High Street UMC

Tower Topics



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July 2026

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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
Muncie High Street UMC
YouTube: http://bit.ly/4tS7Ehu

From Pastor Teri

Five Seems Like a Good Number

> "*In commitment and renewal to my covenant as a clergy person in The United Methodist Church, I now reverently and with joy, accept my appointment with a glad mind and will, and pray that I shall be worthy of my call to the ministry, my conference relationship, and the place of labor to which I have been appointed.*"

I've written a variation of this article every July since I've been here, and we're "interrupting" our series on "A Pastor's Life: Behind the Curtain" to bring it to you again.

The statement above is the vow each clergy person takes at Annual Conference during the final worship service after the Bishop announces the appointments for the year have been "fixed." It's a reminder that clergy are appointed on a year-to-year basis, even though the Cabinet tries to keep us in our appointments for lengthier periods than used to be the case.

As I write this, we just recently completed Annual Conference 2026, the appointments were fixed, and I have been reappointed to High Street UMC for 2026-27. As this comes out, we'll have hit the 4-year anniversary of my time here, and will be heading into Year 5. It's hard to believe how fast time flies.

Of course, as is true every year, things continue to change. We were fortunate to be able to share Pastor Colin as our Associate Pastor this past year with Community of Hope UMC. But the Conference is currently experiencing a bit of a clergy shortage, and he's needed – for many reasons – at Richmond Central UMC as their senior pastor. We'll miss him, as will Community of Hope, and will pray for him and Pastor Heather and their family as he commutes to Richmond while they continue to live here in Muncie.

As of right now, we will not have an associate pastor. Fortunately, our talented laity have stepped forward before to assist in leading worship, and to take leadership in many of the areas where we'd normally have pastoral oversight. You've all done a terrific job previously, and I know you will again. This is how church is supposed to work. It was never intended to be clergy-focused.

Our lay leader, Bob Myers, has agreed to take on some additional responsibilities this coming year. We'll see him preaching a bit more, and he'll take on some of the pastoral care responsibilities that Pastor Colin focused on, particularly with our homebound members and those in assisted living facilities. This will work well with Bob's strengths as he leans into his call; and his gifts, background, and training as a Stephen Minister.

We are all called into ministry through our baptisms. High Street United Methodist Church isn't about what the High Street staff and pastors are doing; it's all about what God and the members

and constituents of High Street are doing. How High Street flourishes in the coming year and beyond will be up to each person within this congregation.

Financial stability continues to be a concern for our congregation. You are a generous group of people, and I give thanks daily for it. But it takes a lot of time, talent, and resources to keep our church and building running, as we all know. We've had some generous gifts this year that have brought me to my knees in gratitude; and we've had some times when I've wondered if we would be able to pay our bills and payroll. I continue to lean on God's providence as God reminds me time and time again that God will provide. The decision of Judge Calhoun on the Foundation's petition to divide the Rowls Trust may provide us with some breathing space, but it will not solve our financial issues.

We've had a good four years of ministry together. It's true I've wondered and prayed during this past year about whether it was time for me to retire, and for High Street to have a new pastoral leader. But I discerned, with the help of God and the Spirit, that we still had some ministry to do together, and I look forward with joy to another fruitful year with you.

<u>May 2026 Financial Update</u>
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 2024 Foundation grant, against both numbers.

As previously noted, our giving trends are unusual, because so many folks give through RMDs, QCDs, and other annual tax-minimizing means – usually at the beginning or end of the year. Such beginning of the year giving has come to an end. Our income for May was $39,599. This means our May income was $5781 less than the $45,380 that's 1/12 of our $544,554 budget. Our expenses were $34,962, considerably lower than usual. This meant our monthly expenses were $4637 less than our income.

Our YTD income (including the one-time extravagant gift in February) is $248,422, which is $21,522 more than the $226,900 we have budgeted YTD. Expenses YTD are $220,012, which is $28,410 less than our YTD income, and $6888 less than we had budgeted for YTD. There were no extraordinary or unusual expenses during May (in fact, they were lower than usual).

As reported in last month's *Tower Topics*, Judge Calhoun issued her decision in the Foundation's case, granting the petition seeking to divide the Rowls Trust in half (half to remain subject to the original terms of the gift, and half to become an unrestricted trust). This will not solve our financial difficulties, but may provide some breathing space as we continue to move forward in prayer and planning for our future.

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 into 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.

May 2026 Financial Snapshot:
Budgeted: $45,380 (1/12 of $544,554)
Pledged for 2026: $27,511 (1/12 of $330,134)
Actual income: $39,599
Expenses: $34,962
Net Income (May): $4637

YTD 2026 Financial Snapshot:
Budgeted YTD: $226,900 (5/12 of $544,554)
Pledged YTD: $137,555 (5/12 of $330,134)
Income YTD: $248,422
Expenses YTD: $220,012
Net Income YTD: $21,522 (Budget v. Income)

Thank You to All for VBS
Another year; another week of VBS. But that doesn't even begin to cover all the work, effort, laughter, and fun that goes into Vacation Bible School. We're grateful to everyone who contributed towards our week of VBS, who volunteered their time and talents, and who supported this major undertaking of our children's ministry. I particularly want to recognize Ms. Joy Bricker, who not only is the heart and soul of VBS here at High Street, but who organized and coordinated everything this year – as she does every year. Along with Ms. Joy, we want to recognize the entire Bricker family for their help and stamina throughout the week – as well as before and after.

Ms. Joy, you are a blessing to High Street and to us as you lead us in our Children's Ministries here at High Street.

New Class: Wednesday Morning Bible Study
Friends, I love teaching Bible Study classes. It's hard for me to do so here because our congregation has some strong ideas on when they want to meet. That's fair, by the way. But the times I'm available and you're available don't always match up well.

However, I'm going to teach the next class that the "Women's" Wednesday Morning Bible Study group is undertaking: *The Lord's Prayer*, using a book with that same title by Adam

Hamilton. I had originally planned to do a sermon series on this topic, but with the sermon series we'll be starting around the same time on *The Apostles' Creed*, it seemed like a lot of didactic (i.e., teaching or educational) style of preaching at once. I tend to lean toward that style anyway, so no need to push me in that direction!

This study will be six weeks long, and will begin on Wednesday, July 8 at 9:15am in the Bethany classroom on the 3rd floor. The group is generous in having others join them for individual classes, or a series. The book is available through Amazon or Cokesbury, if you'd like to join us.

Custodian Needed

As we reported previously, Joel Dale is planning to retire soon. We wish him well, and we will certainly miss him when he does. However, this leaves a critical role soon to be empty. Our best source for referrals is YOU. This is as much a ministry as a job. It would be especially suitable for someone who has already retired from a job in the school systems, the hospital (or similar setting), or a hardware store (like Lowe's), and would like a little extra money. If you know of anyone who might be interested in a part-time custodial position with the church, please have them contact either Diana Smiley or Pastor Teri directly.

Month of Transition

As our office assistant, Marilyn Peña, prepares to return home to Lafayette to be nearer to her family, we've hired a new office assistant: Emerson Cress. You probably won't see much of Emerson because the work will be done during the week, and much of it can be done from home. However, Emerson will be in the office at least once/week to enter the Sunday slides into our sanctuary computer for Sunday's service. Marilyn will be training Emerson during June and July.

We will certainly miss Marilyn, but welcome Emerson to the office staff.

Summer Sermon Series

Many of you have asked why we don't recite The Apostle's Creed, or sing the *Gloria Patri*, every week. I'm not a big fan of reciting things by rote, especially if we don't know the "why" behind the "what." So, in July and August, we'll be exploring the basic statements of our faith found in The Apostle's Creed. And yes: we'll recite it and sing the *Gloria Patri* each week. I think you'll find this sermon series interesting as we learn about our faith, and how to ask the questions behind "what we believe."

Pastor Colin

Friends at High Street, I knew that you were generous. You support mission and ministry in so many positive ways. Thank you for extending that generosity to me through the gift I received on June 21. Quite practically, it will go a long way helping me set up my parsonage in Richmond. And thank you for all your prayers, your support, and your continued faithfulness. You do well in your service to God and neighbor. Thank you for including me in that work this past year, and again in your generosity.

- Pastor Colin



Children • Youth • Family

July 2026 — High Street United Methodist Church

PRAY FOR OUR CAMPERS!!

Pray for our CAMPERS!!

We have 4 campers that will be attending one of our Indiana United Methodist Camps in June and July! Please add them to your prayers ~ that they will have a safe week, make new friends, and learn a ton about JESUS!

Esther Furlong •
Lakewood Elementary Camp

Joseph Bricker •
Camp Adventure Junior High Camp

Josiah Bricker •
Epworth Forest High School Camp

Audrey Crow •
Indicoso High School Camp

SUNDAY MORNING

- **July 5:** God Wants Us to Know Him & Jesus Gave His Followers a Mission
- **July 12:** The Disciples Replaced Judas
- **July 19:** The Holy Spirit Came
- **July 26:** Peter preached in Jerusalem

Sunday School @ 9am
Children's Church @ 10am

CONFIRMATION:

Watch your mailboxes for a special invitation for youth confirmation class! This class will start in August! See Ms. Joy with any questions!

UPCOMING FUN:

Dates to be Announced:

• Putt-Putt Youth Party!

Also (hopefully) still coming:
• Trip to Water Park
• Trip to State Park

Send Ms. Joy your vacation dates so I can try to plan accordingly!

jbricker@munciehighstreet.com
















Dear High Street Friends,

Thank you for your loving support of our 2026 Rainforest Falls VBS! The generous gifts, supplies, kind words, and volunteer hours made our week of Bible School absolutely wonderful! The parish hall was full of 35 little people laughing and running around during our week of Vacation Bible School. We learned that God is our Creator, God knows Everything, God is our Safe Place, God is Love, and God is Forever. During the week the children made crafts, sang songs, ate yummy treats, played games, learned Bible Stories, explored coordinating Science lessons, and talked about Scripture that will "stick" with them! We had over 30 adult and youth volunteers helping during the week. I am always beyond grateful for everyone that comes to help during this often chaotic – but incredibly fun week. Our beautiful stage backdrop and other pieces of our colorful decorations are being shared with 2 other churches in their upcoming VBS weeks. High Street's generosity through the Foundation, Bethany Class, and other donations from individuals do not only touch the lives of the kid's who attend our week of VBS … but your faithful support continues to impact the lives of many other children from Wells Co. and Madison Co.!

Thank you for investing in the youngest generation of the Church!!

With so much Gratitude! Ms. Joy



High Street Church Staff

Lead Pastor: Rev. Teri Crouse
tcrouse@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
July Worship

July 5	Holy Communion
Sermon:	Love All the People
Scripture:	Mt. 1:40-42
July 12	We Believe
Sermon:	God
Scripture:	Gen. 1:1-5; 1 Jn. 4:7-13
July 19	We Believe
Sermon:	Jesus
Scripture:	John 1:1-4; Phil. 2:5-11
July 26	We Believe
Sermon:	The Holy Spirit
Scripture:	Jn. 14:16-17, 25-26: Lk. 24:29; Acts 2:1-4

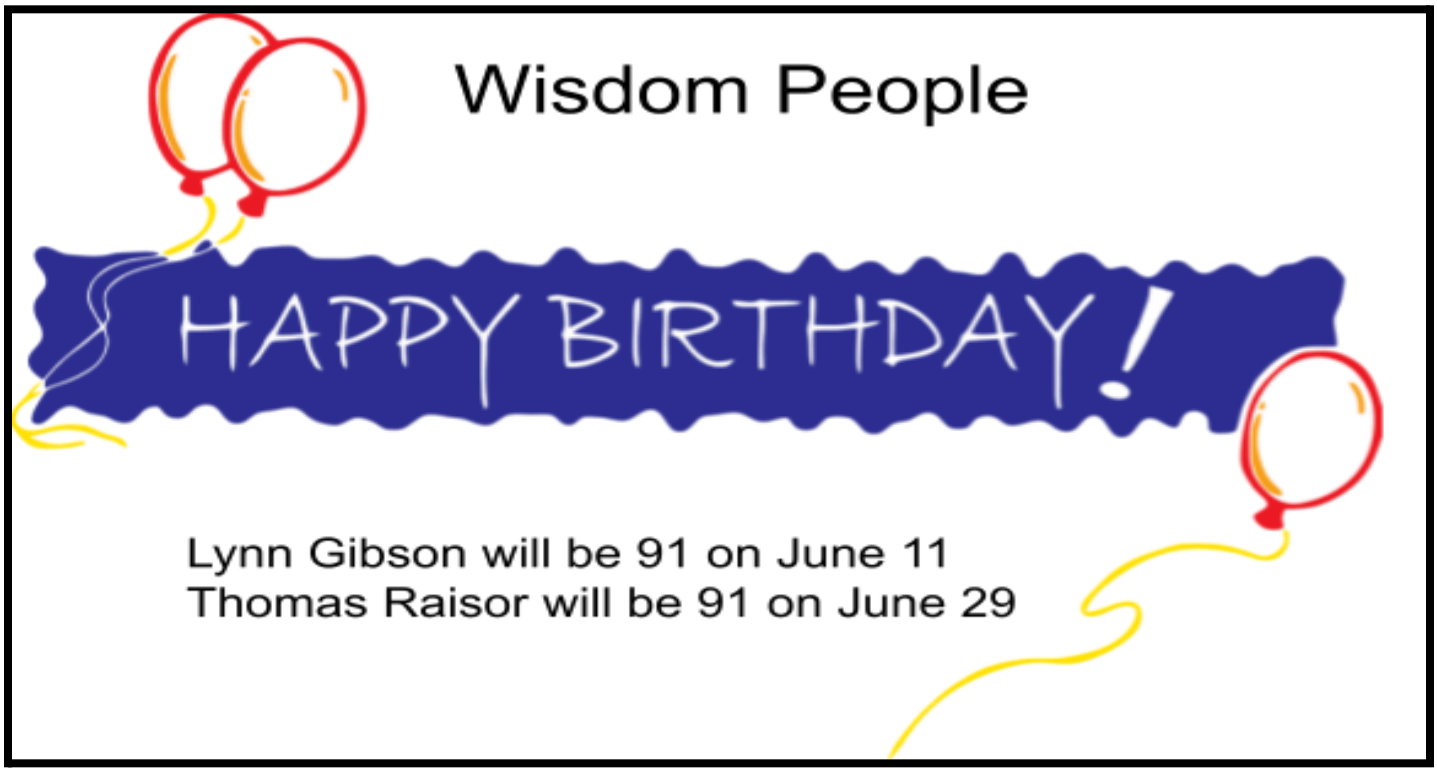


Happy Fourth of July

250 years of Independence

Men’s Breakfast

Take a break from the July heat! Come join us at 8:00 AM on July 15th for our Men's Breakfast. We’ll have good food, great fellowship, and insightful thoughts to share from Bob Myers. Come join us!



Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle does not meet in July.

Stay Cool

In July, Indiana experiences warm and highly humid summer weather.

It is the hottest month of the year, and the heat index often

exceeds 100°F during extended heat waves.

It is important to stay out of the sun and remain hydrated.

Angels on High Preschool & PDO
A special ministry of High Street UMC

July 2026

Contact Information
If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Director, Elisha Lynn aohpreschool@munciehighstreet.com or 765-216-7919.

Angels on High will be closed on Friday, July 3 in observance of Independence Day!
Happy 4th of July!

Donations
- Coffee Filters
- Bubble Wands
- Kids Spray Sunscreen
- Plastic Forks
- Plastic Spoons
- Small Paper Plates
- D Batteries
- Black Sharpies

We only have 4 Summer Camps remaining for Summer 2026!
July 6-10 Space Camp
July 13-17 Ice-Cream Camp
July 20-24 Pet Palooza Camp
July 27-31 A Bug's Life Camp
All of our June AND July camps filled completely this year! Our summer camps are hosted by our preschool teachers and provide children with fun, hands-on learning experiences and special activities. Camp proceeds also help fund exciting classroom materials, activities, and special events throughout the year!

Preschool is right around the corner! Our Pre-K AM class is officially full for the 2026-2027 school year! We still have a few spots available in our preschool prep & 3-4's preschool classes. If you know of a family looking for a loving, faith based preschool with amazing teachers and hands-on learning experiences, please send them our way.

Thank you to all of the HSUMC volunteers who keep our flower beds watered and the weeds pulled! The freshly painted planter boxes look wonderful!

Sing in the Sanctuary

Most of the folks at High Street Church, and most of the Christian traditions from the last 500 years, agree that music—and, specifically, *singing*—play an integral role in congregational worship. Matthew 26:30 tells us that Jesus sang with his disciples at the Last Supper. The New and Old Testaments record the words of several songs and many instances of God's people singing together. Of course, the book of Psalms provides us with 150 song texts from King David and other musicians from ancient times. If you ever wondered "what's all that about?" or if you ever proclaimed, "I'm not a singer, why should I be bothered?" - we will explore those sincere questions and address both historical and current practical approaches to church music this summer.

If you love to sing and know how to sing, you're welcome to attend, but this session is specifically designed for those who (for any reason) don't regularly participate in musical worship. Maybe you were even told "not to sing" in the past. (I strongly disagree!) I believe sincerely that it will enrich your life and the life of our congregation.

As long as pastors and ministers have been writing about music in the church, they have lamented about the poor quality (and lack of participation) of congregational singing. When I had the opportunity to step away from weekly responsibilities at High Street Church last fall during a generous period of sabbatical, I felt called to focus more of my professional energy here on elevating the congregational part of our shared worship. This summer series is just one step in that initiative.

Five Sundays, July 12 through August 9, we will meet in the chapel before the worship service. Grab your snacks and coffee from The Gathering Place at 9:00 am and bring them to the chapel by 9:05. We will end each session with Q&A and make sure you have time to reset before the worship service at 10:00. These sessions are open to everyone in our congregation and to visitors from outside (so invite a friend or neighbor). Although the series is offered in a sequence, participants need not attend every session in order to keep up.

Each session will include some elements of history, philosophy, practical instruction, and, of course, singing! We will also include time for Q&A with Dr. Crow and an invitation to suggest and reflect on some of your favorite songs.

July 12—Why We Sing [Who Should Sing]
July 19—How to Sing
July 26—What to Sing
August 2—Topic TBD
August 9— Make a Joyful Noise: Music in Worship, plus Questions and Discussion

Send questions to andrew.crow.dma@gmail.com