

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

As we enter this season of hope and generosity, UMMMC is once again adopting families in our community. We will be providing gifts for one or two families this year, and there will be opportunities for everyone to participate. More information will be included in next week's newsletter, and details will also be posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall at the First Church Campus. Thank you for helping us share love, dignity, and hope with our neighbors this Christmas.

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 year ahead, we're inviting you to consider a few simple but meaningful ways to serve our church family in 2026. These roles help us create spaces of welcome, connection, and worship every Sunday. Your participation strengthens our mission and supports the life of our community.

Fellowship Hosts - We are building the hosting schedule for Fellowship Time at the First Church Campus. Hosting can be done by individuals, families, or small groups and involves setting out light refreshments after worship. It's a great way to help create a warm, welcoming space for people to connect with one another.

Communion Stewards - Communion Stewards help prepare the elements for one of our most meaningful acts of worship. This ministry typically requires about an hour on Sunday morning, once a month or so, to set up the bread and cup, place items in the sanctuary, and ensure everything is ready for worship. It's a behind-the-scenes role that supports the whole congregation as we celebrate the sacrament together.

Greeters - Greeters are the first expression of hospitality people encounter once they step inside the building. A warm smile, a word of welcome, and a readiness to help someone find their way can make a profound difference. If you enjoy connecting with people and offering hospitality, this is a wonderful way to serve.

Ushers - Our ushers serve outside the sanctuary, handing out bulletins, assisting with seating as needed, and helping maintain a neat and tidy worship space before and after services. Ushers play an important role in helping worship flow smoothly and helping everyone feel at ease as they enter the sanctuary.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities or would like to learn more, please contact Barb Erb in the church office or Pastor Jeremy. Thank you for helping us build a welcoming, vibrant community each Sunday!

Happening This Week

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

9:30AM - Worship @ Paris Campus
Friends-giving Breakfast Immediately Following Worship
10:00AM - Worship @ First Church Campus
Fellowship & Coffee immediately After Worship, Fellowship Hall

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE UMMMC OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED THIS WEEK IN CELEBRATION OF THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24

12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave
7PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27

7PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28

12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29

11AM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris
11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave
3PM - "Deck the Halls" Decorating and Potluck @ Paris

POTLUCK & FAMILY MEETING

Join us Sunday, November 30, at 11:15 AM (First Church) for a potluck lunch and UMMMC Family Meeting. A sign-up sheet is available on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited, and no RSVP is necessary!

CHRISTMAS CHOIR INFORMATION

Directed by Ruth Zoccoli and accompanied by Kathy Bell, the choir will sing during worship at First Church on November 30, December 7, 21, and 24 (Christmas Eve). Rehearsals are on Wednesday @ 4 PM - no rehearsal Thanksgiving Week! If you'd like to participate or have questions, please contact Kathy Bell.

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 .



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 - November 23, 2025

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

*** Call to Worship** (Reader / *People*)
We gather today as people who have seen God’s promise revealed:
a river of life, a tree of healing, a future filled with hope.

*We come to worship the One who says,
“Behold, I am making all things new.”*

The Spirit says, “Come.” The Church says, “Come.”
And every thirsty heart is invited to draw near.

We come with longing, questions, hope, and praise.

In this place, Heaven leans close. In this moment,
God’s future brushes against our present.

*We come to listen, to be renewed, and to be sent
as people of the Revelation story.*

Let us worship the One who is the Alpha and the Omega, the
beginning, the ending, and the love that holds all things together.

*Blessing and honor, glory and power be to our God,
now and forever. Amen.*

*** Hymn** - “Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus”, led by the Praise Team

Children’s Message

Scripture Reading - Revelation 22:1-7 (NRSVUE)
Reader: The word of God, for the people of God.
People: *Thanks be to God!*

Song - “Mighty to Save”, led by the Praise Team

Message - “A Revelation of Hope: From Vision to Vocation”

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

*** Hymn** - “For the Healing of the Nations”, UMH #428, vss. 1-3

* Benediction and Blessing

*** Hymn** - “For the Healing of the Nations”, UMH #428, vs. 4

Postlude

* PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

Altar flowers are given by Penny Brenner in memory of Bernie.

*Please join us for coffee and light refreshments in the
Fellowship Hall immediately following worship!*

Welcome to First Church!

Welcome to First Church, the downtown campus of United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County - we’re so glad you’re here! This is a community where every person belongs, every story matters, and every question is welcome. If you’re new or exploring, we’d love to get to know you. You can learn more about who we are and find helpful information for your first visit at bigrapidsfirst.org.

Need directions? Curious about something? Our welcome team is nearby and ready to help. Truly, we’re delighted to worship with you today.

NOTES:



Check In Here

SERVING TODAY - NOVEMBER 23

Reader: Beth Bejcek
Ushers: Mike & Jana Pisani
Greeter: Barbara Ross
Nursery: Sarah Delany, Paige Madden
Sunday School: Pam Fleming, Laurie Daniels
Fellowship Host: Jeremy and Toinette Wicks, Marlene Rodgers

SERVING NEXT WEEK - NOVEMBER 30

Reader: Suzette Compton
Ushers: Rex & Cheryl Richardson
Greeter: Pat Little
Nursery: Sarah Delany, Grace Supanich
Sunday School: Julie Setlock, Frank Supanich
Fellowship Host: Family Meeting Potluck

DARE TO DREAM: AN ADVENT & EPIPHANY JOURNEY

This Advent, our church family is stepping into a season of holy imagination. In a world where trust feels fragile and divisions often pull us apart, Advent invites us to remember that God meets us in every longing, every question, and every hope we carry. Our new Advent–Epiphany series, *Dare to Dream*, asks us to reclaim the courage to imagine a world made whole—rooted in the visions of Isaiah, the songs of Mary, and the stories of those who welcomed Jesus into the world.

Rather than rushing toward Christmas, we’ll move through the season with intention, listening to the ancient voices who dared to believe that God’s dream for humanity was bigger than fear, violence, or despair. Each week centers on a biblical figure whose life opens a window into God’s unfolding story of hope, peace, joy, love, and courageous faith.

To help us walk more deeply through this season, we’ve created a full *Dare to Dream Daily Devotional Companion*. This devotional mirrors our weekly themes and includes:

- A daily Scripture reading (NRSVUE)
- A thoughtfully written reflection
- A spiritual practice for the day
- Three guiding questions
- A personal prayer

The devotional companion is designed to meet you wherever you are - whether you’re longing for quiet reflection, seeking a pattern to ground your day, or hoping to connect more intentionally with the meaning of Advent. Families, small groups, individuals, and even friends reading together from afar will find this devotional to be a rich and grounding resource through the season.

As we *Dare to Dream* together, may this season awaken your imagination, strengthen your faith, and remind you that God’s dream for the world - and for you - is still unfolding. We hope you’ll join us for worship, for the devotional journey, and for the shared hope that Advent brings to our community.

The devotional companion will be shared in a variety of ways:

- Daily posts on Facebook
- Emailed to those on our mailing list
- Online at www.ummecosta.org
- In print at Paris and First Church

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 First 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.**