



August 2026

Messenger

SYCAMORE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

DISCOVERING THE GIFTS GOD HAS ALREADY PLACED WITHIN US

Each of us is uniquely made in the image of God, carrying gifts, passions, and experiences that can help bring healing, hope, and connection to the world around us. Our spiritual gifts are ways God's Spirit works through ordinary people to build community, share compassion, offer encouragement, and serve others.

As we move through different seasons of life, our understanding of ourselves and our relationship with God continues to grow. Faith is not something we complete; it is a journey of continual transformation. One way we actively transform ourselves and our community is by noticing the opportunities God gifts us here and now to be agents of change.

The Discipleship Team has been tasked with offering a Spiritual Gifts Inventory to assist each of us in our journey of faith. Many of you have completed surveys in the past, but we ask you to complete this new version that we have carefully crafted a version to meet the needs of this congregation.

Our goal is to have at least 150 people complete the survey. By gathering this information, we can create a digital record of the spiritual gifts represented within our congregation. This will help us better support people where they are in their life of discipleship and to connect those with similar passions, strengths, and interests for ministry and service.

To make participation as easy as possible, the Spiritual Gifts Inventory is available in both digital and hard-copy formats. Whether you prefer completing it online or on paper, we invite you to take a few minutes to share your responses. Thank you for helping us better discern and celebrate the many ways God's Spirit is at work among us, so that together we can continue building a church where every person is valued, connected, and empowered to use their gifts in service to Christ and our community.



 **Sycamore**
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Spiritual Gifts INVENTORY

-  This Spiritual Gifts Survey contains three parts with 20 statements each.
-  Please answer each statement with the response that matches closest to your feelings.
Be sure to Submit the form when finished.
-  You will receive a response with your Spiritual Gifts ranked according to your answers along with ministries or areas at Sycamore UMC that may allow you to share your gifts.
-  **Hard copies are available** in the Resource Center.

Scan to Take the Survey!



UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS

- August 2** at the 9:30 service
Summer Chancel Choir
- August 9** from 11am-1pm
Float Fundraiser PICNIC
- August 14 & 15** - UWF Thrift Sale
(drop off Aug. 10, 11, 12 only)
- August 16** at the 9:30 service
Blessing of the Backpacks
- August 31** - 6-8pm
ABC Preschool Parent Night
- September 6** - Kick off Sunday
and Faith in Action Fair



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Sycamore United
Methodist Church



@sycamoreumc



AUGUST 2026 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays at 9:30am

Children's Sunday School at 9:30am

Sunday Evening Service at 4:30pm

www.facebook.com/SUMCIllinois/ or

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

AUGUST 2 - TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SERVICES OF HOLY COMMUNION

Genesis 32:22-31

Romans 9:1-5

Matthew 14:13-21

AUGUST 9 - ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Guest Preacher—The Reverend Fabiola Grandon-Mayer
Northern Illinois Conference- Director of Connectional
Ministries

Mark 6: 7-13

Sermon Title – “Called to Serve”

AUGUST 16 - TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28

AUGUST 23 - THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SERVICE OF BAPTISM

Isaiah 51:1-6

Romans 12:1-8

Matthew 16:13-20

AUGUST 30 - FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Exodus 3:1-15

Romans 12:9-21

Matthew 16:21-28

Please keep your pastors & your church family informed!

As policies surrounding confidentiality and patient's rights continue to be adjusted, hospitals and nursing homes no longer contact church offices to notify them that church members have been admitted. To insure that you desire and receive pastoral care, please call the church office, or have a friend/family member call on your behalf.

In Our Thoughts & Prayers

Those for whom we pray:

Nancy	Aimee Alanis
Diana Grace	Ellis McLives
Norma Clarner	Rosalie Gartner
Jerrica Newby	Robert Wolfe
Mike Milyanovich	Gene Miller
Kelly Brens	Rick Bianco
Damian Olson	Celeste
Vicki	Pastor Bill Landis
Otto	Norma Moss
Regan & James	Mary Alice Robison
Kathy M.	Carol Reed



We extend our sympathies to the families of:

Ray Larson
Ann Elder
Lowell Akers

The Service Personnel and Their Families

SGT Matthew Einhorn
PFC Timothy Einhorn
*CPO Frank Incapreo
SFC Christopher Isabel
MSG Matt "Scott" Stewart
PO3 Samuel V. Bell
SSGT Brock Grimaldi
*SPC Alexis Jones
*Maj Steve Haack
*CPL Joshua Caraballo
SPC Sutit Jackson
PV2 Liam Keller
E-3 Amanda Royer
SPC John Archer
PV2 Zada Riddle

**indicates deployed personnel*

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

TAKING A BIBLICAL VACATION



This is the time of year when vacations are top of mind for many people. There is no direct correlation between our modern version of a vacation and the scriptures. But scriptures do share the need for rest and renewal. In Matthew 11:28-29 we read, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." The key to a Biblical vacation is to ask if it is a God-honoring event.

It is easy to find advertising promoting wealth as the focus of a vacation trip. Maybe it is total escapism from problems without ways to address them once the journey ends. Or perhaps the vacation is described as a way to satisfy some impulsive desire. It is harder to find vacation time that helps grow relationships with family and friends. Will you find a vacation that lets you learn new things and draws you closer to enjoying the world God created? With rest and renewal as a vacation focus, may the experience of God's generosity in your life lead the way to an even stronger bond of worship with Him.

Thank you for your continued support of the missions and ministries of Sycamore United Methodist Church. In addition to offerings given during a church service, checks may be mailed to the church at 160 Johnson Avenue, Sycamore, Illinois 60178; you may securely give online at www.sycamoreumc.org/giving; or send the text "giving" to the church phone number – 815-895-9113.

REMEMBER SUMC IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

A legacy gift is your opportunity to support the church's work beyond your lifetime, to change lives and honor the role the church played in your life, your family's life, our community, and our world. Legacy gifts allow flexibility to respond to the greatest needs of tomorrow. Legacy gifts can benefit the giver through tax savings. Retirement assets are particularly good assets to achieve the best tax outcome for a planned gift. Consult with your accountant, financial planner, or attorney before finalizing any charitable gift.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER, GROW, AND SERVE



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The vines are down and the waterfalls have dried up, but my gratitude is still overflowing! Nearly 100 kids had a tree-mendous time at Rainforest Falls VBS. Thank you to everyone who helped make Rainforest Falls VBS such a meaningful week. Together, we guided kids as they explored the nature of God's love. They rooted new friendships and deepening their understanding of what it means to be a child of God. We have been well and truly blessed to have cultivated a faith-filled rainforest where young hearts can continue to grow.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Fall program registration will be going live coming soon!!

We were able to hire an additional childcare/nursery provider for the summer months, but we are still seeking someone to serve in this role beginning this fall. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Todd Puttkammer.

We are also looking for Sunday School teachers. If you feel called to serve and can help—even occasionally—please reach out to Todd Puttkammer. If everyone takes a turn, we can easily fill the schedule and ensure that our children are cared for and supported each week.

We are excited to be invited to join the Northern Illinois Conference Fall Youth Retreat at Timber-Lee! The retreat will be held September 25–27. Registration is now open. If you are interested in attending, please let Todd Puttkammer know. The cost for the weekend is **\$180 per child**.

To register, visit: <https://niumc-reg.brapp.com/2026NICFallYouthRetreat>

YOUNG ADULT

- **Young Adults Fellowship** meets every Thursday evening from 6-7:30. Anyone age 18-29 are invited for dinner and discussion about how God is showing up in our lives. A virtual meeting is available.

YOUTH MINISTRY

- **Youth Group** will be every other week. The next youth groups are August 2, 16, and 30, 6-8 p.m. We have food, games, and devotion. All are welcome.

LIFE MISSIONS

Our trip to Louisville was an amazing experience! We had the opportunity to serve as disciples in the community and witness God's work in many meaningful ways. Thank you to everyone who supported us through your prayers and generosity. We look forward to next year's mission trip!



PRIDE MINISTRY UPDATES

PRIDE (Promoting Reconciliation Inclusion Diversity and Equality) continues its programming with our monthly Game Nights: August 15th and September 19th from 4-7pm in the gym. All ages & abilities welcome at all events! Reminder: You are a beloved child of God and we hope to see you soon!

3 SIMPLE RULES

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

OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER, GROW, AND SERVE

WORSHIP, MUSIC AND ARTS

August is here, and our music, worship, and arts programs will be starting a new season!

Mark your calendar for the start dates of our ensembles! If you've been thinking about joining any of our music groups, we'd love to have you join us!

Chancel Choir

Our first rehearsal and beginning date is Wednesday, August 26, from 7:00–8:30 p.m.

For those of you who have wanted to sing with the choir but haven't had the time or been able to make the weekly commitment, now is your chance to try it out! The music is always fun, upbeat, and inspirational! Contact Peter Hansen or the church office for more information.

Tech Team

We really need you! We are always looking for new additions to our Tech Team!

Slides/video and sound help are needed! Not sure if you're qualified? Don't worry—we'll teach you everything you need to know to be successful! Please contact Alex Wilson or the church office for more information.

Breakthrough Band!

Do you play guitar, bass, or drums, or do you sing? Do you enjoy the contemporary style of worship and music? Contact Cory Nordine or the church office for more information.

Handbell Choir

Handbell Choir begins on Thursday, September 3, and meets from 7:00–8:00 p.m.

The Handbell Choir rings once a month and also performs with the Chancel Choir, et al., for a special combined ensemble presentation! Contact Mary Thomas, Peter Hansen, or the church office for more information.

Children's Choir(s)

We currently have two Children's Choirs: Kids Choir and Jr. Choir. They typically begin the first Wednesday in September after our Fall Sunday Kickoff! The start date is tentatively planned for Wednesday, September 16, from 5:30–6:00 p.m. For more information, contact the church office.

Instrumental Ensemble(s)

Throughout the year, instruments are utilized at various special seasonal services. While this has primarily been a brass ensemble, all band and orchestral instrumentalists are welcome to participate! Contact Alex Wilson, Peter Hansen, or the church office for more information on any of these groups.



FELLOWSHIP TIME ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

Coffee is provided each Sunday morning during Fellowship Time, and we're looking for volunteers to bring treats! Whether you'd like to celebrate a special occasion, enjoy time to mingle after worship, or simply share something happening in the life of your group or ministry, providing treats is a great way to connect with others. Sign-up at the Welcome Center or call the church office.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER, GROW, AND SERVE



SCHOOL SUPPLY & BACKPACK DRIVE

Help local students start the school year off right! Throughout July and into August, the Food Pantry will be distributing school supplies and backpacks to area children in need.

You can help by donating new school supplies or backpacks. Simply place your donations in the collection tub located in the Concourse.

Thank you for helping local students begin the school year prepared and ready to learn!

HOPE HAVEN FOR AUGUST

Prepare or buy just one course or the entire meal to feed 60-65 people! **Please call the church (815-895-9113) to let us know if you will be delivering it. Sign-up at the Welcome Center in the Concourse or by calling the church office at 815-895-9113.** You may also get on the Hope Haven volunteer list by texting HOPEHAVEN to the church # of 815-895-9113.

DIRECTOR NEEDED – SYCAMORE FOOD PANTRY

The Sycamore Food Pantry is in need of a new Director. This important ministry provides food and hope to many in our community, and we are prayerfully seeking someone with a heart for service to help lead it. If you feel called to learn more, please reach out to the church office.



FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR AUGUST

Soup	Canned veggies	Spaghetti sauce	Salad Dressing	Bar Soap
Crackers	Crunchy Peanut butter	Mayo	Paper towels	
Canned Chili	Canned Peas, Beans	Canned meals	Toilet Paper	
Canned Refried Beans	and Corn	(i.e spaghetti's,	Tissues	
Canned fruit	Canned Tuna	beefaroni)	Toiletries	

DUFFLE BAG COLLECTION

Many children in the foster care system leave their home with their possessions in trash bags. UWF will continue through July to collect new or gently used (clean, working zippers, no wheels) duffle bags to be distributed to foster care participants. There is a collection box in the church concourse. We have collected 59 duffle bags so far...thank you!!



UNITED METHODIST MEN'S SPIRITUAL CONGRESS

September 11–13, 2026 • Conference Point, Lake Geneva (Williams Bay, WI)

Plan now to attend the United Methodist Men's Spiritual Congress, a weekend of worship, inspiration, fellowship, and service centered on the theme "**Walking Each Day with Hope**" (Isaiah 40:31). The event features inspiring speakers, music by the Alleluia Quartet, Holy Communion, a Christian movie, a service project with the Midwest Mission Distribution Center, updates on United Methodist Men ministries and Scouting, awards, prayer and worship opportunities, and plenty of fellowship on the beautiful shores of Lake Geneva. Attend for one day or the entire weekend—overnight accommodations are available on site.

For additional details, costs, and registration, visit www.nicumm.org



DO YOU LOVE COOKING OR CONNECTING THROUGH FOOD?

Our weekly meal ministry is returning soon. Volunteers are needed to help prep, serve and clean up. Whether you can help once or regularly, your gifts can nourish and care for our church and community in meaningful ways. Text MEALS or see Cassie Grashorn.

AUGUST 2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

The deadline for the September issue of The Messenger is August 20th

Summer
OFFICE HOURS

Summer Office Hours
Monday - Thursday: 8:30am-2:00pm
Fridays: 8:30am-12 Noon

						1 8:00 AM UMM Breakfast
2 8:30 AM Summer Choir 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM Meal Ministries 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	3 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 12:00 PM Summer Magic Mondays.	4 10:00 AM Staff Meeting	5 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Summer Book Study "The Heart of the Psalms"	6 Church building closed for maintenance	7 Church building closed for maintenance	8
9 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM Pumpkin Fest Float Fundraiser Picnic 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship	10 9am-7:30pm Thrift Sale Drop-off 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 5:30 PM Finance Comm.	11 9am-3:00pm Thrift Sale Drop-off	12 9am-Noon Thrift Sale Drop-off 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Summer Book Study "The Heart of the Psalms" 3:00 PM Summer Christian Kids	13 4:00 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group	14 9am-5:00pm UWF Thrift Sale	15 8:00 AM UMM Breakfast 9am-5:00pm UWF Thrift Sale 4:00 PM PRIDE Game Night
16 BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM NOW Circle 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group	17 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 9:30 Ruth Circle 12:00 PM Food Pantry	18 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 1:00 PM Grace Circle	19 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 10:00 AM Caring Ministry Team Meeting 11:00 AM Summer Book Study "The Heart of the Psalms"	20 4:00 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group	21	22
23 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM Pumpkin Fest Parade Float Team 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship	24 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry	25 1:00 PM UWF Missions Team	26 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Summer Book Study "The Heart of the Psalms" 7:00 PM Chancel Choir	27 4:00 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group	28	29
30 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship	31 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM ABC Preschool Parent Night	September 1 6:00 PM GS Troop 697	September 2 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness	September 3 4:00 PM TOPS 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group 6:00 PM GS Family Information Meeting 7:00 PM Handbell Choir	September 4	September 5 8:00 AM UMM Breakfast

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



**PUMPKIN
FEST**
FLOAT FUNDRAISER
PICNIC

**SUNDAY,
AUGUST 9**
11AM – 1PM

Table service
will be provided.

Free will donation
WILL GO TO HELP DEFRAY
THE COST OF THIS YEAR'S FLOAT.

BRATS
HOT DOGS
CHIPS
DRINKS



SYCAMORE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**KICK-OFF &
CHURCH
Picnic**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH

**DURING THE
9:30 AM
SERVICE**

**PICNIC
FOLLOWS
THE SERVICE**

**BRING A
SIDE DISH
TO PASS**

PLUS!
Faith in Action
COMMUNITY FAIR

Discover local organizations,
resources, and ways
to make a difference
together!

*Faith.
Fellowship.
Fun.
For Everyone!*

Come for worship. Stay for fellowship. Leave inspired to serve!



SYCAMORE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

BLESSING
of the backpacks

**SUNDAY,
AUGUST 16**
at
9:30am

Students, educators, and education support staff are
invited to attend this service, where special prayers
will be said for you as you go back to school.



**SCHOOL SUPPLY
& BACKPACK DRIVE!**

The Food Pantry will be
handing out **school supplies**
and **backpacks** in August
to help local students start
the year prepared.

You can help!
Donate new school
supplies or backpacks.
Please place your items
in the **collection tub**
in the **Concourse**.

THANK YOU
FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Thank you for helping
local students begin
the school year
prepared and
ready to learn!

UWF ANNUAL THRIFT & BAKE SALE

The **United Women in Faith (UWF) Annual Thrift & Bake Sale** is just around the corner, and we need your help!

Donation Information

We are accepting **gently used**:

- Clothing
- Housewares
- Home décor
- Toys
- Baby items

Please do not bring: furniture, office electronics, TVs, Christmas trees, full sets of dinnerware, textbooks, encyclopedias, or other large or heavy items.

Donation Drop-Off

Please use the **south door** of the church.

Drop-Off Times

- **Monday, August 10:** 9:00 AM–7:30 PM
- **Tuesday, August 11:** 9:00 AM–3:00 PM
- **Wednesday, August 12:** 9:00 AM–Noon

Please respect other church activities and our summer office schedule. No early or late donations, please.



Sycamore United Methodist Church
160 Johnson Avenue (north of the High School) on Rte. 64 east of Peace Rd.

THRIFT SALE

FRIDAY	AUGUST 14	9:00am - 5:00pm Friday only: \$10.00 Bag Sale & Bake Sale from 9:00am until SOLD OUT
SATURDAY	AUGUST 15	9:00am - 12 Noon Saturday only: \$10.00 BOGO Bag Sale (Buy One, Get One FREE)

Featuring:
Clothing, shoes, books, toys, home décor, sporting goods, holiday, collectibles, accessories, puzzles, housewares, linens & miscellaneous.

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO MISSIONS IN AND BEYOND OUR COMMUNITY



Bake Sale

Don't forget the bake sale! Baked goods may be dropped off in the kitchen on **Thursday**. Please prepackage your items for sale (for example, cut and bag brownies) and be sure all packages are well sealed.

Volunteers Needed

The success of the Thrift Sale depends on volunteers! We are looking for a few willing men and women to help **set up tables on Sunday, August 9, after worship**. Helping hands are also needed during donation drop-off, set-up, and sale days.

Volunteer sign-up sheets are available at the Welcome Center.

Sale Hours

- **Friday, August 14**
9:00 AM–5:00 PM
- **Saturday, August 15**
9:00 AM–Noon

Bag Sale Specials

- **Friday:** \$10 Bag Sale
- **Saturday:** Buy 1 Bag, Get 1 FREE

