

The Key Newsletter

May 2026

Volume 14 - Issue 05



Confirmation Service

Sunday, May 10th, 2026

Adrian UMC - 9:00 a.m. - Owen Lee Heidebrink

First UMC - 10:30 am - Kelli Rae Geertsema, Emma Marie Hill,
Leah Catherine Schuett

Sunday Worship

Adrian UMC
9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship

First UMC
10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship

408 11th Street, Worthington,
Minnesota 56187
Phone: (507) 372-2939
methodistoffice@gmail.com

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Hello! Welcome to the Family Light Update - where we shed some light on the Family Life Ministry of First United Methodist Church!



It's pouring rain outside right now and I'm excited for the grass turning green and the gardens gearing up for summer!

Connect will come to a close on Wednesday, May 13th. We will have a potluck that evening as we watch the final episode of Season 3 of *The Chosen* - which is extra long, so we will begin playing the film at 5:15. Anyone is welcome to join us! Bring a food item to share and watch with us!

Children's **Sunday School** is done for the programming year. On Sunday, May 3rd, during the worship service, we will thank our teachers who have taught throughout our various programs.

The **Fireside Book Club** meets on Tuesday, July 28th at 7:00p.m. in the Fireside Room. We are reading *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman. Please come with the book read and be ready to discuss this heartwarming story of a neighborhood shaken up by love. This is a great summer read!

Don't miss being at church on **Mother's Day**, May 10th! We will have a chocolate fountain during coffee fellowship time, thanks to the generous sponsorship of an anonymous donor, and it is also confirmation Sunday.

Our **high school graduates** will be honored on Sunday, May 17th. Please be sure to come to worship that day and support these young adults as they celebrate this milestone.

Community Kids' Camp will be June 8-11! Please watch for opportunities to volunteer, for food needs and for the new adult engagement element that we are adding! This will be a terrific four days of fun, learning, playing and growing together!

One more event for the women of our church to add to their calendars is **RESURFACE**, coming on Saturday, October 24th. We are praying that this day-long conference will renew your mind, body and soul. **Please watch for more information and for ways that you can help make this event happen.** Tell your friends and plan on attending this meaningful day.

Once again we will have a **Bible study for women** and **Ladies by the Lake** to look forward to this summer!

Serving Him Together, Gretchen

"Worship the Lord with gladness..." - Psalm 100:2a

"Come worship the Lord!"

Sunday May 3 - Join Linda Doeden from 9:15-10:15 am in the Fellowship Hall as she shares about her experiences in Laos.

Coffee, juice and donuts will be served.

Teacher's recognition @ FUMC 10:30 am service
Communion at both churches.

Thursday, May 7 -Love INC of Worthington & Pray Worthington invite you to join them on May 7th for our local National Day of Prayer Event from noon -1pm in the Farmer's Room at 315 10th St.

Sunday May 10- Confirmation Sunday & Mother's Day Confirmation at Adrian 9:00 am & FUMC 10:30 am with Confirmation celebration after the service.
Communion at both churches.

At First UMC , as a special gift to the women of the church, we will have our chocolate bar again. We want to thank the anonymous donor who will be covering the cost.

Sunday May 17 -Graduation Sunday

Sunday May 24 - Linda Doeden preaching at Adrian, UMC
Pastor John @ First

Sunday May 31

Sunday Morning Coffee Fellowship

Come to the Fellowship Hall on Sunday morning before church to enjoy a cup of coffee or juice and a roll, and visiting with other members and friends of the church. It all begins at 9:45 a.m.!

Women's Coffee

The women's weekly coffee group meets every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. at HyVee in the Starbucks serving area. All women are invited to come and join this fabulous group!

Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast group meets every Wednesday at 8:00 a.m. at the Blue Line Cafe. The men discuss shared concerns, solve the problems of the world, and make sure the rain gauges are up to speed. All guys are welcome to join us each week!

FUMC Foundation College Scholarships

The FUMC Foundation is again awarding college scholarships to qualified candidates planning to pursue post-secondary education in the upcoming academic year, 2026-2027. Members of Adrian United Methodist Church and First United Methodist Church of Worthington are eligible to apply.

The scholarship program has now been expanded to provide up to four years of financial support. Candidates must re-apply each year to qualify for the annual scholarship of \$1,000.

Past scholarship winners that have completed their three years of \$1,200 annual scholarships prior to the 2024-2025 academic year are no longer eligible for this scholarship.

Applications are available in the FUMC office and must be submitted no later than June 30, 2026.

Food Shelf Donations

Your donations for the local food shelves of non-perishable food items are accepted throughout the year, please place your items in the wagon located in the narthex. Please be aware of the "best by" or "use by" dates on the items that you are donating. Items are taken alternately to the two food shelves.

Blankets Needed

During the long cold snap in January, we discovered students who struggled with warmth. In our community, there are homes with multiple families living in them. The kids often share a bed and blankets. When one person turns, someone is without a blanket. To save expenses, many of these homes have the heat set relatively low and the house is drafty. Older kids often prioritize the health of their younger siblings and will give them the blankets. The blanket supply at the Middle School has dwindled down to nothing. If you would like to donate warm, used blankets of any size, please put them in the box in the hallway by the kitchen.

Thank you!
Missions Committee

Operation Christmas Child-2026

In 2026, we will once again be participating in Operation Christmas Child.

Please note that we will begin collecting donated items in

August, continuing through October. The shoeboxes will then be packed in November.

If you would like a list of the items needed for the shoeboxes, copies are available in the Narthex.

If you have any questions, please contact Pam Soderholm.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of this meaningful project.

Teacher Recognition Sunday May 3

Please take a moment to thank our Sunday School, Confirmation and Wednesday evening teachers when you see them in church or around town! The time they spend investing in the youth of our church is beyond measure.

Our teachers are Lisa Gerdes, Amber Nielson, Amy Shirbroun, Randy Shirbroun, Kylee Shirbroun, Ida Van Westen, Stacie Miller, Missy Geertsema, Rick Dalrymple, Sharon Algood, Mike Brignac and Sherry Benton.

Confirmation Sunday & Mother's Day May 10th

It is a big day for both our churches!

The morning will start at 9:00 am in Adrian, where all confirmed students from both churches will be present. One Adrian student will be confirmed. The confirmation students will then travel to First UMC, where the three students from First will be confirmed. The students will arrive around 10:20 am. at First. At each service, we will hear their faith stories and have communion.

Our confirmands are Owen Lee Heidebrink –Adrian UMC and Kelli Rae Geertsema, Emma Marie Hill, Leah Catherine Schuett—Fumc

We will have cupcakes (students' choice) *after* the 10:30 am service.

At First UMC , as a special gift to the women of the church, we will have our chocolate bar again during fellowship time. We want to thank the anonymous donor who will be covering the cost.

A special gift will also be given to the women in attendance.

Graduation Sunday

Please join us as we recognize our graduating seniors during the worship service on May 17th! A reception will be held for them during the coffee fellowship time that morning.

Our graduates are Jayse Geertsema, Dylan Schuett, Hannah Hill, Alex Romero, James Spartz, and Judah Luevanos.

Worthington Area Symphony Concert

WORTHINGTON AREA
Symphony
Orchestra

CELEBRATE AMERICA
★ ★ A 250TH CELEBRATION ★ ★

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2026
7:00 P.M.

Dr. Christopher Stanichar,
Conductor

FEATURING
BELOVED AMERICAN SONGS

MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM
714 13TH STREET - WORTHINGTON, MN
All tickets reserved & sold at the Auditorium Box Office
507.376.9101
www.friendsoftheauditorium.com

TICKETS
ADULT TICKETS - \$15
STUDENT TICKETS - \$5

Reception
in lobby
following

PIANO RECITAL

Piano Recital

For
Elizabeth Bushard's Students

Sunday, May 17 – 2:00 p.m.

The Sanctuary @ First
First United Methodist Church
408 11th Street
Worthington, MN



Summer Ladies' Bible Study

All women are invited to join us for our summer Ladies' Bible Study titled *Amen: The Story of Scripture from Eden to Eternity*". We will meet on Mondays, starting on June 1 through June 29th. We meet at 9:00a.m. in the Fireside Room. *Please pick up your book ahead of time, as the first time we meet we will discuss the first week!* See Gretchen or Lori to pick up your book. Cost of the book is \$10.

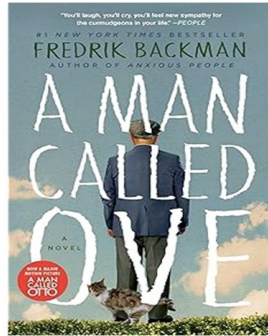
Fireside Book Club

Fireside Book Club!

July 28 / 7:00p.m.

Fireside Room

Please come with the book read and be ready to discuss this heartwarming book of a neighborhood shaken up by love.



Risefest

Did you know that Risefest is one of the largest Christian music festivals in the nation? And it's only a half hour away! This year's event will take place June 12-13 in Sheldon, Iowa. We will play a video during the service on May 17 with more information and motivation.

COMMUNITY KIDS' CAMP

CREATE!

June 8-11

(Location: American Lutheran Church)

5-5:45pm Meal ✦ 5:45-8pm Activities



NEW!
Adult Engagement
(6:15pm-7:45pm)
REGISTER USING THE QR CODE.



TO REGISTER:
SCAN THE QR CODE (BY MAY 26)
OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE.



Community Kids Camp

*For children age 3 (& potty trained) through completed grade 5.
Suggested donation: \$5/child*

RENEWING YOUR MIND, BODY & SOUL

Resurface

A Women's Conference

Saturday, October 24, 2026

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

First Methodist Church, Worthington



Letter from Rev. Dr. Woojae Im

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to First UMC - Worthington in the name of Jesus Christ.
Grace and peace to Adrian UMC - in the name of Jesus Christ.

I write to you with deep gratitude and appreciation for your faithful commitment in paying your apportionments in full. Your generosity and dedication are not simply matters of financial responsibility—they are a tangible expression of your congregation's participation in the shared mission and ministry of the United Methodist Church.

Through your faithful giving, you are helping to fulfill our primary mission: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Your partnership strengthens the connection we share across congregations, districts, and the global church, enabling ministries that no single congregation could accomplish alone.

In the Prairie Winds District and throughout the Minnesota Annual Conference, your support directly contributes to our shared vision to love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously. Because of you, lives are being touched, communities are being transformed, and the Gospel is being proclaimed in meaningful and life-giving ways.

As I prepare for a new appointment beginning July 1, 2026, when I will serve as superintendent of the Aurora Sky District, I carry with me deep gratitude for the time we have shared in ministry. Your faithfulness and support will be remembered and will always hold a special place in my heart. It has been a privilege to walk alongside you in the Prairie Winds District.

Thank you for your leadership, your stewardship, and your unwavering commitment to the connectional covenant that binds us together. Please know that your faithfulness is seen, appreciated, and celebrated.

May God continue to bless your ministry as you serve Christ and your community.

With gratitude and hope,
The Rev. Dr. Woojae Im
Conference Superintendent
Prairie Winds District

Letter from the Bishop Lnette Plambeck

Dear Friends,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

As we prepare to gather for the upcoming session of the Minnesota Annual Conference, we do so with a shared conviction rooted in the gospel: we are created to serve joyfully. From the beginning, God has called people into lives of generosity, compassion, and faithful service. In Christ we see this calling most clearly, as Jesus teaches us that greatness in God's kingdom is found not in receiving, but in serving.

The Apostle Paul reminds the church of this spirit of generosity and partnership in Philippians 4:15-16 (NRSVUE):

"You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once."

Paul celebrates a community that understood giving as a form of participation in the gospel itself. Their generosity was not simply charity; it was shared ministry, a way of joining God's work in the world.

Service takes many forms. It happens when we pray for one another, when we care for our neighbors, when we lead our congregations with courage, and when we respond to the needs of the world with compassion. One of the simplest and most meaningful ways we serve together is through generous giving.

Each year at Annual Conference we receive a Love Offering. This offering is more than a tradition. It is a tangible expression of our connective life and our shared commitment to Christ's mission. When we give, we participate in ministry that reaches far beyond what any one congregation could do alone.

Giving is, at its heart, an act of joyful service.

Our broader ministry commitments in Minnesota invite us to:

Love Boldly.

 Serve Joyfully.

 Lead Courageously.

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Through this Love Offering, we practice what it means to serve with joy. Our gifts become instruments of God's grace—extending hope, care, and opportunity to others.

The 2026 Minnesota Annual Conference Love Offering will support the following ministries:

Midwest Mission (30%)

Midwest Mission (www.midwestmission.org), founded by the United Methodist Church, is a significant partner with UMCOR in providing humanitarian relief through items such as rice and soy blessing bags, personal dignity kits, feminine hygiene kits, student kits, and layette kits. Midwest Mission has locations in Iowa and Illinois which serve as year-round mission trip opportunities for groups who help with packing kits or engaging in other coordinating tasks.

Love Boldly Mental Health Ministries Grant (20%)

Love Boldly Mental Health Ministries Grants (tinyurl.com/love-boldly-grant) help Minnesota United Methodist congregations, in a very practical way, reduce the stigma of mental health care while engaging in collaborative ministries in their communities.

The Endowment for Theological Education (20%)

The Endowment for Theological Education (www.endowftecc.org/) is an initiative established by the Council of Bishops to provide sustainable and impactful support for seminary education of clergy in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. Seminaries in the United States benefit from healthy endowments that often fund scholarships for their students. This endowment will bring similar support for United Methodist seminary students beyond the US.

Minnesota Conference Emergency Response Fund (20%)

The Minnesota Conference Emergency Response Fund supports congregations across the conference who are providing immediate, focused, and localized humanitarian aid due to crisis or emergency; with current focus on responding to the impacts of immigration enforcement, and the call for food distribution, hygiene supplies, and housing and utilities support.

Volunteers in Mission Scholarships (10%)

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (umvim.org/) is a grassroots movement through which thousands of United Methodists engage in short-term mission each year in ministries such as disaster response, community development, pastor training, microenterprise, agriculture, Vacation Bible School, building repair and construction, and medical/dental services.

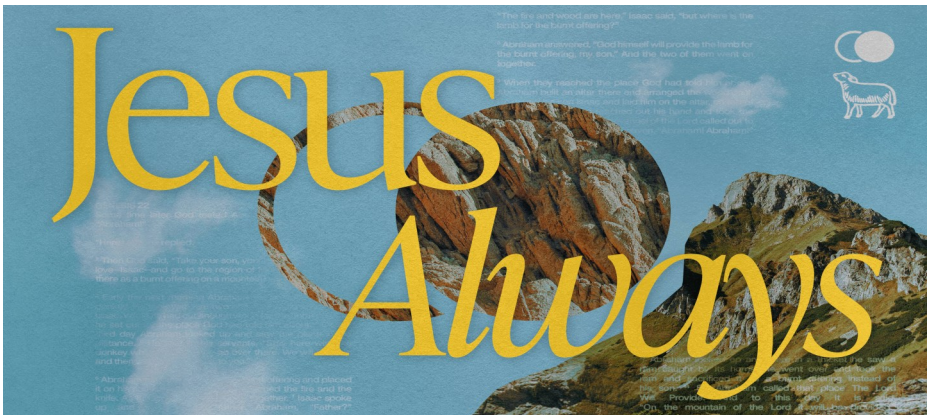
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Please invite the members and friends of your congregation to join in the Love Offering. Access the Love Offering webpage www.minnesotaumc.org/loveoffering) for resources to help promote this offering in your congregation. There you will also find the latest information on kits and the in-kind equipment donations requested by Midwest Mission this year.

Every gift matters. Whether given by an individual, a family, or a congregation, each offering becomes part of a collective witness to the love of Christ at work through the people called United Methodist in Minnesota. Thank you for the many ways you serve Christ and your neighbors every day. I look forward to seeing you in St. Cloud to worship with you, learn with you, witness with you, and celebrate the ways God continues to move through our shared ministry.

With gratitude and hope,

Bishop Lanette Plambeck
Resident Bishop
Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area of The United Methodist





*Here are the highlights from
the First UMC Council meeting held
on Thursday, April 23*

The FUMC Covenant Council held an online meeting to discuss the church's finances. A revised, expanded version of the financial report was introduced. This report displays all major categories of revenue and expenses, as well as detailed breakdowns within those categories and a comparison with the previous year. This expanded report was developed by Ellen in response to the Council's recommendations and to requests expressed by some members of the congregation to Pastor John. This report will continue to be available outside of the church office each month for anyone interested in reviewing it.

Overall the month of March was stronger in terms of revenue. However, we are a full two months behind on apportionments, as those are evaluated each month and paid after expenses are covered and payroll is ensured. Apportionments are \$2916/month. One significant expense of note was heating of the facility. The bill for electricity and heat in the last quarter of 2025 averaged \$1000/month. It averaged \$4000/month in the first quarter of 2026. So we are welcoming the warmer weather! All expenses continue to be closely monitored.

Next meeting: 21 May 2026

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Shirbroun, Covenant Council Recording Secretary



First United Methodist Church - Minnesota

Available in App Stores



SUBSPASH®

Remember to update our mobile app from Apple store or Google play store.

Any difficulties, please see Pastor John.

Happy Birthday!

3	Susan Bents	13	Gerald Langendorfer	25	Cole Bonsma
4	Chelsea Homan		Lori Palaschak		Emma Hietbrink
5	Matthew DeSmith	14	Linda Reese		Hayden VanWesten
6	David Palmer	19	Amy Shirbroun	26	Clara Hietbrink
8	Susanne Murphy	20	Miranda Tripp		Christopher Hill
	Craig Soderholm	21	Cheryl Homan	27	Kristine Tripp
9	Hannah Barrie	22	Savannah Homan		Nathan Williams
	Madonna Carlson	23	Nicole Bonsma	28	Rick Honermann
	Naomi Hill		Mike Johnson		Cheryl Matthies
10	Violet Erlandson		Kelly Kluever	30	Ben Lopez
11	Cameron Steinle	24	Erin Nickel		Colby Nickel
			Robyn Silver	31	Dorothy Hector

Happy Anniversary!

1	Wayne & Sharon Jones	20	Kurt & Melissa Geertsema
3	Tim & Thelma Yager	25	Chris & Diane Dybeck
14	Dave & Lorraine Carstensen	30	Kyle & Andrea Johnson
18	Chad & Sarah Nickel		

First United Methodist Church Staff

Pastor:	Rev. John Mitchem
Administrative Assistant:	Lori Nienkerk
Family Life:	Gretchen O'Donnell
Youth Leader:	Lisa Gerdes
Bell Choir Director:	Brenda DeSmith
Finance Manager:	Marie Lonneman
Custodians:	Sarah & Chad Nickel

Office: (507) 372-2939 Fax: (507) 372-2404

408 11th Street P.O. Box 668

Worthington, MN 56187

methodistoffice@gmail.com

www.firstumcworthington.com

Live Streaming!

Each Sunday we live streaming our worship services from First UMC. If you are going to be out of town, you can catch the live broadcast on our church app (download to your device) or any one of four different online locations:

The Boxcast TV Channel

<https://boxcast.tv/channel/qikol6fqes2qwhperl2l>

First UMC YouTube Channel

Go to YouTube: First United Methodist Church Worthington

First UMC FaceBook

Go to FaceBook: Worthington: First United Methodist Church

First UMC Website

<http://firstumcworthington.com/>

Worship services for First UMC are scheduled to be broadcast on the public access Channel 3 in Worthington. The broadcast times are Sunday at 6:30 am, Monday at 3:00 p.m. and Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. for the current week. Worship services for Adrian UMC can be found on the church's YouTube Channel.

Greeters, Live Stream and Media Tech

We can use one or two more pairs of persons to help with our live stream media on Sundays. Please contact Pastor John if you are interested. Here are the persons who are scheduled to help with the greeting, sound, media, and live stream services:

First UMC		Sound/Video	Media Shout
Sunday	May 3	Deb Steinle	John Steinle
Sunday	May 10	Kari Meyer	Claire Meyer
Sunday	May 17	Kari Meyer	John Steinle
Sunday	May 24	Deb Steinle	John Steinle
Sunday	May 31	need someone	

First UMC		Greeting Team
Sunday	May 3	Kenny & Ellen Hoefker
Sunday	May 10	Jim & Tina Nickel
Sunday	May 17	Amber, Tucker, & Ellie Nielsen
Sunday	May 24	Dana & Amy Oberloh
Sunday	May 31	Dave & Myra Palmer

Prayers for health concerns:

Rod Behrends	Ron Husenga	
Chris Nelson	Lourdes Franco	
Logan Waldner	Virgle Buck	
Kristin (Dalrymple) Amundson		
Julie (Ginny Tate's sister)	Sally Hibma	Margaret Loger
Steve Johnson		



Those dealing with cancer:

Christopher Brown	Shellie Williams	Mike Miller
Marion Reitsma (friend of Jolene Kuhl)		Stacey White
Jeff Wachell (friend of Deb Steinle)		

Those recovering/dealing with health issues:

Nancy Hyink	Bill Carlberg	Larry Doeden
Emma Schnyders	Pat Huisenga	Corky Tate
Ariana Lopez	Aiden Remme	Dianne Dalrymple

For those dealing with grief and loss...

The family of Scott Klooster with his passing

Giving thanks & praying for:

Our farmers during this planting season
Our Bishop and District Superintendent...
Our teachers, administrators, students...
Front line health care workers...
Law enforcement & emergency workers...
Service women & men and their families...Galen & Sherry Benton's granddaughter

If you have a loved one you would like to have added to the Prayer Corner list, or if any name needs to be removed from this list, please contact the church office: 507.372.2939 methodistoffice@gmail.com

Prayer Chain

Please send requests to our email Church Office
methodistoffice@gmail.com
or (507) 372-2939

Care Centers

First UMC:

The Shores

Larry Doeden

LaDee Grant

Sibley Specialty Care Center

Norma Swenson

Adrian UMC:

Mary Jane Brown Ctr (Luverne)

Mary Prins

Adrian Country Living Cottage

Margaret Loger