

May Messenger 2026

First United Methodist Church of East Peoria

154 E. Washington Street, East Peoria, IL 61611

Phone: 309-699-5417

Visit Us Online at www.epfumc.com

E-mail: 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,

May is a month of celebrations. There is, of course, Mother's Day (started by a Methodist), Cinco de Mayo, graduations, Pentecost—just to name a few. I was thinking back the other day, and in 34 years of ministry, I don't think I ever wrote about my mother in one of my columns. I have written about my dad and grandmothers but never featured my mother. Well, in this article, I plan to rectify that error. Since this is May, I believe this is very appropriate.

My mother was not sure she would be able to have a child, and so she prayed that if God would give her a son, she would dedicate the child to the Lord and bring him up in church. This sounds like the Hannah/Samuel story in the Old Testament, doesn't it? When I was born, she did what she promised, and she took me to McLeansboro First Baptist Church where she was active.

My mother was brought up during the Depression and was extremely self-reliant. Thus, she was never content being a stay-at-home housewife. She worked her entire life, primarily as a nurse, frequently leaving me in the care of a nanny.

My mother was often described as a "force of nature." She was highly opinionated and spoke her mind freely. She always stood up for those nobody else would stand up for. In the late 50s/early 60s, I recall a family moving into our neighborhood who had a child with Down syndrome. None of the other mothers would allow their children to play with this girl. My mother, however, would invite the little girl to our house. I learned from my mother's example to accept everyone and to see good in all people.

Everyone in our community knew my mom, and they knew not to cross her, but for some reason, my mother and I would often "cross swords." We were both strong, outspoken people, so disagreements were fairly commonplace. Despite our contention, my mother had high expectations for me, expecting me to be the best in whatever I did. She also showed me unconditional love; whatever I faced, she was always in my corner. I was—and am—so thankful to have a mother who loved me, believed in me, and stood up for me. I believe Jesus' mother Mary was always there for Jesus, too.

When I started ministry here in 1992, my mother was so happy that I became a pastor in the United Methodist Church. Most of her family had been Methodist—every aunt and uncle—with one of the first Southern Illinois circuit riders, Braxton Parrish. Unfortunately, around that same time, she was in the early stages of dementia, and our relationship changed. I now had to play the role of parent for her as she had once done for me.

Regardless of our ups and downs, I was so blessed to have Georgia Mae Hartley as my mother. I hope if your mother is still alive that you will let her know how much she means to you, and if your mother has passed, like mine, that you will share stories about her to keep her alive in your life.

Stay Strong,

Rev. Ted A.

May Mission Offering

Our 'noisy' offering for every Sunday in May will benefit South Side Mission.

Their mission is "to proclaim Jesus Christ, and in His name love our neighbors and provide hope to the community through life-transforming ministries."

Their aim is twofold:

- 1) To alleviate the powerful physical poverty of those in the 61605 area code of Peoria—one of the 100 poorest zip codes in the country.
- 2) To offer life-transforming change through the spiritual hope of Jesus Christ.

Through ministries like Camp Kearney, Hope Builders, and G.A.P. After School Ministry, along with its Soup Kitchen and Thrift Store, South Side Mission strives to meet unmet vital needs to provide hope in His name.

On Sunday, May 3, a representative from South Side Mission will share more about their life-saving ministries during our 9:00 am worship service.

You can also visit their website at www.southsidemission.org

MAY SERMONS

May 3 :

"Clark Kent Christianity" (2 Corinthians 3:18)
Speaker: Tia Fielder

May 10 (Mother's Day):

"God's Way" (Ephesians 6:1-4)
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

May 17:

Sermon Series: Why Be United Methodist Pt. 2
"What Methodists Believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13)
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

May 24 (Pentecost Sunday):

"A Spirit-filled Church" (Acts 2:1-21, 42-47)
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

May 31 (Music Sunday):

"Singing Like a Methodist: A Message in Song"
(Psalm 150)
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

2026 Monthly Missions

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

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's breakfast will be held on **May 9**. Please contact Chuck Pierman to confirm your attendance.

Graduate Information 2026

Attention parents and grandparents!

Do you have a student graduating from 8th grade, high school, or college? Help us celebrate and recognize their accomplishments! Pick up a form outside the chapel or the office to submit your graduate's name and information.

If you have a photo you can share as well, that's even better! Email a picture of your graduate to office@epfumc.org to be featured in a future Messenger!

Deadline for this info is May 15th.

Ladies' Luncheon

The next EPFUMC Ladies' Luncheon will be held on **May 16 at 11:30** at Avanti's in East Peoria.

Mark your calendars!

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.

Red Bird Mission Trip

Friends for Mission are leaving on their mission trip to Red Bird Mission Camp in Beverly, Kentucky on **June 6**. They will return on June 12. The cost is \$500 per person. If interested, please contact Jim Vogel or Jamie Webb.

IGRC Annual Conference

Pastor Ted A. recently preached the first sermon in his series, "Why Be a United Methodist." As a United Methodist, you are not just a member of East Peoria First UMC. You are a member of a much larger connection that touches lives and works to lead people to Christ all over the world.

A portion of your giving goes to cover our conference apportionments, which help to cover administrative costs and support missions and Christian education. It is your right and your duty to stay abreast of things going on in your conference and the denomination. One way to do that is by attending our annual conference.

The Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference will be held at the Peoria Civic Center June 4-6. It is a wonderful time to reconnect with old friends and learn about important decisions being made that affect our church and the way we conduct ministry. While only clergy and appointed laity are allowed to vote, the public is allowed to sit in on worship services and legislative sessions or watch online. Registration is required to attend the legislative sessions. You can learn more about the conference and this year's legislation or register to attend at www.igrc.org/ac2026.

1st Quarter Finance Report

Church General Fund

The General Fund is used to pay our monthly expense.

For the 1st Quarter 2026:

Offerings \$43,682.36

Expenses \$55,962.47

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. For questions about how to access these various platforms, contact the church office.

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!

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.

HELP NEEDED!!!

Jesus said suffer not the little children. We need YOUR help to keep our Children's Church adequately staffed. For safety purposes, we must have two volunteers with the children each Sunday.

All the materials are ready for you. All you have to do is show up! Please consider signing up for a Sunday on the sheet in the foyer. Our children (and their parents) will thank you!!

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.

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.

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.

Current Items:

Gray ladies glove
Blue stocking hat
Collapsible umbrella

Reporting a New Address

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

Sondra Urban Address & Update

Our dear friend, Sondra Urban, has been released from the hospital. She was recently moved to Apostolic Christian Home in Eureka, IL. Sondra would appreciate continued prayers, cards, and letters from her church family. Cards and letters can be sent to:

Sondra Urban

Apostolic Christian Home
610 W. Cruger Ave, Room 257
Eureka, IL 61530

June Messenger Deadline

The deadline for the June 2026 issue of the Messenger is noon on **Monday, May 25**. Send your submissions to office@epfumc.org or drop them off in the church office.

Your Church Staff

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

Office Manager, Tia Fielder
e-mail: office@epfumc.org

Ryan Klaus, Pianist/Organist

Bob Dietrich, A/V Coordinator



A special tribute to the mothers and mother figures still imparting wisdom after 90 years:

Jean Aldag-Daniels 93

Marijean Bishel 92

Mary Cole 93

Ernestine Dellaca 98

Betty Fugitt 93

Evelyn Howard 92

Anna Martin 101

Marie Meyer 94

Jean Paulos

Judy Wenger 91

"She opens her mouth with wisdom,
and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue."

Proverbs 31:26

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.

Snack Pac Season Update

Thank You Church!!

May has arrived and the end of the school year is in sight!! What a year it has been!! We have had the privilege of packing on the average of 162 Snack Pacs a week for students at Bolin, Lincoln and Shute Schools in East Peoria District 86. This monumental task would not have been possible without the support of our church family and the community.

Many of you have graciously donated food items and or monetary donations to help offset the cost and need. People in our community have also given donations as well. A big thank you to Fondulac Township and to Pam Price.

We have had several outside volunteers that have also come to help with the packing. This includes the Teachers and Staff of Shute School and the Youth Group from First Baptist Church in Morton. Because of all of you...we have put food in the hands of students who just need that extra boost to get them through each weekend.

A special heartfelt THANK YOU to our Elvins!! These amazingly dedicated people come each week to pack those 162 Snack Pacs. They are a loving crew who exemplify what it truly means to be the hands and feet of Jesus!! And we trust that our own dear Vi Smith is cheering all of us on from her heavenly home. We love and miss you Vi.

Our last Snack Pac distribution for this school year will be on May 22.

Again, we would like to sincerely thank all of you for supporting us another year!!

God bless you!!

Jim, Jamie and Byron



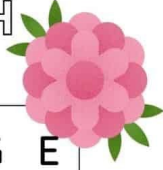
Our Dedicated Snack Pac Volunteers



MOTHERS DAY

WORD SEARCH

FIND AND CIRCLE EACH WORD!



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

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|------|
| Heart | Pink | Flower | Care |
| Chocolate | Sweet | Gift | Mom |
| Love | Mother | Coffee | Card |

Mother's Day Cryptogram

Can you solve this cryptogram?
The answer is a quote by Abraham Lincoln.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
21				24				3				
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
	11						20					

A _ _ _ _ A _ I A _ O _
 21 16 16 6 9 21 6 3 21 5 11 19

E _ E _ _ O _ E _ O _ E ,
 24 7 24 19 9 11 23 24 6 11 25 24

I O _ E _ O _ _ A _ _ E _
 3 11 22 24 6 11 5 8 21 1 4 24 16

_ O _ _ E _ .
 5 11 6 9 24 19

Fun Page for Every Age

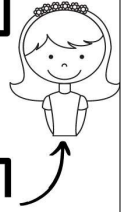
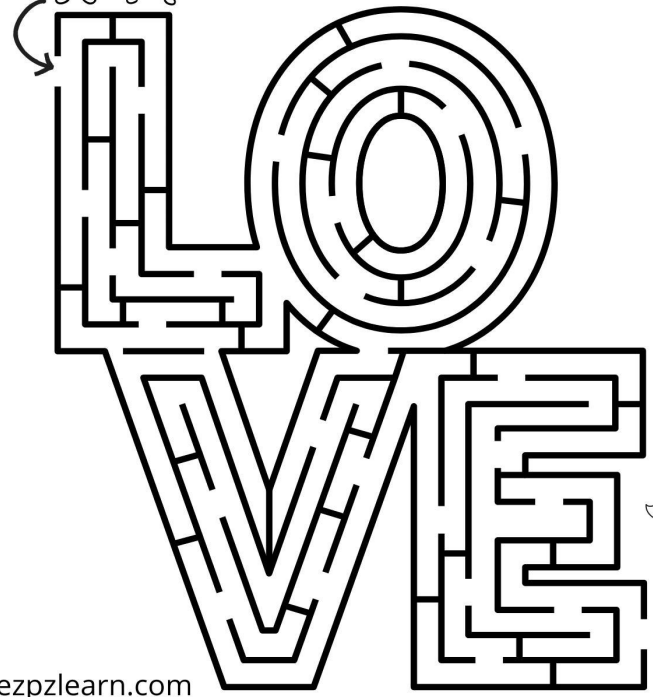
Mother's Day Scramble

Unscramble to words below.
(Answers at the bottom of the page)

- sotenh _____
- imesl _____
- hemo _____
- lgonvi _____
- ltak _____
- trohem _____
- nkdi _____
- mayfli _____
- ngarci _____

Mother's Day Maze

Help the children find their mom.



ezpzlearn.com

Kind
Family
Caring

Loving
Talk
Mother

Honest
Smiles
Home

Word Scramble Answer Key



In Our Prayers

In the Hospital in the Past Month

Sylvia Badgerow
Robert Snoke
Sondra Urban

Fighting Cancer

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

Prolonged Illness / Challenges

Rev. Stan Haxton, Bonnie Lourash,
Margaret Sides, 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

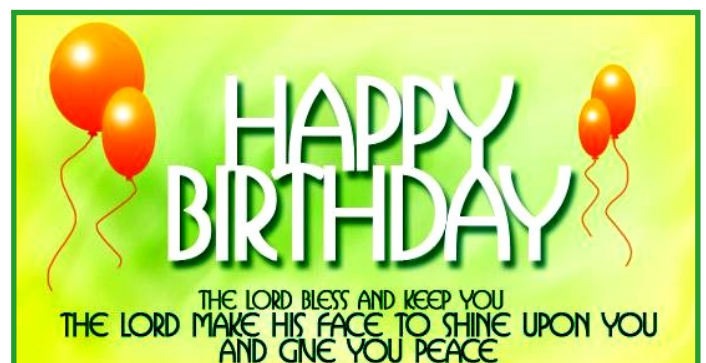
Please pray for Our Dear Church Family who are struggling, the lonely, all who are unemployed, shut-in, those who are struggling with flu/colds, those who are grieving, all governmental leaders, those who are serving in our military, the youth and all caregivers.

Military Service Members

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

May Birthdays

May 4	Linda Gren
May 4	Dan Son
May 5	Orin Naramore
May 7	Nancy Cheatham
May 10	Becky Ellis
May 12	Scott Allison
May 12	Margaret Sides
May 16	Jean Hobbs
May 16	Jacob Powers
May 19	Doug Ogle
May 21	Marlene Klaus
May 22	Victoria Hinkle
May 22	Julie Jamison
May 25	Layney Cunningham
May 25	Hayley Powers
May 25	Ryan Webb
May 28	Di Robbins
May 31	Hazel Blackmore



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!



May 2026

"May, the month of sunshine, blooming flowers, and endless possibilities."
- Unknown

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 9:00am Worship Friends for Mission Light Breakfast	27 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 Meeting 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	28 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	29 12:00pm REFRESH	30 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	1	2
3 9:00am Worship	4 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 Meeting 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	5 NO CHOIR PRACTICE	6 12:00pm REFRESH	7 National Day of Prayer 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	8 LOF Mother's Day Tea Party	9 8:00am Men's Prayer Breakfast 4:00pm Breakfast Setup
10 9:00am Worship Friends for Mission Breakfast Communion Sunday Mother's Day	11 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry 5:00pm - 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 5:45pm - 8:00pm Cub/ Boy Scout Meeting 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice 6:15pm 4-H Meeting	12 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	13 12:00pm REFRESH	14 NO EAST PEORIA WOMAN'S CLUB 4:00pm - 7:00pm Early Head Start 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	15	16 11:30am Ladies Luncheon @ EP Avanti's
17 9:00am Worship 10:15am Ad Council Meeting	18 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 Meeting 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	19 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	20 12:00pm REFRESH 6:00pm - 8:30pm Puppets for Jesus Practice	21 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	22	23 4:00pm Breakfast Setup
24 9:00am Worship Friends for Mission Light Breakfast Pentecost	25 CHURCH CLOSED Memorial Day NO FOOD PANTRY	26 9:00am - 11:00am LOF Graduation Setup & Practices 7:00pm - 8:00pm Choir Practice	27 12:00pm REFRESH 9:00am - 11:00am LOF Graduation Setup & Practices	28 9:00am - 11:00am LOF Graduation Setup & Practices 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	29 LOF Graduation	30
31 9:00am Worship Trinity Sunday	1 1:00pm - 3:00pm Food Pantry 5:00pm - 6:00pm Bell Choir Practice 6:00pm - 8:00pm REBORN Practice	2	3 12:00pm REFRESH	4 7:00pm EP/Morton Singles	5	6

Visit our website to view the most up-to-date calendar of events at epfumc.com.



Palm Sunday Procession



Easter Egg Hunt



We want to see your faith in action!
 If you have pictures from a recent EPFUMC worship service or ministry event,
 please share them with the office. Email your photos to office@epfumc.org.

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