



"Developing Followers of Jesus Christ to Serve the World"

Tidings

Union United Methodist Church, Belleville, IL

July 2, 2026



This summer, I experienced something completely new. For the first time in my life, I joined a musical production. I had never been involved in the performing arts before, so I was both excited and nervous.

I am part of the ensemble. Wanting to do my best, I practiced faithfully at home. After enough repetition, I thought, "I've got it!"

Then came rehearsal.

Suddenly, I was not singing by myself anymore. Other people were singing different parts. The music was louder. I had to watch everyone else's movements, remember the choreography, move to the right place, and somehow keep singing at the same time. To my surprise, everything I thought I knew disappeared! More than once, I found myself standing there wondering, "What happened to the song I knew so well at home?"

It made me laugh, but it also taught me something about the Christian life.

It is not very difficult to think we are patient when no one is testing our patience. It is easy to believe we are loving when no one is difficult to love. We may even think we are righteous when we are by ourselves. But Christian character is not developed in isolation. It is revealed—and shaped—in relationships.

God's love is relational. God's righteousness is relational. God's holiness is relational. Throughout Scripture, these qualities are lived out in God's relationship with God's people and in our relationships with one another. We learn forgiveness by forgiving. We learn patience by being patient with others. We learn grace by giving and receiving grace.

In many ways, life is more like singing in a chorus than singing a solo. It is one thing to know the notes by ourselves. It is another to sing them together while listening to one another, adjusting, and working as one body.

Our faith is not merely something we believe; it is something we practice every day in our relationships. Perhaps that is why Jesus summarized the law so simply: love God and love your neighbor.

I am still learning my part—and still trying to remember all 29 colors in the right order, with the right tune and rhythm! But through this experience, I have been grateful to be involved. I leave these rehearsals with a deeper appreciation for the gifts God has given each person and for the beautiful things that can happen when those gifts are shared in community.

Blessings,
Pastor Angie

2
VBS

4
UWF

5
Journey

7
Save the Date

11
Music Tidings

United Women in Faith
10:00 am
Krause Room
2nd Wednesday
(not January, April or 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

Dinner & The Word will *not* meet on July 3 in observance of July 4 holiday.

We will resume on the first Friday of August (August 7) to watch "The Chosen"; Season 2. We will meet at Bruce & Marjie Simms' home at 6 pm. We will enjoy a potluck (theme will be announced later).

Please RSVP by August 5. Marjie's phone number: 618-623-9279

Simms address: 1745 St. Andrews Dr., Shiloh.

Everyone is welcome.

Union UMC live stream services

9 am service:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Kent512>

2

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

11:15 service:

<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

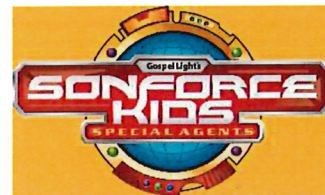
**Upcoming Tidings
deadlines (12 pm):**

July 31
August 28
September 25

VBS SonForce Kids Special Agents

Online registration starts May 25th for VBS
There is **no fee** so invite your friends too.
You can sign up on the website.

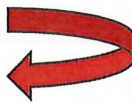
Monday, July 27th - Friday, June 31st
6:00 - 8:00 pm



Our VBS theme this year is SonForce Kids Special Agents, where kids become part of God's courageous team of disciples standing side-by-side to serve Him. As SonForce Special Agents, they will follow in the words of Joshua 1:9: *Be strong and courageous. do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.*

Please register your children so they don't miss this fun-filled VBS.

Any questions, contact Jane Peters, 618-406-7607



VBS VOLUNTEERS

Registration for volunteers. Please register so I can have an accurate count to order t-shirts and I can see the area you are interested in serving.

Please go to the church's website to sign up.



Throughout July, you are invited to **place your questions** about the Bible, faith, life, spirituality, the church, or anything related to your faith in our Question Box.

This fall, we will begin a sermon series shaped by the questions of our congregation and community. We also hope to offer a short-term Sunday School class where people can continue these conversations and share their thoughts together.

Hobby Time



Wednesday
McKinley Hall
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.*

Joint Worship & Church Picnic: Faith, Freedom, and Fellowship

On Sunday, June 14, members and friends of Union United Methodist Church, Journey Church, and Bethel United Methodist Church gathered for our Joint Worship Service and Church Picnic. We thank God for blessing us with a beautiful day and for the spirit of harmony, joy, and Christian fellowship we experienced together.

Our worship centered on the theme "Faith, Freedom, and Fellowship," in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States. As we gave thanks for our nation's history and the freedoms we enjoy, we also celebrated our unity in Christ. Although we worship in three different congregations, we experienced the joy of being one body, sharing worship, conversation, and fellowship around the table.

We had 154 reservations (Union 90, Journey 18, and Bethel 46), and approximately 145 people attended. It was wonderful to see members of all three congregations enjoying time together and strengthening the friendships that unite our churches.

A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who made the day possible—those who planned the event, prepared and served the meal, provided music, led worship, set up, cleaned up, and volunteered in so many ways. Your generous service reflected Christ's love in action.

The total cost of the event was \$680.79, including chicken, paper products, condiments, and the park shelter rental. A freewill offering of \$951.00 was received, leaving a balance of \$270.21.

The three pastors and the planning teams from all three churches agreed to use the remaining offering to support ministry in the Mascoutah community. The Church Council of Bethel UMC subsequently voted to designate the remaining \$270.21 to the Summer Sack Lunch Program for school-age children in Mascoutah. Through this community ministry, local churches take turns preparing and delivering lunches to eligible children during the summer. Bethel UMC will serve June 29–July 3. We are grateful that the generosity shared during our joint worship and picnic will continue to bless children and families in our community.

We give thanks to God for a wonderful day of worship, fellowship, partnership, and service. May God continue to strengthen the ministry we share together.

Angie Lee



Suzanne Hutcherson serves as UUMC's Prayer Ministry Coordinator. If you have a prayer request that you would like to include on our weekly distribution list, please send it to Suzanne via email: suzannehutcherson@att.net. You may also leave a message on her landline phone: 618-235-3793 and she will promptly return your call.



Raise Right Order: Sunday, July 5
Delivery: July 12

10:00 - 10:15 at the Welcome Desk
(check or exact cash)

Please visit RaiseRight.com for a full list of retailers or contact Stephanie Pierce at 618-406-7960 for more information. *Proceeds benefit missions of the UWF.*



Blessing on Michael and Morgan Howland and boys as they move to their new assignment.



Congratulations to recent graduates:

Cailyn Kaemmerer
Jerard Perez
Hunter Kaemmerer
Andrew Delabre
Cooper Binder

High School

Belleville West
Belleville West
Belleville West
O'Fallon Township
Eastern Kentucky University Model School, Richmond, KY

8th grade

Leah Sonsoucie
Abby Melton
Zoey Pierce
Max Ticknor
Jonah Emge

Shiloh Middle School
Millstadt
Millstadt



On July 14th the 2nd **Tuesday BBQ Men** will gather at Beast Craft BBQ, 20 South Belt West at 11:30. Bring your appetite and a friend for some great fellowship at the #1-rated BBQ in the area! No reservation needed. Any questions, contact Joe Milton, 618-235-5344.



Union's Women of Faith continue with their mission incentives! We are enjoying fellowship with members near and far. Elizabeth Circle travelled to Missouri to enjoy lunch with long-time member Marilyn Cunningham (and Gary). Laura Koehler enjoyed a week helping with Girl Scout Camp. Cards have been sent by Lydia Circle to shut ins.



Elizabeth Circle members enjoyed lunch with long-time members Gary and Marilyn Cunningham in June

Miriam Circle held a delicious bake sale. And we were thrilled to host one of the receptions following the performances of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat"! Good work everyone!

Prayers also have gone out for members that have passed away, dealt with surgery, and those who are traveling.

Our thanks to Karen Milton for hosting a fun Luau at her home on June 10. The Leadership Team provided the tasty food.

Summer is not even half over, and already we're looking ahead to our school supplies drive. Please check out the article by our new Child Advocate, Allynn Walker.

There will be no unit meeting in July, but plan to be present at the August 12 meeting in the Krause Room at 10 am. Miriam Circle is the host. Ruth Circle has July's card ministry, Keep praying, Marjie



Sixteen Miriams enjoyed lunch at Graphite in Columbia



Every child should have the tools they need to succeed and thrive! So again this year we're collecting school supplies. The United Women of Faith will deliver them to Lessie Bates Davis

Neighborhood House, Douglas School (go Tigers!) and other District 118 schools.

Items needed are pencils, erasers, colored pencils, crayons (24 per box), markers, paper and notebooks (wide ruled), hi-liters and glue. Monetary donations will also be accepted. Checks should be made payable to UUMC with "school supplies" written on notation line.

A collection box will be in the Welcome Center Sundays July 26 & August 2. On behalf of the children, we thank God for your generosity.



Luau at Karen Milton's



Mary Circle meets the 2nd Sunday of every month (unless noted otherwise) from 10:30 -11:00 am.

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



What In God's Name Is Happening at Freeburg Journey

Do you enjoy taking drives and going on field trips? Here are a few opportunities:

Ice Cream Sundae Bar: Our next Wednesday Event is July 8th (not the 1st) at 6 pm. Ice cream will be provided. We are asking those who are able to bring toppings. Look for the Facebook event on the Journey page or contact Cathy O. *Tip: if you need something more substantial to eat beforehand, there is a Dairy Queen right next door, or we are just a few minutes down the road from Eckert's.*

Pastor Exchange: Follow your pastor as they make the rounds of Union, Journey, and Bethel in July. Or, of course, stay at your home church and enjoy all three. See calendar for details.

Lunch Bunch: this fun group meets for potluck lunch. We meet at 11 am and eat at Noon. The next one is July 22nd.

EVERY WEEK:

Worship - Sundays at 10:15 a.m. with Pastor Mike Olson and Journey Praise Band

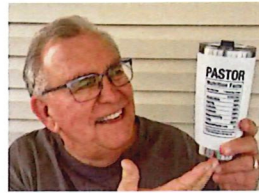
AA and Al-Anon - Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. Contact Eric G. 618-406-0366

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS:

July 8 – Wednesday Event: Ice Cream Sundae Bar
July 12 – Pastor Angie Lee from Belleville Union UMC preaching at Journey: "Love of Country, Love of Neighbor"; Pastor Mike preaching at Mascoutah Bethel UMC
July 19 – Pastor Bobby Davis from Mascoutah Bethel UMC preaching at Journey: "The Heart of America"; Pastor Mike preaching at Belleville Union UMC
July 22 – Lunch Bunch, 11 am
August 5 – First Wednesday Dinner: Breakfast; guest speaker Michelle Barthelemy

"Cathy O"

Cathy Obernuefemann
Journey Worship Leader



Visitation and Other Good Stuff with Rev. Dr. Joe Scheets

July 2026

**Happy 250th Birthday!
Happy Independence Day-Weekend
and Beyond!**

Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you.

I am emphatic about this. When you attempt to live by your own religious plans and projects, you are cut off from Christ, you fall out of grace. Neither our most conscientious religion nor disregard of religion amounts to anything. What matters is something far more interior: faith expressed in love.

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom.

Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. For everything we know about God's Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That's an act of true freedom.

If you bite and ravage each other, watch out—in no time at all you will be annihilating each other, and where will your precious freedom be then?

--- *Wish I'd written that; our old friend St. Paul did. It's from Galatians 5. Let's pick up right there next month.*

As always, I look forward to hearing from you---
joescheets3@gmail.com ---217.377.8049 --- and you'll find my Fresh-Brewed Daily Devotionals at joescheets.com. Love being in ministry with you



Benefit Breakfast for Blessing Bags

On July 26th, the **Outreach Committee** invites everyone to join us after the 9 am service for a delicious breakfast of egg casserole, potatoes, fresh fruit cup and a muffin. There will be a freewill offering, and net proceeds will benefit the **Rice Meal Pack Event**. Our goal is to raise \$4,000 to cover the cost of supplies for 2,000 Blessing Bags. Each Blessing Bag will provide a meal for up to 6 people who are in a crisis situation. This would be a great opportunity to invite a friend to church and treat them to breakfast in McKinley Hall! If you are unable to attend the breakfast but would like to support this worthy cause, please make your check payable to "Union UMC" and put "Blessing Bags" in the memo.



Thank you, church family, for your cards, visits, and prayers as we grieve the death of Kathy. Your support means so much. Jerry Sauerwein



All of us experience the ache of grief in our lifetimes. Yet our culture tells us we can just get over it. We can get "closure" and life will continue as before.

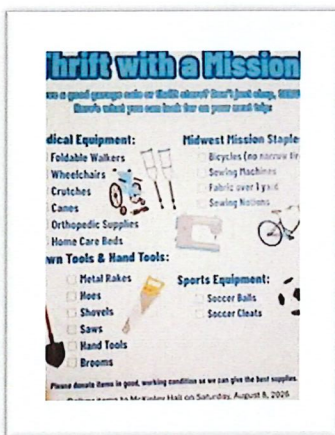
Time heals all wounds. Wrong.

Grief Share is a 13 session, Christ-centered grief support group program. Starting in January on Sunday mornings, Danny Nollman and Pastor Allynn led a group of 11 people. Each week we watched a 30 minute video and then had conversation. Here are examples of the feedback we received when the group ended.

"It has helped me a lot. I do not feel so alone."
 "It has given me comfort and ideas for how to cope."
 "It made me feel stronger and more grateful."
 "I was encouraged to see how others are managing."
 "I felt free to express my feelings."

We found hope and courage in God's Word. We found understanding and encouragement from each other. We thank God for the healing we received. And we continue on the grief journey.

Watch for future announcements for a new Grief Share session to start. Those who have attended before are welcome, as are all—those in our church and in our community.



Thrift with a Mission!

If you love a good garage sale or thrift store, don't just shop, SERVE!

Midwest Mission sends supplies to their partners in Central America for distribution to those in need. Please be on the lookout for medical equipment, such as foldable walkers, crutches, canes and wheel

chairs. Shipments also include bicycles (no narrow tires), sewing machines, fabric over one yard and sewing notions. Lawn tools such as rakes, hoes, shovels, saws, hand tools and brooms are needed. Sports equipment such as soccer balls and cleats are welcomed.

Please bring collected items to Union Church the morning of August 8th and they will be included in the trailer going back to Midwest Mission with the Blessing Bags. Contact Joe Milton if you have any questions, 618-235-5344, joseph.milton@att.net.

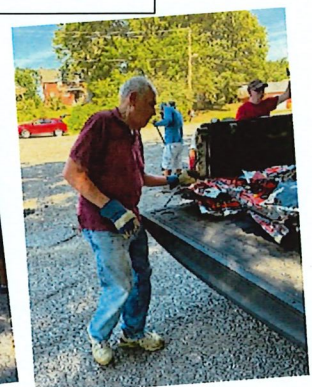


On Saturday, August 8th, the Outreach and Evangelism Committees invite you to join them in McKinley Hall at 9 am to assemble 2,000 Rice and Soy Blessing Bags. Midwest Mission will supply the ingredients for the bags at a cost of \$2.00 per bag. Each bag is a nutrient-dense meal filled with vitamins, dehydrated vegetables, soy and rice. The meal was created to give up to six people the energy to get through the day. Given in response to disasters, the meal is a life-saving source of important nutrition when someone doesn't know where their next meal is coming from. We will need 120 volunteers, working in 2-hour shifts, to complete this project. This is something everyone can do - all ages and abilities will enjoy participating in this hands-on event.

If you would like to volunteer, contact Laura Koehler at 618-792-8210, Koehlerlaura73@yahoo.com or Joe Milton at 618-235-5344, joseph.milton@att.net. If you would like to support this worthy cause, make your check payable to "Union UMC" and note "Blessing Bags" in the memo.

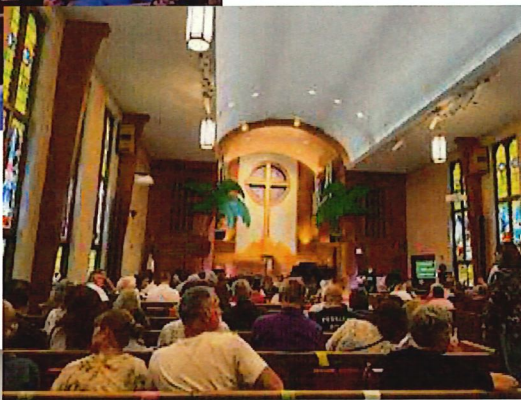


Horticulture hard at work





Thank you to Principal Geoff Schwalenberg and the staff at Douglas School for gathering these "end of year" school supplies for the children of Honduras. Pastor Allynn took them to Annual Conference and Midwest Mission will distribute.



🔔 HEAR YE! VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR THE LIBERTY CELEBRATION!

🔔 HEAR YE! HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

Good citizens of Union United Methodist Church and friends near and far!

The Liberty Bell is calling, and volunteers are needed for our **America 250 Liberty Celebration** on **Sunday, July 12!**

Before we gather for the Liberty Picnic, we invite all patriots to join in a lively afternoon of colonial fun and fellowship. To make this event a success, we need cheerful volunteers to help with:

- Colonial Game Stations
- Founding Fathers Trivia Walk
- Town Crier Challenge
- Setup
- Cleanup Crew

Whether you can lend a hand for an hour or the entire celebration, your service will help create a memorable day of faith, fellowship, and patriotic spirit for all ages.

To volunteer, please contact Laura Koehler:
(618)792-8210 or koehlerlaura73@yahoo.com

"Many hands make light work, and joyful hearts make memorable celebrations!"

Mark Your Calendar for Wednesdays at Union!

We're excited to bring back Wednesdays at Union for a 7-week fall series, beginning in October 7. Join us each Wednesday evening for food, fellowship, and Bible study.

Time: 5:00–6:30 p.m.
5:00–5:45 p.m. – Dinner
5:45–6:30 p.m. – Bible Study

This fall, we will journey through the books of Genesis and Exodus, exploring God's faithfulness from creation through the Exodus.

Schedule

October 7
October 14
October 21
October 28
November 4
November 11
November 18 – Community Thanksgiving Dinner

More details, including dinner menus, registration, and study materials, will be announced soon. We hope you'll plan to join us for this meaningful time of learning, fellowship, and spiritual growth!

Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary: Faith, Freedom, and Community

While our nation officially marks this historic milestone in 2026, our congregation is taking time this summer to reflect on the blessings of freedom, give thanks to God, and strengthen our community through fellowship and service.

Throughout the summer, we invite everyone to participate in several special events:

- **Liberty 250 Mile Challenge**
Walk, run, bike, swim, or enjoy your favorite outdoor activity as we work together to reach a combined goal of 250 miles. This challenge encourages healthy living, appreciation for God's creation, and fellowship with one another.
- Please send your mileage to Jayla at jayla@unionumc.org. If possible, include a photo of yourself or the place where you walked, ran, biked, or enjoyed your activity.
- Our congregation's progress is displayed on the banner in the hallway leading to Fellowship Hall.

Group Walk at Three Spring Park

- There will be Group Walk on Wednesday, July 8, at 7:30-8:30 pm at Three Springs Park in Shiloh. Bring the family and enjoy the walk or run as a group. These miles will count toward our overall 250 Mile Challenge goal. Just show up—no registration needed.

Freedom & Liberty Community Banner

- Stop by the Welcome Center to sign our commemorative banner. You are also invited to write a brief message or draw a picture expressing what freedom means to you.

Patriotic Home Decorating Contest

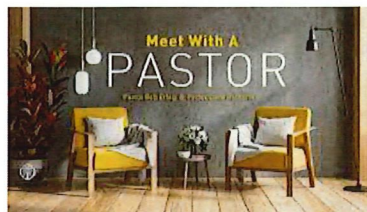
- Celebrate our nation's heritage by decorating your home in patriotic colors and themes. We look forward to seeing the creativity throughout our community.

Colonial Liberty Games & Church Picnic

- On Sunday, July 12, following the 9:00 a.m. worship service, we'll enjoy Colonial Games at 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch at noon.
- Meat and a hot potato dish will be provided. Please bring a covered dish to share if you can.
- Desserts will be provided by the entries in our Bake-Off Contest. Bake-Off participation is limited to 15 pies, so be sure to sign up!

Sign-ups will be available on Sunday morning, July 5.

More information or sign-up papers are available at the Welcome Desk.



Summer Focus: Time with Pastor Angie Lee

Listening, Sharing, and Growing Together
50 Minutes with 50 Individuals or
Households
U matter at UUMC!

I am so thankful for this past year of getting to know the Union community and sharing in ministry together. As we begin our second year, I look forward to many more years together.

This summer, I would love to spend time getting to know you more deeply—your story and your faith journey—through intentional, meaningful conversations.

- Share more of your story
- Reflect on our first year together
- Offer your hopes and dreams for our church
- Deepen our relationship in ministry

Conversations can take place at your home, at the church, or over coffee—whatever feels most comfortable for you.



 Available Dates through the Summer
Mondays:

10:00 AM and 11:00 AM (Pastor's Office)

Wednesdays:

10:00 AM and 11:00 AM (Pastor's Office)

4:00 PM and 6:30 PM (Location of Your Choice)

Sundays

2:00 PM (Location of Your Choice)

How to Sign Up:

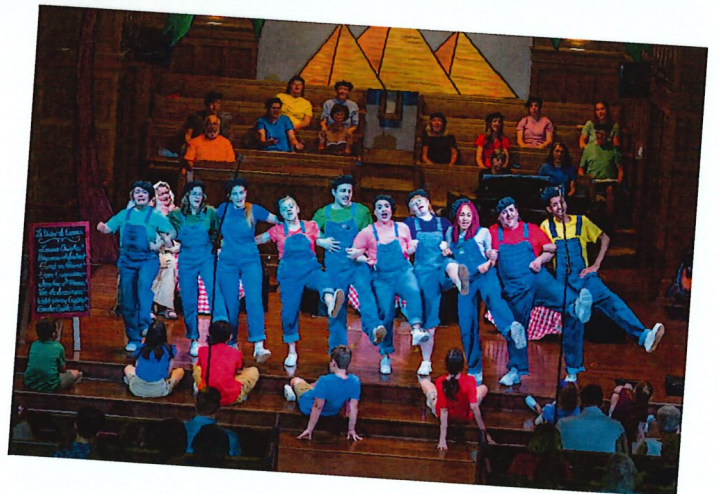
Write your name on the sign-up sheet available at the Welcome Center on Sunday mornings.

Email Sheri sheri@unionumc.org or call (618) 233-6375

Email Angie angie@unionumc.org or texting (217) 369-1292



Pictures by David Philip





Union United Methodist Church

721 East Main

Belleville, Illinois 62220

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Permit #124



Our thanks to the cast and crew of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat", which includes Director: **Julie Petraborg**; Stage Manager: **Ginger Jones**; scenery: **Paul Petraborg**, Sound: **David Trout**; instrumental combo: **Alex Petraborg**; photography: **David Phillip**; the costume seamstresses: **Karen Milton, Tammy Herrmann, & Mary Mueth**; the UWF and Worship Committee for the receptions, and countless others who helped make the musical such a meaningful and successful production!

We are blessed at Union indeed!

Save the Date
250th Liberty Celebration at
Union
Sunday, July 12
10 am games - potluck at noon



CROSSWALK

Sundays at 11:15

Chapel

[https://www.facebook.com/
@Crosswalk.UnionChurch.Belleville](https://www.facebook.com/@Crosswalk.UnionChurch.Belleville)



Music Tidings

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. Your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is firm as the heavens.

Psalm 89:1-2

SUNDAY, JULY 5

9 am - Sanctuary Choir anthem: "God of Our Fathers" - arr. McDonald
trumpet: Len Bull

Rev. Lee's sermon: "Love of Country, Love of Neighbor"
Jeremiah 29:4-7; Philippians 2:3-4

Communion

SUNDAY, JULY 12

9 am - Special Music: "America the Beautiful" - Bates/Ward
Men's quartet: Michael Woodruff, David Braswell, Jim Eckert, & Gary Voelker
Rev. Bobbie Davis from Mascoutah Bethel preaching: "The Heart of America"
John 17:20-26

SUNDAY, JULY 19

9 am - Special Music: "For the Beauty of the Earth" - Rutter
soloist: Mary MacIntire Pryor
Rev. Mike Olsen from Journey preaching: "Out of Many One"
2 Chronicles 2:13-15; Matthew 23:29-32 and 37-39

SUNDAY, JULY 26

9 am - Special Music: "Let There Be Peace" - arr. Wagner
Ladies Ensemble
Rev. Lee's sermon: "The Freedom That Serves Others"
Galatians 5:13-14; 1 Peter 2:15-17

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

9 am - Special Music: the Petraborg family
Rev. Lee's sermon: "Following the Shepherd Through Every Valley"
Psalm 23:1-6
VBS kids will sing
Communion