

ADOPT-A-FAMILY CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

This year, UMMMC is sponsoring two local families who could use a little extra care and support during the Christmas season. Together, we have the opportunity to surround them with love, generosity, and the joy of knowing they're not alone.

- Family One: A single mother raising two young daughters.
- Family Two: A single father caring for his son who has special needs.

You'll find detailed gift information posted on the *Adopt-A-Family* bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall at the Downtown Campus (First Church). If you feel led to participate, simply choose an item, write your name beside it, and return the UNWRAPPED gift to First Church no later than Sunday, December 14.

If you worship at the Paris Campus—or if mobility or transportation makes participation difficult—there are still several ways to join in! You can sign up by calling Larisa, Jackie, or Barb in the church office (who can check the board for you), shop online and have items shipped directly to the church, drop off gifts at the Paris Campus for volunteer pickup, or give financially so that volunteers can shop on your behalf. **However you participate, we are grateful.**

We will wrap all gifts together on Tuesday, December 16, from 2–4PM in the Fellowship Hall at the Downtown Campus (First Church). Whether you're a seasoned gift-wrapper or someone who simply enjoys being part of something meaningful, join us!

If you have any questions, please contact **Larisa Draves (231-598-1911)** or **Jackie Fitzgerald (231-250-6681)**.

Thank you for helping us make Christmas brighter for these families. Your kindness truly makes a difference.

ADULT CHRISTMAS PARTY - DECEMBER 13 @ 5:30PM

Everyone from all UMMMC campuses is invited to our Adult Christmas Party on Saturday, December 13, at 5:30PM at the First Church Campus. This event is designed for adults to relax and enjoy an evening together; childcare will be provided on-site.

We'll share a lasagna dinner (beef, seafood, and vegetable options). Please bring a salad or dessert to add to the meal, if you are able.

We'll also have a White Elephant Gift Exchange - just bring one wrapped gift (new, used, or regifted). If bringing a gift is a burden for any reason, please let Pastor Jeremy know and we will have a wrapped gift ready for you so that everyone can participate. *If you need a ride to the event, please let us know. We want everyone to be able to join us.*

Please RSVP by Sunday, December 7 by emailing or calling Barb in the church office or by signing up on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board. Volunteers are also needed for set-up on December 12.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2026

- As we prepare for the new year, we're building teams to help create a warm, welcoming Sunday experience at UMMMC.
- Fellowship Hosts – Provide simple refreshments after worship at First Church. Individuals, families, or groups welcome.
 - Communion Stewards – Prepare the bread and cup before worship (about one hour, once a month).
 - Greeters – Offer a warm welcome and help people feel at home when they arrive.
 - Ushers – Distribute bulletins, assist with seating, and help keep our worship space ready.

If you're interested or want to learn more, please contact Barbara Erb in the church office or Pastor Jeremy. Thank you for helping us build a welcoming, vibrant community!

Happening This Week

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

9:30AM - Worship @ Paris Campus
10:00AM - Worship @ First Church Campus
Please join us for coffee and fellowship immediately following worship, in the Fellowship Hall.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

9AM - Ministry Staff Meeting @ First
10AM - Worship Design Team @ First
10AM - Gift Wrapping @ Angels of Action
12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave
6:30PM - SOUL Circle @ First
7PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

10AM - SOUL Circle @ First
11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave
4PM - Christmas Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

5:30PM - Community Dinner @ First
7PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12

12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

11AM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris
11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave
5:30PM - Adult Christmas Party @ First

FAMILY MEETING / POTLUCK

A new date will be announced soon for the family meeting and potluck that was scheduled for Sunday, November 30 - be on the lookout!

DECEMBER EUCHRE NIGHT

Please note that Euchre will not meet in December. We'll resume our regular schedule on the third Wednesday in January. We look forward to gathering again after the holidays!

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Julie Setlock - *Director of Family Ministry*
julie@ummecosta.org - (231) 796-7771

Kathy Bell - *Director of Congregational Care*
kathy@ummecosta.org - (231) 224-6177

Rev. Jeremy Wicks - *Executive Pastor*
jeremy@ummecosta.org / (231) 224-6545

To schedule an appointment with Pastor Jeremy, contact Barbara Erb or schedule online @ calendly.com/jeremy-ummecosta .

Week of December 7 - December 13, 2025
Family News



UNITED METHODIST MINISTRIES OF MECOSTA COUNTY
304 ELM STREET, BIG RAPIDS MI 49307 • (231) 796-7771 • WWW.UMMECOSTA.ORG

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE HOURS: TUES - FRIDAY, 9AM - 3PM
PASTOR OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAY & THURSDAY, 9AM - 12PM & 12:30PM - 3PM

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

Worship Gathering
in-person
Sundays @ 9:30AM

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

Worship Gathering
in-person and online
Sundays @ 10AM

Order of Worship - December 7, 2025

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

*** Call to Worship** (Leader / *People*)
In a world that feels unsteady, where uncertainty shadows our days and weariness settles into our bones, Advent comes to us like a quiet whisper: Do not be afraid. Lift up your hearts. Dare to hope again.
We come longing for light, for renewal, for the courage to dream of a world made whole.

This is the season when we lean forward—toward promise, toward peace, toward the God who draws near.
We come to be awakened, to stay alert, to watch for signs of hope.

Isaiah saw a day when nations would choose peace over violence, when swords would become plowshares, and people would walk in the light of divine love. Today we choose to walk toward that light.
We dare to believe another world is possible. We dare to hope.

This morning, we light the first candle of Advent, the candle of HOPE. This candle reminds us that hope is more than optimism; it is a sacred refusal to let despair have the final word.
May we become people who stay awake to God's dream, who watch for the light, and who dare to hope with courage and expectation. Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Today, we also light the second candle—the candle of Peace. But not peace as the world often defines it: not quietness that ignores injustice, not comfort that comes at someone else's expense, not the silence of avoidance or fear.
We long for the peace of Christ—justice-rooted, Spirit-led, a peace that prepares the way for healing and renewal.

We light the candle of Peace...trusting that God's way leads us toward mercy, justice, and transformation.
As these candles burn, may hope steady our hearts and peace guide our steps. May we prepare the way for Christ in our homes, our community, and our world.

*** Hymn** - "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus", UMH #196

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

Hymn - "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel", UMH #211

Scripture Reading - Isaiah 2:1–5; Mark 13:24–37 (NIV)
The word of God, for the people of God. *Thanks be to God!*

Message - "Dare to Dream: Vigilant Hope", Ray Setlock

Offering

*** "The Doxology"**, UMH #95

*** Hymn** - "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light", UMH #206

*** Benediction**

*PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

NOTES:



Check In Here

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.

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 2:1-5 (New International Version)
¹ This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: ² In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.

³ Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."

The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. ⁴ He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

⁵ Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Mark 13:24-37 (New International Version)

²⁴ "But in those days, following that distress, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; ²⁵ the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken."

²⁶ "At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

²⁸ "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³² "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. ³⁴ It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch.

³⁵ "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. ³⁷ What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!'"

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

We will offer two Christmas Eve services this year as we celebrate the wonder of Christ's birth and the light that breaks into our world.

- 5:00PM - Paris Campus, Candlelight Service
- 7:00PM - First Church Campus, Candlelight with Communion

If you'd like to volunteer to serve on Christmas Eve at either campus, please contact Pastor Jeremy or Barb in the church office
Your generosity makes a difference! To avoid any confusion in our giving systems, please make your checks out to Paris Church. Thank you for your continued support!

ALL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS INTENDED FOR 2025 GIVING MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28. GIFTS RECEIVED AFTER THAT DATE WILL BE RECORDED IN THE 2026 GIVING YEAR.