



THE MESSENGER

The Sycamore United Methodist Newsletter

Volume 25, Issues 1 & 2

January/February 2024

As we move into the Epiphany season, we leave behind another Christmas season. By now we have taken down all our decorations, stored some of the items we didn't use and so on. All our family gatherings are now in pictures, videos or just in our memories. We are now ready for what is to come in a new year, one day at a time. In some cases that may be true, but in others it is very hard to move on. For some, the year that left us gave us some difficult things to remember such as death, illness, and financial problems; unfortunately, the list can go on and on. For others, some instances are much easier to remember, such as; new lives being born, goals accomplished, expectations have been met and so on. In some mysterious but clear sense, the year that has left us leaves us with mixed emotions. In each instance we have experienced God's presence with us. That's grace!

We have the tendency; I know I have caught myself doing it, to dwell on what we cannot change. To look at the experiences of the past and try to, in some "magical" way, change it. What should I have done differently? What if???? But why dwell on what can't be changed? For me, it is one of those questions we may never get a clear answer to. But, yet, why we do spend all that time and energy on it? With a new year there are indeed new possibilities, every day brings its own blessings. Why can't our energies be directed in ways to fulfill our call-in response to God's faithfulness? Why not redirect those energies, if we truly believe in the blessings of a new day.

"Every day brings new challenges and opportunities for us to be wise and maximize our potential."

Every day brings new challenges and opportunities for us to be wise and maximize our potential. So this year, instead of dwelling on so many resolutions that may get lost in the business of our life, let's change our frame of mind and think of how, with God's help, we can move forward in our faith journey. Let's develop faith strategies that will help us keep on track. I have become a strong believer that if our spiritual life is in order, it is much easier to take care of the other parts of our life.

So, you can see that there is so much we can do every day, one day at a time instead of dwelling on what we are unable to change. Let's learn from these experiences, let's be more intentional about the mistakes we've made (if that was the case). Let's be mindful in our talking, doing, and thinking. It has been said that the source of our wording lies in our heart; if our heart is in the right place, our words will be invitational, hospitable, and yes, witnessing...

But what do we do now? I know changes are not easy. It is more comfortable to keep doing what we have every year. But have we seen any improvements in our life? If the answer is yes; that's great for you. But if that is not the case, maybe this is a good year to move in another direction. I have strong intentions to:

1. To not dwell so much on what I cannot change;
2. Focus on today and what I can do to be more faithful in all aspects of my life and
3. To be more aware of the mistakes I have made and try being more conscientious not to repeat them. So far, I find myself moving on. I am certainly not there yet, but I am heading with God help's in the right direction.

So, it is a new year, a new day and we are presented with new opportunities. I will ask each one of you; what are you going to do? For me, I promise to keep all of you in my prayers and keep moving forward. May God blessings be with you All!

In Christ' service,
Luis F. Reyes-Rosario, Lead Pastor

Staff

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January/February 2024

Saturdays at 5:00pm; Sundays at 9:30am

Children's Sunday School at 9:30am

www.facebook.com/SUMCIllinois/ or

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

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR DECEMBER

January 20/21 - 1st Sunday of Advent

Jonah 3:1-5, 10 Mark 1: 14-20

January 27/28—2nd Sunday of Advent

Deuteronomy 18: 15-20

Mark 1: 21-28

February 3/4 – Black History Month

Isaiah 40: 21-31 & Mark 1: 29-39

February 11- The Transfiguration of the Lord/ Black History Month

2 Kings 2: 1-12 Psalm 50: 1-6,

2 Corinthians 4: 3-6 Mark 9: 3-6

February 14 – Ash Wednesday

2 Services: 12:30 & 6:30pm/Black History Month

Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17 Psalm 51: 1-17,

2 Corinthians 5: 20b – 6:10

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

February 18 – First Sunday in Lent/Black History Month

Genesis 9: 8-17 Mark 1 9-15

February 25 – Second Sunday in Lent/Black History Month

Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16

Mark 8: 31-38



The SUMC Staff Pastor-Parish Relations Committee was instructed to cut staff costs to help close the budget gap. After much deliberations and discussion, the committee decided to make two changes.

Then first change is to eliminate Buzz Wheeler's position of Minister of Congregational Care and Outreach. This position was originally created because there was no full-time associate pastor in our church, and it was needed to relieve some of

the workload of the lead pastor. The Church now has an associate pastor, and both the lead pastor and associate pastor will now have to take on these duties.

The second decision is to take Peter Hansen's position of full-time Music Director to a part-time position. Most Music Directors are part-time positions and although not optimal we felt that this was a cut that the church could make.

The Staff Pastor-Parish Relation Committee did not take this task of cutting costs lightly. Through special meetings, emails, texts, and of course conversations, we feel these are the changes that are best for our congregation at this time.

Donny Faulhaber

Chair - Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee



Prayers of thanksgiving for the Gale Family, Jarod & Jessica, Oliver, Cooper, & Messiah. Messiah's adoption was finalized on Wednesday, January 10th to officially make them a family of five!



Those for whom we pray:

Nancy	Dick McLaughlin
David Dykema	Randy Rutledge
Ron Skelton	Jean Schmidt
Doris Sloniker	Beth
Helen Meadowcraft	Ray Larson
Cynthia Kosusnik	Diana Grace
Jeanne Johnson	Roger
Mike Milyanovich	Nancy Leifheit

We extend our sympathies to the families of:

Betty Lou Finn
Kathy Hendricks
Roberta Smith
Karen Blaser

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	

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION - The Faithful Steward

Here is a familiar scene you may have observed over Christmas. It is the holiday get together and you hear children shouting, "My doll!" or "My truck!" or "My Legos!" Mine, Mine, Mine!

Have you ever seen someone act this way? Have you ever acted this way? Is that item really yours?

As Psalm 24:1 points out, *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."* You see, everything really belongs to God, but he lets us use it for ourselves. God is so good to us and loves us so much that he even sent Jesus to show us the way, the truth, and the life we should lead. God wants us to be good stewards of what he has given us and use it for the work of the church and to help others.



We begin the new year prepared to put the words of our church mission statement into action. We are ready to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. But this cannot happen without your faithful support of the ministries of this church. Since God has given so much, wouldn't it be sad to just hold onto your gifts and say, "Mine!"?

Please share generously what you have been given and join in living our core values of Community, Discipleship, Faith, Integrity, and Love. 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 Johnson Avenue, Sycamore, Illinois 60178.



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Sycamore United
Methodist Church



@sycamoreumc

DISCIPLESHIP AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- LIFT Dinner on February 7th at 6:00pm
- Lenten Study begins on February 21/22

LIFT Dinner - February 7th - Worship, Music and Arts will be cooking. We will pray and play together ! To RSVP text LIFTDINNER to the church phone number.



Lent is the perfect time to reflect on who Jesus was, someone who challenged the way the world looked at God. This season we invite you to join our Lenten study, "Reckless Love". You can choose Wednesday with Pastor Luis from 11-12 in the activity room or Thursdays virtually with Pastor Hannah, from the comfort of your home from 7-8pm. Classes meet weekly starting February 21st or 22nd and conclude during Holy Week. Register with this link or by texting LENT2024 to the church phone number.

<https://churchteams.com/m/Register.asp?a=Q3c2K21UdmRIV0E9>

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

- Brunch with Pastor Hannah on Sunday, January 21
- Sledding Outing for everyone! January 21, 12:30-2:00pm
- UMC Superbowl Spectacular! Sunday, February 11, beginning at 5:00pm

YOUNG ADULTS

Anyone who considers themselves a young adult--high school grads, college students, young professionals, parents of young kids, people just figuring it out, etc.--is invited to join Pastor Hannah for brunch at Cesaroni's right after worship on Sunday, 1/21 to get to know each other and talk about what you want out of your young adult ministry. Let Pastor Hannah know if you plan to attend!



YOUTH & FAMILIES

Mark your calendars for our first annual Sycamore UMC Superbowl Spectacular! The Young Peoples' and Family Ministries team is hosting a big Superbowl watch party on Sunday, February 11th and you're invited (start time TBA, but kickoff is at 5:30)! In addition to watching the big game, we'll also have games and activities, including a Madden tournament, and of course, food and fellowship. We hope to see you at what is sure to be a fun community event!

ALL AGES

People of all ages are invited to join Family Ministries for a sledding outing on Sunday, January 21st at the Sycamore Park District Sled Hill on Airport Road from 12:30-2:00 PM (weather/conditions permitting). BYO sled for a fun winter afternoon! No Youth Group on December 24th or 31st! We hope to see you at worship services on those days and we'll be back on January 7th.



ABC PRESCHOOL MINISTRY NEWS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We cannot wait to begin our new session beginning January 8!

Annual Teddy Bear Week fun begins on January 16.

Graduation pictures will be taken on Monday, February 5.

Registration for school year 2024/2025 begins on Tuesday, February 20. We will enroll current families, Sycamore UMC families and alumni families through February 25. Open registration begins on February 26.

We thank Sycamore United Methodist Church for all your support of ABC Preschool. We look forward to working together on many projects during the year.



The ABC Preschool Staff

WORSHIP, MUSIC AND ARTS

- Children's Choirs meets Wednesday's 5:30-6:00 p.m.
- Chancel Choir Meets Wednesday's 7-8:30 pm
- Handbell Choir Meets Thursday's 7-8:15 pm

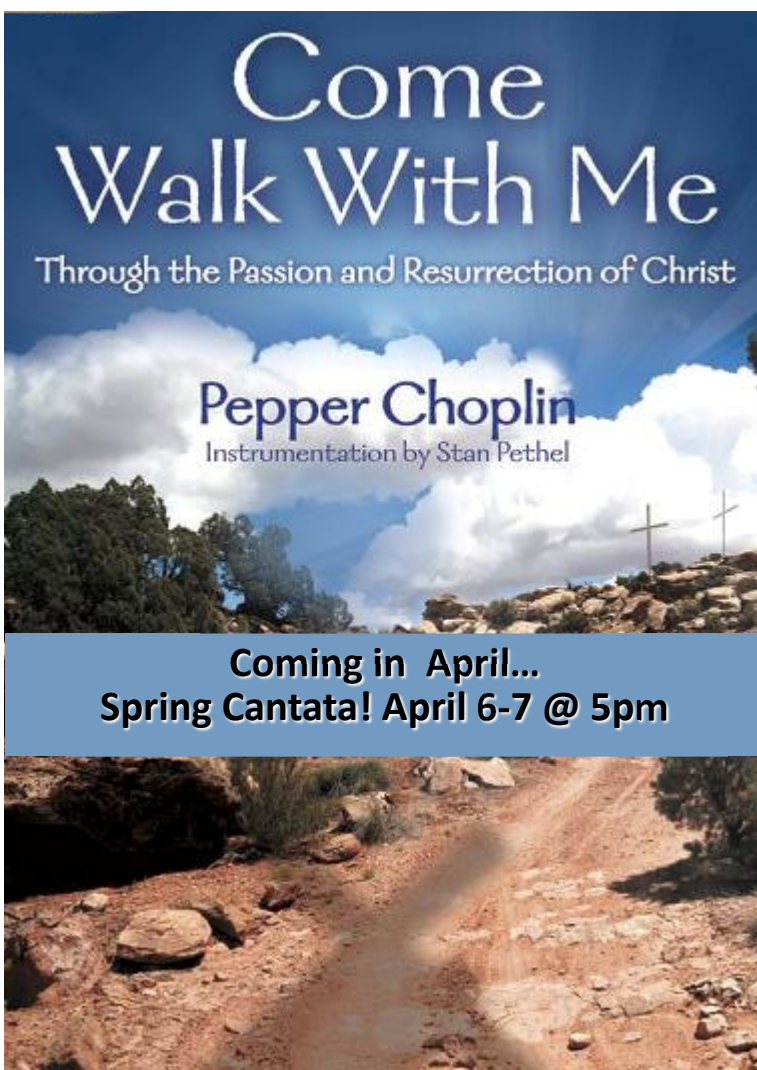
Chancel Choir: Meets Wednesday Nights 7-8:30 in the music room. (ages High school to Super Senior!) Now is the time to join, as we will be learning our Spring Cantata, "Come Walk With Me" which will be presented April 6-7, 2024 @t 5 p.m.

Children's Choirs: We have TWO this year. Kids choir (ages pre-k to 3rd grade) and Jr. Choir (ages 4th-8th grade) The choirs sing once a month and meet in the music room on Wednesday's from 5:30 – 6 pm.

Handbell Choir: Meets Thursdays in the music room at 7-8 pm They ring at the 10 o'clock service on the second Sunday of the month.

Tech Team: We are always looking to add more tech's to our Team. If Audio (sound) or Video is your passion, please contact Peter Hansen Director of Music.

Instrumentalists, pianists, singers always needed. Contact Peter Hansen, Director of Music.



WED., FEBRUARY 14TH

ASH Wednesday

Contemplative Worship @ 12:30pm
(30 minutes) in the Chapel

Worship Service @6:30pm

Communion Stewards

The Worship, Music and Arts Committee is looking for Communion Stewards. Volunteers will be responsible for helping set up communion on the weekends that communion is served. Responsibilities will included setting up communion on the altar, filling cups, and clean-up after service. We will train you! Our hope is to get a group of people to volunteer so we can rotate months. If you're interested please contact Debbie at the church office.

3 SIMPLE RULES

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



United Methodist Men's Pancake Supper Thursday, February 1, 2024 from 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased ahead from most any Methodist Men, in the concourse on Sundays or the church office. Tickets can be purchased at the door for the same price.

The Pancake Supper features pancakes served with sausage, scrambled eggs, and apple sauce.

Tickets: \$9 each for adults, \$4.50 for children ages 5-10, children under 5 eat free.

If you would like to help with the Pancake Supper you can sign-up on the bulletin board in the Concourse or contact Tony Sgarlata.

AARP Foundation

TAX-AIDE

AARP Tax Preparation will be each Wednesday beginning February 1st and will go through April 12th, **by appointment only**. To make an appointment please call Sue at 815-501-5696.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

The Memorial Committee will be offering scholarships to deserving and qualified students planning to attend a 2 or 4-year-college or university next year.

- One or more \$500 scholarships will be awarded from the **Church Scholarship Funds**. The number of scholarships vary each year and are determined by the amount of money in the scholarship fund at the time the applications are reviewed in April. Contributions to this fund can be made at any time during the year.
- The \$1,000 **Marion B. Marsh Memorial Scholarship** will be given to a person entering the freshman year.
- The **Barbara J. Rodgers Memorial Scholarship** of with a minimum of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$5,000 will be given to a full-time student who has completed the freshman year and is planning to continue his/her undergraduate, graduate, or post-graduate studies at an accredited college of university, majoring in a religious vocation or education vocation. Priority will be given to a prior recipient of the Barbara J. Rodgers Memorial Scholarship. If no applicant meets the criteria, the scholarship will not be awarded.
- The **Midge Hartsuch Memorial Scholarship** of \$500 will be given to a student who will be attending Kishwaukee Community College in Malta. If no applicant meets the criteria, the scholarship will not be awarded.
- The **Karen S. Palm-Hale-Hagen Nursing Memorial United Methodist Endowed Scholarship**, based on funds in the account, with the minimum of \$500 will be awarded to one high school senior declaring "Nursing" as their college major or an active college student pursuing a nursing degree each year for their dedication to serving others in the surrounding Sycamore/DeKalb communities. If no applicant meets the criteria, the scholarship will not be awarded. **(NOTE: The criteria and application for this scholarship is different from the Sycamore United Methodist Church Scholarship criteria and application.)**
- **United Methodist Men Scholarships** - Two \$500 scholarships will be given:
 - ◊ 1 scholarship to honor and provide financial assistance to one student who will be attending a 2 or 4 year college or university in the following school year.
 - ◊ 1 scholarship to honor and provide financial assistance to one student who will be pursuing further education in a "hands on" trade school program.
 - ◊ For more information, criteria, and an application form, contact Tony Sgarlata, 815-762-4861, anthony.sgarlata@yahoo.com

Applications and criteria are available in the church office and online at www.sycamoreumc.org. The application needs to be completed and returned to the church office by March 31, 2024. Be sure to use the 2024 scholarship applications to be considered for a scholarship. The scholarships will be awarded in June. If you have questions, please contact Diane McQueen at 815-899-8878.

January/February 2024 EVENTS CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
January 21 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 10:45 AM New Disciple/ Membership Class 10:45 AM Brunch with Pastor Hannah 12:30 PM Family Sledding Event 2:00 PM GS Troop 2304 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	22 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Coat Ministry 6:45 PM PRIDE Comm.	23 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM UWF Missions Team 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 4	24 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Adult Book Study "Soul Reset" 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM LIFT Dinner 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	25 4:00 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:00 PM Pack 141 Dens 5 & 6 7:00 PM Virtual Book Study "Soul Reset" 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	26 1:00 PM ABC Preschool Staff Meeting	27 2:00 PM DeKalb County Interfaith Network 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service 7:00 PM Confirmation Retreat and Overnight
28 Confirmation Retreat to Chicago 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 10:45 AM New Disciple/ Membership Class 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	29 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Coat Ministry 12:00 PM Magic Mondays 6:00 PM Discipleship Committee	30 12:00 PM Staff Meeting	31 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Adult Book Study "Soul Reset" 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	1 4:00 PM TOPS 4:30-7:30 PM UMM Pancake Supper 7:00 PM Virtual Book Study "Soul Reset" 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	2	3 7:30 AM UMM Breakfast 8:00 AM Leadership Gathering 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service 6:30 PM Girl Scout Daddy/Daughter Dance
4 New Disciples/Members Received 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 2:00 PM GS Troop 2304 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	5 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness	6 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Coat Ministry 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Staff Pastor Parish Relations Comm. 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 1 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 3	7 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Adult Book Study "Soul Reset" 12:40:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM LIFT Dinner 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	8 4:00 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:00 PM Pack 141 Dens 5 & 6 7:00 PM Virtual Book Study "Soul Reset" 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	9 6:00 PM Girl Scouts	10 3:00 PM Pack 141 Pack Meeting 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
11 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 5:00 PM SUMC Superbowl Spectacular	12 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Magic Mondays 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Coat Ministry 5:15 PM GS Troop 5070 6:00 PM Discipleship Committee 7:00 PM Trustees	13 9:30 AM Mary Circle 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 4	14 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 10:00 AM The Great Commission Team 11:00 AM Adult Book Study "Soul Reset" 12:4:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 12:30 PM Ash Wednesday Contemplative Service 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:30 PM Ash Wednesday Worship Service 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	15 4:00 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Young Peoples Family Ministries Comm. 6:30 PM Girl Scout Leader Meeting 7:00 PM Virtual Book Study "Soul Reset" 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	16	17 7:30 AM UMM Breakfast 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
18 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 2:00 PM GS Troop 2304	19 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Coat Ministry 6:30 PM Worship Comm.	20 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 1 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 3	21 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 10:00 AM Caring Ministry Team 11:00 AM Adult Lent Study 12:4:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	22 3:30 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:00 PM Pack 141 Dens 5 & 6 7:00 PM Virtual Adult Lent Study 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	23 ABC Preschool no school	24 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service
25 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	26 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Coat Ministry 12:00 PM Magic Mondays 5:15 PM GS Troop 5070 6:00 PM Congregation Care Committee	27 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Coat Ministry 1:00 PM UWF Missions Team 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 4	28 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Adult Lent Study 12:4:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	29 4:00 PM TOPS 7:00 PM Virtual Adult Lent Study 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	March 1	2 7:30 AM UMM Breakfast 5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service

The deadline for the March 2024 issue of The Messenger is February 20th