

# HAPPY New Year

REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS; AND AGAIN I SAY, REJOICE.

PHIL 4:4



## January 2025

Greetings, Sterling Wesley family,

Happy New Year! As we enter 2025, I pray that our church is inspired by the Hebrew word (חַיַּיִת *Hai*), meaning "life," to guide our theme for the year. This powerful word invites us to reflect on three meaningful dimensions of our faith journey:

**Hi** – We are called to embody the love of Jesus by warmly greeting our neighbors and extending true hospitality. Each encounter is an opportunity to share Christ's welcoming spirit, fostering fellowship and community. Through small gestures of kindness and openness, we can make a profound impact in reflecting God's love for the world.

**Hai** – (חַיַּיִת) This word reminds us of God as the Creator and sustainer of all life. We celebrate the sacredness of life, recognizing our connection to God's life-giving breath. This aspect of our theme invites us to cherish the beauty of creation, honor the divine spark within each of us, and live with gratitude for the gift of life itself.

**High** – In humility, we acknowledge God's sovereignty as the One who reigns above, holding all creation in God's care. This recognition invites us to trust God's guidance and grace as we navigate life's joys and challenges. Living humbly before God keeps us rooted in faith and dependent on God's wisdom and strength.

This year, our ministry will continue to focus on four foundational aspects of a missional church: Word, Education, Fellowship, and Service.

**1. Word** – Let us immerse ourselves in the Word of God, allowing Scripture to shape and inspire our daily lives.

**2. Education** – Through Bible studies, small groups, and learning opportunities, we grow in understanding and strengthen our faith.

## Church Events

Tues/Thurs– Exercise Class @  
4:00 PM @ Fellowship Hall

Tues– Fiber Group @ 2-3:30PM

Wed– Bible Study @ 9:30 AM  
Fireside Room

Sat– Men's Bible Study @  
8:00AM Fireside Room

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### 1/1/2025– Happy New Year!!

1/5 – Path Forward, Day of  
Grace after 10 AM Service

1/5 - Take down Christmas  
Decorations between  
services @ 9:00 AM

1/9 – Greeting Card Ministry  
@ 9:30 AM  
Fellowship Hall

1/16 – Ladies Luncheon @  
11:30AM @ A's Kitchen

**1/20 – Martin Luther King Jr.  
Day**

3. **Fellowship** – Building relationships within our church community reflects the unity and love of Christ.
4. **Service** – Serving others with compassion and justice allows us to extend God’s grace beyond our walls.

Our annual ministry calendar, which you find in the first Sunday’s insert, reflects this balance in our ministry in a macro view, offering opportunities to engage in vibrant ministry. With these four aspects and three meanings of “*Hai*,” we are called to embrace radical hospitality and divine friendship. We embody God's grace and love by moving beyond our comfort zones and opening our hearts to all. We form a community rooted in trust, grace, and joy by deepening our connections with God and one another. Together, these practices embody the inclusive and transformative power of Christ’s presence among us.

Let 2025 be a year of vibrant faith and joyful ministry as we live out *Hi, Hai, and High*. Together, we will continue to share God’s love and make disciples for the transformation of the world.



### **Appreciation Letter**

I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude for your understanding and support as I prepare for an important surgery on January 17th. During the recovery period following the surgery, I will be on leave for nine weeks. While this time will undoubtedly be a journey of healing and rest for me, I am reassured that our church family is in good hands.

We are blessed to have three wonderful pastors—Rev. Mike Jones, Rev. Julie Bunt, and Rev. Rosa Lee—who will lead our worship services and respond to pastoral emergencies during my absence. Their pastoral hearts in serving our congregation reflect the love and grace of Christ. Their contact information will be available in the bulletin and through the church office for any needs.

Your prayers, encouragement, and understanding mean the world to me. Knowing that such a caring and faithful community surrounds me gives me strength and peace as I step into this season of healing. I look forward to returning to ministry with renewed energy and joy.

May God’s blessings continue to guide and sustain us all.  
Rev. Paul H. Lee

# LET US WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



**Bonny Brown**

**Tim Mussmen**

**Arianne Cravatta**

**Jeanette Rhodes**  
**Amber Celletti** **Rebecca Allen**

## WORSHIP SCHEDULES

### January 8am

Door Greeter(s)	Usher/Acolytes	Liturgist
1/7 Lynn Majewski	Rebecca Tieman/Shannon Klausing	Nancy Pitsch
1/14 Lynn Majewski	Rebecca Tieman/Shannon Klausing	Nancy Pitsch
1/21 Steve & Mary Downes	Rebecca Tieman/Shannon Klausing	Mary Downes
1/28 Randy Clodfelter	Rebecca Tieman/Shannon Klausing	Pam Clodfelter

### January 10am

Door Greeter(s)	Usher/Acolytes	Liturgist	Matthew Meetings
1/7 Frank & Janne Rausa	Andy Pitsch, Frank Rausa Steve Lopez, Bill Parker	Nancy Pitsch	Happy New Year No Class today!
1/14 Aaron & Jovie Flick	Devon & Remy Flick Steve Lopez	Aaron Flick	Nancy Pitsch Communion w/kids
1/21 Jan Davey	Andy Pitsch Steve Lopez, Bill Parker	Jeff Davey	Nancy Pitsch
1/28 Eric & Kala Allen	James Allen, Jaxson Williams Steve Lopez, Bill Parker	Justin Allen	Jaime Greenfield

# Thank You & Announcements

## Greeting Card Ministry,

Will be meeting on Thursday,  
January 9th at 9:30 AM in Fellowship Hall.  
Come Join the fun!!! All are welcome to  
attend!!! Hope to see you there!!!



## The Wesley Lunch Group,

Will be meeting on Thursday,  
January 16th at 11:30 AM  
@ A's Kitchen



Dear Wesley United Methodist Church,

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks for your generous donation this Thanksgiving. Your kindness makes a world of difference, and we are truly grateful for your commitment to our community! Wishing you a joyous Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Angela Schneider  
Sterling Township

**On Sunday, January 5th,  
between the 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM services,  
we will take down the Christmas decorations.  
We encourage everyone to join us.  
The more people who participate,  
the easier it will be!**

## Church Finance Report

	October, 2024	November, 2024	Year to Date (by Oct)
Offering (Income)	\$11,301	\$16,147	\$177,796
Expense	\$18,977	\$15,741	\$202,324
+/-	-\$7,677	+406	-\$24,527



**PATH FORWARD  
DAY OF GRACE**

**JAN, 5 (SUN), 2025**

**AFTER THE 10 AM SERVICE**

- ANNUAL GATHERING AND DIALOGUE**
- EXCHANGING FELLOWSHIP AND INSPIRING IDEAS**
- LIFT STERLING WESLEY FAMILY IN PRAYER**



**WESLEY MEN'S GROUP  
10TH ANNIVERSARY**

*Awesome men of God walking together  
in faithful disciple journey with Christ.  
Congretulations, all!*



**NO SECRETS MEN'S CONFERENCE** **FEBRUARY 1, 2025**

**RESCUED**

COLLEGE/AGE 18-34

Sterling Wesley UMC sanctuary  
8:00 am to 1:00pm, Feb. 1, 2025 (Sat)  
Snacks will be provided

*Sterling Wesley umc is a site host of the Conference*



# CHRISTMAS PROGRAM





# UGLY SWEATER SUNDAY





# BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE



# CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE





## Worship Schedule



- 5th- Epiphany Sunday  
Luke 2:41-49  
Where Would I Be?
- 12th- Deuteronomy 28:1-14 , Galatians 5:16-26  
Promises and The Life We Want
- 19th- Jeremiah 29:11-14, Chronicles 15:2b  
Prayer Is the Start
- 26th- Hebrews 10:19-25, Acts 2:42-47  
Worship Leads to Love and Good Deeds

- |      |                   |      |                  |      |                        |
|------|-------------------|------|------------------|------|------------------------|
| 1/1  | Joan Partridge    | 1/12 | Matthew Taylor   | 1/22 | Mitchell Clodfelter    |
| 1/3  | Norma Church      | 1/13 | Molly Papoccia   |      | Alice (Cathy) Williams |
|      | August Johnson    | 1/14 | Christie Freas   | 1/24 | Antonio Castaneda      |
|      | Steve Michel      |      | Michael Quick    | 1/26 | Darrin Driscoll        |
| 1/4  | Linda Dirks       | 1/16 | Toby Hodges      | 1/27 | Bella Styles           |
| 1/5  | Joshua Greenfield | 1/18 | Reid Blackburn   | 1/30 | Lynn Hammer            |
| 1/8  | Joe Gatz          |      | Ryan Blackburn   |      | Lexi Hinrichs          |
|      | Carol Shaw        |      | Bowen Mallhi     | 1/31 | Wendy Fitzanko         |
| 1/11 | Susie Cedro       | 1/20 | Randy Clodfelter |      |                        |
|      | Melissa Freas     |      | Janne Rausa      |      |                        |



## Anniversaries



- 1/6 Jon & Christies Freas      1/28 Edd & Marianne Rosser

## Missions Corner

Thank you for your contributions to **LOOSE COINS** in the month of **December** we were able to raise **\$ 157.48** for **LOAVES & FISHES**.

**Christmas Envelopes** also contributed **\$820.00** to Loaves & Fishes/ UMCOR Disaster Relief Fund.

**Fifth Sunday** in **December** contributed **\$25.00** to **Native American Ministries**

**LOOSE COINS** for **January** is **Rev. Jane Eesley** a missionary with General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. She serves as advocacy coordinator of the Methodist Liaison Office in Jerusalem. Jane earned Master and Bachelor of Arts degree in English literature at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, and a Master of Divinity degree at Garrett-Evangelical Theology Seminary, also in Evanston. She most recently served as senior pastor of Christ United Methodist Church, Rockford, Illinois.

**January** we will be collecting **Laundry Detergent** for pantries & travel-sized toiletries.

# Sterling Wesley United Methodist Church

2200 16<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Sterling, IL 61081

## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Wesley United Methodist Church  
Phone: (815) 625-1968  
Website: [www.sterlingwesley.org](http://www.sterlingwesley.org)  
Email: [office@sterlingwesley.org](mailto:office@sterlingwesley.org)

*Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors*

Join us for in-person Sunday services  
8:00 am and 10:00 am.

We will continue to Livestream worship  
on Facebook at 10 a.m.

Find us on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/SterlingWesleyUMC>

## Mission Corner

Sterling Wesley UMC has always been a mission-minded church. The purpose of this space is to keep the congregation informed of our various mission efforts.

**We currently are receiving:**

**\*January's** collection for local pantries is **Laundry detergent.**

\*Travel-sized toiletries

**\*Loose coins** for **January** will benefit **Rev. Jane Eesley :**