GATHER AROUND THE TABLE—AND THE TREE!

Join us at First Church on Sunday, November 29, immediately after worship for a family meeting, potluck, and Christmas tree decorating! Bring a dish to share and an ornament that symbolizes your family to add to our church Christmas tree. Your ornament might reflect a favorite memory, a meaningful tradition, or something you enjoy together.

Sharing a meal gives us time to catch up, meet someone new, and strengthen the relationships that make us a church family. As we gather for conversation and decorate the tree, we'll celebrate the many people and stories that belong within the Body of Christ. Whether you've been part of this congregation for decades or have only recently joined us, we hope you'll stay and participate. There's a place for you at the table!

THE TEAM BEHIND THE SOUND & SCREEN

A lot happens behind the scenes to help worship come together each week. The music, prayers, scripture, and message all matter, and so does the work that helps everyone hear, see, and take part. Our tech team gives their time and attention so worship can be shared clearly with people in the sanctuary and with those watching online.

Ken Draves is at the sound booth each week, helping make sure the service can be heard and managing the PowerPoint that guides us through the worship. Gary Poole works at the video station, keeping the service on screen for those gathered in the room. Their work takes focus throughout worship, even when most of us barely notice it—which is often a sign that everything is going smoothly. Brenda Chaffee's work happens after the service. Each week, she uploads the worship video to YouTube so people who follow us there can watch. That gives folks another way to connect with our congregation and take part in worship, even when they can't be with us in person.

We're grateful to Ken, Gary, and Brenda for the care and consistency they bring to this ministry. Their work helps make worship welcoming and accessible, week after week. Thank you for sharing your time and gifts with our church.

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS: ADOPT A FAMILY

This Christmas, our church is participating in Christmas Blessings: Adopt A Family. We'll be helping two local families with six children between them. In one household, a parent cares for a child with special needs and takes part in the child's regular therapy appointments. Both families have little room in their budgets for gifts this year. Together, we can ease that worry and give the parents the joy of watching their children unwrap something picked just for them.

Information is posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Please consider choosing one requested item and returning it unwrapped by mid-December. If you'd enjoy shopping with someone, invite a friend or bring the kids and let them help choose a gift.

Once the gifts are in, we'll check both families' lists, fill in any gaps, and gather for a wrapping day. We want all six children to have something they'll be excited to open on Christmas morning. Thank you for helping make that happen!

What's Happening

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29
9AM - Worship @ Paris (North) Campus
10AM - Worship @ First Church (Downtown) Campus
11AM - UMMMC Family Meeting & Potluck @ Downtown Campus

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1
9AM - Director's Meeting @ Downtown Campus

WEDNESDAY,DECEMBER 2
10AM - Choir Rehearsal
11AM - Planning Meeting @ North Campus
11:30AM - Good Company @ Big Rapids Public Library
12PM - Table Talk @ Downtown Campus

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3
5:30PM - Community Dinner @ Downtown Campus

ADULT CHRISTMAS PARTY – DECEMBER 12

Mark your calendars! Our Adult Christmas Party is coming up on Saturday, December 12, and we hope you'll plan to join us! The Christmas season is a wonderful opportunity to gather with friends, enjoy some fellowship, share a few laughs, and celebrate the joy of the season together. RSVP by signing up in the Fellowship Hall at the Downtown Campus or contacting Barb in the office.

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS EVE WITH US

Join us on Christmas Eve as we gather to celebrate the birth of Christ. Both services will include candlelight, offering a quiet and meaningful way to share the light of the season together. The service at our North Campus begins at 5PM, and the service at our downtown campus begins at 7PM. The downtown service will also include a celebration of communion. We hope you'll join us and bring family and friends. All are welcome.

DECEMBER SPECIAL GIVING: COMMUNITY DINNER

This December, our Special Giving focus is the Community Dinner Ministry @ our First Church Campus. A shared meal can do more than fill a plate. It gives people a chance to sit together, enjoy good food, and experience the welcome of a caring community. The Community Dinner Ministry helps create that welcome at First Church. Every meal offers an opportunity to make room for connection and to remind our neighbors that they are valued. It's a practical way to live out our call to care for one another. Your December gift will support this ministry and the work of bringing people together around the table. Thank you for giving generously and helping make this ministry possible.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Barbara Erb - Director of Administrative Services
barbara@ummecosta.org - (231) 796-7771 ext. 1

Kathy Bell - Director of Congregational Care
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Paden Clevenger - Director of Family Ministries & Community Outreach
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Linda Rinehart - Director of Choral Music
linda@ummecosta.org - (231) 631-4380

Rev. Jeremy Wicks - Executive Pastor
jeremy@ummecosta.org / (231) 796-7771 ext 2 / (231) 224-6545

Week of November 29 - December 5

Family News



the weary world rejoices



UNITED METHODIST MINISTRIES OF MECOSTA COUNTY
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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE HOURS: TUES - FRIDAY, 9AM - 3PM
PASTOR AND MINISTRY STAFF AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT

NORTH CAMPUS - PARIS
109 Lincoln St
Paris, MI 49338
ummecosta.org/paris

Worship Gathering in-person
Sundays @ 9:00AM

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS - FIRST
304 Elm Street
Big Rapids, MI 49307
bigrapidsfirst.org

Worship Gathering in-person and
live online, Sundays @ 10AM
www.facebook.com/brfumc

Services Archived Weekly:
www.youtube.com/@brfumc

Order of Worship - November 29, 2026

"This is the Day" Call and Response - *Gordon Mallett*

Welcome & Announcements

Musical Meditation - *Ed Mallett*

*** Unison Prayer**

God of hope, we come carrying the weariness of the world and the longings of our own hearts. Meet us as we are. In this season of waiting, help us notice the light already breaking through. Quiet the voices of fear, awaken us to your presence, and prepare us to become signs of hope for one another. Gather us into worship and renew us for the work of love. Amen.

*** Hymn**

Lighting the Advent Candles (Reader / *People*)

In this season of Advent, as we look forward to Christmas, we take time to celebrate and to remember. On this, the first Sunday, as we light the first candle, we celebrate hope: hope for a better world and a better tomorrow. We also remember that we are God's instruments of hope here on earth, and it's up to us to spread the message of hope.

Most merciful God, we thank you for the hope that shines like a star in the night. With your promise, we can look forward to a better tomorrow. Fill our hearts with the love that hope brings to all humankind during times of darkness. In your name, O Lord, we pray. Amen.

Praises and Prayers
Prayers and Praises of the People
Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer

Scripture Reading - Romans 5:5 & Romans 15:13
The word of God, for the people of God.
Thanks be to God!

Hymn

Message - *"A New Hope"*

*** Doxology**, UMH 95

*** Hymn**

*** Blessing and Sending**

Postlude

* PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

Welcome to Paris!

Welcome to Paris, the North Campus of United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County - we're so glad you're here! This is a place where faith feels like family, where neighbors become friends, and where we learn and grow together in Christ's love.

Whether you're visiting, returning, or looking for a church home, you are welcome here. Come as you are, bring your questions and your hopes, and make yourself at home.

If you need anything or have questions, our church family is here to help. We're blessed to have you with us today.

NOTES:

Check In Here

If you came prepared to give today, please place your offering in the plate on the rail at the front of the sanctuary. Your generosity makes a difference!

To avoid any confusion in our giving systems, please make your checks out to Paris UMC or UMMMC. Thank you for your continued support!

A NEW HOPE: DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK

As Advent begins, we name the weariness we carry and make room for hope. Romans reminds us that hope is rooted in God's love, which meets us where we are and gives us strength to keep going. We can receive that hope in small moments of peace, courage, and care. Then we can carry it to others through the way we live.

Romans 5:5 "And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

Romans 15:13 "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29
God is called the God of hope. As Advent begins, we can trust that hope is already at work, even when we can't yet see what comes next.
Prayer: *God of hope, help me notice the light breaking through today.*

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30
Hope is more than wishful thinking. Paul connects hope to God's love, poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.
Prayer: *Let your love steady me when I feel uncertain.*

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1
Paul prays for joy and peace as we trust God. We don't have to wait for everything to be settled before we receive a measure of peace.
Prayer: *Meet me in the middle of what feels unfinished.*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2
The hope we receive can become hope we share. A patient word, a listening ear, or a small kindness may help someone else keep going.
Prayer: *Show me one way to offer hope today.*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3
Hope can grow even in a weary world. We make room for it when we look for signs of care, courage, and possibility around us.
Prayer: *Open my eyes to signs of hope in my community.*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4
God's love is not something we have to earn before we can share it. We can meet others with the same care and welcome we have received.
Prayer: *Help me offer love freely today.*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5
As the week ends, remember that hope is both a gift and a calling. We can carry it into tomorrow through the way we care for one another.
Prayer: *Renew me, God of hope, for the work of love. Amen.*