Monthly Newsletter

United Methodist Church

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October 2026

Office hours
Tues-Thurs
9 am –3 pm
754-4247

Staff
Rev. Nicole
Schwartz-Eck

Church Secretary
Carrie Hancock

Custodian
Integrated Life Choices
Call Church Office

Committee Chairpersons:

Admin Council
Bob Rasmussen

Board of Trustees
Doug Voigt

Finance
Dave Harrington

Staff/Parish Relations
Tom Knutson

Worship
Darla Voigt

Mission-Outreach

UMM
Jeremiah Eck

UWF
Deb Wells

Education
Nancy Harrington

October gives us several opportunities to remember what it means to be the church. We celebrate World Communion Sunday, recognize Laity Sunday, prepare for Halloween, and look ahead to All Saints' Day.

On World Communion Sunday, we remember that we are part of a worldwide family of faith. We may worship in different places and have different traditions, but we share one Lord and one faith.

Laity Sunday reminds us that everyone has a place and a purpose in the church. The dictionary definition of laity is, "the people of a religious faith as distinguished from its clergy" (Merriam-Webster). So, on Laity Sunday, we celebrate "all y'all"—everyone who is not the clergy or pastor of the congregation. Whether we teach, sing, greet, serve on a committee, help with meals, visit others, care for our building, pray, or simply offer encouragement, our gifts matter. Whether serving in an "official capacity" or not, the laity make the church a community of faith. We are also called to invite others to discover their place and gifts within the church. As our church prepares for Charge Conference, there may be specific ways that you are being asked to serve, either because of your interests and experiences, or because of gifts that you have identified or gifts that others have identified in you. I hope that you will prayerfully consider saying yes. Also, mark your calendars for November 15th and consider heading to Charge Conference in Columbus. Carpooling will be available!

During October, we don't only celebrate the laity in our church today. As we approach All Saints' Day, we remember those who came before us and helped shape our faith and our congregation. We remember relationships, service, examples, and care, and we recognize those who have died in the last year. Many of them have had a tremendous impact on our lives, and we continue their legacy. They made room for us, and now we have the opportunity to make room for those who come after us.

Even Halloween is a time we can make space for others and be reminded of what true Christian hospitality looks like. Whether we are participating in the community events, church trunk-or-treats, or handing out candy from the comfort of our homes, these activities can provide an opportunity to create a safe, welcoming environment for families as they celebrate Halloween and an opportunity to practice hospitality as we interact with families. We can share the gospel of Jesus Christ, more through our actions than our words, at least for one night (or nights, depending on the volume of activities you participate in).

There are two things that stand out for me as I reflect on what this experience can be:

1. We might not always know who we are welcoming. We get an opportunity to not only welcome those we know, but the stranger, the wanderer, or the "other" whoever that might be. Now it might be a costume that hides an identity, or it might be that we truly don't know someone because they wear other "masks" in life, so this reminder isn't just for the upcoming celebrations but for every day of our lives. So we get to truly WELCOME everyone! There were times throughout scripture when welcome or greetings were extended to the stranger and it turned out to be a blessed event.
2. We always know what's behind the mask. This truly goes hand in hand with #1. We will see goblins, ghouls, witches, famous people, and cartoon characters. From the cute to the scary, the children (and adults) are still people behind the masks. They are still people who are created in the image of God no matter what mask they put on the outside. And God loves them! Even when they act like some of the less favorable costumes they might choose. God loves them! And so do we. This is one of the truest statements of our faith life. This love, God's love through Jesus Christ, is extended to each and every one of us and we have an opportunity to extend it to others!

October is a full month of life and ministry! I pray that we are reminded of who we are in Christ and what it looks like to live our lives in him every day through these celebrations.

Blessings,
Pastor Nicole

October

Oct 1st	Community Office Hours: 8am-11am at Bedhead	Oct 18th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10:00am Children's Church during Worship
Oct 4th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10:00am- Communion Children's Church during Worship World Communion Sunday Special offering	Oct 20th	UWF meeting 1:30pm
Oct 7th	Youth Group 6:30pm	Oct 21st	Youth Group 6:30pm
Oct 8th	Community Office Hours: 8am-? at Bedhead	Oct 22nd	Community Office Hours: 8am-11am at Bedhead
Oct 11th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10:00am Children's Church during Worship	Oct 25th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10:00am Children's Church during Worship Nursing Home Services: 1:30pm Brookefield 2:30pm Matelyn
Oct 13th	Crafting Group 1:30pm	Oct 25-28th	Orders & Fellowship- Pastor Nicole in Kansas
Oct 14th	Youth Group 6:30pm Admin Council Charge/Church meeting 7:30pm	Oct 28th	Youth Group 6:30pm
Oct 15th	Community Office Hours: 8am-11am at Bedhead	Oct 29th	Community Office Hours: 8am-11am at Bedhead
Oct 17th	UMC helps at Food Pantry 9-11am	Oct 31st	Boo Bash at School- 5pm-6:30pm

Reminder: October is Pastor Appreciation Month!!

Teacher's Prayers

At St. Paul United Methodist Church, we have made a commitment to our local schools. As we have done in the past, we will start our weekly prayers for the teachers and school staff for the school year. If you know of teachers from our congregation that teach at other districts or substitute teachers that would not be listed on the St. Paul district website, please let Pastor Nicole or the church office know so we can add them to our teacher prayers. *Thank You!*

October 4th: Amanda Lawver, Tammy Wilshusen, Danika Woodgate, Jessica Usasz, Mandy Richter
October 11th: Steph Grabowski, Steve Goodbody, Jody Hazen, Jackson Seward, Stacy Keller
October 18th: Janessa Slattery, Cora Menke, Anna Seward, Kurt Harders, Breana Keeling, Cara Lemburg
October 25th: Travis Brouillette, Connor Klecan, Libby Beck, Don Kleinsasser, Stacy Vogel, Luke Thompson

October Birthdays

Oct 4	Ann Tuma	Oct 17	Marilyn Brehm
Oct 7	Nicole Schwartz-Eck	Oct 18	CaLee Thomsen
Oct 11	Linda Jacobsen	Oct 21	Don Berggren
Oct 12	Sheila Studley	Oct 22	Carol Phillips
Oct 12	Cleo Edwards	Oct 25	Carol Bushhousen
Oct 13	Hensley Pearson	Oct 25	Milo Syring
Oct 13	Jennifer Mitteis	Oct 25	Kaitlyn Kezior
Oct 16	Arianne Killinger	Oct 28	Susie Wolfert

October Anniverseries

Oct 8	Mike & Nancy McCarthy
Oct 13	Tim & Susan Ross
Oct 19	Mac & Arianne Killinger
Oct 19	Chris & Erika Klassen
Oct 24	Nick Pedersen & Susie Wolfert

September

Attendance

September 6th:	30 In-person 12 Views/YouTube
September 13th:	54 In-person 23 Views/YouTube
September 20th:	54 In-person 15 Views/YouTube
September 27th:	49 In-person 25 Views/YouTube

Offering

September 6th: $1,993

September 13th: $4,688

September 20th: $1,549

September 27th: Not yet deposited

Financial Update

At our recent finance committee meeting several members mentioned that we need to do a better job of updating the membership about our financial condition as a church. Giving year to date is down almost $10,000 compared to the same time period last year (January-August). While this includes the summer months, where attendance usually falls off, the reduction in giving was a little bit of a surprise to the committee. Expenses are down slightly which has helped. As we usually do during the summer, we have borrowed money from ourselves, including recently from our Memorial Fund to meet our summer obligations. We plan to do a fund raising campaign this fall to try and finish the year with enough funds to meet all of our obligations. You will receive a letter in October with more information concerning our church's financial condition along with a request for each of you to share any financial help you might be able to provide along with an approximate time. The financial committee is well aware of the impact higher expenses have had on all of us and know it will impact what your response will be. A response form will be included along with a small envelope for you to return to the church as soon as possible so that we can plan ways to meet our year end obligations. As always, your generosity to our church is amazing and we look forward to hearing back from you.

Please contact me if you have additional questions-

Dave Harrington: 308-750-5310

Christmas Cheer

The 2026 Christmas Cheer Program is underway in Howard County, once again helping families who might not otherwise be able to afford Christmas gifts.

Applications will be available beginning October 15, 2026 here at the United Methodist Church, Citizens Bank and Trust, 721 7th Street, and the Chamber of Commerce office, 619 Howard Avenue. Again this year, an online application option will also be available through the Chamber's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/st.paulchamber. To qualify as a gift recipient, completed applications must be returned to the Methodist Church in St. Paul by Thursday, November 19th prior to 3pm or online by midnight of the same day.

As in years past, families will receive gift cards to Home Plate Market.

Distribution of gifts will take place on Friday, December 18, 2026, between 11 a.m.and 1 p.m. at the Methodist Church in St. Paul.

Community members are encouraged to help by purchasing gifts for children or families, with a suggested $30–$35 value per gift. Gift tags will be available at Citizens Bank, where a tree will also hold your donations of mittens, hats, socks, and stocking caps beginning the first week in December. Gift tags for the UMC congregation will be made available in the church fellowship hall at that time also. Financial contributions may also be made directly to the Christmas Cheer account at Citizens Bank and Trust.

SAVE THE DATE: To kick off our fundraising, we are hosting a soup supper at the St. Paul United Methodist Church on Wednesday, November 11th. It will be a freewill donation with proceeds going to the Christmas Cheer account. More details will be available soon.

For more information, contact the United Methodist Church in St. Paul at 308-754-4247 during business hours, Tuesday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Update on Home Groups

Our 3 church Home groups have been active for the past three years, usually meeting once a month for about 2 hours during the fall and winter months. The meetings were held either in the homes of the host couples or hostess and later in a church meeting room. The meetings included a pot-luck meal or light snacks with a social time, a Christian lesson based on Biblical scripture, group discussion, prayer, and sometimes a fun game. Host couples were Dave and Nancy Harrington, Doug and Darla Voigt, Gary and Charlene Craig, and hostess Dorthea Fairbanks.

We have really appreciated these dedicated volunteers and are so grateful and thankful of their time and effort. However, each of these people can no longer host the Home group meetings due to active involvement in other church activities or personal family issues.

Therefore, we regret that there will not be any Home group meetings for the rest of the 2026 year.

We are considering the possibility of combining the 3 groups into 1 group, starting again in January and meeting in the church fellowship hall, possibly after Sunday church services. The suggested lesson topic might be the Lenten season to coincide with Pastor Nicole's Sunday sermons.

If you would be interested in joining this gathering in 2027 or could help coordinate or lead the group, please contact Pastor Nicole, the church office, or Charlene Craig at (308)750-6377.

2026-2027 United Methodist Youth Group Meals

Youth Group began on August 19th. Every Wednesday, Youth Group begins with a meal and fellowship. We are once again asking for people to help supply these meals and desserts. There is a Sign-Up Genius that has been created for those that would like to help in this ministry. It is a huge help for our Youth group leaders to have this provided. Any questions, you may ask Nancy Harrington, Pastor Nicole, or give the church office a call. Click the link below or use the QR code to take a look at the Sign-Up Genius to see available dates and to sign up.

Youth Group Meals 2026-27

United Methodist Church Prayer Chain

The purpose of the prayer chain is to offer special prayers for individuals in critical need. The chain cannot be activated without the permission of the family in need. Call prayer requests to the church office 754-4247.
The prayer request will be called to the first person on these lists.
Each caller then calls the next person on the list. If that person is unavailable, a call should be placed to the following name and contact made with the first party later in the day.
Last name on list does not call anyone. We are in need of more people joining the prayer chain.
Praying for each other is an important ministry that we can do for our church family.
If you would be interested in becoming part of this mission, please contact the church office.
We are in need of more people joining the prayer chain. All you have to do is pray for someone as the requests are made. **Please consider this request to help.**

Deb Wells	**754-5620**	**Martha Voigt**	**750-4319**	**Jackie Cook**	**754-9115**
Nancy Harrington	750-0279	Darla Voigt	750-1401	Charlene Craig	754-5503
Theda Van Horn	754-4541	Rose Ross	754-4993	Mary Pearson	(308)-223-0001
Cleo Edwards	754-4853	Cherri & Scott Klinginsmith	750-0615	Brenda Starkey	750-7967
Nancy **OR** Mike McCarthy	Nancy-750-2117 Mike (775)830-9521	Charlotte Rasmussen	(308)-968-3375	Becky Schwenk	750-4590
Sheila Studley	750-6973	Susan Hartley	(641)-485-7349	Lory Thomsen	754-4286
Marilyn Wall	754-5100	Robyn Dvoracek	754-8468		

Sunday

Worship time
10:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study
Sunday morning 9:00 am

Children's Education
Children's Church
-during Worship service

Churches Praying for Churches

Every year each church receives a list of UMC churches to pray over each week. Please join us in lifting these churches up in prayer this month.

Oct 4th– Osceola First/Shelby
Oct 11th – Polk/Stromsburg
Oct 18th – Epworth Village
Oct 25th– St. Paul Ne

Food Pantry

The Food Pantry here in St. Paul is always looking for food donations. Please help us stock the shelves. Any food or paper item is accepted but these items are in high demand every month.

Jello– Strawberry
Ketchup and Mustard
Laundry Soap-small bottles
Mayo
Sugar
Brownie mixes
Jelly
Cookies
Cereal
Crackers–
**Salad & Soup- (Saltines)
Dish Soap
Flour
Hamburger Helper
Pancake Mix
Juice
Pork & Beans
Pudding-Instant-Chocolate
Syrup
Shampoo
Conditioner
Toilet Paper
Salad Dressing-(Ranch,Dorothy Lynch)
Frosting
Cake Mixes
Spaghetti Sauce
Toothpaste
Canned Fruit

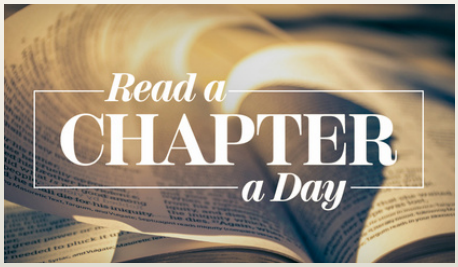
The United Methodist Church is responsible for operating the Food Pantry every third Saturday from 9-11 am. If you could volunteer to help any one of these Saturdays, it would be greatly appreciated. ***October 17th*** will be the next work date. Precautions are taken to insure the health and protection of both the worker and the consumer.

Food Pantry Hours

Saturday
9:00-11:00 am

Tuesday
4:00-6:00 pm

February is the month for United Methodist Church to donate to the Food Pantry.



Let's join together with those across the United Methodist Church as well as our congregation in reading a chapter of Scripture a day. This journey begins September 8th and goes through October 19th. We'll journey through Galatians, Ephesians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. You can register at https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/read-a-chapter-a-day or simply pick up a reading guide at church. If there is interest, we could gather weekly to discuss the readings. I will also post some reflection questions to our church Facebook page each week as we journey together!

-Pastor Nicole

United Women in Faith Minutes
September 15th, 2026
1:30 p.m.

Deb Wells called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. followed by members reciting the Purpose of the United Women in Faith. Ursula gave devotions including a reading from The Advancing Star. Prayer concerns include Mary Pearson, Ursula's neighbor and Jennifer Christensen. Also prayers of thanksgiving for good test results for Charlene Craig. Minutes from the August meeting were read and approved as read.

Jackie gave the treasurer's report. Income from lunch in August, $59. As reported last month, $50 was sent to Epworth. leaving a balance on hand of $910.51.No outstanding bills. Cleo Edwards has been a faithful servant for many years mailing in the Best Choice labels for reimbursement. She reported recently that the cost of postage has increased substantially. She also has had some recent health issues and feels she is no longer able to continue collecting and mailing these labels. Theda Van Horn made a motion and Rose Ross seconded, to reimburse Cleo for recent postage expenses. We also will take over the responsibility of trimming and mailing these labels. For every thousand labels sent in, our group receives $30.

No Correspondence received or sent.

Old business: There were 8 present at our first crafting day. It was decided that we will continue meeting monthly on the second Tuesday of each month. We begin at 1:30, everyone is welcome.

A second gazing ball has been ordered. There will be an article about this at a later date.

Deb reminded everyone of the Fall Gathering meeting on October 12th in Hastings, contact her if interested.

The sign up sheet was passed around for Fellowship, hosting on the third Sunday of each month.

New business: Carol shared that there is a soup supper planned for November 11th. It will be a freewill donation with proceeds going towards Christmas Cheer. More details will be available soon.

Church activities: UMC help at Food Pantry September 19

Community Office Hours 8:00-11:00 each Thursday at Bedhead

Not certain of dates for Care Facility services

Breakfast Church on September 27th

Charlene shared that the family group format may be changing.

More discussion will take place and details will soon be announced.

The meeting was closed with Darla giving the lesson on The Power of Gratitude

The next meeting will be held on October 20th. Charlene will give devotions, Ursula will serve lunch. For our lesson we will make noodles for purchase at the Christmas Cheer soup supper.

Submitted by Carol Phillips

Next UWF meeting:
October 20th at 1:30pm
All ladies welcome!

Thank you for reading!

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October