

The Caller

First United Methodist Church

221 East Broadway, Monmouth, IL 61462

309 734-9437

1umc@frontiernet.net

www.comejourneywithus.com

July 2026



Outreach on July 1 and 2



As an outreach to families with children in our community, we are going to baseball games at Harmon Park to hand out frisbees on **Wednesday, July 1 and Thursday, July 2**. The frisbees have our church logo and website and we will also hand out invitations to Vacation Bible School. Each night there are two games, the first game begins at 5:30 followed by the second game. If you would like to help hand out frisbees and invitations, please sign up at the Welcome Center.

Worship at the Fair - July 12 in Roseville

On **Sunday, July 12**, at 10:00 am, we have been invited to worship with other churches in Warren County to kick off the Warren County Fair. The worship service will be held in the new multi-purpose building just east of the park at 625 N. Chamberlain Street. We will not be holding worship in our Sanctuary on July 12.

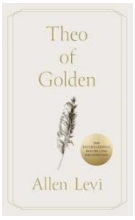
Vacation Bible School – August 2 – 6

Plans for VBS are being finalized and volunteers are in place. Now we need your help to invite children ages 3 through 6th grade to attend VBS. Frisbees are being handed out along with information about VBS but that is not enough. Business cards, postcards and flyers are available in the Atrium for you to pick up and hand out. Can you take a flyer and post it where parents and grandparents will see it? Can you mail or hand a postcard to a child to invite them to VBS? We also have business cards that can be handed out with information about registering online. Please help us reach out to children in our community and invite them to join us for VBS in August.



A volunteer meeting will be held on **Thursday, July 23 at 6:00**. All volunteers are encouraged to attend. We will also be decorating on **Thursday, July 30** beginning at 9:00 a.m. There are many rooms that need to be decorated to help make this a fun week for our children and youth..

Summer Book Study begins Wednesday, July 8



In July, I am offering an opportunity to read and discuss *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi, one of the most talked-about novels of the year. It captivates its readers with a moving story of kindness, generosity, and the power of truly *seeing* another person.

Set in a small Southern town, *Theo of Golden* follows the mysterious arrival of a stranger named Theo. As he quietly touches the lives of those around him, we are led to reflect on grace, hospitality, forgiveness, compassion, and the ways God often works through ordinary people and unexpected moments.

Whether you're an avid reader or simply looking for meaningful conversation and Christian fellowship, we would love to have you. Together we'll explore the novel's themes alongside scripture, discovering how stories can deepen our faith and challenge us to love our neighbors more fully.

We will meet on Wednesday evening in the Lounge at 6:30: July 8, 15, 29, and August 12. Pastor Shelly is at camp on July 22 and we will all be at VBS on August 5.

Come be part of this four-week journey as we laugh, reflect, ask questions, and encourage one another in faith. You don't have to have all the answers—just bring your curiosity, your Bible, and a willingness to see God's work in fresh ways. Please purchase or borrow the book on your own—it is available on Amazon, or wherever you buy books.

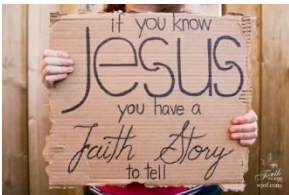
This is a great opportunity to invite a friend. This story has strong faith elements, but people are talking about it everywhere.



S.T.A.R.S. - Students To Arrive Ready for School

Backpacks filled with school supplies are given to area children in need. Jamieson Community Center serves as the application and distribution site. We have been asked to collect 200 Crayola 24-count Crayons by **Tuesday, July 28.**

From the Pastor



As some of you know, I have been meeting monthly with a District Leadership Team. Part of church leadership is helping people GROW—in faith, in understanding, in fruit of the Spirit, and ultimately, in number.

At our June meeting, we talked about 10 ways to strengthen ministry.

Those include prayer, discipleship pathway, spiritual leadership development, faith sharing, small groups, next-generation ministry, adult ministry, an outward focus on the community/world, worship attendance, and financial giving.

I was asked to pick two for us to focus on in the coming couple of months. The two I picked for us are: faith sharing and outward focus on the community. Faith sharing can be internal as well as external. We can share safely with each other, which will equip us to share with others who are not in the church.

When we share our faith, it's not because we are "jamming something down someone's throat" or trying to win an argument. When we share our faith, we are called to be *witnesses*, not judges. We are simply telling people what we have seen with our own eyes and experienced in our own lives. I don't believe in scaring people out of hell. I believe in sharing the love, joy, peace, grace, goodness and hope that I have experienced myself. Our "testimony" (as witnesses) does not have to be about a life that was headed toward the rocks or had hit rock bottom (though it could be if that is the truth.) Our testimony can be how you saw God in the beauty of creation, in the protection He gave you on a given day, on how the truth of God's forgiveness became real to you, on how he provided for you. I know you have these stories or you would not continue to worship and seek the Lord.

I presume that there is a reason that you connect with Monmouth First United Methodist. I believe you feel something here—welcome, family/friendship/connection, the love of God. We need to not be the "best kept secret in town." I will be working on ways to help us speak and act in ways that help others encounter the God we know and love.

Grace Place, our youth Sunday School

Garrison Todd won the big candy bar this month. Congratulations to Gary!

We finished our unit on Christian Living: We learned to walk the narrow path, fix our eyes on Jesus, and to be good examples.

We found out that NO ONE knows when Jesus is coming back, but we need to always be ready and we also learned that blessings come from living in a Christian home and putting all of these things into practice. The Scripture that we memorized is from Joshua 24:15—"As for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."



Now we are studying a unit about Discovering Jesus. Our first lesson taught us that we must believe that Jesus is who He claims to be even though we haven't seen him. We believe we have a heart pumping inside of us even though we can't see it. When we see a beautifully wrapped present, we believe that there is something special inside for us even though we can't see what it is until we unwrap it.



We took time out to make special gifts for our dads and grandpas. The kids made special cards and gave their dad's a unique package that contained some special candy and a rock that said, "Dad, you are our rock!" Proverbs 20:7.

We always find time for snacks and a game!

Blessings,

Miss Chris and the Grace Place Gang

Thank You

Thank you for all your prayers and for the many ways that so many of you either reached out with cards, gifts, meals, or gave me grace and time to heal from surgery! I just received word that the cancer is GONE! Praise the Lord!—Pastor Shelly

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 Galatians. 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. Small pillows are also available.

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.

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.

The Buchanan Community Chorus – July 12

The Buchanan Community Chorus is proud to present a patriotic concert celebrating America's 250th Birthday! The concert will highlight the nation's history through various songs including the Revolutionary War, Civil War, WWI, WWII and feature patriotic music from current American composers. The concert will be held on Sunday, July 12 at 5:00 p.m. at the new air-conditioned Pattee Building at the Warren County Fairgrounds. There will be a freewill donation. Members from First United Methodist Church who will be performing are Joy Boostrom, Linda Dean, Shelly Forrest, Karen Stauffer and Mary Kelly.

Mother's Day/Father's Day Update

For both Mother's Day and Father's Day, the memorial/honor contributions totaled \$955 which will be split between Strom Center and Teen Recharge Center. Strom Center offers many services to support seniors in our community. The Teen Recharge Center offers a food pantry, washer/dryer, and kitchen on site. It is a nonjudgmental space to interact with friends, learn about resources, meet some amazing people and organizations as well as discover new hobbies, interests, opportunities and things about themselves! Thank you for your generous support of both of these important assets in our community.

Miracle Sunday Update

The first fruits of Miracle Sunday are already bearing powerful witness to God's work among us. From the first 51 United Methodist congregations reporting around the world, a remarkable **\$187,650** has been given. Our contribution was \$2,000. Many of the first offerings by congregations are worshipping fewer than 50 people, making their generosity all the more extraordinary.

This is more than a number - it is a shared commitment to raise up a new generation of pastoral leaders across Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. Alongside these gifts, inspiring testimonies of faith and sacrificial giving are emerging, reminding us that God is working in profound and personal ways through this movement. And this is only the beginning.

Giving continues to grow, with offerings still being received and commitments expanding. To date, total giving and committed support has already surpassed **\$1.5 million**, a powerful sign of what is possible when United Methodists come together in faith and purpose.

Individuals may continue to give through <https://www.endowftecc.org/donate>.

Together, we are part of something much larger than ourselves. Every gift, large or small, is shaping the future of the church and equipping pastoral leaders in Africa, Europe and the Philippines for generations to come.

Annual Conference

Pastor Shelly was able to attend the first day, and Dave Geer represented us on the second day of this year's Annual Conference. The Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference gathered June 4-6 at the Peoria Civic Center with the theme, *Love Boldly*, based upon John 13:34-35.

One of the most impactful decisions that was made this year is the reduction in the number of districts from five to four. This is an effort to reduce the cost of the conference leadership. Our district superintendents will be taking on a larger task. Please keep them in prayer!

In other action, the Annual Conference:

- Affirmed the allocation of \$300,000 for the second of two years for Little Grass Camp that was approved by the 2025 Annual Conference.
- Chose to not sell and continue using the conference center in Springfield.
- Approved resolutions closing 67 congregations.
- Established a Special Conference Offering on Heritage Sunday, the proceeds of which would be used to finance the purchase of historical markers for conference historical sites.
- Granted retired home missionaries and retired deaconesses voting status.
- Approved resolutions affirming the Conference's health and welfare agencies; affirming the voting rights of Americans and a resolution calling for support of ethnic clergy and pastors in cross-racial/cross-cultural appointments.

A Service of Ministry celebration celebrated the consecration of Home Missioner Curt Franklin; the recognition of four newly assigned lay supply pastors; 16 certified lay ministers; nine new local pastors; and five local pastors who have completed the Course of Study.

Twenty-one pastors retired. Fifty-two clergy and clergy spouses and six lay members to annual conference were remembered at the annual memorial service. Included in the roll were three former conference presidents of United Methodist Women and its predecessor organization. Sixty-seven churches completed their mission in the past year.

The Annual Conference approved a 2027 budget of \$7,527,488 – a reduction of 1.08 percent from the 2026 budget. The budget calls for \$1,140,488 from conference reserves in order to reduce the burden on local churches' apportionments with \$6,387,000 apportioned to the churches.

The 2027 budget and its corresponding apportionment is roughly 11.4 percent of local church operational expenditures and the Conference Council on Finance and Administration is working to bring that total down to 10 percent in order to maintain a collection rate of 90 percent or greater. In 2025, collection rates dipped to 88 percent payment.

The conference also approved a 3.5 percent increase to its minimum salaries for 2027 with minimum salaries rising to \$55,272 for clergy in full connection, associate members and provisional elders; and \$50,719 for full-time local pastors.

The Annual Conference gave generously as special offerings during the session (both in-person and online) totaled nearly \$30,000. Offerings included: Africa University (\$8,011); John Kofi Asmah School in Liberia (\$3,004); Camp Scholarships (\$5,223); Tom Brown Scholarship at Wiley University (\$4,117); Campus Ministries (\$5,597) and the Ordinands' Trip (\$3,846).

It was also announced that as of June 3, Miracle Sunday offerings to endow scholarships for the theological students in the central conferences outside the United States totaled \$187,650. Eleven lead donor churches and the United Methodist Foundation provided lead gifts of \$99,000. Ninety-two of the 580 churches have reported participation in the May 17 offering with 42 churches receiving offerings of more than \$1,000.

A request from our organist, Liz.

Liz Walker, our organist, is looking for someone who would be willing to be a substitute organist if she needs to be gone. Liz will be gone one Sunday this fall and is looking for someone to fill in for her. If you are interested or know someone who would be interested, please contact LeAnn Murk in the church office or Liz Walker.

July Birthdays

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Aiyana Sanders | 15 Jared Halcomb |
| 2 Sarah Moore | 16 Alexis Clark |
| 3 Alex Burgland | 18 Bev Crede |
| 4 Carson Clayton | 19 Debby Fuess |
| Curt Scott | 22 Heaven Edwards |
| 5 Craig Anderson | Chris Moore |
| 6 Nancy Clayton | Adam DeCrane |
| 6 Kendall Murk | 23 Gina Raymond |
| 7 Jo McVey | Casey Rexroat |
| 7 Cathy Sheagren | 24 Anders Bergren |
| 8 Jill Sollenberger | Jan Helms |
| Susie Clark | Carter Carlson |
| Debra Young | 25 Ashlee Salyers |
| 9 Lois Cook | 26 Brooke Anderson |
| Cohen Anderson | Carolyn Ross |
| 10 Candy Duncan | 29 Madelyn Edwards |
| 12 Jan Uddin | Kathleen Elliott |
| 13 John Stinemates | Bryan Murray |
| Reese Anderson | |
| 14 Emmi Frieden | |
| Lori Oetting | |



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 - Julian Drum and Hannah Clark
Certified Lay Speaker - Anita Anderson

Sanctuary and Bell Choir Director -
Vea Vavrosky
Organist - Elizabeth Walker
Keyboard - Joy Boostrom
Praise Team Director - Sarah Moore
Custodians - Doug Ray and Mitch Ray

First United Methodists Church of Monmouth JULY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 EVERY WEDNESDAY Prayer Group 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM	2 5:00 pm hand out frisbees Harmon Park	3 Church Office Closed	4
5	6 Church Office Closed	7 Church Office Closed 6:00 pm Trustees meeting in lounge No Worship meeting	8 Church Office Closed 6:30 pm Book Study in the lounge	9 Church Office Closed	10 Church Office Closed	11
12 10:00 am Worship at the Warren County Fair in Roseville	13 No Finance or Ad Council meeting	14	15 6:30 pm Book Study in the lounge	16 5:00 pm SPRC meeting in the lounge	17	18
19	20	21	22 No Book Study	23 6:00 pm VBS Volunteer meeting in the Sanctuary	24	25
26	27 August Caller info due	28 Last day to donate crayons to Jamieson Center Stars Program	29 6:30 pm Book Study in the lounge	30 9:00 am start decorating for VBS	31	