

# The Chimes

November 2025

## From Our Pastor



## Church Events



A few weeks ago, my brother-in-law said something that made me pause. He smiled and said, “You finally smell like a person now.” We’ve known each other for twenty-five years. When we first met, he was a teenager and I was already a young pastor—

disciplined, structured, and maybe a little too serious. He said I always seemed strong and reliable, but perhaps a bit distant, as if I lived behind a wall of perfection. “Now,” he said, “you seem more human.”

At first, I laughed. But the more I thought about it, the more I realized he was naming something sacred—something about grace and humanity.

This season of Thanksgiving invites us to reflect on stewardship: how we care for what God has entrusted to us—our time, our resources, our relationships, and even our humanity. Stewardship is not only about giving; it’s about receiving life as a gift and living it with gratitude.

Karl Barth once wrote, “Grace is the humanity of God.” In Jesus, God did not appear as an untouchable ideal but as a living, breathing human being—vulnerable, compassionate, and real. If

**Join us Sundays in-person: 8:00am and 10:00am**

### **Ongoing:**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 4:00 pm**  
Exercise Group (Fellowship Hall)

**Wednesday @ 9:30 am**  
Bible Study ( Fireside Room)

**Thursdays @ 2 or 6:30 pm** Fiber Group-  
Knitting & Crocheting (Fireside Room)

**Saturdays @ 8:00 am:**  
Men's Bible Study (Fireside Room)

### **Save the date:**

**Sun. 11/2- All Saints Sunday**

**Tues. 11/4-Church Conference @ 7 pm,**  
SPRC @ 6:15 pm

**Thur. 11/6-Greeting Card Ministry group,**  
**Fiber Group 2 pm (Fireside Room) @**  
9:30 am (Fellowship Hall)

**Sun. 11/9- Veteran's Sunday, Chili**  
**Cookoff & Dessert Auction, Youth**  
**Group with Aaron after 2nd Service**

**Sat. 11/15 Sauk Valley Food Bank**

**Thur. 11/20- Ladies Lunch at A's**  
**Kitchen @ 11:30**

**Sat. 11/22 Salvation Army Bell Ringing**

**Thur. 11/27 Thanksgiving**

that's what grace looks like in God, then faithful stewardship means learning to live our own humanity with grace—honestly, gently, and thankfully.

I think that's what my brother-in-law saw in me: not a perfect man, but one learning to be present. And strangely enough, our dog Harry has been part of that journey.

Harry doesn't care about sermons or schedules. He cares about being near. He reminds me that love is not performance—it's presence. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said that genuine life together is found in the ordinary and the simple. When Harry curls up at my feet, I'm reminded that gratitude grows not from grand gestures but from quiet moments—shared warmth, small joys, and the grace of simply being here.

Henri Nouwen said, "Gratitude as a discipline involves a conscious choice." Each day we can choose to live with open hands rather than clenched fists—to see God's presence in the fragile, imperfect, and beautifully ordinary parts of our lives.

So, this November, **may we together** give thanks for the gift of being human—for the holy scent of grace that lingers not in perfection but in presence. To be fully human, vulnerable, and thankful is perhaps the greatest act of stewardship of all.

### 3rd ANNUAL WINTER REUNION WEEKEND of Joy Camp 2025

Held at Camp Reynoldswood

Friday, January 2nd-**6 pm** CHECK IN with dinner

Sunday, January 4th-**3 pm** CHECK OUT & dismissal

5th grade-Senior, youth who've previously attended summer J.O.Y. CAMP are invited to attend this weekend! Campers & Leaders will be housed in the Manor House. Pack for OUTSIDE, COLD and SNOWY adventures!! Bring layers of clothes & outer wear! There will be cozy inside games, crafts, activities, WORSHIP & adventures, too!!

Area churches will provide meals –PLEASE CONTACT NANCYT PITSCH if you'd like to contribute to lunch on Saturday afternoon by either a dish/dessert to pass ( to go w/ Angelo's spaghetti) or join me in serving the kids and clean up afterwards!

Registration begins NOW on [joycamp.org](http://joycamp.org) website. Registration fee is \$70 per camper.

## NOVEMBER 8am Head Ushers Rebecca Tieman/Shannon Klausung

Door greeter(s)	Ushers	Liturgist
11/2 Jan Glover Larry Schuchard	Chloe Stumpfenhorst Brenley Johnson	Jaz'Mya Castanada Nancy Pitsch
11/9 Jan Glover Larry Schuchard	Chris Gallentine	Greg Galentine
11/16 Nancy Pitsch	Jan Davey	Jeff Davey
11/23 Jean Moe Sue Reese	Jaz'Mya Castaneda Chloe Stumpfenhorst	Nancy Pitsch
11/30 Tony & Katie McCoy	Jan Davey	Jeff Davey

## NOVEMBER 10am Head Ushers Steve Lopez/Bill Parker

Door greeter(s)	Ushers	Liturgist	Matthew Meetings
11/2 Justin & Kala Allen	James Allen Jaxson Williams	Eric Allen	Nancy Pitsch Communion w/ kids
11/9 Mark & Sharon Taylor	Jaxson Williams, Eric & James Allen	Justin Allen	Jessica, Nora & Carlie Truedson
11/16 Frank & Janne Rausa	Isabella Celletti Jionni Cataneda	Nancy Pitsch	Jamie Schwingle
11/23 Mary Sue Puckett Carolyn Allen	Sadie Wendelken JP Papoccia	Dave Fredericks	Nancy Pitsch (Thanksgiving Break Begins)
11/30 Carolyn Allen Janne Rausa	Jovie & Remy Flick	Beth Wicks	Christmas Program Practice

## Worship Schedule

**Nov. 2nd** All Saints Sunday  
1 Chronicles 29:11-12, Matthew 6:33  
Living Beyond our Little Kingdom

**Nov. 9th** Veterans Sunday  
Isaiah 43:18-19, Philippians 3:13-14  
The Weight of Yesterday's Pizza

**Nov. 16th** Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:17; John 13:34-35  
Do Good-A Calling You Can Live

**Nov. 23rd** Christ the King/Reign of  
Christ Sunday  
Intro to the Seasons of the  
Christian Calendar

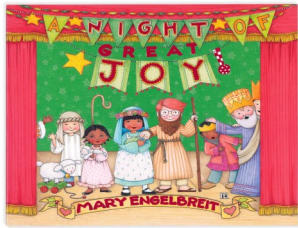
**Nov. 30th** First Sunday of Advent  
Isaiah 40:3-5, Luke 1:13,  
16-17  
Prepare the Way



# Announcements



**Calling all bakers!** It's that time of year again! **Our church has been asked to donate 30 dozen cookies**, as we have done in the past, for the *2025 Rock River Hospice & Home Festival of Trees Country Store*. Please let Stacey Wendelken know if you are willing to help! You will need to bake 3-4 dozen cookies (any variety such as Christmas cookies, snicker-doodle, sugar, cut-outs, oatmeal, peanut butter, thumb prints, chocolate chip, peanut butter blossoms, etc.), **store them in a disposable container** (Ziplock bag or a container that can be thrown away) and deliver them to the church kitchen on or before **Thursday, November 13, 2024**. The building will be open during office hours from 8:00 a.m. through 12:00 p.m. If you can't deliver your cookies at that time, please contact Stacey Wendelken at 480-220-6337 or [stacey.wendelken@comcast.net](mailto:stacey.wendelken@comcast.net) to make other arrangements. Thank you! This year's Festival of trees will be held at the McCormick Event Center from November 9-15, 11 am to 7 pm daily. Stop by and enjoy the entertainment, silent auctions, raffles, beautifully decorated trees & table settings and their beloved Country store.



Children-Youth of ALL Ages!! Our Christmas Program will be December 14th at 10am worship service! Practices are November 30th and December 7th during Matthew Meetings! Older youth will have opportunities to practice narration prats w/ Nancy Pitsch during the week at their

availability. Please bring your children/youth as many Sundays possible prior to our program on December 14th!!! Contact Devon Flick 815-590-0720 with questions or to let her know your child is interested in participating. Looking forward to GREAT JOY!!

## Thank You

Thank you all for your thoughts, prayers, wishes and cards!! With the Lord we can do all things—thank you for asking Him to be with me. It is a long road back to 100 % but He has set me down it and you have made me smile as I took my first steps.

With much love,  
Viny

PS God is SO cool!!

Wesley Church Family,

Our family would like to thank everyone who prayed for my sister, her family and ours and for all the wonderful cards and messages of sympathy.

Dave & Roberta Fredericks

## A Note of Gratitude



I want to express my heartfelt thanks for your overwhelming kindness during Clergy Appreciation Month. Your thoughtful cards—more than twenty of them!—your generous gifts, and your love mean more to me than words can say. You remembered my favorite meal and gave me a local butcher's gift card. You also didn't forget our furry family member, Harry—thanks to your PetSmart gift card, he's now enrolled in his Intermediate Training Course (he's wagging his tail in approval).

Your monetary gift will be used for something good and meaningful, as a way of passing on the love and generosity you've shown to me. Each note and gesture reminded me of how blessed I am to serve such a gracious, caring, and joyful congregation. I give thanks to God for the privilege of walking this journey of faith together. You are truly a gift to me.

With deep gratitude and love,  
**Pastor Paul**

Dear Members of the Wesley family,

We are writing on behalf of the church finance team. As in recent years our income will fall short of our expenses, so we need our members to consider increasing their support of our church.

We need everyone's support to continue the programs we have at Wesley. With your support Wesley can continue to offer a great Sunday school program, an inspired music program, meaningful worship opportunities, enjoyable fellowship opportunities, mission and community programs plus opportunities for everyone to deepen their walk with Jesus Christ.

In II Corinthians Paul exhorts us to be "a cheerful giver...God's grace abounds toward you, always having all sufficiency in all things and abundance for every good work." In the Parable of the Talents, Jesus is explaining our duty to use well all the good things God has given us.

One of the ways to live thankfully is to return a portion of the material gifts God has entrusted to our care. This letter is inviting you to give from your gratitude for the blessings in your life.

We are Christ's disciples in our community. Through our gifts of time, talent and money we can carry forth his works to our friends and neighbors. For it is in giving that we receive. May God bless you in all things you do.

Thank you for your faithfulness,

Rita Smith - Finance Chair

Paul Lee - Pastor



Thanksgiving  
Baskets  
Donations



**Salvation Army  
Bell Ringing!**

**When: November 22nd**

**Where: Farm and Fleet**

Wesley is collecting for the Township's Thanksgiving Baskets. **Each basket costs approximately \$35.** We will be collecting monetary donations starting mid-October and the first three Sundays in November. Please place donations in the turkey located on the Mission's Table.

**Our goal is to raise enough for 25 baskets.**

**Sign up sheet is  
on the Missions Table under TV**

**You may also contact Roberta Fredericks  
or office to sign up**



The 6th Annual Missions Chili Cook Off and Dessert Auction Fundraiser will be held immediately following second service.

**November 9th**

Please sign up to provide Chili or a Dessert

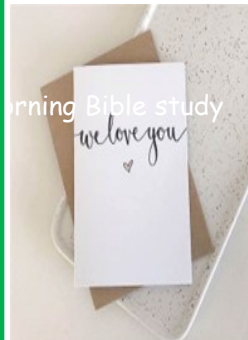
Sign up sheets are on the Mission's Table along with an information sheet for participants. Trophies will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> around 12:30. Encourage friends and family to come join us for a fun time!



### The Wesley Lunch Group

We will meet at A's Kitchen **Thursday, Nov. 20th** at 11:30. If you have any questions please contact Beth Mathew 815-625-4381.

Hope to see you there!!!



The Wesley Greeting Card ministry will meet Thursday, November 6th at 9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall to prepare December cards. Come join us and help spread some joy.

### Christmas Poinsettias

Orders for Christmas poinsettias are being taken through **Friday, November 14th**. Forms are available in the church office and Fellowship Hall. The color choices are red and white. Please return them to the office. Cost will again be \$10 per plant.

Thank you



Come join us November 17th at 9:30 am to help "fluff" up the greenery used to decorate our Fellowship Hall and sanctuary. Please come help if you are able. Many hands make light work!!

January 4th, 2026 we will be taking down the Advent decorations between services. Please plan to stay late or come early to help.  
Thank you, The Worship Team



# World Communion Sunday



# Upcoming

## All Saints Sunday

Remembering those who have passed

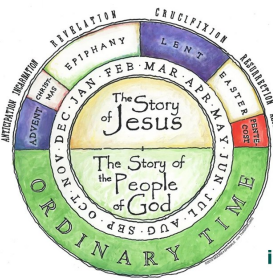
**NOVEMBER 2, 2025**



**CHURCH CONFERENCE 2025**  
**NOVEMBER 4 (TUES)**  
**@ 7 PM (SPRC @ 6:15 PM)**



## Veterans Sunday (Nov. 9)



**On November 23 (Sun)**

our worship will take us on a journey through **the Christian Calendar**: learning the stories, symbols, and songs that shape our year of grace.

All are welcome to share in this joyful time of reflection and praise.



# Youth Group w/ Aaron November 9th



**STERLING WESLEY  
YOUTH GATHERING**



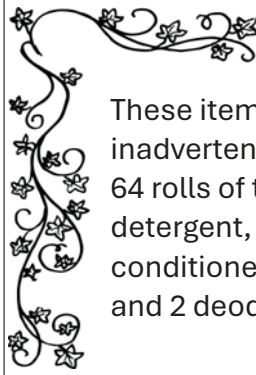
## Missions:

The total **Loose coins** collected in **October** for **YWCA Crisis Center for Domestic Violence** is \$164.97

World Communion Sunday will add \$ **20** to various international scholarships.

**November** we will be collecting **Dish Soap** for pantries and loose coins for FISH Food Pantry.

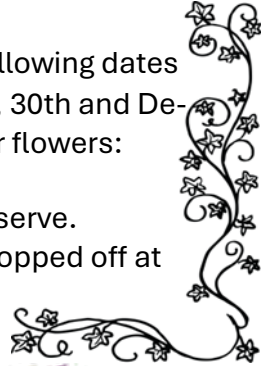
Items collected in October were 54 bars of soap



These items for September collection were inadvertently left out of October Chimes: 64 rolls of toilet paper, 2 bottles of laundry detergent, 3 bottles of shampoo, 1 bottle of conditioner, 2 bars of soap, 2 toothpastes and 2 deodorants.

**Altar Flowers (\$20)** The following dates are available: November 16th, 30th and December 21 is available for altar flowers:

Please contact the office to reserve. Payments can be mailed to/dropped off at



## Birthdays

**Nov. 1** Alyssa Cedro, James Fitzanko, Scott Heern

**Nov. 2** Becky Allen

**Nov. 3** Walter Lindsley, Mary Sue Puckett

**Nov. 4** Jeremy Maxfield

**Nov. 6** Mary Anne Batten

**Nov. 7** Devon Flick, Faith Minor

**Nov. 10** Gloria Rodriguez, Grace Wetzell

**Nov. 11** Bill Parker

**Nov. 13** Jan Glover, James Morris, Sena Warkins

**Nov. 14** Logan Ayala

**Nov. 15** Jamie Schwingle

**Nov. 16** Blake Parker

**Nov. 18** Edd Rosser

**Nov. 19** Holliana Drew

**Nov. 20** Jionni Castaneda

**Nov. 23** Bill Abate, Ava Lyon

**Nov. 25** Mary Spitzer

## Anniversaries

**Nov. 4** Tim & Jamie Schwingle

**Nov. 11** Steve & Kay Bierman

**Nov. 16** Rich & Carrie Halverson

**Nov. 17** Antonio & Amber Castaneda

**Nov. 19** Dave & Becky Allen

**Nov. 20** Curt & Jaime Greenfield

**Nov. 22** Bill & Sue Abate, Don & Sena Warkins

**Nov. 30** John & Linda Larson



**Wesley United Methodist Church**  
2200 16<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Sterling, IL 61081

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Wesley United Methodist Church  
Phone: (815) 625-1968  
Website: [www.sterlingwesley.org](http://www.sterlingwesley.org)  
Email: [office@sterlingwesley.org](mailto:office@sterlingwesley.org)



**Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors**

You are invited to join us for Livestream worship on Facebook at 10 a.m.

**Find us on Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/SterlingWesleyUMC>

**Upcoming Events**

**Wesley has always been a mission-minded church. The purpose of this space is to keep the congregation informed of our various mission efforts. We currently are receiving:**

**Dish Soap and Travel-sized toiletries for local pantries.**

**Loose coins for November will benefit **FISH Food Pantry****

**The office is staffed Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to noon.**

**Snowbirds,**

**As many of you start to head to your winter addresses, please make sure those addresses are updated through the office so we can stay in touch.**



*Thanksgiving Blessing*

May the beauty and blessings of Thanksgiving bring warmth and peace to your home this season.