

DECEMBER

Flame 2025

ALGONA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Message from Pastor Russ

We believe in prayer. We also believe in taking action steps. Allow me to share a mixture of prayer requests and action steps that are on my heart . . .

PRAAYER: LORD, HELP US TO HAVE SUNDAY SERVICES THAT ATTRACT FAMILY INVOLVEMENT. HELP US REACH NEW FAMILIES. Possible action steps: Start a "Children's Church" (Young children sit with their parents for the first part of worship and then leave for a special kids time); Involving kids in worship, i.e. acolytes, readers, special music, greeters, etc.; Having special Sundays, i.e. Youth led services, "Blessing of the Backpacks", Service project days, etc.; Explore whether or not a later start for Worship would be helpful for families.

PRAAYER: LORD, HELP US REACH OUR IMMIGRANT NEIGHBORS WITH THE LOVE OF CHRIST. Action steps: Continue to be involved in the Community and Cultural Connections group and specifically their English as Second Language offerings. I am finding some interest in starting a bilingual Bible study group. I have very excited about this.

PRAAYER: LORD, HELP US REACH THOSE WHO LIVE CLOSE TO OUR CHURCH BUILDING. I especially think of the families in the nearby apartment buildings. At this point, we don't have "a plan". The first thing to just get to know people.

PRAAYER: LORD, HELP US USE THE NATIVITY SCENE TO SHARE YOUR LOVE WITH THOSE WHO MIGHT NOT ATTEND A REGULAR CHURCH SERVICE. The Nativity Scene has been touching hearts for 80 years! We are especially appreciative of the faithful and tireless work of Marv Chickering. Since I've moved to Algona, I've wondered if we could use this fantastic resource to touch lives in An even deeper way. In these unsettling days, people are looking for peace. We are going to hold simple "Peace Services" at the Nativity Scene on Sunday evenings in Advent and on Christmas Eve (8 p.m. on each of these nights). There will be traditional hymns, quiet prayer and Scripture. The Nativity Scene itself reminds us of the power of Christ to bring peace in the midst of great conflict.

PRAYER: LORD, HELP US TO FIND A SIGNATURE MISSION PARTNERSHIP THAT LEADS TO ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS. There is great power in congregations having a relationship with a specific missionary. There are exciting missions out there that are empowering people to be economically self-sufficient. I'd love to have Algona UMC find a partnership that is a great fit for our congregation and community.

Please join me in these prayers. What are your prayers for the ministry of our congregation? What steps would you like to take part in to make these prayers a reality?

Jesus came to show God's love! Let's recommit ourselves to joining Him in mission.

Pastor Russ



United
Women
in Faith

December 4 : General Meeting @ noon

Luncheon served by The Charity & Friendship Circles.

Program: Christmas Celebration with Installation of Officers.

Bible Verse: John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Birthday's

Sara Guenther 12/16

Phyllis Rusch 12/19

Jodie Bormann 12/21

Diane Nall 12/24

Lisa Zeller 12/26

Amy Leigh 12/31



Ladies of Algona UWF gave MMDC a check for \$250. Dee Hellmich, Judy Samp, Lisa Rogoni(MMDC development staff), Sandy Ley, JoAnn Orthel were at MMDC November 17th to present this donation.

This Month Events



Men's Breakfast

In the Fireside Room
December 6
8am

Mat Weaving

In the Craft Room
Tuesday's
9-11:30am

Homestead Bible Study

Tuesday's 9am

Chicken & Biscuit Committee Thanks You!

We would like to thank everyone who worked or sold tickets to make it another successful year. We would also like to thank The Chase Family for donating their Coleslaw Dressing. Thank You Everyone!

Hospitality News

The SERVE SHELF is the Mission of the Month!
We continue to thank you all for your generosity.

Missions

The Food Pack was a success! We packed 40,000 meals !! 10,000 Meals staying right here on our SERVE Shelf!

Thank you to all who helped with this years Food Pack Event! God Bless you ALL!

Packing Day for Operation Christmas Child was November 12! Together we packed boxes!

The Samp's and Sandy Ley went to Illinois for MMDC Week on November 16-22.

Judy will have an article next month in the Flame.



This Month Events



Van Buren Bible Study

Tuesday's 10am



Prayer Devotions

In the sanctuary.
12 noon
Every Tuesday



The Vine

Meal 5:30
Bells, Christmas Program Practice,
Confirmation 6:15pm
Choir & High School Youth Group
7pm



Would you like to become a member of Algona First United Methodist Church?

We welcome new members at any time of the year. However, we are extending a special invitation to formally join the congregation on June 10 or 11, 2026. Members are generally received in two ways: Profession of Faith or Transfer from another Congregation. Please talk to Pastor Russ if you have questions and / or are interested. His cell is (507) 600-9155.

Odds and Ends from Pastor Russ

Sundays, December 7, 14, 21 & Christmas Eve, 8 pm – Pastor Russ will lead a simple time of worship at the Nativity Scene. Traditional carols, prayers and Scripture will focus on seeking God's peace for our lives, our nation and our world.

Community Christmas Eve Observances:

Tuesday, December 23, 10 am at Homestead

Tuesday, December 23, 10 am at Van Buren.

Wednesday, December 24, 1:30 pm at Good Samaritan

Wednesday, December 24, 5 pm – Christmas Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 24, 8 pm – Peace Service at Nativity Scene

This Month Events



Tacos 4 Tots

December 1

Fellowship Hall 4-7pm



Santa's Workshop

December 6

Fellowship Hall



Paper Magnolia's

December 11 ~ 1-3pm

December 15 ~ 10-12 noon

In the Craft Room

Christian Ed News

Kids Club

The Kids have been going through a series called "BLESSED!"

They will be practicing on Wednesday Nights for the Christmas Program.

The Christmas Program is December 17 @ 6:30pm. All are invited! Please RVSP for the catered meal @ 5:30pm

Confirmation

Save the date!

Confirmation Sunday is May 3 @ 9am

A small reception will be held after church.

High School

They will be making Care Packages for our friends in the Algona Manor, Good Sam, Van Buren, Homestead and Eastland Apartments.

Acolyte Schedule

December 7- Eizley Friedrich

December 14-Hayden Mortensen

December 21-If you are available let Kim know.

December 28- Aubrey Menning

Vine Meal

December 3-Rose and Jean

December 10- Men's Group

December 17- Catered by AK Chrome

\$10 /person suggested donation.

**NO VINE ON
DECEMBER 24 & 31, 2025**



Birthday's

Another year older is also another year of learning to pray, to love, and to feel God's grace. Here's to many more!

Sodie Bormann 12/21

Emily Walker 12/21

Amanda Anderson 12/24

Diane Nall 12/24

Morgan Kelly 12/28

Hallie Lovstad 12/28

McKenna Brown 12/29

Elise Guenther 12/29

Brad Hicks 12/29

Claire Radmaker 12/29

James Wartick 12/30

Amy Leigh 12/31

This Month Events



Nativity Scene Hosts

The Whole month of DECEMBER!

Sign ups available in the office or in back of church on the weekends!



Toys 4 Tots

December 20

in the Fellowship Hall



Children's Christmas Program

"JOY!"

December 17

6:30pm

In the sanctuary

Missions

MMDC Trip 2025



Top photo- team members for week were Bruce Dykstra, Tim Samp, Mike Orthel , and Rick Hellmich Sandy Ley, Judy Samp, JoAnn Orthel, and Dee Hellmich.



Packing meals for
Jamacia!



Missions

MMDC Trip 2025



Student Kits



Judy and Dee move donations.

Tim and Rick worked in the duplex housing to install shower.



Mike and Bruce help unload donations.

Finance

Message from the Finance and Stewardship Committee

"Honoring the Past and Securing the Future"

The finance committee wants to take this opportunity to say thank you to our congregation for your support of our 2026 stewardship campaign. "Harvest Sunday" was successful. We took time to thank God for the resources we received in 2025. Then prayed for his support and guidance in 2026 as we continue to do his work by giving our time, talents, and resources.

However, the 2025 stewardship campaign is not over. We have one more month. This church has been very fortunate to have a congregation that comes through and meets the financial needs of the church. December is always our best giving month. Last year, we exceeded expectations and had the second-best giving total in December in the last ten years! This allowed us to meet our budget needs for 2024 and end with a balanced budget! It is our hope that we can finish strong again in 2025 by meeting our budget needs through our congregation's generous financial support.

In 1899, this church was dedicated. It still stands today. There are not a lot of buildings that still stand over 125 years. Old buildings are either torn down to build new or left standing until they deteriorate from neglect. Neither one describes this church. Over the years, those before us have made the effort and commitment to update and remodel this church. Past members looked at the impact this church had on its membership, the community, and the world in carrying out the mission of God. They faithfully invested their time, talents, and resources to support this church.

That is why the Stewardship and Finance committee chose to look back and honor those before us and focus on securing the future for those ahead of us. The hope is that our congregation today has the same faith and drive to continue the work and mission of this church in the future.



| Column1 | Income | Expenses |
|-------------|------------|------------|
| 1st Quarter | 82,828.20 | 77,022.64 |
| 2nd Quarter | 57,148.41 | 72,207.67 |
| 3rd Quarter | 81,129.52 | 67,660.58 |
| October | 18,298.58 | 22,002.76 |
| Year To | 239,404.71 | 238,893.65 |
| | | |
| Difference | 511.06 | |
| | | |

**We need Hosts for the
Nativity! Sign up is in the back
of the sanctuary on weekends
and in the office during the
week.**



**You still have time to order a
poinsettia. Orders are due
Monday, December 1!**

**Color: Red, Maroon, Winter
Rose.**

Cost \$23

**You can call the office, stop
by or sign up in the back of
the sanctuary.**



Connect with us!



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