

JANUARY MISSION FOCUS - HUMAN RELATIONS SUNDAY

Today (*January 18, 2026*) is Human Relations Sunday, one of six churchwide Special Sundays designated to support ministries and causes important to the United Methodist Church. Human Relations Sunday supports the Church's work in creating communities where everyone can flourish. When we give, we support church-based programs that work in local neighborhoods to build justice, offer hope, and walk alongside those who need a second chance.

HOW ARE HUMAN RELATIONS SUNDAY OFFERINGS USED?

- *Community Developers Program (57%)* - This program helps churches serve their neighborhoods—especially communities of color—by focusing on local needs like education, employment, and empowerment.
- *United Methodist Voluntary Services (33%)* - This program equips volunteers and congregations to tackle injustice through hands-on projects, community organizing, and service-learning opportunities.
- *Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs (10%)* - These church-supported programs help young people rebuild their lives through mentoring, leadership training, and positive, faith-based community experiences.

You can support Human Relations Sunday by placing your gift in an offering envelope, noting “HRS”, and placing it in the regular offering plate or in the designated basket (First Church) at the front of the sanctuary. You can also give online at ummecosta.org.

Thank you for supporting Human Relations Sunday! Your generosity strengthens communities working toward Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King’s vision of “*beloved community*,” making transformational ministries possible.

ASH WEDNESDAY: BEGIN LENT WITH US

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent—a season of reflection, prayer, and re-centering our lives around what matters most. It’s a chance to slow down, tell the truth about our need for grace, and begin again. The ashes remind us that we are human, we are finite, and we belong to God—and that even in our fragility, God is still at work making all things new.

We invite you to join us in one of three opportunities to receive ashes and worship on Ash Wednesday:

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

- 7:30–9AM @ First United Methodist Church
- 9:30-12PM @ The United Church
- 9:30–11:30AM @ St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church

WORSHIP SERVICES

- 12:00PM @ St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church
- 7:00PM @ First Church United Methodist Church

Whether you can slip through in the morning, pause at midday, or gather in the evening, this is a meaningful way to begin the Lenten journey together.

SOUL CIRCLE - SPRING 2026 GROUPS FORMING NOW!

SOUL Circle 2025 offered a meaningful and supportive experience for more than a dozen church and community members. Sharing our stories and the many ways grief is experienced along life’s journey proved to be deeply healing and comforting.

We are gathering participants for our Spring 2026 session. If you are interested in joining our next 13-week SOUL Circle, please contact Barb in the church office or reach out to Kathy Bell for more information.

What’s Happening

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

- 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, JANUARY 19

- 12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20

- 9AM - Ministry Staff Team Meeting @ First
- 12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave
- 7PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21

- 11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave
- 5PM - Praise Team Rehearsal @ First
- 6PM - Euchre / Game Night @ First

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22

- 5:30PM - Community Dinner @ First

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23

- 12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24

- 9AM - Men’s Breakfast & Coffee @ First
- 11AM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris
- 11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave

MEN’S BREAKFAST

Pastor Jeremy will be hosting a Men’s Breakfast on **Saturday, January 24 at 9AM at the First Church campus**. This is a great opportunity to connect, build friendships, and invite someone new to something relaxed and fun. Please **RSVP by January 20** so we can plan for food. You can register by calling or emailing Barbara Erb in the church office. We hope to see you there!

FAMILY MEETING / POTLUCK - FEBRUARY 1, 2026

- 11:15AM - First Church Fellowship Hall

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 January 18 - January 24, 2026

Family News



A PROMISE YOU CAN COUNT ON

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 - January 18, 2026

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
Human Relations Sunday

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

* **Call to Worship** (Leader / **People**)
God has placed us here - in this church, in this community,
among these neighbors.
We gather where we are, trusting that God is already at work here.

We come carrying the hopes and hurts of our neighborhoods,
the stories of our streets and schools, the joys and struggles of
those near to us.
*Teach us to see our community as holy ground, and to see our
neighbors as beloved siblings.*

Scripture calls us to seek the good of the place where we live,
to be salt and light not from a distance, but right where we are.
Shape us into people of love, justice, and care.

Come, Spirit of God. Open our eyes to our neighbors.
Open our hearts to our shared life.
*Let us worship the God who dwells among us and calls us to love
our neighbors well.*

* **Hymn** - “For the Healing of the Nations”, UMH #428

Praises and Prayers

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

Hymn - “Help Us Accept Each Other”, UMH #560

Scripture Reading - Galatians 3:25-33 (NIV)
The word of God, for the people of God. **Thanks be to God!**

Message - “A Promise You Can Count On”, Dave Hanna

Offering

* **“The Doxology”**, UMH #95

* **Hymn** - “Lord, You Give the Great Commission”, UMH #584

* **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

Galatians 3:25-29, New International Version
²⁵ Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

²⁶ So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of
you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there
male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs
according to the promise.

Galatians 3:25-29, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition
²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a
disciplinarian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through
faith.

²⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves
with Christ.

²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there
is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs
according to the promise.

FEBRUARY MISSION GIVING FOCUS: CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

Next month, our Mission Giving Focus will support Camp Scholarships,
helping children and youth attend Christian summer camp—even when
cost would otherwise be a barrier. Camp can be a life-shaping
experience where faith is formed, friendships grow, and young people
encounter God in a powerful way. Thank you for helping make camp
possible for the next generation!

e beloved community by supporting ministries that serve
neighborhoods, advocate for those on the margins, and invest in
leadership and youth outreach. By giving to Human Relations Sunday,
we collectively support programs that help people thrive, bridge gaps
between church and community, and reflect God’s love in tangible ways.

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!