

High Street UMC

Tower Topics



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Our Vision

High Street United Methodist Church nurtures disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, **love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously** in our local communities and in worldwide connections.

Office Hours

Mon-Thurs: 9am - 3pm

Closed Friday

You will need to be buzzed in the door

765-747-8500

High Street United Methodist Church
219 S. High St., Muncie, IN 47305

Join Us For Sunday Worship

10am Traditional Worship Service

And livestream on Facebook and YouTube

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com>

HighStreetUMChurch

YouTube: [bitly.videohighstreet](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bitly.videohighstreet)

From Pastor Teri

Supporting UMCOR

For the third year in a row, I'm writing about supporting UMCOR in March & April. Our March and April bucket offerings are for UMCOR (the United Methodist Committee on Relief), One Great Hour of Sharing. This is High Street's only "global" mission offering, and the only one specific to a United Methodist agency or cause, other than the Bishop's Christmas offering on Christmas Eve.*

I am particularly passionate about UMCOR, both because of the great work it does and because it is rated as a 5-star charity by both Charity Navigator and CharityWatch.

When a natural or human-caused disaster strikes inside the United States, UMCOR works with local Annual Conference disaster response ministries to provide financial and physical support. Outside the United States, UMCOR serves as the primary channel for United Methodist assistance. In the short term, UMCOR provides financial assistance, and in the long term, UMCOR works with local partners toward recovery and reconstruction. Together, we are rebuilding hope in the lives of those in need all over the world. UMCOR is "in early" and is often one of the last assistance organizations to leave.

UMCOR was created to respond to the needs of human anguish by working globally to alleviate suffering and advance hope and healing. UMCOR is organized into programmatic areas focused on U.S and international response and recovery, sustainable development, global health, and migration. Each area is founded on the belief that positive, sustainable change is best done alongside and in support of communities. Our generosity in supporting UMCOR in March and April

underwrites the “costs of doing business,” allowing UMCOR to keep the promise that 100% of any gift to a specific UMCOR project will go toward that project, not administrative costs. The work of UMCOR is managed through the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM).

Join me in March and April in supporting “One Great Hour of Caring” for UMCOR.

*The Bishop’s Christmas Offering seeks to strengthen ministries around the world by financially supporting their efforts to reach out to and improve the lives of young people.

January 2026 Financial Update

As previously announced, the Church Council approved a 2026 budget of \$544,554, which again was a “meet-the-needs as is” budget. We’ve received \$330,134 in pledges for 2026. We’ll report our monthly income, which will include any one-time gifts, as well as money provided by the trustees from their accounts to cover some of our building expenses and some of the money from the Foundation grant, against both numbers.

We’re starting 2026 in good shape. Our giving trends are unusual because so many give through RMDs, QCDs, and other annual tax-minimizing means – usually at the beginning or end of the year. Our giving for January reflected that trend, and was \$64,598. This included funds we received at year-end 2025, designated for 2026 pledges. This means our giving was \$19,218 more than the \$45,380 that’s 1/12 of \$544,554. Our expenses were up in January due to weather, some

annual fees, and three payroll periods. They were \$45,380. This meant our expenses were \$9197 less than our giving.

The \$125,000 grant from the Foundation, provided at year-end 2024, for the projected gap between giving and budget in 2025, is still invested at White River. We anticipate needing it (and more) this year to cover the \$214,420 gap (\$17,868/mo.) between our budget and our pledges. But we know you are a generous congregation, and we are a people of faith.

We encourage you to keep up your support as 2026 continues. You may give online at www.highstreetumc.breezechms.com/give/online . You may also text your offering to 765/222-5007, or mail your checks to the church at 219 S. High Street, Muncie, IN 47305. As always, you may bring your offering or pledge form into the church in person; we'd love to see and talk with you. If you're able to give extra, please prayerfully consider doing so. Your support means everything.

January 2026 (& YTD) Financial Snapshot:

Budgeted: \$45,380 (1/12 of \$544,554)

Pledged for 2026: \$27,511 (1/12 of \$330,134)

Actual income: \$64,598

Expenses: \$55,401

Net Income (Jan): \$9197

Update on Trial (Rowls Trust)

We still don't have much to report. Both the church and the Attorney General filed their proposed Statements of Fact and Findings of Law to the Court in mid-February. It's now in the Court's (Judge's) hands as to

when she will rule, and we will have a decision. Our attorneys do not believe any decision we receive is probably worth appealing (by either side). The law is difficult, and it will be a close call. Our proposed findings stressed Garth Rowls' love of High Street UMC, and the Attorney General's stressed Mr. Rowls' desire to support scholarships. Now, we wait.

The Paschal Candle

Just a reminder that, as per tradition, we'll not be lighting the Paschal candle (the tall white candle next to the lectern) during Lent. This is a reminder of the penitential season we observe during Lent – much like “burying” the Alleluias. We'll re-light the Paschal candle on Easter.

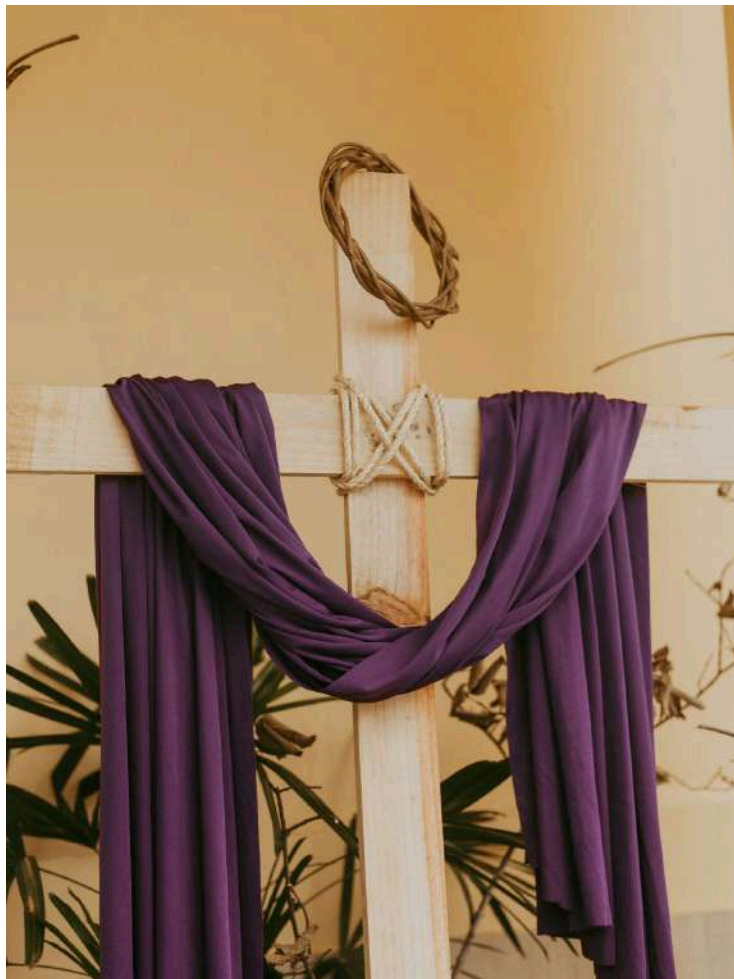
A Reminder About the Worship Slides

A few of you have wondered in the past about the slides used in worship. The background color is based on the liturgical color of the season. We've chosen an “unbusy” pattern to make it as easy as possible to read the slides. I eliminated the distracting “stained glass” and similar backgrounds after I arrived.

Worship slides are part of the worship arts used in the service. We do all we can to balance the needs of the congregation with creating a worshipful space. We will not be going to black and white slides (except where liturgically appropriate, e.g., Good Friday). We provide the text for the scripture and the interactive portions of the service in the bulletin, which is also available in the e-newsletter on Fridays before Sunday's service. Thank you for your understanding.

Tech Issues

We've experienced an unusual number of problems with our livestreaming technology. We don't know why. We've had our internet/computer consultants in, and our livestream consultants in. They don't know why. Both groups have set up software on our livestream computer to monitor it remotely to see if anything is "glitching" before, during, or after a service. I promise you: we're doing everything we can to make certain the livestream works. As a side note, we'd love to have additional people who know how to run the livestream and who have tech experience to assist with our tech team.



From Pastor Colin

I've been watching how my parents have chosen to live recently. After a heart attack, my dad has taken up running and is in better shape than he ever was. He's semi-retired, so he's had plenty to do around the house and the camper. My stepmom has always been an artist and has been a lot more creative and productive recently, even remaking some studio space. Both of them lead in local organizations, including their Lutheran church, and go to all of the basketball games, concerts, and camping weekends that they want.

Also, recently retired and relocated, my stepdad can now golf whenever he wants. He's found a business in their new community where he can assist, but it's on his own schedule. Mom retired at the same time, but will be starting soon with one of our United Methodist organizations and traveling all over her new District and the Conference. Together, they used to be half of a gospel quartet, so I'm sure the choir in their new UM congregation will benefit. And they've got all the time now to visit family, have dinner with friends, or drive to Florida.

How are you spending your days? I can't say I'm not a little envious of my folks and their freedom. But to their credit, in all their retirements and their working days, my folks have always been leaders in their congregations and all over their communities.

Leading, in those contexts, often means being a lead volunteer. When there's an event, my folks have set up before and cleaned up after. If there's a board that makes decisions, my folks have been on it. Fundraisers? Check, not even counting ones for their kids and grandkids. Newsletters and media? Check. Taking minutes or folding mailers? Check. From the outside, anyone would say my folks are busy,

active leaders in the places they work and serve. They would say they're just doing what they want and supporting the things they believe in.

So, again, how are you spending your days? Some of us are working; some have family commitments; some have circumstances that obligate us to certain things or ways of being. None of us can do everything that we want to do. But I hope that, in the time you have, you are doing what you want to do, and that what you want to do is something that glorifies God and serves your neighbors.

If you need some help with how to best fill your time, let's talk!

You'll see information in this newsletter about our Thursday Lunch, and about various ministries and missions of High Street. The first thing to say about all that is thank you! Thank you to everyone who is leading, volunteering, and supporting the good work we share. The second thing to say is that there are opportunities in any of our missions and ministries for your contribution! We have sufficient support for our present moment, but there's always room for more. And, like anything, the future requires new leadership and volunteers. Who is watching, and who will inherit the best of where we've been?

We have stories to tell about the difference our faith and our efforts have made. We have stories to tell about the ways that our neighbors and we have been shaped by our work together. We look to examples, living and past, of leadership and faithfulness. In whatever capacity we have, may we be a good example of service to God and neighbor.

Men's Breakfast

Join us for the March Methodist Men's Breakfast as we celebrate the arrival of spring on the 18th at 8:00 AM. Enjoy delicious food and great fellowship while listening to insightful thoughts shared by Jim Cartwright. We will conclude by 9:00 AM, giving you plenty of time to attend to your springtime responsibilities. We hope to see you there!

Ruth Circle - Thank you

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the bakers, sellers, and buyers who contributed to our Bake Sale's tremendous success. The High Street Pantry and the Samaritan funds greatly appreciate your generosity. Many blessings, Barrie Robinson, Ruth Circle.



March Wisdom People

Elvera Nichols will be 101 years old on March 5th

and

Shirley Taylor will be 97 on March 7th.

MARCH 15 – POTLUCK SUNDAY LUNCH

The High Street UMC's first potluck of 2026 will take place immediately after worship on March 15.

The Fellowship Team is counting on all the wonderful High Street cooks and bakers to provide an abundance of delicious food for everyone to enjoy. Salads, entrees, desserts, appetizers, breads, and side dishes are all needed.

Do you have a recipe you would like to try? Do you want to bake a scrumptious dessert, but don't want to have too many leftovers tempting you? This potluck is for you! Food can be homemade, store-bought or even a combination of the two.

As a courtesy to those with food allergies and intolerances, we are asking that an ingredient list be provided with each item brought, if possible.

Share your bounty with the church family!

Come one and come all. It will be a great day of sharing and fellowship.

Please contact the church office with any questions.

THANK YOU

The Coffee Bar in the Gathering Place operates only because of the help of many volunteers. We wanted to take this opportunity to thank the following people for their contributions in 2025:

Barbara Ballard, Ann Barnell, Ann Briggs, Josiah Bricker, Eunice Bryant, Carol Casazza, Connie Crabtree, Joel and Cynthia Dale, Doug and Linda Ferguson, Zula Ferguson, Mary Le Glore, Glenna Herker, Donna McNary, Bob and Kay Mingle, Stacey Myers, Barbara Pavey, Janie Pegg, Linda Pohly, Sherry Riggan, Jim Schneider, Ken and Barb Schuck, Ruth Swetnam, Don and Rinda Vogelgesang, Gail Werner, Dick and Rhonda Williams.

We also appreciate the contributions provided by the Bethany Class.

Some of our 2025 volunteers will not be available in 2026, and we want to express our gratitude for their past help with great appreciation.

If you are not on this list, would you enjoy helping with this ministry that brings joy to so many? It is easy! Sign-up sheets are on the coffee bar. If you have any questions, please ask Doug or Linda Ferguson. There is a place for you!

Are You Reading *Tower Topics*?

We're not sure whether our monthly newsletter still has a place in the life of the church. Can you let us know if you're reading the monthly *Tower Topics*? A great deal of time and effort goes into writing, formatting, publishing, and printing *Tower Topics* each month. In our era of decreasing resources - especially staff resources - we need to make certain the limited time our staff has is directed to places and activities that make the most difference in the life of the church, its members, and our shared mission.

**MARCH
2026**

High Street UMC

Children, Youth, & Family

219 : YOUTH @ 5PM!

•MARCH 1:
BOWLING

•MARCH 8:
Easter Activity Fun!

•MARCH 15:
No Youth

•MARCH 22:
MOVIE NIGHT (Easter)

•MARCH 29:
EASTER SERVICE PROJECT!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Every Sunday @ 9 am in Room G1

March 1 - Jesus Is Our Perfect Prophet

March 8 - Jesus Was Anointed

March 15 - Jesus Shared a Last Meal &
Jesus Was Arrested

March 22 - Jesus Is Our Perfect Priest &
Jesus Was Put on Trial

March 29 - Jesus Was Crucified &
Jesus Was Raised

**IMPORTANT!!
JOIN US FOR OUR
PALM PARADE!**

**MARCH 29TH
@ 10AM**

ACOLYTES: MARCH 2026

MARCH 1 •
JOSIAH BRICKER
JOSEPH BRICKER

MARCH 8 •
LEO FURLONG
DEAN WERNER

MARCH 15 •
SAM ATKINSON
JOSIAH BRICKER

MARCH 22 •
SOPHIA TAPY-HARRISON
ESTHER FURLONG

MARCH 29:
JOSEPH BRICKER
LEO FURLONG

IT'S TIME!!
TO SIGN UP FOR
CHURCH CAMP!!



SEE MS. JOY FOR
INFORMATION!!

JBRICKER@MUNCIEHIGHSTREET.COM

High Street Movie Night
Friday March 13th @ 6pm

Disney
SECRETARIAT



\$5 per person • \$20 max per family
RSVP to Ms. Joy by March 11th!

Note: Rated PG:
Visit Common Sense Media to see if this movie is a good fit for your family!

March 2026

High Street Movie Night

SECRETARIAT

Friday March 13th @ 6pm



Need to contact Joy?
jbricker@munciehighstreet.com

\$5 per person • \$20 max per family
RSVP to Ms. Joy by March 11th!

Pizza
Popcorn
Pop
Treat

Note: Rated PG:
Visit Common Sense Media to see if this movie is a good fit for your family!

ANGELS ON HIGH PRESCHOOL & PDO

A SPECIAL MINISTRY OF HSUMC

Contact Information

If you have any question or concerns please contact the Director, Elisha Lynn by email

aohpreschool@munciehighstreet.com or by phone 765-216-7919.

AOH will be closed for Spring Break March 23-27. We will be completing building maintenance during that time.

Thank you to Bethany's Sunday school class for generously purchasing a 5 gallon bucket of laundry detergent for our preschool. We had another successful fundraiser! We sold 60 5 gallon buckets! We appreciate your support!



• PDO Snack Donations & Preschool Scholarship Donations are always accepted & appreciated!

• Angels on High is a **non-profit** preschool & child care service. Our mission at AOH is to provide high quality early childhood education & care to the children in our community.

• Please visit Angels on High Preschool & PDO Amazon Wish List

• https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/NV9WOM2YARZE?ref=wl_share



Preschool Registration for the 2026-27 school year has started. Enrollment is based on the day and time we receive the preschool registration form and fee. Preschool classes will begin on August 24, 2026. Please feel free to share our preschool information. The greatest compliment you can give us is the referral of your family and friends. Thank you for loving and supporting Angels on High. We look forward to another great year!



High Street Church Staff

Lead Pastor: Rev. Teri Crouse
tcrouse@munciehighstreet.com

Associate Pastor: Rev. Colin Cress
ccress@munciehighstreet.com

Church Administrator and Finance Director: Diana Smiley
dsmiley@munciehighstreet.com

Children's, Youth & Family Ministries Director: Joy Bricker
jbricker@munciehighstreet.com

Angels on High Preschool Director: Elisha Lynn
aohpreschool@munciehighstreet.com

Director of Music: Dr. Andrew Crow
andrew.crow.dma@gmail.com

Organist: Dr. Sally Kang
Soyeon.Kang@bsu.edu

Handbell Director: Dr. Ann Hicks
amhicks2@bsu.edu

Worship Schedule March Worship

March 1	Heart-to-Heart Talks Holy Communion Hush-Hush John 3:1-17
March 8	Heart-to-Heart Talks Well, Actually.... John 4:5-30, 39-42
March 15	Heart-to-Heart Talks So Many Questions John 9:1-41
March 22	Heart-to-Heart Talks Too Little, Too Late? John 11:1-8, 14-45
March 29	Palm/Passion Sunday The Truth Hurts Matthew 26:14-35

March General United Women of Faith Meeting and Ruth Circle Combined

Join us on Tuesday, March 10th, at 1:00 PM in The Gathering Place as Pastor Colin guides us in reflecting on this Lenten season. After the reflection, you are welcome to continue with your day or stay for our regular Ruth Circle meeting. Please note the change in time for Ruth Circle members. We look forward to seeing you.

Thursday Luncheon to Resume

We are excited to announce another year of Thursday Luncheons here at High Street. This event has been a cherished ministry of High Street for nearly 52 years! While it has evolved over the years, it continues to be a wonderful opportunity for older adults to enjoy fun and fellowship together. Our first luncheon of the year will be on March 19th. We will meet at 11:30 am, with a brief introduction and prayer before lunch is served at 11:45 am. At least once a month, we will feature a 20-minute program (approximately) after lunch has been cleared away.

One key to the longevity of the Thursday Luncheon has been the dedication of our volunteers. We are currently fortunate to have Laurah West as our wonderful cook. There are three other women (Barb Ballard, Ann Briggs, and Kris Lewis) who assist with setting the tables, helping Laurah, and managing serving and cleanup. Additionally, two fantastic gentlemen, Dave Kistler and Dick Williams, take care of the dishwasher and clean the pots and pans. We've also had 3-4 additional volunteers when possible to give Dave and Dick a much-needed break.

At this time, we are seeking new volunteers to join our team and support those of us who are still actively working. If you can help out on a Thursday between 9:00 am and about 1:00 pm, or even for part of that time, we would love to have you on board. You can volunteer just once a month, for two Thursdays, or for the whole month — any help is greatly appreciated! Please consider joining this fun and worthwhile ministry. For more information, contact Barb Ballard or Pastor Colin.