



## Monthly Newsletter

### February 2026

Sunday Worship: 8:30 a.m., 10:45 a.m.

Check us out on our web site [www.monticelloumc.com](http://www.monticelloumc.com)

#### *From Pastor Anne:*

There have been a number of folks who have had questions about the notice on the screens when it's time to take Communion, which for the past two years has read "*In the United Methodist Church, all baptized Christians are invited to share in the Lord's Table.*" It was meant to be welcoming: to let people know that they did not need to be a member of this congregation, or even of the United Methodist Church, in order to receive Communion. This practice (known as "open communion") is observed by the United Methodist, Episcopal, ELCA, PCUS, UCC, Moravian, Disciples of Christ, and several Baptist denominations.

Back in 2012, Charles Heffling writing for *The Christian Century* pointed out that "The received understanding has always included a proviso, sometimes explicitly stated but often simply assumed: "All are welcome to receive" has been taken to mean "all Christians," which in turn has been understood as including all (and only) those who have been baptized with water in the name of the Trinity. In other words, an open eucharistic service has been open irrespective of denominational status but not of baptismal status."

Mr. Heffling made his observation in light of the fact that even the minimal standard of baptism in order to receive communion was beginning to fade away in some churches. The leading UM voice in this movement is that of Rev. Dr. Mark Stamm, who suggests that in a context of a deliberate and comprehensive program of discipleship, receiving Holy Communion might well come to *precede* Baptism as a means of encountering God. (*Let Every Soul Be Jesus' Guest*; Abingdon, 2006). It should go without saying that neither the Pastor nor the Communion servers are checking anybody's baptismal certificate at the Communion Table. Certainly anyone who is moved to do so is welcome to receive the body & blood of Christ at our services (though it is to be hoped that they will request the sacrament of Baptism expeditiously.) Nevertheless, seeking to err on the side of hospitality, the notice in the bulletin and on the screens will now read, "*In the United Methodist Church, all Christians regardless of denomination or church membership are invited to share in the Lord's Table.*"

## *Our Sympathy...*

...to the friends and family of Jay Mueller, who passed away on January 2, 2026. A celebration of Life was held for him at MUMC Saturday, January 17.

## *Thank Yous*

On behalf of Dick Dean's family, I wish to thank my beloved UMC family and friends for all the support and love they have shown. It has been a difficult time in our lives and we have been very blessed. Thank you. God bless each and everyone.

Mary Ellen Dean and family

Thank you to those who contributed in any way to the 2025 Cookie Walk. \$855 was raised and given to the Piatt County Ecumenical Food Pantry. Thank You to Carolyn Vanderklot who organized the event. The funds were used toward the cost of the extra \$40 holiday vouchers given to each family who visits the pantry.

*“Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”*

*Galatians 6:9*

In appreciation, The Families Who Shop the Food Pantry

## *Stewardship Update*

Sweatshirts and long sleeve T's are here! If you placed an order for one it is now in the atrium with your name on it. Additionally, if you didn't receive a tshirt this fall there are now a few extras in each size so let us know if you need one. The directory is in the process of being designed and we'll be able to provide a better ETA in February. Last, it's never too late to complete a 2026 pledge card. It can still help with planning for the year ahead!

## *W.A.T.Ch. Meals*

- February 4 - Beef and noodles, mashed potatoes 'n' gravy, green beans, rolls, Tahitian Sunrise Cake
- February 11-Ham 'n' Beans, fried potatoes, Cole slaw, corn bread, Cherry Crisp, ice cream
- February 17 **SHROVE TUESDAY**- pancakes, sausage, bacon, chunky apple sauce, King Cake
- February 25 -Roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, marinated green beans, rolls, bread pudding with lemon sauce

## **Youth Ministry News**

Did you know that you can be a part of the youth group? Yes! You can sign to provide a meal for our youth group! Each Sunday night the youth group has a meal together and that is thanks to our church. Each week we have family or a group volunteer to make the youth a meal. If you would like to sign up please see Will or send him an email ([wpontious1@gmail.com](mailto:wpontious1@gmail.com)). Our youth really appreciate your generosity!

## **Fun & Fellowship News**

The chili cook off and bingo event made for a fun afternoon and we're thankful for all those that were able to join us. Kim Dancy was this year's Chili Winner! Mark your calendars for Sunday February 8th for Football Fellowship Sunday. Get your favorite sports jersey ready for church!

Looking Ahead: Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday March 28th! And then coming this spring...watch for more info to come for our first ever Senior Prom (Ages 55 and older). We can't wait to share

## **New Member Class**

Maybe you've been attending worship at Monticello UMC for a few weeks or months and would like to explore becoming a member of our congregation. Maybe you've been part of this congregation's life for many years, and just have never gotten around to becoming a full professing member. (Maybe you don't even *know* if you are "official" or not - call or email the office. We can tell you.) Whatever the reason ***you are invited*** to join our New Member Class. We will hold two half-hour meetings per week through the season of Lent, and ***you can choose each week*** which meeting you want to go to. I hope to see you there!

### Class Meetings

Sunday, February 22nd 9:45 - 10:15 a.m. ***or*** Wednesday, February 25th 5:30-6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 1st 9:45 - 10:15 a.m. ***or*** Wednesday, March 4th 5:30-6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 8th 9:45 - 10:15 a.m. ***or*** Wednesday, March 11th 5:30-6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 15th 9:45 - 10:15 a.m. ***or*** Wednesday, March 18th 5:30-6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 22nd 9:45 - 10:15 a.m. ***or*** Wednesday, March 25th 5:30-6:00 p.m.

## **Lent Is Coming**

...and it's sooner than you think! We will kick off our Lenten season with our Third Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 17th, at which we will enjoy Harry & David's delicious pancakes and tolerate Pastor Anne explaining what "Shrove" means. Our Ash Wednesday will begin with *Drive Through Ashes-To-Go* available under the

portico from 6:30-7:30 a.m. and will end with a cooperative worship service at Cisco United Methodist Church at 7:00 p.m. Our Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>. Palm/Passion Sunday is a 5th Sunday of the month so we will have a combined service at 10:00 a.m. at which we will enjoy a presentation of the cantata *Come Walk With Me* by our Sanctuary Choir. Our Holy Week services will be offered cooperatively with the congregation of Cisco UMC. Maundy Thursday will be celebrated in Cisco and Good Friday in Monticello. Easter Sunday is on April 5th.

## *Outreach News*

Summary of 2025:

- Food Pantry- The pantry continued to “grow” in 2025 and we are now regularly serving 20-25 families a week. We get at least one new client per week now. November saw a temporary halt of SNAP benefits so additional new clients came around that time for a while. Luckily, our ecumenical donor family, as well as the community as a whole, really has stepped up enormously. Several food drives were held during the holidays and we are well stocked for the new year.
- Community Assistance- we provided financial assistance to 40 families, a few of them multiple times within the year. The number of other agencies with which we can coordinate efforts to help those in need also continues to grow as more and more have attended our quarterly meetings for networking. A Piatt County Housing Coalition was developed and meets here monthly to discuss ways we can increase the availability of low income housing in our community.
- Our \$7100 giving to United Methodist affiliated missions once more qualified MUMC as a Five-Star church. In addition, \$10,161.89 was given to various other missions locally, regionally, and abroad.
- Giving Tree collections yielded \$365 for Hope on 5th temporary housing shelter and \$535 for K9s for Warriors. The donations were able to be made before the year end.

**All in all, MUMC Outreach spent \$93,628.63 in 2025! Thank you to residents and businesses of the community, fellow churches, and, of course, to the MUMC church family for all your generous tithes to support our efforts.**

## **Typical Weekly events:**

Worship Services, Sunday at 8:30 and at 10:45, with Sunday School in between at 9:45.

T.O.P.S., Monday, 4 pm

Food Pantry, Tu & Th 12:45-3 pm, Wednesday, 5:30-7 pm

Boy Scouts, Monday, 7 pm (if school is in session)

Mat Weaving for Midwest Missions - Every third Monday of the month at 9 am

“Just Walking” - Tu & Th, 8:30 am - Half hour devotional followed by indoor walking

Bible Study Wednesdays, 1:15 pm

W.A.T.Ch. Meals - Wed, 5 pm (September through mid-May)

Sanctuary Choir rehearsals, Wed, 6 pm; Bell Choir & New Day rehearsals -Wed, 7pm\*

Youth Group, Sunday, 5-7:15 pm; mid August through mid-May

Summer Singers - Thursdays at 6:30 pm, June through mid-August

\*(Sanctuary Choir and New Day take rehearsal hiatus June through August)

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### **Thursday, February 5th**

Hospitality Comm. Mtg, 6 pm

### **Tuesday, February 17th**

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 5 pm

### **Saturday, February 7th**

4H, 11:30 am

### **Wednesday, February 18th**

Ash Wednesday

### **Sunday, February 8**

No Youth Group

### **Sunday, February 22**

New Member Class, 9:45 am

4H, 2:30

### **Monday, February 9th**

P.E.O., 6:15 pm

Fun & Fellowship Comm. Mtg, 6:30 pm

### **Tuesday, February 24**

Worship Comm. Mtg, 7 pm ?

### **Thursday, February 12th**

Safety Policy Committee Mtg, 6 pm

### **Wednesday, February 25**

New Member Class, 5:30 pm

### **Sunday, February 15th**

Youth Group to Urban Air, 2-7 pm