



**First United Methodist Church**  
127 N 4th St  
Vandalia, IL 62471

# May Pews News



**First United Methodist Church of Vandalia:**  
*Planting and nurturing seeds of faith, cultivating devoted disciples of Christ, and feeding souls for the glory of God.*



Vacation Bible School 2026  
will be at the Family Center  
June 15th-June 19th,  
Monday-Friday 6pm-8pm

All children (pre-k-6th grade)  
are welcome to attend.

If you're interested in volunteering,  
please contact the Church office.

OFFICE WILL BE  
\*\*\*  
**CLOSED**  
\*\*\*  
FOR MEMORIAL DAY  
May 25th, 2026

**2026 Baby Bottle Campaign**  
Collection Dates:  
Mother's Day - Father's Day  
May 10th - June 21st

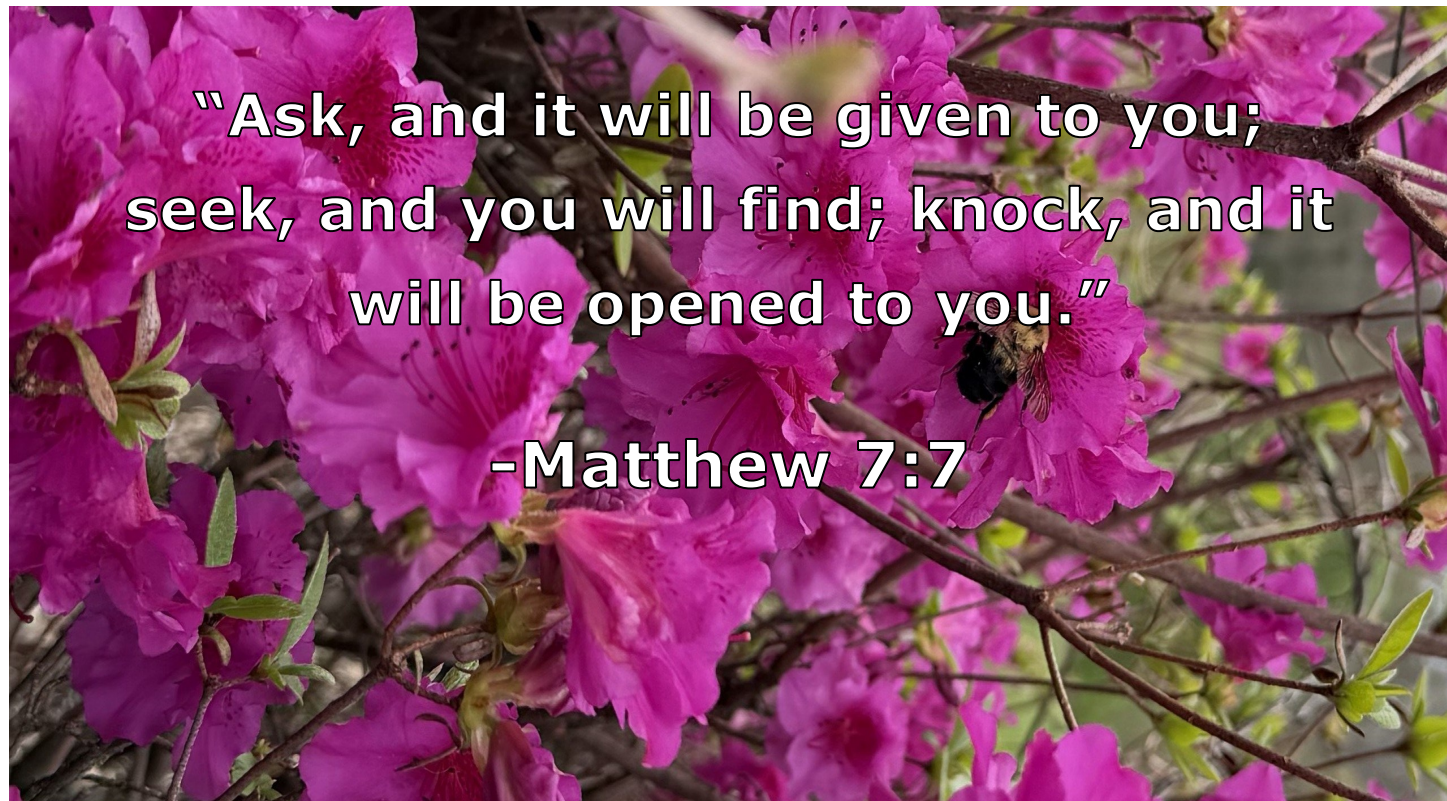
Please have baby bottles  
turned into FUMC Narthex by  
June 14th

Thank you for your **SUPPORT!**

**GOAL: 60k**

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**"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."**

**-Matthew 7:7**

**National Day of Prayer**

Thursday, May 7th @1pm

Location:  
Vandalia Christian Academy



May 17th

ASCENSION DAY

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY  
May 10th

## Church Staff

Pastor: Curtis Flake: rev.cflake@gmail.com, 217-273-4432  
Administrative Assistants: Sue Miller & Jaicob Arndt  
Church email: vandaliafumc@outlook.com  
Director of Choirs: Taryn Flake: taryn.a.flake@gmail.com  
Director of Young Children's Ministries:  
Preschool Director: Morgan Tessman  
Custodian: Andy Sidwell  
Family Center Custodian: Rich Well

## Contact us

M-W: 8a-4p  
Th: 8a-11a  
F: closed

Phone: 618-283-3684

Email: vandaliafumc@outlook.com

Website: www.vandaliafirstumc.org

## Still Brewing: One Year of Coffee, Christ, & Cards

The "Coffee, Christ & Cards" group has been actively meeting for over a year now! Meetings are the first and third Thursday of each month at 10:00am in Wesley Hall. The group gathers to send personal handwritten notes to those in the community experiencing health concerns or grieving loved ones. Notes are also sent to anyone in the community who has served or given of themselves in a special way. We bring our coffee, enjoy fellowship and are usually finished in about an hour. Anyone is welcome to join the group and you are only committed to the Thursdays that fit into your schedule.



- Joyce Staff

### I Meet God at Church

On Sundays, I meet God at church.  
But I also meet Him on the way to church in my car, with the windows rolled down and the music on.

I meet Him in the sunflower fields a mile away from the church doors.  
I meet Him in the eyes of those who love Him and the eyes of those who don't yet know how to.

I meet Him after church, in the glow of sun on my windshield and in the friendly chatter of birds that greet me in my backyard.

I meet Him on dreary Mondays and ordinary Tuesdays and slow Wednesdays and unkind Thursdays and rainy Fridays, where grief trickles down my face.  
I meet Him in the quiet breath of every Saturday morning.

I meet God whenever I open my senses.

ullie-kaye



Contributed by: Andy Sidwell



### MAY Birthdays

- 1— Candy Carroll
- 2— Michelle McNary
- 3— Andy Craig  
Josh Miller  
Josh Moulton
- 5— Taylor Arndt  
Elizabeth Bowen  
Calista Eyman  
Joyce Hunter
- 12— Hayden Eyman
- 13— Aleah Likas
- 15— Cindy Rockow
- 16— Paige Buente
- 18— Janet Potts  
Randy Protz  
Silas Vieregge  
Bill Wells, Jr.
- 19— Phyllis Thoman
- 20— Drew McDowell
- 21— Carla Diveley  
Alex Schwarm
- 22— Haven Burnam  
Whitney Campbell  
Tessa Opfer
- 23— Jes Koonce
- 24— Beverly Short  
Jamie Michel
- 26— Eli Bowen
- 28— Justin Hawk  
Grady Laack
- 29— John Campbell  
Josh Koonce

### MAY Anniversaries

- 3— Ty & Michelle McNary
- 12— Steve & Sandy Stombaugh
- 13— Mike & Louis Davis
- 17— Roger & Peg Clark
- 18— Abby & Easton Hanna
- 27— Randy & Barb White
- 30— Drew & Sherry Schneider
- 31— Scott & Mia Vieregge

### Liturgist Amy Vieregge

### Sound Tech Patrick Myers

### Video Tech Travis Clark

### Acolytes

- 3- Brayden Stombaugh
- 10- Harper Burnam
- 17- Trevor Clark
- 24- Addi Flake
- 31- Hannah Stombaugh

### Kingdom Kids

- 3- Sharon Mueller
- 10- Trisha Miller
- 17- Sue Burnam
- 24- Kelly Clark
- 31- \*TBD\*

### Offering Collectors

- 3- John Burnam
- 10- Gene Schwarm
- 17- Barb Paine
- 24- Jeff Endres
- 31- John Burnam

### Bus Ministry

- 3 Driver: Ed Taylor  
Rider: Kim Taylor
- 10 Driver: Bill Warner  
Rider: Kim Warner  
Greeter: Sandy Stombaugh
- 17 Driver: Max Durbin  
Rider: Deb Durbin
- 24 Driver: Ed Taylor  
Rider: Kim Taylor  
Greeter: Sandy Stombaugh
- 31 Driver: Bill Warner  
Rider: Kim Warner

### Head Ushers

- 3- JD Vieregge & Josh Figgins
- 10- JD Vieregge & Rand Craycroft
- 17- JD Vieregge & Jacy Fulk
- 24- JD Vieregge & Greg Fulk
- 31- JD Vieregge & Max Durbin



# Music Minute



Sanctuary Choir will perform **May 10th & 17th** during morning worship service.

After May 17th the choir will take a well deserved break for the summer!



## Caregiver Advisor

1108 S. Willow St.  
Effingham, IL 62450

Phone: 217.342.4526 ~ Fax: 217.354.9111

Fayette County Churches,

Michelle Barber, the Caregiver Advisor with SWAN. The Family Caregiver Program works with caregivers that provide care to those over the age of 60. Michelle provides information and assistance, advising/counseling, education and training opportunities, and an in-home assessment to provide caregivers with respite care—which is short-term temporary relief from their caregiving duties. Each month Michelle facilitates a support group for family caregivers in Vandalia. In addition to the family caregiver program, a grandparent raising grandchildren program is also available. There is a Monthly support group in Vandalia and respite services to grandparents by financially covering various forms of campership, after school programs, gym memberships, private tutoring, piano or other musical lessons are also available. Since SWAN has received funding for this program Michelle has been reestablishing these groups and would like to offer an invitation to congregates to join. If there are any members who would benefit from these programs please feel free to contact Michelle directly by phone [217-342-4526](tel:217-342-4526) or email [Caregiver@swandvhl.org](mailto:Caregiver@swandvhl.org) and schedule a time to visit. Thank you. -Michelle Barber

*Come to the table*

REVELATION 19:9

Please join us **Wednesday May 6th**  
**@6pm** for our end of the year Youth Group Party! Event will be held in the FUMC back parking lot (weather permitting)

**Menu: Hamburgers/Hot Dogs, Chips, Cookies**



## Pastor's Perspective

### Doing

Why do we do the things we do as a church?

I have tried to remind our congregation of the amazing outreach that happens through this church. But the truth is, it is not really what we do as much as what we are privileged to be a part of. It is God's ministry.

The more I hear the origin stories of many of these ministries, the more convinced I become of that truth. Time and again, I hear how God placed a need on someone's heart, and faithful people responded. A burden became a calling. An idea became a ministry. Compassion became action.

That brings us to the word community.

Our ministries certainly reach the community, but they also build community within the church. That is one of my hopes for us in this season—not only that we continue serving others, but that we grow closer together as we serve.

Sometimes we may miss opportunities for deeper community because we have enough faithful people who can simply "get the job done." But I wonder: are there others who would love to be part of God's work here if only they were invited? If only they knew. If only they felt they could belong here and be part of God's ministry.

We need to raise up our own Elijahs.

In scripture, Elijah prepared Elisha to carry on the work after him. Faithful ministry has always depended on one generation investing in the next. The work of God continues when people are taught, encouraged, and invited into service. We need mentors, helpers, learners, and future leaders growing alongside today's leaders.

Maybe the real phrase for all of this is building a culture of invitation.

By the time you read this, we will have just hosted a concert—or be about to host one. Why did we do it? There are probably many good answers: to bless the community, to remind people we are here, because music brings joy, because we are able, to make it easier for someone to walk through our doors, or even to introduce someone to Jesus Christ.

All of those are good reasons.

But I also hope it makes inviting easier.

Our Church Council is currently working on mission and vision, and I hope that helps us share more clearly who we are and why we are here. People are more likely to come when we have something clear, hopeful, and meaningful to share. We have t-shirts coming, and I wonder about other tangible reminders of where we go to church—small ways to carry our identity and open

doors for conversation. If you have ideas for things you would like to see, use, or share, I would love to hear them. At the heart of it all, my desire is simple: I want people to know Jesus, belong to a church family, and learn to love like Jesus. And I believe the Methodist Church has something special to offer in that calling.

We are a generous church with a profound impact on our community—especially for children through preschool, Backpack to School, Coats & Shoes, Tools 4 School, the food pantry, Wednesday Youth, and many other ministries. I asked some time ago whether the

community would miss our church if we closed the doors tomorrow. I hope the answer, with all of these ministries and with worship itself, is undoubtedly yes. But I also wonder how many people truly know the difference this church is making.

But it is not only our local church. Our wider church connection also makes a tremendous difference. Together, through shared ministry, churches across our conference give millions of dollars each year to support missions,

ministries, and lives changed in Jesus' name. Our conference in Illinois is one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the state. United Methodists are built different.

So why do we do what we do?

Because God is still doing what God has always done—loving people, changing lives, and inviting ordinary people like us to join in.

Grace and peace, Pastor Curtis

**May 2026 Newsletter Article #1 Scripture Challenge – In Three Parts: Selected Women of the Bible**

Growing up, I was fortunate to have three women who were very special to me – Aunt Mil, Aunt Jenny and Aunt Virginia. They were my “maiden” aunts and my brother Mike and I grew up being claimed as their kids. Gene had a similar experience with his Aunt Glad and Aunt “One.” Our sons enjoyed the love and attention of Gene’s oldest sister, Pat. I often said, “Everyone should have an Aunt Pat.” So, as we turn our attention to the month of May during which we celebrate Mothers’ Day, it is with the recognition that other special women—aunts, cousins, sisters, grandmothers, godmothers, friends—play significant roles in our lives.

Once again, with the help of the adult Sunday School Class members, mothers and others have been identified for our scripture challenge. They identified so many interesting women of the Bible that another Scripture Challenge is already started. Let me say “thank you” to these devoted Bible students who have once again participated in the Scripture Challenge uniquely.

The stories from scripture of these special women are organized in three parts—Old Testament, New Testament and those without names but who have a home and history in the sacred text. You may notice that one of the Old Testament women is mentioned twice in the New Testament. Rahab is listed in the lineage of Jesus (mother of Boaz, husband of Ruth, Matthew 5:1) and in the “Hall of Fame” of faith (Hebrews 11:31).

You will find that some readings are quite long. I tried to split these over several days. Others are quite short. If you are so inclined, read the scripture passages before and after those listed to get a fuller picture of these remarkable women.

As you read through this month’s scripture challenge, I challenge you to ask and answer two questions. First, who has influenced your Christian walk? Secondly, who is in your sphere of influence and how are you pouring into their lives as a Christian friend and mentor? Guess that is technically three questions. You get the idea. Go beyond the obvious and connect, even if just in your own mind, with those who have inspired you to be your best at being you.

**May 2026 Newsletter Article #2 Scripture Challenge – The “Why!” Revisited Read and Remember**

Maybe it is my age. I’ve come to understand more fully what I don’t know, don’t understand and don’t remember. A confession. For much of my adult life, I have read the Bible “In a Year” along with various devotionals which reference scripture. Of late, I am amazed at what I have read oh so many times and don’t remember. It’s not that I don’t understand it, which is absolutely true, it is that I don’t remember reading it. I shared last month that although I had read Psalm 22 numerous times, it only came into focus and understanding for me after I heard a sermon preached on the parallels with the crucifixion as described in the Gospels.

Another such instance was during the Adult Sunday School class when we were discussing Tamar. Remember her? She was the one in the Old Testament (Genesis 38) and the one in the genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:3). She was a seductress. She tricked Judah into an eventual marriage when he didn’t provide to her his third son after his other two older sons died while married to her. Long story—actually it just one chapter. Worth reading. But who is Judah, I asked myself, when reading this account, focusing on Tamar? Judah, many of you will no doubt remember, was an older brother of Joseph, the one with the coat of many colors. It was Judah’s idea to sell Joseph into slavery. So, when I became curious about who this Judah guy was, I got out the Bible and read the backstory. Again, I confess that with a regular “read the Bible in a year” habit, I’d read this account many times. Finally, with curiosity as a motivator, I read and now remember these stories and hopefully many others.

My point in sharing my confessions and my revelations is this, the church’s revitalization effort includes the monthly scripture challenge so we can all become more knowledgeable of the Bible and grow in understanding. The “understanding” part? It comes. Just keep reading and praying for the insights God wants to reveal to you at any given time. Don’t become discouraged if what you read does not make sense. God will show you a way, His way. Maybe your revelation will not be the same as Biblical scholars. Mine seldom are. But, if it is what God wants to show you that day with those words, claim it as your own. Learn and praise God. It is my prayer for myself and for you that curiosity propels us forward and we all do, indeed, grow in knowledge and understanding.

*In Christ’s Love, Ann*

**May 2026 Scripture Challenge – In Three Parts Selected Women of the Bible**

**New Testament Women**

1. Mary, Mother of Jesus – Matthew 1:1-2:23. Luke 1:1-2:52. John 2:1-11; 19:25-27.
2. Mary, Magdalene – Mark 15:40-47; 16:1-11. Luke 8:1-3; 24:9-10. John 20:1-18.
3. Mary, the wife of Clopas – John 19:25.
4. & 5. Mary of Bethany, Sister to Martha & Lazarus and Martha, Sister to Mary of Bethany & Lazarus – Luke 10:38-42. John 11:1-44; 12:1-8.
6. Elizabeth, Cousin of Mary, Mother of John the Baptist – Luke 1:5-25; 1:39-45.
7. Salome, Wife of Zebedee, Mother of the disciples, James & John –Matthew 20:20-23; 27:56. Mark 15:40-41; 16:1-8.
8. Anna, Widow & Prophetess at the Temple Presentation of Jesus – Luke 2:36-38.
9. Joanna, One of Herod’s Household & Susanna, Both Who Financially Supported Jesus – Luke 8:1-3.

**Old Testament Women**

10. & 11 Eve, The First Woman – Genesis 2:15-4:26
12. Miriam, Sister of Moses – Exodus 2:1-9; 15:1-24. Numbers 12:1-15; 20:1.
13. Rahab, Prostitute and Protector – Joshua 2:1-24; 6:17-25. Matthew 1:5. Hebrews 11:31.
14. Deborah, A Leader – Judges 4:1-5:31.
15. Jael, Strength in the Battle – Judges 4:17-22, 5:24-27.
16. & 17. Naomi, A loved mother-in-law & Ruth, A Loving Daughter-in-Law – Ruth 1:1 – 4:22.
18. Hannah, Mother of Samuel – 1 Samuel 1:1 – 2:21.
19. , 20 & 21. - Esther, A Queen with Courage – Esther 2:7-9:32.
22. Abigail, Wife of Nabal and then King David – 1 Samuel 25:1-42.

**Women Whose Names are not Recorded in the Bible**

23. The Woman at the Well – John 4:1-30.
24. Peter’s Mother-in-law – Matthew 8:14-15. Mark 1:29-31. Luke 4:38-39.
25. The Queen of Sheba – 2 Chronicles 9:1-12.
26. Widow with Jars of Oil – 2 Kings 4:1-7.
27. Woman Subjected to Bleeding – Matthew 9:20-22. Mark 5:25-34. Luke 8:43-48.
28. Widow of Nain – Luke 7:11-17.
29. Pilate’s Wife – Matthew 27:19.
30. The Syrophenician (Canaanite) Woman – Matthew 15:21-28.
31. Widow with Two Small Copper Coins – Mark 12:41-44. Luke 21:1-4.



<p><b>Brookstone: (1607 W. Fillmore)</b>  <b>Jean Stombaugh (Apt. 35)</b></p> <p><b>FCH/Long Term Care (650 West Taylor)</b>  <b>Arlene Hoffman (Rm. 510)</b>  <b>Sharon Lee (Rm. 706)</b>  <b>Margaret Carroll (Rm. 610)</b>  <b>Larry Peyton (Rm.405)</b>  <b>Sara Clark (Rm.707)</b>  <b>Phyllis Thoman (Rm.403)</b></p>	<p><b>Pete Burnam (Rm.608)</b>  <b>Retha Burnam (Rm. 708)</b></p> <p><b>Meridian Village Assisted Living</b>  <b>Diane Adams 27 Auerbach Place Glen Carbon. IL 62034</b></p> <p><b>Willowbrook: (1124 Sunset dr)</b></p>
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***New Joys and Concerns***

- Joy in hearing Children in Church
- Our Church, our community and our country.
- World Conflicts
- Family of Shirley Frick
- Wonderful UNSPOKEN concert
- JD Vieregge—Kidney stones and mass on abdomen
- Richie Well & Shelby Stone Getting Married



- |                          |                                |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Diane Adams              | Alan & Shannon’s Granddaughter | Heather (Jones) Thompson |
| Barb Ambuehl             | Jason Mouser                   | Les Vaughan              |
| Mike Baker               | Jeff Mueller                   | Victoria & Family        |
| Brianna Barnett          | David Rademacher               | Sarah Vu                 |
| Marti Bingham            | Sydney Rosborough              | Kim Warner               |
| Gretchen Schneider Bland | Dorothy Schultz                | Carole White             |
| John Campbell            | Andy Sidwell                   | Suzanne Wilkerson        |
| Sara Clark               | Arlen Sidwell                  | Jeff Williams            |
| Ava Cooper               | Anna Syniuk                    | Ken & Peg Williams       |
| Julia Crowe              | Donna Taylor                   | Hudson Winters           |
| Carolyn Daniels          | Phyllis Thoman                 | Lonna Woodruff           |
| Cheri Darr               |                                |                          |
| Connor Eyman             |                                |                          |
| Rob Dillingham           |                                |                          |
| Maurice Eyman            |                                |                          |
| David Floyd              |                                |                          |
| Sue Harrison             |                                |                          |
| Steve Hoover             |                                |                          |
| Patty Jennings           |                                |                          |
| Jennifer Kenney          |                                |                          |
| Bob & Joy Kloster        |                                |                          |
| Ray Kramer               |                                |                          |
| Krey Leesman             |                                |                          |
| Austin Long              |                                |                          |