

THE Visitor

November 2025

Grace United
Methodist Church
318 N Center Street
Geneseo, IL 61254
309-944-4208
geneseogumc@gmail.com
geneseograce.org

The Slippers That Became Rugs

As an Asian pastor living in a cold country for the first time, I quickly learned that transition is real - not just in climate, but in culture, language, and even in the little things we often take for granted.

One chilly morning, I woke up freezing in the parsonage. My feet were cold, and I realized - I need slippers! After my office hours that day, a kind and beautiful teacher offered me a ride home. On the way, I asked if we could stop by a nearby store to look for slippers.

We first went to the Goodwill Store, but the lady helping me said, "There are no rugs here." I was a little confused - rugs? I thought we were looking for slippers. But she smiled and said, "Let's try another store."

At the next stop, she kindly guided me again - this time, to the rugs section - along with a trash can she thought I might need. After she helped me gather those, I went on my own to find what I really came for - slippers! I was happy to find a pair and took them home.

Three days later, a few people asked me, "Pastor, do you need rugs?" I was confused. "Why are they asking me that?" I wondered. But after four days of using my new slippers, I understood. The slippers had become rugs! 🤔

This little experience made me laugh, but also reflect deeply. Moving to a new place brings all kinds of changes - in language, expectations, and even in what we call things. In the Philippines, slippers are flip-flops. Here, slippers are rugs - but what I picked up was... closer to a cleaning rag!

Still, that pair of "slippers" was a blessing. It reminded me that even in confusion, God provides. Even when we misunderstand, there is grace. And even when things don't go as planned - kind people, warm laughter, and God's presence make every step lighter.

Transitions are never easy, but they are part of the journey of faith. Whether you're adjusting to a new country, a new season of life, or even just a new pair of "slippers," remember this:

God walks with us through every step - even the funny, messy, and unexpected ones.

Blessings,

Pastor Cel



Pastor Excelsis (Cel) Biteng
Email: celbiteng@gmail.com

318 N Center Street
Geneseo, IL

Sunday School:
Adult Classes 8:00am
Ladies Bible Study
10:00am

Worship Sunday at 9:00am
Kids Worship (Ages 4-11)
Sunday at 9:00am

stayCONNECTED



309 944-4208



geneseograce.org



geneseogumc@gmail.com



Geneseo Grace

2025 Offering Needed to Meet Monthly Budget

\$31,800.00

Received September 28 - October 26

\$27,644.60

General Fund

**YOUR GIVING MAKES
A DIFFERENCE.**



GOOD NEWS!

For your convenience we have added 3 ways to give online!

Scan the QR code below. This will take you to "Vanco". Follow the steps to give your gift.



Go to the church's website: geneseograce.com
Find the "Give Now" or "Donate" button
Follow prompts.

Download the "Vanco Mobile" app from your phone's App Store. Search for Grace UMC.
Select Grace UMC. Follow prompts.

You may continue to give as you currently do.
Save this information for future use.
Questions? Contact Jean Hahn

Prayer Requests

Adopted children & families

Kim Brake
Joseph Titus Countryman
Family Member
Nikki Haars
Mary Kintigh Family
Michelle Matheis
Patty
Ellen Rubino
Barb Sigwalt
Todd
Karen Venter

Brenna
Sue Chaffee
Ruth Ann Eaker
Cathy Gaudet
Hannika
Andrew Lord
Karen Myhre
Bev Radue
Steve Schulte
Sally Swanson
Powell's Brother
Connie Yager

Those in Assisted Living & Nursing Home:

Joyce Criddle Mary Lou Deane Bev Radue
John Riggs Connie Ryner Barry Snodgrass
Sarah Stees Carolyn Stenzel Rita Webb

Please contact Julie Dahlquist
with prayer updates.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Church Council Summary September 22, 2025

Mark Lohman chaired, and Coral Minge was the recording secretary. Minutes were approved and the Committee Chairs gave their reports.

George Farley, Chair of the SPRC, reported that the committee is working on the budget and staff evaluations. He said that \$2,705.00 had been donated by the congregation to Pastor Cel for moving expenses.

Missions, as reported by Karen Doy, donated \$500 to Chaddock Children's Home (given to Pastor Shawna Bunnell on Sunday, September 7) and \$2,000 to UMCOR. On Missions Sunday, September 14 following Worship Service, members of the congregation packed 130 student kits for school children. Karen and Steve Doy will deliver the bags to Midwest Missions.

The Council reviewed the 8/31/25 Financial Statements. These will be formally accepted at the Finance Committee meeting on October 6. **It was reported that the 3rd Quarter was \$45,000 less than last year's. It was pointed out that 4th Quarter is usually more fruitful.** George Farley moved and Dave Swanson seconded to accept the financial statements. Motion approved. Also announced, online-giving would begin soon.

Brian Humphries, Chair of the Trustees, reported that when Wirth came for their fall service to clean and inspect the **furnaces, two of the four experienced significant equipment failures and are not repairable because of units' age. These units were installed in 1989 and have far outlived their 20-year lifespan. The needed electronic components are no longer being manufactured, and Wirth does not have them in their emergency stockpile that we have been fortunate to use in the past. Wirth's quote reflects a cost of \$48,500. It was moved by Dave Swanson and seconded by George Farley to approve the installation of furnaces/air conditioners. Motion approved. (Four new furnaces and air-conditioning units have since been installed.) Because of a church member's fall on the west side entry ramp due to raised concrete, the concrete was repaired immediately. Additionally, the north sidewalk will need to be replaced soon, hopefully before winter, and handicap signs in the south parking lot need to be replaced. Steve Doy will make sure internet service is turned on at the parsonage. Many thanks to all who donated and helped ready the parsonage for Reverend Biteng and family. (The next SPRC meeting is November 5.)**

Tom Hitzhusen, Worship Committee chair, said we were blessed with wonderful visiting pastors during August and September. He also stated that three people have joined choir. (The next Worship Committee meeting is November 3.)

Evangelism Committee Chair Gayle Barnes reported that the committee met on September 15. The committee is designing a new church information pamphlet. They also discussed future plans (e.g. entering a float in the Geneseo Christmas Walk Parade, placing a prayer box on the north side of the building, placing a library box filled with **children's books in the green space north of the west parking lot**). George Farley moved to approve these plans and Lynne Haars seconded. Motion approved.

Nominations and Leadership Development met several times. Joe Mickley, Chair, reported that this will be a committee of transparency. They will work with the chairs of the various committees for their input. Instead of just calling, the committee will speak in person to encourage volunteers to be on a committee. This will be a continuous process beyond getting our annual report to Conference. Nominations Committee would like to thank all who have ever been on a committee. Members of this committee are Joe Mickley, Jane Scherer, Paula Venema and Mark Lohman.

Continued on the next page

Updated church directory will be printed for 2026. Members are reminded to look over their information and report any changes to the church office.

Dave and LaVon Swanson, Lay Members to the Annual Conference, encourage everyone to attend Annual Conference next year. They stated that they had a wonderful experience when they attended last summer.

The Church Council met for a special meeting on October 20 to approve the budget. The budget needed to be approved before the upcoming Charge Conference (November 16) and had to be submitted to Illinois Great River Conference by October 26. George Farley moved to approve, and Lynne Haars seconded. Motion approved. The budget is available in the office if anyone wants to view it. It is so nice to have a balanced budget. We are truly blessed.

At the October 20 meeting, Pastor Cel gave her vision for Grace Church. She will share more at our November meeting. It was decided to have a soup luncheon after the Charge Conference. All are encouraged to attend. We are excited to **enter this new chapter in our church's ministry.**

Next Council Meeting: November 17 @ 6:00pm

Peace through Christ,
Jeff Orton, Chair



Food needs:

juice, coffee, chips, sugar, spaghetti sauce, pancake mix, syrup, cake mix, flour, Jello, cooking spray, all kinds of soups

Non-food needs:

toilet paper, paper towels, men's body wash, toothpaste, toothbrush, cleaning supplies, baby wipes, diapers, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant

Clothing Room needs:

sheet sets all sizes, bath towels, washcloths, **men's clothing all sizes, children's** underwear

Date	Attendance	
	Worship	Sunday School
October 5	101	29
October 12	79	12
October 19	88	19
October 26	88	22



begins
November 30



Understanding the Charge Conference at Geneseo Grace UMC

On November 16, 2025, Geneseo Grace United Methodist Church will hold its Annual Charge Conference in the Sanctuary, right after the Worship Service. The conference will be conducted under the leadership of our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. James Fielder.

This important meeting is a time for reflection, renewal, and recommitment as we celebrate what God has done and plan for the year ahead.

What Is a Charge Conference?

In The United Methodist Church, the Charge Conference is the official annual meeting that connects each local church to the wider mission and ministry of the denomination. It provides oversight, guidance, and accountability for the life and work of the church.

Members of the Charge Conference are persons of Christian character and commitment, including the church council, retired clergy members, and youth representatives who meet the same standards as adults. The District Superintendent presides over the meeting, which must be announced at least ten days in advance.

Responsibilities of the Charge Conference

The Charge Conference reviews and evaluates the total mission and ministry of the church. Together with the pastor and district superintendent, it helps organize and administer the life of the congregation.

Key duties include:

- Receiving annual ministry and membership reports.
- Setting goals and objectives for the coming year.
- Electing church leaders for various ministry areas.
- Recommending and nurturing candidates for lay and ordained ministry.
- Approving pastoral compensation.
- Supporting and interpreting the importance of apportionments and conference benevolences.
- **Preserving the history and ongoing story of the church's ministry.**

The Charge Conference serves as a vital link between the local church and the larger United Methodist connection, ensuring that our mission, resources, and leadership align with the vision of Christ's ministry in the world.

An Invitation to Participate

All members and friends of Geneseo Grace UMC are invited to attend. Your prayers, presence, and participation make this moment of spiritual accountability and celebration meaningful.

Join us on November 16, 2025, as we gather with Rev. Dr. James Fielder to give thanks for the past year, elect our leaders, and dedicate our church once again to God's mission.

"Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus." – Colossians 3:17



Charge Conference

Sunday, November 16 at
10:00am (following
worship service)

in the Sanctuary

(Please note the time change, it
does not start at 1:30pm)

Soup Lunch will be served
following the meeting.



GENESEO MAPLE LEAFS

senior night



Liam Coleman (band)
Steve & Susy Coleman



Perry Farley (band)
George & Gail Farley



Cora Gorman (cheer)
Tom & Jennifer Gorman



Wyatt Neumann (player)
Corey & Ann Neumann



Janey Neumann (cheer)
Landon & Sharon Neumann



If you enjoy freedom,
thank a Veteran!
Tuesday, November 11

Operation Christmas Child
SHOEBOX PACKING PARTY!

Friday, November 14 - 4:00-8:00pm
Saturday, November 15 - 9:00am-2:00pm

You're invited to pack a shoebox! Drop by anytime.
Kingswood Church South Campus Building - 224 N. State Street, Geneseo
www.kingswoodgeneseo.org

IT'S BEGINNING
TO LOOK
A LOT LIKE
Christmas



Our Angel Tree will be up & filled with lots of angels the week of November 3! Grab one, two or more, and help make this a joyful Christmas for these special children & senior citizens. Please place unwrapped gifts under the tree (attach the angel tag to the correct gift).

**** Gifts must be turned in NO LATER than Monday, December 1 ****

bless all the dear children



Thanksgiving & Christmas Offerings



The Thanksgiving Offering will go to the Geneseo-Atkinson Food Pantry, whose Christian mission is to provide food, clothing, and short-term emergency assistance for families and individuals in need. The Pantry aims to serve the whole person, striving to positively impact the **guests' total sense of wellness** – economic, education, health, environment, and community – with the ambition of empowering the guests to live more functional, effective, and healthy lives. Last month the Pantry served 426 households, representing 1221 individuals.

The Christmas Offering will go to Red Bird Mission and Clinic, missions supported by the United Methodist Church. Red Bird Mission and Clinic have been providing ministries in the Kentucky 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.



Poinsettia order forms will be available as soon as we are notified with a price for each plant.





OWLS Lunch
Thursday, November 20
11:30am

Join us for lunch followed by a program given by the Geneseo Police Department on current scams. Sign up in the lobby or call the office.



**CLOSED
for
Thanksgiving
Nov. 27 & 28**

Coral will be out of the office
November 24 -26



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ
at Grace UMC - Geneseo, IL,

Everyone at Midwest Mission would like to send a heartfelt thank you for making your generous donation of 31 Student Kits on 10/21/2025. Your donation extends our outreach and makes a tremendous impact on so many lives. Thank you so much for blessing others through the ministry of Midwest Mission!

Yours in Christ,
The Midwest Mission Staff

OFFICE HELP NEEDED

Coral will be out of the office November 24, 25, 26 and we will need someone to answer phones.
This is a PAID position.
You can choose to be here all day or just morning or afternoon & you can do one, two, or three days. If you are interested, please contact Coral
309-944-4208
geneseoqumc@gmail.com



Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

~Psalm 107:8-9

We wish you & your family a very blessed Thanksgiving!



- 01 - Dave Swanson
- 05 - Hannah DeJohn,
Mark Shoemaker, Cody Sheffler
- 06 - Steve Depies
- 07 - Susy Coleman, Bodey Mickley,
Sue TeStrake
- 10 - Mark Koster, Bev Radue
- 12 - Jerry Hahn
- 15 - Kylie DeJohn
- 16 - Duane Haars,
Margaret Hitzhusen, Tony Simon
- 20 - Dave Johnson, Hilary Lohman
- 21 - Julie Blank, Dick Gradert,
Randy Rutherford
- 22 - Barry Snodgrass
- 23 - Mark Lohman
- 25 - Clarice Massengill
- 27 - Nancy Mickle
- 28 - Ethan Orton
- 30 - Libby Anderson, Jenni Lindberg,
Ron Obrecht



- 03 - Dathan & Betty Kerber (7)
- 05 - Mike & Ellen Rubino (37)
- 08 - Wendall & Helen Akers (61)
- 18 - Jerry & Jean Hahn (58)
Shannon & Carly Verbeck (8)
- 19 - Dean & Sharon Yoder (65)
Steve & Christina Zobrist (8)
- 26 - Tom & Margaret Hitzhusen (60)



You are invited to Music Mission 2025
 Sunday, November 9 at 5:00pm
 Bethel Wesley UMC
 1201 13th Street, Moline



Book Club

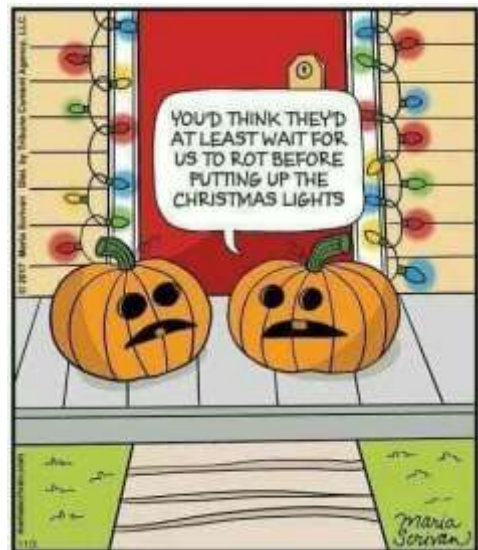
Meets on
 Tuesday, November 4
 1:00pm

Grace Book Club met on Tuesday, October 7, in the church library. The book, "Come Fly With Me" by Camille Di Maio created a lively discussion by the attending members, Joy, Sandy, Pat, Dee, Sharon H, LaVon, Gayle, & Sharon C. Our guest attendee was Pastor Cel. Next month the group will read "Mottys Vow" by Diane Shotten.



I want to thank everyone for the many cards, thoughts and prayers. They meant so much. You are a very caring church family.

Betty Kerber



Enjoy these photos
from October 8, 15 & 24



November

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<p>Regular Sunday Events</p> <p>8:00am - Adult Sunday School 9:00am - Worship 9:00am - KIDS Worship 10:00am - Women's Bible Study</p>						1
<p>2</p> <p>Regular Sunday Events</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8:00am - Prayer Group, Library</p> <p>6:00pm - Worship Committee Meeting, Chapel</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9:00am - Pearl Circle Meeting, Chapel</p> <p>1:00pm - Book Club, Library</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00am - Staff Meeting, Chapel 9:15am - GUMDROPS 9:30am -Worship Staff Meeting</p> <p>5:30pm - Staff Parish Meeting 7:00pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>	6	7	8
<p>9</p> <p>Regular Sunday Events</p>	<p>10</p> <p>8:00am - Prayer Group, Library</p> <p>5:30pm - Evangelism Meeting, Otterbein 6:00pm - Opal Circle Meeting 7:00pm - Finance Meeting, Otterbein</p>	11	<p>12</p> <p>9:00am - Staff Meeting, Chapel 9:30am -Worship Staff Meeting</p> <p>7:00pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>	13	14	15
<p>16</p> <p>Regular Sunday Events</p> <p>10:00am - Church Conference, in Sanctuary Soup Lunch following</p>	<p>17</p> <p>8:00am - Prayer Group, Library</p> <p>6:00pm - Church Council, Chapel</p>	18	<p>19</p> <p>9:00am - Staff Meeting, Chapel 9:15am - GUMDROPS 9:30am -Worship Staff Meeting</p> <p>7:00pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>20</p> <p>11:30am - OWLS Lunch, Otterbein</p> 	21	22
<p>23 / 30</p> <p>Regular Sunday Events</p>	<p>24</p> <p>8:00am - Prayer Group, Library</p> <p>CORAL OUT OF OFFICE</p>	<p>25</p> <p>CORAL OUT OF OFFICE</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:00am - Staff Meeting, Chapel 9:30am - Worship Staff Meeting</p> <p>CORAL OUT OF OFFICE</p>	<p>27</p> <p>CLOSED</p> 	<p>28</p> <p>OFFICE & BUILDING CLOSED</p>	<p>29</p>