



*Sharing Christ • Uniting as family • Maturing in faith • Calling others*

# Sharon

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



FROM WHERE I SIT by Rev. Wally Carlson



We are just around the corner from Lent. A little early this year. As far back as I can remember, Lent has been a pretty big part of my life. There was a service to start Ash Wednesday (just an evening service; oddly enough, I did not have ashes imposed on my forehead until I was in my forties.)

There were special studies at the church. I particularly remember one on the Reformation. There were films - 16 millimeter, remember those? - and then group discussions. Kids and adults all mashed together.

And then there were always special worship services, every Sunday night - youth group meetings and then church. Just like Sunday morning. Years later came the shared services with other churches.

And then there was Good Friday. A community service that started at noon and lasted until three o'clock, referencing the hours Jesus was on the cross. Always based on the seven last words of Christ, there were seven different preachers, seven different choirs, and seven different sermons. Significantly, it was considered bad form to leave during the middle of the service. A person came at noon (and, as far back as I can remember, we always did), stayed until three, and left in silence. Even if you were a child (insert your own eye-roll here.)

And then there was music. Some of the darkest, heaviest music ever written. Stabat Mater (written by a variety of composers), the Seven Last Words (again, various composers), and various passion masses written by Haydn, Beethoven, Bach - oh, take your pick.

Lent was not a normal time nor was it a happy time. We were never encouraged to give up anything for Lent (except by our Catholic friends who wore their sacrifices as well-earned badges of honor) but it always seemed some of the light of life had gone away. It was all leading up to the crucifixion - and no-one ever told us (at least not so I remembered) that Lent did not have anything to do with crucifixion but with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing himself for his ministry.

Some of that stuff has gone out of style. Still, Lent needs to be seen as a special time, an extraordinary time. As Advent prepares us for the coming of the Christ Child, so, too, does Lent prepare us for the coming of our own work, our own ministry. Even if it were not liturgically mandated, it is still a good time for clergy to retreat and prepare to bring the good news of Jesus Christ. But it should not be just clergy alone.

This Lent, take some extra time to sit in prayer. By that I mean take some time to listen. Read a book or a Bible if that helps you get in the right frame of mind but then set all that aside and say, like Samuel, "Speak, Lord. I'm listening." And then be quiet. Still your mind, still your thoughts. And listen. You might not hear at first but, eventually, you will.

God is with you.  
Rev. Wally



*Visit us on the web at [sharondeatur.org](http://sharondeatur.org)*

# February 2024

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
<b>28</b> 9:00am - 10:00am Worship 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School for all ages 3:30pm - 5:00pm Troop 911 Meeting	<b>29</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 6:00pm - 7:00pm Pack 91 Meeting	<b>30</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Sharon Quilters 6:00pm - 7:30pm Women's PM Bible Study	<b>31</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 6:00pm - 7:30pm Men's Bible Study	<b>1</b> 9:00am - 10:30am Women's AM Bible Study	<b>2</b> <b>Groundhog Day</b>	<b>3</b>							
<b>4</b> <b>Holy Communion</b> <b>Scout Sunday</b> 9:00am - 10:00am Worship	<b>5</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 6:00pm - 7:00pm Pack 91 Meeting	<b>6</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Sharon Quilters 6:00pm - 7:30pm Women's PM Bible Study	<b>7</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 3:30pm Worship Meeting 6:00pm - 7:30pm Men's Bible Study	<b>8</b> 9:00am - 10:30am Women's AM Bible Study	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>							
<b>11</b> <b>Transfiguration Sunday</b> 9:00am - 10:00am Worship 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School for all ages	<b>12</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 6:00pm - 7:00pm Pack 91 Meeting	<b>13</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Sharon Quilters 6:00pm - 7:30pm Women's PM Bible Study	<b>14</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b> <b>Valentine's Day</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 6:00pm - 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service	<b>15</b> 9:00am - 10:30am Women's AM Bible Study 6:00pm - 7:30pm Men's Bible Study	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>							
<b>18</b> 9:00am - 10:00am Worship 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School for all ages 3:30pm - 5:00pm Troop 91/911 Meetings	<b>19</b> <b>Presidents' Day</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 6:00pm - 7:00pm Pack 91 Meeting	<b>20</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Sharon Quilters 6:00pm - 7:30pm Women's PM Bible Study	<b>21</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates 6:00pm - 7:30pm Men's Bible Study	<b>22</b> 9:00am - 10:30am Women's AM Bible Study	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 4:00pm Pack 91 Blue/Gold Banquet at Harristown Community Center							
<b>25</b> 9:00am - 10:00am Worship 10:15am - 11:00am Sunday School for all ages 3:30pm - 5:00pm Troop 91/911 Meetings	<b>26</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates	<b>27</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Sharon Quilters 6:00pm - 7:30pm Women's PM Bible Study	<b>28</b> 11:00am - 12:00pm Pilates	<b>29</b> 9:00am - 10:30am Women's AM Bible Study	<b>1</b> <b>World Day of Prayer</b>	<b>2</b>							



- 1 Evan Leeper
- 4 Mandi Podeschi
- 13 Monte Thornton
- 15 Imogene Shepherd

# SHARING CHRIST ...



### ★A friendly reminder:

Please make any donation checks out to **Sharon United Methodist Church** and name the receiving ministry in the memo.

### Missions Offerings

Reach out to those in need in our community and world by participating in the following offering opportunities:

#### February 4

- ♥ Monetary donations for **T.A.G. Fund**

#### February 18

- ♥ Third Sunday Offering for **Dove Financial Assistance**
- ♥ Children’s Noisy Offering for **Liberia Pastors**

### Now through March 3

- ♥ New Life Pregnancy Center’s **Change for Life Campaign**



Take home one or two baby bottles and return them on **Sunday, March 3**, filled with your pocket change. Put the bottles in a visible place in your home as a reminder to pray for the safety of mothers and their unborn children. Fill out the piece of paper inside the bottle BEFORE you begin filling. NLPC will send you a statement with your tax-deductible contribution. Your donation will support programs and materials used to minister to the lives of those who come to NLPC for help. Thank you!

# UNITING AS FAMILY ...



### Committee Meetings

#### **Worship**

Wednesday, February 7  
3:30 p.m.



**Wednesday,  
February 14**  
6:00 p.m.

### Prayer Chain

If you are not currently a member and would like to join, here’s how:

1. To join the **text chain**, text **@sumcprayer** to the number 81010 and follow the prompts.
2. To join the **phone chain**, please talk to Beverly Carmean (422-7115 or 433-1242)

# MATURING IN FAITH ...



### Sunday School Classes:

- Nursery**  
Lisa Landacre
- Elementary**  
Lori Leeper
- Jr. High-College**  
Mike Landacre
- Wesley**  
Mandi Podeschi
- Good News**  
Martha Leeper



## **Bible Studies Continue in February!**

- ★ **For Women:** *“For His Glory: Living as God’s Masterpiece,”* by Marian Jordan Ellis  
Tuesdays, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27; 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
Thursdays, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- ★ **For Men:** *“In the Footsteps of the Savior,”* by Max Lucado.  
February 7, 15, 21; 6:00-7:30 p.m.

CALLING  
OTHERS ...



**Scouting News**

- **Troop 91/911 Meetings**  
February 11, 18  
3:30-5:00 p.m.
- **Pack 91 Meetings**  
February 5, 12, 19  
6:00-7:00 p.m.



**Scout Sunday**

February 4  
Join us in celebrating the Scout members, leaders, and families.

**Pack 91 Blue/Gold Banquet**

Saturday, February 24  
4:00 p.m. at the Harristown Community Center.



**Serve the LORD with gladness!**

	February 4	February 11	February 18	February 25
<b>Ushers</b>	★Tom Leeper	★Tom Leeper	★Tom Leeper	★Tom Leeper
	Jarred Leeper	Jarred Leeper	Jarred Leeper	Jarred Leeper
	Ben Holmes	Ben Holmes	Ben Holmes	Ben Holmes
<b>Liturgist</b>	Martha Leeper	Jarred Leeper	Debbie Johnson	Lori Leeper
<b>Nursery</b>	Jenna Doty	Cindy Landacre	Cindy Landacre	Cindy Landacre
<b>Acolyte</b>	Joshua Leeper	Joshua Leeper	Joshua Leeper	Joshua Leeper

Our Tithes and Offerings to God				
	12/31/2023	1/7/24	1/14/24	1/21/24
Tithe	\$305.00	\$7,750.00	\$0.00	\$3,005.00
Loose Plate	\$52.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
S. School	\$15.00	\$6.00	\$0.00	\$6.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$372.00</b>	<b>\$7,756.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$3,011.00</b>
<b>Weekly Budget Need - \$2,211.00</b>				



**SHARON UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH**

4363 W. Center St.  
Decatur, IL 62522

 February 

*SHARING CHRIST, UNITING AS FAMILY, MATURING IN FAITH, CALLING OTHERS*