

As our building is being used more and more, it is important for everyone to check with LeAnn when you want to schedule something in our building. While we do have many different spaces available and can host different events at the same time, some events will require a specific room, and we don't want to have any conflicts.

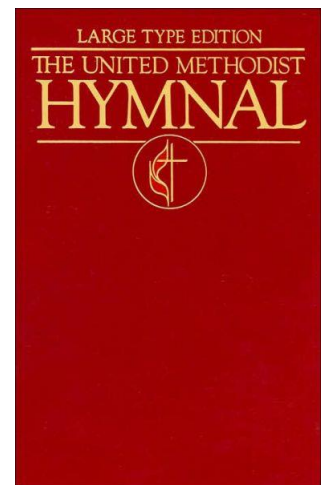
Please, if you would like to use the building, contact our church secretary LeAnn Murk so she can add it to the church calendar. You may stop in the office in the morning, call her at 309-734-9437 or email her at [leann\\_1umc@yahoo.com](mailto:leann_1umc@yahoo.com).

## Large print hymnals and bulletins are available

We have Large Type Edition of The United Methodist Hymnal available for anyone who would prefer a larger print. They are available at the Welcome Center in the Atrium and at the back of the Sanctuary.

Also, large print bulletins are available. Please let LeAnn know if you would prefer a larger print bulletin so she can print one for you.

You may have noticed, we do have some chairs with arms that are also available for you to use. If you prefer to have a chair with arms, please let Pastor Shelly know and we will move a chair for you. Please don't move them by yourself as several are in place for others who have requested a chair with arms.



## Save the dates - VBS is Sunday, August 2 – Thursday, August 6.



Many volunteers are needed for Vacation Bible School. 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.

If you are not available the first week in August, there are still ways you can help before VBS begins. See Chris Moore or Deb Moore if you have any questions or to volunteer.

Volunteer forms are available at the Welcome Center in the Atrium.

### April Birthdays

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Mark Clark       | 15 Pete Gebauer     |
| 2 Allison Albright | 16 Sharon Elliott   |
| 3 Matt McVey       | Joan Horner         |
| 4 Carol Stombaugh  | 17 Joy Boostrom     |
| 8 Jake Halcomb     | Don Daily           |
| 9 Rick Williams    | 18 Mandy Andrews    |
| Callie Lantz       | 22 Melissa Anderson |
| 10 Teresa Prein    | Andrew Myers        |
| 11 Sue Cooley      | 25 Nick Lantz       |
| Steve McVey        | Jonathan Boyer      |
| 12 Bobbi Uddin     | 26 Carson Ray       |
| Daniel Uddin       | 28 Marlita Bulen    |
| 13 Brian Boyer     | 29 Kennedy Halcomb  |



### 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 Choir and Bell Choir Director -  
Vea Vavrosky  
Organist - Elizabeth Walker  
Keyboard - Joy Boostrom  
Praise Team Director - Sarah Moore  
Certified Lay Speaker - Anita Anderson  
Custodians - Doug Ray and Mitch Ray

# First United Methodists Church of Monmouth      APRIL 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<u>EVERY WEDNESDAY</u> 9:30 AM Prayer Group 10:00 AM Bible Study 6:00 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Sanctuary Choir	1 No bell choir rehearsal 6:00 pm Sanctuary Choir rehearsal	2 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service at Fairview Center Church	3 <b>Good Friday</b> 6:30 a.m. Lenten Lay Breakfast 7:15 Heritage Bible Church has the program at Strom Center Noon-2:00 pm Prayer Stations	4
5 <b>Easter</b> No Prayer Shawl Ministry No Youth Group	6	7 6:00 pm Trustees meeting in Lounge 7:00 pm Worship meeting in Lounge	8 10:30 am Deborah Circle in the lounge 11:15 Local Author Visit in Chapel 6:00 pm Bell Choir No Sanctuary Choir	9	10	11
12	13 6:00 pm Finance in the Lounge 7:00 pm Ad Council in the Lounge	14 9:30 am packing of college care packages in Chapel 6:30 pm Alpha Study in Chapel	15	16	17	18
Youth Group	20	21 6:30 pm Alpha Study in Chapel	22 May caller info due	23	24	25
19 2:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry in the Chapel Youth Group						
26 Youth Group	27	28 6:30 pm Alpha Study in Chapel	29	30		