



A Note from the Pastor

Good News in Unexpected Places!

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.'" Luke 2:10 NIV

I have often wondered what it was like watching sheep the night the angels appeared to the shepherds. Who would have thought that the announcement of the Messiah's birth would first be made to simple field hands. As I dream of what it must have been like, I wonder. Would I have been afraid, or would I have been prepared to hear the news?

If such an important birth would happen today, one would think that there would be a full compliment of reporters to share the news. Facebook would be tied up with people trying to get the word out. Surely the President of the United States would make a special announcement and declare a nationwide celebration.

No, that is not the way God wanted to become human flesh. The Messiah was not born in a palace. He was born in a simple stable. The first announcements were not sent to the King. They were sent to lowly shepherds. One does not need to be special, or wealthy, or connected to celebrate the birth of this baby for this good news of great joy is for all the people! That is what the angels said. That is what Jesus proved on the cross.

Every year I hear the slogan "Put Christ back in Christmas." Although those who hold on to this mantra mean well, the place for Christ is not in Christmas, for he came not to rule as a winter celebration. He came to rule over human hearts. I believe that once we place Jesus in our hearts we will find that he is already in Christmas.

I will admit, I enjoy the decorations, the lights, the carols, the food, and the "presents" this time of the year brings, but I hope that this Christmas may well be one where we remember God's "presence" among us.

May you and yours have a blessed Christ-mas season!

In Christ,
Pastor Bob



190TH CELEBRATION OAKFORD UMC SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH 8:30 a.m. WORSHIP

We invite you to join us for a special service which will include special choir music, a Children's Christmas Program and historical reminiscences from former pastors and friends.

A buffet breakfast will be served following worship service.

ALL ARE INVITED TO JOIN OUR CELEBRATION!!!

The Messenger

United Methodist Church
Havana/Oakford
December 2025



United
Women
in Faith

The United Women in Faith PURPOSE is to be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop a creative, supportive fellowship, and to expand concepts of mission through participation in global ministries of the church. All women are invited to be a part of this Christian Fellowship.

United Women in Faith will meet for their Christmas Party Meeting on **Wednesday, December 3rd at 11:30 a.m. at Vic's Place.** Members and guests will be able to order off the menu or visit the soup & salad bar. There will be a short business meeting after the meal and **White Elephant Gift Exchange.**

All women of our church and their friends are invited to join. This is a great organization providing a lot of excellent services to our church.

JAM/MYF UPDATES

It is such a joy to serve the children and youth a meal each week. We would like to invite parents and the congregation to be a part of that experience. Please contact Pastor Bob or Melanie Daniels if you can help.

JAM & MYF will not meet on December 10, 24, or 31st. We will resume meeting on **January 7, 2026** once the youth have gone back to school.

CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BIBLE IN A YEAR December 2025

December 1 Ezekiel 25–27 Psalms 120:1–7
Proverbs 28:25–26
December 2 Ezekiel 28–30 Psalms 121:1–8
Proverbs 28:27–28
December 3 Ezekiel 31–32 Psalms 122:1–9
Proverbs 29:1
December 4 Ezekiel 33–35 Psalms 123:1–4
Proverbs 29:2–4
December 5 Ezekiel 36–38 Psalms 124:1–8
Proverbs 29:5–8
December 6 Ezekiel 39–40 Psalms 125:1–5
Proverbs 29:9–11
December 7 Ezekiel 41–43 Psalms 126:1–6
Proverbs 29:12–14
December 8 Ezekiel 44–46 Psalms 127:1–5
Proverbs 29:15–17
December 9 Ezekiel 47–48 Psalms 128:1–6
Proverbs 29:18
December 10 Daniel 1–3 Psalms 129:1–8
Proverbs 29:19–20
December 11 Daniel 4–5 Psalms 130:1–8
Proverbs 29:21–22
December 12 Daniel 6–8 Psalms 131:1–3
Proverbs 29:23
December 13 Daniel 9–12 Psalms 132:1–18
Proverbs 29:24–25
December 14 Hosea 1–4 Psalms 133:1–3
Proverbs 29:26–27
December 15 Hosea 5–9 Psalms 134:1–3
Proverbs 30:1–4
December 16 Hosea 10–14 Psalms 135:1–21
Proverbs 30:5–6
December 17 Joel 1–3 Psalms 136:1–26
Proverbs 30:7–9
December 18 Amos 1–4 Psalms 137:1–9
Proverbs 30:10
December 19 Amos 5–9 Psalms 138:1–8
Proverbs 30:11–14
December 20 Obadiah 1 Psalms 139:1–24
Proverbs 30:15–16
December 21 Jonah 1–4 Psalms 140:1–13
Proverbs 30:17
December 22 Micah 1–4 Psalms 141:1–10
Proverbs 30:18–20
December 23 Micah 5–7 Psalms 142:1–7
Proverbs 30:21–23
December 24 Nahum 1–3 Psalms 143:1–12
Proverbs 30:24–28
December 25 Habakkuk 1–3 Psalms 144:1–15
Proverbs 30:29–31
December 26 Zephaniah 1–3 Psalms 145:1–21
Proverbs 30:32
December 27 Haggai 1–2 Psalms 146:1–10
Proverbs 30:33
December 28 Zechariah 1–5 Psalms 147:1–20
Proverbs 31:1–7
December 29 Zechariah 6–10 Psalms 148:1–14
Proverbs 31:8–9
December 30 Zechariah 11–14 Psalms 149:1–9
Proverbs 31:10–24
December 31 Malachi 1–4 Psalms 150:1–6
Proverbs 31:25–31

December Missions

Adult Mission Offering Red Bird Mission

The Red Bird Mission has been providing ministries in this region of the Appalachian Mountains since 1921. Today the need remains critical in this isolated, rural distressed area. Chronic poverty, lack of jobs, poor housing, and rugged mountainous terrain provide obstacles to a fuller life for the residents of this area. Red Bird Mission and Clinic strives to meet these needs through ministry in five areas: Education, Health and Wellness, Community Outreach, Economic Opportunity, and Community Housing Improvement.

Children Mission Offering Liberia Scholarship

This months mission offering will go to the Liberia Scholarship Fund. We have been supporting 30 students (\$200 for each student) at the Tubman Gray United Methodist School in Liberia for several years. Each scholarship provides for school uniforms, supplies and teacher salary assistance. You may make a one time gift of any amount, give \$200 for a scholarship or make a pledge and give what you can through the year.



Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of

Robert (Bob) Sisson who passed away on October 18, 2025, Glendora Stout who passed away on October 26, 2025 and Virginia "Ginnie" (Donaho) Earhart who passed away on November 10, 2025.

Sharing Our Blessings with Others for October 2025

Havana

Total Mission \$6,643.25

Adult Mission
World Communion Sunday
\$150.00

Children Mission
UNICEF \$298.25

Bell Tower Repairs \$100.00
JAM \$50.00

Preacher's Aid Society \$20.00
Special Offering \$25.00
Toy Give Away \$6,000.00

Thank you for your generosity throughout the year to support our Mission Projects!!

Mary's Office Update

*Please notify the church
office at: 309-543-4725
or e-mail*

office@havanaumc.org
*of any person or persons
whom you would like placed
on or removed from the
prayer list.*

***Newsletter deadline
December 12th***

***Church Office will be closed
December 24th, 25th and
January 1st***

***Mary will be on vacation
December 24th and 29th***

The Messenger

United Methodist Church
Havana/Oakford
December 2025

Havana First UMC Advent

Hanging of the Greens
Sunday, November 30, 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Cantata
Sunday, December 7, 10:30 a.m.

A Christmas Story
Sunday, December 14, 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve
Wednesday, December 24th
5:00 p.m. Baby Jesus Birthday Party
Fellowship Hall
11:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion
Service

Oakford UMC Advent

Hanging of the Greens
Sunday, November 30, 8:30 a.m.

190th Celebration
Sunday December 14th
8:30 a.m. Worship Service
Breakfast Buffet following worship

Christmas Eve
Wednesday, December 24th
8:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion
Service

Baby Jesus Birthday Party
Epiphany Sunday
January 4, 2026

Community Food Pantry *December Item:* *Tissues-Any Brand*



*Please help us re-supply our Food
Pantry by donating the above
product.*

(Box located outside of Sanctuary)

Update Church Directories

We will be updating the church directory and need your help! If you no longer have a home phone or if you primarily use your cell phone, please notify the church office so we can update the directory with your **preferred contact information**.

Thank you for helping us keep our records current!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR TOY & CLOTHING GIVE-AWAY **Saturday, December 13th**



**CONTACT THE CHURCH
OFFICE OR LISA DIETSCH
FOR DETAILS ON HOW
YOU CAN HELP!!!**

ADVENT BOOK STUDY

**December 1st, 8th, 15th & 22nd
11:00 a.m.**

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”
An Advent to Christmas Pilgrimage
By: Andy Langford and
Ann Langford Duncan

**Havana First United Methodist
Church Fellowship Hall**

(Contact Pastor Bob or the Church Office to
order a book)

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Havana FUMC

Birthdays

Dec 2 Andrea Gamble
 Dec 4 Darrin Walker
 Dec 5 Collin Wilcoxon
 Dec 7 Scott Dietsch
 Dec 8 Cori Lippert
 Dec 9 Richard Lounsberry
 Dec 11 Trey Bergman
 Dec 11 Kaleb Layton
 Dec 12 Donna Sarff
 Dec 13 Jennifer (Daniel) Price
 Dec 16 Kaitlyn Strauman
 Dec 17 Riki Layton
 Dec 17 Eli Sheets
 Dec 18 Carys Daniel
 Dec 19 Susie Bearce
 Dec 20 Don Clancy
 Dec 20 Ramona Pfeiffer
 Dec 20 Carol Walker
 Dec 20 Andrew Brooks
 Dec 21 Lillie Smith
 Dec 22 Cheris Beaty
 Dec 22 Sarah Silva
 Dec 22 Judy Roch
 Dec 25 Denise Ray
 Dec 28 Alex Clancy
 Dec 29 Jason Layton
 Dec 30 Rita Badger

Anniversaries

12/05/1971 Dennis & Kris Skaggs
 12/10/1989 Graham & Kay Curtis
 12/26/1968 Ed and Jenny Edwards
 12/27/1969 Larry & Connie Montgomery
 12/29/1995 Victor & Christina Oney
 12/31/2023 Darrin & Charity Walker

Oakford UMC

Birthdays

Dec 1 Stihl Chalmers
 Dec 2 Shirley McCandless
 Dec 6 Lori Hill
 Dec 7 Sarah Riley
 Dec 8 Susan Short
 Dec 10 Jayden McGinnis
 Dec 10 Bryce Monroe
 Dec 12 Clayton Trueblood
 Dec 15 Justin Brooks
 Dec 16 Lisa Wilhoit
 Dec 17 Wes Boensel
 Dec 24 Gary French
 Dec 27 Jane Rebbe
 Dec 27 Neal Norris
 Dec 28 Chris Stone
 Dec 31 Myra McGinnis

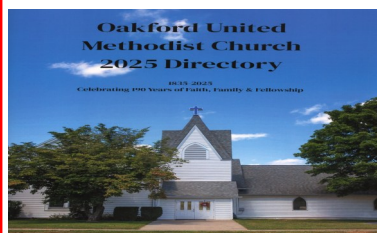
Anniversaries

12/11/1993 Matt & Becky Duncheon

Lunch Bunch

**January 11, 2026
 Los Charros**

RSVP to Church Office or Michelle Tibbs



**2025 Oakford United Methodist
 Church Directory
 Cost: \$8.00**

Available on Sunday mornings

You may also mail payment to the church office at P.O. Box 227 Oakford, IL 62673. Please add \$2.50 for postage if you would like your copy mailed.

The Messenger

**United Methodist Church
 Havana/Oakford
 December 2025**

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Upcoming Calendar of Events

for **Both** Churches

Every Sunday:

8:30 a.m. - Oakford UMC

10:30 a.m. - Havana FUMC

<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Weekly Events</u>
12/01		Registration Opens for Toy&Clothing Give-Away
12/03	11:30 a.m.	UWF Christmas Lunch/ Meeting at Vic's Place
12/07	10:30 a.m.	Christmas Cantata-Havana
12/11	6:30 p.m.	Finance Committee Mtg
12/13	8-10 a.m.	Toy&Clothing Give Away
12/14	8:30 a.m.	Oakford 190th Celebration
12/18	1:30 p.m.	Cancer Support Group
12/20	10:00 a.m.	"Crochet 4 Christ"
12/23	6:00 p.m.	Trustees Meeting
12/24	5:00 p.m.	Baby Jesus Birthday Party
		Havana
	8:00 p.m.	Candlelight Service
		Oakford
	11:00 p.m.	Candlelight Service
		Havana

Advent Book Study

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

December 1st, 8th, 15th & 22nd at 11:00 a.m.

Choir Practice

December 3rd, 10th & 17th at 6:00 p.m.

enTrust Praise Team Practice

December 28th at 4:00 p.m.

MYF & JAM

December 3rd & 17th at 5:00 p.m.

Toy Give-Away Workdays

December 4th, 5th, 8th, 9th, 10th, & 11th

Church Office Closed

December 24th, 25th & January 1st



DECEMBER USHERS

*Mike & Phyllis Hedden
Robert Williams
Melanie Daniels*

Weekly Prayer Topics

- Dec. 7 Encourage us to be generous throughout this Christmas season – so much so that it becomes a habit.
- Dec. 14 Open our hearts and enable us to share the Christmas story with others.
- Dec. 21 Please prepare our families for the blessings of the Christ child.
- Dec. 28 Help us to reflect upon this past year. Encourage us to reach out in the coming year.

Havana FUMC Christmas Cantata

**Sunday, December 7th
10:30 a.m. Worship Service**

"O Holy Light"

By Mary McDonald

**The Cantata will be
live streamed this year!!!**



DECEMBER Acolyte Schedule

December 7th: Mason Dietsch
December 14th: Emma Strauman
December 21st: Davis Snedeker
December 28th: Madelynn Snedeker

If you are unable to Acolyte, please trade with someone and let the church office know either by calling or sending us an email!!

Remember Our Shut-Ins



Clayberg Nursing Center
625 E Monroe St, Cuba 61427

Rosie Moore

Lodge at Manito
1303 S. East Ave, Manito 61546

Bette Lynn Apt. 102

Shirley Lynn Apt. 109

Mary Lou Stephens Apt. 129

Independence Village
1201 W Northmoor Rd., Peoria IL 61614

Portia Brown Apt. 327

At Home

Karen Short

PO Box 228

Oakford, IL 62673



Havana FUMC
"Crochet 4 Christ"
December 20th

2026 Newsletter Sponsors Reserve Your Month Now!

- You can sponsor a month **in honor of a loved one, for a special celebration, or simply to support the ministry.**
- Cost \$60.00
- Contact the church office to reserve your month today.



In Our Prayers

Havana: Gloria Bess; Lynn Coots; Kay Curtis; Debbie & John Duitscher; Nancy Elliott; Ann Funkenbusch; Don Graham; Buddy Hedden; Dana Hedden Glass; Robert & Carol Himmel; Kennedy Parsons; Jo Pedigo; Janet Roper; Kevin & Connie Roper; Shawn Sievers; Fred Stadsholt; Craig Stephens; Bob Turk Family; Aiden Walker; Rosemary Watson

Oakford: John Bell; Ron Burn; Renee Downing; Lisa Johnson; Rodney King; Betty Lynn; Doug McGinnis; Carol McHenry; Greg Matthis; Katie Nichols; Carolyn Parker; Kennedy Parsons; Joe Rumler; Linda Sandidge; Karen Short; Scott Smith; Susan Upton; Tim Welch; Lisa Wilhoit;

Bishop David Bard; Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai; The Church; Our Country; Those Grieving.....

PRAYER LIST UPDATE

All prayer requests will remain on the prayer list for 30 days. If you would like someone to remain on the list beyond that time, please contact Pastor Bob or the church office.

Thank you for helping us keep our prayer list current.



No Communion will be served on December 7th.

Communion will be served December 24th.

The Messenger

United Methodist Church
Havana/Oakford
December 2025

The Messenger

8

First United Methodist Church
101 S. Broadway St.
Havana, IL 62644

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Havana, IL 62644
Permit #4

MERRY CHRISTMAS

(Put Address Label Here!)

The Messenger

Published by:

First United Methodist Church
101 S. Broadway St., Havana IL 62644

Church phone: (309) 543-4725

E-mail: office@havanaumc.org

Website: havanaumc.org

Rev. Robert Herath - Pastor

Pastor's Cell Phone: (309) 252-1136

E-mail: revraherath@gmail.com

Mary Layton - Administrative Assistant

Published to keep the members and friends of Havana First United Methodist Church and Oakford United Methodist Church informed about its ministry within the world community. Please consider "sponsoring" a particular month by covering the mailing cost for that month. Sponsorship is \$60 per month.

December Newsletter Sponsored by:

The Congregation of the
Oakford United Methodist
Church as we share our
Christian love this Christmas
season.

