

# THE MESSENGER



February 2025

## Cherry Valley United

Rev. Mark Harkness, Pastor  
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***Our Mission:*** *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by loving God, connecting with others, and serving the world.*

### A Word From the Pastor

*Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible." (Mark 10:27 NRSV)*

Grace and peace in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Have you ever wished that something would go awry? Not as a burden to someone else, but in those things that matter to you? I have. Especially over the last month and a half, while driving – out of the blue a “Service Charging System Now” alert would display on my dashboard. Sometimes it would go away on it’s own. Other times, I click to clear it and it stays off, other times it stays on until my next drive. Do you know when it never came on? When I have it in the shop to be fixed. However, as of this writing, the alert hasn’t appeared since I had it evaluated at the shop two weeks ago.

As glad as I am not to get that alert, I have that lingering worry in the back of my head. Will the problem show up next while I’m towing a camper from deer camp 60 miles through rural roads? Will I get stranded? Why couldn’t – why won’t the alert come on when my truck is at the shop? Or why can’t it be more specific so that I can address the problem?

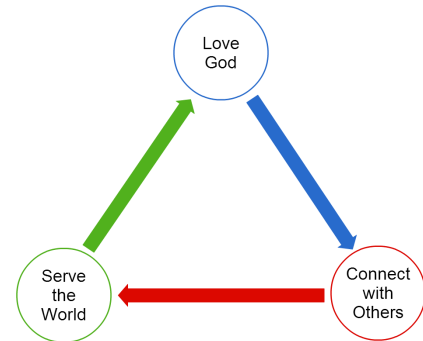
Allow me to correct myself: I didn’t really wish that my charging system warning would arise, I wished that I knew how to assure that my truck will be drivable. That warning light, merely, alerted me to the need to not take being able to safely drive my truck for granted.

Back in December, many of you received an e-mail sharing that the church was low on funds and that giving so far in the year had been substantially less than expenses. A “check giving” light popped up on your dashboard. Many of you responded to that alert, by giving to address the immediate need. We are grateful. But like my truck, the question lingers what needs to be done to assure not that utility bills and repairs get made – but that we continue to serve Jesus in this place to develop strong character among youth, to offer healing for those suffering from addiction, to offer comfort to those who grieve and those confronting terminal illness, to offer companionship to the lonely, to baptize persons into new life, and to grow in love of God through study, prayer and worship together.

The world is much more complicated than it once was. It used to be that I could check my own charging system by disconnecting components while the vehicle was running; now that would short out computers. Although leadership could report that we had experienced a shortfall, we can’t always explain the nuance of what caused that shortfall.

For the sake of transparency our budget is voted upon by the entire congregation during church conference and our financial reports are not secret. The only information that we don’t share is individual giving (only accessible by those who need to see it for recording and documentation purposes). We’ve strived to evaluate expenses eliminating some, including recently freeing ourselves from the microscopic fine print in a service contract.

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I am so grateful for the diligence that our leadership has approached this task: a task they've assumed to help this congregation thrive.

I can report that almost every pledge from our stewardship campaign in November represented an increase for the coming year. Not everyone who gives turned in a pledge card. But some quick math from counting how many people/households gave last year: a mere \$5 increase each (less than a Big Mac or most coffee options at Starbucks) would provide over \$11,000 of resources to do those things I've listed above; if we all take up the mantle together. For a few, that could be a challenge; but for most of us, it's achievable. Just think what \$10 or even \$7.50 would mean.

This congregation is alive! We have three lay led Bible studies weekly! We have a new acolyte in Loralie! Without disclosing particulars, souls have come for healing, because our doors were open.

With my truck, even though the technicians could see that fault codes had occurred, they weren't able to identify what happened. Neither they nor I know exactly what caused the problem or why it hasn't recurred as of this time. I wonder if maybe the simple act of evaluation – checking components and connections resulted in something as simple as tightening a loose connection.

Either a bit before – or a bit after – this newsletter is published, a follow-up email from December will be sent out. What I hope that you hear is that the church is still working, that when we put our trust in God all things are possible, and that when we each tend to simple things like just a few extra dollars a week rather than waiting for a warning light, we free ourselves to serve God and to bless others with confidence.

Your brother in Christ, ,

Rev. Mark Harkness

PS: As your pastor, so that you know I strive to follow all that which I preach: I do tith (salary and value of living in parsonage) as my minimum offering and my pledged increase for 2025 is more than the \$5/week suggested above.

### Dates to Remember

February 9	Scouting Sunday
February 11	6:00 pm Administration Board Meeting
February 14	Valentines Day
February 20	Presidents Day
February 19	Prayer Shawl Meeting @ Lucy Powell's
February 22	6:00 pm Scouts Blue & Gold Banquet
February 27	Secretary Leaves for Vacation



### Members & Friends

Sandra Baxter  
Glenn Carnine  
Barb Clucas  
Pat Gorsuch  
Dawn Harter  
Trudy Hunt

### Military Personnel

Gage Christensen  
Sean Conderman  
Dan Harter  
Wesley Harter

### Mission

Pastor Kim & the Next  
Generation Ministry

### Those Who Mourn

Patty Campbell Family  
Lori Rother Family



**PRAYER REQUESTS:** If you have prayer concerns that you wish to express, you may call or email the church office with your requests and the secretary will forward your requests to the church family.

For those in attendance at the Sunday worship services, we have a sharing of joys and concerns that is shared with the church family. If you request prayers but do not want the details of the prayers expressed openly, you may designate that you do not wish to share that part of your request.



### District prayer focus in February 2025

- Week of 2nd - CHADWICK: HOPE UMC & HICKORY GROVE UMC  
- Pastor Richard Ottens
- Week of 9th - ROCKFORD: CHRIST UMC  
- Pastors Caleb Hong, TK Lee & Jane Bradford
- Week of 16th - LANARK UMC - Pastor Marilyn Nolan
- Week of 23rd - ROCKFORD: CENTENNIAL UMC  
- Pastor Audrey Rochet

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" - Philippians 4:6*



## Scripture Readings

### **February 2, 2025**

Scripture: Psalm 71:1-6  
 Jeremiah 1:4-10  
 Luke 4:21-30  
 Message: "Hometown Boy"  
 [series: A Light to Enlighten the Nations #4]

### **February 9, 2025**

Scripture: Psalm 138  
 1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
 Luke 5:1-11  
 Message: "Called and Sent"  
 [series: A Light to Enlighten the Nations #5]

### **February 16, 2025**

Scripture: Psalm 1  
 Jeremiah 17:5-10  
 Luke 6:17-26  
 Message: "Fullness and Emptiness"  
 [series: A Light to Enlighten the Nations #6]

### **February 23, 2025**

Scripture: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40  
 Genesis 45:3-11,15  
 Luke 6:27-38  
 Message: "Unlimited Love"  
 [series: A Light to Enlighten the Nations #7]



## Methodist Women



The Methodist Women continue to meet on the second Sunday of each month after worship. Our group is small but dedicated to serving our church. At our last meeting, January 12th, we discussed ways in which we can continue to serve. Additionally, we discussed our plans for Valentine's day and the upcoming Lenten season. We plan to send Valentine greetings to our members and friends that we have not seen in some time. *Thank you to Terri Burritt for the beautiful hand made cards she made for us to send at Christmas time.*

We shared concerns about our families, our church, and our country. Sunday School is one of our big concerns and we need to consider how we can best serve the few children that we have in church.

The Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5th, which means that Shrove Tuesday is the previous day, March 4th. We have been in discussion about our traditional pancake supper that has been served here at Cherry Valley UMC for as long as most of us can remember, however, with our dwindling population, we are still undecided as to whether or not we will be serving the pancake supper. Watch this space and the weekly bulletins for more detailed information as the date approaches.

We were well pleased with our Christmas Cookie Walk success! We netted enough that we were able to contribute to the general fund which goes towards the needs of the church. Thank you all for your support of this program!

Our next meeting will be on February 9th after worship. Won't you join us? All women of the church are welcome. We need you...Your church needs you!



*"Women supporting women is the most powerful force for change in the world".—Ntozake Shange*

## Finance Committee Report

### December

Total Revenue	\$17,056.54
Total Expenditures	<u>\$14,508.82</u>
Net Revenue	2,547.72

### 2024

Total Revenue	\$149,308.13
Total Expenditures	<u>\$161,384.63</u>
Net Revenue	-12,076.50



*Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance*

—Eckhart Tolle—

## Lenten Bible Study

Pastor Mark will begin a 6 week Lenten Bible Study beginning March 10th. The times are as follows:

Monday morning 10:00 a.m. (New Milford)  
Wednesday evening 6:00 p.m. (Cherry Valley)

Books are \$16.00 each (also helps to offset the cost of DVD for study). In order to receive books on time, please let Pastor Mark know if you will attend by February 23rd.

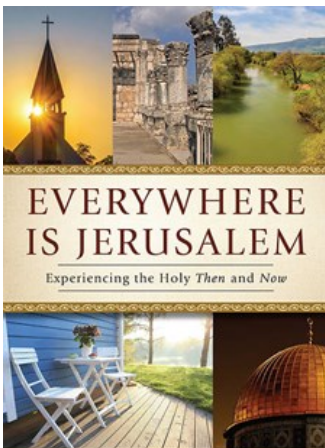
### Everywhere Is Jerusalem:

Experiencing the Holy Then and Now  
**Location matters.**

*Christianity isn't a batch of spiritual thoughts or metaphysical truths. It's a journey of real people with their feet on the ground in real places.*

*In Everywhere Is Jerusalem, James Howell takes you on a spiritual pilgrimage to significant places in the ongoing story of the Christian faith. You'll go from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, from the Jordan River to Assisi, and from the Sea of Galilee to Montgomery, Alabama.*

*Along the way, you'll discover the profound connections between biblical stories and the places they happened. You'll see how Christians throughout history have brought their faith to life worldwide, in their own cities and communities. And you'll find God calling you to bring your own faith to life right where you are, right now.*



James C. Howell

*Part travelogue, part Bible study, this book will take you on a spiritual journey to the places that are most important in our faith, and you'll discover that the most important place of all is the place where you are, right now.*

*There will be a sign-up sheet for the Lenten Study on the table in the sanctuary for you to indicate whether or not you wish to purchase a book and to designate which session you will attend. Look for the sign-up sheet beginning Sunday, February 2nd.*

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

# CELEBRATE!

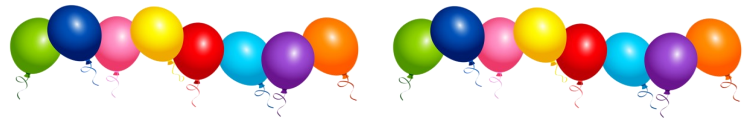
### Birthdays

- 3 Riley Sundberg
- 5 Mary Wilson
- 6 Matthew Gross  
Natalie Herold
- 9 Keith Burritt
- 12 Taylor Gross
- 17 Mary Lou Clevenger
- 19 Teaghan Brown
- 20 Mark Harkness
- 21 Judith Krunfus

- 23 Mark Snyder
- 26 Monica Gaten

### Anniversaries

No anniversaries for February



### Begin Ash Wednesday with Ashes

*Pastor Harkness will conduct a brief  
Ash Wednesday service*

*At 9:00 am on  
Wednesday, March 5th, 2025.*

*All are welcome to attend.*



## Prayer Shawl Group



The Prayer Shawl Group will meet on Wednesday, February 19th at 10:00 am for knitting, crocheting, conversation and lunch at the home of Lucy Powell.

Check the weekly bulletins or call the church office (815-332-5075) for Lucy's exact address. Call her at 815-904-9462 or email [lpowell530@yahoo.com](mailto:lpowell530@yahoo.com).



The next Administrative Meeting of the Council will be on February 11th at 6:30 pm. Check the SharePoint app for the agenda and other documents needed for the meeting.

## Congregational Care News

CVUMC now has complimentary CareNotes for you or someone you care about.

These easy to read pamphlets cover a broad range of topics impacting congregants and their families.

Take one for you and one for someone else. Let us know if you need CareNotes on a specific topic not covered.

In the church narthex, you can find CareNotes about aging adults, physical, spiritual and emotional issues.

In the fellowship hall, you can find CareNotes about teen and family issues.



## Rockford Rescue Mission Needs

### URGENT NEEDS

- Travel Size Body Wash, Shampoo, Men's Antiperspirant
- Razors
- Detergent
- Women's Underwear (All Sizes)
- Wash Cloths
- Napkins
- Paper Towels
- 8 oz. Foam Cups

### CLINIC

- Probiotics
- Claritin
- Vitamin C
- Men's & Women's Multivitamins
- Aleve
- Tylenol

### KITCHEN

- Drink Mixes
- Bottled Water
- Salt & Pepper
- Pasta Noodles
- Pasta Sauce
- BBQ Sauce
- Hot Sauce
- Canned Fruits & Vegetables
- Plastic Forks & Spoons

## Rock River Valley Food Pantry



### *Feeding Rockford One Meal At A Time*

Thank you for your continued support of the Rock River Valley Food Pantry. The pantry currently serves approximately 6,800 clients per month. You can help by bringing your non-perishable foods and placing them in the basket located in the foyer of the church.

### CURRENT NEEDS LIST

Canned Fruit	Applesauce	100% Juice
Canned Vegetables	Pasta and Rice	Cereal
Peanut Butter	Tuna	Soup

### PEANUT BUTTER ENDOWMENT

The Rock River Food Pantry also has a Peanut Butter Endowment program in which charitable contributions of property, assets or funds are placed. Endowments are created for non-profit organizations in support of a specific goal. The Peanut Butter Endowment was created to purchase food to distribute to our clients. Join in this valuable cause by making a one-time or recurring donation. You may go to the web site and view the brochure outlining the program and you can donate on line.

<http://www.rrvp.org/peanut-butter-endowment/>

## Greeter/Liturgist Sign-Up Sheets

### GREETER AND LITURGISTS...WE NEED YOU!

The Greeter and Liturgist sign up sheets for the coming months are on the clipboards on the table in the sanctuary.

Please look over the dates and select at least one Sunday in which you can take part in these very important aspects of the worship service. If you have never greeted or been a liturgist, speak with Juanita Barnes who will help you through the process.

**Being a greeter**—Your smile and the welcome that you extend to every person who comes into the church on Sunday can set the tone of a person's worship experience. It can also be the way in which that person perceives the church as a whole.

**A liturgist** actively shapes and leads the communal worship experience, fostering a deep connection with the congregation by guiding them through prayer and scripture, contributing to a richer spiritual life for the church community. Being a liturgist can, in turn, deepen one's own personal faith. What do you say? Can we count on you?

## Christmas Child Shoe Box Update

I am happy to report that our **53 boxes** for the Christmas Shoe Box ministry have been processed and are on their way to..... Mexico! In all the years that I have been able to track where the boxes go, we have witnessed this outreach allowing our love to be spread across the world; the Philippines, Columbia and now Mexico!

In the next few months, please keep an eye out for toys on clearance and for all the "Love" items available around Valentines Day. There will surely be some really cute clearance items from that holiday! I will put the collection basket in the narthex for your year-round donations. We don't stop thinking about our kids and grandkids once the Christmas holiday is over, let's keep collecting for this ministry year-round!

Thanks  
Terri Burritt, Project Coordinator

Below is a listing of items to look for each month.

**January** – look for after Christmas sales of toys, puzzles, books and pictures

**February** – look for stuffed animal toys, love related tee shirts and pajama sets

**March** – Look for spring related items

**April** – Look for Easter related stuffed bunnies and other stuffed toys and craft items

**May** – Look for Memorial Day sales on almost everything.

**June** – Hot weather items will be on sale such as sunglasses, hats, t-shirts,

**July** – More hot weather items such as flip flops, shorts

**August** – back to school items such as notebooks, pencils, erasers, glue sticks

**September** – Summer toys will be on clearance, such as frisbees, balls, yo-yos

**October** – look for cool weather items such as sweaters, socks, pajama sets

**November** – look for soft items such as coloring books with a Thanksgiving or Christmas theme, craft items, dry watercolor sets.

**December** – personal care items such as toothbrush, comb or brush, character adhesive bandages, nail clippers and file.

Of course, books and puzzles, notebooks and pencils, crayons and coloring books are always a welcome addition to the boxes.

## Our Missionary in Tanzania

Young Seon (Christina) Kim continues her mission to help bring secondary education to the people of Tanzania with the construction of The Global Mission Secondary School.

### DONATIONS:

You may send a check to:

Advance GCFA

P.O. Box 9068

New York, NY10087-9068

With the advance

number on the memo line

**Advance # 3022281**

Contact information for Young

Seon Kim

Telephone: +255 68 976 1708

Email: yskim1023@gmail.com

Facebook: Young Seon Kim

Kakaotalk: yskim1470

## Secretary's Vacation Time

I am going to be on vacation beginning February 27 and returning to the office on March 13th.

If you have any administrative items you need accomplished, please see me before February 27th, or if it is not urgent, see me after I return to the office.

I love you all.....but I will not be thinking about any work that needs to be done at the church while I am at Walt Disney World with the family!

I am looking forward to the daily 10 miles plus walking that we will do, all the hoards of humanity that we will encounter during our adventures and the hours that we wait in line to ride an attraction that lasts less than 3 minutes. Plus, paying an exorbitant amount for a bottle of water! I must be a glutton for punishment, because I make this trip every other year and....

I LOVE IT!

See ya on the flip side...

Nancy Laurent, Secretary



The Cub Scouts will hold their Blue and Gold Banquet in the fellowship hall of the church on February 22nd. They will be here on Friday, February 21st to set up the hall for the event. We wish them well as they progress through the ranks of the Scouts and as they continue their journey to becoming spiritually healthy and productive adults.

- Blue represents truth, spirituality, and loyalty
- Gold represents good cheer, happiness, and warm sunlight

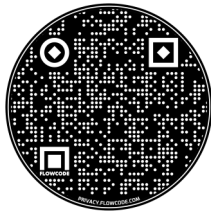


<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						<b>1</b> 8:30 am-3:30 pm Scout Training 9:00 am GA
<b>2</b> 10:00 am Worship	<b>3</b> 6:00 Scouts BSAG 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>4</b> 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	<b>5</b> 9:00 am Women's Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir Practice	<b>6</b> 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 9:00 am GA
<b>9</b> 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Methodist Women <i>Scouting Sunday</i>	<b>10</b> 6:00 Scouts BSAG 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>11</b> 6:00 pm Admin Board 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	<b>12</b> 9:00 am Women's Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir Practice	<b>13</b> 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	<b>14</b> <i>Happy Valentines Day</i> 	<b>15</b> 9:00 am GA <i>March Newsletter Items Due</i>
<b>16</b> 10:00 am Worship	<b>17</b> 6:00 Scouts BSAG 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study 	<b>18</b> 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	<b>19</b> 9:00 am Women's Bible Study 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Group @ Lucy Powell's Home 2:00 pm Choir Practice	<b>20</b> 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	<b>21</b> 2:00 pm Scouts set up for Blue & Gold Banquet	<b>22</b> 9:00 am GA 6:00 pm Scouts <i>Blue &amp; Gold Banquet</i>
<b>23</b> 10:00 am Worship	<b>24</b> 6:00 Scouts BSAG 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>25</b> 6:30 pm Scouts BSAB	<b>26</b> 9:00 am Women's Bible Study 2:00 pm Choir Practice	<b>27</b> 6:30 pm Cub Scouts <i>Secretary begins vacation</i> 	<b>28</b>	

**MESSENGER ITEMS ARE DUE TO THE SECRETARY ON THE 15TH OF EACH MONTH.**



Cherry Valley United Methodist Church  
112 South Cherry Street, P.O. Box 235  
Cherry Valley, Illinois 61016



Sunday @ 10:00 am—In-person Worship  
Live You Tube streaming at Cherry Valley  
United Methodist Church.

Contact us:

Office phone: 815/332-5075  
E-mail: [churchinthevalley@comcast.net](mailto:churchinthevalley@comcast.net)  
Web Site: [cherryvalleyumc.com](http://cherryvalleyumc.com)  
Facebook: Cherry Valley United Methodist Church



Pastor: Rev. Mark Harkness  
Deacon: Rev. Danice Loveridge  
Secretary: Nancy Laurent

Church Office Hours  
Tuesday – Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm