



“Developing Followers of Jesus Christ to Serve the World”

Tidings

Union United Methodist Church, Belleville, IL

December 4, 2025



Waiting for the Light

“This is a joyous time of the year.” We hear that often. But is it always so?

Each Advent season, many carry burdens that make it difficult to feel joy. Some in our community have lost income and could not receive the pay they hoped for. Some are anxious about health care or medical bills. Some are searching for work. Others are grieving loved ones who will not be here this Christmas. Many are recovering from surgery, battling cancer, or living with chronic illness. For some, this season is not bright—it is heavy.

Advent meets us exactly there. It reminds us that the first Christmas was not peaceful either—Mary and Joseph traveled under pressure, Jesus was born in uncertain and humble conditions, and the world was full of fear and unrest. Into that darkness, God came. Light broke through.

Advent is a season of coming. While our lives are full of going—going to work, school, errands, appointments—Advent invites us to slow down and wait for Christ’s coming. In the quiet, we remember that God still comes to us: with comfort, with strength, with hope.

My prayer for you is simple: May the angel’s message be yours today—“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy” (Luke 2:10)

With hope,
Pastor Angie Lee

Online Worship Community

If you worship with us online—whether through YouTube at 9:00 am or Facebook at 11:15 am—please know that we are here to meet your spiritual needs and help you stay connected.

One of my goals is to strengthen our online community and ensure that everyone feels included, no matter where you worship from. If you would like to receive the church bulletin or sermon manuscript in advance, please let us know.

I also welcome your feedback on how we can make our online worship experience even better. If you’re interested in joining a coffee hour via Zoom or participating in a Bible study online, please reach out—I’d love to hear from you. You can contact me at angie@unionumc.org or church office sheri@unionumc.org.

Pastor Angie

2
Journey

3
UWF

8
Poinsettia Order Form

9
Fine Arts Concert

10
Christmas at Union

11
Music Tidings

United Women in Faith
10:00 am
Krause Room
2nd Wednesday (not July)
*Special events posted in
Tidings and the bulletin*

United Methodist Men
Third Wednesday 5:30 pm
Krause Room

**Ruth Circle
Quilters/Stitchers**
Each Thursday 9:00 am
Krause Room

Horticulture
Each Wednesday, 9 am
Coffee, 8 am
Krause Room

Junior Church
(Kindergarten – 4th
Grade)
Junior Church is held
during the 9:00 am
worship service

No Sunday School:



December 28

Jane Peters
Sunday School Superintendent



Join us for coffee and
fellowship in McKinley Hall
following 9:00 am worship.

Deadline change for Tidings:

Please mark your calendar.....
accommodating the holidays is not
easy!

The January 2 deadline is now
December 19.

Union UMC live stream services

9 am service:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Kent5122>

or later through YouTube
Union United Methodist Church,
Belleville, Illinois

11:15 service:

[https://www.facebook.com/
CrosswalkUnionUmc](https://www.facebook.com/CrosswalkUnionUmc)

Tidings

Union United Methodist Church
721 East Main Street
Belleville, Illinois 62220
618-233-6375

Pastor: Rev. Angie Lee

Thel Lemons, Editor

Please attach copy to email or text the
information to the editor:
chefthel@aol.com
618/530-8435

**Upcoming Tidings
deadlines (12 pm):**

**December 19
January 23**

JOURNEY CHURCH

900 NORTH STATE STREET, FREEBURG, IL 62243
618-710-0224 WWW.JOURNEYUMC.ORG

Continuing the Journey What's Happening in Freeburg

Last time I shared with you that I was including Jesus Loves You bracelets with treats for Halloween. I did do that. The disappointing part was that we didn't have many kids come by our house. But I haven't given up! I am carrying the goody bags with me on errands to give out to adults, because Jesus loves adults, too! Everyone needs to know that Jesus loves them, don't you think?

Our next First Wednesday Event will be on December 3rd, and will feature holiday appetizers and a Christmas carol sing along.

Our Feed the Kids is underway. We provide some groceries for students identified by Freeburg schools. This year the count is 50, and may even increase. Yes, we have some budget for that, but as you can imagine, we will go through that quickly. We are accepting donations of food from the specific list below. Or you can easily donate through www.journeyumc.org. Just click on Donate / Feed the Kids. Of course, adding it to your Sunday offering works, too.

- Applesauce cups
- Cheese & crackers
- Corn or Green beans (canned)
- Fruit snacks
- Juice boxes
- Macaroni & cheese
- Nutri-grain bars
- Oatmeal packets
- Pop Tarts
- Pasta (canned)
- Pudding cups
- Ramen noodles
- Soup (canned)



Please make sure items are not expired!

"Cathy O"

Cathy Obernuefemann
Journey Worship Leader

EVERY WEEK

- Worship - Sundays at 10:15 am with Pastor Mike Olson and Journey Praise Band
- College & Career Bible Study - Sundays at 4 pm with Jenny Olson 618-979-3937 or jolson@nashville-k12.org
- Bible Study – Wednesdays at 6 pm with Jenny Olson, 618-979-3937 or jolson@nashville-k12.org (not first Wednesdays)
- AA and Al-Anon - Thursdays at 7 pm; Eric G., 618-406-0366

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS:

November 30 First Sunday in Advent; decorate after Worship
December 3 First Wednesday Event: Holiday appetizers and
Christmas carol sing along
December 6-7 Community parades
December 14 Caroling; no College & Career
December 24 Christmas Eve Worship, 5 pm

**United Women in Faith News
December**



The Union UWF is excited for the upcoming advent season. We invite all women of the church to join us December 10 for our Christmas meeting.

The various UWF circles (Elizabeth, Lydia, Mary, Miriam, Ruth) will host a variety of Christmas events throughout the month of December. Fun programs, caroling, ornament exchanges, card sending, yummy meals, etc., will be shared with our members. It is certainly a time of celebration and rejoicing in the birth of our savior Jesus Christ!

We will also serve our annual Christmas Tea on Sunday, December 21, following the 9am service. Please plan to attend! It's a wonderful time to socialize with other church members and enjoy delicious treats.

Keep Praying!
Marjie

WEDNESDAYS AT UNION—2026 Looking Ahead

Format

- 4:15 pm – Chair Yoga with Prayer
- 5:30 pm – Dinner
- 6:30 pm – Bible Study

Dates

Spring: 10 weeks, from February 18 - April 29

- * Includes Ash Wednesday service, 5 Lent services, 4 Bible studies
- * No meeting on April 1 due to Holy Week

Fall: 10 weeks, from September 16 - November 18
Concludes with the Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Winter: 3 weeks in the morning during December
(December 2, 9, 16, 2026)

CHAIR YOGA WITH PRAYER

Beginning November 26, Chair Yoga with Prayer will be offered year-round.

When: Every Wednesday, 4:15–5:15 pm
(no class on December 24 and 31, 2025;
March 4 and 11, 2026;
two weeks in summer;
and December 30, 2026)

Where: Krause Room

**UWF Christmas Meeting
December 10**

11:30, Krause Room

All women of the church—their daughters, daughters-in-law, sisters, friends and neighbors—are invited to UWF's Christmas program and lunch.

Lunch Served by the Executive Team
Program by Jo Ellyn Lynn and Thel Lemons

Come for fellowship, food and holiday program!



Miriam Circle serves at Memorial Reception
Miriam Circle November meeting



Ruth and Mary Circles host bake sale after church

Mary Circle meets the 3rd Sunday of every month (unless noted otherwise) from 10:30 -11:00 am.

December 21, no meeting

Contact Stephanie Pierce, 618-406-7960, for more information.





The Worship Committee encourages you to get involved! Volunteers are always needed for the following at the 9:00 service:

Liturgists (read scripture and Call to Worship)
please contact Lisa Koerkenmeier at
koer1922@gmail.com or 618-979-2085

Ushers
please contact Danny Nollman at nollmandl@att.net or
call 618-334-0320

Greeters
please contact Judy Eckert at
judy.eckert@eckerts.com or 618-476-1757



76 Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes were delivered to the collection center on Tuesday, 11/18, to be distributed throughout the world with the message of God's love. Thank you for supporting this UWF project.

We will continue "Dinner & the Word" in February 2026. The group will watch Season 2 episodes this next year. This is a fun group with lively discussions and delicious potlucks. Please feel free to join whenever your schedule allows. Hint! If you read the bible you know the storyline! But this series helps the characters come alive!

Hosts are Bruce and Marjie Simms: 618-623-9279;
address, 1745 St. Andrews Dr., Shiloh

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

"2nd Tuesday BBQ"

"2nd Tuesday BBQ" for the men of Union will gather at Edley's BBQ in O'Fallon at 11:30 A.M. on Tuesday, December 9th. No reservation required. Just show up for some great food and fellowship! Any questions, call Joe Milton, 618-235-5344.

Angel Tree Announcement 🎄

Our Outreach Committee is excited to support Douglas School and the Salvation Army through this year's Angel Tree Ministry!



As you walk through the church, please take a moment to check the Christmas Trees located around the building. Each tree holds angel tags with gift requests for children and families in need this Christmas season. If you feel led, please choose a tag, purchase the gift listed, and return it unwrapped with the tag attached.

📅 All gifts are due back to the church by December 14. Thank you for helping us share Christ's love and make Christmas brighter for our neighbors!



The Outreach Committee is grateful for the generosity of our members in providing Thanksgiving food baskets for 76 families of Douglas School, along with a gift card to purchase protein. The principal and social worker helped us load the bags of food and they were very thankful!

The Outreach Committee recently applied for a grant from the Illinois Great Rivers Conference for our Food Pantry Ministry. These grants were made available due to the recent government shutdown. We are thankful to have been approved to receive \$1,000 for this mission that we provide for our community. We are also thankful for the support of our members who provide regular, ongoing donations to this ministry.



Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:4-9

The Christmas Tea sponsored by UWF will be December 21 and honors the church's choirs and musicians.



UWF requests donations of two dozen homemade cookies from members of the congregation for this event. Your cookie contribution can be dropped off Saturday, December 20 between 11:30-12 pm or Sunday by 8:30 am.

UWF also prepares cookie boxes for the shut-ins of the church.

Donations of packaged cookies and packaged drink mixes are also requested. These items will be delivered to Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House.

Thank you in advance for always making this event so special.

Jo Ellyn Lynn and Sandy Patrick

Hobby Time

Room 211
4:30 pm – 7:30 pm



These are open times;
you are welcome to come and go as you please.

Bring your portable hobby, a snack, and a friend for fellowship and fun as you work on a project. *Please contact Becky Keiser, 618-795-0317 for more information.*



"Rise and Shine" at Crosswalk

Hurrah For Hot Dogs!

Union Church had a great fall season of showing God's love to our neighbors. Thanks to our new canopy, we were able to set up the hot dog stand close to the road and thus were much more noticeable.

We had many more people stop by and get food for the body, as well as food for the soul (prayer for their concerns).

It is amazing that 99% of our "customers" had serious prayer concerns that they shared with us. That shows just how we were God's ears and hands to our neighbors. For a small investment, this is a bountiful spiritual harvest!

Thank you to all our volunteers: Rev. Angie and S.J. Lee, Denise Gaynor, Carl Buehler, Suzanne Hutcherson, Jim Eckert, Allynn Walker, Linda Moyer, Jane Peters, Mike Callaghan, Mary Peck, and Mardy Eisloeffel.

We will begin the Hot Dog and Prayer Project again in the Spring.



At first glance, would you invite this guy to your Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner? Just as the inn keeper turned away Mary and Joseph, we probably would turn away someone that doesn't look the way we think they should. If he would have known Mary was about to give birth to the Savior of the world, would he have made a different decision?

Would it change your mind if you knew that this guy is a Contemporary Christian musician, singer and song writer? He is the very talented David Crowder. This season of Advent, Crosswalk will be singing one of his Christmas songs, "Your Praise Goes On". The chorus says "It's been 2000 years and we're still singing your song. Hallelujah!" It is so good to praise Him and I hope you can join us on Sunday mornings to do just that.

Also join us on Christmas Eve at 4pm in the sanctuary for a beautiful service of music, communion and candle light. We will be telling the Christmas story through a program called "Light Shines In the Darkness". It will be a special hour you want to be a part of.



November 30 – "Your Praise Goes On" by Crowder
December 7 – "God's Gift To Us" by Natalie Grant
December 14 – "Face Of God" by Phil Wickham
December 21 – "I've Heard About You" by Crowder
December 28 – "Just A Girl" by Brandon Heath



The sign-up for altar flowers in 2026 is now available in the Welcome Center (look for yellow folder).

Arrangements are \$25 and you may take them home with you after the service.

You may sign up for as many Sundays as you wish.



A bit of a slow two months! We had monetary donations in September from **Bob Brunkow, Sue Davis, Bob Inman and Jerry Sauerwein!** In

October, **Bob Brunkow, Ann Braun and the Bank of Belleville** made donations. People are struggling out there so please keep them in mind! Thanks for the continued support of our Food Pantry. Thanks to the people who bag it up and straighten up the shelves (**Linda Moyer, Don Stein and Mike Engel**) - and to **Linda Moyer** who also does the heavy lifting by buying the food we need!

Kay MacIntire



Last call! December 7 is the last Sunday to bring in your canned goods that will be used as the offering at the "Kids for Kids" Christmas Eve service.

If you could wrap them in white paper (tissue paper works great; use white ribbon to tie it up), the Worship Committee would appreciate it. Nonetheless, your donations will be wrapped and ready for the Kids for Kids Christmas Eve service. Thanks in advance for participating in this worthy project. Our food pantry thanks you too.....



Sleep In Heavenly Peace "Deliveries Across America" will be Saturday, December 13th at 8:30 at Grace Church in Fairview Heights. Sleep In Heavenly Peace - Metro-East will be delivering beds, just in

time for Christmas. Several teams will deliver and assemble some of the beds that Union UMC helped build in September. No experience necessary. If you have questions, contact Joe Milton, 618-235-5344.

No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town!

Visitation and Other Good Stuff with Dr. Joe Scheets December 2025



Then and Now/Now and Then

Harry Styles, Toby Keith, Bob Seger, Bruce Springsteen and too many others to name here all have at least one thing in common: songs about how much better things used to be. For example ---
I ain't as good as I once was

You know it's not the same as it was

*Call me a relic, call me what you will
Say I'm old-fashioned, say I'm over the hill
Today's music ain't got the same soul
I like that old time*

*Glory days
They'll pass you by, glory days
I hope when I get old,
I don't sit around thinking about it
But I probably will
Time slips away
Leaves you with nothing, mister, but boring stories of
Glory days*

--- We sometimes do that in church as well. We have moments when we wonder "Why were the former days better than these?" and "How can we get them back?"

We might start with how "back then" (in the *glory days*) "our hymns said something" (not unlike *today's music ain't got the same soul*). Then we look around at how "the culture's changed for the worse" (meaning *it's not the same as it was*). We usually point out that "even the church has changed" which should include correctly, maybe even

I'm writing in first person plural, and with good reason. Each of those songs was catchy and said a lot for a lot of people. Sometimes yours truly included.

I sometimes wonder why former days were better than these. You, too?

Meanwhile, here we are in the Season of the Gospel we call Advent. Traditionally understood as the beginning of the Liturgical Church Calendar for Worship, it's the time to remember God's promises already fulfilled in Christ Jesus and to prepare our hearts and minds for his Second Coming.

Someone long ago noted that we live in The In-Between Time of what God did and what God shall do. We are somewhere on a journey from the Already to the Not Yet. Advent clarifies that for us annually.

As hymn 383 in our official United Methodist Hymnal puts it, *This is a day of new beginnings; our God is making all things new.*

I can forget what that hymn and so much of Scripture promises. You, too?

And then there's Ecclesiastes 7:10. It advises us directly, *Do not say, "Why were the former days better than these?"* Even more pointedly and perhaps painfully, that same verse concludes with the observation that *It is not from wisdom that you ask this.* Oops.

Join me in remembering the lyrics of a great Charles Wesley song (p. 201 in our hymnal):

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus
Born to set thy people free
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in thee*

--- and from that *freedom* and *rest* in Christ may we find that *our God is indeed making all things new*, including us, too. Amen?

--- Rev. Dr. Joe Scheets, joescheets3@gmail.com and 217.377.8049

A Huge Thank You!

Our hearts are full of gratitude for everyone who came together to make Haircuts for Hope, the Shower Ministry, and Pastor Angie's Wednesday at Union Thanksgiving Meal a wonderful success.

Thank you to every volunteer, every committee, and every person in our congregation who served with monetary, love, joy, and compassion. You truly embodied Christ's hands and feet in our community.

Laura Koehler



Why Our Discipleship Pathway Matters

- At Union, we believe faith grows best in community.
- A clear discipleship pathway helps newcomers feel welcomed, supported, and guided as they take their next steps. It also reminds us that spiritual growth is a journey—we walk together, learn together, and discover God’s grace together.
- By offering simple, meaningful steps, we hope every person can find a place to belong and a way to deepen their life with Christ.

Discipleship Pathway for Newcomers at Union UMC

New to Union? We’d love to get to know you! Our discipleship pathway is a simple way to help you connect, grow, and deepen your faith through Union UMC.

Step 1: Say hello and receive a welcome bag. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Angie or one of our greeters after worship. We’d love to greet you and offer a welcome bag as a small gift from our church.

Step 2: Share a meal and conversation. Our greeting team can schedule a lunch with one of our pastors—lunch is on us. It’s an easy, relaxed time to share your story and learn more about life at Union.

Step 3: Get involved. Explore opportunities that match your interests—small groups, Wednesday Bible study, or missional outreach. Take a simple first step, and feel free to talk with a pastor. We can help you find what fits you best.

Step 4: Deepen your commitment to Christ. As you grow, we invite you to take deeper steps of faith through the life of Union UMC. New Members Classes are available for baptism, reaffirming faith, or joining the church.



But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.”
 Luke 18:16



Sunday drama presented by Susan Botula and Julie Callaghan

Poinsettia Order Form
 (Please Print)

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Celebration of: _____

\$15.00 each (you may order as many as you like)

of poinsettias ordered: _____ Total \$ _____

Donated By: _____



Please Place in the Offering Plate or bring to the Churchoffice by **Monday, December 15th**

Christmas Time at Union The Sanctuary Choir



**9:00 A.M. Sunday,
December 21, 2025**

Union United Methodist Church
721 East Main Street, Belleville

You are invited to the UWF Tea following the service.



CHRISTMAS AT UNION

Advent Bible Study

Wednesdays, December 3, 10, 17, at 10:00 a.m.
Discover the deeper meaning of the Nativity stories and
God's hope for the world.

Angel Breakfast

Saturday, December 6th at 8:30 a.m.
Start the Christmas season with this joyful family event
featuring a nativity craft, breakfast, the story of Jesus'
birth, family photos, and angel choir singing carols.

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 14, at 9:00 a.m.
Be inspired by a joyful retelling of the Christmas story by
our children and youth.

Blue Christmas Service

Thursday, December 18, at 4:00 p.m. (followed by a light
supper) This quiet, reflective service offers comfort and
hope.

Carols and Scripture Service

Sunday, December 21, at 9:00 a.m. (followed by a reception)
Enjoy beautiful music by the Ramos Family Strings.

Christmas Eve Services

Wednesday, December 24

- 2:00 p.m. – “By Kids and For Kids” Service: A lively, child-friendly celebration perfect for families with young children.
- 4:00 p.m. – Candlelight and Communion Service: Featuring contemporary music and welcoming atmosphere.
- 11:00 p.m. – Candlelight and Communion Service: A beautiful, traditional worship experience with beloved Christmas hymns.



Union United Methodist Church

721 East Main

Belleville, Illinois 62220

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
ORG/
PAID
U.S. Postage
Belleville, Illinois
Permit #124

Sanctuary Choir Party
and Potluck, Sunday,
December 21, at 4 PM
at the Corner George
Inn in Maeystown.



Hosts are David and
Marcia Braswell; Meat and drink

Calling all ringers!
Jubilation Handbells will
meet Thursday, December
4, 11 and 18 from 6:30 - 7:30 pm in
Room 214. If you can read music, we
would love to have you join us. No
experience necessary. We will ring at
the 11:00 pm Christmas Eve Service



CROSSWALK

**Sundays at 11:15
Chapel**

[https://www.facebook.com/
CrosswalkUnionUmc](https://www.facebook.com/CrosswalkUnionUmc)

MUSIC TIDINGS

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the
heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the
highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Luke 2:13-14

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

9 am - Sanctuary Choir anthem -

"Praise Ye The Lord" from Saint-Saens "Christmas Oratorio"

Rev. Lee's sermon: "Hope: Wake Up to Hope"

Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

9 am - Sanctuary Choir anthem - "People, Look East" - Courtney

4-hand piano with Gail Long and Steve Bloomer

"Holy Grapes", youth choir, will sing:

"What You Gonna Call The Pretty Little Baby"

Rev. Lee's sermon: "Peace: A Path to Peace"; Matthew 3:1-12

Communion

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

9 am - Children's Christmas Pageant

Reception following



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

9 am - Sanctuary Choir Carol Service

with the Ramos family string quintet

Rev. Lee will deliver the message

Christmas Tea

by the Union United Women in Faith following the service