



Our Mission Is To Be Committed Christians Inviting Others To Join Us.



Our Vision Statement

“Our faith calls us to action in the body of Christ and in the local community to love God and to love others.”

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NEW YEAR, SAME GRACE

Friends, Our Bishop Dan Schwein has declared 2025 the year of Grace, the Grace that has been at the heart of Wesleyan theology and practices. Our Book of Discipline defines Grace as "the undeserved, unmerited, and loving action of God in human existence through the ever-present Holy Spirit."

Since grace deals with the ever-presence of the Holy Spirit. It is an excellent way to start a new year just after celebrating Christmas, the birth of Jesus, Emmanuel, "God with us." I want to suggest to our First Savanna UMC family that we could start the year 2025 with the same Grace we find in the ever-presence of the Spirit of God since we might have different plans, hopes, and fears for the months ahead, some hope about our health, our finances, the future of our families, and the future of our Church, those expectancies could be stressful for so many of us.

Therefore, despite all the possible ups and downs each year brings along the grace of God upon us will help us to be gracious to ourselves and others. So, let us welcome the next 365 days the 52 Sundays or the 12 Months, just like Jesus did with the twelve disciples. Jesus chose to love his disciples and was gracious to each of them in the way they were, with different characters and behaviors.

In the same manner, not every month will be the same; some will be cold, others very hot, and some just cool, but God's grace will be sufficient each month and each day, for it is the same grace.

So I pray that as we navigate the coming months, let us be gracious and grow in grace. So that those around us and beyond may hear about the presence of God through the Holy Spirit in us and give glory to the same God we served last year. We will serve him again with the newness of Spirit.

Happy New Year and May God bless you

Pastor Fernando de Castro

SAVANNA FUMC ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MINUTES
SUNDAY, November 17th, 2024 11:45 AM @ CHURCH LIBRARY

Chairperson Susan Michelle Jepsen called the meeting to order at 11:43am with members Ronda Rathje, LaVona Grissinger, Molly Andersen, Tom Michels, Vivian Eaton, Kathie and Burt Prins, Mary Irons, Jason Moore, Pam Darrow, Linda Stubbe, and Kris Yingling present. In the absence of Pastor Fernando (he is in Angola) LaVona opened the meeting with prayer. Minutes from the previous meeting were emailed to members, however Pam and LaVona did not receive them. Molly will try sending them from her Google email. Kathie moved, seconded by Tom, to accept the minutes as presented and the motion passed. The Financial Reports were presented. Kris moved, seconded by Susan Michelle, to approve the reports and the motion carried.

TRUSTEES: The new conduit from Jo-Carroll is marked out along the church driveway. Work on the new roof at the parsonage should start any day. We will have the furnace inspected as the family room at the parsonage is cold and needs space heaters. The Grasshopper lawn mower has been repaired. River City replaced 2 thermostats at the church. Neither of these 2 bills have been received yet. The church roof leaked again in the narthex after the heavy rain we had several weeks ago. Jason will check into someone sealing it. 4-H is still interested in using the church building for monthly meetings and special events. Jason will contact Jane Shaw, the local leader, and find out more information.

FINANCE: Vivian will be retiring as the church treasurer and Cori Moore will replace her. Starting soon, Kathie proposed a resolution to accept Cori as the church treasurer and add her name and signature to the church's checking account. Kris seconded the resolution and the vote was unanimous to accept the resolution. In January the committee will look at the 2024 financial situation and report to the congregation. A church conference may be needed to decide our future pastoral situation. The JOY ministry has voted to donate \$100 monthly, retroactive to April, for the use of the church's fellowship hall. Vivian will transfer the funds from the \$5000 grant they received.

WORSHIP: The committee is meeting on Thursday and are busy planning the Hanging of the Greens service on December 1st and the community Christmas concert on December 8th.

STAFF PARISH RELATIONS: Everything is going well.

EDUCATION: Our Sunday School children went to St. John's Catholic Church this morning. The Christmas program will be December 15th.

EVANGELISM: Birthday cards were sent to Mary Ellen Dreger and Steve Yenney. Mary and Pastor Fernando visited Alice and Erik Torrison, Joy Turner, all in Davenport, and Burt and Kathie Prins after Burt's recent surgery.

UWF: They are having a Christmas party on Tuesday, December 3rd and are planning a shower for Pastor Fernando's family.

UMM: They are meeting Tuesday night. Supper will be ribs cooked by Bill Wright and the program is Bill and Paul Mayer talking about their recent Honor Flight.

INTERCHURCH COUNCIL: The Christmas Children's Fund is in full swing. The leaders need curling ribbon if anyone has extra.

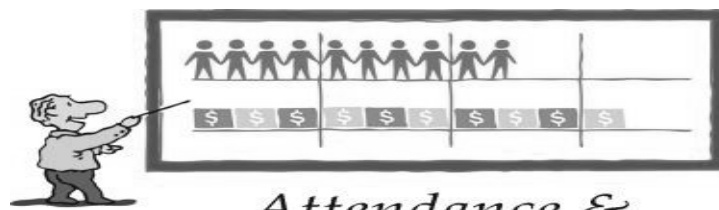
YOUTH: Lexi Piercy was not present, due to having oral surgery, but LaVona read a report submitted by April Ruddell, the group leader. They met at Big Meadows with pizza at church afterwards. They are having a game night in December.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Fernando emailed his report to LaVona, which she read. A copy is included in these minutes.

Susan Michelle closed the meeting with prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 12:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Andersen



Attendance & Financials

Cash Available in General Account: \$ 7108.18		
	November 2024	Year to Date
Church Revenue	\$ 14,581.29	\$ 139,897.23
Church Expenses	\$ 15,713.48	\$ 224,707.21
Net Operating Balance	\$ -1132.19	\$ -84,809.98
NIC Apportionments Paid	\$ 1,405.00	\$ 15,455.00
Kitchen Remodeling	\$ 20,107.33	\$ 20,107.33
Please, contact Vivian Eaton with any questions - vkeaton@grics.net		



Date	Income	Worship Inside	Worship Outside	Total Attendance
December 1	\$ 2960.00	72	0	72
December 8	\$ 2894.58	??	1 + 2 dogs	1 + 2 dogs
December 15	\$ 2639.00	110	2 dogs	110 + 2 dogs
December 22	\$ 2335.00	75	2 dogs	75 + 2 dogs
December 24	\$ 1475.00	105	0	105
December 29	\$ 7754.00	63	2 dogs	63 + 2 dogs
Totals	\$ 20,057.58	425	1 + 8 dogs	426 + 8 dogs



In Our Prayers

Sandy Froehlich, Glen White, Shirley Hastings, Curtis Pilgrim (Kris Yingling's friend), Herb, Ben, & Sandy Pratt, Lexi Tsoukalas (Molly's great niece), Debbie Bilik (Janet Morlock's friend), Scarlett Huebner, Chrissy Sullivan, Angie (Paula's friend), Roger Furrow, Eli (Bob & Lavona's grandson), Tinslee, Ed & Barb Jepsen, Mary (Belandier) Klein, Howard Nichols, Jackie Walker, John Jachino, Kristin (Bob & LaVona Grissinger's granddaughter), Chuck Curtis, Alyssa Volkers, Burt Prins, Lisa (LaVona's friend), Jill (Melinda Dykema's daughter), Elyssa Gooding (Bonnie's daughter), Susan Foltz (organist at Mt. Carroll UMC), Denise Curtis, LaVona Grissinger, Iola McCutcheon (Tim Cavanagh's friend), Karen Burcham (Paul Mayer's sister), Beth (LaVona's colleague), the Norman family, Dan Zambon (uncle of Kim Gonzalez), Pat Kemp, Melinda Dykema, Karen Grissinger (Bob & LaVona's Grissinger's daughter-in law), Dave Miller (Brigit Jepsen's boyfriend's father), Mary & Phil Nylin (house fire), Karen Hoffman's cousins (house fire), Jody & Jon Kragel (Dianne Piercy's friends), Gary Speed, John Norse, Louise Brouillard (Ronda's friend), Howie Von Haden (LaVona's brother), Nick Law, Rita Mitchell, Ron Miller, Betty Hoertz Hottenstein, Amy Hanson, Jamie Harkness Townsend, baby Wesley and family, the family of Dorothy Taylor, and closure for the family of Jackson Kradle. **Our shut-ins:** Sylvia Reuterfors, Alice Riffe-Torrison, Joy Turner, Steve Yenney, Brenda Hamm, Janice Wilt, Mary Ellen Dreger, Herb, Sandy & Ben Pratt, and Florence Bevins Powell.

Our country & government, those that are serving in the military & their families, the safety of Ukrainians & end of wars, Haiti, Syria, Israel, the Gaza strip, peace in the Middle East, people affected by heat, torndoes, severe thunderstorms, hurricanes, and the victims of the everyday gun violence and their families.

What's Happening At Church!!!!

New Sewing Ministry

We invite all sewers to get involved in our sewing ministry but getting a kit in the sewing room. Several are available (pattern & material). 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!

We also are asking for clean and dry plastic bags. The group will be making sleeping mats for homeless people. You can drop them off in the box in the sewing room. A loom was obtained from Midwest Mission and Mary Irons attempted to make the first one. We now have 5 mats complete. They are fabulous!!! If you are interested in getting involved in this ministry, call Mary Irons at 815-541-8487. Thank you to those who have brought in bags and continue to bring them!

JOY (Just Older Youth) Ministry

JOY (60+) will have a Christmas party on **Wed, January 15th, from 4:30-6:30pm.** We're serving chili and angel food cake for dessert (shhh, it's Linda Stubbe's birthday!). The program will be a fun game as we gather around our new round tables. This is a free meal and program for anyone over 60. Reservations are required by calling the church office by noon, Monday, January 13th, at 815-273-2345.

Rides are available, in-town only. We are looking for volunteers to help cook, serve, clean, and provide rides and programs. If you are interested in helping, please let Molly Andersen or Ronda Rathje in the church office know.

Soul Sisters Quilt Show &

Soup Luncheon

Thursday, January 16th

11:00 A.M. "Quilt Show" in the Sanctuary

12:00 P.M. Soup Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall

(soups, dessert, drinks, & table service provided)

***BRING** 1. Any quilts you'd like to display--ones you or others have created. 2. Good, clean plastic store bags for the UWF "Mats for the Homeless" mission project

ALL WOMEN ARE INVITED!!!

RSVP: Linda Jachino (815) 541-4760

Kids Kards

Kids Kards will meet after worship on **January 26th** to make valentines. We'll have different types of dips for lunch. All materials are provided and everyone is welcome. Let's share God's love with our children and their creativity!

Blessing Basket

The Blessing Basket averaged 165 items per month given away in 2024. This includes 74 bottles of dish soap, 54 boxes of bandages, 65 boxes of facial tissues, 162 rolls of paper towels, 340 rolls of toilet paper, and 68 boxes of sandwich bags, among other items donated. Thank you for all your donations!

West Carroll Food Pantry

The West Carroll Food Pantry is well stocked because of your Advent calendar giving!

Thank you for your generosity and to Ronda Rathje for all her help with this project.

IMPACT YOUTH GROUP

(formerly Carroll County Youth Group)



PICTURES!!!



**Kids Kards -
Everyone was hard at work!**



**James Dean Gonzales
was baptized on
Dec 29th.**



**James and his mother, Kimberly
Gonzalez were both accepted as
members of the church!**



**Our tree for the Festival of Trees at
the Savanna Museum.
Tree designed by Deeann Kramer**

**JOY Dinner Christmas Pizza Party
Vivian played her accordion and Christmas
carols were sung. Elves put cookies into
containers for everyone to take home.
There was an Ugly Christmas Sweater
Contest.
Deb Long was the winner!!!**



OTHER ITEMS



Hanging of the Greens Service



Pastor Mike Jones with the kids



**Sunday School Kids
decorated cookies then
went caroling and passing
out the cookies they
made.**



Worship is at 10:15 am!!!

**Weekly Zoom Prayer Meeting
will resume January 9th at 7 pm!**

**United Methodist Men
will meet Tuesday, Jan 21st
@ 5:30 pm**

**Finance/Growth will meet
Tuesday, Jan 14 @ 5 pm in
the library at the church.**

**Telstar items will be due on
the 15th of each month !!!**

**Thursday Bible Study is
at 9 am each week!!!**

**New Member Class - If you are interested in becoming a
member, we will be holding a class. This will be 5 classes
either in person or via Zoom for 5 weeks.
Just let the office know!**

**Impact Life Blood Drive
Wed, Jan 8th
3 pm to 6 pm
Fellowship Hall**



I want to thank all of you for the wonderful
Christmas gifts that you gave me and the kind
words. It truly warms my heart and I am
appreciative of each one of you!
Love and blessings for you all! Ronda Rathje

Thank you so much for your
generous gifts and blessings.
Kay Cavanagh

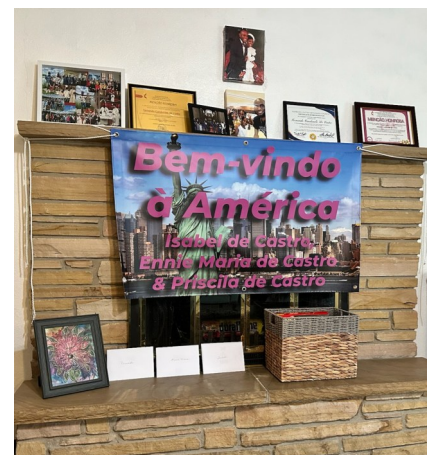
We would like to thank everyone for their prayers. The surgery
was successful and physical therapy is done. Thanks again, it was
very much appreciated. David and Carol Fosdick



**Pastor Fernando is back with his
family!!! After a very long flight, they
arrived at Ohare Airport in Chicago
on December 8th, 2024**



**When they arrived to the
parsonage,
this is what they saw!**





January 2025

3—Scott Law
 4—Ben Pratt
 6—Amanda Gonzalez
 7—John Irons
 8—Mary Irons
 13—Debbie Hockman
 13—*Susan Michelle & Greg Jepsen (2001)*
 15—Gary Dykema
 15—Linda Stubbe
 19—Mark Rathje
 20—Linda Yenney
 23—Kay Cavanagh
 29—Dalton Shaw
 30—Sandy Froelich
 31—Rhonda Law



Hello January

Journey of a thousand miles
Always starts somewhere.
Nothing will be achieved
Unless you take
Action. Momentum plus
Repeated efforts will take
You further than expected

OurMindfulLife.com



Worship Helpers

Acolytes

Jan 5 - Ellie Johnson
 Jan 12 - Joe Pasch
 Jan 19 - Pearl Michels
 Jan 26 - Kirk Hoffman

Liturgists

Jan 5 - Joe Michels
 Jan 12 - LaVona Grissinger
 Jan 19 - Molly Andersen
 Jan 26 - Ryker McCombie

Coffee Hour

Jan 5 - Bob & LaVona Grissinger
 Jan 12 -
 Jan 19 -
 Jan 26 -

Ushers & Greeters

will be Worship cmte for the month of January

Counters & Verifiers

Jan 5 - Molly Andersen & Tom Michels
 Jan 12 - Rhonda Law & Sharon F Guilinger
 Jan 19 - Lori Miller & LaVona Grissinger
 Jan 26 - Vivian Eaton & Mary Irons

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

Lots of pictures inside! Even more on our
 Facebook page. Be sure to friend us!
www.facebook.com/savanna.firstumc





January 2025