THE MESSENGER
NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 11: 2026

Give Thanks

Give thanks to the Lord,
for He is good.

Psalm 136:1



First United
METHODIST CHURCH

Equipping More People for the Mission

Our vision for 2027—and your invitation to be part of it

What could God do through our church if more people discovered their gifts, found a place to use them, and became equipped to participate in Christ's mission?

That's the question guiding our vision for 2027.

At First United Methodist Church, we see God at work in so many ways: lives being changed, children and youth growing in faith, neighbors receiving help, new relationships forming, and people discovering the joy of serving together. We believe there is even more potential within our congregation—not simply to do more activities, but to equip more people to participate in what God is already doing.

Our 2027 goal is simple: Equipping More People for the Mission.

To make that vision a reality, we will focus on three priorities.

1. Build the Ministry Infrastructure

Good ideas need somewhere to go. We want to strengthen the teams, leadership roles, and processes that help ministry ideas become reality. Rather than relying on a few people to carry the work, we want to build a church where ministry can be shared, supported, and sustained.

2. Identify and Equip Leaders

Our congregation is full of people with gifts, experiences, passions, and potential. We want to become more intentional about recognizing those gifts, inviting people into leadership, and equipping them to take meaningful responsibility for ministry.

3. Create Pathways into Participation

We want it to be easier for people to discover their place in the life and mission of the church. That means making opportunities visible, personally inviting people to participate, and creating clear next steps for those who want to learn, serve, lead, and grow in faith.

These priorities aren't simply about adding more programs. They're about building the leadership and structures that make meaningful ministry possible—and helping more people find their place in it.

Your generosity helps make it possible

Building this kind of church takes more than good ideas. It takes people willing to share their time, gifts, and financial resources.

Our 2027 missional budget shows how we plan to steward the resources entrusted to us in support of our mission. And our pledge cards give each of us an opportunity to prayerfully consider how we will participate financially in the year ahead.

If you've already returned your pledge card, thank you! Your generosity helps create opportunities for people to encounter Christ, grow in faith, serve their neighbors, and discover their gifts.

Haven't returned your pledge card yet? Now is the time!

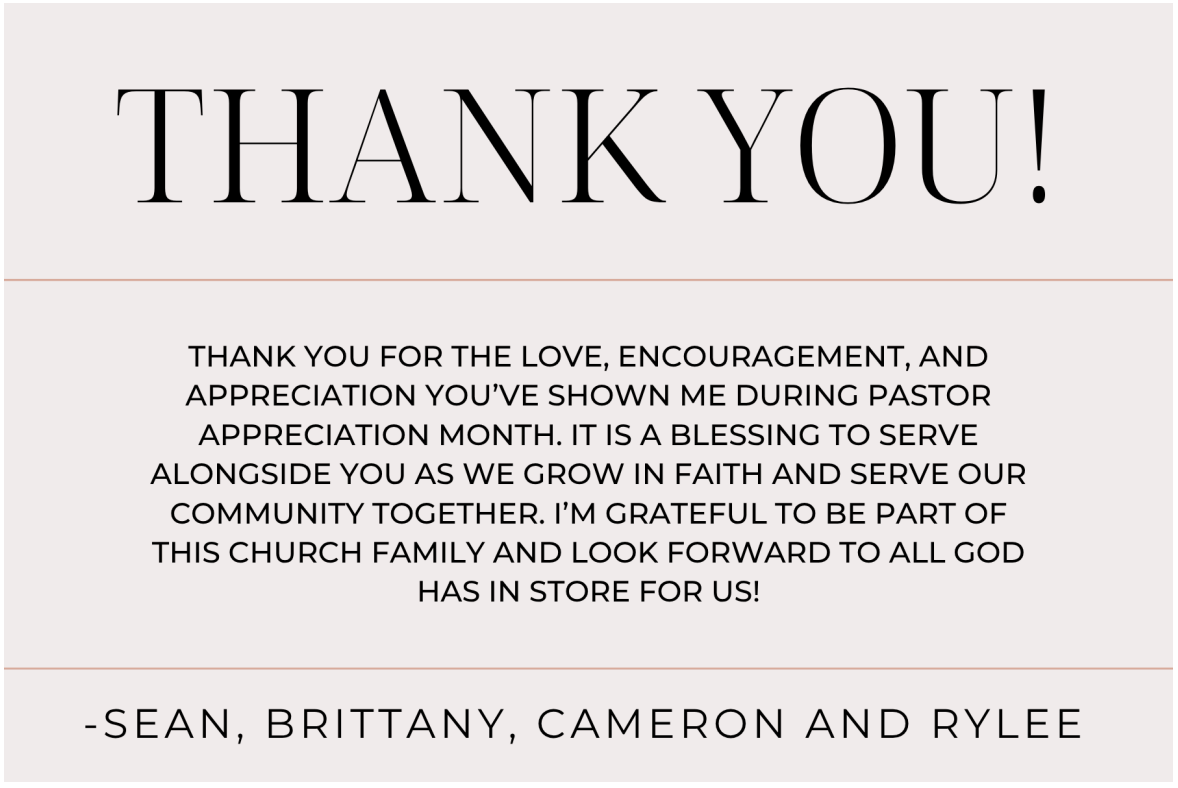
Take a few moments to pray about what God is inviting you to give, complete your card, and return it to the church by Friday, November 6. You can also bring it to worship this Sunday, November 1.

This isn't about comparing our gifts or meeting an obligation. It's about responding to God's generosity with our own and participating in something bigger than ourselves.

Together, we can build a church that doesn't simply welcome people in, but equips them to go out and live the mission of Jesus Christ.

Equipping More People for the Mission. Let's build that future together.

Pastor Sean



ADVENT

AN ADVENT WORD STUDY

Exploring the biblical meaning of hope, peace, joy, and love and their connection to Christmas.

DEC 2	DEC 9	DEC 16	DEC 23
HOPE	**PEACE**	**JOY**	**LOVE**
A LIGHT THAT LEADS	A CALMER WAY FORWARD	A DEEPER KIND OF JOY	A LOVE THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

DINNER
5:30–6:00 PM
FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

KIDS' CLASS
6:00–7:00 PM
PRE-K – 5TH GRADE

ADULT CLASS
6:00–7:00 PM
ALL ARE WELCOME

BELL CHOIR
6:00–7:00 PM
ALL ARE WELCOME

There will be a sign-up sheet in the lobby of the CLC or call the church office for more information

God's Crew Fall Festival





Blood Drive

First United Methodist Church

Fellowship Hall
503 West Main Street
West Plains, MO 65775

Tuesday, December 1, 2026
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



November Gratitude

November Bible Reading and Writing Plan

1st Corinthians 15:57
2nd 2 Corinthians 9:15
3rd Colossians 3:17
4th Psalm 116:17
5th Psalm 28:7
6th Colossians 4:2
7th John 6:11
8th Psalm 95:2
9th Psalm 92:1
10th Revelation 11:17
11th Philippians 4:6-7
12th Psalm 107:1
13th Psalm 100
14th Psalm 31:14
15th Colossians 3:15
16th 1 Chronicles 29:13
17th 2 Corinthians 2:14
18th Psalm 106:1
19th Psalm 136:26
20th Ephesians 5:18-20
21st 1 Thessalonians 5:18
22nd Psalm 105:1-2
23rd Psalm 30:4
24th Psalm 69:30
25th 1 Chronicles 15:8
26th Psalm 7:17
27th Psalm 34:1
28th Psalm 95:1-3
29th Psalm 35:18
30th Psalm 50:14



COUNCIL'S CORNER

Church Board Update: Making Disciples & Strengthening Our Spaces

Our First UMC Board met on October 12 in the Fellowship Hall to review our ongoing ministries, campus stewardship, and security updates.

Ministry Highlights & Growth
We are celebrating vibrant growth across our worship services! The 9:30 AM service continues to be well-received, drawing more young people into our church family. We've also been blessed with several new families and individuals joining us for worship and Sunday School across both morning services. In further celebration of our mission to serve side-by-side, the church recently made monetary donations to support our local schools, and Michael Boise successfully upgraded the sound system for the late service.

Financial Stewardship
Our team is keeping a close eye on resources as we head into the final months of the year. Currently, general giving is tracking about $17,000 short of our $339,700 budget goal, but spending remains carefully managed. The Friendship Circle is navigating a deficit, which we are working to bridge using budgeted funds. Looking ahead, Bob Legler and the Stewardship Team are meeting to reconcile and organize our designated funds in Realm to ensure total accuracy.

Trustees & Campus Care
Thanks to Greg Weeks and the Trustees team, several maintenance projects are moving forward to keep our facilities safe and comfortable:

- **Safety First:** Our fire system passed inspection and is officially certified for the next five years. Fred Howell also repaired the fire doors into the CLC for smoother operation.
- **Toddler Room Upgrades:** Approval was given to install a new sink and linoleum flooring in the toddler room bathroom.
- **HVAC Maintenance:** Regular system testing remains within normal guidelines. Butler Heating and Air is scheduled to replace the failed Pre-K room AC unit and has ordered a new $404 drain pan for the choir loft cooler.

Security Grant Progress & Volunteer Needs
Melody Martin provided a major update on our federal security grant, which has been extended to February 28, 2027. Grennan has installed cameras, alarms, and access controls throughout most of the building. Additionally, Feller Construction completed the installation of the new second-floor security doors to limit access to the CLC and daycare. We have also received FEMA approval for an additional **$11,359** to replace two vulnerable North side exterior doors (the rotting storage room door and the all-glass infant room door).
Can You Help? Melody has faithfully coordinated this grant since May 2024 and will continue handling the government paperwork, **but we desperately need a volunteer to step up as the hands-on project coordinator** for this final door-replacement phase. If you have a knack for contractor oversight or construction coordination, please contact the church office!
Thank you for your continued prayers, presence, and financial gifts as we foster friendships and make disciples together!

Shaun Duggins
Council Chair

UMW MEETING

November 10th at 9am

Jerris will present a short program then we will go to ECT... in Kosh to do some shopping followed by going out to lunch.







October's Trip to the Pumpkin Patch



Important dates for your calendar

Every Sunday:
9:30am Contemporary Service
Christian Life Center

11:00am Traditional Service
Sanctuary - 2nd floor

5:30-7:30pm Youth Group
Christian Life Center

Every Wednesday:
5:30-6:30pm God's Crew

6-7pm Handbell Practice

7-8pm Choir Practice

Every Monday:
7:30 am Methodist Men - 10/40 Coffee on the Square

November 1st
Daylight Savings Time ends. Set clocks back 1 hour

November 2nd
Planning meeting for Winter Carnival - 6pm, CLC

November 3rd
In Stitches - Parlor, 10am

November 10th
University Community Choir - Sanctuary, 7pm

November 16th
Church Council Meeting - Fellowship Hall, 5:30pm

November 17th
In Stitches - Parlor, 10am

November 22nd
Food for Though (formerly known as Alpha) - Fellowship Hall, 12-2pm

November 25th-27th
Church Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

December 1st
Red Cross Blood Drive - Fellowship Hall, 11-3pm

Friendship Circle Preschool

During November, the Preschool we will have the following Themes: Friends, Nutrition, Community Helpers, and Thanksgiving. The children will be learning bible stories about the Jonah, Job, and the Book of Psalms. Prekindergarten will be learning Letters Nn and Hh. Number 9-12. The Color Gray. Our special event this month will be our Thanksgiving Feast at 11am on Thursday, November 19th. We will also have several community helpers visit our school. The Preschool Parent's Advisory Council did a great job at their indoor garage sale and raised over $2000 to benefit FCP. Thank you to everyone who donated and for those that gave their time.

Children's Ministry

During November, our Nursery/ Preschoolers will be learning about Baby Moses and Ruth and Naomi. Our Elementary Children will be learning about Jacob and Esau during Children's Church. During Sunday School, we will continue learning about the Good Samaritan. Our lessons will include a Movie, Art, Cooking, Storytelling, Science, and Games.

Upcoming Events

This year instead of a Fall Festival we will have a Winter Festival. Our Winter Festival will include games, treats, crafts, Photo ops, and a chance to hear the Christmas Story. The Winter Festival will be Saturday, December 12th. We will have a planning meeting Monday, November 2nd at 6pm if you are interested in helping with the Festival.

Advent Classes will begin soon. This year we will have a meal before class. Children's classes will be in the CLC.

Crystal Houston
Director of Friendship Circle Ministries/
Director of Children's Ministries



FUMC Youth has had a busy October! Our youth group has had a great time enjoying great food, building friendships, and making memories together! Our students had the opportunity to enjoy a special fishing night at the local Conservation Department with cool trails and some big catches. It was a Reel-y fun time!







We also held our annual pumpkin carving contest night at the church, a favorite fall tradition filled with creativity, friendly competition, gooey pumpkin guts and plenty of laughs!

This month we have started a lesson called “Jesus in our Generation.” In this lesson Ben Stuart is teaching us how to adapt to cultural revolutions while remaining anchored to God’s unchanging word. We love seeing our 6th–12th graders grow in their faith, strengthen friendships, and find joy in being part of our youth community. We meet every Sunday evening, beginning with dinner at 5:30 p.m., followed by games and a lesson. New faces are always welcome, so invite a friend and come join us! We are so thankful for our congregation and the volunteers who help make these evenings possible through meals, activities, and continued support of our youth ministry. If you or someone you know wants to get involved with volunteering in youth ministry reach out to the church office and let us know!

God Bless,
John Ackerson- "Interim” Youth Director
Hattie Patillo- Youth Administrative Assistant

In Our Thoughts & Prayers

November 1, 2026

- Billy Wade – health
- Charlene Case – health
- Deborah Whittington – health
- Amy Smith – health
- Jim Peterson – health
- Alecia Goodfellow – health
- Charley Woodworth – vision loss
- Ernie Vaughn – health
- Jennifer Shriver – continued health issues
- David White – health
- Patty & June Brown – life changing event
- Mary Aughenbaugh – unspoken
- Kate Carter – Health
- Willard – eye surgery

Emmi Nelson, Crystal Hammack's sister from Minnesota, has been moved to Anoka Rehab Center to recover from surgery for a brain tumor and other cancer related issues. Prayers for healing.

Joel Kerschen (Geoff Posegates Brothr-in-law, his sister's husband) has recently been diagnosed with leukemia. Prayers for him and his family as they face this diagnoses.

Becky Ellsworth is currently having health issues. Prayers for comfort.

Tammy Harper recently passed away. Prayers for the Harper and Morrison families during this difficult time.

UMCOR group from Missouri has been activated and sent to Milton Florida to help with clean up after recent hurrican. Chris Patillo is part of this group. Prayers for them as they help this community recover.

Rocky Long's father, Ronald Long recently passed away. Prayers for their family during this time. 3310 Ross Lane, WP

Mary Beth Davis's sister, Susan Hendrix Brown recently passed away. Prayers for their family as they navigate this loss. Mary Beth Davis – 347 Private Rd 2014, WP

Harry Wheeler is currently going through some health issues. Prayers for him and his family as they seek answers. Lori & Harry Wheeler – 7181 CoRd 8040, WP

Continued prayers for Pat Holmes and his family as they navigate his health issues. Ruthi & Pat Holmes – 5400 US Hwy 160, Koshkonong, Mo 65692

Wanda Byrd's brother Mike is back home after a recent hospitalization due to complications after a bone marrow transplant. Prayers for healing.

Jim weathers is currently under going treatment for leukemia. Prayers for comfort and recovery. P.O. Box 694, Salem, AR 72576

Cancer

- Mark Cook – melonoma
- Veda May – breast cancer (Barry Fielder's aunt)
- Steve Turner
- Trina Johnson
- Don Schlag – prostate cancer/ starts radiation in November

Home

- Daryl Leonard – 2325 St. Rt. 14, WP
- Bud & Marie Nale – 1619 Evergreen, WP
- Charles & Carole Cooper – 2694 S. St. Rt. 17, Mtn. View, MO 65548
- Bill Shaw – 872 CR 424 Birch Tree, MO 65438
- Steve Evens – 7324 St. Rt. BB, WP

Nursing Homes & Assisted Living

- Barbara Gingles – Whispering Pines, 2313 Bradford Circle
- Nean Dorris – Whispering Pines, 2313 Bradford Circle
- Helen Birdsong – 213 Davis Dr., Apt. 403
- Connie Long – 408A, Brookhaven
- Billy Wade – Room 15, Cedar Hurst
- Dee McCormack – Room 503, Pleasant Valley
- Marvin Collins – Room 210, Brookhaven
- Christy Hodgson – Room 406, Brookhaven

Nursing Home/Assisted Living Addresses:

West Vue: 210 Davis Dr.
Pleasant Valley Manor: 213 Davis Dr.
NHC: 211 Davis Dr.
Brookhaven: 1410 Kentucky Ave.
Greenhouses: 2313 Bradford Circle (Oak, Pine Place, Dogwood)
Cedarhurst: 1521 US Hwy 63

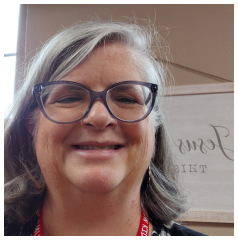
STAFF & LEADERS



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- **Administrative Council Chair**
  Shaun Duggins
- **Columbarium Committee**
  Janice Bowden
- **Librarian**
  Donna Cook
- **Methodist Women**
  Wanda Byrd
- **Treasurer**
  Amy Murphy

Contact Information

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