



Watseka First United Methodist Church

***‘Welcoming Neighbors of All Ages to Experience God,
Share Hope, and Be Changed by Christ’s Love’***

Volume 54 Issue 7

July 1, 2026

Thoughts from Pastor Ashley

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." — Hebrews 13:8

Dear Friends,

As I write this month, I am reminded that we are living through a season of change. Change comes in many forms—new opportunities, new beginnings, unexpected challenges, and sometimes difficult goodbyes. While change is a natural part of life, it is not always easy. Even when we welcome it, change can bring uncertainty, questions, and anxiety about what lies ahead.

The good news of our faith is that while much around us may change, God does not. Hebrews 13:8 reminds us that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." The One who walked with the disciples, calmed the storms, healed the hurting, and proclaimed God's love is the same Christ who walks beside us today. His love remains steadfast. His promises remain true. His presence remains constant.

Throughout Scripture, we see God's people navigating seasons of transition. Abraham journeyed into the unknown. Moses led the Israelites through the wilderness. The disciples left familiar lives to follow Jesus. In each circumstance, God was present, guiding, strengthening, and providing for His people. The same is true for us. Whatever changes we may face individually or as a congregation, we can trust that God goes before us, walks beside us, and holds us securely in His care.

This month, we also celebrate a joyful transition in the life of someone dear to our church family. We rejoice with Pastor Jeanne Brown as she has completed the requirements to become a Certified Lay Minister and has been appointed to serve as pastor of Hoopeston United Methodist Church.

Pastor Jeanne has faithfully answered God's call, and we are grateful for the gifts, leadership, and ministry she has shared with us. While this new chapter brings change, it is also a wonderful testimony to God's ongoing work in her life. We are proud of her accomplishments and excited to see how God will use her in this new role.

As she begins this ministry, I invite you to join me in praying for Pastor Jeanne, for the congregation she will serve, and for God's guidance throughout this transition. May she know the support, encouragement, and prayers of her Watseka First United Methodist Church family as she steps forward in faith.

As we continue our own journey together, may we remember that although seasons change, Christ remains the same. Let us move forward with confidence, trusting the One who has been faithful in the past, is faithful today, and will remain faithful forever.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Ashley

Food Pantry Update



In May the food pantry served 156 families- 357 adults and 96 children. Plans are in the making to carry some fresh produce for our clients. The purchase of a new refrigerator will be used for that purpose. Special items for July are macaroni & cheese, rice and ramen noodles. All current dated items are appreciated.

Our July delivery from Eastern Illinois Foodbank will be on Tuesday, July 7th, at 8:00am. Our trip to Midwest Foodbank will be on Friday, July 10th, and we will arrive back around 11:30am. All volunteers are most welcome to come and help us unload and put items away on these days.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

The summer garden season is here! The Food Pantry appreciates donations of fresh, homegrown produce to share with our neighbors. If your garden produces more than you need, please share it with the Food Pantry!

Thank you for helping us provide healthy, nutritious meals to our community.



Red Cross Bloodmobile

A blood drive will take place on Thursday, July 9th, in our church fellowship hall from 12:30pm to 4:30pm. Please bring a photo ID, or your blood donor card, or two other forms of ID. Donors are needed!



Holy Stitchers Update

The Holy Stitchers met on Tuesday, June 16th, in their new stitching room. They were gifted with a couple bags of yarn recently along with pattern books and patterns. They began their meeting by sorting the yarn and adding it to their yarn shelves and putting the books and patterns away also. When they were finished, they moved to the parlor and worked on projects they had brought with them that evening and caught up with what they all had been working on and doing.



The stitchers love their new room and are grateful to Doug Custer for putting some shelves together and setting them up for us so that we can be more organized and easily see what we have. Rhonda Leitz, a member of our group, has been organizing our things on the shelves on Sunday mornings before church and has done a wonderful job. Thank you Rhonda! We appreciate you and the work you have done in our room.

There is more work to be done in our room to get it more organized. When the room is finished, we will take pictures and put them here in the newsletter so everyone can see. You are also welcome to go to our room any time and look at it. Our room is the room north of the choir room.

The Holy Stitchers' next meeting will be on Tuesday, July 21st, at 7:00pm. We welcome all types of stitchers. It's not just crocheting and knitting. It can be cross stitching, loom knitting, sewing etc. If you would like to learn to crochet or knit, we are happy to teach you. On sewing days, you don't need to be a sewer. There is always something for everyone to do.

Next Newsletter Deadline



The next newsletter deadline will be Tuesday, July 21st. Please have all articles and information for the August newsletter to me in the office by 2:00pm. You can also email information to me. Thank you!

July Birthdays

7-1 Madeline McKenna
7-4 Anthony Norrick II
7-5 Conner Onnen
Debbie Wienrank
7-6 Mary Waltz
Jackson Cook
7-7 Eiley Smith
7-8 Samantha Petersen
7-11 Grace Smith
7-12 Bryan Cook
Sandra Overacker
7-13 Lee Elliott
7-15 Linda Holaway
Andy Onnen

7-17 Jeff Clifton
Carol Drew
Helen Gerber
7-19 Brittany Burd
7-20 Kamryn Overacker
7-21 Joyce Dorsey
7-23 Susan Moenck
Joanne Wheeler
7-24 Debbie Beer
Joel Davenport
7-25 Mary Davis
7-26 Jessica Kingdon
7-29 Michael Waltz



July Anniversaries

7-2-1977 Joyce & Timothy Dorsey
7-3-2010 Ashley & Jeff Clifton
7-3-1964 Lea & William Sieveking
7-6-1996 Amy & Rich Dickte
7-8-1967 Sharon & Jim Ward
7-27-2002 Samantha & Jeffrey Petersen
7-29-1978 Deb & Doug Longest



Super Senior Birthdays

From the Member Care Team-
The following people are celebrating birthdays in July

Joanne Wheeler July 23
411 W. Mulberry
Watseka IL 60970

Mary Davis July 25
Evenglow Inn
1200 Evenglow Lane
Pontiac IL 61764



WFUMC General Fund Report: May 2026 **General Fund Income & Expense Summary**

	May	Y-T-D
Income	\$11,627.61	\$67,357.17
Expenses	-\$14,472.22	-\$76,372.40

These figures do not include \$5,447.06 due for
2026 Y-T-D conference apportionments.

Thank you for your monetary support which allows us to share Jesus' story and love, fulfilling the mission and vision of our church.

July Radio Broadcast Support

- July 5:** Rich & Amy Dickte in celebration of their 30th anniversary
July 12: Stacey, Grace, & Ella Smith in memory of Dick & Maggie Martin on their birthdays
July 19: Wayne & Jeanne Brown in honor of their grandchildren
July 26: Joe Sutfin in honor of his grandchildren Natalie, Cara, Isla, Oliver & Milo

Greeters & Ushers for July

- July 5:** Velanne Gocken & Mike Grimes
July 12: Dianne Thomas & Barb Curry
July 19: Debby Sapp & Melinda Day
July 26: Tim & Joyce Dorsey

July Liturgist: Bob Burd



?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

About 450 years before Jesus, Nehemiah heard that Jerusalem still lay in ruins after the Babylonian invasion. The news broke his heart. After days of prayer and mourning, he stepped forward to lead the effort to rebuild the city wall. Despite opposition, the people pressed on.



A well-known verse describes their progress: "So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to _____."

A. be protected C. serve
B. work D. live

Answer: B (Nehemiah 4:6, ESV)

Jeanne Brown Receiving her Certified Lay Ministry Certificate



Pastor Ashley's Commissioning at Conference



**Congratulations to Pastor Jeanne Brown and Pastor Ashley Clifton!
We are so proud of both of you!**

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7:00 p.m. Radio Broadcast on WIBK, 96.9FM and www.wibkradio.com
Online Giving at <https://bit.ly/2SlvyCr>



First United
Methodist Church



First UMC Watseka

Our Mission: Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
Our Vision: To welcome neighbors of all ages to experience God, share hope,
and be changed by Christ's love.

PSALM 145:3, NIV

Great IS THE LORD
and MOST WORTHY OF PRAISE;
HIS greatness
no one can FATHOM.