

The Caller

First United Methodist Church

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www.comejourneywithus.com

August 2026



Vacation Bible School is here!



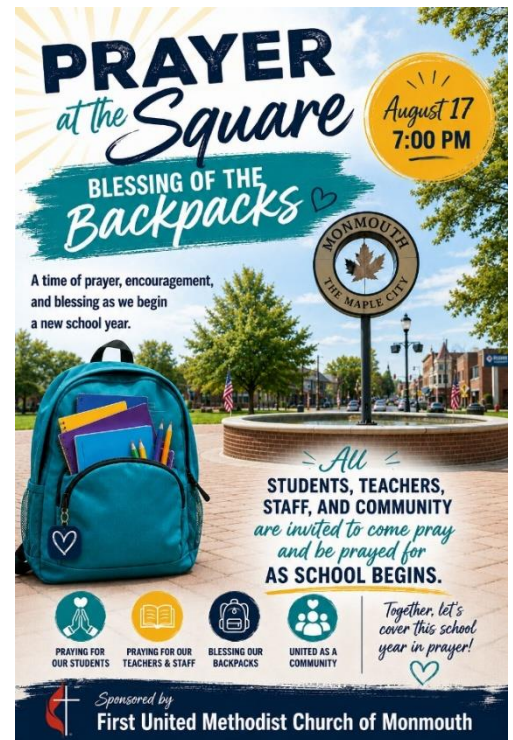
We are still accepting registrations for Vacation Bible School. It is not too late to invite any 3-year-old through those entering 6th grade to join us Sunday, August 2 through Thursday, August 6. We begin at 5:00 p.m. with a light meal in Fellowship Hall and then begin in the Sanctuary at 5:30. Everyone is invited to the Opening from 5:30 – 5:55 and the Closing from 7:35 – 8:00.

Prayer at the Square - Monday, August 17

As we enter this new school year, we wish to bless our teachers, students, support staff, administration, and families by covering them with prayer. Please come to Monmouth Square at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 17, where we will offer prayers as this new year begins. We will pray for Monmouth-Roseville and United School Districts as well as Monmouth College. As always, invite someone to join you!

Fellowship Meal – Thursday, August 20

Dream Team is planning a fellowship meal, which is open to all, on **Thursday, August 20** at 6:15 p.m. at Maple City Restaurant. Please sign up at the Welcome Center by August 17.



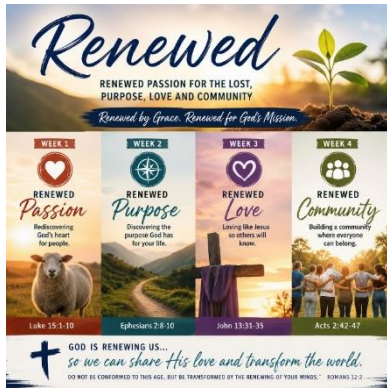
Monmouth College New Student Walkout – Monday, August 24

United Women of Faith sponsors the Monmouth College New Student Walkout. It will begin at 3:15 p.m. on **Monday, August 24**. There is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center to provide cookies for each of the new students. Please pack 3 cookies per zip lock bag with no nuts or peanut butter in the cookies. Thank you ahead of time for baking for our college students.

Youth Group Kickoff – Sunday, August 30

If you are entering 6th grade through 12th grade, you are invited to be a part of all youth group activities. Youth Group generally meets on Sundays at the church, however there are times where alternate activities are planned. A typical gathering consists of worship, music, devotion, food and fun! **Sunday, August 30** will be the Youth Group Kickoff Cookout at Carlson's home from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Please get in touch with Adam or Michelle Carlson so you can be added to the GroupMe app where announcements, meeting times, etc. are posted.

Pastor's Article



While we will be finishing the sermon series on “The Upside-Down Kingdom” for most of August, get ready to be “Renewed”—renewed by grace, and renewed for God’s mission.

Even though for many of us, it’s been a long time since we started a new school year with new gym shoes, clothes, crayons, and pencils, there is something about the beginning of a new school year that gets us all motivated to START something. Mitch once had a professor who said when someone asked him if he was “born again,” his answer was, “Yes! I’m born again, and

again, and again!” We slip, we fail, we get in ruts and routines, and we need to renew our faith, our love for the lost and our passion for the mission and message of Christ.

God is always renewing people and communities through grace. As we are renewed, we become people who share Christ's love, discover God's purpose, love more deeply, and build communities where everyone can belong.

So, as we end August and enter September, the focus is renewal. We need new vision, new breath, new life, and a constantly renewed passion for loving our neighbor who is not already sitting next to us in worship.

Two things we need to focus on as we head toward this series are: prayer and invitation. Between now and August 30, pray daily for someone in your circle of connections. And as you pray, pray not only for them and their struggles, but for the right opportunity to invite them to come. Come into the beautiful, joy-filled, loving community of Monmouth First United Methodist Church. Faith is a journey. Invite them to come journey with us.

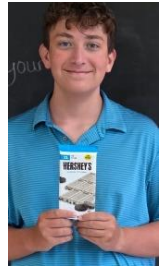
Birdies for Charity 2026 Pledges!!!

The total amount of just pledges donated by 40 of our congregation is **\$19,499**. Last year 38 of us donated \$13, 805. Wow!!!! This does **NOT include that extra percent we will earn** on the total sum of pledge money. The extra percent won’t be broadcast for a while. There is a process used to decide how much extra can be given, so we need to be patient.

Laurie Todd, Birdies for Charity Contact Person

Grace Place, our youth Sunday School

Landon Andrews won the big candy bar drawing this month. Congrats to Landon!



We completed our unit on "Discovering Jesus." We know we are to believe in Jesus and in order to do that we must know Him. We have to study the Word, learn the Word, pray, and interact with other believers. Then we must obey Jesus, live for him, and love and adore Him. Our memory Scripture was, Mark 12:30. "Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."

We took time to play a game of "Sin Ball." None of us want sin in our lives so we split up into teams and try to keep those nasty sin balls out of our side of the room. This opens up a conversation about what to do if you do sin. We know that if we confess it to Jesus or throw it to him, he forgives us. Thank you, Jesus!



Next, we are studying the Miracles of Jesus.

Blessings,

Chris Moore and the Grace Place gang.

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. We are just beginning to study Ephesians. 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 let me know.

Joyce Clark - 309-299-5682.

Please mark your calendar for a Fellowship Meal at Maple City Restaurant. It will be on Thursday, August 20, at 6:15 pm. Please sign up at the Welcome Center by August 17.

Healing Touch – is non-invasive and effective.

Just a reminder that healing touch continues to be available by scheduling an appointment. Some of the benefits include relieving stress and depression, pain reduction, bodily support during chemotherapy, strengthening the immune system, and enhancing recovery after surgery. Following a session, nearly everyone expresses that they feel great peace, if you wish to make an appointment, call Chris Moore (309-337-4162) or Joyce Clark (309-299-5682). There is no charge for a session.

A Note from the Trustees

At our last meeting, we were looking at what our next needs and priorities will be, and we started thinking about all that we have accomplished in recent months. Sometimes, it may seem that the wheels don't turn as quickly as we might like, but we have accomplished MANY things to care for the building and property which helps us have a space to reach and teach people with the message of Christ! We thought you should know what we have been up to!

We accomplished the goal of putting some acoustic panels on the ceiling in Fellowship Hall to improve issues with "bouncy" or "live" sound. It is greatly improved but will need additional tiles in the future.

In the Sanctuary, we put up solar powered shades on the southeast windows so that people can worship without the sun beaming them in the face. It also helps the livestream. We fixed the east fire exit door that was not working well due to building settling. The audio/visual desk had carpet on it which was causing static that was damaging to the sound equipment. The carpet has been removed and replaced with oak veneer. Plexiglass has been placed over the altar to prevent wax from damaging the paraments. And the organ had several sticking keys which have now been repaired.

The Chapel had three windows with holes or cracks. Those have been repaired. The chapel's furnace also stopped working last winter and has now been replaced so that people can use the space for prayer, Bible study, choir practice, and the many other meetings that are housed there.

The west entrance ramp has been repaired and the bottom smoothed out so that people can access the building more easily. The stairs were mud-jacked so they are even. A crevasse was filled so heels do not get stuck, and yellow paint was put on to make the steps more visible.

We had already begun plans to recoat the roof over the education wing and the Chapel before the storm hit. That project to recoat the roof has been completed. There was also minor damage from the storm to other parts of the building that were repaired. The HVAC system is on the roof, so a fuse that is regularly impacted by power outages and surges was put in a more practical place that is more easily accessible. The inverter that runs our emergency exit lights has been repaired and is working now.

The handrails to the lower level were put back in place where the chair lift had been. We are still grateful to Max McNeeley and Zach Johnson of Advance Mechanical for their work and donation of the rails and labor! Also, work has been done to address water coming under the south entrance doors during heavy rainstorms.

Parking blocks were installed in the parking lot to prevent people from driving over the edge, and the parking lot was re-sealed and re-painted in July. An outdoor trash receptacle was added. The playground and area outside the youth room windows were sprayed to eliminate weeds.

The church office has been painted with a fresh coat of paint which makes it a more inviting place to be. Also, the exterior locks have been re-keyed to make things safer.

In the past year, the parsonage has also had numerous improvements. The handrail to the house was tightened. New pull-shades were installed in the main bedroom. The bathroom floor which had been carpeted now has vinyl flooring. The leaks over the basement bathroom ceiling have been repaired and the ceiling has been replaced. As of this month, the deck has been cared for by repairing some of the wood, power washing and resealing the wood. A volunteer tree and some bushes were removed, and flowers were planted. It is important to have small improvements rather than delayed maintenance, and Mitch and I are greatly appreciative of all the care that has provided us a comfortable place to live.

August Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Aaran Lantz | 17 Emmanuel Amouzouvik |
| 2 Lance Oetting | Matt Sims |
| Ann Halcomb | 18 Andrew Uddin |
| 4 Penny Vaughn | 21 Lars Bergren |
| 5 McKinley Rexroat | Bob McVey |
| Colton Willhardt | 22 Brenda Cornell |
| George Sprout | 23 Reagan Scanlon-Kessler |
| 6 Linda Murray | Rich White |
| LeAnn Murk | Patti Salyers |
| 8 Rod Fuess | 24 Steph Malachi |
| 9 Todd Clayton | 25 Janet Underwood |
| Carol Tarr | 27 James Petri |
| 13 Camdyn Bennett | 28 Phil Lemley |
| Lori Anderson | 29 Cinda Burgland |
| 14 Carson Davies | 30 Betty Bollman |
| 15 Jim Ray | 31 Grace Murk |
| | Rhonda Willhardt |



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

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 August 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 5-8:00 pm VBS	3 5-8:00 pm VBS	4 5-8:00 pm VBS No Trustees meeting	5 <u>EVERY WEDNESDAY</u> Prayer Group 9:30 AM Bible Study 10:00 AM 5-8:00 pm VBS	6 5-8:00 pm VBS	7	1
9	10 6:00 pm Finance in the lounge 7:00 pm Ad Council in the lounge	11 6:00 pm Worship meeting in lounge	12 6:30 pm Last Book Study in the lounge	13	14	15
16	17 7:00 pm Back to School Prayer on the Square & Blessing of the Backpacks	18	19 10:00 am Nominations meeting in the lounge	20 6:15 Fellowship Meal at Maple City Restaurant	21	22
23	24 September caller info due 3:15 Monmouth College New Student Walkout	25	26	27	28	29
30 4-6:00 pm Youth Group Kickoff at Carlson's home	31					