



The First Word

September 2026

First United Methodist Church, Racine

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From the Pastor's Pen

As the days grow a little shorter and the first signs of fall begin to appear, I find myself noticing the familiar changes all around us. Backpacks are being filled, calendars are beginning to crowd, ministries are starting up again, and the rhythm of church life begins to shift into a new season. I have always appreciated the way autumn reminds us that life moves in seasons—and that God is present in every one of them.

I know that for some of us, fall brings excitement and fresh energy. For others, it may bring a sense of weariness, uncertainty, or even sadness as summer ends and responsibilities increase. Wherever you find yourself this year, I want you to hear this good news: God's renewing work is not limited to perfect timing, perfect circumstances, or perfect readiness. God meets us right where we are, with grace enough for today and hope enough for tomorrow.

One verse that has been on my heart as we enter this season is God's promise through the prophet Isaiah: "See, I am doing a new thing!" I love that promise because it does not come to people who already have everything figured out. It comes to people who are longing for restoration, direction, and hope. That feels like a word many of us need. God is not finished with us—not with our lives, not with our congregation, not with our families, and not with our community.

Fall also has a quiet way of teaching us about letting go. When I see the trees release their leaves, I am reminded that letting go is not always a sign of loss. Sometimes it is an act of trust. Perhaps there are burdens, regrets, habits, or worries that God is gently inviting us to release so that we can receive what is next.

Of course, new beginnings do not mean everything becomes easy. They simply mean we do not step into the next season alone. The mercy of God is new every morning. Christ goes before us. The Spirit continues to shape us—patiently and faithfully—into people of courage, compassion, forgiveness, and hope.

As we move into fall together, I invite you to join me in asking: What new thing might God be beginning in me? Where is God calling me to grow? What might I need to release in order to receive the grace being offered? And how might we, as a church family, be called to begin again in worship, service, prayer, and love?

My prayer for us is that this fall will be more than a change in weather or schedule. May it be a season of renewed faith, refreshed purpose, and deeper trust in the God who is always making all things new.

Pastor Christal

Themes & Scriptures for September

September 6

Theme: "Conflict"

Exodus 12: 1-14, Matthew 18: 15-20

September 13

Theme: "The Call"

Matthew 4: 10-21, Matthew 28: 16-20

September 20

Theme: "Grace"

Exodus 14: 19-31, Matthew 18: 21-35

September 27

Theme: "True Humility"

Philippians 2: 1-13, Matthew 21: 23-32



New Book Study Begins
Beginning September 18, the Friday morning study group will start a six week

study based on the book "Five Marks of a Methodist" written by Steve Harper. Come explore what makes us unique. We meet for an hour beginning at 10:00 am. Please let Pastor Christal know if you will be attending so we have enough books on hand. The cost of the books per person is \$13.50.



Welcome New Choir Director

We welcome Dominic (Dom) Luzwick as our Choir Director beginning September 1st. Dom was one of several high school students awarded a Choral Scholarship Internship at the Presbyterian Church of Barrington, Illinois. He is currently a senior at Carthage College majoring in Music Theatre and Theatre Directing. He brings a combination of performance and directing experience. Please introduce yourself to Dom and welcome him to his new ministry.



THANK YOU NANCY COOK for serving as our choir director these many past years. Your dedication to the choir and the church is an example of your Christian stewardship and is very much appreciated. We will

have a special time to thank Nancy on Sunday, August 30 during fellowship time. There will be a basket to receive your cards of thanks. Be sure to join us.

Confirmation Orientation

There will be an orientation meeting for those interested in exploring the process of becoming confirmed in the church on Sunday, September 20th following worship. A parent or grandparent should accompany the student. All ages are welcome. If you have any questions, please talk to Pastor Christal.



September is Hispanic Heritage Month, a time to celebrate our Spanish-language and bilingual congregations and our commitment to ethnic and multiethnic ministries. This is one

of our six “Special Sunday” offerings. Envelopes are located on the sanctuary tables.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN SEPTEMBER!!

- 1 - Carol Buhler
Marcia Fernholz
- 8 - Jean Harmon
- 10 - Brittany Piliouras
Melanie Guckenberger
Shannon Hirth
- 17 - Al Feest
- 30 - Peter Feest Jr.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY IN SEPTEMBER!!

- 1 - Al & Dee Feest
- 2 - Scott & Connie Boehm
- 5 - Paul & Peggy Nejedly
- 16 - Scott & Wendy Toutant



FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

Our item for September will be canned fruit. Bring your contributions to the church any time and place them in the crates near the entrances. Thanks for your continued support of the food banks of Racine.

PRAYER CHAIN IN THE WORKS – Are you called to be a part of this type of ministry? Contact Pastor Christal for additional information:

PastorChristalUMC@gmail.com

SPECIAL MEETING SCHEDULED

Sunday, September 13, 11:15 am following morning worship the Church Council will meet in the social room. Lunch will be provided.

Sunday, September 27, 11:15 following morning worship. The entire church membership is encouraged to attend. Lunch will be provided.

LOOSE CHANGE OFFERING FOR SEPTEMBER

is designated for UMCOR. With many weather related disasters throughout the country, UMCOR is in need of additional funds to meet the needs of people suffering with these events. Simply put your loose change, or more, in the offering plate and indicate UMCOR on your check.

The First Word

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Pastor's office hours – Wednesday and Friday

9:00 am - Noon

Pastor – Rev. Christal Bindrich

Editor – Carol Feest



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745 Main Street
Racine, WI 53403



First United Methodist Church

The Vision statement:

Inspire all to live faithfully in Jesus Christ

The Mission statement:

**Gather, Equip, and Serve our community and the world in the name
Jesus Christ!**

