



# High Street UMC

## Tower Topics



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### Our Vision

Creating Space  
for the future

Creating Space  
In ourselves for  
spiritual formation

Creating Space  
For others to be  
spiritually formed

#### Office Hours

M-Th 8am-4pm  
F 8am-12pm

You will need to be  
buzzed in at the door.  
765-747-8500

### Join Us For Sunday's Worship

10am Traditional Worship Service  
And livestream on Facebook & YouTube  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com>

## **Words from Pastor Teri**

### **Time for a New Outlook**

We've all heard the saying, "New Year, New You." That tends to refer to a push toward greater nutrition, more exercise, and a fresh perspective on all the things we wanted to try or get done the previous year, but for various reasons, maybe didn't.

Our faith community here at High Street UMC is at the point where we're going to need a new outlook, a fresh perspective, on many of the things we were used to and many things we'll need to change. Change can be scary, but it doesn't have to be. We just need to remember that God is with us through it all.

When our stewardship committee reported that everyone responded well to our stewardship campaign, they were right: you all did. Most everyone who pledged last year also pledged this year, and most pledges were the same or higher than last year. But we also lost some people this year to the Church Triumphant. And our expenses continue to rise – as most of us know from our personal lives: utility costs are up, service costs are up, and the general costs of maintaining our beautiful building never go down.

We've had to consolidate some positions on staff. For example, Diana now covers the job responsibilities of what were once two previous full-time positions. We don't have any full-time custodial support (both Denby and Joel are part-time). And Pastor Mackenzie, who is three-quarter time, is likely to move on to her next appointment at mid-year since she will be graduating from seminary.\* We made the painful, but necessary decision with the input of the finance and SPRC committees, IF and WHEN Pastor Mackenzie is reappointed., there will be changes to the associate pastor position as well. Other positions have also been eliminated after much prayerful discernment.

PLEASE NOTE: we will share more information on all of this as we know more. Please do not start rumors.

The most important take-away from all of this is that we – as a congregation – must move to a more volunteer-oriented (and less staff-focused) model of doing things. We already have a great start on this. We have amazing leadership capability within our congregation, and so many outstanding members who have taken charge of our missions, ministries, and committees. Now we need to remember that when tasks and items need to be done (labels, minutes, copies, forms, binders, and so forth), that we no longer have the staff to do that without plenty of notice. We want to help you, but our very few staff members are juggling a lot of balls now, and need your help in making things happen.

High Street doesn't belong to the staff; it belongs to everyone who attends it. We all love it. We'd love to see everyone get involved in keeping it vital. Let's all join in.

\* As always, clergy appointments are determined by the Bishop and his appointive Cabinet.

## **Words from Pastor Teri**

### **November Financial Update**

As a reminder that our monthly budget is set at \$36,667/month, and \$440,000 for 2023.

Our giving for November was \$29,751 which was \$6916 less than what we had budgeted for. Our expenses were \$32,650, which were \$4017 under budget for the month (which is good), but \$2899 more than what we received in giving.

Our total giving for the year-to-date (YTD) is \$413,832; and our total expenses for the YTD are \$450,261. This means we had \$10,486 more in giving compared to what we budgeted for. Praise God. Unfortunately, our expenses were \$36,429 above our YTD giving, and \$46,915 above our YTD budget.

As always, we encourage everyone to keep up with their pledges. That said, we continue to recognize that you are an generous congregation. We are grateful for your ongoing support of the missions and ministries of High Street UMC, and give thanks to God for your faithful contributions!

### **Church Council Update**

We had a very productive Church Council meeting at the end of November 2023. We approved the Nominations Committee report, approved the budget for 2024, and held our Charge Conference for 2023 – which elected our leadership team for 2024, approved our lay leader, Bob Myers as a Lay Servant in the Conference Lay Ministries program, and approved the pastors' salaries (same levels as last year).

The finance committee, after reviewing the results from our stewardship campaign and considering our congregation's giving patterns, recommended a budget of \$415,000 for 2024. As noted above, this was approved by the Church Council.

We'd like to thank those leaders who rotated off committees as of the end of December 2023. Your service to the church and congregation is greatly appreciated. We welcome those coming into committees beginning January 2024, as well as those continuing their service on committees and in leadership roles. You are a blessing. Your new Chair of Church Council is Marie Blackburn, as Ned Kammeyer assumes the role of immediate past Chair of Church Council.

### **Giving Envelopes**

The new giving (offering) envelopes for 2024 are available for pick-up in the church office. If you'd like to have a set, please stop by to pick yours up. We will not be mailing any out.

### **New Directory**

We are working on an updated church directory. As soon as it's available, we'll let you know.



## Notes from the Trustees

Your Trustees had an eventful year with many projects from updating the third floor to the renovation of The Gathering Place along with many others interspersed.

Comments and suggestions are always welcomed from the congregation.

We are looking forward to the new year. Many projects plans are being developed to keep the place we love and cherish called High Street a safe, secure place to worship.



### Scholarship Applications due April 1

The Foundation will be accepting scholarship applications between January 15 and April 1, 2024 for the 2024-2025 academic year. To be eligible, candidates must be seeking higher education at an accredited organization and be a member of High Street Church.

Scholarship applicant will be able to locate the application on the High Street web site at <https://www.munciehighstreet.com/scholarships> after January 15, 2024. If you have questions, please contact Cynthia Dale at (765) 729-7287.



## Thursday Luncheon December Update

We had a wonderful December at Thursday Luncheon. We welcomed the Distaffs this month, who presented us with a Christmas musical program. We also had our Christmas Party on December 21st. We played Christmas bingo, had special Christmas treats, and watched "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." We have had yet another fantastic year of Thursday Luncheon.

I want to offer a special thank you to our cooks Matthew Green and Laurah West, and our excellent volunteer team: Sydney Wulff, Ann Briggs, Dave Kistler, Bob Mingle, Dick Williams, Kris Lewis, Wanda Hicks, Barb Ballard, Kyle Orr, and Beth Nahre. Without their hours of dedication, Thursday Luncheon could not have run as smoothly as it did.

We look forward to beginning Thursday Luncheon again after a brief winter hiatus.

Blessings,  
Pastor Mackenzie



Thursday Luncheon will take a brief winter break as winter weather sets in. Laurah West will continue as our cook when we resume in the Spring. We will resume Thursday Luncheon on **March 7th, 2024**. We can't wait to see you then!





**ANGELS  
ON HIGH PRESCHOOL & PDO**

*A special ministry of High Street Church*

765-216-7919

[aohpreschool@munciehighstreet.com](mailto:aohpreschool@munciehighstreet.com)



**Angels on High will be closed on  
January 15 in observance of  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

**January Donations**

A big THANK YOU to all of the HSUM Church members who helped with donations for the 2023 school year! Angels on High truly appreciates your support!

In **JANUARY** we will be accepting the following donations: **Free & Clear Baby Wipes** and **Free & Clear Laundry Soap**. We go through a lot of baby wipes and laundry soap in PDO. All donations can be dropped off at the Preschool or the Church Office.

Thank you!

**Angels on High Preschool & PDO collected over 100 pairs of socks for the 2023 UWF Sock Drive! The students and staff enjoy collecting warm socks each year for this wonderful drive. Thank you to the UWF for another successful year!**

**Preschool Scholarship Fund**

With the help from wonderful High Streeters, Angels on High Preschool was able to grant three scholarships to families in need of financial support. All 3 students receiving a scholarship attend our 4/5 Pre-K class. We need your help with second semester tuition fees. Tuition for the 4/5 Pre-K class is \$210 per month. The scholarship helps with 50% of their tuition. We need to collect \$1,575.00. If you would like to help (any amount big or small) please contact Jacie or Elisha at 765-216-7919. Checks can be made out to Angels on High Preschool and dropped off at the Preschool or Church Office.

Thank you!

**AOH Fundraisers**

Thank you HSUM Church members for participating in all of our 2023 school year fundraisers. Please watch for more information about upcoming 2024 fundraisers in the weekly Friday e-mails and in the monthly Tower Topics. School fundraisers help with purchasing snacks for PDO, supplies for Preschool Classes, Teacher gifts for Teacher Appreciation Week, Back to School, Christmas, etc and so much more! We really appreciate all of your support in helping us make our school the very best!

## Merry Christmas from the Youth Ministry!

Many of us treasure this time of year, because it prompts us to slow down, consider our need for Jesus, and remember the time he became flesh so we could be reconciled with God. Christian fellowship is always important, but this time of year it seems especially meaningful. Naturally, then, the youth group had to celebrate the occasion with our annual Christmas Party. It wouldn't be a youth group party without plenty of games. We started off with a favorite from last year, back by special request: candy cane axe-throwing. I've invented a number of games, but this one is one of my all-time favorites. I've taken a dozen or so artificial candy canes that are especially durable, and adhere to the front of their crooks a bit of Velcro. The other half of the Velcro is arranged in a target pattern on a cardboard sheet, and we take turns flinging our ersatz axes at it. It makes for great holiday fun. A second game, probably the all-around crowd favorite this time, involved dividing into two opposing teams competing to knock down the most targets with soft, artificial snowballs. It was fast-paced and chaotic, but sometimes those quick, energy-sapping games can be the most fun.

Game time was rounded out with a classic gingerbread house making competition. Each entry was inventive and made with a lot of heart, but the gold was ultimately taken by teammates Joshua and Ella, awarded by our contest judge, youth group volunteer Luke. Of course, fun and games are a tremendous perk of my job, but my favorite part is always the conversations I get to have with the students about Jesus. Since it is Christmas time, we read passages about Christ's Incarnation, and discussed what it means that God became a human and dwelt with us. There is amazing comfort in the fact that God came to us when we had run away from him, especially given all that it cost him. Jesus is Immanuel – a name that means "God with us". Relationship and reconciliation are at the center of what Christmas means. To discuss this Good News with the students and hear their sharp insights on the matter is always a highlight of my work.

2023 was a year to remember at High Street! I can't wait to see what 2024 has to offer.



Students Abby and Elijah work on their gingerbread house, which was creatively designed as well as delicious.



Students Joshua and Ella show off their beautifully crafted gingerbread house.



# FAMILY & CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

JANUARY 2024

High Street Family,

Happy New Year and Blessings to your families! As we step into a new year ... I am grateful to have the opportunity to minister to your children and families! In Sunday School we are taking a slight hiatus from our Gospel Project lessons and starting our Exploring Bible Class ... following this 8 week class ~ those 3rd-5th graders who have not received their Bibles will have a Bible presented to them in a special Sunday morning service! We are also starting a new curriculum in TWEENS called GRAPPLE! We will discuss relevant topics that our tweens face each day! This group for 3rd-6th graders will continue to meet 2 Sundays a month! Your families are such a blessing to me!!

*In Christ,  
Joy*

STARTING THIS JANUARY ....

HIGH STREET UMC

CHILDREN BIBLE EXPLORATION CLASS

during Sunday school @ 9am



See Ms. Joy for more information!

Need to contact Joy?

[jbricker@munciehighstreet.com](mailto:jbricker@munciehighstreet.com)

*Events coming up soon!*

## High•Street•TWEENS

Coming up in TWEENS:

- January 7: Tween Den (g6) - GRAPPLE & Games @ 5pm
- January 21: BOWLING ... Please meet @ Village Bowl @ 4pm - Cost \$5
- February 4: Tween Den (g6) - GRAPPLE & Games @ 5pm
- February 18: Tween Den (g6) - GRAPPLE & Games @ 5pm



"FOR WE ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP,  
CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS FOR GOOD WORKS,  
WHICH GOD PREPARED BEFOREHAND,  
SO THAT WE SHOULD WALK IN THEM." EPH. 2:10

Spring Acolyte Training:  
January 7th @ 4pm!



Sunday Morning:

Sunday School @ 9am in G1

Children's Church - during Traditional Service - @10am in G1

TWEEN Group: 1st & 3rd Sundays @ 5pm-6:30pm in g6 - The Den (3rd-6th grade)



# Worship Schedule

## January Worship

**January 7, 2024 (Epiphany)**

**Communion**

**Sermon:** What gifts Do We Bring?"

**Scripture:** Matthew 2: 1-12

**January 14, 2024 (Baptism of the Lord)**

**Sermon:** "Holy Ground, Holy Water"

**Scripture:** Mark 1: 4-11

**January 21, 2024**

**Sermon:** "Your Servant is Listening?"

**Scripture:** John 1: 43-51

**January 28, 2024**

**Sermon:** "A Second Time"

**Scripture:** Mark 1: 14-20

## January & February Mission Focus



JANUARY 28TH & FEBRUARY 25TH

### Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle will meet on Tuesday, January 9 at 9:30 a.m. in The Gathering Place.

Blessings, Barrie

### Angel Tree 2023

Because of you, our 2023 Angel program was a big success! 78 Children from 34 families were Provided gifts.

Thank you to all who participate in purchasing gift or helped in providing behind the scenes support roles of making calls, collating, or delivering gifts, and a special thanks to our office staff for fielding questions.

What a blessing to bring a little joy to these children who are separated from their parent not only at the holiday season but every day.

Blessings, Cynthia Dale

### Warm, Friendly People Needed

#### Sign up to be a Greeter or an Usher!

It's not a permanent commitment; you only have to sign up for a week at a time. You'll be the first ones to say hello to those coming to High Street UMC or get to stretch your legs in the middle of the service! All it takes is a smile and a willing heart

### Church Office Holiday Hours

The office will be closed on January 1st in observance of New Year's Day.

The office will be closed on January 15th in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

## **Confirmation 2024 Update**

In early fall, we contacted the families of all students of confirmation age (grades 7-10) in our database to let them know of upcoming Confirmation Information meetings so they could learn more about confirmation and make a decision on whether to participate in a 2024 Confirmation class. We offered two informational meeting opportunities.

Based on the responses we received, we won't have a confirmation class this year. While we were ready and enthusiastic about facilitating a class this year, we aren't discouraged. It's not unusual for a church of our size or with the number of youth of confirmation age that we have to hold confirmation classes every other year or so. We'll be ready for next year, and excited to invite those students who will be eligible for a 2025 confirmation experience.

## **Walk-A-Mile is here!**



We are excited to have a team from High Street participate in the Muncie Mission Walk-A-Mile 2024. Adam Atkinson will lead this year's team. This year will be the 20th anniversary of Walk-A-Mile! We want to encourage everyone to participate in some capacity to celebrate 20 years.

### **Save the Date for Walk-A Mile-2024 Saturday, February 17th 2024**

This year, we have set a goal for our church to raise **\$3,000.00** toward our Walk-A-Mile Campaign. This effort will be our mission focus for January and February 2024.

Sign up with Adam to be a part of our walking team in the main hallway on the following dates:

**January 21st**

**January 28th**

**February 4th**

**We hope you'll join our team for Walk-A-Mile 2024!**

# High Street Church Staff

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

**Associate Pastor:** Pastor Mackenzie Phillips  
mphillips@munciehighstreet.com

**Director of Administration, Finance, and Outreach:** Diana Smiley  
dsmiley@munciehighstreet.com

**Financial Administrator Foundation:**  
Melissa Morris  
mmorris@munciehighstreet.com

**Building Superintendent:** Denby Turner  
dturner@munciehighstreet.com

**Youth Ministries Director:** Kyle Orr  
korr@munciehighstreet.com

**Children & Family Ministries Director:**  
Joy Bricker  
jbricker@munciehighstreet.com

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

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

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

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

**Tech Director/Praise Band Leader:**  
Clay Arnett  
hclayarnett@yahoo.com

## Methodist Men

Will meet on January, 17th at 8:00am in  
Parish Hall. Every one is welcome.

## The United Woman of Faith

Thank  
you

Thank you for your generous giving  
for the sock drive. Thanks to your  
hard work we collected 1,140 pairs  
of socks!

Also for all of the hats and mittens  
that were collected this holiday  
season.

Your kindness has allowed those  
that are less fortunate to stay warm  
and dry this winter season.



We need help with our Samaritan Fund. Unable  
to help financially? Sign up to call those we serve  
and help them today. Contact the Church Office  
for more information.





High Street

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

219 S. High St.  
Muncie, IN 47305  
*Return Service Requested*

January 2024

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
P A I D  
Muncie IN  
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