

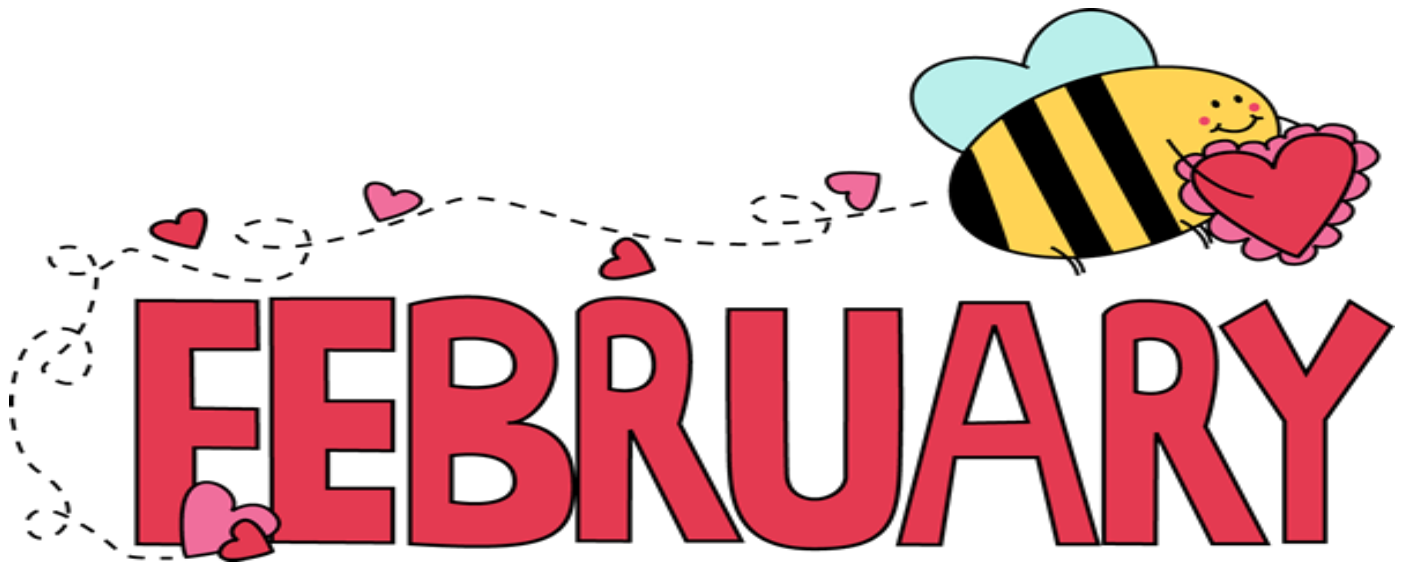


First United Methodist Church of Savanna, Illinois

Volume Issue



Our Mission Is to Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully and Lead Courageously



2026

Our Vision Statement

**“Reaching out to all people and
inviting them to experience the Love
of God through Open Hearts, Open
Minds, and Open Doors.”**

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Dear FUMC Family,

What Would Jesus Do?

Beloved in Christ,

The month that has just ended has been marked by deep sorrow. We mourn the tragic deaths of two of God's children: Renee Good, a young woman full of dreams who leaves behind children now orphaned, and Alex Pretti, who was shot repeatedly while kneeling, already subdued. These were human beings—precious lives—no different from any of us. My heart aches as I reflect on how much evil seems to grow around us, how much harm, hatred, and fear we witness in our nation each day. And so I find myself asking: What would Jesus do?

This month, we begin our reflection on the teachings of Jesus in the Beatitudes from Matthew 5. In one of these verses, Jesus declares:

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Friends, I know my opening words may not be easy for everyone to hear. In our time, Christians are often identified more by political positions than by love for their neighbor. Yet the Scripture for our first Sunday calls us back to the heart of Jesus's ministry. I am convinced that in our place, Jesus would choose peace, for He is the Prince of Peace.

We must also remember that the opposite of being "blessed" is to be burdened—emotionally, physically, and spiritually. A peacemaker brings healing; a tormented spirit spreads division. As we enter this new month, with all the challenges facing our society—fear, anger, hatred, and political unrest—I invite you to join me in prayer and in choosing to live as children of God.

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." — Ephesians 4:3

First, as Christians, we are called to protect the unity of the Spirit. That means refusing to label or diminish others—whether immigrant, foreigner, Black, Latino, or Asian. These are the very people often targeted because of how they look or speak. Our God is a God of justice, and justice belongs to Him. Our calling is to pray, to love, and to see every person as a neighbor.

Second, as Methodists, we remember our General Rules—especially in times like these:

1. Do no harm. 2. Do good. 3. Stay in love with God.

This is exactly what Jesus modeled. He did not harm; He did good; He remained in perfect love with the Father. He entered the homes of those society rejected—prostitutes, adulterers, tax collectors, and the demon-possessed. He showed us what love looks like in practice.

So let us pray for those who mourn, and also for those ICE agents who, as human beings, carry tremendous pressure that affects their minds and spirits. I believe Jesus would pray for them, and so should we.

May we walk this month as peacemakers, as children of God, and as followers of the One who brings light into every darkness.

Blessings,

Pastor Fernando de Castro

Administrative Council Minutes

January 18, 2026

Members present: Molly Anderson, Linda Stubbe, Vivian Eaton, Burt Prins, Kris Yingling, Pam Darrow, Karen Hoffman, Jason Moore, Bill Wright, John LeComte, Tom Michels, Mary Irons, Lea Ann Michels, Pastor Fernando.

Molly Anderson chairman pro tem called the meeting to order. Pastor Fernando opened the meeting with prayer.

The minutes of the previous meeting were emailed to members. The Kris Yingling moved and Pam Darrow seconded to accept the minutes. The motion carried, the minutes were approved

Vivian Eaton gave the financial report. The report had been emailed to members. Jason Moore moved and Karen Hoffman seconded to accept the report. The motion carried. Vivian presented a Resolution for Appointment of Church Treasurer and Authorization for Banking Activities. This is for Rhonda Badtke to take over as the new Treasurer. As this was recommended by the finance committee it only needed to be voted on. The vote was unanimous. Molly signed the certification as chairman pro tem.

Tom Michels & Vivian Eaton reported for the finance committee that last month was the first month that we came out ahead on finances. Also our apportionments went down this year. We should thank Rhonda Badtke for taking the Treasurer job.

Outreach: Jason Moore reported that outreach will be hosting a Souper Bowl luncheon on February 8. They will be collecting cans of soup for the food pantry. Their goal is 150 cans.

Hospitality: Pastor Fernando introduced the new committee. Esther Losh is the chairman. This committee will be responsible for welcoming people to the church by hosting dinners, coffee hour, ushering, and greeters.

Education: Kris Yingling reported that the children had been to the Catholic Church as part an ongoing exchange program. Twice a year the children combine for a Bible lesson and snacks. We will host in the fall. VBS will be held June 23-25. It will only be 3 days this year. The program will still be held on Thursday night.

Interchurch Council: Linda Stubbe reported that they have been working on the Lent services. Our church will host the Ash Wednesday service.

Trustees: Jason Moore reported that the committee is working on getting bids for mowing the grass. They are working on snow removal and have decided that they can handle shoveling the sidewalk and will hire someone to plow the drive. He also reported that the youth room needs to be cleared out so there is room for the growing youth group. Education and Worship need to go through their things and find a new home for the items. He mentioned that there is a trailer outside to put things in as well as Ron Miller has offered storage space at his barn.

Worship: Linda Stubbe reported that the committee had met and are changing the time of their meetings to accommodate a new member on the committee.

Staff Parish: Kathie Prins reported that LaVona Grissinger will be sending a letter to Eric informing him that his services are no longer needed.

Evangelism: Mary Irons reported that the committee has compiled a list of members who live alone so they can take turns visiting them. They will take communion with Pastor Fernando to shut-ins as well as Pinnacle Place and Big Meadows. They will be creating a schedule for this.

Pam Darrow reported that the Soul Sisters will be going to the movie and the church is invited.

UWF: Kathie Prins reported that they had several new members in the last few months.

It was suggested that Administrative Council might not to meet monthly. Committee chairmen will go back to their committees to see how the meetings can be streamlined.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Fernando thanked everyone for the Christmas generosity. He had many visitors over the Christmas time. They were impressed with the friendliness of the members of the church. He has attended many meetings. The Leadership training this Saturday will be attended by 9 people from our church.

Vivian offered a closing prayer.

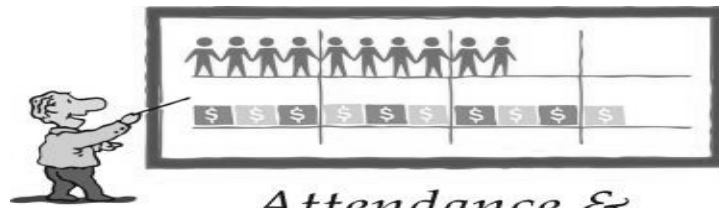
Kris Yingling moved for the meeting to adjourn.

Molly Anderson closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted ,

Lea Ann Michels

Recording secretary



Attendance & Financials

Cash Available in General Account: \$ 16,500.79		
	December	Year to Date
Church Revenue	\$24,408.82	\$173,443.84
Church Expenses	\$22,328.73	\$ 226,328.66
Net Operating Balance	\$1880.09	\$ 52,884.82
NIC Apportionments Paid		
Please, contact Vivian Eaton with any questions vkeaton@grics.net		



Date	Income	Worship Inside	Worship Outside	Total Attendance
December 7	\$ 5,194	85		85
December 14	\$4,211.83	72		72
December 21	\$ 2,736	64		64
December 24	\$2,581	97		97
December 28	\$ 7,479	96		96
Totals	\$ 22,201.83	414		414

IN OUR PRAYERS

Don Kramer- rehab going well, taking steps! Sandy Froehlich-immune

Therapy - Curtis Pilgrim-Morrison Nursing Home, Norman Family, Mia, Derek Osborn, Vicki & Michael, Janet Smith, Tinslee recuperating from transplant), Dan Zambon - cancer, Christa Jachino- Breast Cancer. Kris Dornbush - clot in her

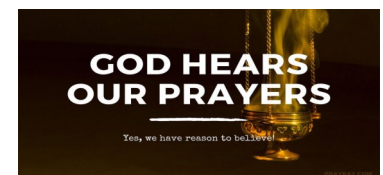
spinal cord and is paralyzed from the waist down. Abea- Early pregnancy-prayer to go to term. Marilyn

Kline, she fell and broke her neck. Bob Bauer has returned to work! Tim Cavanagh—Home- recovering well! Mike Medley-home low potassium -Susan King-home- pneumonia getting better! -Burt Prins-

home ankle injury Frank Norman -home health problems -Also Franks granddaughter Grace, IA hospital -Jeff Doran- home started dialysis Susan Foltz -Madison Hospital. Christina Pasch- foot surgery

Our shut-ins: Sylvia Reuterfors, Dorothy Taylor, Erik & Alice Riffe-Torrison, Joy Turner, Steve Yenney, Brenda Hamm, Janice Wilt, Mary Ellen Dreger, Herb, Sandy & Ben Pratt, Florence Bevins-Powell.

Our country & government; Military Personnel & their families; the safety of Ukrainians & end of wars; Haiti; Syria; Israel; the Gaza Strip; peace in the Middle East; people affected by the wildfires, snow, cold temperatures; the towns, families, students, school administrators, and those who experience everyday violence and their families.



What's Happening At Church!!!!

Sewing Ministry

We invite all sewers to get involved in our sewing ministry but getting a kit in the sewing room. Check out this ministry in the sewing room after church or ask any member of United Women of Faith. This gives those who cannot come Monday afternoons to sew a chance to be a part of this important ministry by sewing at home at your convenience.

Come check it out!

If you are interested in getting involved in this ministry, call Mary Irons at 815-541-8487.

JOY (Just Older Youth) Ministry

Canceled until March 18

Worship Committee

Is trying to bring back Ushers and Greeters. If you are interested in volunteering, please see Linda Stubbe.

Savanna Food Pantry

UMC will be

Staffing the Pantry on February 10 and 12th

9am to 12pm

Please leave your donations in the Food Pantry box in the narthex and **Thank you** for feeding our neighbors.

If you would like to volunteer please call Molly Andersen 815-541-6852

Blessing Basket

Is located in the West Carroll Food Pantry at the end of the Education wing. Please consider donating a bottle of shampoo & dish soap this month. Thank you for your continued support of this ministry.

West Carroll School Food Pantry

Will be open February 2 and 16th from 3:30 - 5:00 pm. Items needed this month are soup and crackers. You can leave your donations in the Food Pantry box in the nar-



**IMPACT YOUTH GROUP
SKI TRIP**

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

6-12th graders are invited to come ski or snowboard on our 3rd annual youth group ski trip!

Meet at the First United Methodist Church in Savanna at 12:00 p.m. sharp.

Youth leaders (Quinn & April Ruddell) and parent volunteers will carpool kids to Chestnut Mountain Resort in Galena for an epic afternoon of skiing/snowboarding!

Lift tickets, ski/snowboard rental, and helmet rental costs will be covered!

Parents/guardians, please RSVP via the attached Google form by January 29 so we can ensure we have enough drivers.

Each family **MUST** complete and sign an updated emergency contact/liability form before we leave.



Women of Faith

No meeting in January or February

New President --Kathie Prins

Call Kathie for information

**Join us for prayer meetings
each Sunday 8:30 &
for Sunday School at 9:00 AM**

Soul Sisters

February 5, 2pm

Movie Theater \$5

IMPACT YOUTH

**OUR YOUNG PEOPLE MEET EVERY FIRST
SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH AT OUR
CHURCH- LEADER -APRIL RUDELL**

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

**March 7th 8 am to 12:45 pm
Faith UMC - Rockford**

Leaders representing Savanna-FUMC

Kids Kards will meet after

Worship . On February 22

**We will be making a variety of
cards for the first responders
and the employees of Big Meadows and Pinnacle Place.**

Lunch will be sloppy joes.

**Everyone invited and all
materials are provided. Come
join our children and create
some cards and memories**

**Call Molly Andersen for more
information. 815-541-6852**



SOUPE BOWL

**SUNDAY, Feb. 8th
11:30**

**Join us for soup,
sandwich and dessert**

**FREE WILL OFFERING
will support mission projects**



**Hosted by the
Outreach Committee**



SOUP & CRACKER COLLECTION

Benefiting the West Carroll School Food Pantry

January – February

What better way to warm up than with a hearty bowl
of soup and crackers?

The Outreach Committee is challenging our church
congregation to help support local families by
collecting



150 Cans of Soup

Boxes of Crackers

If each family brings just 5 cans of soup,
we can easily reach our goal!

How You Can Help:

Donate canned soup (any variety)

Don't forget crackers to go with it!

Drop off donations at the church during
January & February



Together, We Can Make a Difference

Your generosity helps ensure students and families in our community
have warm, nourishing meals during the winter months.

Thank you for supporting the West Carroll School Food Pantry!

UM-First meeting of the year 2026



Building Relationships with Other Ministries Victory Center - Pastor Ray Jimenez



VICTORY CENTER PRESENTS:


The Witness

"A powerful musical drama of the life of Jesus Christ"

The Witness is a moving musical drama that brings the gospel to life through song, and testimony. Experience the life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as witnessed by those who walked beside Him. Through the voices of Peter, James, John, Mary, Judas, Pilate, the Pharisees, and Jesus. You will journey through the moments that changed history forever.

March 29 / 6:00 PM
First United Methodist Church
2100 Chicago Ave Savanna, IL

"Rev. Ray Gimenez, founded the Victory Center in 1987. Victory Center presents this original musical drama under his direction, featuring the residents from the Center as well as talented singers from other churches to bring you this performance. You will be impacted and encouraged."



SOUL SISTERS -T-Shirt Creations



JOY



*Thank
You!*

for Remembering our 50th Anniversary!
Bill & Jo Landis





February 2026

Liturgists

February

1 -Kim Gonzalez

8 - Christina Pasch

15 - Jason Moore

22 - Lea Ann Michels



Acolytes

Feb 1 - Ryker McCombie

Feb 8 - Tyson Speer

Feb 15 - Joe Pasch

Feb 22 - Priscila & Ennie
de Castro

1 - Thomas Losh

9 - Becky Pitman

Dana Haynes

Lea Ann Michels

15- Aiden Michels

16 - Shanna Roberts

Alexis Piercy

23 - Christy Clemons

Susan Michelle Jepsen

24- Jeff Andersen

26 - Janie Jones

28 - Diane Brinkmeier

Denise Curtis

Burt & Kathie Prins-
1976

Coffee Hour

Feb 1 -Mayers

Feb 8 - Souper Bowl

Feb 15 -Prinses

Feb 22 -Bob & LaVona
Grissinger

Greeters

Feb 1 Tom & LeaAnn Michels-----Burt & Kathie Prins

Bill Wright

Feb 8 Ross & Glenda Bronkema-----

Feb 15 Gary & Melinda Dykema-----Karen & Kirk Hoffman

Feb 22 Bob & LaVona Grissinger----Sherry Canalose &

Esther Losh

Ushers

Counters & Verifiers

Feb 1 -Molly Andersen & Pam Darrow

Feb 8 - Rhonda Law & Linda Jachino

Feb 15 - Lori Miller & Kay Cavanagh

Feb 22 - Vivian Eaton & Linda Stubbe



If you are unable to do your scheduled day,
please find someone to take your place!



February 2026



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 8:30 Prayer 9am Sunday School 10:15 Worship Coffee hour Impact Youth	2 1 PM Sewing ladies School Pantry	3	4	5 SOUL SISTERS 2pm Movie	6	7
8 8:30—Prayer Meetings 10:15 am Worship with Coffee hour Impact Youth	9	10 Savanna Food Pantry	11	12 Savanna Food Pantry	13	14 Valentines Day
15 8 am Trustees 9am Sunday School 10:15—Worship Coffee Hour Impact Youth	16 Presidents Day 1 PM Sewing ladies School Pantry	17 Clergy Day with The Bishop Pastor is attending	18 Interfaith Lenten Services ASH WEDNESDAY JOY Canceled I	19	20	21
22 8:30—Prayer Meetings 9am Sunday School 10:15—Worship Coffee hour Impact Youth KIDS KARDS	23	24	25 Pastor is meeting Rotary Club Lenten Service Presbyterian Church	26	27	28