NOVEMBER NEWS

DAY OF THANKS

Give Thanks To the Lord

GIVING BACK TO THOSE IN NEED

Nov. 8

SUGGESTED NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DONATION ITEMS

DAIRY & BREAKFAST ITEMS
- Powdered milk or shelf-stable milk
- Cereal • Oatmeal • Grits
- Pancake or biscuit mix
- Instant mashed potatoes

CANNED & PROTEIN FOODS
- Vegetables (green beans, corn, peas, carrots)
- Tomatoes (diced, crushed, sauce, paste)
- Canned protein (tuna, chicken, or turkey)
- Fruits • Soups & stews • Chili
- Peanut butter • Lentils
- Beans (dry or canned)

GRAINS & SIDES
- Rice • Pasta & noodles
- Boxed macaroni or rice mixes

SAUCES, OILS & SEASONINGS
- Jars of sauce (spaghetti, marinara, alfredo)
- Beef, chicken, or vegetable stock
- Cooking oil • Basic spices • Condiments

SNACKS & TREATS
- Boxed snack crackers • Cake or muffin mixes
- Protein or granola bars • Popcorn or trail mix

Donations will benefit the Council on Aging and the West Ouachita Senior Center, helping provide meals and support for seniors in our community.

DURING ALL WORSHIP SERVICES, WE WILL BE COLLECTING NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS FOR NELA SENIOR ADULTS

HARVEST OF HOPE



SENIOR PASTOR

REV. DR. BRIAN MERCER

PastorBrian@
FIRSTMETHODISTMONROE.COM

NOVEMBER NEWS 2026

November has arrived, and with it comes a season filled with gratitude, reflection, and the quiet beauty of harvest. The fields around us begin to rest, families gather around tables, and our hearts turn toward the blessings God has poured into our lives. It is a month that invites us to see—not just what has grown, but what God is still growing.

Our theme this month is **Harvest of Hope**, drawn from Jesus' words in Matthew 9:35–38: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few."

Jesus speaks these words after traveling through towns and villages—teaching, healing, and seeing people who were "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." His response was not despair. It was hope. Hope that God was already at work. Hope that people were ready to receive the Good News. Hope that the Kingdom was growing, even in unexpected places. This November, we claim that same hope.

A HARVEST ROOTED IN GRATITUDE
Before we look ahead, we pause to give thanks. On **October 4, 2026**, our church family gathered to celebrate our **Bicentennial**—200 years of worship, mission, fellowship, and faithful witness. It was a day overflowing with joy, memory, and gratitude. To everyone who served, planned, prayed, decorated, cooked, welcomed, sang, and attended—**thank you**. Your generosity made the celebration not just an event, but a testimony. A testimony to God's faithfulness. A testimony to the legacy of this church. A testimony to the hope that continues to grow in us. You helped create a moment that honored our past and pointed us toward our future.

HARVEST OF HOPE — WHAT JESUS SAW
In Matthew 9, Jesus saw crowds of people longing for healing, direction, and compassion. He saw hearts ready for transformation. He saw a harvest waiting to be gathered.

AND HE TOLD HIS DISCIPLES:
"Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."
A harvest of hope is not something we create. It is something we join.
It is God's work—God's planting, God's watering, God's growing. But we are invited to be part of the gathering.

This is where generosity enters the story.

GENEROSITY — THE HANDS OF HOPE
A harvest is gathered by hands willing to work. Generosity is not just giving financially. It is giving of ourselves—our time, our prayers, our compassion, our presence, our willingness to serve. Every act of generosity is a seed of hope:

- A meal delivered
- A prayer offered
- A ministry supported
- A child taught
- A neighbor encouraged
- A mission funded
- A volunteer stepping forward

These are the ways hope is harvested in the Kingdom of God.

STEWARDSHIP — PLANTING SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE
As we gather this **Harvest of Hope**, November also marks the culmination of our annual **stewardship and pledge campaign**. Each year, we ask our church family to prayerfully consider how God is calling them to support the ministries of First Methodist Monroe in the coming year. Stewardship is not merely about budgets or numbers—it is about planting seeds of faith that will grow into future ministry, mission, and transformation. Your pledges make it possible for us to worship boldly, serve generously, teach faithfully, and continue the legacy that has carried us through our Bicentennial celebration. Thank you for giving, for pledging, and for investing in the Kingdom work God is doing among us. Your generosity is part of the harvest God is gathering.

HOPE THAT CONTINUES TO GROW
Our Bicentennial reminded us that we stand on the shoulders of generations who planted seeds of faith long before us. Now, we are the ones tending the fields. And the harvest is still plentiful. There are still people longing for grace. Still families needing encouragement. Still hearts ready for Christ. Still ministries waiting to grow. Still hope rising in unexpected places. This November, may we be the laborers Jesus prayed for—people who see the harvest, step into the work, and trust that God is growing something beautiful in and through us.

Harvesting Alongside you,
Pastor Brian



HARVEST OF HOPE

When I think of the word harvest I think of what Jesus said, that the harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few. This means that there is plenty of work to be done as we think of building God's kingdom. He wants us to engage others with our faith. I pray that we would be a people who desire to harvest the things of God.

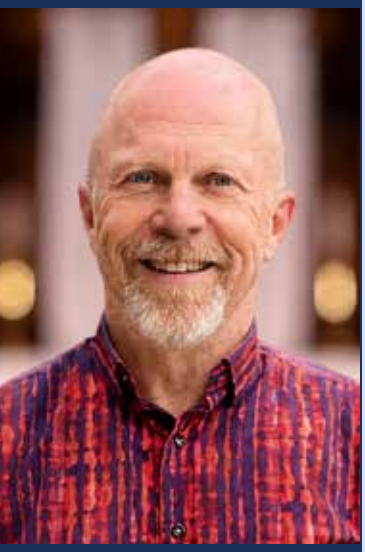
What Might This Look Like for You?

You don't need a seminary degree to make a disciple. You need a willing heart and a little courage. This Harvest of Hope season, I'd ask you to pray about one name. One neighbor, coworker, grandchild, or friend who doesn't yet walk with Christ, or whose faith has grown cold.
Then take one step:
Pray for that person by name every day.
Invite them to worship, to lunch, or to your Sunday school class.
Offer to read a Gospel together, a chapter a week.
Share how Jesus has met you in your own story.
It may feel small. So did my friend's invitation in 1991, when he invited me to a Bible study at his house. I do believe that God multiplies small acts of faithfulness.

Don't Grow Weary

Some of you have been praying for someone for years. Don't give up. "Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).
The harvest is coming. The Lord of the harvest is still sending out workers. My prayer is that this fall, He finds us ready, with open hands, open doors, and hearts full of hope.

REV. JOHN O'LEARY
John@
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ASK PASTOR CRAIG!

A place where your real questions meet honest, biblical answers for everyday faith.

Question: Last month you said the different denominations are all part of the same body. But if that's true, why did they split up in the first place? Don't the differences matter?

Short answer: Yes, some differences matter. But most matter less than we think, and the most important things are the ones nearly every church already agrees on.

Let's be honest about the church splits. Some came from real conviction: people read the same Bible, reached different conclusions about something important, and couldn't in good conscience stay. But some came from simple pride, petty politics, or plain stubbornness. Church history has plenty of both. It helps to sort things into two piles. The first pile holds what makes a church Christian at all. Jesus is fully God and fully human. He died for our sins, rose from the dead, and is coming again. We're saved by grace, not by earning it. Ask almost any church in town, and they'd affirm every line of the Apostles' Creed, even the ones that never say it out loud on Sunday. As Paul put it, "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all" (Ephesians 4:5-6, NLT).

The second pile holds what sincere Christians disagree about. Should babies be baptized? Sprinkle or dunk? How often should we take communion? Who makes decisions? Hymns, band, or both? Every church has to land somewhere on these, but you can land differently from the church down the street and still be family.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, held his convictions firmly, but he asked a question I love: "Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike?" So what should a church look like? The first church gave us a good picture: "All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals, and to prayer" (Acts 2:42, NLT). Turn that into a few questions:

- Teaching: Does the Bible actually get opened and taught?
- Fellowship: Do people love each other here?
- The table: Is Jesus at the center, or is the church mostly about itself?
- Prayer: Do these people pray, for each other and for you?
- Growth: Is there a place to go deeper, or just a seat to sit in?

Those questions aren't a scorecard for shopping around. They're a picture of what every church, including ours, should be, and what you can help build wherever God has planted you. So hold your convictions, hold them with love, and put down roots where He has placed you.
Have a question you'd like your pastors to address? Email it to Craig@firstmethodistmonroe.com

REV. DR. CRAIG FERGUSON
Craig@
FIRSTMETHODISTMONROE.COM



NANNETTE FLOWERS

NFlowers@
FIRSTMETHODISTMONROE.COM

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

THE FOLLOWING WILL BE REMEMBERED DURING ALL SERVICES ON **NOVEMBER 1**

Claudette Bartlett
Mary Troy Coker
Mary Ann Cosby
Kathy Daughdrill
Glora Nell Dray
John Ellett
Ben Heidenreich
Ted Holmes
Howard Jackson
Ralph Karst
William "Bill" Kelly Jr.
Sue LaBorde
Mary Rabb
Ann Rollins
Martha "Marty" Somoza



MINISTRY OF HOPE

Not a week goes by at First Methodist Monroe without thanks being expressed by church members to one of our pastors, staff members, or myself for the cards mailed, texts sent, local hospital and home visits, communion served, gifts, food, and large print Upper Rooms delivered. First Methodist Monroe receives at least 5-7 handwritten thank you cards each week for the love and concern given to them. It doesn't just happen! We are blessed to have a trained Congregational Care team at our church and are so grateful for the commitment and dedication given by these folks! As our way of expressing gratitude to these faithful servants, a Ministry of H.O.P.E. Appreciation Luncheon is Sunday, November 8, at 12:30pm at the St. Joseph's Assisted Living facility, 2290 Sterlington Road, for the Hospital, Card Ministry, L.Y.F.T., Homebound Visitation, and Communion team members. If you'd like to be a part of this ministry team in 2027, please contact me!

The son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10:45

50+ Adult Happenings at the church

BE FIT exercise class meets every Monday and Wednesday at 10am in the Fellowship Hall. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a water bottle to stay hydrated! On Monday, Nov. 9, at 11am we'll be loading food items in vehicles to deliver to the senior pantries.

BRIDGE is Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11, from 1-4pm in the Aldersgate classroom. Wear red, white and blue in appreciation of our veterans!

50+ Adult Happenings outside the church

GRANDPARENTS & GRANDCHILDREN PIZZA MAKING PARTY is Tuesday, Nov. 3 (Election Day – no school), at 11am at Milano's Italian Grill, 1603 Constitution Dr., WM. Grandchildren will make their own pizza with up to three of their favorite toppings. Cost is $8.99++ per child. Come let the grandkids take over the pizza making for a lunch filled with fun memories! RSVP to me at nflowers@firstmethodistmonroe.com so a table is reserved for your family!

LUNCH AND LEARN is Thurs., Nov. 19 at 11:30am at the West Monroe Convention Center, 201 Ridge Ave., for the Living Well Luncheon. Come to learn who the grant recipients are in our community and how they are using their funding to improve the lives of others! Contact me for a ticket(s).

WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S – Join our First Methodist Monroe team by walking in support of those experiencing dementia on Saturday, Nov. 7 at the ULM grove at 9am. See me for a registration form.



NORTHERN ITALY TRAVELERS AT LAKE MISURINA & THE DOLOMITES

HOSPITALITY



EMILY MARTIN

Emily@
FIRSTMETHODISTMONROE.COM

A HEART OF THANKFULNESS

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." — Philippians 1:3–5

As we reflect on all that God is doing in and through our church, we are filled with gratitude for each of you who faithfully serve on Sunday mornings, Wednesday nights, and at special events throughout the year. Whether you serve behind the scenes or welcome people with a smile, your time, kindness, and willingness to serve make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

Our amazing 200th anniversary celebration was a beautiful reminder of what makes our church family so special. It was an opportunity to celebrate God's faithfulness through generations, and it would not have been possible without the countless people who gave their time, shared their gifts, and served with joyful hearts.

Every act of service matters. Every welcoming smile, every helping hand, every conversation, and every moment spent connecting with someone helps create an environment where people feel seen, valued, and loved. You may never fully know the impact of a simple conversation, a warm welcome, or a thoughtful gesture. Yet, these moments can open doors for people to experience God's love and take meaningful steps forward in their faith.

Paul's words in Philippians remind us that serving together is more than volunteering; it is partnering in the gospel. Each of you plays an important role in the mission God has given us, and we are so thankful to share that mission with you.

Thank you for showing up, giving generously of yourselves, loving people well and serving with willing hearts. We are grateful for each of you and for the unique gifts you bring to our church family. May we continue to serve with joy, love one another well and create opportunities for people to encounter Jesus.







EMERY JOHNSON
Emery@
FIRSTMETHODISTMONROE.COM

RISE YOUTH MINISTRY (6TH -12TH GRADE)

We want your student to KNOW God and know His LOVE for them, Ephesians 3:16-19

November is my favorite month for many reasons, but in youth ministry it's the time when we look back at the time that has passed since August and also look forward and Hope for the rest of the school year. We have been serving as a youth group at church events and gathering canned goods this past month! It has been incredible watching the students serve each other and the community. Our weekly events are a blast, but getting to serve, especially as a youth group, is amazing.

Hope is a key word in our faith. We Hope for the return of the King and Hope for His Spirit to move in the lives of those around us. These students have been harvesting Hope, seeing God's Kingdom in each other. It is a beautiful reminder that Hope is not something that stops us but compels us forward, to Hope in God and do His work. Join the youth in Harvesting Hope to be a part of God's work in RISE, this church, and the community.

RISE YOUTH MEETS SUNDAYS & WEDNESDAYS | 5-7 PM

We'll share dinner, enjoy fun games and competition, and grow together through small groups and worship. For more info contact our Emery!



JACKIE KITCHINGHAM
Jackie@
FIRSTMETHODISTMONROE.COM

KINGDOM KIDS MINISTRY (K-5TH GRADE)

With Halloween and all the fun of fall festivals, candy and costumes in the rear-view mirror, the hustle and bustle of the holidays is quickly approaching. It's easy to get lost in lists of things to do and events to attend, but I challenge you to spend some time as a family focusing on the things you are thankful for. While you're having dinner, driving to school, or spending time as a family, use some of these conversation starters to help your children focus on being thankful for what they have:

- What is your favorite part about your home? Why?
- What abilities do you have that you are grateful for?
- What is one of your favorite things to do? Why are you grateful for it?
- What is something about your teacher that you are grateful for?
- Who did something nice for you today? What was it?
- What is something you love doing with your parents?

I hope these questions allow you great conversation and time to reflect on the great job you are doing raising your children.
As you are helping your children focus on the things they are thankful for, I am excited to share how thankful I am for Megan Jefcoat. If you know Megan, you know that she is the best hype girl in town, has the sweetest spirit, pours into others effortlessly and loves kids. For those that don't know Megan, I hope you have the chance to meet her soon. You will be blessed. She has joined our church staff to help take our children's ministry to the next level. Megan is the answer to many prayers and will bless our church and children's ministry in numerous ways.



PANCAKE DAY

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

6:30AM - 7PM

Kiwanis' annual fundraiser to fund projects and initiatives throughout our community. Held in the Fellowship Hall from 6:30am til 7pm.

firstmethodist monroe

REPORTING OUR FAITHFULNESS

09/06/26	09/013/26	09/20/26	09/27/26	ONLINE GIVING
15TH SUN AFTER PENT	16TH SUN AFTER PENT	17TH SUN AFTER PENT	18TH SUN AFTER PENT	$68,241
Here 779	Here 804	Here 853	Here 879	
Online 1520	Online 1325	Online 1019	Online 969	TEXT "GIVE" TO 318.217.8383
TV Area Wide	TV Area Wide	TV Area Wide	TV Area Wide	
WE GAVE	WE GAVE	WE GAVE	WE GAVE	
$42,417	$22,083	$21,674	$31,003	

FOUNDRY

WE GAVE	WE GAVE	WE GAVE	WE GAVE	ONLINE GIVING
$799	$2,772	$704	$190	$7,091

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

In memory of Mary Rabb given by Glenda & Lloyd Brown

In memory of Judith Renee Williams given by Aldersgate Sunday School Class

In memory of Mary Rabb given by Charles & Allison Wilkes

In memory of Glora Dray given by Charles & Allison Wilkes

In memory of Glora Dray given by Nick & Cheree Anderson

In memory of Glora Dray given by Karen LeBeau

In memory of Mary Ware given by Ed & Charlotte McGuire

In memory of Ted Holmes given by Frank & MaryAnne Adams

In memory of Glora Dray given by Frank & MaryAnne Adams

In memory of Amy Copeland given by Nancy Meinel

In memory of Mary Ware given by Aldersgate Sunday School Class

In memory of Mary Rabb given by Pam & Fred Hill

In memory of Hannah & Wayne Speer given by Erin & Brett Barclay

In memory of Mary Polk Rabb given by Elaine Croft

In memory of Mary Polk Rabb given by Lloyd Jones

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A MEMORIAL OR HONORARIUM 318-325-7335



HOW IS GOD CALLING YOU

to give and to live generously in the coming year?

Text "PLEDGE" to 318-217-8383

"Where your TREASURE is, there your HEART will be also."

NOVEMBER 2026

2 ADMIN. BOARD MTG. 5:30PM

3 GRANDPARENT & GRANDCHILDREN PIZZA MAKING 11AM

7 ALZHEIMER WALK 9AM AT ULM

8 DAY OF THANKS

H.O.P.E. LUNCHEON 12:30PM

WOMEN'S EVENT 3PM

10 KIWANIS PANCAKE DAY

11 50+ ADULT BRIDGE 1PM

19-20 50+ ADULT TRIP TO DALLAS

50+ ADULT LIVING WELL LUNCH & LEARN 11:30AM

22 DECK THE HALLS

26-27 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

29 HANGING OF THE GREENS 6PM
TASTE OF THE SEASON 7PM

50+ ADULT BE FIT | 10AM
MON., NOV. 2, 9, 16, 30
WED., NOV. 4, 11, 18

BELL PRACTICE | 6:15PM
WED., NOV. 4, 11, 18

CHOIR PRACTICE | 7PM
WED., NOV. 4, 11, 18

J-FORCE | 3-5PM
WED., NOV. 4, 11, 18

MEN'S & WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDIES | 10AM
TUES., NOV., 3, 10, 17

WED. SUPPER & STUDY | 5-7PM
WED., NOV. 4, 11, 18

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