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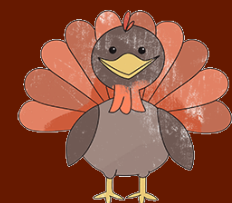
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November Pews News

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."*



The church office will be closed on
November 11th in observance of
Veterans Day.

The church office will be
closed November 27th and
28th in observance of
Thanksgiving.



Church Staff

Pastor: Curtis Flake: rev.cflake@gmail.com, 217-273-4432
Administrative Assistants: Sue Miller & Megan Kern
Church email: vandaliafumc@outlook.com
Director of Choirs: Taryn Flake: taryn.a.flake@gmail.com
Preschool Director: Morgan Tessman
Custodian: Andy Sidwell
Family Center Custodian: Rich Well
Praise Team Director: Sarah Vu

Music Minute

Happy fall! It's beginning to start to feel like fall, and meanwhile, we are looking ahead in worship planning to the Advent and Christmas season. We'd love to have you join one of our groups this fall:

Sanctuary Choir:

Rehearsals (Wed's @ 4:30)

October 29th (@ 5:00)

November 5th

Anthems (Sundays @ 9:00)

November 2nd (Angels and the Saints)

November 9th (Built on the Rock)

Handbells (Christmas group):

Rehearsals (Wed's @ 6:00) — Anthem (Sundays @ 8:50)

October 29th

November 5th

November 12th

December 3rd

December 6th



Our handbell group will also be performing at the Olde Tyme Christmas Concert on Saturday, November 15th @ 6 PM at the Old Baptist Church downtown. We hope to have several members of our church represented at the concert.

Thanks to the sanctuary choir for your adaptability with the changing schedule this month. Thank you to the handbells for offering the anthem on October 26th.

Finally, thank you so much to those who led the traditional songs in the month of October: Deb Cook and Dennette Guyer. Thank you to Sarah Vu for covering for me while I was in Kansas City for Focus Week at seminary. Thank you to those who provided a prelude in October: Sarah Vu, Judy Roberts, and Charlene Jett. Thanks to the small group of handbells for playing with the choir song on October 5th. Thank you to all of you for sharing your musical gifts with the congregation!

Musically,
Taryn Flake



I would like to sincerely thank the church family for every act of kindness shown to me after my surgery and recovery time. Thanks for the visits, food, cards, phone calls, and especially your prayers. Thank you to the Bucket Buddies for the flowers, cards, and prayers. Thanks also to the Prayer Shawl Committee for the beautiful prayer shawl. It has been so comforting to me during a difficult time. All of you are a living example of Jesus and his service to others.

- Debbie Brantley



1—Andy Vaughan

2—Dawn Rosborough

Katie Tarkington

4—Isaac Grapperhaus

5—Justin Brantley

Tom Goodell

6—Lori Hoffman

7—Diane Adams

Lucy Laack

8—Roger Grimmett

Clark Pearson

9—Mitch Harrison

10—Aaron Konrad

11—Walt Pearson

13—Ray Kramer

17—Jean Stombaugh

19—Kennidee Yarbrough

22—Isaiah Rademacher

Brayden Stombaugh

26—Alexa Campbell

J.D. Vieregge

28—Cindy Bennett

Susan Colburn

29—Peyton Buente

Megan McDowell

2—Byron & Terese Sikma

3—Randy & Janel Protz

7—Paige & Blain Buente

Brad & Julie Dunn

16—Alan & Cindy Laramee

18—Paul & Kathy Taylor

Bus Ministry

2 **Driver:** Bill Warner

Rider: Kim Warner

Greeter:

9 **Driver:** Max Durbin

Rider: Deb Durbin

Greeter: Sandy

Stombaugh

16 **Driver:** Ed Taylor

Rider: Kim Taylor

Greeter:

23 **Driver:** Bill Warner

Rider: Kim Warner

Greeter: Sandy

Stombaugh

30 **Driver:** Max Durbin

Rider: Deb Durbin

Greeter:

Acolytes

2- Parker Clark

9- Hannah Stombaugh

16- Brooklyn Burnam

23- Addison Flake

30- Trevor Clark

Liturgist

Sandy Ehrat

Video Tech

Patrick Myers

Sound Tech

Rand Craycroft

Ushers

2- JD Vieregge & Josh Figgins

9- JD Vieregge & Rand

Craycroft

16- JD Vieregge & Jacy Fulk

23- JD Vieregge & Greg Fulk

30- JD Vieregge & Max

Durbin

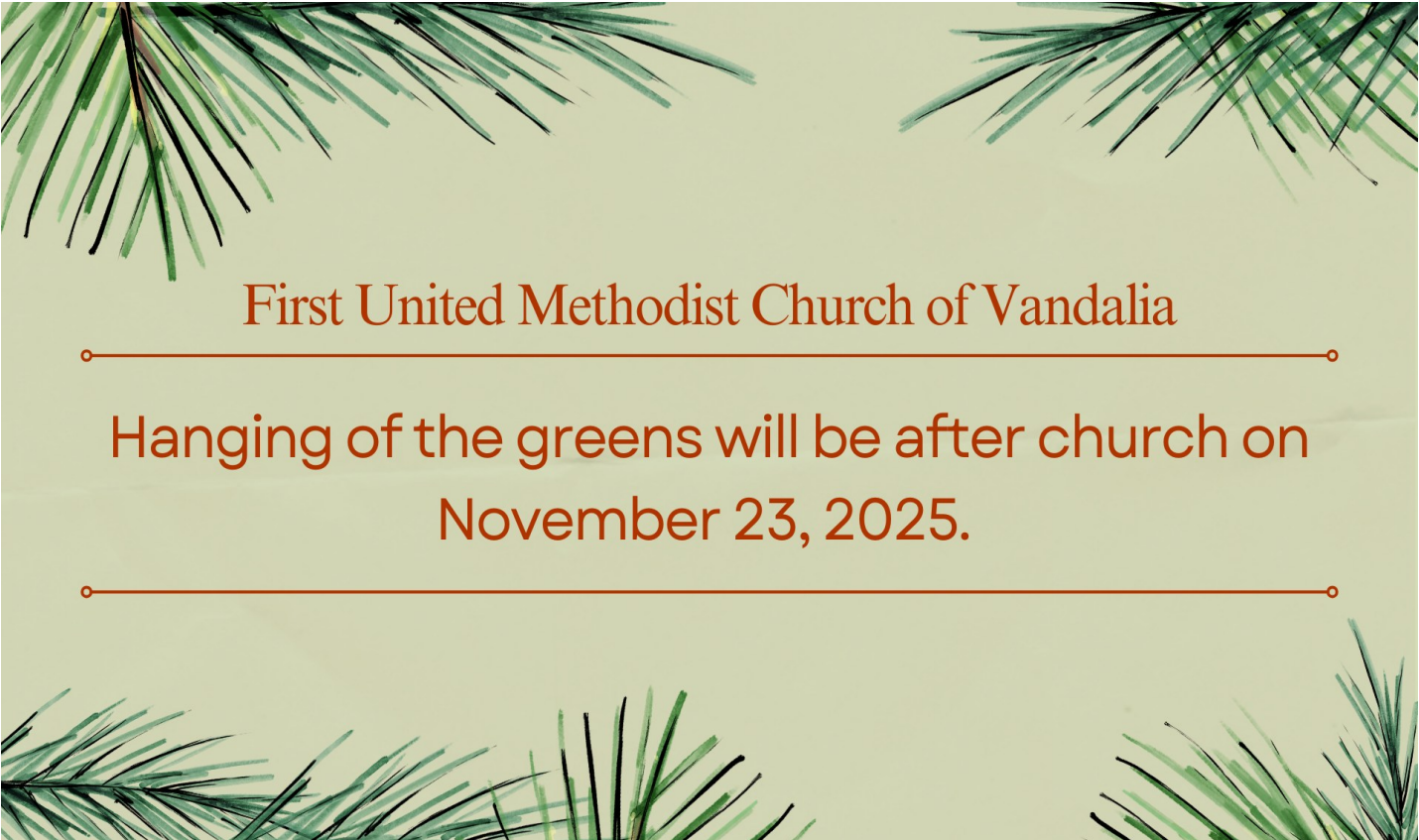




Thank you to the generous donors who gave for the students at the alternative education school.

They truly appreciated your kind donation to the Giving Tree.

- Bucket Buddies



Clergy & Laity are invited to attend the 2025 conference on revitalizing and growing churches.

The New Wineskins– Leaning In- to A Faith-Filled Future
November 7 & 8
Mt. Vernon First UMC

*Please let the office know if you are interested in going so we can put a group together!



Nursing Home Residents & Shut-ins: <u>Brookstone</u> (1607 W. Fillmore) Pete & Retha Burnam (Apt 41); Frank Roeder (Apt. 25); Jean Stombaugh (Apt. 32); <u>FCH/Long Term Care</u> (650 West Taylor) Arlene Hoffman (Rm. 510); Sharon Lee; Deb Endres (Rm.708); Margaret Carroll; Larry Peyton (Rm.405) <u>Meridian Village Assisted Living</u> (27 Auerbach Place, Glen Carbon, IL 62034) Diane Adams	<u>Willowbrook</u> (1124 Sunset Dr, Vandalia, IL 62471) Edith Knebel <u>Shut-Ins:</u> Mike Beckett (2625 W. Jefferson St., Vandalia) Retha Burnam c/o Lori McGuire (4635 Timberview Dr, Auburn, IL 62615)
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Barb Ambuehl (Patty Donaldson's mother, recovering from surgery & doing well)
Marti Bingham (Patti Craycroft's step-mother, recovering from surgery for a brain tumor)
Bill Blythe (Wendy Blythe's husband, suffered a heart attack)
Debbie Brantley (recovering from surgery)
Candy Carroll (ongoing health concerns)
Sara Clark (health concerns)
Ava Cooper (10 year old neighbor of Candy Zeman, back at school!)
Julia Crowe (continued prayers)
Rob Dillingham (friend of Pastor Curtis, diagnosed with cancer)
Scott Dolejs (Carole White's grandson, going to the Congo for 2 weeks to perform surgeries)
Patti Emerick, (friend of Kim Warner, recovering from a lung transplant)
Maurice Eyman (continued prayers)
Shirley Frick (needs prayers)
Willard Fulk (health concerns)
Jan Johnston (continued prayers)
Gene Hicks (friend of Mark Miller, now in remission!)
Jack Huth (Donna Taylor's son-in-law (Beth's husband), throat cancer)
Butch Johnston (continued prayers)
Jennifer Kenney (Barb McCart & Sue & Eric's niece, diagnosed with breast cancer)
Bob & Joy Kloster (both recovering from falls)
Ray Kramer (recovering from compressed spinal fracture due to a fall)
Dorothy Kriesel, (wife of pastor in Farina/Patoka, recovering from complications due to bypass surgery)

Carson LaDage (Graduated/still needs prayers)
Kirk Langham friend of Kathy Taylor's, radiation has been paused for heart surgery)
Krey Leesman (friend of Pastor Curtis, diagnosed with cancer)
Austin Long (friend of the church, ongoing health concerns)
Buddy Miller (Eric & Sue Miller's son, treatment for AFib and a blood clot)
Jason Mouser (recovering from stroke at home)
Jeff Mueller (friend of Pastor Curtis, diagnosed with cancer)
David Rademacher (diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia)
Kevin Roberts (Steve & Sandy Stombaugh's nephew & Sue Schwarm's son-in-law, diagnosed with lung cancer with metastasis)
Sydney Rosborough (diagnosed with TOS)
Arlen Sidwell (Andy's mom, health issues)
Anna Syniuk (Zoryana's mother, suffered a stroke)
Donna Taylor (recovering from a brain bleed)
Heather (Jones) Thompson (breast cancer)
Les Vaughan (Lakeland Rehab)
Mike Wehrle (recovering, but still needing prayers)
Jeff Williams (BJ & Sharon Mueller's son in law, lung cancer)
Ken Williams (health concerns & strength for Peg as his caregiver)
Hudson Winters (diagnosed with LCH)
Lonna Woodruff (friend of the church, diagnosed with cancer)

Pastor’s Message

I wanted to take the time to share the Pastor’s Report that I shared at Charge Conference. Pastor’s Report to Charge Conference (October 2025)
State of the Church
I am blessed to have been appointed to Vandalia First for another year. The word of the moment last year was “transition,” and it could still be the right word. However, let us now call it “revitalization.” We’ve experienced many changes and challenges. There has been healing needed due to the pastoral transition, the effects of coming out of COVID, the natural challenges that come with transitions, and the aftermath of the General Conference. Last year, I said the church remains strong, resilient, and we trust that God is with us. That remains true. However, after our time together as a church—talking and dreaming—I would also say that the church is hungry for revitalization, to share the good news of Jesus Christ and the joy of being a part of the church community. The great strength of Vandalia UMC is its ability to continue ministry even in times of transition and revitalization. While pastors may change, people change, and the world changes, the ministry continues. As I type this I wonder how many years, and how many pastors have mentioned the same things. For example:

- Children and Youth Ministries:** These are thriving. Over 60 children attend midweek youth group, and our Sunday morning children’s ministries maintain steady attendance. We aim to further improve and reach even more of our community.
 - Mission Work:** Our mission efforts focus on both local needs (backpacks and school supplies, new coats and shoes for children at Christmas, food pantry, and many other forms of local outreach and care) and national efforts (Supporting UMCOR, as well as supporting several overseas missionaries). When asked, “What does our church do well?” the community’s answer is consistently our heart for missions. We are a mission-minded church.
- Looking ahead, beyond the ongoing transitions, our focus will be on communication and structure. Although times feel challenging, God is with us, and the energy of the laity remains strong. My hope is that we continue focusing on sharing Jesus with the community. Specifically, we aim to:
- Develop and empower leaders to fill vacancies and build a strong committee and church leadership structure.
 - Continue to work on communication across the board, from leadership to the congregation, finance to the church, social media, newsletters, prayer requests, and any other information that is best shared.
 - Start an alternative worship service in the next year.
 - Continue working through the Laity Roundtable ideas and pursue ministry with excellence in mind, paying special attention to excellence in Youth Ministry.
 - Continue working toward 150 in church attendance.
 - Focus on worship—whether in person, live online, or on-demand—striving for excellence in all areas.

Continuing Education and Pastoral, Spiritual Growth
I am actively involved in a covenant care group and maintain a regular practice of daily devotions and intensive weekly Bible study. Worship is, of course, a central part of my spiritual life. I continue to seek out continuing education opportunities, such as Covenant Keepers, the Leadership Institute, Greenhouse Leadership Development, and other possibilities as they arise. Additionally, I have set a personal goal of pursuing further education through doctoral studies.

Grace and Peace,
Curtis Flake, Pastor



The United Methodist Men are planning their annual **Fish Fry** for **Thursday, November 13th**, from **4:00pm to 6:30pm**. This year’s meal will be drive thru only as we did last year. We encourage you to support this fundraiser as proceeds are applied directly to the UMM Coats and Shoes program.



The Wisdom of Praise and Thanksgiving

~November 2025 Scripture Challenge~

When I turn the page in my calendar to November, my eyes are immediately drawn to the fourth Thursday – Thanksgiving! My favorite holiday...no gifts, just great food, warm memories, family time, friends time and thankfulness. It was with those thoughts in mind that Psalms was chosen as the source for our November 2025 Scripture Challenge.

Relax! You are not going to be challenged to read all 150 Psalms. Instead, wise ones have gone before you and selected 30 Psalms—one for each day—which focus on praise and thanksgiving.

The Psalms are often referred to as “the school of prayer.” They give us a model to follow for our own prayers and they encourage us to move beyond trite cliches to our own deepest emotions as we talk with God. The prayers we find in the Psalms take a variety of forms—lamentations (Psalm 79), wisdom (Psalm 37), penitential - sorrow for sins (Psalm 51) and joy of forgiveness (Psalm 31), trust (Psalm 57) and those we will be reading this month—Psalms of thanksgiving and praise

When asked to contribute their thinking and experience to this endeavor, Pastor Gary and Dorothy Ann Jenkins did not hesitate. Instead, they poured through their Bibles, looking for the list of 30 Psalms to recommend for our congregation to use as we pray daily words of thanksgiving and praise. Dorothy Ann described the effort as “a labor of love.” Thank you, Pastor Gary and Dorothy Ann, for giving your time to this undertaking and in so doing, helping us grow in faith, understanding and knowledge.

November 1 – Scripture Challenge #3 is underway! Maybe your reading time will not be as short as in October with the Proverbs, but it certainly won’t be as long as in September with the reading of all four Gospels. By reading, contemplating, sharing and discussing scripture, we are “planting and nurturing seeds of faith” and “cultivating devoted disciples of Christ,” as this church experiences new ministries, greater outreach and the ultimate revitalization.

In Christ’s love,
Ann Schwarm

