

MANY WAYS TO CONNECT WITH OUR CHURCH

Church is about gathering together—but gathering does not always look the same for everyone. Some people connect with us in the sanctuary each Sunday, while others join online because of illness, travel, work schedules, caregiving responsibilities, mobility challenges, or other circumstances. We want everyone to know that there are several ways to worship, stay connected, and share in the life of our congregation. Join Us in Person

We offer two opportunities for **in-person** worship each Sunday - 9AM (North Campus) and 10AM (Downtown Campus). Whether you have worshiped with us for years or are visiting for the first time, you are welcome at either service.

Our 10:00 a.m. Downtown Campus service is **streamed live** each Sunday on our Facebook page: facebook.com/BRFUMC . The livestream allows people to worship with us in real time, hear the Scripture and sermon, pray with the congregation, and remain connected even when they cannot be physically present.

Sermons are also uploaded to our YouTube channel, where they can be watched and shared at any time: youtube.com/@BRFUMC . This is especially helpful for those who miss a Sunday, want to revisit a message, or would like to share a sermon with a friend or family member.

Social media is not simply a tool for advertising church events. It is one of the places where people form relationships, ask questions, seek encouragement, and explore their faith. Many people will visit a church’s Facebook page or YouTube channel before they ever walk through its doors. Our online presence gives them an opportunity to learn who we are, hear what we believe, and discover that there is a place where they will be welcomed.

Digital ministry also helps us remain connected with members who are homebound, recovering from illness, traveling, away at school, or living outside the community. It allows the ministry of our congregation to extend beyond a particular building or a single hour on Sunday morning. When we share worship, prayers, sermons, stories, and opportunities to serve online, we are meeting people where they already are.

In the coming months, we hope to expand our presence into additional online spaces, including Instagram. Instagram will give us another way to share photographs, short videos, Scripture, prayers, ministry updates, and stories from the life of our congregation. We will also explore shorter videos for Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts. These could include brief devotional thoughts, sermon highlights, invitations to upcoming events, and glimpses of the ministries happening throughout the week.

Our goal is not to be present on every social media platform simply because it exists. Our goal is to use these tools intentionally—to build relationships, communicate clearly, offer hope, and invite people into a community of faith.

One of the easiest ways you can support our digital ministry is by following our pages, reacting to posts, leaving encouraging comments, and sharing worship services, sermons, and church announcements.

We also encourage you to check in online whenever you attend Sunday worship, a church event, a class, a community meal, or another ministry activity. A simple Facebook check-in lets your friends know that something meaningful is happening here and helps introduce our church to people who may never have encountered us otherwise. You do not need to write a long post. A quick check-in, photograph, or sentence about what you appreciated can help extend our welcome beyond the walls of the church.

Every interaction helps more people discover our church and the ministries we offer. Whether you join us in person, worship through the livestream, watch a sermon later in the week, or connect through social media, you are an important part of our church community. There are many ways to access the life and ministry of our church—and there is always a place for you.

What's Happening

SUNDAY, JULY 19

9AM - Worship @ Paris (North) Campus
Fellowship and Coffee immediately following the worship service
10AM - Worship @ First Church (Downtown) Campus
Fellowship and Coffee immediately following the worship service

TUESDAY, JULY 21

9AM - Director's Meeting @ Downtown Campus
3PM - 6PM - Good Company @ Hemlock Park

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22

12PM - Table Talk: Politics & Following Jesus @ Downtown Campus
(Chapter Three: Freedom, Violence, Order)

THURSDAY, JULY 23

5:30PM - Community Dinner @ Downtown Campus

HELP US FILL BACKPACKS AND HEARTS!

We are collecting school supplies for an exciting new outreach opportunity! As part of this year's Ice Cream Social at our Paris campus on August 9, we'll be opening our doors to the wider community and providing free school supplies to local students as they prepare for a new school year. It's a simple but meaningful way to support families, encourage children, and remind our neighbors that they are loved.

Getting involved is easy! Visit the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall Downtown or the display at the North Campus and pick up a tag—or several. Each tag lists a specific school supply item and the quantity needed. Simply take the tags, purchase the items, and return them to the church by Sunday, August 2. Thank you for your generosity and for helping us share Christ's love in such a practical way!

UMMMC ICE CREAM SOCIAL - DATE CHANGE!!!

Mark your calendars for the 2nd Annual UMMC Ice Cream Social, happening Sunday, August 9, at 1PM at our Paris Campus! This is an opportunity to gather as one church, welcome our neighbors, strengthen community connections, help local students begin the new school year with confidence - and eat ice cream!

This year, we are partnering with Angels of Action to offer a school supply giveaway during the event. We may need to supplement the supplies provided, so watch for more information about specific items that may be needed and additional ways you can support this important outreach.

Volunteers will be needed to help with preparation, setup, serving, welcoming guests, the school supply giveaway, cleanup, and all the little details that make an event feel special. Whether you can help before the event, during the afternoon, or afterward, your participation will make a difference. To volunteer, please contact Jane Pedely (Paris) or Paden Clevenger, Director of Family Ministry and Community Outreach.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Family Meeting & Potluck, August 30 @ 11:15AM

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Kathy Bell - Director of Congregational Care
kathy@ummecosta.org - (231) 224-6177 ext. 3

Paden Clevenger - Director of Family Ministries & Community Outreach
paden@ummecosta.org - (231) 796-7771 ext 4

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

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

Week of July 19 - July 25, 2026

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 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

Check out our Youtube page -
www.youtube.com/@brfumc

Order of Worship - July 19, 2026

* PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

“This is the Day” Call and Response - Gordon Mallett

Welcome & Announcements

Musical Meditation - Ed Mallett

*** Call to Worship** (Reader / *People*)

We come as children of God,
called together by grace.

Here, the barriers that divide us lose their power.
Here, every person is clothed in Christ.

There is no insider or outsider, no greater or lesser,
for we are one in Christ Jesus.

Come, beloved of God.
We come as we are.

All are welcome here.
Let us worship God together.

*** Hymn**

Praises and Prayers

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

Scripture Reading - Galatians 3:26-29 (NRSVUE)
*The word of God, for the people of God. *Thanks be to God!**

*** Hymn**

Message - “All Are Welcome”, Ray Setlock

Silent Prayer of Reflection

*** Doxology, UMH #95**

*** Hymn**

*** Benediction**

Postlude

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!

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

THIS WEEK - ALL ARE WELCOME

Paul's words in Galatians 3:26-29 are written to a church struggling with questions of identity and belonging. Some within the community believed that certain people were closer to God, more faithful, or more fully included because of their religious background and practices. Paul rejected that way of thinking. He reminded the Galatians (and us) that their deepest identity was not rooted in social status, ethnicity, gender, or religious pedigree, and that through Christ, they had become part of one family.

This does not mean that differences disappear or that everyone must become the same. Histories, cultures, identities, experiences, and perspectives continue to matter. The unity Paul describes is not uniformity. It is a community in which difference is no longer used to determine who has greater value, greater authority, or a greater right to belong.

This scripture speaks directly to our commitment at United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County: *We affirm the sacred value and dignity of every individual as a beloved creation of God. We seek to create a hospitable and welcoming environment where all people, regardless of their background, identity, or beliefs, are treated with love and respect.*

For our church, welcome is more than friendliness, shaking hands, opening doors, or telling visitors that we're glad they came. We welcome because God has welcomed us. We honor the dignity of others because every person bears the image of God. We make room for those who have been excluded because Jesus consistently crossed boundaries, challenged systems of religious superiority, and drew near to those others pushed aside.

To say “all are welcome” is a theological conviction and a spiritual practice. It calls us to examine the visible and invisible barriers that can prevent people from participating fully in the life of the church. It challenges us to listen carefully, repent honestly, and continually grow into a community where people are not merely permitted to enter, but are genuinely known, valued, and included.

Paul's vision in Galatians is not about being polite to one another—it is about becoming a new community in Christ, in which the divisions that society uses to rank and separate people no longer determine their worth. Our belonging is grounded in God's grace. Each of us comes with a different story, but none of us comes as an outsider to the love of God. We come as beloved children, called together to become one body in Christ.

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF UMMMC

United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County is seeking individuals from both the First Campus and the Paris Campus to serve on our Leadership Team. The Leadership Team is the governing body of UMMMC. They care for the church's resources, discern long-term priorities, ask important questions about the future, and ensure that our ministries and finances remain aligned with our mission, vision, and values. If you believe this may be a meaningful way for you to serve—or if you would simply like to learn more—please contact Pastor Jeremy to schedule a conversation.

JULY MISSION GIVING: OUR BROTHERS KEEPER

Throughout July, our mission giving will support Our Brother's Keeper, Big Rapids' shelter for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. OBK offers more than a safe place to sleep. Guests receive meals, showers, clean clothing, compassionate support, and assistance as they work toward stable housing and greater self-sufficiency. At a time when the need for emergency housing continues to grow—including among families with children and older adults—this ministry provides safety, dignity, and hope to some of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Thank you for giving generously and helping Our Brother's Keeper remind every guest that they are not alone.