



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 6

June 1, 2026

Thoughts from Pastor Ashley

Dear Church Family,

Over the past several weeks, we have journeyed together through the theme of discipleship by loving boldly, serving joyfully, and leading courageously. Again and again, we have been reminded that following Jesus is not simply about belief—it is about becoming. Discipleship is the lifelong work of learning to live, love, serve, and lead in the way of Christ.

That calling can sometimes feel overwhelming. We may wonder if we are wise enough, strong enough, or faithful enough for the work God places before us. The good news of Pentecost reminds us that we were never meant to do this work alone.

In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit rushes in like wind and fire, filling ordinary people with extraordinary courage and purpose. The disciples who once hid behind locked doors stepped boldly into the world proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Pentecost is not simply the birthday of the Church—it is the reminder that God still equips God’s people today.

The same Spirit that empowered the early Church continues to move among us now. The Holy Spirit equips us to teach our children the faith, to serve our neighbors with compassion, to speak truth with love, to pray with boldness, and to offer hope in a weary world. The Spirit gives gifts not for our own recognition, but so that the body of Christ may grow and the world may be transformed.

Discipleship is not reserved for pastors or church leaders alone. Every one of us is called to participate in God’s work. Some are gifted in teaching, others in serving, encouraging, leading, giving, listening, or showing mercy. When we offer those gifts faithfully, the Church becomes a living witness to the love of Christ.

As we move forward together, may we continue to pray for open hearts and willing spirits. May we trust that God does not call the equipped but equips the called. And may we step boldly into the work of discipleship knowing that the Holy Spirit goes before us, walks beside us, and works within us.

Come, Holy Spirit. Continue to shape us into disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

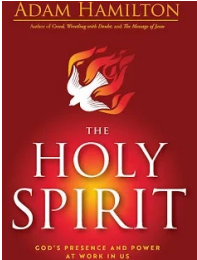
Grace and peace,

Pastor Ashley

Women's Retreat at Prairie States Christian Service Camp

"I AM" is the title of the Women's Retreat being held at Prairie States Christian Service Camp on August 7-8, 2026. Sharon Hoy is dean of the event; featured speakers are Holly Halliwell and Pam Cross. Registration may be done online or by calling 815-471-4837. Cost is \$50. Information about the retreat is available from Diann Peabody.

Study Group Starting June 15



The Holy Spirit: God's Presence and Power at Work in Us is a new book by Adam Hamilton, pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City. We are excited to begin a study group to learn more about this book on MONDAY, JUNE 15 AT NOON FOR 5 WEEKS.

The Holy Spirit is God's active presence and power at work in the world and in our lives. Through the Spirit, we are transformed, led, empowered, and guided in our faith journey. This small, readable paperback helps believers understand and experience the Holy Spirit's presence and power in their daily walk with Christ.

Copies of the book are available in the church office for \$15. With the purchase of the book, you will also receive access to complementary video content, discussion questions, and streaming on any device. If you would like to join the group in June and July, please pick up a copy now and indicate your interest. It will help to ensure there are enough books for everyone.

Holy Stitches Update

The Holy Stitches met on Tuesday, May 19th. They moved some totes filled with Afghans and Shawls to their room. They also moved some pattern books and yarn donations they received recently to their room. After taking things to their room, they then worked on projects they brought with them and discussed some possible dates for sewing days to work on blankets and comfort bears. Possible dates are Saturday, June 6, Monday, June 8 and Wednesday, June 24th.



The Holy Stitches' next monthly meeting will be on Tuesday, June 17th at 7:00pm in the church parlor.

Food Pantry Update



The Watseka Area Food Pantry 2025 Impact Report was sent out in May to businesses, churches and individual donors. In April we served 148 families- 318 adults and 99 children. This total is down from last year which was 175.

Alan Hopkins, a representative from Midwest Food Bank, visited our pantry on April 30th. Alan came to see our operation and to discuss our partnership with their Food Bank. Special items for June are canned goods- fruit, vegetables, and beans. However, all items with current dates are much appreciated.

Our Eastern Illinois Food Bank delivery will be on Tuesday, June 2, at 8:00am. Our trip to Midwest Food Bank in Bloomington will be on Friday, June 5th. We will arrive back at the fellowship hall around 11:30am. All volunteers are most welcome to come and help unload and put away the items! Our volunteers are such a great group!

June Birthdays

6-6 Barb Hasbargen
6-7 James Dearth
6-8 Ashley Smith
Cynthia Sumner
Stephanie Ziemianski
6-10 Eileen Burns
Gary Gerber
Abigail James
6-11 Susan Butt
6-12 Lynn Canady
6-14 Evan Kingdon
6-15 Dorothy Koonce
6-23 Bonnie Sterrenberg
6-26 Wayne Brown
Julia Carey
Jim Ward



6-1-2013
6-6-1988
6-11-2016
6-13-1987
6-14-1969
6-25-2005

June Anniversaries

Kayla & Dana James
Barb & Larry Hasbargen
Jessica & Austin Kingdon
Julie & Bob Burd
Sherry & David Klinefelter
Pam & Mick Thurston

From the Member Care Team - Super Senior Birthdays in June

Dorothy Koonce June 15
505 E. Mulberry
Watsoka IL 60970

Jim Ward June 26
Albrecht Lane
Crescent City IL 60928-8016



June Radio Broadcast Support

June 7: Joe Sutfin in loving memory of Karen

June 14: Bob & Julie Burd in honor of their 39th anniversary, and Blake & Ailie's 1st anniversary

June 21: Elaine Hickman in honor of family and in memory of Wayne

June 28: Joyce & Tim Dorsey in celebration of their anniversary

Next Newsletter Deadline

The Deadline for the July Evangel will be Friday, June 19th. Please have all articles and information for the July Evangel to Melinda in the office by 2:00pm on that day. Thank you!

Greeters & Ushers for June

June 7: Steve & Soni Knapp

June 14: Velanne Gocken & Diann Peabody

June 21: Dianne Thomas & Julie Carey

June 28: Deb & Doug Longest

June Liturgist: Amy Dickte

WFUMC General Fund Report: March 2026 General Fund Income & Expense Summary

	April	Y-T-D
Income	\$14,538.39.	\$55,450.56
Expenses	-\$12,767.14.	-\$61,900.18

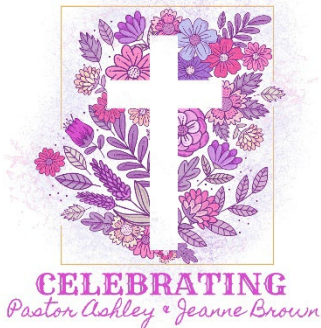
These figures do not include \$4,314.04 due for
2026 Y-T-D conference apportionments.

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

Celebration Planned For


Pastor Ashley & Jeanne Brown

Please mark your calendar for Sunday, June 28th. A celebration is being planned following our Worship Service that day for Pastor Ashley and Jeanne Brown. During Annual Conference **Jeanne Brown will be recognized** on June 5 **for becoming a Certified Lay Minister** and on June 6 **Pastor Ashley will become commissioned** a step toward becoming an ordained pastor. Please look for details in the Sunday bulletins and Melinda's weekly emails as they become available.



Bible Quiz

King David wanted to build a glorious temple for worshiping God and for housing the ark of the covenant. God, however, did not permit him to build it. Instead, God chose Solomon, David's son, to head up the building program. Why wasn't David allowed the honor of building the temple?



- A. David was getting too old to supervise such an undertaking.
- B. David had been a warrior and had shed blood.
- C. David had stopped taking God seriously.
- D. David's attention was required elsewhere.

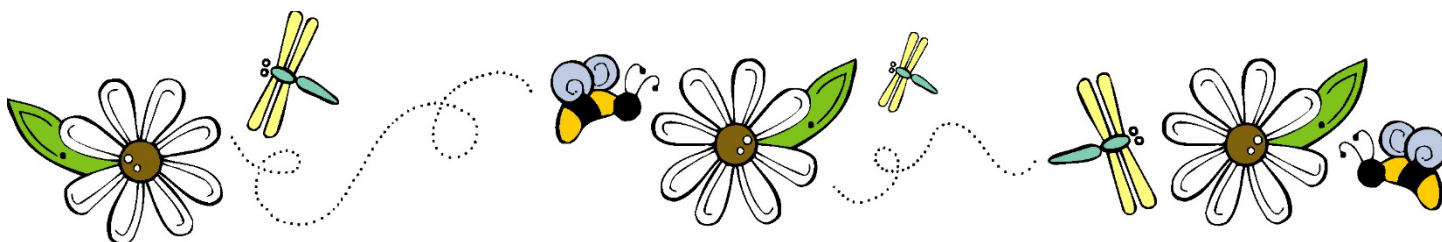
Answer: B (1 Chronicles 28:3)

June 2026 Church Calendar

*Calendar subject to change.

**Annual Conference is Thursday, June 4 through Saturday, June 6

Tues., June 2	8:00am- Food Pantry Delivery 11:00am- Staff Meeting
Thurs., June 4	First Day of Annual Conference
Fri., June 5	Second Day of Annual Conference 11:30am- Food Pantry Delivery
Sat., June 6	Last Day of Annual Conference
Sun., June 7	10:30am- Worship Service
Tues., June 9	11:00am- Staff Meeting
Wed., June 10	11:30am- Prayer Group
Sat., June 13	8:00am to Noon- Jessica Fehland Using Fellowship Hall
Sun., June 14	10:30am- Worship Service
Tues., June 16	11:00am- Staff Meeting 7:00pm- Holy Stitches Meeting in Church Parlor
Wed., June 17	11:30am- Prayer Group
Fri., June 19	2:00pm- Newsletter Deadline
Sun., June 21	10:30am- Sunday Worship Service
Tues., June 23	11:00am- Staff Meeting
Wed., June 24	11:30am- Prayer Group
Sun., June 28	10:30am- Sunday Worship Service 11:30am- Reception to Celebrate Jeanne Brown and Pastor Ashley
Tues., June 30	11:00am- Staff Meeting



Special Dates for June 2026

- Flag Day, June 14, 2026
- Juneteenth, June 19, 2026
- Father's Day, June 21, 2026
- First Day of Summer, June 21, 2026

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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.**

