PATHWAYS

Emmanuel Community United Methodist Church

November 2026

Emmanuel Community United Methodist Church Monthly Newsletter

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STEWARDSHIP



Thank you to everyone who has made a 2027 pledge. We are deeply grateful for your commitment to Emmanuel Community United Methodist Church. Your generosity supports the future of our children and youth, ministry programs, worship, and missions. If you were unable to attend Consecration Sunday, you may still drop off or mail your pledge to the Church through November 15th.

MISSIONS

The Christmas Giving Tree Is Coming!
The Giving Tree will be returning in late November, offering many meaningful ways to give during the Christmas season.
Looking for a gift for someone who is hard to shop for or someone who seems to have everything?

Give a gift that makes a difference in their honor!
Instead of purchasing another item that may not be needed, choose a Giving Tree gift that supports a mission in need. There will be many options to choose from and a variety of giving amounts, making it easy to find a gift that is meaningful to you and the person you are honoring.
Start making your shopping list because the Giving Tree is coming soon!



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A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

Pastor Matt Hadley; MattH@ec-umc.com

Dream Big! A New Sermon Series This November

Have you ever had a dream so vivid you woke up wondering what it meant? Or a dream so strange you were relieved it wasn't real? (We're looking at you, dreams about showing up to work in your pajamas!) Dreams have a way of capturing our attention, stirring our imagination, and making us wonder what God might be up to. Many of us have had at least one dream that was so different and vibrant that it has stayed with us.

This November, we're exploring DREAMS in a brand-new sermon series! Throughout Scripture, God used dreams to surprise people, challenge them, offer wisdom, and reveal a bigger picture of what He was doing. And while we may not all dream of angels climbing ladders or interpret the dreams of kings, we can all discover how God speaks into our lives and invites us to trust Him.

We'll kick things off on November 1 with Jacob's Ladder: A Stairway to Heaven. (No guitar solos required!) On November 8, we'll explore The Dreams Joseph Shared with his brothers and discover what happens when God gives someone a vision that others just don't quite understand. November 15 brings us to Nebuchadnezzar's Dreams, where we'll see how even a powerful king needed help understanding what God was revealing. Finally, on November 22, we'll discover Solomon's Dream of Wisdom and consider what we might ask God for if He offered us the chance to ask for anything.

Whether you're a big dreamer, a practical thinker, or someone who usually remembers only that you were being chased by something with too many teeth, this series is for you! Together, we'll discover how God meets us in unexpected places, gives us hope for the future, and invites us to seek His wisdom for the life right in front of us.

So, bring your questions, your curiosity, and maybe even a friend who could use a little inspiration. Join us for worship this November as we dream about what God can do! Who knows? You might leave with a new perspective, a renewed hope, or at least a really good reason to get out of bed on Sunday morning.



HOW OUR CHURCH WORKS TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION:

Each month going forward we will provide a brief write-up on a committee or group that works behind the scenes to support our Church's mission: To Imitate Christ Together. It is our hope that these articles will highlight the accomplishments of these groups and may inspire others to participate in the future. Each group will be asked to respond to the same four questions.

This month we're highlighting the Acolytes as our featured group. This group is managed by Liz Cannon. If you have any follow-up questions, please don't hesitate to contact her.

1. What are the goals and the purpose of this group?

Acolytes are part of a team of children and youth. Starting in fourth grade, interested children are trained to light and extinguish the candles on the altar-the Lord's table. On Sundays in the sanctuary, they help the pastor and everyone in our church worship God as the family of Christ.

2. Who are the members? 3. How do people volunteer to be part of this group?

Acolytes are a part of the Worship Team. Eli Pokey is the most recently trained acolyte. Millie Germana, Kiera Mosher, Rory Mosher, Sylvia Petrie, Leon Powers, Calvin Schoenenberger, and Peirson Sommers belong to the first group of acolytes trained two years ago. Avery Kostka, Cody Hohl, Griffin Matthias, and Nolan Zeitler were trained last year, and there are seven fourth graders that are eligible to participate in the Club 4/5 group and in acolyte training this Fall.

4. How does this committee's work support the church's mission?

The acolytes have two primary responsibilities: bringing the Light of the World into the sanctuary for the service and taking that Light out into the world at the end of worship. There are two memory Bible verses they focus on in their training. These verses are intended to instill and reinforce the reverence the acolytes should have and to know the importance of their work.

John 8:12

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

Matthew 5:16

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.



YOUTH MINISTRIES

Contact: Anna Schoenenberger; AnnaS@ec-umc.com

The Youth Group has been busy getting into its new routine this fall. During first service on the first Sunday of each month, we meet for Donuts with Devotionals. Alongside eating delicious donuts, youth participate in Bible study, conversation, and activities focusing on a particular lesson or topic. In October, our topic was how to become rooted in our faith. We delved into being firmly planted, growing deep, growing up (maturing in), and growing strong in faith. Our next Donuts with Devotionals is coming up right away on November 1. I hope to see many youth there!



Mission trip update: as you probably know, we're headed to Louisville, Kentucky, next summer! YouthWorks still has spots available if a few more youth want to head there with us from July 17-23. Please reach out to Anna (AnnaS@ec-umc.com) if your youth would like to come along for this adventure or to learn more. Information about pricing, payment deadlines, and fundraising earn back can be found in the wall file holder outside my office.

Also coming up this month is the Youth Group Drop 'n Shop event. Drop your kids off at church and get a start on your holiday shopping! The Youth Group & adult chaperones will provide childcare, fun, and games. Children through 5th grade can come as kid participants, and youth in 6th-12th grade as volunteers. Dinner is included. There is no cost to the event, but we will be collecting a freewill offering to raise funds for next summer's youth mission trip to Louisville, Kentucky.

Please sign both kid and youth participants up by November 15th using the QR code or this link.

What a great turnout we had for our pumpkin carving event on October 25 with 30 youth and children! Thanks to all who participated. We discussed fear, read Isaiah 41: 9-10, and talked about how God is always with us so we can overcome our fears even when they feel daunting. We even had some brave volunteers engage in the Bean Boozled Challenge (look it up and try it for yourself – if you dare!) It was wonderful seeing everyone's enthusiasm and creativity in their pumpkin designs.



In this season of gratitude, I am thankful for the opportunity to continue working with the youth of our church and create a place where they can build community while growing in faith. Let us remember Colossians 3:17 this month: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS

Contact: Liz Cannon (LizC@ec-umc.com)

The season has changed and so are the children from the Nursery on up. They all grow up so fast! Check out the "Cradle Roll" board to see how some of our youngest disciples have gone from infancy to toddling around and playing side by side.

The "big" kids are growing and changing, too! Almost every child has moved up a size in their choir robes. Thanks to Laura Hohl, our Children's Choir Director, for preparing the children for their impending performances on November 8, and the Children's Christmas Program on December 13.

Our "big faith" Sunday School curriculum has taken the elementary children through examples of God's compassion via Joseph's trials and tribulations in the book of Genesis. The emphasis of the lessons was that God was always with Joseph and because of that, Joseph prevailed in many ways especially in showing his brothers forgiveness. Moving forward this month, we delve into Old Testament Stories that model ways God cares for us.





Pharoah's Headdress Craft modeled by some of our elementary students.





The Youth Sunday School class has been brimming with children and excitement as they engage in important lessons from the Bible with cool science experiments that reinforce the message. What an awesome sight to see! Thank you to Jean Reif and Anna Schoenenberger for all of your efforts to keep the youth actively involved in Sunday School, Youth Group, and church.

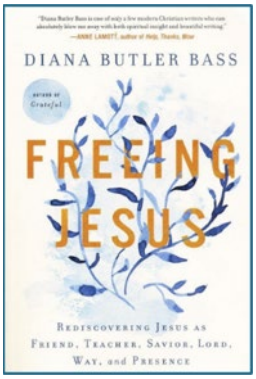
We invite you to join us next month on December 13, in Celebration Hall for the *Emoji Christmas Program*. There will be an incredible cast of characters to delight and amuse you at both services. We are excited to present to you another unique and modern take on the story of our Lord and Savior's birth.



ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Contact: Janet Ray; JanetR@ec-umc.com

New Study This Fall



"These days, Christians shy away from telling their stories of Jesus, perhaps for fear of offending others or perhaps not knowing what to say.
And there is no denying that Christians often speak of Jesus badly – in exclusive, hurtful ways.
Despite the reticence of some and the hubris of others, Jesus remains central to the lives of millions of Christians.
If nothing else, sharing our stories might lead to greater understanding, tolerance, appreciation, and perhaps even celebration of our differences.
I invite you into your own memory and experience, where I trust Jesus can be found."
(Diana Butler Bass, from the Introduction to Freeing Jesus)
Join us for a 6-week study of Diana Butler Bass's *Freeing Jesus*. This study will challenge the institutional thought that tempts some Christians to think they should contain Jesus, limiting him to a "right doctrine" or "MY church." We can, instead, "free Jesus" from the constraints of organized religion.
Through her blend of personal memoir, theology, and church history, Bass encourages us to embrace doubt, mystery, and a vibrant faith that grows along with us.
We'll meet Sundays at 11 AM in Fellowship Hall September 27–November 8 (except for Consecration Sunday on October 25). Snacks will be available. Register on the bulletin board or email JanetR@ec-umc.com. Books are available for $5 in the church office.

Bible Study (Wednesdays and Fridays at 10 AM)



Each week we examine the Lectionary scriptures "assigned" to the upcoming Sunday. What do they mean? Why are they grouped together? How might they apply to my life?
This study is offered twice each week–once in person and once via Zoom. No outside preparation is needed.

- Join the group in person on Wednesdays, 10:00-11:00 AM, in Fellowship Hall. Bring your favorite Bible or borrow one that day.
- Join the online group on Fridays, 10:00-11:00 AM. Contact Janet Ray for the Zoom link (JanetR@ec-umc.com)

Sunday Morning Discussions: The Wired Word

This drop-in group discusses topics of current events and issues of social justice from a Biblical perspective. Find what interests you and come once in a while or every week – you are always welcome!
We meet, starting September 20, on Sunday mornings from 8:45-9:45 AM in Chapel Lounge.
Upcoming topics:
October 4: Considering the Separation of Church and State

The Wired WORD

YOUNG AT HEART AND SPIRIT

Discover how artificial intelligence (AI) can make everyday tasks easier and learn how to use AI safely and confidently in today's digital world. Join YAHAS (Young At Heart And Spirit) on Tuesday, November 17, for lunch and a presentation by Gary Morgan and David Rohr. Sign up on the YAHAS sheet outside of Pastor Matt's office. Plan to bring a salad or dessert and meet in Celebration Hall between 11:15 and 11:30 a.m. Hope to see you there!

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Billf@ec-umc.com Bill's Cell 414-881-3023

This is a great time of the year to get involved with music. We are in the middle of our preparations for the Advent and Christmas seasons. Mark your calendars for Dec 13 as the children will be presenting their annual Christmas musical. Then, on Dec 20 all the musical groups at Emmanuel will join together to present the wonderful music of the Advent and Christmas seasons at both services.

On Christmas eve we will have three services 2pm, and 8pm, in the sanctuary and 4pm in Celebration Hall.

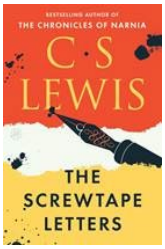
We will also begin to rehearse the cantata, What Wondrous Hope. The rehearsals will begin on Thursday, Nov 5 at 7:45 PM. This cantata consists of 9 songs and readings and has instrumental parts available as well. We need all voices and experience levels to be a part of this musical offering. The cantata will be sung the Sunday after Easter, April 4 at both services. Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sing Every Day,
Bill
Bill's Cell 414-881-3023



WOMEN'S MINISTRY NEWS:

New Wednesday Study: C. S. Lewis



Our next study is *The Screwtape Letters.* This short book is a series of fictional letters of advice from Uncle Screwtape to his nephew, a fledgling demon, on how best to corrupt the human soul. Lewis uses dark humor and inverted perspectives to expose human frailties, making us laugh at the sheer absurdity of our own flaws. Ultimately Screwtape highlights that the greatest threat to the human soul is not spectacular wickedness, but the gradual, unnoticeable descent into the mundane darkness of indifference.

We meet 7:00-8:30 PM in Fellowship Hall on October 28 and November 4, 11 & 18.

Note: This should be an easy find at the library or your local used bookstore. Read Letters 1-8 for our first meeting.

Join us and feel free to bring a friend who might enjoy our gatherings.

ADVENT 2026



ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES: THE GIFT

Light to Overcome Darkness (11/29)
Justice to Bring Peace (12/6)
Hope to Bring Comfort (12/13) 8:30/10 AM (CH)
Joy to Bring Healing (12/20) 8:30 /10 AM (S)
Christmas Eve: 2 PM (S), 4 PM (CH), 8 PM (S)

ADVENT STUDY – THURSDAYS IN DECEMBER

Contact: Janet Ray; JanetR@ec-umc.com

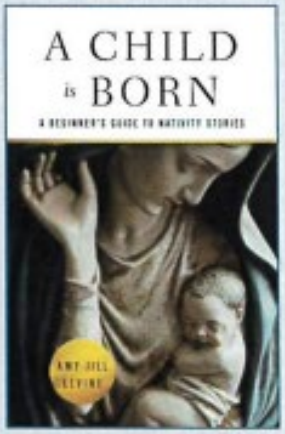
Discover the Nativity Anew!

This Advent season, we will examine the Christmas story through a unique lens using *A Child Is Born: A Beginner's Guide to Nativity Stories* by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine. As a Jewish scholar teaching the New Testament, Dr. Levine brings an unparalleled depth of historical context, scriptural framework, and fresh perspective to the narrative we know well.

Instead of diving straight into Bethlehem, we will look backward to the stories of Old Testament mothers whose deep longings, fierce faith, and miraculous experiences pave the way for Mary and Elizabeth.

The birth of their sons – Isaac, Ishmael, Samson, Samuel, and Moses – take on new meaning with the incarnation of the New Testament Savior, Jesus.

By exploring these ancient narratives of hope, struggle, and divine intervention, we will gain a new understanding of why Jesus' birth changed the world.



Whether you are a lifelong Bible scholar or simply curious about the deep roots of our faith, this study promises lively discussions, profound insights, and a warm community environment.

Come marvel at the unexpected connections that tie the Hebrew Scriptures to the manger.

Choose morning or afternoon session in Fellowship Hall on

Thursdays, 12/3, 12/10, and 12/17.
10 – 11 AM or 5 – 6 PM*

*Chancel Choir members - bring your dinner to eat from 6 to 7.

For those participating in the study, books are available for $5 in the church office while supplies last.

WOMEN'S CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTMAS

Join us on Friday, 12/4 for refreshments in Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM and our quiet, contemplative service of Advent preparation in the Sanctuary at 7 PM.



This service is best for women pre-teen and up. Invite a friend who might appreciate a moment to breathe during this very busy season.

SOUP, STORIES, AND SONG

Wednesdays (12/2, 12/9, 12/16) @ 6:30-7:30 PM

We'll enjoy a light meal together in Celebration Hall, sing a carol or two, and then Pastor Matt will tell a Christmas story.



The Kitchen Klub will provide soup and salad and various Ministry Teams will supply desserts. Bring the whole family - and feel free to invite others to join you.

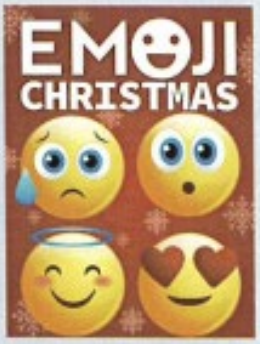
[Note: the 12/9 meeting will also include our brief annual Church Conference meeting.]

INVITE OTHERS TO WORSHIP

Consider who - friend, neighbor, relative - you might invite to these services!

Children's Program

On **Sunday, 12/13**, our ECUMC children will tell the story of Christmas through music and drama.



Emojis take on the roles of the Angel, Herod, the Shepherds, and others in this creative re-telling of the Christmas story.

Both services on 12/13 are in Celebration Hall.

All-Choir Sunday

On **Sunday, 12/20**, we and all our music groups raise our praise in melody and harmony as we prepare for the Incarnation! This service is always a seasonal favorite. Both services on 12/20 are in the Sanctuary.



WUMF MONTHLY STEWARDSHIP NEWS



The Dec. 2026 Stewardship Newsletter (sharable in Nov.) is now available and on our website.

Coming up - the Fall Grant application is available! They are due Nov. 1 end-of-day, which is a Sunday this year. View the project guidelines here.

Do you need someone to preach at your church this fall about stewardship or planned giving? There are a few slots left. Call our office at 608-837-9582 to schedule.

Lastly, if you've got year-end giving in mind, review our stock or QCD gifting instructions, or consider a small donation to Methodist social programs here. We appreciate all you do!

WORSHIP TEAM

The Worship Team invites everyone to help put up the Christmas tree and hang the greens on November 22 after the 8:30 AM service. We especially need people to put up and decorate the tree in the Sanctuary. Please help consider making the church beautiful for the upcoming Advent/Christmas seasons.

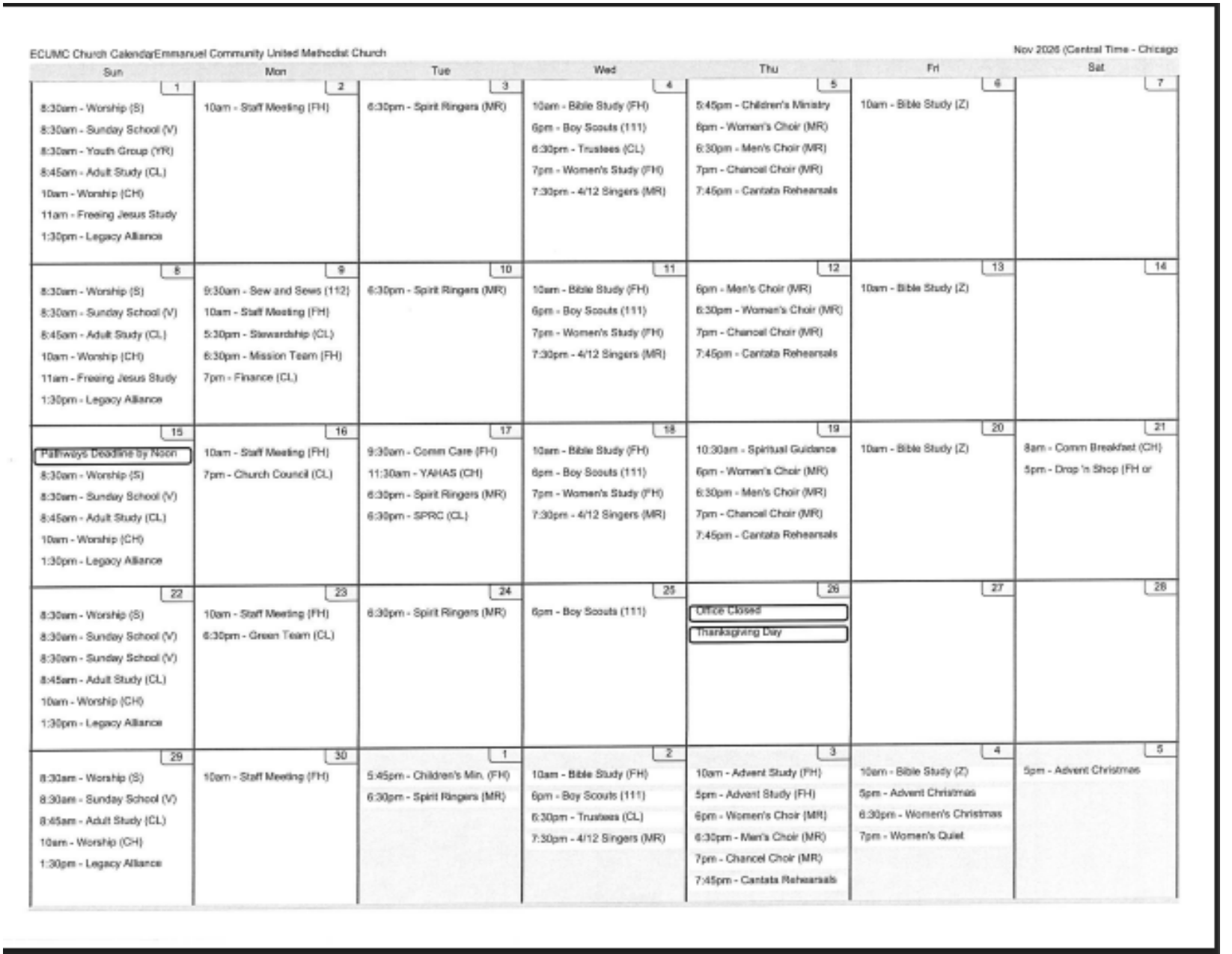


POINSETTIA ORDERS

The Worship Team is selling Poinsettia plants for our altar display. Order sheets will be available starting 11/22 in the bulletin or in the office. Plants are $13.00 each this year. Checks should be made out to ECUMC with Poinsettia on the memo line. **ORDERS ARE DUE BY 12/16**. Flowers can be picked up after the last Christmas Eve service or the following week when the church is opened. Please check off your name on the list in the back of the church so we know you've got yours!



NOVEMBER 2026



ECUMC Church CalendarEmmanuel Community United Methodist Church

Nov 2026 (Central Time - Chicago

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:30am - Youth Group (YR) 8:45am - Adult Study (CL) 10am - Worship (CH) 11am - Freeing Jesus Study 1:30pm - Legacy Alliance	2 10am - Staff Meeting (FH)	3 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR)	4 10am - Bible Study (FH) 6pm - Boy Scouts (111) 6:30pm - Trustees (CL) 7pm - Women's Study (FH) 7:30pm - 4/12 Singers (MR)	5 5:45pm - Children's Ministry 6pm - Women's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Men's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR) 7:45pm - Cantata Rehearsals	6 10am - Bible Study (Z)	7
8 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:45am - Adult Study (CL) 10am - Worship (CH) 11am - Freeing Jesus Study 1:30pm - Legacy Alliance	9 9:30am - Sew and Sews (112) 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 5:30pm - Stewardship (CL) 6:30pm - Mission Team (FH) 7pm - Finance (CL)	10 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR)	11 10am - Bible Study (FH) 6pm - Boy Scouts (111) 7pm - Women's Study (FH) 7:30pm - 4/12 Singers (MR)	12 6pm - Men's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Women's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR) 7:45pm - Cantata Rehearsals	13 10am - Bible Study (Z)	14
15 Pathways Deadline by Noon 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:45am - Adult Study (CL) 10am - Worship (CH) 1:30pm - Legacy Alliance	16 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 7pm - Church Council (CL)	17 9:30am - Comm Care (FH) 11:30am - YAHAS (CH) 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR) 6:30pm - SPRC (CL)	18 10am - Bible Study (FH) 6pm - Boy Scouts (111) 7pm - Women's Study (FH) 7:30pm - 4/12 Singers (MR)	19 10:30am - Spiritual Guidance 6pm - Women's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Men's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR) 7:45pm - Cantata Rehearsals	20 10am - Bible Study (Z)	21 8am - Comm Breakfast (CH) 5pm - Drop 'n Shop (FH or
22 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:45am - Adult Study (CL) 10am - Worship (CH) 1:30pm - Legacy Alliance	23 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 6:30pm - Green Team (CL)	24 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR)	25 6pm - Boy Scouts (111)	26 Office Closed Thanksgiving Day	27	28
29 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:45am - Adult Study (CL) 10am - Worship (CH) 1:30pm - Legacy Alliance	30 10am - Staff Meeting (FH)	1 5:45pm - Children's Min. (FH) 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR)	2 10am - Bible Study (FH) 6pm - Boy Scouts (111) 6:30pm - Trustees (CL) 7:30pm - 4/12 Singers (MR)	3 10am - Advent Study (FH) 5pm - Advent Study (FH) 6pm - Women's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Men's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR) 7:45pm - Cantata Rehearsals	4 10am - Bible Study (Z) 5pm - Advent Christmas 6:30pm - Women's Christmas 7pm - Women's Quiet	5 5pm - Advent Christmas