

WATSEKA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost
November 16, 2025**

Thought for our gathering: God is not done creating. In a world weary with division and despair, Isaiah's vision calls us to trust in God's ongoing work of renewal — a creation made new through joy, justice, and belonging. To rejoice forever in creation is to live with hope, to speak words that build community instead of walls, and to embody the coming kingdom even now.

Prelude

Welcome and Opportunities for Ministry

Introit

***Hymn** "Soon and Very Soon" #706

Call to Worship

Leader: Celebrate and rejoice, all you people of Christ,

People: For the Lord our God is doing a new thing! The old order is gone, everything is new!

Leader: Illness, disease and crying and mourning,

People: shall be as a distant memory! Hatred and war shall cease from the earth,

All: For Christ has risen! Death is defeated!

Hallelujah! Jesus lives! Hallelujah! Amen.

Opening Prayer

One day in the New Jerusalem, we shall all walk in peace. There shall be joy, unspeakable joy. No longer shall there be weeping or wailing nor shall we bury our daughters and sons prematurely in the New Jerusalem. We will not labor in vain. No more shall we plant and not eat of the fruit of our hands. No more shall we build only to have another inhabit our dwelling. No more shall we be oppressed because of class, color, or gender in the New Jerusalem. Our enemies will be our friends. Rise up children of the Most High God, See what is to come! Hold this promise in your heart. We shall toil and not see the benefits for a while, but one day, God shall come for us and bring us to the new city where we may rest from our present angst and find true communion with the Creator and all creation. Amen.

Children's Message "Jesus Loves Me" #191 vs. 1

***Hymn** "He Is Exalted" #2070 (2x)

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Special Music during Offertory Chancel Choir

***Offering** "Doxology" #95

***Offertory Prayer:** Restoring God, Maker of new

heavens and a new earth, where sorrow is lifted, and joy takes root. As we bring our gifts this day, may they be seeds of your promised future—an offering of hope, justice, and mercy in a weary world. Use what we give and who we are to proclaim a kin-dom where none are forgotten, where the wolf and lamb lie down in peace, and where the sound of weeping is no more. Let this act of giving remind us that your dream is still unfolding—and that we are called to help build it. In Christ's name, who is our joy. Amen.

Scripture Isaiah 65:17-25 NRSVUE

Message “Rejoice Forever in Creation”
 -Pastor Ashley Clifton

***Hymn** “It Is Well With My Soul” #377

***Sending Forth/Benediction**

Postlude

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Contact us:

Facebook @ First United Methodist Church Watseka

YouTube: “First UMC Watseka”

Office Hours by appointment

Ashley's cell: 708.204.4238

Ashley's Sabbath Day is Friday

Opportunities for Ministry

Watseka UMC:

- Advent Study coming up based on the book *What Do You Want for Christmas? An Advent Study for Adults*. It's a 4-week study which begins December 1st from 12:00 pm-1:00 pm in the church parlor.
 - Salvation Army Bell Ringing: December 5-7. Please sign up on the clipboard!
 - Next Men's Breakfast: December 7 @ 9:00 am
 - Christmas Meal: December 14 following worship.
- This will be a combined service with Cissna Park UMC

Cissna Park UMC:

- Christmas Shop Donation Day: November 22nd from 9 am-12 pm
- Christmas Shop Event: December 6th from 9:00 am-3:00 pm
- 1st & 3rd Fridays: Craft/Game Night at CPUMC-6:30 pm
- 2nd and 4th Fridays: Euchre Night at CPUMC-6:30 pm

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Isaiah 65:17-25 NRSV

For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating, for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime, for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat, for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain or bear children for calamity, for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD-- and their descendants as well. Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, but the serpent--its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

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