

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH
610 BONUS AVE
BELVIDERE, IL
61008



The Courier

DECEMBER 2025



Belvidere First
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
LOVIN' JESUS  LOVIN' YOU

December Newsletter

Beloved Church Family,

As we enter the season of Advent and step into a new year in the church calendar, we are invited once again to turn our hearts toward the One who anchors our hope—Jesus Christ. Advent is not merely a countdown to Christmas; it is the sacred rhythm of waiting, longing, and trusting the God who keeps God's promises.

This year, our Advent reflections are shaped by the rich witness of the Letter to the Hebrews. We remember that God's promise is unchanging, and that in Christ we have "an anchor for the soul, firm and secure" (Hebrews 6). We are reminded that faith is not blind optimism but the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen (Hebrews 11). Through Jesus, the mediator of a better covenant, we receive a hope that renews us and a grace that carries us (Hebrews 8–9).

As we prepare our hearts in this holy season, we also pause to reflect on the year behind us. 2025 has been a year filled with both challenges and blessings, moments of stretching and moments of deep gratitude. Through it all, God has been faithful. As a church family, we give thanks for every step we have walked together—every prayer, every act of service, every shared joy, and even the tears that have drawn us closer to Christ and to one another. May we close this year with gratitude and trust, knowing that the same God who has carried us through 2025 will also lead us into what is ahead.

Advent reminds us that we are a people who wait—not in uncertainty, but in confidence. As we begin another year of ministry together, we wait for Christ's coming with renewed hope. We open our hearts to His presence, His light, and His transforming grace.

May this season ground us again in the truth that our lives are anchored not in shifting circumstances or in our own faithfulness and endurance, but in the faithful and unfailing love of God.

May our waiting be active, our hope steadfast, and our hearts ready for the Light who is coming into the world.

In Christ, our Anchor and our Hope,

Pastor Jay

Check out these books from our church library in December!

For Kids: *The Story of the Lost Sheep* by Grolier

For Women: *Christmas: A pictorial Pilgrimage* by Benoit

For Men: *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* By Ferguson



**Salvation Army Bell
Ringing
December 13th.
Sign-ups will be
available in the
gathering area or
by contacting the
church office at
815-544-3479.**



Christmas Eve Services

We will have Christmas Eve services at 3pm and 7pm on Wednesday December 24th.



Our prayer team is always ready to pray for you, or someone you know. If you have a prayer request, please contact Karen Frazer @ 815-985-7970, or contact the Church office at 815-544-3479.



Active Military

Do you have a family member serving in the military?

Please contact Ruth Bower, and let us know so we can be encouraging and praying for them. Here is what we need:

- Name of active family member and their relation to you
- Branch of military
- Location serving
- Address to send correspondence

Hospitality Team

Proverbs 22:9 The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

Would you like to meet and greet visitors to our church? Then our Hospitality Team may be the place for you. Contact the church office at 815-544-3479 for more information, if you feel God nudging you towards this team.





*Christmas Poinsettia for
Christmas Eve
Services. Last day to turn in
your order is
December 1st.*

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

To decorate the Christmas Eve altar.
Please place orders by **Monday 12/1**
\$13.00 each.

Choice of:

___Red

___Pink

___White

___Bi-color

Please Place order form and payment
(made out to First United Methodist
Church) in Debbi Bloomingdale's mail
bin, in the collection plate, or mail to
the church.

In Memory
of _____

In Honor
of _____

Given
by _____

*You may take your flowers home af-
ter either service, or contact the
church office and we can hold it for
pick up*



THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25TH FOR THE
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY.



The church office will be closed
Thursday January 1st for the New
Year holiday.



December 15-19
Sign up in gathering area or call
the
church office.



Visitation Team

"Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other, let us really show it by our actions." 1John 3:18

During this season of giving, please take time to give gifts from the heart. Share the love of God with a little bit of thoughtful attention to others. Those gifts can be more meaningful than the ones with fancy bows. Remember your ill and homebound friends with calls, cards, cookies and visits. Share smiles and friendly greetings with those you meet. As you celebrate the birth of the Savior, let your love for God show in your face, your faith and your actions.

"May I never get too busy in my own affairs that I fail to respond to the needs of others with kindness and compassion." Thomas Jefferson

Team members: Karen McClenthen, Rene Worden, Linda Clair, Mary Lou Poulter, Joanie Eastland & Janet Wheeler

December Greeter Schedule

December 7 Nancy Petersen

December 14 Wayne & Nancy
Jahn

December 21 Max Gardner

December 28 Jeanette Gardner

December Ushers

Steve Heuer

Aaron Heuer

Lucy Capitosti

December Altar Flowers

*December 7 Dan & Sue
Holmes*

December 14 Open

December 21 Open

December 28 Open



CARE NOTES

Care Notes are small booklets offering strength, help and healing for a variety of topics that impact everyday lives at a very personal level. They are free to those who are hurting and in need of them.

Topics range from Overcoming Everyday Anxiety to dealing with Depression, Abuse, Grief, Financial Stress, Addictions, Dementia and Suicide. There are booklets for children, teens, and adults. Check out the **Care Notes** rack in the main hall just outside of the office.

Debbi Bloomingdale is a Notary. If you need something notarized, please call the church office. This service is free to church members and their families.





Ministry by, with and for women, supporting spiritual growth individually and in community, encouraging and recognizing the unique needs that come with life stages.

Adapted from www.resourceumc.org/en/topics/womens-ministry

We all love to get a Christmas card, and read the beautiful messages. Please join us for our Saturday December 13th Women's Ministry Gathering at 10am. We'll be writing our cards to our shut-ins, assisted living, nursing home and lots of our special people.

Please call any of the ministry team with questions, (Karen Frazer, Pam Rossmiller, Carla Walter, Linda Lennon or Cindy Poulter). We'll save you a seat.

Front Door Status Update

All the parts for the new front doors have been received by the contractor and the installation date has been rescheduled for **Monday, December 1st**. As the work will take most of the day, guests will be redirected to use the Perry Hall/Kitchen door for the day.

Thank you for your continued patience~~ Trustees



UWF

Board meeting:

December 1, 1pm



Women's Christmas

Luncheon

December 2, 12pm



UMM MEETING NOTICE

Current members & any men who may be interested: Our next UMM meeting is Saturday, 12/20 at 830am in Perry Hall! Come for breakfast, fellowship, a recap of events, and a discussion on 2026 plans!



SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

10-7

SIGN UP FOR A ONE HOUR SLOT



ADOPT A RESIDENT GIFTS

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK A
NORTHWOODS RESIDENT TO PROVIDE A GIFT
FOR. ALL GIFTS MUST BE WRAPPED AND
RETURNED TO THE CHURCH BY DECEMBER 14TH.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:
NORTHERN ILLINOIS FOOD BANK TRUCK
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28TH

3:30-5:00





OH HOLY NIGHT

A D N H P W P J Q B T G F F S Q V
Y D M Q M I A A S T A R R L G F R
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V A N F Q F A T G F T G I A Z T X
N J C U R Z Z X E U N O M N G L Z
B K Y M W I H F R A P E A C E G W

ANGEL
ANIMALS
BABY
BETHLEHEM
DONKEY
FRANKINCENSE

GIFTS
GOLD
JESUS
JOSEPH
MANGER
MARY

MYRRH
PEACE
SAVIOR
SHEPHERD
STAR
WISE MEN





Cookie Walk Fundraiser – December 14th

We're excited to share that our annual Cookie Walk fundraiser is coming up on December 14th, right after worship! And once again, we're hoping to lean on the amazing baking talents in our church family.

We know this season is a busy one—Thanksgiving just behind us and Christmas right around the corner—so we truly appreciate you considering baking again. Your support really does make all the difference, and we're so grateful.

If you're able to participate, please drop off your cookies on Saturday, December 13th, between 9 AM and noon. We can't wait to see (and smell!) all the wonderful treats you'll create this year.

Thank you so much for your generosity and your joyful spirit!

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while ^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register. ⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. ⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." ¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. **Luke 2: 1-20**



Tithing: The Covenantal Contribution

Tithing is a practice steeped in tradition and covenant. It represents a tangible acknowledgment of God's sovereignty and provision. By setting aside a tenth of their income, believers demonstrate their trust and faith in God's enduring provision and grace.

Biblical References

Abraham and Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20)

Abraham's act of tithing to Melchizedek, a priest of the Most High God, is the first recorded instance of this practice. It symbolizes respect and honor, setting a precedent for future generations.

The Mosaic Law (Leviticus 27:30-32)

Under the Mosaic Law, tithing was established as a vital aspect of worship and support for the Levitical priesthood. It served as a constant reminder of the Israelites' dependence on and devotion to God.

<u>2025 Financial Information</u>				
	October	Year-to-Date		
Income	40,420.71	381,930.63	Annual Apportionment	61,764.00
Expenses	46,425.68	424,758.80	Apportionment paid to date	37,387.19
Net Income (Loss)	(6,004.97)	(42,828.17)		

Family Movie Night

Friday, December 19

6pm

The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear. (Quote from Elf the movie)

All families are welcome to join the Ambassadors at Family Movie Night this month. We'll gather in Perry Hall to watch the Christmas classic "Elf" with popcorn and snacks. Families are encouraged to wear their jammies if they like and bring sleeping bags and pillows -- let's get comfy! Parents/Grandparents, we ask that you stay with your kids to enjoy this fun family event. There is no charge to attend.

Please RSVP by December 17 by calling the church office or sending an email to officeadmin@fumcbelvidere.com. Invite a friend -- the more the merrier!






December

	Old Testament	New Testament	Psalms	Proverbs
<input type="checkbox"/> 01	Daniel 8:1-27	1 John 2:1-17	Psalms 120:1-7	Proverbs 28:25-26
<input type="checkbox"/> 02	Daniel 9:1-11:1	1 John 2:18-3:6	Psalms 121:1-8	Proverbs 28:27-28
<input type="checkbox"/> 03	Daniel 11:2-35	1 John 3:7-24	Psalms 122:1-9	Proverbs 29:1
<input type="checkbox"/> 04	Daniel 11:36-12:13	1 John 4:1-21	Psalms 123:1-4	Proverbs 29:2-4
<input type="checkbox"/> 05	Hosea 1:1-3:5	1 John 5:1-21	Psalms 124:1-8	Proverbs 29:5-8
<input type="checkbox"/> 06	Hosea 4:1-5:15	2 John 1:1-13	Psalms 125:1-5	Proverbs 29:9-11
<input type="checkbox"/> 07	Hosea 6:1-9:17	3 John 1:1-15	Psalms 126:1-6	Proverbs 29:12-14
<input type="checkbox"/> 08	Hosea 10:1-14:9	Jude 1:1-25	Psalms 127:1-5	Proverbs 29:15-17
<input type="checkbox"/> 09	Joel 1:1-3:21	Revelation 1:1-20	Psalms 128:1-6	Proverbs 29:18
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Amos 1:1-3:15	Revelation 2:1-17	Psalms 129:1-8	Proverbs 29:19-20
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Amos 4:1-6:14	Revelation 2:18-3:6	Psalms 130:1-8	Proverbs 29:21-22
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Amos 7:1-9:15	Revelation 3:7-22	Psalms 131:1-3	Proverbs 29:23
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Obadiah 1:1-21	Revelation 4:1-11	Psalms 132:1-18	Proverbs 29:24-25
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Jonah 1:1-4:11	Revelation 5:1-14	Psalms 133:1-3	Proverbs 29:26-27
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Micah 1:1-4:13	Revelation 6:1-17	Psalms 134:1-3	Proverbs 30:1-4
<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Micah 5:1-7:20	Revelation 7:1-17	Psalms 135:1-21	Proverbs 30:5-6
<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Nahum 1:1-3:19	Revelation 8:1-13	Psalms 136:1-26	Proverbs 30:7-9
<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Habakkuk 1:1-3:19	Revelation 9:1-21	Psalms 137:1-9	Proverbs 30:10
<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Zephaniah 1:1-3:20	Revelation 10:1-11	Psalms 138:1-8	Proverbs 30:11-14
<input type="checkbox"/> 20	Haggai 1:1-2:23	Revelation 11:1-19	Psalms 139:1-24	Proverbs 30:15-16
<input type="checkbox"/> 21	Zechariah 1:1-21	Revelation 12:1-17	Psalms 140:1-13	Proverbs 30:17
<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Zechariah 2:1-3:10	Revelation 13:1-13:18	Psalms 141:1-10	Proverbs 30:18-20
<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Zechariah 4:1-5:11	Revelation 14:1-20	Psalms 142:1-7	Proverbs 30:21-23
<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Zechariah 6:1-7:14	Revelation 15:1-8	Psalms 143:1-12	Proverbs 30:24-28
<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Zechariah 8:1-23	Revelation 16:1-21	Psalms 144:1-15	Proverbs 30:29-31
<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Zechariah 9:1-17	Revelation 17:1-18	Psalms 145:1-21	Proverbs 30:32
<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Zechariah 10:1-11:17	Revelation 18:1-24	Psalms 146:1-10	Proverbs 30:33
<input type="checkbox"/> 28	Zechariah 12:1-13:9	Revelation 19:1-21	Psalms 147:1-20	Proverbs 31:1-7
<input type="checkbox"/> 29	Zechariah 14:1-21	Revelation 20:1-15	Psalms 148:1-14	Proverbs 31:8-9
<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Malachi 1:1-2:17	Revelation 21:1-27	Psalms 149:1-9	Proverbs 31:10-24
<input type="checkbox"/> 31	Malachi 3:1-4:6	Revelation 22:1-21	Psalms 150:1-6	Proverbs 31:25-31

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December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
	1 8:00 AM Front Door Installation 1:00 PM UWF Board Meeting 5:30 PM SPRC Meeting 6:00 PM Cubscout Committee Meeting	2 2:00 PM Bright Point Head Start 6:00 PM Disciple 1 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Cub Scouts	3 9:00 AM Psalm Sisters Bible Study 10:30 AM Ladies Fitness Class 5:30 PM Disciple 3 6:30 PM Disciples Forever	4	5 5:00 PM EV Band Practice	6																																																																																											
7 9:00 AM Worship 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM EV Sunday School	8 10:00 AM Matthew Group 6:00 PM Cub Scouts	9 2:00 PM Bright Point Doula Program 6:00 PM Disciple 1 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	10 9:00 AM Psalm Sisters Bible Study 10:30 AM Ladies Fitness Class 5:30 PM Disciple 3	11	12 5:00 PM EV Band Practice	13 9:00 AM Cookie Drop Off 10:00 AM Women's Ministry Meeting																																																																																											
14 8:00 AM Adopt-a-Resident drop off 9:00 AM Worship 10:15 AM Cookie Walk 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM EV Sunday School	15 11:00 AM Meals on Wheels 5:30 PM Mission Meeting 6:00 PM Cub Scout Pack Meeting 6:30 PM Ambassador Meeting	16 11:00 AM Meals on Wheels 6:00 PM Disciple 1 7:00 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM Cub Scouts	17 9:00 AM Psalm Sisters Bible Study 10:30 AM Ladies Fitness Class 11:00 AM Meals on Wheels 5:30 PM Disciple 3	18 11:00 AM Meals on Wheels	19 11:00 AM Meals on Wheels 5:00 PM EV Band Practice 6:00 PM Family Movie Night	20 8:30 AM UMM Meeting																																																																																											
21 9:00 AM Worship 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM EV Sunday School	22 6:00 PM Cub Scouts	23 6:00 PM Disciple 1 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	24 3:00 PM Christmas Eve Service 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Church Office Closed	26 5:00 PM EV Band Practice	27																																																																																											
28 10:15 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM EV Sunday School 1:30 PM EV Luncheon	29	30 6:00 PM Disciple 1 7:00 PM Boy Scouts	31 9:00 AM Psalm Sisters Bible Study 10:30 AM Ladies Fitness Class 5:30 PM Disciple 3	<div> <div>Nov 2025</div> <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <div>Jan 2026</div> <table> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1 2 3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </table> </div>			S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30							S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1 2 3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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**First United Methodist
Church**
610 Bonus Ave
Belvidere, IL 61008
Lead Pastor Jim Bell
Associate Pastor Jay Shin

Phone: 815-544-3479

E-mail: officeadmin@fumcbelvidere.com

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9-3

Friday 9-12

After hour emergencies--847-764-6563

Worship 9:00 AM

Sunday School 10:15 Sept--May

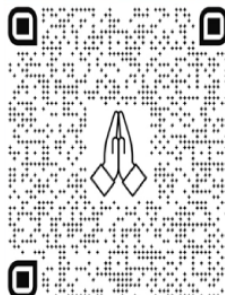
Find us on the web @ fumcbelvidere.org



Scan the QR with
your phone, or Ipad
to go directly to our
website.



If you would like us to
to pray for you, email the
church or scan the QR
code below.



Joy to the World

We will once again celebrate Christmas Eve with candlelight worship at 3:00 and 7:00 on Wednesday, December 24. Please think of someone you can invite to share one of our Christmas Eve services, by joining us in worship to sing the songs and remember the story of Jesus' birth, or joining you in your home to watch the livestream with you, or by offering them the link, [Belvidere First United Methodist Church | Online Worship \(fumcbelvidere.org\)](http://Belvidere First United Methodist Church | Online Worship (fumcbelvidere.org)) so that the light of Christmas may be seen throughout the world, not just in the sanctuary of our church.