

Stevensville United Methodist Church Weekly Update

October 25, 2026

 **GROWING CONNECTIONS**
to God • to Each Other • to the Community
Stevensville United Methodist Church

See What's Inside!

p2 Order of Worship for Oct 4
p3 October Group Gatherings
p4 Birthdays/Week at a Glance
p5 Faith Formation Classes
p6 Monthly Mission Focus
p7 Jr. Youth
p8 Caring Ministry
p9 Wonderland Donations
p10 Fair Booth Update
p11 Prayer Concerns

Connect With Us

Church Office: 429-5911/email: stevensvillechurch@gmail.com

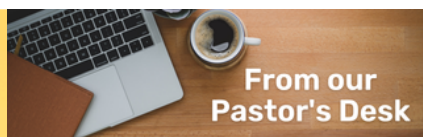
Website: www.stevensville-umc.org

Facebook: [Stevensville United Methodist Church](https://www.facebook.com/StevensvilleUMC)

Children's Center: 269-429-1069

Facebook: [Stevensville United Methodist Children's Center](https://www.facebook.com/StevensvilleUMCChildrensCenter)

Expanding the Table

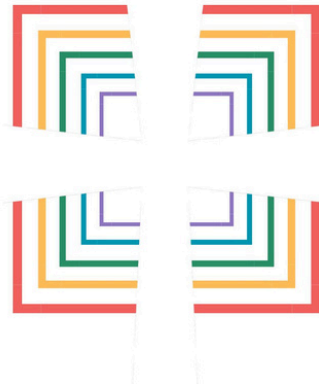


As I write to you this week, I am humbled by all the ways people are being fed – physically and spiritually – by you, the congregation of Stevensville United Methodist Church. This morning, Lancer Lunches were packed for 250 Lakeshore students to have meals for this weekend. As I write, preparations are being made for the arrival of the Feeding America Food Truck. Last night, a group gathered at Watermark for Pub Theology, and the team that went to Zimbabwe this summer gathered to work on continued partnerships with Arnoldine Mission. One of our book study groups just wrapped up their first session on the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer this afternoon, and in just a couple hours, our upper elementary and middle school students will gather to serve at the Mobile Food Pantry and then enjoy a bonfire together. Tonight, the sanctuary will be filled with the music of BASIC, the Senior Choir, and the Cantata Choir. And of course, that's just one tiny snapshot of 24 hours of ministry. God is up to good things at Stevensville UMC – and it's possible because so many of you say yes to sharing your time, your talent, and your treasure.

This Sunday, we conclude our “Expanding the Table” series and explore how God’s table is a place where we discover how we are empowered to serve. We are fed not only for the sake of ourselves, but for the sake of being able to share the love we’ve received with those who need it. This Sunday, those who call Stevensville UMC their church home will have the opportunity to prayerfully and intentionally commit their time, talent, and treasure for the upcoming year of ministry. If you didn’t receive a commitment form in the mail, or you need an additional form, you can pick one up in the Gathering Space or access an online version [here](#). I am excited about all the ways that we will keep expanding the table in 2027. I firmly believe that God can use the gifts we bring to help all who hunger know that they belong, that they can be fed, and that they can be empowered to serve at God’s expansive table.

Thank you for all you do to make this church a place that is truly alive with God’s love. I am excited about where we will go with God, together!

With hope and joy,
Pastor Elise



expanding the table
to all who hunger to
**be empowered
to serve.**

 **Stevensville**
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY WORSHIP ONLINE
9:55AM ON THE SUMC FACEBOOK PAGE
or click on the link on our website:
www.stevensville-umc.org

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude: "How Firm a Foundation"
(take these moments to quiet your mind & heart
as worship begins)

*Opening Song: "Come to the Table of Grace"

The Story For All Ages
Pastor Elise

Scripture Reading: John 21:1-19
Karen Pallas

Message: "Expanding the Table:
To All Who Long to Belong"
Rev Elise Low Edwardson

Time of Commitment: #2130 "The Summons"

Musical Praise: "That Old Time Religion"
Grace Notes

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

Offering
Doxology #640 "Take Our Bread" (2x)

*Closing Hymn: #593 "Here I Am, Lord"

Blessing

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Mission Focus for October
SUMC Community Assistance Fund

Mobile Food Pantry Update- We had 37 volunteers with 13 of them being youth and students, to help with the pantry this month. We served: 92 Households; 246 Individuals; 90 Children; 76 Seniors and 8 Veterans. Thank you to everyone. Our next pantry will be here Wednesday, November 18.

Church Fall Clean Up- See page 3 of today's update.

Brunch Bunch- Monday, November 2.
Sign-up on the table in the hallway and see page 3 of today's update.

Serving in Worship Sunday, October 25
Kellie Meyer, Pianist
Karen Pallas, Lector
Sandy Hayes & Rachel Wade, Ushers
Dave & Elizabeth Carlson, Greeters
Brody Nelson, Acolyte
Bob Clark, Congregational Safety

Altar Flowers are Given by Monique Yoder
In Loving Memory of My Father MJ Yoder.
October 29th would have been his 91st Birthday.



Church Fall Cleanup Day – November 7, 9:00 AM to Noon

On Saturday morning, November 7, we will be doing our Fall Cleanup of the church and grounds and will need as many participants as possible. Tasks will include window washing, shrubbery trimming, carpet spot cleaning and general landscaping maintenance. Many hands will make quick work of getting the church in shape for the winter.

SUMC Trustees



Men's Breakfast - Sunday, November 8th at 8:00 am in Faith Hall

Men you are invited to this breakfast. Fathers, grandfathers, uncles, sons, grandsons, maybe a neighbor too! Come hungry, as the Men Who Cook Breakfast will be ready to delight your tastebuds. Pancakes, bacon, eggs, biscuits & gravy, and yes, even some fruit, along with hot coffee and juice. Join us as we fellowship together. We will be finished before 9:00 am, so if you need to go pick up the rest of the family for church, there is plenty of time. Place it on your calendar and we'll see you then.



THIS WEEK AT SUMC

Monday, October 26

1:00pm Caring Ministry Mtg
6:00pm Cub Scouts-FH
6:30pm Ringing in the Spirit

Tuesday, October 27

2:00pm Scripture of the Week
7:00pm Pub Theology

Wednesday, October 28

10:00am Staff Meeting
1:00pm Wesley Prayer Study
5:30pm BASIC Rehearsal
7:00pm Cantata Rehearsal
7:00pm Senior Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, October 29

11:30am Covenant Journaling
3:00pm Lancer Lunches
6:00pm Scout Pack Meeting
6:15pm Cardio Drumming

Sunday, November 1

9:00am Men's Study
10:00am Worship
10:15am Sunday School



Congregational Safety Volunteers Needed

The Congregational Safety Team is looking for individuals to help ensure safety and emergency preparedness. Members of the Safety Team help keep the building secure by locking and monitoring all the doors after worship begins, and by being ready to respond to safety issues that arise. The team also helps respond to medical emergencies that occur during worship or other church events. If you are interested in learning more about serving on the Congregational Safety Team, please contact the Church Office. Thank you.



Our Fall Rummage Sale Was a Huge Success

Thanks to all of YOU!! The sale raised \$5,029 thanks to the generosity and help of so many in our congregation! A portion of our proceeds will go to buy the food we prepare for the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. Thank you to everyone who donated items, who donated time helping sort and work the sale, and who helped pack up the items and clean Faith Hall at the end of the sale. With so many helping hands we can do such amazing things!! We were also able to donate items to several local non-profits:

- Harbor Country Mission in Bridgman
- Apryll's Closet
- SUMC Children's Center
- Lincoln Township Library
- Corewell Hospice Services
- Shoes for Haiti
- Laundry Hub in Benton Harbor First Church of God
- Women's Service League coat collection
- Interfaith Action of Southwest MI

Thank you for helping to support this important mission of our church!!

**Mary Sundblad, Bette Mallen, Linda Sprague and
Leanne Nitz
Rummage sale Co-Chairs**

ADULT FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2026

**Tuesdays
2:00pm
in the
Lounge**

SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK:

Facilitator: Pastor Elise (reveliselowedwardson@gmail.com)

Ever wish you had more time to reflect on Sunday's message before it's preached? Join Pastor Elise as she gently unpacks the week's scripture, offering context, insight, and space for conversation. It's a chance to engage with the Word ahead of time, so it can settle in your heart before it's proclaimed from the pulpit.

**Tuesdays
7:00pm
at
Watermark**

PUB THEOLOGY:

Facilitator: Everett Harpole (everett.harpole@gmail.com)

Pull up a chair and join the conversation. Each week we dive into moral, ethical, theological, and philosophical topics in a relaxed, open setting. Bring your thoughts, your doubts, and your curiosity.

**Wednesdays
1:00pm
in
Gathering
Space**

WESLEY PRAYER CHALLENGE: Four-week Study Starts October 21

Facilitators: Dick Lukey & Lona Vogie (jlvogie@sbcglobal.net)

In The Wesley Prayer Challenge, author Chris Folmsbee invites readers to consider words from the Wesley Covenant Prayer each day, while reflecting on their meaning. Each day's reading will include scripture, prayer, and a challenge for daily life.

**Sundays
9:00am
in
Room 1**

MEN'S GROUP FELLOWSHIP

Facilitator: Bob Clark (bandbclark2@gmail.com)

Each Sunday we gather for fellowship and discussion on a relevant book or DVD series. All men of the church are welcome!

**Thursdays
11:30am
in the
Lounge**

COVENANT JOURNALING

Facilitator: Patti Harpole (patti.harpole@gmail.com)

Enter a sacred space of quiet reflection. With meditative music surrounding us, we journal our prayers, thoughts, and spiritual insights—whether through Bible journaling, faith journaling, or prayer journaling. We close with shared prayer practices that refresh the spirit and nourish the soul. Everyone is welcome!



October Mission Focus: SUMC Community Assistance Fund

The Mission Focus for October is the SUMC Community Assistance Fund. These funds are used to pay utility bills for local people experiencing a financial crisis using the following criteria:

1. Those requesting utility funds assistance need to be Berrien County residents.
2. Requestors can receive up to \$100 to cover gas, electric or water bills.
3. A person can request funds up to two times in one calendar year.
4. The church will process a maximum number of three requests per week.
5. The church transfers assistance money directly to the utility company; money is not given to the requestor.

The church office maintains a record of those who have requested assistance to help make decisions when a request is made for utility bill assistance.

Why does Stevensville United Methodist Church need a Community Assistance fund? It is a way for our church to lend support to people in our community who are experiencing a financial emergency in their lives.

Imagine if you couldn't pay to keep the lights on or the heat on in your home and had nowhere to turn? They come to us in desperate need of help. Many times, the one instance of assistance is enough to get individuals back on their feet. In fact, most individuals come to us for help just once.

So far this year we have helped 86 individuals – a historically high number. Currently our funds are running very low. The only source of funding for the Community Assistance Fund is ALL OF US - the generous members of Stevensville United Methodist Church.

We hope you will give generously to replenish this important Mission Fund by donating in October so we can be here for our neighbors when they need it most! Thank you from the Mission Team.

MISSION TEAM MEMBERS

Monique Yoder, Chairperson: Wanda Barclay, Barb Clark, Kathleen Deforest, Wayne Koebel, Mindi Logan, Dick Lukey, Kellie Meyer, Leanne Nitz, Paster Elise, Nancy Poelker, Barb Pries, Kathy Sankey, Myra Thompson, Lona Vogie, Rachel Wade, Robin Weingart

Our Junior Youth have had a wonderful time serving at our Mobile Food Pantry, followed by a campfire cooking class with Robin Weingart this month! This monthly gathering of 4th–8th graders offers a space to serve, grow, and have fun together. Thank you to our awesome volunteers! The next gathering is November 18th at 4 pm!



NEW MAIN ENTRANCE SIGN

Have you seen our new “MAIN ENTRANCE” sign by door #9? Many thanks to the Trustees, First Impressions Team, and Bob Hendley for making this happen. Your work on this is appreciated and it looks great!

RANDOM THOUGHTS FROM YOUR LAY SERVANT

Has your mailbox been filled with flyers from candidates hoping to be elected in the upcoming election? Have you received text messages or phone calls asking you to vote for someone? Maybe you've noticed the messages often reflect only the negative qualities about the other candidate. I'm left wondering why is it so much easier to point out the faults of another instead of recognizing their strengths? Over the last several weeks, we have been considering what it means "to expand the table", to share God's love with as we interact with those around us. Each one of us has the opportunity to share kindness, hope and encouragement wherever we go. Webster's dictionary states kindness is a noun and means "loaning someone your strength instead of reminding them of their weakness." Exhibiting kindness isn't difficult. Kind acts, even small ones, can have a profound impact on someone's day. Every kind thing you do leaves a little light behind. A kind word, a patient moment, a smile given freely, a hand held gently. None of it is wasted! The world is softer because you cared. Kindness reflects God's goodness and grace. Bob Kerry reminds us that "Unexpected kindness is the most powerful, least costly and most underrated agent of human change." Will you accept the challenge to spread kindness wherever you go?

"Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic
love one another, be compassionate and humble." – 1 Peter 3:8

So, in a world where you can be anything...Be Kind!

Your Lay Servant

Kathy Sankey

David Hills' memorial service was held August 15, 2026 in California. The family would have liked to have held a service in Michigan so they could hear the memories from colleagues, friends, and former parishioners; however, trying to schedule it was difficult. His wife, Claire, would still love to hear from Michigan! Claire and David's children are planning on taking all of the memories shared and turn them into a book for Claire to have and continue to feel the love and support that Michigan friends have shared with the Hills family for so many years.

Should you like to share a memory, please send it to Rev. Mona Joslyn at mojoslyn2@gmail.com. Claire also sent memorial cards and wildflower seeds. Should you like one, again let Mona know. Claire shared that David died before they could make friends in California, and is holding on to the memories she and David have shared with all of you.

THANKS
FROM THE
HEART

Dear SUMC Family,
Thank you for all of your support during this chaotic time. We appreciate the meals, donations, and check-ins more than you know. It has been a rough month, but you have made it better. Chris came home from the hospital last week, so we are adjusting to our new normal. He is feeling better each day. Thank you so much again for everything!
Love, The Stolk Family

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MOSAIC & FRIENDS
P R E S E N T

Wonderland Toy Drive

at SUMC

at SUMC

NEW UNWRAPPED TOYS

Ages 0–12 yrs

GIFT CARDS \$10–\$50

Ages 12–18 yrs • Walmart, Meijer,
Amazon

Your donation of **stuffed animals, infant and baby toys, board games, trucks/cars, dolls, crafts, educational toys, and books** stocks the **Wonderland Toy Store** —a special Christmas shopping experience where parents shop NEW toys for their children at just **10% of their original value**, with dignity and joy.

DROP OFF TOYS & CARDS-DEADLINE NOVEMBER 1

Look for the Wonderland box in the church concourse.



Can't shop? Scan to give!

mosaicccda.kindful.com

Questions: wts@mosaicccda.com



MOSAICCCDA

Donated gifts typically range from \$10–\$50.

All gifts donated should be unwrapped with a price tag on the gift if possible

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2026 Berrien County Youth Fair Booth Results

A Tale of 4 Bible Verses (with some numbers to go along with them)

Verse #1- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up."

Every year, without fail, people step up. This year we had an unusually large number of shifts that people had to back out of, for very legit reasons, such as various medical challenges or the need to care for ailing family members. And when we put out the call for help, that call was answered. **65 different people** volunteered, with **27** of them working multiple shifts.

Verse #2 - 1 Peter 4:8-10

"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling."

The work is hard, but the love we get to share makes it all worth it. People are always grateful that we offer good food at an affordable price. Breakfast continues to be a blessing for so many, and our church lady sloppy joes still get rave reviews after all these years. Over the **6 days** of the fair, there were **126 different shifts**, for a total of **315 hours** that were served.

Verse #3 - Hebrews 10:24-25

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together... but encouraging one another..."

And while sharing God's love with fair goers is part of our purpose, the other part is to raise money. And this year, we raised a lot! The congregation donated **\$789** in cash, not to mention all of the food donations. This enabled us to keep our supply costs as low as possible. Compared to last year, we spent just **\$200 more** on supplies this year. Given the high cost of food, this is incredible!

In total, we raised **\$13,296.87**. This is a **2% increase** over last year! Over **\$6600** will be used to help cover the cost of resealing the parking lot. And the Samaritan Center and mobile food pantry ministries will get over **\$3300 each**.

Verse #4 - John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Isn't this what it's really all about? Expanding God's table – the table of love - to all who hunger. Some of us hunger to belong, some of us hunger to be fed, some of us hunger to be empowered to serve. And it all happens in that booth. What a blessing that is.

On behalf of the fair booth team, **THANK YOU ALL SO VERY MUCH** for your support this year!

HEALTH CONCERNS:

Bruce Barclay
Gordie Barry
Maggie Behrens
Christi Blunt
Adam Burnett
Missy Carroll
Dianne Collins
Sue Dock
Jack & Margie Hardy
Kathy Harris
Jason Kik
Ken Foyder
Shirley Hetfield
Chelsea Hunt
Dick Lukey
Sebastian Kurup
Mike Melcher
Gary & Lee Nelson
Schaeffer Ott
Bonnie & Tom Parrish

Gloria Pollack
Mike Rush
Amy Scaub
Fred Seifert
Chris Stolk
Amber Stolk
Jan Taylor
J.T. Thompson
Kathy Trejo
Brooke Trux
David Sundblad Jr.
Judy Vanderaue
Chris Weber
Gary Wank
Dan Whitt

SHUT-INS:

Grace Park
Sally Streick
Carol Svorec

MISSIONARIES IN THE FIELD:

Caleb Dormah-Liberia
IN ACTIVE SERVICE:
Taylor Allgood-Illinois
Lydia Sankey-Orsillo-uss
Bulkeley DDG84-Rota Spain



PRAYER CONCERNS:

- Prayers for Jennifer Kosten and family in the passing of her mother, Patricia Ricks on Monday the 12th.
- Prayers for Gloria Hopkins who has been diagnosed with Neuropathy in both legs and Parkinsons.
- Prayers of healing for the Rescoe's cousin who recovering from wound care treatments.
- Prayers of comfort and peace for the family of Carol Momany who passed away on September 29.
- Prayers of healing for Chirs Stolk who is home from the hospital and continuing dialysis treatments.
- Prayers of comfort for the Nitz's grandson Ben who lost his best friend Ethan.
- Prayers of healing for Myra's niece Faye who is recovering from back surgery and is in a lot of pain.
- Prayers for those going through seasonal ailments for relief and being able to return back to worship.
- Prayers for Kathy Sankey's friend who has stage 4 kidney cancer. Prayers of comfort for her and wisdom for the health care team.
- Prayers for Elaine's cousin Karen who is recovering from brain surgery.
- Prayers of wisdom and recovery for Lisa William's mom Donna. Also, prayers for her Mother-in-law Frida going through cancer treatments and her Uncle Norman who is going through cancer treatments.
- Prayers for all our men & women in the armed forces, especially for Lydia Sankey-Orsillo who is on a destroyer ship in the Mediterranean Sea. May they all be safe and appreciated in their mission.
- Prayers for de-escalation in the air strikes taking place in the Middle East.
- Prayers for peace for our world.