

**Ames First United
Methodist Church**



November 2026 Newsletter

Words from Rev. Amanda Gordon

I am so thankful for the laity and staff of this church. It amazes me when I stop and think of all the ways in which people serve God's church, Ames First United Methodist. In 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul speaks of the church as one body with many members. It's a good analogy. As the many members perform their various roles, the body is able to function and make disciples of Jesus who serve beyond the walls.

I would imagine you are thankful for the ways in which others serve as well. So, I thought I would make a suggestion for the month of November. Would you join me in thanking at least one person in our church each day this month? Thank them in whatever way works for you—in person, note, phone call, text, social media message, email, meet for lunch or coffee, attend an event together, etc.

There are some of you who have done this in previous years. I have been the recipient of a thank you note from someone thanking someone each day in November. Offering thanks is one of those wonderful spiritual practices that has a way of blessing us as well as the recipient...and God is pleased when we live as people with grateful hearts.

I often think, "I need to be sure to thank..." And all too often I fall short. Can you relate? Maybe you want to thank your small group leader or each person in your small group who encourages you. Maybe you want to thank each member of the chancel choir or bell choir for blessing our worship services with special music. Maybe you want to thank those who make sure there is always Sunday Coffee Fellowship. Maybe you want to thank the person who prayed for you during a difficult time this past year. Maybe you want to thank those who

work in caring for the church flowerbeds. Maybe you want to thank our technology volunteers for all they do to ensure we have livestream for services. Maybe you want to thank our various committee chairs. Maybe you want to thank those who decorate our church and prepare it for seasons and services. Maybe you want to thank the person who greets you every Sunday with a smile and makes your day better. Maybe you want to thank the UWF ladies who help with funeral meals. Maybe you want to thank those who represent our church and serve through Appalachia Service Project. Maybe you want to thank those who count the offering. Maybe you want to thank someone from our congregation who volunteers at the hospital. Maybe you want to thank...

That list is very, very incomplete. There are so many more categories I could add! It's just meant to get you and me thinking. I intentionally left out names in fear that by naming one person, I would leave out another. And, maybe you are not sure who does some things for which you are thankful...please feel free to ask me!

Thinking of reasons to be thankful is also a great practice as we strive to be everyday contemplatives. Noticing reasons to be grateful throughout our days has a way of making us more aware of God's goodness and grace. So who will you thank this November?

Have a FANTASTIC November!

Pastor Amanda

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. Colossians 2:6-7

Fall Sermon Series

SEPTEMBER 19 - NOVEMBER 22

An invitation to consider a new perspective on life and prayer, one that counters the just-get-on-with-it, make-something-happen impulse of our culture.

BOOKS ARE \$15 IN THE OFFICE.

AMES FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Thanks to Ann Thomas and Susan Zawacky for the use of their recliners during this series!

The following small groups welcome you to join them for the Fall Study:

Wonderful Wednesday Women, Wednesdays at 10:00am in the Conference Room

Coffee Talk, Sundays at 8:50am in the Conference Room

Faith & Reason, Sundays at 11:15am in the Multi Purpose Room



AFTER WORSHIP
NOVEMBER
15

QUARTERLY
UPDATE

AMES FIRST
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



AMES FIRST
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH




Game Night

Friday
Nov. 6
6 - 8 PM
Free Event




Walking Tacos, Nachos,
Desserts, & Drinks Provided
Love Offering for Food at First

Hosted by The Welcome Team
Want to donate Bingo prizes?
Drop them off in the office.



Thanksgiving Dinner

November 22 11:15 am

Fellowship Hall

Please bring a **place setting** and a **side to share**. Family names beginning:

A-M salad or vegetable
N-Z dessert

EVERYTHING ELSE IS PROVIDED!

Your Generosity Makes Our Ministry Possible

As we reflect on all that has been accomplished, we are filled with gratitude for each of you who faithfully supports our ministry through your prayers, service, and financial gifts. Because of your generosity, we continue to deliver on our mission of “making disciples of Jesus who serve beyond our walls”!

Every act of giving, whether large or small, is an expression of faith and stewardship. We recognize that your contributions represent personal sacrifice, and we are thankful for the trust you place in our church's mission.

As we prepare for the coming year, we ask our church family to complete your 2027 Annual Pledge Commitment by November 22, 2026. While we greatly appreciate gifts that have been faithfully given throughout the year, a completed pledge commitment helps our church leadership plan responsibly for ministry, staffing, outreach, missions, and facility needs for the year ahead.

If you have not yet submitted your pledge commitment, we encourage you to take a few moments to prayerfully consider your response and return your pledge card or online commitment form by November 22. Every commitment, regardless of the amount, helps us build a realistic and faithful ministry plan for the year ahead. If you are new to pledging, an anonymous donor is willing to match up to \$100 for new commitments of \$100 or more. You can help us reach our goal of 140 total pledges!

Thank you again for your generous support and your partnership. Together, we look forward to all that God will do through our church in the coming year.

Sincerely – Kevin Hinders (Stewardship Lead)

Appalachia Service Project 2027

It is already time to begin planning and fundraising for our ASP 2027 mission trip! If you are new to ASP and want to know about the ministry, keep reading...if you are just looking for this coming years' info, skip ahead to the



Appalachia Service Project is a Christian ministry dedicated to repairing and improving homes for families in need throughout Central Appalachia. Its mission is to make homes warmer, safer, and drier, helping families live in healthier and more secure environments. Through home repairs and meaningful relationships, ASP offers volunteers an opportunity to serve others while demonstrating Christ's love in practical ways.

Each year, volunteers from churches, youth groups, and communities travel to Appalachia to work alongside homeowners. Projects may include repairing floors, replacing roofs, improving accessibility, addressing water damage, and making other necessary home improvements. We need every ability level from construction master to able to follow directions and pass out water. We even need some people to have the job of sitting on the front porch and talking with the homeowners.

ASP is about people, not just projects. Volunteers learn that service begins with listening, respecting the dignity of homeowners, and recognizing the value of every individual and family. The relationships built along the way often become just as meaningful as the work completed. Ultimately, Appalachia Service Project is more than a home repair ministry. It is a ministry of hope, fellowship, and service that brings people together to make a difference—one home, one family, and one act of love at a time.

😊 For this year, we currently have 10 spots reserved, but I would love to have at least 20 attend! We can always open up more spots. We will be going either week 6 -- July 18-24, or week 7 -- July 25-31. In the Spring we will receive confirmation on which dates. We ask that all youth (having completed 6th grade and older) be accompanied by a parent or guardian selected by the parents. We will need to begin fundraising efforts soon and will need help, so we are building our team early this year. Please let Pastor Nikki, nikki@amesfirstumc.org, know if you are interested in finding out more information, attending ASP, or helping us fundraise.

Our **All Saints Recognition** will be during worship on October 31 and November 1. We will light a candle and have a special time of remembrance for those members who passed away between Oct.1, 2025 and Sept.30, 2026.

Our Saints this year:

Wilma Lesan, Glendora Clark, Jan Samuelson,
Greg Sims, Shirley Grathwohl, Don Newell,
Joyce Kirk, Phyllis Crouse, Larry Vallery,
Billie Irene Watertor, Jim Torrie, Sharon Hogle,
John Adams, Jo Durlam, JoAnn Burgason,
Jerry Hall, Eldon Guge, Barbara Rassmussen,
Jack Smalling, Delores Ball, Jerri Adams

Welcome New Members!

Steve Gehlsen – joined October 10

Brett Weyek – joined October 11

Britta Rued – joined October 11

Isaac Jonathan Weyek – Preparatory Member
October 11

November Missions Moment

Missions and Outreach

United Methodist Student Day (Nov. 29, 2026) is one of the six churchwide Special Sundays designated to support ministries and causes important to the entire United Methodist Church.

- Empowers students preparing to help the suffering while speaking the truth in love. Provides scholarships and student loans for United Methodist students.

- 100% goes to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to support United Methodist Scholarships and the United Methodist Student Loan Fund.

At the Oct.13, 2026, Missions Committee meeting we voted to donate \$500 to Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance. If you would like to donate to Missions, please write a check to FUMC and put Missions in the memo line. A thank you note from Self Help International for a \$500 donation in August is posted on the Missions bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Missionary Douglas Williams is retiring from Argentina and will be visiting us here at FUMC on Sunday, November 1. He will be sharing about his mission work with us after the church service in the Multi Purpose Room. We hope you will be able to attend.

An additional way to help Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance: Attend the GNEA Fall Choral Concert on Sunday Nov. 8, 2026, 2 p.m. at Bethesda Lutheran Church.

Volunteer needed for Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance Board

Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance (GNEA)
Mission and History:

The mission of Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, Inc., a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit corporation organized by member faith groups in Ames and Story County, Iowa, is to provide emergency rent, utility, food, and fuel assistance in an atmosphere of dignity, comfort and encouragement to keep people in their current housing.

In 1997 Larry LaVelle, Lee Webb, and Dale VanderSchaaf of FUMC helped organize a few faith groups to pool their resources to organize Good Neighbor. Good Neighbor offers a central location where a qualified Director evaluates requests for assistance and provides counsel and advocacy with the support of dedicated volunteers.

Representatives from member organizations form Good Neighbor's Board of Directors, to provide oversight and direction to the agency. Member organizations with a representative on the board include: Ames FUMC, Bethesda Lutheran Church, Unity Church of Ames, St. Andrew's Lutheran, Northminster Presbyterian, First Christian Church, St. Cecilia's Parish, Ames Jewish Congregation, and Nevada Memorial Lutheran.

Funding:

Good Neighbor's funding comes from a variety of sources. Some of them include the following.

- **Contributions from member organizations.** Some make annual pledges and build GNEA into their budget, while others simply contribute through giving opportunities (e.g. offerings.) Together, these contributions make up a substantial portion of GNEA's budget.
- **Grants.** Good Neighbor participates in the ASSET funding program of United Way, and applies for other state and local grants.
- **Individual Donations.** Many individuals contribute monthly or occasionally to Good Neighbor. Some do this by check while others donate online.
- **Special Events.** Fundraisers such as the annual combined choir concert give community members opportunities for giving.

GNEA meets monthly by zoom or occasionally in person at 613 Clark Ave. the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Besides attending meetings, board members also help at the GNEA Block Party in May and the GNEA Fall Choral Concert fund raiser In November.

The Ames FUMC rep on the GNEA Board is also a member of the FUMC Missions Committee and reports about GNEA at the Missions Committee meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at FUMC.

Our previous two GNEA Board Representatives are Steve Hanlin and Charli Hanway if you would like to talk to them about their experience.

Please contact Pastor Nikki if you are interested in being Ames First's rep on the GNEA Board.

BEAUTIFUL
MUSIC.
STRONGER
TOGETHER.



GNEA

Fall

CHORAL CONCERT

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2026 | 2PM



Bethesda Lutheran Church

1517 Northwestern Ave.

Ames, IA 50010

Fall is better with music! ♥

Come out and enjoy an uplifting afternoon
of seasonal choral music, community, and fun.

Gather your family and friends and
celebrate the season with us!

Everyone is welcome! ♥



For more information:

EVENTS@GNEA.ORG

Thanks to these folks for volunteering at Food at First on Sept. 24: Charli Hanway, Dean Swyter, Chef Dale VanderSchaaf, Pastor Amanda Gordon, Darlys Orth, Margaret Torrie, Paul Attema, and Steve Hanlin.



The fourth Thursday in December will be Christmas Eve, and we will need to provide volunteers from Ames First. Please be considering if you can help that evening. You would be done in time to slip into the 7:30 service at the last minute!

Thanks to these folks for volunteering at Ames Romero House on Oct. 6:

Nancy Tamashunas, Margaret Torrie, Charli Hanway, William Edwards, and Jane Edwards.

We delivered 60 hygiene items, 4 sweatshirts, and a sleeping bag to ARH. We also delivered 2 liquid soap dispensers to The Bridge Home. Feminine hygiene products and kitchen products were delivered to ACCESS.



Ingathering/Midwest Mission Update

The needs are there.....and YOU answered! We have 75 school kits and 78 personal dignity kits to send off on Ingathering day in early November. These kits will go to Midwest Mission, the first stop on their way around the world and around the corner. THANK YOU so much for all the donations and to those who helped assemble, check and pack kits. It takes a team and we have a great one!

You've also continued to add to the donation list for Midwest Mission. We've sent an amazing list of items this year. THANK YOU! Keep those sewing machines, walkers, canes, bikes, braces and all the rest coming - we'll see that they get to Jefferson. If you have questions or need help, please contact Carol Miller (515-290-3843).

MICA

Thank you for your continued support of MICA! Our church has donated over 2,700 pounds of food and supplies to the MICA food pantry so far this year! A list of requested items is near the MICA cart in the entryway, and items especially needed include skillet meals, ramen, and toilet paper. Your generosity is appreciated!

United Women in Faith

***Love in Action Can Change the World!** Your faithful service makes a difference in our church, our community, and in the world! We are truly blessed to have so many people in our church and in UWFaith who serve in many ways, including sharing kindness and encouraging one another, donating to MICA and ACCESS, serving on committees, making sleeping mats for Midwest Missions and casseroles for Romero House, and volunteering at Romero House, Food at First and the Warming Place, and of course, supporting UWFaith bake sales, Fall Fair and other activities to raise money for missions locally, nationally and around the world!

As an expression of our appreciation, every year our unit of UWFaith selects a few people to receive.

*On October 10, we made three casseroles, three large containers of soup, and four desserts for **Romero House!** Thank you to Ellen Johnsen for planning this event and to everyone who participated!

***UWFaith Weekend** was on September 26-27! Danille Curtiss, Director of Midwest Mission in Iowa, gave the message at both church services about her work serving communities in need nationally and internationally. Our church supports Midwest Mission in many ways, and if you'd like more information about Midwest Mission, Carol Miller is a Midwest Mission Ambassador! You can speak with her at church, call 515-290-3943 or email jacemiller@isunet.net.

UWFaith Mission Recognition Pins and a donation is made in their honor to the UWFaith National Office for its work in support of women, children and youth. This year we are honoring three women for their service in our church and community: Charli Hanway, Cathy Webb, and Carolyn Yorgensen, Following are some of the many ways they serve: Charli Hanway is an active member of UWFaith. She has been on its Leadership Team and is currently Treasurer of the Silver Anniversary Circle. She is Chair of Missions and Outreach, and she is a regular volunteer and coordinates volunteers at Food at First and Romero House. Cathy Webb has been on UWFaith's Leadership Team and is active in the Silver Anniversary Circle and serves as its secretary. She is a volunteer with Midwest Mission, and she is the contact person for making Midwest Mission mats. Our third recipient, Carolyn Yorgensen is active on the History and Records Committee, Membership Care, and is the Head Communion Steward. She's a regular volunteer at Food at First and active in the Silver Anniversary Circle and pie committee. She's also a member of the UWFaith Leadership Team's Fundraising Committee, and in this role she has helped raise money for UWFaith Missions with bake sales, Fall Fair, and other activities! To our recipients and to the many other helpers (pretty much everyone reading this!) thank you so much for all you do in big and small ways for your church, your community, and beyond!

***Fall Fair**, our most important fundraiser of the year, was October 17! We enjoyed shopping for crafts and other items, lots of delicious baked goods, and a very tasty soup lunch! It's always a joy to be in fellowship with one another, and over \$5000 was raised for UWFaith missions! Thanks to everyone who made the Fall Fair a success, and especially to the fundraising committee: Donna Banker, Joan Peterson, Margaret Torrie, and Carolyn Yorgensen!

The Fellowship Hall and 1st Floor Education Building are currently being prepped for painting and new flooring. Over the next few weeks, some groups and activities will have alternate meeting spots. Group leaders have been contacted, but please contact the office with any questions.

Mat Makers will not be meeting in November.

Holiday Season is Coming! Hanging of the Greens will be November 21 from 9am to Noon. All are welcome to help decorate the church for Advent and Christmas!

Thanksgiving Week Please note the office will be closed from noon on Wednesday Nov. 25, and all day Nov. 26 and 27 for Thanksgiving.

Youth News!

Be sure to follow us on instagram @amesfirstumcyouth
We share about events and other fun things happening with and for our youth!

Sunday School

Youth Sunday school meets at 9:00am in the youth room with games, food, and some great discussion! Youth at Ames First UMC are grades 6th-12th with Middle School Youth being 6th-8th grades and High School Youth being 9th-12th grades. During the month of November, the youth will explore some of Romans through the series "Battles: Good vs. Evil"

Be sure to get your youth registered TODAY for all things 2026-2027 church school year by going to <https://forms.gle/54zdbxtUBGsxoAk9>

Confirmation

Connectional Confirmation faith visits begin this month with a visit to Temple B'Nai Jeshurun in Des Moines on November 13 at 5:30pm. The students along with mentors and parents will attend the Shabbat service there. If you would like to join our students at this visit, please let Nicole know so she can get a head count to TBJ. nicole@amesfirstumc.org

Up With Puppets

Up With Puppets has been working hard to prepare some special holiday songs but it isn't too late to join them! This is open to any youth from 6th to 12th grades. The group meets following worship service at about 11:15am in the Puppet room located just off the top of the main stairs. The group works together listening to music to hear faith filled and inspiring messages that they can then share with all during worship through puppetry and various props. If you have any questions you can contact Nicole Smith or Suann Evans.

Wednesdays

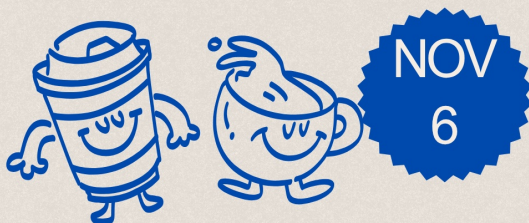
Youth Group

Youth Group will meet on Wednesday, November 11 from 7:30pm – 9:00pm (6th -12th grades). The schedule is pinned on the instagram page and has been emailed out to families. This month we will have a special "Friendsgiving" meal and make fleece tie blankets for our unhoused neighbors. We would love to have all the youth there! Youth are invited to bring friends too!

WE NEED FLEECE MATERIAL! We would love to have donations of fleece material to make the fleece blankets during youth group on 11/11. If you would like to donate some fleece for this, we would like to request the 54" or 60" width and length of 2 yards. Smaller donations will be accepted as well but the 2 yard length makes the perfect size for adults.

Ames First UMC High School Youth

FAITH FILLED FIRST FRIDAY



→ Friday, November 6
7:00am - 7:30am or
7:30am - 8:00am

North Grand
Starbucks
location

Fridays

First Fridays – High Schoolers

We will meet on Friday, November 6 for our Faith Filled First Fridays gathering for high school students. We meet at the North Grand Starbucks before school. High school students can get a free drink and have some dedicated time for devotions and prayer before heading to school for the day and into the weekend. Meeting times will be 7:00am –7:30am and 7:30am to 8:00am. If additional meeting times need to be added, we can discuss that as the time comes. Friends are welcome to join our youth!

Game Night After Hours

On Friday, November 6, the youth and families are welcome to join in the Game night fun from 6-8pm. But after game night is over for everyone else, the youth will continue with some after hours games like sardines and Romans vs. Christians. We will have snacks available. After hours will go until midnight. Students who have other things going on that evening may arrive late but please let Nicole know what time you'll be there. And students can leave early too if needed, just let Nicole know what time.



Kid Min News!

Helpful Hive

This month, the Helpful Hive will be learning more about Samuel when he was young. The kids will also take some time to learn more about Midwest Mission. If you are interested in helping lead a session or assist with children's Sunday school, please contact Nicole Smith. Children's Sunday School has begun and all are welcome! We start at 9:00am in the Sanctuary for music and announcements before heading to our classrooms. So buzz on over to the registration

<https://forms.gle/54zdbxotUBGsxoAk9>

Attendance

Date	5:30	10:00	Online	Total
9/5&6	18	110	59	187
9/12&13	21	85	71	177
9/19&20	27	133	67	227
9/26&27	20	127	61	208

September Utilities

Great thanks to all who donated towards the Utilities in September! You make our days bright.

Keith & Jean Bailey, Ruth DeBoer, Carol Deppe, Jennifer Groat, Becky Jordan, Steven & Jean McBreen, Gary & Peggy McConnell, Jim & Carol Miller, Marty & Julie Sankey, Zella Studer, Joanne Van Dyke

Greeters

November 1	Karen Kerper, Kevin Hinders, Kris Hinders
November 8	Becky Jordan, Margaret Torrie, Steve Hanlin
November 15	Mike Reese, Stella and Amy Parkes, Diana Schwendinger
November 22	Jan Tryon, Greg Lofstedt, Rhonda Lofstedt
November 29	Becky Jordan, Donna Banker, Steve Hanlin

If you are interested in being a greeter, please email Paige Brincks at nickpaigebrincks@gmail.com

Ames First United Methodist Church
516 Kellogg Ave Ames, IA 50010
Worship Service times
Saturday at 5:30pm Sunday at 10:00am

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Amanda Gordon, Senior Pastor
Rev. Nikki Ross Bishop, Associate Pastor

Nicole Smith, Christian Education Director
Ilene Riitano, Organist and Music Director

Julie Minot, Office Manager

Vivian Severson, Office Assistant

Reid Cummer, Business Manager

Kris Hinders, Digital Coordinator
James Minot, Maintenance Custodian
Matt Woodworth, Part-time Custodian

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Thurs 9:00 - 4:00

Friday 9:00 - 1:00

Email: office@amesfirstumc.org
515.232.2750 / www.amesfirstumc.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED