



THE MESSENGER

The Sycamore United Methodist Newsletter

Volume 24, Issue 9

September 2023

Join us on September 10th for...

**Sunday Church Services will return to 8:30 and 10:00am
and Children's Sunday School will resume at 10:00am**



Bring your appetites on Sunday, September 10th for our very own version of THE TASTE between and after services!! Ministries will provide a tasty bite and information about ways we can live out our discipleship. United Methodists know how to eat, and we will be keeping the food flowing after the 10am service at our annual church picnic. The United Methodist Men will be grilling, so bring a salad to share. Family and friends are welcome to join us for this festive event!

Children's & Middle School Sunday School resumes September 10th.

Children are in worship through Children's Time and be led to Kids Worship in the gym. From there we break off into age specific groups. Each group will have an age-appropriate lesson rooted in active learning. This year PK-5 will be using "Spark Rotations" and Middle School "Connect" as curriculum. We are excited engage with our children and youth in faithful conversation and fun. We look forward to seeing you soon!

School teachers are needed this fall. Share God's love with kids through fun activities once a month! Training is on September 9th from 3-4pm. We do your weekly prep for you so all you have to do is read and share your love of Christ. Contact Becca to learn more.



SEE PAGES 4, 5, AND 6 FOR UPCOMING SEPTEMBER/FALL PROGRAMMING

Staff

Rev. Luis Reyes

LEAD PASTOR

LFReyes@sycamoreumc.org

Pastor Hannah Phillips Mollenkamp

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

pastorhannah@sycamoreumc.org

Debbie Elleson

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

debbie@sycamoreumc.org

Craig Fritz

ORGANIST

craigfritz@sycamoreumc.org

Peter Hansen

MUSIC DIRECTOR

peter@sycamoreumc.org

Jim McCue

BUSINESS DIRECTOR

jim@sycamoreumc.org

Becca Rome

DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP & SPIRITUAL FORMATION

becca@sycamoreumc.org

Lisa Szydlowski

ABC PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

abcpreschool@sycamoreumc.org

Buzz Wheeler

MINISTER OF CONGREGATIONAL CARE & OUTREACH

buzz@sycamoreumc.org

Cory Blanco

SATURDAY WORSHIP LEADER

cory@sycamoreumc.org



Securely give online at
www.sycamoreumc.org/giving
or by texting "giving" to
815-895-9113. Checks may be
mailed to the church at:
160 Johnson Ave., Sycamore, IL 60178.



Sycamore United
Methodist Church



@sycamoreumc

September 2023 Worship Schedule



Saturdays at 5:00pm;
Sundays at 8:30 and 10:00 am

www.facebook.com/SUMCIllinois/ or
www.youtube.com/results?searchquery=sycamore+umc

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

September 2/3 - Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 3:1-15

Matthew 12: 9-21

September 9/10 - Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 12:1-14

Matthew 18:15-20

September 16/17 - Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 14:19-31

Matthew 18:21—35

September 23/24 - Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 16:2-15

Matthew 20: 1-16

Starting September 10th

We will be returning to two Sunday Services, beginning on Sunday September 10. The time of services will remain the same as before, 8:30 and 10:00am, with a Discipleship's Table Talk time between services (see page 4 for more details). We will also continue our Saturday night Re: Worship service at 5:00 p.m. The 8:30 am service will be a "traditional" style church service, with two hymns, a reading, confession, and communion each week. The 10:00 a.m. service will be a blended/multigenerational style of worship, as we have been experiencing this Summer. In addition to variety of music styles, we will also experience short liturgical drama/dramatic readings, and liturgical dance. Sunday School would meet during this time



Those for whom we pray:

Nancy	Amanda Bertolozzi
Sam Rucker and	Elba I. Rosario
Cris Woodin	(Pastor Luis' mother)
Don Clayberg	Leila Cruz
Pat	(Norma Nieves' mother)
Kirk Reed	Lillian Welch
Sue	Lois Cullison
Pat Theyse & family	Diane Mathey
Lillian Mikan	Ron Skelton
Doris Gangwer	Heidi Ridnour
Mary	Peyton Blake
Tammy Hemmelgarn	Kathy Griswold
Milz/Weimer Family	Doris Sloniker
David Dykema	Jessica Hagendorn
Christine Poppens	Helen Meadowcraft
Randy Peterson	

We extend our sympathies to the family of:

Eric Gabriel
 Albert Drake
 Annabelle Wilson
 Shirley DeSort (Darla DeSort's mother)

The Service Personnel and Their Families

Cpt. Mark Browning,	E4SPC Alexis Jones
*SGT Ben Bushno	E3PFC Max Keller
SGT Shaune Clark	A1C Brock Larson
SGT Matthew Einhorn	*Maj Steve Haack
PFC Timothy Einhorn	SPC Caden Grimaldi
PO1 Frank Incapreo	PV2 Rachel McMillion
SSG Christopher Isabel	*CPL Joshua Caraballo
Lt. Col. Garrett Slack	SPC Sutit Jackson
SFC Matthew "Scott" Stewart	PV2 Liam Keller
*LT Matthew Herbaugh	E-5 PO Hayden Royer
PVT Trevor Bassett	E-3 Amanda Royer
PO3 Samuel V. Bell	<i>*indicates deployed personnel</i>
SGT Brock Grimaldi	



We are sending out a very heartfelt **thank you** to everyone who made the Fall Thrift/Bake Sale event a success. We estimate our profit at \$4,200 which will all go to mission work near and far. In addition, we donated items to support at least seven other local non-profit groups.

We appreciate your donations of items, your time, and your financial support. It is a true team effort to make this a success.

Thank you very much,
 The UWF Mission Team

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

What is your purpose?

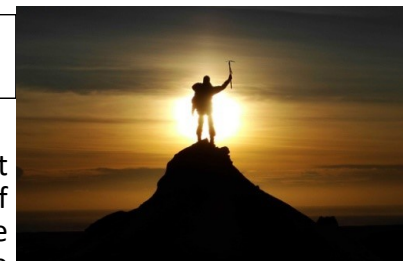
Coming September 10 is "Taste of Sycamore UMC (Sycamore United Methodist Church)." It is sponsored by the Discipleship Team and is based on the style of Chicago's popular annual food fest. Various church groups at SUMC will have booths explaining their missions and ministries as well as giving away some type of snack. It is also your chance for self-examination to be sure you are making your life count to the fullest by being an active participant in the life of the church. 1 Peter 4:10 says: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Ever ask the question "what does God want me to do?" Try answering these questions to help guide you to a purposeful life.

1. What would you do every day without pay....what comes easy?
2. Whom could you benefit the most from what you do?
3. How would someone else's life change because you helped them?

Think about Jesus' parable of using one's talents found in Matthew 25:14-30. Use "The Taste of Sycamore UMC" to help find what God has designed you to do. Work for a cause and enjoy the deep satisfaction that comes with it.

Remember, it is your financial support that makes the opportunities for service at SUMC possible. You may securely give online at www.sycamoreumc.org/giving or by texting "giving" to 815-895-9113. Checks may be mailed to the church at 160 Johnsson Avenue, Sycamore, Illinois 60178.



FALL PROGRAMS STARTING IN SEPTEMBER (LISTED BY AREA OF INTEREST)



DISCIPLESHIP AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- Bible Study - "Fulfillment of a Promise: The Book of Joshua"
- Fall Book Study - "Brave Church"
- PRIDE Book Study – "Mom, I'm Gay"
- New Member/Disciple Class
- Discipleship's Table Talk

SEE BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS

Bible Study - Fulfillment of a Promise: The Book of Joshua.

This is a 14-week study covering the Old Testament book of Joshua. Class meets Monday nights from 6:00pm – 7:00pm starting September 11th. Location of the study will be the Church Lounge. Sign-up on the Discipleship bulletin board.

Bring your Bible with you! There is also a Study Guide and a Class Schedule, both to be distributed at our first Monday meeting.



Our Fall Book study is Brave Church by Elizabeth Hagan. Let's be brave together and learn to talk about sensitive issues. Let's create a safe place where people can talk about their struggles without fear of being dismissed, shamed, or judged. Classes will meet in person for seven weeks, Wednesdays from 11-12pm or Thursdays from 7-8pm. Our first meeting is 9/13 or 9/14. Materials are at the Resource Center. Text BRAVE to the church phone number or click the link below to register: <https://churchteams.com/m/Register.asp?a=ZEJnS3JRWmtLaTA9>



Book Study "Mom, I'm Gay" presented by SUMC's PRIDE Group - Saturdays at 6:15pm - September 16-October 21. Join the discussion on understanding the LGBTQIA+ community in Christian Love and what it means to "come out". Sign-up in the Concourse or text PRIDE STUDY to 815-895-9113.

Want to claim SUMC as your church home & connect with more ministries? Join our New Disciple/Member class on Sundays 9/17-10/1 from 11:30-12:30pm in the lounge. Childcare will be provided. Text NEWMEMBER to the church phone number or click the link below to register: <https://churchteams.com/m/Register.asp?a=ejZla1RkekhhZTA9>



Discipleship's Table Talk is a continuation of this summer's Next Steps. It meets in various locations from 9:15-9:55 between services. This time gives adults, young adults, and youth a chance to engage in different ways to strengthen their connection with God and one another. We will have conversation around topics, town-hall style meetings, scripture review, and of course fellowship. We hope you will join us for this new approach to discipleship at SUMC.

FALL PROGRAMS STARTING IN SEPTEMBER (LISTED BY AREA OF INTEREST) CONT'D.

WORSHIP, MUSIC AND ARTS

- Chancel Choir
- Handbell Choir
- Children's Choirs Open House
- "GlorySound"



SEE BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS*

Chancel Choir meets each Wednesday at 7:00pm beginning September 6th with rehearsal and ICE CREAM and DESSERT SOCIAL. Be there to sing and eat and enjoy fellowship and social time together afterwards!

Adult Handbell Choir meets each Thursday at 7:00pm beginning September 7th.

Children's Choirs will begin with an Open House on Wednesday, September 13th at 5:30pm. Ages Pre-K thru 8th Grade. Learn more about our children's Choirs and meet our directors! Parents/Guardians are invited to stay and observe

Coming Soon...Fall Sing entitled "GlorySound" singing the great hymns and gospel songs (with a few new ones too!) is Saturday, October 14 @ 5 pm

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

- Confirmation Class
- Youth Group
- Breakfast and Devotion (B.A.D) for High School Youth
- Young Adult Bible Study

SEE BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS

Confirmation (8th grade & up), Wednesdays beginning 9/13 from 7-8pm in the fall & monthly in the Spring
All youth in grades 8 and up who have not already been confirmed are invited to join us on this exciting step in their faith journey. In the fall we will meet weekly for classes and in the spring we will have monthly events such as field trips, service projects, and fellowship opportunities. Register by texting "confirm" to 815-895-9113.



Youth Group (grades 6-12), Sunday evenings weekly beginning 9/17 from 6:00-7:30pm

Youth Group this year will be every week and encompass a variety of activities! We will share a meal together, play games, and spend time in devotion and prayer, but we may also worship or do service projects, crafts, or other activities. Bring your questions, your ideas, and a friend!

Breakfast and Devotion (Sycamore High School), alternating Thursday mornings beginning 9/21 at 7:50am. We invite Sycamore High School students to join us for fellowship and a quick devotional time over breakfast on alternating Thursday mornings (late start days). All are welcome to come and be fed both physically and spiritually! Breakfast is served at 7:50 AM.

Young Adult Bible Study, Tuesdays beginning 9/19 from 6:30-8:00 PM

Anyone over high school age is welcome to join us on Tuesday to share a meal and dive into scripture with us.

Family Ministry

We will have monthly events and activities programming for families throughout the year. All are welcome! We will also provide family devotional resources during Advent and Lent.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE AND OUTREACH

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

- CROP Walk
- Sycamore Food Pantry
- Hope Haven



The CROP Walk will step off on Sunday, September 24th at 2:00 PM at the Sycamore Forest Preserve. This route is fully accessible so everyone can easily participate. Join the Sycamore Food Pantry CROP Walk team or donate to CROP Walk by contacting Buzz Wheeler.

Food Pantry Needs

Food Pantry needs include canned soup, canned beans and canned fruit. Also we welcome canned tuna, canned chicken, mac & cheese, cake mixes and any other non-perishable grocery items.



Hope Haven Meal Assistance Needed for September

Prepare or buy just one course or the entire meal to feed 50 people! Deliver your contribution to Hope Haven in DeKalb or drop it off at the church by 3:30 on Monday. **Please call the church (815-895-9113) to let us know which delivery option you will be using. Sign-up at the Resource Center in the Concourse or by calling the church office at 815-895-9113.**



OTHER SUMC OPPORTUNITIES IN SEPTEMBER

Teacups for Trevor Project

A fundraiser for mental health resources for LGBTQIA+ youth

Saturday, September 23rd at 3:00 pm
Sycamore UMC, 160 Johnson Ave, Sycamore, IL 60178
Recommended Donation for Tickets: \$25 or Pay as You're Able

Join us for afternoon tea and a silent auction!
Wear your best tea party attire as we raise funds and awareness for this important cause.

.....

Presented by P.R.I.D.E
With special Guest, Dekalb FSA

THE TREVOR PROJECT
For Young LGBTQ Lives

UWF will host a Pink Potluck on September 7th at 6PM.

There will be a guest speaker on breast cancer awareness. Ham and dessert will be provided. Please bring a side dish to share and your own table service. Wear something pink! All women are invited, no need to be a UWF member. Sign up at the UWF table in the Concourse or on the UWF bulletin board if you would like to join us.



\$15
per ticket



Chicken Strip Drive-thru Dinner

from The Dirty Bird in Sycamore

Wed., September 20, 2023 from 4:30-6:30pm

Pick-up at Sycamore United Methodist

Meal includes: 4 chicken strips, fries, coleslaw, roll & sauce

Hosted by:



A Message from Pastor Hannah

He told another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and planted in his field. It’s the smallest of all seeds. But when it’s grown, it’s the largest of all vegetable plants. It becomes a tree so that the birds in the sky come and nest in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast, which a woman took and hid in a bushel of wheat flour until the yeast had worked its way through all the dough.” -Matt. 13:31-33

These two parables are the first texts I ever preached on. I had just turned 21 and was interning for the faith community I belonged to at the time, Open Worship, which was one of the contemporary services at First United Methodist Church of Denton in Denton, Texas, where I went to college. We were wrapping up a series on love (groundbreaking, I know) and I had been offered the final week in the series. I decided to preach on how love leads to growth—specifically, how the love of this beautiful community I’d belonged to for a couple of years at that point had brought about my own growth, calling me into relationship with Christ and supporting my call to ministry when it became apparent that I did, in fact, have one.

I hadn’t started seminary yet, but I’d learned a lot watching our wonderful pastor over the years, and since I was studying both English and German literature, I’d gotten pretty good at writing about the things I read. I’d also been reading theology books “for fun” for a bit at this point (a habit that I dearly hope will return now that I have finished seminary, which pretty much killed it), so I at least had a place to start. I interpreted these parables as illustrations of that ordinary miracle, explaining that both the yeast and the mustard seed represented what theologian Bruce Bauer called “the unholy everyday” to the original listeners. I’d loved these texts ever since I first encountered Bauer’s interpretations and knew that these images were worth sharing.

But I had something to add to that interpretation: I imagined God’s love as the water poured out on the mustard seed and mixed into the leavened flour, enabling the seed to grow and the dough to come together and rise.

The kingdom of heaven: a home, a loaf of bread, growing eternally in our midst through the grace of God, inviting all of us in.

It was a relatively easy sermon to write, honestly. Easy and fun. The preaching part was another matter. I’ve struggled with anxiety for as long as I can remember and have long had terrible stage fright as a result. I was so nervous leading up to that Sunday—who was I to think that I had anything to offer these people? How could my humble, untrained words possibly be good enough?

Finally it was Sunday morning. After a few songs, our pastor, Jonathan, introduced me and I climbed onto the stage, blinking in the bright lights, as my friends and loved ones in the congregation cheered me on. My hands shook as I adjusted the music stand we treated as a pulpit. I felt like I was outside my body, watching someone else. Somehow, I took a deep breath and began.

And everything changed. To this day I can’t explain it. All I know is that my fear melted away and that I knew, suddenly, that what I had to offer was, in fact, enough. The only explanation I can give is that the Spirit of God was with me in that moment, holding me, guiding me, pushing me to grow. And I knew then that I was in the right place, doing the right thing.

And that I was going to have to keep doing it.

I graduated from UNT that spring. One of my closest friends from church, Jenny, gifted me with a mustard seed pendant, in honor of my first sermon. I wore it basically every day for a long time, but lost it sometime before we moved to Illinois. Fast forward a few years to coming to Sycamore and meeting the team here. When Becca came over to help us with unpacking at the parsonage, I noticed that she wore a mustard seed pendant not unlike the one I’d lost. I quickly told her the story, lamenting that I’d lost my own.

Two weeks later, she presented me with a new one, beautifully carved in a sunflower-like shape with the seed at its center. You might’ve seen me wearing it; I’ve worn it every day since, including the first Sunday I preached here. And it felt like coming home.

I look forward to sharing more of my story with this wonderful community—and hope to hear more of yours (you, reading this!) soon.

In Christ,

Hannah Phillips Mollenkamp, Associate Pastor

SEPTEMBER 2023 EVENTS CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
The deadline for the October issue of The Messenger is September 20th						1 2 7:30 AM UMM Breakfast 8:00 AM Boy Scout Roundup 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
3 9:15 AM Sunday Worship Service 1:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 2:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 2304	4 Church offices closed. Have a safe Labor Day!	5 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 3 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal	6 12:00 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Girl Scout Recruitment 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	7 4:00 PM TOPS 5:00 PM Kish Valley Storm 5:30 PM Visioning Team 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:00 PM UWF Pink Potluck 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	8	9 3:00 PM Sunday School Teacher Training 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
10 KICK-OFF SUNDAY The Taste of Sycamore UMC 8:30 and 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 10:00 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM Church Picnic 5:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal	11 12:00 PM Magic Mondays 12:00 PM Food Pantry 5:30 PM Finance and Stewardship Committee 6:00 PM Adult Bible Study "The Book of Joshua" 7:00 PM Church Council	12 9:30 AM Mary Circle 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 4 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 7:00 PM Grace Circle	13 10:00 AM The Great Commission Team 11:00 AM Adult Bible Study "The Brave Church" 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Confirmation Class of 2024	14 4:00 PM TOPS 5:00 PM Kish Valley Storm 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 6:00 PM Pack 141 Dens 5 & 6 7:00 PM Adult Bible Study "The Brave Church" 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	15 7:00 PM Pack 141 Meeting	16 7:30 AM UMM Breakfast 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service 6:15 PM Book Study "Mom, I'm Gay"
17 8:30 and 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 9:15 AM Discipleship Table Talk 10:00 AM Children's Sunday School 11:30 AM New Disciple/Member Class 1:30 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 2:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 2304 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	18 12:00 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Adult Bible Study "The Book of Joshua" 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal	19 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 3 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 6:30 PM Young Adult Bible Study 7:00 PM Grace Circle	20 10:00 AM Caring Ministry Team 11:00 AM Adult Bible Study "The Brave Church" 4:00 PM Christian Kids 4:30-6:30 PM Drive-thru Chicken Strip Dinner from The Dirty Bird hosted by the Pay It Forward House 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Confirmation Class of 2024	21 7:50 AM B.A.D. (Breakfast & Devotion for HS Youth) 4:00 PM TOPS 5:00 PM Kish Valley Storm 5:30 PM Visioning Team 6:00 PM Stagecoach Rehearsal 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:30 PM Girl Scout Leader Meeting 7:00 PM Adult Bible Study "The Brave Church" 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	22 1:00 PM ABC Preschool Staff Meeting	23 3:00 PM Teacups for Trevor 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service 6:15 PM Book Study "Mom, I'm Gay"
24 8:30 and 10:00 AM Sunday Worship Services 9:15 AM Discipleship Table Talk 10:00 AM Children's Sunday School 11:30 AM New Disciple/Member Class 2:00 PM Sondra King Memorial Crop Walk 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	25 12:00 PM Magic Mondays 12:00 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Adult Bible Study "The Book of Joshua" 6:00 PM Congregational Care 6:45 PM PRIDE Comm.	26 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM UWF Mission Team 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 4 6:30 PM Young Adult Bible Study	27 11:00 AM Adult Bible Study "The Brave Church" 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 7:00 PM Chancel Choir 7:00 PM Confirmation Class of 2024	28 4:00 PM TOPS 5:00 PM Kish Valley Storm 6:00 PM Genealogy Group "Tree Toppers" 6:00 PM Pack 141 Dens 5 & 6 7:00 PM Adult Bible Study "The Brave Church" 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	29	30 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service 6:15 PM Book Study "Mom, I'm Gay"

ABC PRESCHOOL MINISTRY NEWS

I'd like to welcome our ABC Preschool families as we begin our 2023/2024 school year. The ABC Team is happy to be coming back with classrooms full of happy new faces and returning families as well.

We're looking forward to sharing information of our upcoming Monthly Mission Projects as well as daily insights into our classrooms.

Classes will begin on Tuesday, September 5 with our soft opening known as Phase in. We are looking forward to a safe and successful school year here at ABC Preschool.

The ABC Preschool Staff

