November 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



In This Issue:

2 .....Pastor's Heart
3 .....Mission & Impact/Upcoming Events
4 .....Upcoming Events & Announcements
5 .....November Sermons & New Fall Bible Study
6 ....November Happenings
7.....Fun Page for Every Age
8 .....Prayers & Birthday List
9 .....November Calendar
10-11.....Say Cheese!

Find us on: facebook®
Facebook.com/epfumc

Qwer-
tyuip[]\=-098765wqqw

from the pastor's heart

Dear Church Family,

What and who are you thankful for? Is it a "November" practice to be thankful, or do you have a year-round attitude of gratitude?

Another question: does your gratitude go beyond the big events, such as surviving cancer or a fire, or do you give thanks for the small, daily blessings of life? I truly believe that we should live with an attitude of gratitude 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Every night before I go to sleep, I give thanks for what God has blessed me with that day.

So, what am I grateful for? Here goes:

1. My relationship with Jesus.
2. My family, especially my two grandchildren.
3. Music:
   - Playing my tuba
   - Piano/organ duets with Ryan
   - Singing hymns
   - Going to concerts
4. My friendship with my college roommate, Brett Whittenberg, through all these years.
5. And, of course, you, EPFUMC. I am truly thankful for your love and support!

Being Grateful,

Rev. Ted A.

November Mission Candle

Our 'noisy' offering for every Sunday in November will benefit Heifer Project International. Imagine a family having enough food on the table, children able to attend school, and a community growing stronger together. That is the vision behind Heifer International. For more than 75 years, Heifer has partnered with families around the world to help them overcome hunger and poverty through sustainable farming, livestock, agricultural training, and small business development.

What makes Heifer especially inspiring is its commitment to lasting change. Families receive not only animals or resources, but also the knowledge and support needed to build a better future. Through Heifer's tradition of "Passing on the Gift," recipients share livestock offspring, skills, and encouragement with others, creating a ripple effect of hope that reaches far beyond a single family.

To learn more about Heifer International and the difference your gifts can make, visit **www.heifer.org**. Together, we can help turn compassion into lasting change

Your Change Is Changing Lives!

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 September, you raised $184.06 for the Pathway Ministries Naramore dinners. And in October, you raised $280.52 for The Baby Fold! Our last Mission Candle for 2026 will be our Helping Hands benevolence fund in December. Thank you SO much for your continued generosity.

2026 Poinsettia Sale

If you would like to purchase poinsettias for this year's Christmas services, please see Ashleigh Lane or Patti Staley before or after service on November 1st or November 8th. The cost is $15.00.

New Andy Griffith Bible Study

By popular demand, we will be doing one more 4-week Andy Griffith Bible Study. We'll meet Tuesday at 6pm and Wednesdays at 11am.



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 **November 14.**

Please contact Chuck Pierman
to confirm your attendance.



Ladies' Luncheon - CANCELED

The November Ladies Luncheon has been canceled due to the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday and the Festival of Lights Parade. Watch the Messenger this spring for the 2027 schedule. The schedule will remain the same, April through November.

2026 Endowment Reimbursements

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.

November Office Closing

In observance of Thanksgiving, the church office will be closed on Thursday, November 26, and Friday, November 27. The office will reopen as scheduled on Monday, November 30.

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.

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.

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!

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

Lost and found items are stored in the church office. Items that are not claimed within three months will be given away through the Food Pantry, donated, or thrown away.

December Messenger Deadline

The deadline for the December 2026 issue of the Messenger is noon on **Monday, November 23**. Send your submissions to **office@epfumc.org** or drop them off in the church office.

EPFUMC Food Pantry Awarded IGRC Grant

Congratulations to the East Peoria First UMC Food Pantry on receiving a $1,000 grant from the Illinois Great Rivers Conference to support its ministry of feeding neighbors in need.

The pantry was one of 66 feeding ministries across the conference selected for funding, which will help provide food and assistance to local families.

We give thanks for this support and for the volunteers and donors who make this vital outreach possible. This grant will help the pantry continue sharing Christ's love in practical ways by providing nourishment, hope, and care to members of our community.

November Sermons

November 1:

All Saints Sunday
"Finishing the Race"
Scripture Focus: Hebrews12:1-3
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

November 8:

Veterans Day Remembrance
"The Greatest Generation"
Scripture Focus: Matthew 11:16-19
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

November 15:

"When the Stars Begin to Fall"
Reflecting on God's presence and promises in changing times
Scripture Focus: Mark 13:24-37
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

November 22:

Thanksgiving Sunday
"Make Me a Blessing"
Scripture Focus: Hebrews 13:16
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

November 29:

Advent Sermon Series: Experiencing Christmas
Week 1 - Sight
"Do You See What I See?"
Scripture Focus: Isaiah 9:6; Luke 2:29-32
Speaker: Rev. Ted A.

New Fall Bible Study

Andy Griffith & The Bible - Part 2

Back by popular demand! Our Andy Griffith Bible Study returns beginning November 3, after a highly successful first session that drew between 20-25 participants each week.

Join us as we enjoy new episodes of *The Andy Griffith Show,* discover fresh biblical insights, and share meaningful discussion and fellowship. Sessions will be offered on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. and Wednesday mornings at 11:00 a.m.

Everyone is welcome, and we encourage you to invite a friend to experience this unique and engaging study with us. No registration required. Can't make every session? Come when you can. Just come.

November 3-4
Episode: "Opie and the Spoiled Kid"
Lesson: Good Values
Scripture: Luke 16:15

November 10-11
Episode: "Aunt Bee's Medicine Man"
Lesson: Temptation
Scripture: Matthew 26:41

November 17-18
Episode: "Rafe Hollister Sings"
Lesson: Sound Encouragement
Scripture: Hebrews 3:13

November 24-25
Episode: "The Rivals"
Lesson: Nice Guys Finish First
Scripture: Proverbs 11:14

Your Church Staff

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

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

Ryan Klaus, Pianist/Organist

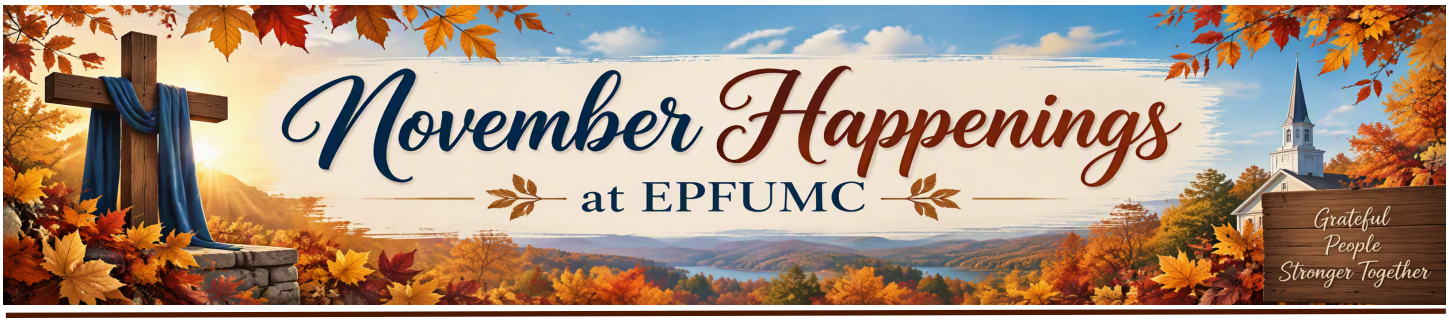
Bob Dietrich, A/V Coordinator

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.



Join us throughout November as we gather in worship, fellowship, gratitude, and preparation for the Advent season. We invite you to be part of these special moments in the life of our church family.

See the dates below and be sure to add them to your calendar:

NOVEMBER 1:

All Saints Sunday & Congregation Appreciation

Once again, we will honor and remember the saints who have gone before us, including loved ones from our church family and our own families who have passed away since in the past year.

Holy Communion will be celebrated, and the choir will offer special music.

Following worship, everyone is invited to Ehrett Hall for Pastor Ted's Congregation Appreciation. Enjoy pastries, coffee, and lemonade as a small token of his appreciation for all you do.

NOVEMBER 8

Remembering & Honoring Our Veterans

Join us as we recognize and give thanks for the service and sacrifice of our veterans. The bell choir will provide special music during worship, and a breakfast reception will follow.

Invite a veteran to share in this meaningful morning of gratitude and recognition.

NOVEMBER 15

When the Stars Begin to Fall

The morning message, "When the Stars Begin to Fall," will invite us to reflect on God's presence and promises in changing times.

NOVEMBER 22

Thanksgiving Sunday/ Hanging of the Greens

As we approach Thanksgiving, we will take time to celebrate and thank the many volunteers who serve our church throughout the year.

Following worship, everyone is invited to help decorate the church for Advent and Christmas.

NOVEMBER 29

First Sunday of Advent

The Advent season begins!

Join us as we prepare our hearts and homes for the coming of Christ through worship, prayer, and anticipation.

ADVENT SERMON SERIES:

Experiencing Christmas

Beginning November 29, we will explore the wonder of experiencing the birth of Jesus through the gift of our senses.

Each Sunday we will experience the Christmas story in a new way:

Nov. 29- Sight

Dec. 6 - Sound

Dec. 13 - Touch

Dec. 20 - Taste

Come discover fresh ways to experience the joy, hope, peace, and love of Christmas.

Fun Page For Every Age



In Our Prayers



In the Hospital in the Past Month

(none)

Fighting Cancer

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

Prolonged Illness / Challenges

Austin Aldag, 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)



November Birthdays

November 5	Rev. Ted Hartley
November 8	Gary Hinkle
November 9	Caitlin Reeves
November 10	Barbara Son
November 11	Maribel Blair
November 14	Rob Calder II
November 17	Jerry Jones
November 20	Donna Cothrell
November 20	Bob Dietrich
November 20	Bill Heisel
November 22	Ron Edwards
November 23	Lydia Rathbun
November 25	Sandy Crawford
November 26	Sally Whitfield



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
1 9am Worship All Saints Day Communion Sunday Congregation Appreciation Daylight-Saving Time Ends 8am-8:50am Choir Practice	2 9am-12pm SnackPac Packing 1pm-3pm Food Pantry 5:45pm-8pm Cub/Boy Scout Meeting	3	4 12pm REFRESH 5:15pm-6pm Bell Choir Practice 6pm-8pm Reborn Rehearsal	5 7pm EP/Morton Singles	6	7 4pm Breakfast Setup
8 9am Worship Friends for Mission Breakfast	9 9am12pm SnackPac Packing 1pm-3pm Food Pantry 5:45pm-8pm Cub/Boy Scout Meeting 6:15pm 4-H Meeting	10 6pm Worship Meeting	11 Veterans Day 12pm REFRESH 5:15pm-6pm Bell Choir Practice 6pm-8pm Reborn Rehearsal	12 11:30am East Peoria Woman's Club 7pm EP/Morton Singles	13	14 8am Men's Prayer Breakfast @ 520 Cafe in EP
15 9am Worship	16 NO SnackPac 1pm-3pm Food Pantry 5:45pm-8pm Cub/Boy Scout Meeting	17	18 12pm REFRESH 5:15pm-6pm Bell Choir Practice 6pm-8pm Reborn Rehearsal	19 9am- 12pm Early Head Start 7pm EP/Morton Singles	20	21 Ladies Luncheon @ EP Avanti's - CANCELED 4pm Breakfast Setup
22 9am Worship Friends for Mission Light Breakfast Hanging of the Greens (after worship service)	23 Messenger Newsletter Deadline 9am12pm SnackPac Packing 1pm-3pm Food Pantry 5:45pm-8pm Cub/Boy Scout Meeting	24 7pm-8pm Choir Practice	25 12pm REFRESH 5:15pm-6pm Bell Choir Practice 6pm-8pm Reborn Rehearsal	26 Thanksgiving Day OFFICE CLOSED	27 OFFICE CLOSED 11am-5pm Private Event	28
29 9am Worship First Sunday of Advent Hanging of the Greens Sunday	30 NO SnackPac 1pm-3pm Food Pantry 5:45pm-8pm Cub/Boy Scout Meeting	1 7pm- 8pm Choir Practice	2 12pm REFRESH 5:15pm-6pm Bell Choir Practice 6pm-8pm Reborn Rehearsal	3 7pm EP/Morton Singles	4	5

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them."

– John F. Kennedy

Worship Outside 2026













Jacob Powers: Newest Drum Major at DHS



Jacob Powers was selected as drum major of the Dunlap High School Marching Eagles. At the Grey Ghost Classic marching competition, held October 3, 2026, at IVC High School in Chillicothe, the Marching Eagles placed first in their class, earned best percussion in their class, and posted the highest overall score of the afternoon session.

Jacob has greatly enjoyed marching band this year. Pastor Ted attended one of the band's performances and has encouraged Jacob to keep pursuing his love of music. Jacob is the son of Nick and Julie Powers, and the grandson of Les and Carol Leach.



say cheese

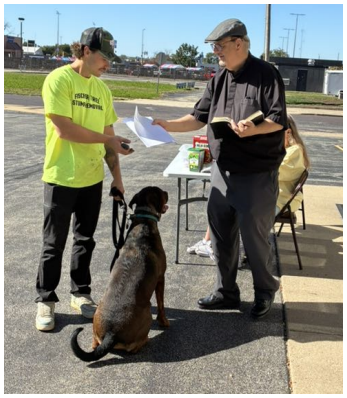


Pet Blessing Sunday













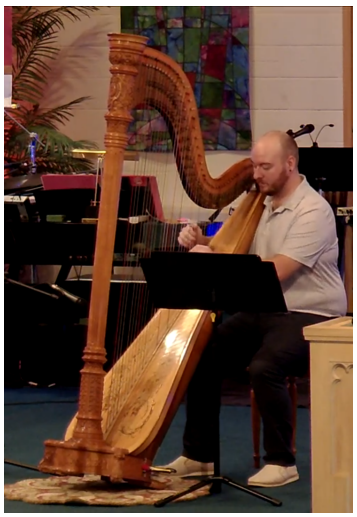




Friends & Family Day











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.

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

Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service

12:00 p.m. Wednesday REFRESH