The First Word

November 2026

First United Methodist Church, Racine

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The Pastor's Pen

In the blink of an eye, the trees have changed color and the temperatures have dropped. November is here, bringing Thanksgiving and the beginning of the holiday season. Before the commitments, school concerts, shopping, and gatherings of December fill our calendars, we have an opportunity to pause and give thanks.

November offers us a holy pause between autumn's beauty and the busyness of Christmas. As the days grow shorter and Thanksgiving draws near, this month invites us to notice God's goodness, remember the people who have blessed our lives, and give thanks for gifts we might otherwise overlook.

Before we turn our full attention to December, I invite us to lean into gratitude. Each day is a new gift from God, filled with possibilities and opportunities to notice grace. We can choose to receive that gift with thankful hearts and to use our time in ways that reflect our gratitude.

Please join me in a November gratitude challenge: Each day, name one blessing and share it. Write a note, make a phone call, offer a helping hand, or tell someone how their presence has blessed your life. As we turn gratitude into generosity, we become a blessing to others and help God's goodness travel farther.

Gracious God, thank you for every good gift, for the people who bless our lives, and for your faithful presence in every season. Open our eyes to your goodness, fill our hearts with gratitude, and help us share your love generously with others. Amen.

With a grateful heart,
Your Pastor

Sermon Topics for November

November 1st	"When Dreams Become Nightmares"
November 8th	"Wisdom and Finance"
November 15th	"Cultivating Contentment"
November 22nd	"Defined by Generosity"

Enough: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity Book Study

Join us for *a* discussion about living joyfully through simplicity and generosity. As rising costs make our money stretch less than it once did, this study offers timely biblical guidance and practical encouragement. We will meet on Fridays at 10:00 *a.m.* in the Gladys Reep Room, beginning November 6th and concluding November 27th.

Hanging of the Greens

Help get our beautiful sanctuary ready for the Advent and Christmas Season. Stay after worship on November 22nd to trim the tree and deck the halls.

Looking Ahead:

Choir Contata "Go Tell It" - December 20

Christmas Eve Candles & Lessons Service at 5:00 pm

Enough: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity

One of Jesus' great teaching parables involves a sower who cast seed along the ground. The sower hoped the seeds would sprout, grow, and bear good fruit. Some seeds did just that, producing a great harvest. But others, Jesus said, fell among thorns and, though they began to grow, these good plants were quickly choked out. Jesus said the thorns were "the cares of the world and the lure of wealth" (Matthew 13:22).

In a culture where having "enough" seems to have become a never-ending pursuit, Jesus' parable remains incredibly relevant. Many of us are chasing the American dream in ways that lead to stress, anxiety, and fear—thorns that can rob us of the ability to enjoy the abundant lives of purpose that God intended for us.

All of us have struggled with these issues at one time or another. They are important issues that we cannot ignore. This is why, over the next four weeks, we will be having a churchwide study and worship emphasis called *Enough: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity*. During this time, we will explore what the Bible teaches us about financial management through corporate worship and small group study. (See separate article about the study details.) Each week we will provide you with some practical tools you can use to assess your financial situation and develop a financial plan with a biblical foundation.

At the conclusion of the emphasis, we will have the opportunity to make personal commitments of our offerings to God through our church in the coming year. We will consecrate these commitments in the worship service on Sunday, November 29th.

I hope you will join us in the coming weeks as we look at how we can manage our financial resources and truly experience simplicity, generosity, and joy.

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LOOSE CHANGE OFFERING FOR NOVEMBER **will support the Veteran Village in Racine.**

The James A. Peterson Veteran Village and SC Johnson Community Center are located at 1624 Yout Street, Racine, WI 53404. We house homeless veterans while supplying them with all the tools needed to break the cycle of homelessness and help them to, once again, become productive members of society.

All Saints Day Celebration

All Saints Day Celebration will be Sunday November 1, 2026, as part of our Worship Service. Please invite family and friends to this time of remembrance and celebration of our Faith journey together. You're invited to stay after service to enjoy some coffee and refreshments. We will be celebrating the lives of Angel Thiel, Chuck Bragg and Jane Jarrett

HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN NOVEMBER

1 – Peggy Nejedly
4 – Carole Randecker
9 – Willard Nettles
15 – June White
18 – John Kara
19 – Alexandra Feest

FOOD BANK ITEM

Food bank item for November will be cake mixes. Bring your donation to church any time and place it in the crate near the entry doors. Thank you for your support of our food pantries. (See related article on next page)

CHARGE CONFERENCE DATE SET

Our Annual Charge Conference will take place on Thursday, November 5, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the social room. All members are invited to attend as we review our past year and look forward to the upcoming year. The meeting will be led by District Superintendent InSun Lee.

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICES

Although we will not have a service at First Church on Thanksgiving Eve, the following churches welcome your attendance:
Christ Church – 7:00 pm
5109 Washington Avenue, Racine
Yorkville United Methodist – 6:30 pm
17645 Old Yorkville Road

Northside Food Pantry News

Thanksgiving is a time when we all want to share food with family and friends. If you wish to contribute to Northside Food Pantry, please remember these non-perishable Thanksgiving foods to donate. Items left at church will be taken to the pantry for our day to serve, the third Thursday of each month. If you don't care to bring food to church, please consider writing a monthly check to the church, putting your donation into the collection plate, and writing North Side Food Pantry on the memo line.

- Boxed stuffing
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Canned vegetables
- Dry macaroni
- Cranberry sauce
- Canned Pumpkin

We all know how expensive groceries are, so any help you can give would be much appreciated. Another suggestion would be to donate to the community Thanksgiving meal at Festival Hall if it is being held this year. More news about that as we move into November. Our mission as Christians is to feed the hungry, so thank you for considering this need in our community. Thanks for thinking of others as we give thanks for the blessings, we have here at First United Methodist Church.

Sincerely,

Patti Walker

Racine Area Church Safety Network

meeting. First Church will host the upcoming meeting on Saturday, November 14 at 10:00 am.

We will have, as our speakers:
1.) Cindy Sywyk (LCSW) talking about, Calming your nervous system when "fight or flight" wants to take over.

2.) Kari McGaughey and Sheri Hess (From NAMI) giving us an overview of mental illness, crisis intervention, and crisis de-escalation.

This should be a lot of good information for our teams. (And ourselves) Hope to see everyone there!
Any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.
Thank you for your time.

Larry White
262-498-2912

SPECIAL 5TH SUNDAY EVENT

Instead of a pot luck on the 5th Sunday of the month we will have a "Pie Sunday" on November 29th. Several people will be asked to provide a pie to share during fellowship time that morning. Can we count on you?

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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!