

THE MESSENGER

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH OF EAST PEORIA



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from the pastor's heart



Dear Church Family,

I returned to serve as pastor of this church because of my love for and belief in our congregation. I truly believe that EPFUMC has a bright future ahead of us. We simply need to keep on keeping on!

Galatians 6:9 reminds us:

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

This month brings many opportunities to invite others, serve our community, and participate in the ministries of our church. October is often associated with things that are scary and spooky, but as a pastor, what scares me is something far more troubling: when we become critical bystanders instead of active participants in the life of the church.

What does a critical bystander look like?

- They focus on what we don't have instead of what God has provided (attendance has been down, we don't have many volunteers, etc.).
- They rarely volunteer or participate in ministry events and service opportunities.
- They often approach the church with a negative attitude.

Many of these individuals say they want the church to grow--and I believe they genuinely do--but their negativity can be unintentionally stifling, actually making growth more difficult. Now THAT'S "scary."

So, church family, let us not grow weary in doing good. Let us remain positive, stay committed to growing in our faith, and serve wherever God calls us. If we trust and obey, God will bring the harvest in His time.

FEAR NOT!

With love and care,

Rev. Ted A.

October Mission Candle

Your Change is Changing Lives!

The Baby Fold
Serving children and families since 1902



Our 'noisy' offering for every Sunday in October will benefit The Baby Fold. Founded in 1902 in Normal, Illinois, The Baby Fold is a faith-based nonprofit organization dedicated to serving children and families throughout Central Illinois.

Guided by Christian principles of love, hope, and healing, the organization works to build positive futures for children by providing a wide range of services, including foster care, adoption support, special education, early childhood programming, and family support services. Today, The Baby Fold serves more than 1,200 children and families each year across numerous counties in Central Illinois.

Over its more than 120-year history, The Baby Fold has evolved from an orphanage for infants and young children into a comprehensive agency focused on strengthening children, families, and communities. Through strong partnerships with families, schools, churches, and community organizations, the agency helps provide safe, loving, and stable environments where children can thrive and reach their full potential.

At its heart, The Baby Fold is committed to transforming lives by offering compassionate care and practical support to those facing challenges. Its mission is to build positive futures with children and families while reflecting Christian values, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to experience hope, healing, and belonging.

On Sunday, October 18, a representative from the organization will be here during our morning service to share more about the Baby Fold Program and ways you can help. You can also learn more on their website at **thebabyfold.org**.

Our "Noisy Offering" is a fun, hands-on way for everyone—especially children—to participate in giving. Each month, these gifts are shared with a different charity, helping us extend God's love beyond our walls and into our community.

In July, you raised \$179.60 for ROC House Ministries. In August, you collected hundreds of pounds of food for SnackPac. Below are the organizations we will support in the months ahead.

Nov: Heifer Project

Dec: Helping Hands



The Men's Prayer Breakfast meets on the second Saturday each month at 8:00 am at the 520 Café in East Peoria. This month's breakfast will be held on **October 10**.

Please contact Chuck Pierman to confirm your attendance.



The next EPFUMC Ladies' Luncheon will be held on September 19 at 11:30 at Avanti's in East Peoria.

We gather together on the 3rd Saturday of each month from April through November.

Contact Bev Avery for questions and/or to reserve your seat.

2027 Endowment Requests

Requests for Endowment funds for 2027 must be submitted by **October 1, 2026**. Request forms are available in black paper tray above the mail slots outside the office.

Contact Bev Avery at 309-657-0907 for questions.

2026 Endowment Reimbursement Requests

If your ministry or project was approved for Endowment funding in 2026, receipts for approved purchases made this year must be submitted for reimbursement by **November 15, 2026**.

Reimbursement checks will be distributed in November and December 2026.

For questions, contact Bev Avery
at 309-657-0907.

October Vounteer Opportunities

October is going to be a busy month at EPFUMC. That's a really good thing, but we're going to need YOUR help! Sign up sheets are available on the table in the foyer or you can contact the office. See below for some opportunities to worship through service:

- **Oct. 11 - Friends & Family Sunday:** Help assemble guest gift bags (exact time and day to be determined)
- **Oct. 25 - EPFUMC Trunk or Treat:**
 - Help man the treat/activity stations
 - Help w/ set up and/or clean-up
 - Help assemble treat bags
 - Donate candy (Donations needed by Oct. 18.)
- **Oct. 30 - Leap of Faith Trunk or Treat:** Help pass out candy to the students as the parade around the church. **9am-9:30am**
- **Ongoing Office Support**
Do you have an hour or two you'd be willing to donate weekly or monthly to help with tasks like folding bulletins, answering calls, or sending out thank-you cards? Contact the office for more info.

2026 Charge Conference & Nominations

It's hard to believe that Charge Conference time is just around the corner. If you are currently serving on a church committee as a member or an officer, please contact the office or Pastor Ted to discuss your willingness to continue serving. We also invite you to contact the office if you are interested in serving.

Worship ANYWHERE 24/7

Are you unable to attend our Sunday Worship Service in person but would love to be able to watch it every week? Did you attend and would like to see it again? Our weekly Worship Service is broadcast live to our Facebook page and remains there even after the Worship Service ends. The service is also available on YouTube and our website. Contact the church office for questions about how to access these various platforms.

All Saints Sunday Remembrance

As we prepare for All Saints Sunday, we invite you to submit the names and photos of loved ones we have lost during the past year for inclusion in our service of remembrance. Please send submissions to the church office by **Sunday, October 25**.

SnackPac is Back!

The new school year is well underway, which means it's time to get packing! Volunteers will begin packing on **Mondays, 9am-12pm, beginning October 5**. Volunteers are always appreciated. If you are interested in volunteering, see Jamie Webb..

REFRESH Service

Join us every Wednesday at noon for our half hour Refresh service. Open to all, come and bring a friend to worship with us through fellowship, devotion, prayer, and communion. What a great midweek pick-me-up to get you through from Sunday to Sunday!

If You Are Ever in the Hospital

We call the hospitals every morning, but even if you specify that we be informed of your hospitalization, we are not always told.

Please call us or have a relative or friend notify the Church. We want to know when you are ill so we can be praying for you.

Giving Made Easy

Did you know you can setup your giving to be an automatic withdrawal, either monthly or semi-monthly? Withdrawals occur on the 3rd and/or the 17th each month. Sign-up is easy. Stop by the church office to request an Electronic Giving form.

Church Communication System

OneCallNow is the notification system we use to communicate church information to our congregation. If you do not currently receive church messages, such as closures, reminders, etc., but would like to, please contact the office. You can be notified by email, text and/or phone call.

November Messenger Deadline

The deadline for the November 2026 issue of the Messenger is noon on Monday, October 19. Send your submissions to office@epfumc.org or drop them off in the church office.

Church Office Hours

Monday—Friday 8:00 am—2:00 pm

Rev. Ted A. Hartley's Office Hours:

Rev. Ted. A. is generally in the office Monday through Thursday.

NOTE: His office hours fluctuate from week to week due to meetings and pastoral care duties. He is off on Fridays. Please call ahead to make an appointment or to make sure the Pastor is in.

Your Church Staff

Rev. Ted A. Hartley,
Directing Pastor

Cell: 217-330-0708

Ryan Klaus,
Pianist/Organist

Tia Fielder,
Office Manager

e-mail:
office@epfumc.org

Bob Dietrich, A/V
Coordinator

October Sermon Series:

"Unafraid"

**Living with Courage and Hope
in Uncertain Times**

Adam Hamilton,
in his book, Unafraid, says:

"You would be hard pressed to overstate the extent to which fear, anxiety, and worry permeate our time. Not a week goes by when some new threat isn't dominating the headlines."

In this sermon series, we will name our fears and how we can be "unafraid."
Invite others for this special series.

October 4:

"Afraid and Facing Our Fears"

Scripture: *Isaiah 41:10; Psalm 56:3-4*

October 11:

"Weaponizing Fear: The Sky Is Falling"

Scripture: *Psalm 46:1-2, 6-7;
Romans 8:15, 21-22*

October 18:

The Baby Fold

We'll take a break from our series as we welcome guest speaker, Rev. Tom Goodell.

October 25:

"Alone and Unloved"

Scripture: *Psalm 139:5, 7-1*



Join us this October for meaningful worship, family fun, and opportunities to grow in faith. Whether you're visiting for the first time or have called EPFUMC home for years, there's a place for you and your family this fall.

October 4: <u>Pet Blessing Sunday</u>	October 11 <u>Friends & Family Sunday</u>
Our pets are part of our families. At 2:00pm, bring your pets, service & support animals as we celebrate that special bond. Each pet will receive a pastoral blessing, a certificate, and a treat. Help us spread the word about this special service. Sign up in the church foyer or contact the office to let us know your pet's name and type. Children who don't have pets are invited to bring their favorite stuffed furry friend!	If you ask a member of our church what brought them to EPFUMC, many will say someone invited them. It's an idea so crazy, it just might work! So, invite a friend, a co-worker, a family member, or the cashier at the supermarket to join us for Friends & Family Sunday. There will be special music, including a harp soloist. Also, be sure to tell them breakfast will be served after the service, AND each friend will receive a special gift packet.
October 14 <u>Refresh Friends & Family Day</u>	October 18 <u>Baby Fold Sunday</u>
On October 14, invite a friend or family member to our Wednesday Refresh service. It's our hump day half hour of power! A light lunch will be served afterwards. Get praise and worship, a devotional message, prayer and communion, all in just 30 minutes! Service begins each week at noon.	Help us celebrate the meaningful mission work The Baby Fold. Rev. Tom Goodell will tell us about the difference the program makes in the lives of children and families. We will also explore ways we can share God's love through adoption or foster parenting. If you know people who are interested in adoption or foster parenting, please invite them to this service.
October 25 <u>Indoor Trunk or Treat</u>	
Join us in Ehrett Hall, 2pm to 4pm! Bring your family, invite your friends, and enjoy an afternoon of laughter, fellowship, and fall fun! Our indoor Trunk-or-Treat is a safe, family-friendly event for kids of all ages! Costumes are welcome but completely optional. This event is always a hit, but only when we all pitch in. Here are some ways you can help: • Donate wrapped candy (deliver to the church by Sunday, October 18) • Help assemble treat bags (date and time TBD) • Give out candy	

You Never Know Unless You Ask!

--Anonymous

Most of us have no problem recommending a favorite restaurant or sharing a great bargain. Yet when it comes to inviting someone to church, we can suddenly become a little nervous. What if they say no? What if it feels awkward?

The good news is that most people appreciate being invited, even if they cannot attend right away. Sometimes a simple invitation is all it takes to help someone find a place of encouragement, friendship, and faith.

You do not need a perfect speech or all the right answers. Often, the best invitation is simply, "Would you like to come with me?" That's it. No sales pitch, no brochures, and no PowerPoint presentation required!

Many people are looking for connection, encouragement, and hope. Your invitation may be exactly what someone needs to take a step toward finding a church family. And even if they say no, they will know you cared enough to ask.

A Simple Challenge:

Over the next couple of weeks, pray about one person you can invite to church. Then take the next step and ask them. Keep it simple, be genuine, and trust God with the outcome.

Friends and Family Day is a great opportunity to invite someone to worship with you. Whether you come to Sunday service on October 11, or Refresh on October 14, make your list, say a little prayer, and extend the invitation. You never know how God might use one simple, "Would you like to come with me?"

Top 10 Ways to Invite Someone to Church

10. **Pray Before You Invite.** Ask God to place someone on your heart and to prepare both of you for the conversation.
9. **Be Consistent.** Don't be discouraged by a "not this week." A gentle invitation at another time may receive a different response.
8. **Bring the Whole Family.** Invite parents, grandparents, children, or extended family members to attend together.
7. **Invite a Neighbor.** Sometimes the people closest to us are the ones we've never thought to ask.
6. **Use Social Media.** Share church events and invite friends through a post, message, or event invitation.
5. **Invite Them to Breakfast or Lunch.** Make it a complete experience by sharing a meal before or after worship.
4. **Offer to Sit With Them.** One of the biggest fears visitors have is not knowing anyone. Let them know they'll have a friend beside them.
3. **Invite Them to a Special Event.** People are often more comfortable attending a special service, concert, meal, or holiday event than a regular Sunday.
2. **Share Your Story.** Tell them why church matters to you and how it has impacted your life.

And the number one way to invite some to church...

1. **Just Ask.** A simple, sincere invitation is often the most effective. "Would you like to come to church with me this Sunday?"

Fall Crossword



Across

2. Fallen foliage
5. Name for a type of summer corn
6. Nut of an oak tree
8. Container for collecting apples
12. Yellow fruit often cooked in autumn
14. Gathering crops
17. Jack-O'-Lantern's main ingredient
20. Grain often found in fields
24. Warm & comfortable
25. Fruit of the season
26. Holiday in late November
27. Tree known for its colorful leaves

Down

1. Evergreen tree
3. Season after summer
4. Sound a turkey makes
7. Clothing worn in cooler weather
9. Another word for fall
10. Keeps birds away from fields
11. Opposite of cold
13. Baled grass
15. Bird often eaten on Thanksgiving
16. Nut roasted over an open fire
17. Early settlers of America
18. Event celebrating fall harvest
19. Fire used for outdoor cooking
20. Drink made from apples
21. Decorative fall fruit
22. Outdoor fire often seen in fall
23. Color of many fall leaves
27. Type of fall flower

In Our Prayers

In the Hospital in the Last Month

(None)

Fighting Cancer

Nancy Brooks, Rob Calder II,
Sandy Crawford, Byron Webb

Prolonged Illness / Challenges

Austin Aldag, Jodi Cassady, Rev. Stan Haxton,
Les Leach, Bonnie Lourash, Caitlin Reeves,
Nancy Riddle, Margaret Sides,
Roger Williams, Earl Webb

Long Term Care / Assisted Living

Jean Aldag, Jim Frey, Lynda Gustafson,
Anna Martin, Marie Meyer

Needing Prayer

Please pray for Our Dear Church Family
who are struggling, the lonely, all who are
unemployed, shut-in, those who are
struggling with illness and injury, those
who are grieving, our conference leaders,
all governmental leaders,
those who are serving in our military,
the youth and all caregivers.

Military Service Members

Ryan Webb (Army), Jared Koch (Air Force),
Nate Hill (Air National Guard)

October Birthdays

October 6	Jodi Cassady
October 11	Nancy Riddle
October 14	Karen McIntosh
October 16	Jean Aldag-Daniels (94)
October 17	Stacey Munoz
October 20	Kathi Webb
October 21	Bill McLean
October 27	Robert Riddle
October 31	Jim Vogel



Is This Your Birth Month?

We love celebrating birthdays!
If your birthday is this month and
your name is missing from our list,
please contact the church office with your
birthdate so we can update our records.
We want to celebrate you!

HELLO October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 9:30am Worship Outside Friends for Mission Light Breakfast	28 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry	29 6:00pm - 7:00pm Andy Griffith Bible Study 7:00pm Choir Meeting	30 12:00pm REFRESH 11:00am - 12:00pm Andy Griffith Bible Study 5:15pm Bell Choir Practice	1 7pm EP/Morton Singles	2	3
4 9am Worship World Communion Sunday 2:00pm Pet Blessing Sunday	5 9am - 12pm SnackPac Packing 1pm - 3pm Food Pantry	6 6pm - 7pm Andy Griffith Bible Study	7 12pm REFRESH 11am - 12pm Andy Griffith Bible Study 5:15pm Bell Choir Practice	8 11:30am East Peoria Woman's Club 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	9	10 8am Men's Prayer Breakfast 4pm Breakfast Setup
11 9am Worship Friends for Mission Breakfast Friends & Family Sunday	12 Indigenous Peoples Day 9am - 12pm SnackPac Packing 1pm - 3pm Food Pantry 6:15pm 4-H Meeting	13	14 12pm REFRESH Friends & Family Day 5:15pm Bell Choir Practice	15 7pm EP/Morton Singles	16	17 11:30am Ladies Luncheon @ EP Avanti's
18 9am Worship Baby Fold Sunday	19 Messenger Newsletter Deadline 9am - 12pm SnackPac Packing 1m - 3pm Food Pantry	20	21 12pm REFRESH 5:15pm Bell Choir Practice	22 9am - 12pm Early Head Start 7pm EP/Morton Singles	23	24 4pm Breakfast Setup
25 9am Worship Friends for Mission Light Breakfast Pastor's Appreciation Sunday Reformation Sunday 2pm - 4pm Trunk or Treat 5pm - 6:30pm Charge Conference	26 NO SnackPac 1pm - 3pm Food Pantry	27	28 12pm REFRESH 5:15pm Bell Choir Practice	29 7pm EP/Morton Singles	30 9am - 10am LOF Trick or Treating (VOLUNTEERS NEEDED)	31

"The beauty of October is a gentle reminder that change is not loss when it rests in God's hands." —Anonymous

say **cheese**
Grandparents
Day



On Sunday, September 13, we celebrated Grandparents Day during morning service. Rev. Phil Icenogle joined us and performed a special blessing for the grandparents who were present, as well as their children and grandchildren.

After the service, members and guests were invited to stay for breakfast. Grandparents were given the opportunity have their picture taken with their grandchild. It was a beautiful, well attended service, and we thank God for that.

Thanks to all who helped make the day possible.

Thank you for reading!

EAST PEORIA FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

309-699-5417

154 E Washington Street
East Peoria, IL 61611

www.EPFUMC.com



First United Church of East Peoria
154 E. Washington Street
East Peoria, IL 61611

Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service

12:00 p.m. Wednesday REFRESH