

The Key Newsletter

October 2026

Volume 13 - Issue 10

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



Sunday Worship

Adrian UMC
9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship

First UMC
10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship

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www.firstumcworthington.com



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

The weather has changed from summer to fall with a vengeance! These rainy days have felt more like the Pacific Northwest in winter than like Southwestern Minnesota in fall.

Sunday School is up and going with the Elementary and Intermediate School students meeting downstairs and the adults meeting in the Fireside Room to study the book *Undistracted* by Bob Goff, which includes videos from Right Now Media. Both groups meet at 9:00a.m.

Wednesday's **CONNECT** has started up for the fall! Please join us for a meal, worship, fellowship and Bible study. There will be programming for all ages! Meal at 5:15; worship at 5:45; age-appropriate classes at 6:00. Pastor John is leading a discussion of The Andy Griffith Show episodes, seeing how the gospel fits into this classic television series.

The **Fireside Book Club** meets next on Tuesday, November 3rd at 7:00p.m. in the Fireside Room. We are reading *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi. This book has taken the world by storm with its story of a gentle man who does what he can in his little corner of the world to bring joy and kindness to his community. Many people love this book, so come and bring friends who would enjoy our discussion. Come with the book read and be ready to discuss this inspiring novel! And even if you didn't love it...we'll still have a lot to talk about!

We are so excited for **RESURFACE**, coming up THIS MONTH on Saturday, October 24th. It's not too late to register! You can call the church or go on to our web page and find the link. Please join us for what promises to be an amazing day - and bring friends!

Serving Him Together,
Gretchen

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

A Campaign for Kindness Coming in October

The primary focus of the Love One Another Campaign is "Love In Action." Focus group conversations have made it clear that while polarization continues to increase and civility decreases, people are tired of just talking about it. It's time to do something. Jesus' commandment to love one another is clear, and he modeled for us what this love looks like. This year's campaign will focus on empowering and encouraging people to put love into action through both individual and corporate acts of compassion and kindness. Special resources, including a journal with ideas for daily acts of kindness and reflections, and small group and individual studies, will be available in October. We will also have Yard Signs and shirts available for purchase. Two years ago, by placing yard signs in our yards, we gained two new households that have joined our community of faith.

Week 1 – Love Another-Oct 11
Week 2 – Show Us - Oct 18
Week 3 – Abide in Us – Oct 25
Week 4 – You are MY FRIEND
Nov 1
Week 5 - TBA



October is Pastor appreciation month

Drop Pastor John a note or do something special for him to show him your care.

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!

Thank you for the prayers, call, cards, and texts
while on my cancer journey.
I am doing well.

Susan Bents

Friendship Supper

One of everyone's favorite projects is hosting the Friendship Supper for the challenged with Pizza and Bingo on Nov. 10 **So we need Bingo Prizes !!** Please start looking for Christmas items, caps, T theatre size candy, stuffed animals, greeting cards, coloring books, gloves, scarves, anything they might enjoy. We serve close to 80 and want them all to be excited about receiving numerous gifts, so please help. Items can be brought to the office or given to Gretchen before Nov. 8th. THANK YOU!!

Operation Christmas Child-2026

We are collecting items to put in the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes which will be packed on Sunday, November 8th. Items that are needed are school supplies, personal care items (not bars of soap or toothpaste) clothing & accessories for boys and girls, toys for boys and girls, games, activities, and craft kits for boys and girls. You can pick up a sheet in the narthex with a more specific list of items. Please place your items in the box in the narthex. Monetary donations are also accepted to help with the purchasing of additional items. If you have any questions, please contact Pam Soderholm.

We can no longer accept pill bottles to use for our sewing and bead kits. Some countries receiving the boxes are not accepting the pill bottles due to potential drug residue in the bottles.



OCC Jump Rope Making Day

Join the Night Light Circle for an afternoon of fund and fellowship as we braid jump ropes for the OCC boxes. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall from 1-4 pm on Tuesday, October 6th. Snacks will be provided.

Thank you! Myra

Noisy offering for OCC

On Sunday, October 11, we will be collecting a Noisy Offering!

The money collected will be used to purchase soccer balls and pumps to be included in the Operation Christmas Child boxes we will pack in November.

Soccer balls and pumps are considered a WOW gift—a special item that stands out—because they have universal appeal and are loved by children all around the world. They are a favorite item to receive in an Operation Christmas Child box and are gifts that children can enjoy and share with others in their community.

Church Work Day



**Help us
spruce up
the
building!**

Thursday,
October 15.
9:00a.m.-
noon.

RENEWING YOUR MIND, BODY & SOUL

Resurface



A Women's Conference

Saturday, October 24, 2026

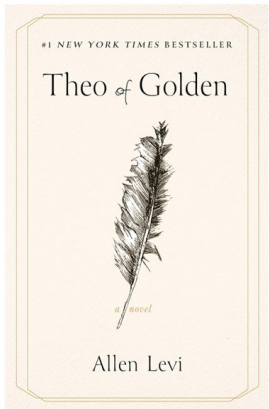
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

First Methodist Church, Worthington

**FIRESIDE BOOK
CLUB**

THEO OF GOLDEN

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5
7:00P.M. FIRESIDE ROOM.**



Membership Class

We will be offering a membership class for Worthington in early November. If you are interested in joining the church, please contact the church office. 507-372-2939

Get To Know Members

Pastor John mentioned he would like an opportunity to get to know members of the church better. He suggested that members host dessert/coffee with a few church friends and Pastor John. A sign-up sheet is in the back, or you may contact the church office. 507-372-2939

Church Charge Conference

September 27th 2027, at Adrian UMC



Led by Rev. Michelle Hargrave, Conference Superintendent of The Prairie Winds District of The Minnesota Annual Conference.

The meeting opened and closed with prayer, including thanks for the parsonage's history as a home for pastors and their families and hope that its next owners will be blessed there.

MOTION: (Modified to correct the person authorized to sign papers.)

To sell the church-owned property (Parsonage) located at 642 Louisiana Avenue, Adrian, Minnesota. Diane Honerman and Terry Miller are further authorized to sign all legal papers necessary to sell the parsonage.

This motion passed, with all people in attendance voting Yes.

Respectfully Submitted

Rev. John D. Mitchem

Save the Date! Dog-Eared Disciples

Save the date for this book study initiative from Bishop Lanette Plambeck that will take place online Fall 2026-Spring 2027.

When: Saturdays, 9-10:30 a.m. Central Time (8-9:30 a.m. Mountain Time)

October 3; November 7; December 5, February 6, March 6, & April 3

What if our love of reading could become a practice of discipleship?

Dog-Eared Disciples is an invitation to read our way more deeply into the life of faith. Drawing on the ancient Christian practice of *lectio divina*, we will approach books not simply for information, but for formation: reading slowly and attentively, listening for what stirs, challenges, unsettles, or invites us, and allowing what we encounter on the page to deepen our relationship with God, one another, and the world.

Across six online gatherings, we will read and reflect together on a text selected for each month:

- Oct. 3 - "An Altar in the World" by Barbara Brown Taylor
- Nov. 7 - "Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God" by Kaitlin B. Curtice
- Dec. 5 - "Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times" by Katherine May
- Feb. 6 - "Jesus and the Disinherited" by Howard Thurman
- March 6 - TBD
- April 3 - TBD

Come with your questions, your curiosity, your favorite pen, and a willingness to dog-ear a few pages along the way.

Registration and additional details will be available in the coming weeks.

(continued from p.10)

Part of *Get in The Way*

Dog-Eared Disciples is part of *Get in The Way*, the discipleship journey Bishop Lanette introduced in her 2026 Episcopal Address. It began with the Building Beloved Community study in summer 2026 and will continue through Dog-Eared Disciples, extending to the 2026 Advent Study and other opportunities online and in-person for formation, encounter, and practice.

WHEN

Saturday, October 3, 2026 at 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM CT

This event recurs Monthly on the 1st Saturday except 1/2/2027 from Saturday, October 3, 2026 to Saturday, April 3, 2027



*Here are the highlights from
the First UMC Council meeting
September 17, 2026*

Questions were asked regarding Caleb Tiede's visit on Oct. 4 :

- Will we be doing a designated or 2nd offering for Caleb's ministry?
No – anyone wanting to donate specifically to Caleb can do so in the Narthex following church.
- Foundation's donation to Caleb: A possible donation and amount is determined by the committee every year. Nothing has been designated for 2027.

☐ **Congregational Care Team:** The objective of this team is to extend the reach of the pastor, to reach all shut-ins, and to provide them with consistent visits. Training will be provided and a prayer/instructional booklet provided. The trained team will also be able to administer communion.

- Anyone interested can participate in the training and then participate right away, or perhaps only in the future or as they are able.
- The team may meet periodically to share insights, challenges, needs, what's going well, etc.
- Some individuals have already voiced interest. Others are welcome to join!
- It was unanimously agreed upon by the Council to move ahead with the Care Team.

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☐ **Trustees Update**

- The missing, broken or stained tiles in the hallway will be replaced once obtained.
- Chad Nickel has looked at the (red) rugs throughout the building. They have been cleaned as needed and will not be replaced at this time as they look significantly better.
- John Nordell gave ideas on hallway light fixtures but cost will be at least \$100 each. This will be tabled for now.
- The large bushes on 11 th Street and near the Sunday School doors on 4th Avenue are slowly encroaching on the sidewalks.

CELEBRATIONS:

☐ Foundation:

- Balance: \$720,982 following multiple donations approved and granted this summer.

☐ Missions:

- Serving at the Banquet in August:
20 volunteers served 280 people
Noisy offering went toward their milk fund
- Sewing kits, jump ropes, & tic-tac-toe bags were made during August work days. Myra Palmer and Diane Dalrymple put in a lot of work getting things ready – thank you!
- Nobles County Backpack Program: 642 bags were given out and some supplies were still short.

- ☐ There will be two confirmands this year – one from FUMC and one from Adrian. They have been given “homework” already, but will officially start meeting in January. Sherry and Mike are assisting again this year.

CURRENT FOCUS:

☐ Resurface Conference:

- There are currently at least 20 registered and we hope there will be additional community interest following the article in The Globe on Sep. 16. The congregation is still encouraged to share information about this conference with friends, family, neighbors, & coworkers.
- The committee is still looking for men to assist with serving and clean-up.

☐ Wednesday Connect:

- There was a nice turn-out the first week!
Pastor John tied the pilot episode of the Andy Griffith Show into theological lesson and scripture. Amy enjoyed a lesson, activity, games and gym time with the younger children.

(continued from p.12)

Missions:

- Operation Christmas Child (OCC) donations are being taken. More jump ropes will be made on Oct. 6.
- A Noisy Offering will be collected on Oct. 11. These funds will be used to purchase soccer balls and pumps for our OCC boxes.
- Mission Haiti: A group will be coming on Nov. 15 to meet with Sunday School kids, preach and provide a meal.

CUTTING EDGE ISSUES:

- ☐ Pat Grimmus and Mike Brignac volunteered to help with a church walk-thru with Chad and Pastor John. The interior and exterior will be observed for possible repairs, updates, needs, etc.
- ☐ Line of Credit: Bank has all relevant financial information and Mike B. is waiting to hear back. Once he does, it will be brought to the Council.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

- ☐ The first projector for the Fellowship Hall has been purchased for \$2749. We are still \$1200 short on the second projector and welcome any additional donations towards its purchase. These projectors will be in place for the Resurface Conference.
- ☐ We celebrate a positive net total on our finances last month!
- ☐ Our net total of 2026 YTD versus 2025 YTD is less than \$5000 off; however, we still owe \$12,000 in apportionments for 2026.

Next meeting: **Tuesday, Oct. 20**

(date altered due to MEA break and preparations for Resurface Conference)

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Shirbroun, FUMC Covenant Council Recording Secretary

Additional Information on Finances:

We have closed the past two months in the black; we are grateful for the increased giving. We know that September will be tight as we purchase items for the fall kickoff.

Second, we are still short \$1300 for the second projector for the Social Hall.

Happy Birthday!

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Dennis Bonsma | 9 Linda Doeden | 24 Sherry Benton |
| Jayse Geertsema | 11 Jaelynn Johnson | Anita Leach |
| Shelly Klooster | 13 Sullivan Erlandson | Taya Oberloh |
| 2 Cheryl Bonsma | 14 Micah Langendorfer | 25 Ben Wieneke |
| Nicole Grimmus | 16 Huck Heidebrink | 26 Craig Carlson |
| 7 Eldon Bents | Noah Reyne | 27 Denise Schlichte |
| Angeline Cunningham | 17 Shannon Klooster | 28 Logan Kluever |
| 8 Tom Vagt | 21 Galen Bents | 30 Steve Leach |
| | 22 Alyssa Hietbrink | |

Happy Anniversary!

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4 Trevor & Erin Nickel | 16 Shawn & Kelly Kluever |
| 6 Kevin & Brenda DeSmith | 29 Dale & Mary VanHorsen |

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:	Jenna Ahlers
Custodians:	Sarah & Chad Nickel

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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	October 4	Deb Steinle	Rick Dalrymple
Sunday	October 11	Deb Steinle	Rick Dalrymple
Sunday	October 18	Kari Meyer	Claire Meyer
Sunday	October 25	Kari Meyer	Claire Meyer
First UMC		Greeting Team	
Sunday	October 4	Andy & Cindy Ekedahl	
Sunday	October 11	Ryan & Naomi Hill	
Sunday	October 18	Kathy Gallagher & Beth Habicht	
Sunday	October 25	Kurt & Melissa Geertsema	



Prayers for health concerns:

Gordon Moore	Rod Behrends
Ron Husenga	
Chris Nelson	Virgle Buck
Logan Waldner	
Kristin (Dalrymple) Amundson	Julie (Ginny Tate's sister)
Carol Oberloh	Galen Benton
Rylie Olson's grandpa	Kari Meyer's father
Preston Smith (Pastor's friend)	



Those dealing with cancer:

Christopher Brown	Shellie Williams	Mike Miller
Marion Reitsma (friend of Jolene Kuhl)	Stacey White	
Nicole Bonsma (mother of Dennis & Cheryl Bonsma's grandson)		

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...

Giving thanks & praying for:

Our farmers during this Harvest 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...

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

LaDee Grant

Sibley Specialty Care Center

Norma Swenson

Adrian UMC:

Mary Jane Brown Ctr (Luverne)

Mary Prins

Adrian Country Living Cottage