



# *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 3*

*March 1, 2026*

Dear Church Family,

“Tell me something good.”

We say that to one another all the time, don’t we? In a world saturated with headlines that exhaust us and conversations that can weigh heavy on the soul, we long for something good—something steady, something hopeful, something true.



That longing is exactly why this year, as we enter the season of Lent, our worship series is titled: **“Tell Me Something Good... Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent.”**

Lent is a 40-day journey that invites us to slow down, to examine our hearts, and to walk intentionally toward the cross. It is a season of honesty. A season of repentance. A season of remembering who we are and whose we are.

But Lent is not about spiritual gloom.

It is about clarity.

It is about clearing away the noise so we can hear the Good News again.

The Good News that we are loved more than we can comprehend.

The Good News that grace is stronger than guilt.

The Good News that even death does not get the final word.

This year, my prayer is that we won’t just *talk* about the Good News—we will ground ourselves in it. That it will anchor us when life feels unstable. That it will steady us when the world feels loud. That it will shape how we live, speak, give, forgive, and love.

Lent also invites us into spiritual disciplines—not as a way to prove ourselves to God, but as a way to create space for God.

Some of you may choose to fast from something that distracts you—social media, constant news consumption, unnecessary spending. Others may choose to fast *for* something—daily Scripture reading, intentional prayer, acts of service, handwritten notes of encouragement, generosity beyond comfort.

(Pastor’s Note cont. on next page)

The goal is not perfection.  
The goal is attentiveness.

What is God saying to you in this season?  
What might God be gently asking you to release?  
Where might God be inviting you to grow deeper roots?

As a church, I hope we will walk this road together—not hurried, not distracted, but grounded. Grounded in the story of Jesus. Grounded in the truth of the cross. Grounded in the promise of resurrection that is already on the horizon.

If someone were to ask you during these weeks, “Tell me something good,” I hope your heart will be so anchored in Christ that the answer rises naturally.

Church family, the Good News is still good.  
It is still steady.  
It is still strong enough to hold us.

May this Lenten season draw us closer to Jesus and closer to one another.

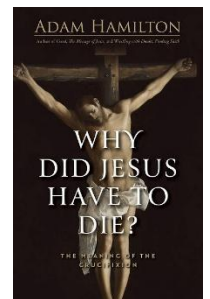
Walking with you,

Pastor Ashley



### **Lenten Study “Why Did Jesus Have to Die?” continues on Mondays in March**

Join the study group *Lunch 'n Learn* during Lent on five Mondays in March at noon to study the Adam Hamilton book “Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion.” The study began on February 23 and will continue March 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30. People are encouraged to bring their lunch if they want. Books are \$15 and are available in the church office. If your budget is already stretched, just let Pastor Ashley know that you will not be paying this time. Please tell Lea (815.683.5785) or Diann (217.493.7692) if you would like to join the study. Anyone is welcome, even if the first meeting(s) were missed.



Lent is a time for reflection and study. Please consider getting and reading the book for your own spiritual growth if a group study doesn't work for you.

### **United Women in Faith**

Peggy Gossett, Director of Volunteer Services of Iroquois County, will present the program at the March 5 meeting of United Women in Faith. The meeting will start at 1:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Volunteer Services has many varied and supportive services for the elderly in Iroquois County. The group will also prepare Easter cards to be distributed by the local Veterans Assistance Commission.

The Spring Rummage Sale will be Friday, April 24, and Saturday, April 25. Rummage may be brought to the church after April 11.

## **Food Pantry Update**

In January 148 households were served – 348 adults and 123 children.

Julie Burd, Diann Peabody, and Martha Howe attended the first annual meeting for agencies at Midwest Food Bank. They serve 450 agencies. Staff members include 6 people plus 9,000 volunteers! A tour of the plant was conducted. Our pantry is blessed to take advantage of this great service provided to help feed the hungry.



Special items for March are pastas, pasta sauces, and pasta entrees (ravioli, spaghetti rings, etc.). However, all donated items are appreciated that have a current date.

The Eastern Illinois Foodbank delivery is Tuesday, March 3 at 8:00am in the fellowship hall. On Friday, March 6, the trailer should arrive back to the fellowship hall from Midwest Foodbank around 11:30am. Volunteers are most welcome!

## **Notes From February 16, 2026 AD Council Meeting**

The AD Council met on February 16, 2026. The Finance Report was reviewed and approved. It was noted the Christmas March to the Manger offering was \$1395 and is being used for Youth Education. Previously, the Thanksgiving offering of nearly \$1000 was used for Apportionments.

The Trustees have been busy clearing out the Wesley Center in preparation for its sale, and a shed will be built for equipment storage. The parsonage will be in need of a new roof eventually, as the shingles are at least 20 years old.

A new committee has been formed to update policies and procedures. We now have a new application for requests to rent the church facilities by outside individuals or organizations and an updated policy with fees.

The Food Pantry served 5,587 people in 2025, the largest number in a non-flood year. Their volunteer luncheon will be held on Thursday, April 9th. Currently there are about 70 volunteers. An Impact report is being drawn up to send to 2025 donors. It was estimated an approximate 50 tons of food was given to those in need last year.

Women in Faith will be meeting on March 5th, hearing from the Director of Volunteer Services and making Easter cards for veterans. The Rummage Sale will be held on April 24th and 25th, rummage may be brought after April 9th. The Funeral Dinner policy is being revised and will be approved at the March 5th meeting.

Pastor Ashley plans a Good Friday “Stations of the Cross” service at the CPUMC from 9am to 6pm, and the WFUMC is invited to join them. Easter Services at WFUMC will be at 10:30 am. Pastor Ashley will have some Sundays off in the coming months and will have fill-in speakers as she prepares for her commissioning ceremony in June. She is also starting a prayer group meeting on Wednesday mornings at 11:30. Everyone is invited. She also noted both the Confirmation and Sunday School classes are going well, with good attendance. Confirmation will take place on Sunday, May 10, and Sunday School will take a break for summer.



## **Special Dates for March 2026**

- World Day of Prayer, *March 6, 2026*
- Daylight saving time begins, *March 8, 2026*
- St. Patrick's Day, *March 17, 2026*
- First day of spring, *March 20, 2026*
- Holy Week, *March 29-April 5, 2026*
- Palm/Passion Sunday, *March 29, 2026*

**Holy Stitchers Update**

The Holy Stitchers met on Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, for a night of stitching and fellowship. Everyone who was there was happy to meet and catch up with each other while stitching on their projects. We hadn't been able to meet since November because of the Christmas Holiday and the winter weather.

The Holy Stitchers are excited and thankful for the large donation of yarn, patterns and supplies for crocheting and knitting that they recently received. We will go through it and get it organized at our next meeting.

The Holy Stitchers' next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 17, at 7:00pm in the church parlor.

**Photos Below are the Pattern Books Received**



**Photos Below are the Yarn & Supplies Received**



**WFUMC General Fund Report: January 2026**

**General Fund Income & Expense Summary**

	January	Y-T-D
Income . . . . .	\$15,414.00 . . . . .	\$
Expenses . . . . .	-\$15,172.21 . . . . .	-\$

These figures do not include \$969.63 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.**

**3-1** David Klinefelter  
**3-7** Doug Warner  
**3-9** Cara Petersen  
**3-10** Jeanne Brown  
**3-11** Mackenzie Valentine  
**3-12** Amy Dickte  
**3-14** Donna Price  
**3-18** Joan Cook

### March Birthdays

**3-22** Blake Burd  
**3-25** Nancy Langellier  
**3-27** Lyndsey Powers  
**3-27** Mariah Yelenick



### March Anniversaries

**3-4-1995** Rhonda & Charles Leitz  
**3-29-1980** Kim & Frank Zumwalt

### March Super Senior Birthdays

From the Member Care Team– These Super Senior people are celebrating birthdays in March

Nancy Langellier            March 25  
c/o Pam Weidert  
10630 Beulah Road  
Pensacola, FL 32526

### March Greeters/Ushers

**March 1:** Jo & Jalyn Newman  
**March 8:** Carol Christy & Carol Bull  
**March 15:** TBD  
**March 22:** TBD  
**March 29:** TBD



### March Liturgist

Amy Dickte

### March Radio Broadcast Support

**March 1:** Pam Harms in loving memory of Lois West  
**March 8:** Jeff & Samantha Petersen in loving memory of Karen Sutfin  
**March 15:** Jon & Lori Yelenick in celebration of Mariah's marriage to Ben Boughton on 3-14-2026  
**March 22:** Robin Shuda in memory of her parent's wedding anniversary  
**March 29:** Charles & Rhonda Leitz in celebration of daughter Lyndsey's 25 birthday

### April Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the April Evangel is Friday, March 20. Please have all information/articles for the newsletter in the office by 2:00pm on that day.

# March 2025 Church Calendar

\*Calendar subject to change.

<b>Sunday, March 1</b>	10:00am- All congregation breakfast in fellowship hall 10:30am- Worship Service in fellowship hall 11:30am Confirmation Class
<b>Monday, March 2</b>	Noon- Lenten Bible Study
<b>Tuesday, March 3</b>	8:00am- Food Pantry Delivery 9:00am- Food Pantry Board Meeting 11:30am- Staff Meeting
<b>Wednesday, March 4</b>	11:30am- Prayer Group in fellowship hall
<b>Thursday, March 5</b>	1:30am- United Women in Faith Meeting in fellowship hall
<b>Friday, March 6</b>	11:30am- Food Pantry Delivery
<b>Sunday, March 8</b>	<b>Daylight Saving Time Begins</b> 10:30am- Worship Service 11:30am- Confirmation Class
<b>Monday, March 9</b>	Noon- Lenten Bible Study
<b>Tuesday, March 10</b>	11:30am- Staff Meeting
<b>Wednesday, March 11</b>	11:30am- Prayer Group in fellowship hall
<b>Sunday, March 15</b>	10:30am- Worship Service 11:30am- Confirmation Class
<b>Monday, March 16</b>	Noon- Lenten Bible Study
<b>Tuesday, March 17</b>	<b>St. Patrick's Day</b> 11:30am- Staff Meeting 7:00pm- Holy Stitches Meeting
<b>Wednesday, March 18</b>	11:30am- Prayer Group in fellowship hall
<b>Friday, March 20</b>	<b>Newsletter Deadline</b>
<b>Sunday, March 22</b>	10:30am- Worship Service 11:30am- Confirmation Class
<b>Monday, March 23</b>	Noon- Lenten Bible Study
<b>Tuesday, March 24</b>	11:30am- Staff Meeting
<b>Wednesday, March 25</b>	11:30am- Prayer Group in fellowship hall
<b>Sunday, March 29</b>	10:30am- Worship Service 11:30am- Confirmation Class
<b>Monday, March 30</b>	Noon- Lenten Bible Study
<b>Tuesday, March 31</b>	11:30am- Staff Meeting

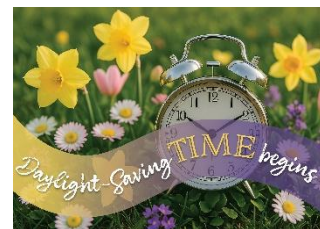


## Prayer Group to Begin

On Monday, March 4, Pastor Ashley will be starting a prayer group. We will meet at 11:30am down in the fellowship hall. All are invited to come and take part in the prayer group. Please know that whoever or whatever we pray for will not be put in Melinda's Friday email or announced in church without your permission. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Ashley in the church office at 815-432-4903 at Ext. 12 or her cell# 708-204-4238 or email Pastor Ashley at [ashleynclynton@gmail.com](mailto:ashleynclynton@gmail.com).

## Daylight Saving Time Begins

We want to see you at church on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> so remember to set your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup> before you go to bed. As we “spring forward,” let’s also renew our hearts in faith and gratitude for God’s steadfast light that never fades.



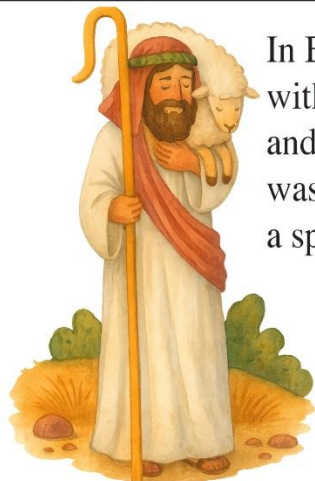
## Easter Lilies



We again would like you to help fill our sanctuary with the beauty of Easter lilies by going out and purchasing your own Easter Lily wherever you wish because the FFA is not selling lilies, and they are very expensive for us to purchase from the flower shop. You may bring your Easter Lily to church the week before Easter. You will have the opportunity to dedicate your lily/lilies. I will have forms in the bulletins for you to fill out and return to the church office. Dedications will appear in the Easter bulletin and lilies may be taken home after Easter Sunday services. Thanks for helping to beautify our Sanctuary for Easter.



## Bible Quiz



In Bible times, shepherds spent most of their days with their sheep—guiding them to food and water and guarding them from danger. When a sheep was injured, the shepherd treated the wound with a special liquid. What was it?

- A. Water
- B. Honey
- C. A Salt Solution
- D. Olive oil

Answer: D (See Psalm 23:5, ESV)

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7:00 p.m. Radio Broadcast on WIBK, 96.9FM and [www.wibkradio.com](http://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.**



DURING THIS LENTEN SEASON,  
*we praise God for  
his righteous Son,*  
who perfectly kept all of God's commandments  
for us and paid the full price  
for our disobedience.