

COMMUNITY MEAL TEAM MEETING

Our Community Meal Team will meet after meal service on **Thursday, May 14**, for a time of planning and evaluation. This will be an opportunity to reflect on what is working well, talk through any challenges, and think together about how we can continue strengthening this important ministry.

Everyone currently serving with the Community Meal is encouraged to stay after the meal, and anyone interested in learning more or getting involved is welcome to join us. Your voice, ideas, and presence matter as we continue working together to offer hospitality, connection, and care to our neighbors.

GRADUATION SUNDAY

On **Sunday, May 24**, we will celebrate Graduation Sunday during worship as we recognize and bless the graduates connected to our church family. Graduation is an important milestone, not only for students and their families, but for the whole congregation. It gives us the chance to give thanks for the hard work, growth, perseverance, and many gifts of those who are beginning a new chapter.

If you or someone in your family is graduating this year from high school, college, graduate school, trade school, or another program, we would love to include them in this celebration. Please contact Barb in the church office no later than May 17 with the graduate's name, school, degree or program, and any future plans you would like to share.

As a church, we want our graduates to know that they are seen, loved, and supported. Whether they are heading into more schooling, beginning a new job, entering a season of discernment, or still figuring out what comes next, we want to surround them with prayer and encouragement. Join us on May 24 as we celebrate their accomplishments and remind them that God's grace goes with them wherever the road leads.

PHOTO DIRECTORY - HAPPENING NOW!

As we continue growing together as United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County, we're excited to create our very first photo directory!

Photos will be taken each Sunday in May during fellowship time after worship at the Downtown Campus. There will be a Saturday photo session at the North (Paris) Campus on **May 16, from 10AM - 11AM**. We hope everyone will take advantage of whichever opportunity works best for them. There's no need to sign up—just stop by the photo area when you're ready. Photos can be taken for individuals, couples, or families.

We're grateful to Gary Poole for serving as our photographer. If you'd like printed copies of your photo, Gary will have prints available for purchase directly through him—no pressure, just an option if you're interested. Print sizes will include 8x10, 11x14, and 16x20.

A few simple tips to help your photo turn out well:

- Dress neatly—no need to be formal
- Solid, medium to darker colors tend to photograph best
- Couples and families may want to coordinate colors
- Photos will be taken from the waist up

We're looking forward to creating something that helps strengthen connection across our whole church community!

What's Happening

SUNDAY, MAY 10

9:30AM - Worship @ Paris (North) Campus
10AM - Worship @ First Church (Downtown) Campus
11:15AM - Fellowship / Coffee Hour @ First Church (Downtown) Campus

TUESDAY, MAY 12

9AM - Director's Meeting @ Downtown Campus
10AM - Worship Design Team Meeting @ Downtown Campus

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

10AM - SOUL Circle @ Downtown Campus
11AM - *Embracing an Adverbial Faith* Discussion Group @ Downtown Campus
12PM - Table Talk @ Downtown Campus
5:30PM - "Purpose Driven Life" Dinner / Book Study @ North Campus

THURSDAY, MAY 14

5:30PM - Community Dinner @ Downtown Campus
6:15PM - Community Meal Team Meeting @ Downtown Campus

SATURDAY, MAY 16

10-11AM - Directory Photo Session @ North Campus

READERS NEEDED FOR HYMN SING SERVICE

On **Sunday, May 31**, we will have a special Hymn Sing service at the **First Church Campus**. As part of the service, we will need several readers to help lead different portions of worship. If you would be willing to serve as a reader that morning, please contact the church office or let Pastor Jeremy know. This will be a meaningful way to help lead the congregation in worship as we sing, pray, and celebrate the hymns that have helped shape our faith.

FAMILY MEETING & POTLUCK - JUNE 7

On Sunday, June 7, we'll gather for a UMMMC Family Meeting and Potluck immediately following worship at our downtown campus. This is one of the key ways we come together as a whole church—to connect, share a meal, and stay engaged in the life and direction of our ministry. You'll hear updates about what's happening across our campuses and where we're headed next. Everyone is invited, and if you're able to bring a dish to pass, it's always appreciated. Make plans to stay and be part of the conversation!

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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

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

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 May 10 - May 16, 2026

Family News

LOVE
boldly

SERVE
joyfully

LEAD
courageously

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 - May 10, 2026

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

* Call to Worship (Reader / *People*)

Family of God, on our journey of faith, we are not alone—God is with us!
Because God is with us, we can love boldly.

God is with us, and God joins us with one another as the Body of Christ.
Because God draws us together, we can serve joyfully.

Through God, we work for the flourishing of self, neighbor, and all creation.
Because God holds us together, we can lead courageously.

Family of God, on this journey of faith, we are not alone—God is with us!
We come to worship God by boldly loving, joyfully serving, and courageously leading, that we may be disciples of Jesus Christ who transform the world. Amen.

* **Hymn** - “God of Grace and God of Glory”, UMH #577

Children’s Message

Old Testament Reading - Joshua 1:5-9 (NRSVUE)

Hymn - “Guide My Feet”, TFWS #2208

New Testament Reading - Ephesians 6:10-18 (NRSVUE)
Reader: The word of God, for the people of God.
People: *Thanks be to God!*

Message - “Leading Courageously”

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

* **The Doxology**, UMH #95

* **Hymn** - “We Are Marching (Siyahamba)”, TFWS #2235

* Benediction

* **Hymn** - “We Are Marching (Siyahamba)”, TFWS #2235

Postlude

* PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

Altar flowers are given in celebration of Thomas Maddens 2nd Birthday.

Pastor Jeremy will be in the Warren Street Lobby after the service and would love to greet you.

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 - MAY 10

Reader: Doug Fitzgerald
Ushers: Colin & Roberta Cline
Greeter: Pete Jensen
Nursery: Sara DeLany, Julie Tessin
Sunday School: Paden Clevenger, Pam Stirn
Fellowship Host: Denise Cospers
Organist: Shirley Jernstadt
Accompanist: Kathy Bell
Tech Team: Ken Draves, Gary Poole

SERVING NEXT WEEK - MAY 17

Reader: Marlene Rodgers
Ushers: Rex & Cheryl Richardson
Greeter: Kathi Parker
Nursery: Sara DeLany, Beth Bejcek
Sunday School: Kathi Parker, Liberty Beam
Fellowship Host: Cheryl Richardson

THINK ABOUT IT THIS WEEK - LEAD COURAGEOUSLY

This week, our series “Embracing an Adverbial Faith” brings us to the call to lead courageously. That phrase can sound intimidating because many of us hear the word *lead* and assume it must be about titles, authority, personality, or being the person in charge. But courageous leadership is not reserved for pastors, committee chairs, staff members, or people who always know what to say. Sometimes leadership is much quieter than that - it looks like telling the truth with love, showing up when others step back, choosing what is right even when it would be easier to stay comfortable, or helping a community take one faithful next step.

In Joshua 1, God tells Joshua to be strong and courageous - not because Joshua has everything figured out, but because God promises to be with him. Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is trusting that God’s presence is enough for the next step.

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON

- Where in your life are you being asked to take a faithful next step?
- What situation requires courage from you right now?
- What helps you remember that you are not alone when something feels difficult?
- How might loving boldly and serving joyfully prepare us to lead courageously?

ACTION STEPS FOR THE WEEK

- Name one place where courage is needed. It might be in your family, workplace, church, neighborhood, or personal life.
- Take one faithful step. You don’t have to solve everything. Do the next right thing.
- Encourage someone else. Courage grows in community. Speak a word of support to someone who is carrying responsibility.
- Pray before reacting. When something feels tense or uncertain, pause and ask God for wisdom before you respond.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

God of courage, you do not call us to lead alone. You meet us in moments of uncertainty and remind us that your presence goes with us. Give us strength for what is ours to do, wisdom to know what is not ours to carry, and courage to take the next faithful step. Shape us into people who love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously for the sake of your world. Amen.

A CLOSING THOUGHT

Courageous leadership does not always look dramatic. Sometimes it looks like faithfulness. Sometimes it looks like honesty. Sometimes it looks like one small step taken with trust. This week, don’t wait until you feel fearless. Listen for where God is calling—and take the next step.

MAY MISSION FOCUS: UMC STUDENT SUNDAY

Each May, we join United Methodist churches across the connection in supporting UMC Student Sunday, an offering that invests directly in students pursuing higher education and discerning their call in the world.

Through the work of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, every dollar given funds scholarships for undergraduate, graduate, and seminary students, helping ease financial burdens and open doors that might otherwise remain closed. This is one of the ways we live out our connectional commitment—pooling our resources to make a meaningful impact beyond our local church.

More than just financial support, this offering is a tangible reminder to students that the Church believes in them and is committed to their future. Throughout the month of May, we invite you to prayerfully consider giving, knowing that your generosity helps shape leaders who will carry forward the work of faith, justice, and service in the world.

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!**