

A MONTH OF GRATITUDE...



My family celebrates each birthday for a week. This plan started when our kids were first old enough to identify with their birthdays; and, truth be told, it was as much about the fact that two of our three kids have their birthdays around Christmas and New Year's. This just made it a big deal. As years have gone on, I think my wife and I enjoy it far more than our kids stop to consider it. Each day holds something special, even the smallest of celebratory gestures...after all, is one day enough to celebrate the gift that each person really is?

In a similar way, I am mindful of November as Thanksgiving's month, what some might say ushers in a month of gratitude. Should we then not suggest a month is not enough time to properly celebrate with thanks or express the depth or completeness of our gratitude? I would answer emphatically "no" a month is not long enough, nor is it our intent as Christians to leave November to gratitude, but rather every day of our lives. If you are not already, I invite you this month to begin the transformation to a life of gratitude. Let us all try each evening to practice the *examen*, a spiritual practice of looking back on your day.

1. *Become aware of God's presence*
2. *Give Thanks.*
3. *Review your emotions.*
4. *Ask for forgiveness and reflect.*
5. *Look toward tomorrow.*

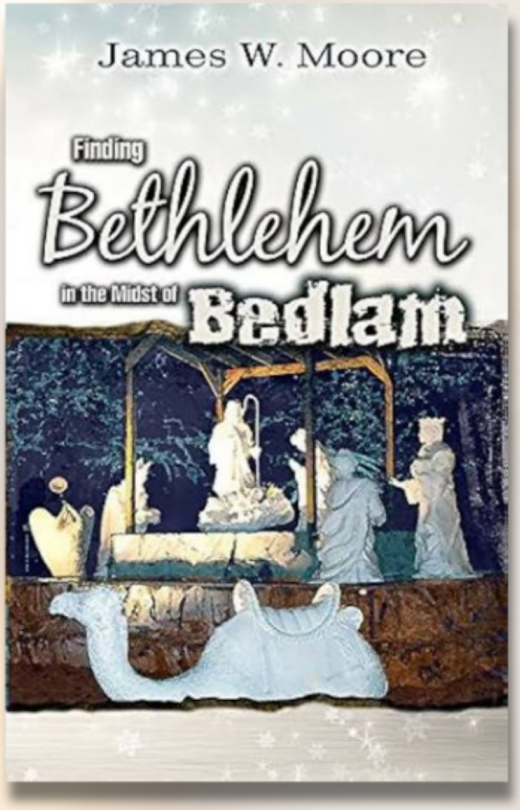
Within the recognition of God's presence and grace we give thanks and we look forward. If we are able to do this each day this month, we are halfway toward starting a positive and healthy spiritual practice habit; a habit formation happens in an average of sixty repetitions.

This month we continue with our season of reflecting on our covenants with the church, supporting it by our prayers, presence, gifts, service and our witness, which we now concentrate on gifts. Many churches feature a stewardship campaign this time of the year, aiming to recommit pledges for annual giving or tithes. I understand the tradition here at St. Paul's to be supportive of living faithfully both in managing the church finances and relying on the Holy Spirit bring forth each of your individual first fruits. While we will launch a minor capital campaign to fund a generational gift to the church for a new roof and solar panels, a pledge to the general fund will not be asked. Instead, may God reveal the gift that you are, for it is here where you find the fruits of your faith. Amen.

Pastor James

pastor@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com

ADVENT SERMON SERIES AND ADULT LARGE GROUP STUDY



Pastor James will begin his Advent sermon series on the First Sunday of Advent on November 29th utilizing Finding Bethlehem in the Midst of Bedlam by James W. Moore.

Large groups will begin the study on December 2nd. If you would like more information or plan to take part in the Bible study, please reach out to Pastor James.

OFFICE HOURS

Mondays
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Tuesdays
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Wednesdays
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Thursdays
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Fridays
By Appointment

October Attendance

10/4 - 110 **10/11 -80**

10/18 - 102 **10/25 - 98**

Financial Report

CURRENT HILLS BANK BALANCE AS OF October 29, 2026
$210,891.25 which includes the following breakdown:

- $84,105.03 General Fund from Offerings
- $53,304.86 Capital Improvements account
- -14,008.87 in designated amts such as missions, scholarships,etc.
- $7,197.52 Memorial Fund account
- $52,273.16 6-month CD

This leaves $70,096.16 to pay regular expenses.

Edward Jones, Williamsburg Summary
Funds invested in a CD & Money Market - $42,352.70

YEAR TO DATE SUMMARY - 1/1/26 to 10/29/26
(44 weeks)

- Total offering given to the General Fund received YTD: $209,516.70 ($4,762.00 average weekly offering)
- Total Capital Improvement offering YTD: $21,430.00 ($487.00 average weekly offering)
- Total Interest Income YTD: $1,330.67
- Total expenses paid by General Fund YTD: $272,428.27 ($6,192.00 average weekly expenses)
- Total expenses paid by Capital Improvements YTD: $26,382.75
- Total donations to Roof Campaign: 11,450.00

Iowa Methodist Foundation Fund
(From Marilyn Tanner Memorial) as of 8/31/26
Balance $109,590.25 ($100,000 of this money is designated by the family for a future sanctuary)

Prayer requests can be emailed to:
office@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com

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Organist*: Sue Heitmann*

Custodian*: Melissa Savage*

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SPUMCnursery@gmail.com

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Deadline for news for next month's newsletter is the 20th of the month.

N.O.W. Notices

Noticing where God is already at work among us.



Notice...

Looking through the lens of

Gifts

Where might God be inviting us to see the gifts within ourselves and others?

Let's Notice Together...

"I'm just me."

How many of us have said that? Or thought that what we bring isn't particularly special because it's simply who we've always been?

But what if those very things—the way you love people, the things that excite you, the way your mind works, the things you notice, the way you make others feel—are exactly the gifts God intended you to bring into the world?

You don't have to become someone extraordinary to have something extraordinary to offer.

One of the things I love about my role as N.O.W. Director is getting to see the different personalities, strengths, and gifts that make up our St. Paul's family. And sometimes I find myself wishing people could see what I see in them.

The person who makes others feel welcome without even trying. The one who always finds a reason to laugh. The person who listens, encourages, creates, comforts, or sees possibilities others might miss. We recognize those things in one another, but how often do we recognize them in ourselves?

Maybe it's because the things that come most naturally to us don't feel particularly special. They're simply part of who we've always been.

But the things that make you *YOU* are not insignificant.
They may be the very gifts someone else needs.

So perhaps this month, instead of asking what more we could do or give, we might begin by recognizing what God has already placed within us.

Maybe you're not "just you."
Maybe being you is exactly the gift God intended you to share.

Until Next month...

Don't be so quick to dismiss the things that make you *you*.

They matter.
You matter.
And you have something worth sharing.

Keep Noticing.

- Kristin

Notice God...

Sometimes the gifts we overlook most are our own.

What comes naturally to you?
What do others see in you?
Could those be gifts from God?

Maybe what feels ordinary to you is a gift to someone else.

Every Story Matters...

Sometimes It Takes Someone Else...

"You make everyone feel welcome!"
I was just being friendly.

"You always know how to make me laugh!"
Oh, I was just being silly.

"You have such a way with kids!"
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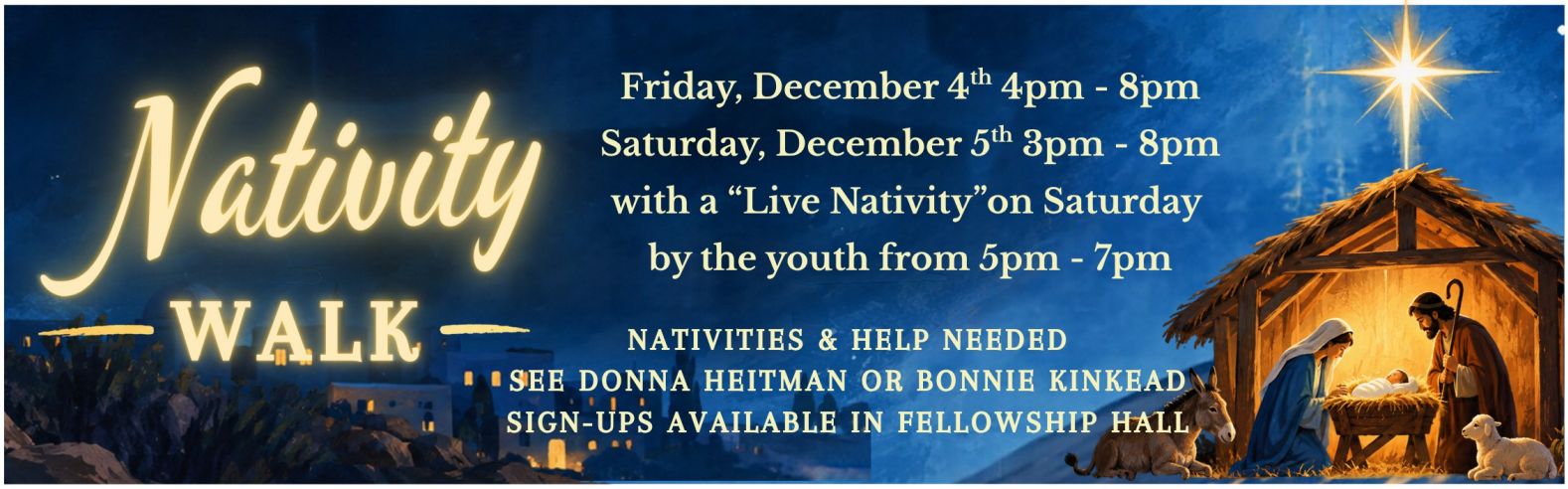



Seating is available at 11:00am and 11:45am

RSVP required: by 11/16/26

Meal pick up or delivery is available upon request. Open the QR code with a smart phone to register or call your local church or (319) 668-2288 and someone will be able to help you.

Food Donation and Volunteer Sign-Up 2026 Community Thanksgiving



SPUMC New Member Orientation | Covenant Group Launch

Beginning Wednesday, November 18th, our new member orientation class series on becoming a Methodist launches. The class will meet on consecutive Wednesdays during E.P.I.C. of 11/18, 11/25 and 12/02, from 6:30 – 8:00 pm.

The discussion will focus on formation of the Methodist Church, how this church embodies those characteristics, and what sets us apart. We will experience John Wesley's approach to Classes, a covenant group sharing journeys of faith and learning to watch over one another in Christian love. New members will join the church during worship services on December 13th.

All are welcome! For more information or to RSVP your interest and participation, email Pastor James at pastor@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com.

Samaritan's Purse
OPERATION
Christmas Child

Shoeboxes are now available in the Fellowship Hall. Grab one or two and fill with surprises for a boy or girl!



SPUMC



UPGRADING OUR ROOF & OWNING OUR POWER

THE CAMPAIGN



The Lord said to Moses: Tell the Israelites to collect gift offerings for me. Receive my gift offerings from everyone who freely wants to give.
Exodus 25:1-2

Everyone who was excited and eager to participate brought the Lord's gift offerings to be used for building the meeting tent and all its furnishings and for the holy clothes.
Exodus 35:21

"It is no secret, what we can do,
working together
we'll see our plan thru.
With My plan and yours,
the goal will be reached,
in five years or less,
the roof will be raised.
IT IS NO SECRET, WHAT WE CAN DO."
Russ Heitmann

GOALS
$140,000
3.6YR PAYBACK
GENERATIONAL TRANSFORMATION
POWER
INDEPENDENCE

Caring for this building for this body of Christ is one of our charges and our joys. Everyone has a role they can play, a resource they can give, a commitment they can make. Your choice will be, how much will we be compelled to give and what increments will we give it, one-time, annually, semi-annually, monthly, or weekly. No gift is too small, no mountain is too big.

So the people stopped bringing anything more because what they had already brought was more than enough to do all the work.
Exodus 36:7

Pledge cards will be available to everyone for 2 weeks beginning November 1st in the sanctuary. Cards will be mailed after that.

SPUMC

Raise the Roof Campaign
Our (My) 5-year Pledge

$_____.00
per
_____

It is no secret...
what we can do!

Contributor: #2

SPUMC

Raise the Roof Campaign

5-year pledge commitment

Our (my) pledge total is $_____.00

Contribution(s) made by: check | ACH (Please Circle One)

One payment	$_____.00	One Easy Payment
Annually	$_____.00	Five Easy Payments
Semi Annually	$_____.00	Ten Easy Payments
Quarterly	$_____.00	Twenty Easy Payments
Monthly	$_____.00	Sixty Easy Payments

Remember Charlie's Motto, "Every Nickel Counts"

Contributor: #2

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SPUMC CONFIRMATION RETREAT 2026
"THE LIVING WATER" - ISAIAH 55



During the overnight retreat at St. Luke's Isaiah 55 was studied by lectio divina, using repetitive reading of a verse to illuminate points of interests. We worshipped, played hard, made friends and felt the Holy Spirit's presence.



Temple Beth El—Experience: A dive into the Jewish faith today with examples of worship and rituals



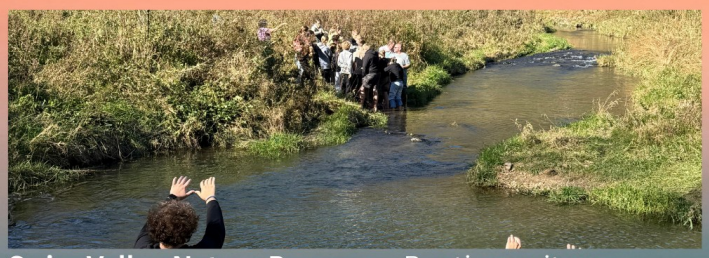
US Lock and Dam—The power of the Mississippi River moves life-giving water from land to sea.



St. Luke's United Methodist Church—The beauty of the church in stained glass and woodwork. The togetherness with new friends, study, worship, play and rest.



St. John's Episcopal Church—Unique faith traditions.



Swiss Valley Nature Preserve—Baptism, witness and renewal.



Maquoketa Caves State Park—Experience: How this evidences Creator God at work still today. Brody, Calen, Matt, Lydia, and Kinnick.

NOVEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

November 1st All Saints Day
Our Gifts: Every Nickel Counts
Exodus 36:3-7 Exodus 35:20-27
Hebrews 3:1-6

November 8th
Keep awake! For you DO know - Gift of Preparation
Joshua 24:14-15, 19-25
Matthew 25:1-13

November 15th
Let Your Talent Shine! - Invest Your Gifts
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

November 22nd
Christ is King! Comprehending lavish gifts.
Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

November 29th 1st Sunday in Advent
Bethlehem or Bedlam
Mark 13:24-37

EPIC Meals

November 4th
- Sliders, soups, relish tray

November 11th
- Veteran's Day - Be Patriotic!
- Spaghetti, breadsticks, lettuce, corn

November 18th
- Service Night! Community Thanksgiving set up
- Chicken fingers, mac-n-cheese, relish tray

November 25th
- No EPIC Meal

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