

# March Messenger 2026

**First United Methodist Church of East Peoria**

154 E. Washington Street, East Peoria, IL 61611

Phone 309-699-5417

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E-mail: [Office@epfumc.org](mailto:Office@epfumc.org)

♥ *Loving God* ♥ *Loving Others* ♥ *Living Our Faith*

*Invite-Attend-Fellowship-Serve*



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## *From the Pastor's Heart*



Dear Church Family,

Let me say I love this church. I also believe this church can be a great church. Maybe not the numbers of long ago, but I do believe this church can be an effective church to share God's love by kindness and care for the least and the lost. We are now in a season of Lent. It is a time of reflection, repentance, and, traditionally, to give up something.

Here are a few of my suggestions for our church:

1. Give up holding on to past hurts. Forgive and embrace the person who hurt you.
2. Give up negativity. Don't live in the "Can't Camp" but with God "All Things Are Possible Camp".
3. Give up standing by the sidelines and volunteer and be in the game of sharing God's love.

Everyday I wake up I try to not dwell on the past of division and leaving but on the new future God has for East Peoria First United Methodist Church.

DO NOT grow weary in doing good.

When you see the good in people, you see the God in people.

Believe! Have faith!

Invite—Attend—Fellowship—Serve

Your friend,  
Rev. Ted A.

### March Sermons

Sermon Series: "The Message of Jesus:  
Words That Changed the World"

- Mar. 1:** "The World's Most Important Sermon  
Part 1"  
Matthew 5:3-12 Rev. Ted A.
- Mar. 8:** "The World's Most Important Sermon  
Part 2"  
Matthew 7:1-5 Rev. Ted A.
- Mar. 15:** "He Spoke to Them in Parables Part  
1"  
Luke 10:34-35 Rev. Ted A.
- Mar. 22:** "He Spoke to Them in Parables Part  
2"  
Luke 11:15-24 Rev. Ted A.
- Mar. 29:** Palm Sunday "Fan or Follower"  
Matthew 21:1-11 Rev. Ted A.

### Dixieland Worship—March 1

The Peoria Pops Dixieland Band will join us for worship. The 1st half will be our traditional worship with a Dixieland flair. The 2nd half will be a mini concert with a few surprises. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite guests especially those who don't normally attend church.

### Palm Sunday—March 29

Weather permitting, we will form a procession (for those that are able) outside on street side and wave our palms to a trumpet fanfare and walk into the church. If the weather is bad, we will start in the hallway by the elevator. A brass ensemble will also accompany our choir in a special number.

### Maundy Thursday—April 2

Our Maundy Thursday Service is still under construction but it will be at 7:00pm. It will include Holy Communion and handwashing.

### Good Friday—April 3

Still under construction. Stayed tuned.

### Easter Sunday—April 5

Easter Sunday Service will be on April 5 at 9:00am. Our Bell Choir and Reborn will provide the music. Friends for Mission will be serving their wonderful breakfast before and after the Worship Service. The cost is just a free will donation to Friends for Mission.

### Supper Parties with Jesus

#### Feb. 22—March 22

Each Sunday of Lent we will gather at 5:00pm for a simple meal and then take part in a drama, "The Trial of Judas". Was Judas condemned or forgiven? It will be up to the jury. You will be the jury and decide. You will feel like you are in an episode of Perry Mason or Matlock. After the drama we will have a brief worship time of joys, singing and close with The Lord's Prayer. This will make Lent special. Order in the court!

#### Cast of Characters

Bailiff—Jim Vogel  
Judge—Lynn Heisel  
Attorney Grace—Rev Ted A.  
Attorney Justice—Terry Newlan  
John—Phil Newton  
Mary Magdalene—Jamie Webb  
Unnamed Woman—Lydia Rathbun  
Peter—Bob Dietrich  
Young Boy—Jacob Powers  
Mary, Mother of Jesus—Tammy Traywick  
Friend of Juda—Ed Newlan  
Chief Priest—Steve Emerson  
Paul—Ron Edwards  
Death—?????

### March Mission Offering

We will be returning to a 'noisy' offering every Sunday in March to benefit the Midwest Distribution Center near Chatham, IL. This Depot helps send out different materials to help in times of disaster and is part of United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

### 2026 Monthly Missions

**Apr:** East Bay Camp  
**May:** South Side Mission  
**Jun:** Red Bird Mission School  
**Jul:** Heifer Project  
**Aug:** SnackPac  
**Sep:** Pathway Ministries—Naramore Dinners  
(fka Peoria Rescue Mission)  
**Oct:** The Baby Fold  
**Nov:** Rock House Ministries  
**Dec:** Helping Hands

### **Souper Bowl Sunday**

The New England Patriots didn't win the Super Bowl but they won our Souper Bowl. We surpassed our goal of 100 cans for the Food Pantry by collecting 199 cans of soup and 1 bag of coffee. The score was Patriots 111 and Seahawks 88.

Way to go EPFUMC!

### **February Mission Offering**

Here are the results of our food donations to the East Peoria Food Pantry.

**Feb. 1:** Mac & Cheese, Peanut Butter

Items counted, number was misplaced

**Feb 8:** Cans of soup for Souper Bowl Sunday  
199 cans

**Feb. 15:** Cans of Corn & Green Beans  
90 cans

**Feb. 22:** Canned Fruit  
55 cans

### **Time Change—Spring Forward**

On Saturday night, March 7, if you have older clocks that do not move forward 1 hour automatically, make sure to set your clocks forward 1 hour before you go to bed.

Otherwise, you will be late for church. More daylight during the day is on its way.

### **Confirmation Class**

We will have a confirmation Class this Spring starting March 15 and will conclude on May 17.

The nine week course will meet on Sundays. Pastor Ted A. will teach it. If you are interested in becoming a member of the church, please let Pastor Ted A. know.

### **Communion**

Due to the special Dixieland Worship Service on March 1, Holy Communion will be during the March 8 Worship Service.

### **Ladies' Luncheon**

We're starting back up on April 18 at 11:30 at EP Avanti's. Mark your calendars! We will gather together on the 3rd Saturday of each month from April through November. Contact Bev Avery for questions.

### **Men's Prayer Breakfast**

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 it is on March 14. Please let Chuck Pierman know if you will be attending.

### **Coming Events**

**Mar. 29:** Palm Sunday 9:00am

**Apr. 2:** Maundy Thursday 7:00pm

**Apr. 3:** Good Friday

**Apr. 5:** Easter Sunday 9:00am

Bells and Reborn

Easter Egg Hunt for children after church

**Apr. 12:** Piano and organ special music

**April 19:** Festival of God's Creation

Earth Day will be celebrated

### **Thank You**

#### **From Austin Aldag**

I extend my sincere gratitude for the numerous letters and thoughtful handwritten cards of encouragement from the members of EPFUMC over the past several difficult years. I am proud and happy to also announce that I will finish my Post-doctoral Scholar year here at the University of Alabama at Birmingham during this upcoming summer (2026) and continue upwards to relocate, yet again, to Starkville, Mississippi, to join Mississippi State University as a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Political Science & Public Administration. Love you all, Austin

### **Sympathies**

Our condolences to Scott Bundy on the loss of his brother, Kirk L. Bundy.

Our Deepest sympathies go out to the family of Joyce Mooberry who passed away on Saturday, February 21. Please keep Randy, Andrea, and the rest of their family in your prayers.

### **Reporting a New Address**

Have you moved? Please call the office at 309-699-5417 and let us know your new address.

### **Life Line Screening®**

March 20th here at the church. Life Line Screening is the nation's leader in Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Screenings. The screenings are simple and painless. Get peace of mind or early detection. There are flyers on the table in the Foyer with all the information and how to book your appointment.

### **Sunday Worship Services**

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. If you have any questions about how to access these various platforms, please contact the Church office.

### **REFRESH Service**

Every Wednesday at noon our Church has a 30 minute service for you to Refresh yourself for the week. This Worship service has a devotion, prayer, and communion. This is a great opportunity to get you through to Sunday.

### **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 and ask for an Electronic Giving form.

### **Church Communication System**

OneCallNow is a software 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 let the Office know. You can receive by email, text message or phone call.

### **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.

### **Lost & Found Items**

The lost and found is in the office. We keep lost & found items for 3 months and if not claimed, we dispose of or give away through the Food Pantry.

Gray ladies glove  
Blue stocking hat  
Collapsible umbrella



### **Your Church Staff**

**Rev. Ted A. Hartley**, Directing Pastor  
Cell: 217-330-0708

Office Manager  
e-mail: office@epfumc.org

**Ryan Klaus**, Pianist/Organist

**Bob Dietrich**, A/V Coordinator

### **Church Office Hours**

Monday—Friday 8:00 am—1:00 pm

### **Rev. Ted A. Hartley's Office Hours**

Monday: 9:00 am to 1:30 pm  
Tuesday: 9:00 am to 11:00 am  
Wednesday: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm  
Thursday: 9:00 am to 11:00 am  
Friday: Day Off  
Please call ahead to make sure Pastor is in

Page for kids of all ages

K	P	Y	J	F	F	A	R	F	F	X	O	H	I	K	I	V	X
S	X	O	P	T	S	Q	W	Q	D	D	N	I	I	X	A	O	T
L	S	R	F	J	B	I	I	S	U	L	B	Q	O	F	N	V	V
N	L	B	J	Z	L	V	M	Y	P	O	R	E	U	E	N	I	M
F	A	M	I	L	Y	O	X	G	H	G	R	M	T	Y	W	Y	P
F	P	P	D	O	T	K	W	Z	L	X	Y	E	I	K	T	B	V
S	U	K	Q	S	R	R	S	F	I	C	S	R	S	R	S	E	B
P	L	U	U	T	E	E	T	E	N	K	E	A	Y	V	I	Y	F
A	C	C	B	N	R	U	F	S	Z	L	B	L	Z	O	H	Q	J
R	A	V	V	L	F	A	C	P	A	I	J	D	R	A	I	T	B
F	B	B	V	D	M	P	D	N	D	E	S	A	P	D	S	L	A
N	B	U	B	T	F	A	D	I	Q	X	F	P	P	N	I	S	D
Y	A	M	M	C	O	Z	G	R	T	W	Y	O	I	I	W	K	B
D	G	L	S	H	F	P	E	I	S	I	M	Y	N	C	M	Z	X
I	E	E	C	Y	Y	Y	W	Q	C	V	O	J	C	M	B	M	B
K	C	D	I	Q	A	L	Q	Z	C	A	Y	N	H	C	O	U	K
J	W	U	D	R	Q	L	O	P	X	A	L	S	A	N	W	Z	G
X	E	D	P	U	D	U	F	N	K	J	G	F	X	L	G	C	Z

Cabbage  
Customs  
Emerald  
Family  
Feast  
Gold

Happy  
Ireland  
Magical  
Pinch  
Prayer  
Traditional



## In Our Prayers

### In the Hospital in the Past Month

#### Fighting Cancer

Halle Bloom, Julie Jenkins,  
Pam Riley, Mark Gill,  
Mary Mallory, Lynne Barker,  
Brian Engles, Rob Calder II,  
Katie Bishop, Sandy Crawford,  
Joette Blakesley, Gary Fargher,  
Merry Eccles, Nancy Brooks,  
Norman Clark (asbestosis),  
Len Brockman, Kellen Norman,  
Sandra Begemen,  
Byron Webb

#### Prolonged Illness / Challenges

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

#### Long Term Care / Assisted Living

Anna Martin, Lynda Gustafson,  
Betty Fugitt, Jean Aldag

#### Needing Prayer

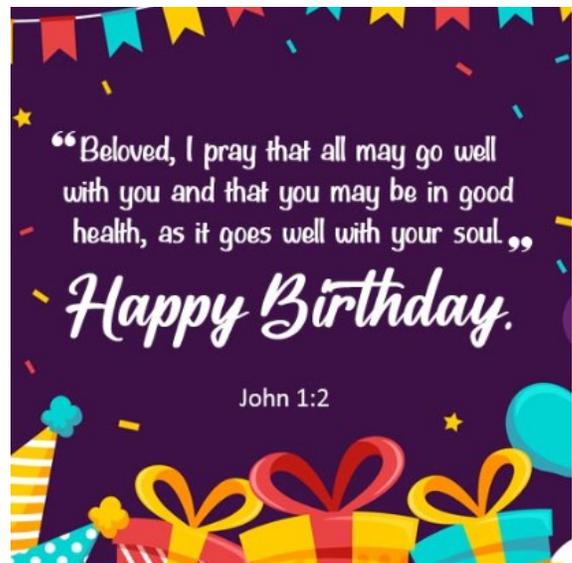
Please pray for Our Dear Church Family who are struggling, the lonely, all who are unemployed, shut-in, those who are struggling with flu/colds, those who are grieving, all governmental leaders, those who are serving in our military, the youth and all caregivers.

#### Military Service Members

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

## March Birthdays

Mar 1	Pat Cassady
Mar 2	Marian Allan
Mar 2	Tammy Traywick
Mar 4	Evelyn Howard (92)
Mar 6	Jamie Webb
Mar 8	Austin Aldag
Mar 9	Jan Chisholm
Mar 9	Dean Smith (99)
Mar 11	Jerry Berkley
Mar 11	Dylan McBrayer
Mar 12	Mary Meischner
Mar 12	Suzie Meischner
Mar 12	Morgan Naramore
Mar 16	Anna Martin (101)
Mar 17	Betty Fugitt (93)
Mar 17	Jennie Reeves
Mar 18	Melissa Earle
Mar 19	Diana Newlan
Mar 20	Roger Williams
Mar 21	John Haeffele
Mar 25	Claire White
Mar 28	Pat Calder
Mar 31	Julie Powers



### **Is this your birth month?**

If you have a birthday this month, and your name is missing from our list, we do not have your birthdate in our database. Please provide the office with your birthdate; month, day and year. We want to celebrate you!



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 9:00am Dixieland Worship 5:00pm Supper Party with Jesus	<b>2</b> 9:00am - 12:00pm SnackPac Packing 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry 5:00pm - 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 5:45pm - 8:00pm Cub/Boy Scout Meet- ing 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	<b>3</b> 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	<b>4</b> 12:00pm REFRESH	<b>5</b> 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 4:00pm Breakfast Setup
<b>8</b> 9:00am Worship Friends for Mission Breakfast Communion Sunday 5:00pm Supper Party with Jesus	<b>9</b> 9:00am - 12:00pm SnackPac Packing 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry 5:00pm - 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 5:45pm - 8:00pm Cub/Boy Scout Meet- ing 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice 6:15pm 4-H Meeting	<b>10</b> 4:00pm - 7:00pm Early Head Start 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	<b>11</b> 12:00pm REFRESH	<b>12</b> 11:30am - 12:30pm East Peoria Women's Club 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 8:00am Men's Prayer Breakfast
<b>15</b> 9:00am Worship Confirmation Class 5:00pm Supper Party with Jesus	<b>16</b> 9:00am - 12:00pm SnackPac Packing 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry 5:00pm - 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 5:45pm - 8:00pm Cub/Boy Scout Meet- ing 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	<b>17</b> 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	<b>18</b> 12:00pm REFRESH 6:00pm - 8:30pm Puppets for Jesus Practice	<b>19</b> 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	<b>20</b> Life Line Screening	<b>21</b> 4:00pm Breakfast Setup
<b>22</b> 9:00am Worship Confirmation Class Friends for Mission Light Breakfast 5:00pm Supper Party with Jesus	<b>23</b> 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry 5:00pm - 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 5:45pm - 8:00pm Cub/Boy Scout Meet- ing 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	<b>24</b> 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	<b>25</b> 12:00pm REFRESH	<b>26</b> 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:00am Palm Sunday Confirmation Class	<b>30</b> 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry 5:00pm - 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 5:45pm - 8:00pm Cub/Boy Scout Meet- ing 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	<b>31</b> 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	<b>1</b> 12:00pm REFRESH	<b>2</b> LOF Easter Egg Hunt 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service	<b>3</b> Good Friday Service	<b>4</b> 4:00pm Breakfast Setup

# SCOUTING SUNDAY



Patrio

## SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

### 199 CANS OF SOUP



**Worship Schedule**

9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service

12:00 p.m. Wednesday REFRESH

First United Methodist Church  
154 E. Washington St.  
East Peoria, IL 61611-2529