

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>

Muncie High Street UMC

YouTube: <http://bit.ly/4tS7Ehu>

From Pastor Teri

Pastor's Life: Behind the Curtain – pt. 2

I've promised you a series of articles giving you a glimpse of a pastor's life. Last month we discussed preaching. Closely related to that is worship planning, and leading worship as well.

We plan and lead worship at several levels: by season, by week, and within a week. I prayerfully consider the liturgical calendar (i.e., Lent, Epiphany, Easter & Eastertide, Ordinary Time, Advent, and Christmas) as well as what God and the Spirit are telling me the congregation needs at any given time. I plan worship in "seasons," like Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Eastertide, the summer, and stewardship. I usually plan in series, with the occasional "one-off" Sunday thrown in. Sometimes I follow (even with series) the 3-year cycle known as the lectionary, and sometimes we go with a series that is topical. For example, both our Lent and Eastertide series this year have themes, but are based on the lectionary scripture texts. That's true for our next, short series as well, but then we'll start a topical series for most of the summer on *The Apostles' Creed*.

Right now, I've got us planned out through the end of the year. There's opportunity for change if needed – and I've already had to change a few things due to Pastor Colin's new appointment. Worship planning takes large chunks of uninterrupted time, prayer, and focus. I write up the series synopses with an overview of the series, weekly summaries, and hymn suggestions for each week. Dr. Crow chooses the hymns, usually from those suggestions, although he's free to suggest and select others.

Our music department needs to know what's coming up so they can plan anthems well in advance. We all try to coordinate the many worship elements to the theme of the series and the scripture.

Obviously, there are several elements to weekly worship beyond the sermon. As a "traditional" – or liturgical – style church, we follow a fairly structured format for our worship that's set out in the *Book of Worship* and the *UM Hymnal*. We've made a few minor changes to better suit our context, but overall, we follow it pretty closely.

That means we have a Call to Worship; Prayer for Illumination and Scripture reading; Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance; and Pastoral/Morning prayer that all have to be written each week. I try to work about four weeks ahead, because we never know what may come up (e.g., funerals or illnesses) that could prevent me from getting to something during the actual week before a service.

Leading worship is somewhat like conducting a symphony or directing a play. We always have an eye on the schedule, the congregation, the choir, and the other people who are part of the service. Pastors are always aware of everything happening within the sanctuary. And of course, we closely watch the clock. We try to keep the worship flow moving. However, that isn't very conducive to allowing us to participate fully IN worship. So, when you see us get caught up in some element of the service – the anthem or other musical offering, a testimony, or something else – know that we've let ourselves "worship" along with you, even if for only a few moments.

March 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.

As we've previously noted, 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. Such beginning of the year giving has tapered off. Our income for March was \$43,781. This means our March income was \$1599 less than the \$45,380 that's 1/12 of our \$544,554 budget. Our expenses were \$41,525. This meant our monthly expenses were \$2256 less than our income.

Our YTD income (including the one-time extravagant gift in February) is \$172,922, which is \$36,782 more than the \$136,140 we have budgeted YTD. Expenses YTD are \$140,325, which is \$32,597 less than our YTD income, but \$4185 more than we had budgeted for YTD. We believe this is due to early weather-related utility costs, as well as some of the beginning of the year expenses relating to some of our annual fees.

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.

March 2026 Financial Snapshot:

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

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

Actual income: \$43,781

Expenses: \$41,525

Net Income (March): \$2256

YTD 2026 Financial Snapshot:

Budgeted YTD: \$136,140 (3/12 of \$544,554)

Pledged YTD: \$82,533 (3/12 of \$330,134)

Income YTD: \$172,922

Expenses YTD: \$140,325

Net Income YTD: \$36,782 (Budget v. Income)

Change in Associate Pastor Position

Well, you may feel as though we're living through "*Groundhog's Day*." Another appointment season, another associate pastor leaving us. We will miss Pastor Colin; it seems as if he just got here, right? But here are some truths we must face: Pastor Colin is an experienced ordained Elder in the United Methodist Church. We were fortunate to have a portion of his time while we did. Right now, the Indiana Conference is a bit short on good pastors to lead churches. Richmond Central is coming out of a hard season, including the disaffiliation years. They need a good, pastoral leader to nurture them in the coming season as they heal, grow, and begin to thrive again. Pastor Colin and his new appointment could use your prayers.

We here at High Street can't currently support a full-time associate pastor. Part-time pastors are usually found from clergy already living in the community. While Indianapolis, Ft. Wayne, and Evansville may have an abundant supply of such clergy, Muncie and the surrounding area does not. Fortunately, we have a talented group of laity who are able to step up to take up roles in mission, senior adult ministries, pastoral care, and leading worship that might otherwise be shepherded by an associate pastor. We are very fortunate.

While we'll continue to be open to the possibility of an associate pastor coming available, we (the church leadership and Pastor Teri) look forward to serving along side our gifted laity. If there's something you can do to help, please reach out. You ARE the church.

Thank You

Major church holidays and seasons do not happen – and especially do not happen well – without the contributions of many people. I'm sometimes hesitant to write a "thank you" article, knowing I'll manage to forget someone or some group, but here's a try.

Lent, Holy Week, and Easter were glorious. So many thanks go to our musicians, music team, and music leadership. I also want to thank our Fellowship Team for their continuing faithfulness in planning events and doing all they can to make both "regular" attenders and our visitors feel welcome each and every week.

The need in our community continues to grow as prices rise and resources thin. Those who work in and with our Samaritan Fund and Food Pantry – in all ways – are a

blessing to this church and to the Muncie community. Thank you. And there is always room for more help. Similarly, Thursday lunch continues to be run by a small, incredibly faithful group of volunteers who set up, serve the food, clean up, wash the dishes, and more. We have a good time on Thursdays, provide a good time (as well as good food) to those who attend, and I dearly love this crew of volunteers. Come and be a part of the team!

Finally, I want to thank our small, but mighty, staff. High Street used to have a much larger staff, and many are accustomed to the staff handling things that now need to be handled by the congregation. That said, our staff is amazing in what they do, and the help they provide, in making our faith community run smoothly. We are so blessed with the people we have on staff – so, thank you.

Staff Turnover: Referrals Needed

As we noted last month, our Resident Security (“Church Mouse”) person, Marilyn Peña, has let us know that she will be leaving us to be closer to her family no later than the end of August. She departs with our blessings; she simply discerned she wants to be nearer to her family.

Similarly, Joel Dale has let us know he plans to retire soon; much sooner than we’d like. This means we need to find a part-time custodian as soon as possible, and we’d like the person to work with Joel for a while to get a feel for everything Joel does, as well as where to find things. Joel has done a great job organizing spaces and things since Denby died, but it’s still a church – which means objects are tucked into nooks and crannies only a few people know about.

You are all our best sources of information for who might fill any open position in the church. So, if you know of anyone who might be interested in either of these positions, please have them call Diana Smiley or Pastor Teri at the church (765/747-8500).

From Pastor Colin

It can be funny how things line up. Nearly a year ago, a tree fell on my dad and stepmom’s house. They’ve been living elsewhere since then, but reconstruction should be finished around Memorial Day, and they’ll move home this June. The same day demolition began on that house, a moving truck delivered my mom and stepdad to the house they chose for their retirement. They say you can’t go home again, and I guess I can’t!

Now I, too, have some relocating to do. Beginning July 1, I will become the full-time pastor of Central UMC in Richmond, Indiana. High Street is a fantastic congregation, and I have been blessed to serve here with you all. I’m not done yet, either, until I am!

Richmond Central also has lovely and faithful people. In many ways, they are similar congregations. Both are county-seat, downtown, and college-town. Both have large, solid stone buildings that have seen fuller days, with seasons of great potential ahead. I've been glad to be part of the potential and direction here at High Street. I'll be glad to be with Central to help them usher in their future.

Many of you have asked, and I thank you for your care: I'll still live in Muncie, and my wife will still be the full-time pastor of Community of Hope UMC. Before I accepted my appointment to Richmond, Heather and I had time to talk it through to make sure it would work for our marriage and family. I'll be commuting to the parsonage in Richmond and staying there for half the week. Our kids will remain in Muncie - no need for them to change schools or make major adjustments. Heather is looking forward to me taking some things out of the garage here. I might have a whole room in Richmond for musical instruments, another for Legos, certainly one for books - we'll see!

There's a line from a Bruce Cockburn song that I've had in mind, even though the song is about heavier things than pastoral transitions. Cockburn sings, "Never got to know you, and suddenly you're outta here." Cockburn was singing about a friend he actually knew well, but still would have liked to have known better and spent more time with. I feel that with High Street, and I'm the one that's outta here. In our United Methodist Church, I serve at the direction of our bishop, and I go when and where I am appointed. That is generally determined yearly, although one can never tell. In any case, July 1 will bring a new season for High Street and for me.

But I'm not outta here until I am. There are lots of mission and ministry happening at High Street! Let's continue! And even when I'm not in Muncie as "Pastor Colin," I'll still be Colin, who lives here in town, who has a stake in the mission and ministry here, and who continues to pray for you all and expects to keep in touch. I won't have the privilege of being a pastor to you, but I hope to remain a friend among you.

Thanks for your prayers and support for these next months. Do pray for High Street, as changes here naturally follow my change. Of course, good and faithful work will continue here in July and for a long time after. You all will certainly see to that! And I'll be glad to hear, even from Richmond, how well things are going at High Street.



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 May Worship

May 3: Holy Communion
Sermon: You Know the Way
Scripture: John 14:1-14

May 10: Acolyte Recognition
Sermon: The Story Abides
Scripture: John 14:15-21

May 17: Scholarship Sunday
Sermon: Living the Sequel
Scripture: Luke 24:44-53

May 24: Pentecost
Sermon: Spirit Unbound
Scripture: Numbers 11:24-30;
Acts 2:1-21

May 31: Trinity Sunday
Sermon: Spirit in Partnership
Scripture: Genesis 1:1-2:4a;
Matthew 28:16-20

The Office will be closed on Monday May 25th in observance of Memorial Day. The Office will open on Tuesday, May 26th at 9 AM





Wisdom People

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Joy Combs will be 95 on May 11th
Barbara Gooden will be 96 on May 12th
Mary Wertzler will be 96 on May 31st.



Men's Breakfast

Join us for a wonderful spring Methodist Men's Breakfast on Wednesday, May 20th, at 8:00 am. Great friends and fellowship, great food, and great thoughts for your week from Pastor Colin. Come share with us.



Ruth Circle

The May meeting of Ruth Circle is scheduled for May 12, 2026, at 9:30 am. The program will feature a White Elephant Sale, which promises to be a lot of fun! Devotions will be presented by Lynn Ryan, and Eunice Bryant will serve as the hostess

HIGH STREET FRIENDS ... PLEASE SHARE!

VBS IS OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN & YOUTH

**• AGES 4 (MUST BE POTTY TRAINED)
THROUGH 7TH GRADE COMPLETED!!**

JUNE 7-11 ... 6PM-8:30PM



Children • Youth • Family

May 2026

High Street United Methodist Church

PROJECT 219 • YOUTH

May 3rd:

We are celebrating a wonderful school year and our last Sunday evening youth activity until fall. Please meet @ 3pm at Boulder Falls Mini Golf And BatZone • 3507 N. Briarwood Lane • Muncie, IN 47304. Students are asked to bring \$5 to help contribute to this outing ... Ms. Joy will cover the rest of the mini-golf cost + a special treat afterwards! Please plan on picking your youth up at 5:30pm!

Dates to be Announced:

- Trip to Water Park
- Trip to State Park

SUNDAY MORNING

- May 3: Jesus Forgave Peter
- May 10: God Wants Us to Know Him & Jesus Gave His Followers a Mission
- May 17: The Disciples Replaced Judas
- May 24: The Holy Spirit Came
- May 31: Peter Preached in Jerusalem

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

ACOLYTES

May 3: Josiah & Joseph

May 10: Leo & Dean
ACOLYTE RECOGNITION!

May 17: Josiah & Sam

May 24: Esther & Sophia

May 31: Josiah & Joseph

Enjoy your Summer!!

UPCOMING:

June 7-11 • 6-8:30pm
VBS for All Youth!
Sign up with Ms. Joy



jbricker@munciehighstreet.com

Congratulations

to all of our High Street Graduates!



John Atkinson • graduating from Delta High School

Jason Bricker • graduating from Purdue University

Jonah Bricker • graduating from Taylor University

Hazel Crow • graduating from Ball State University

Spencer Domer • graduating from Ball State University

Pierre Joseph • graduating from Ball State University

• Please join us as we recognize our High School and College Graduates on Sunday May 3rd in our 10am Service! This will be our last Sunday with some. Come congratulate them and wish them well!

• Our Acolytes will be taking a break for the summer! We are so grateful for their dedication as they provide an important element to our worship service! We will recognize them in the 10am service on Sunday May 10th! They will return in the fall!

Thank You

to all of our acolytes!! 2025-26

Enjoy
your
Summer!

Sam Atkinson

Joseph Bricker

Josiah Bricker

Esther Furlong

Leo Furlong

Sophia Tapy-Harrison

Dean Werner

Trivia Night

“Who was the youngest person to ever receive an Oscar? ... What is the longest river in the US? ... What is an eight-sided shape called? These were a few of the questions shared as part of High Street’s second annual Trivia Night on April 10! High Street Fellowship Team hosted the event, with Gail Werner serving as emcee and trivia participants contributing donations to the church’s food pantry for admission. Our five participating teams answered questions in the categories of Sports, Movies, Music, Geography, & General Knowledge. Congratulations to the team consisting of the Arnett & Bricker families for having the highest score of the night. They took home the coveted trophy and goodie bags with candy break to watch Artemis II splash down!.



Elevator Repairs

You have to visit many churches to appreciate the quality of the High Street elevator. The trustees and saints of the church who planned ahead so many years ago to fund and install such a good elevator must be commended.

However, even the best equipment wears out. Our elevator is inspected monthly, and we are fanatic about keeping it maintained. We know how much our congregants depend on it to move among High Street's many floors. Now two major parts must be replaced; there's no option. And the elevator will not operate without them. This will cost approximately \$40,000.

There's no question we'll make the repairs. But if you feel called to contribute toward the costs, I know our trustees would appreciate it. This was an unforeseen expense during a difficult financial time for the church. Label any such contributions "elevator repairs." We'll get them to the right account.

In the meantime, PLEASE don't use the buttons that hold the doors open, AND don't hold the doors open physically. That was partially what led to the burn-out of one of the parts. As a special note, the elevator is SAFE to use in the interim. We would never put your safety at risk. We'll keep you updated on the repairs.

Online Worship & YouTube

If you participate in our worship services online, you know we occasionally have technical difficulties. We've now experienced one of the most frustrating problems ever: we've been locked out of our own YouTube channel.

Normally, we livestream to both Facebook and YouTube. Because Facebook deletes videos after 30 days, we depend on the longevity of our YouTube channel, where our videos "live on" indefinitely. For reasons we've never gotten an answer to, our YouTube channel was disabled, and YouTube refuses to give us access to it again. The background for how Pastor Teri can summarize this is too long to go into, but it seems to be final. The old channel is still available to view, but we cannot set up new livestream events.

We've set up a new channel with a new, slightly different name (Muncie High Street UMC). We will be streaming from it going forward. Please go to it and subscribe to it. We've changed the direct links from our Facebook page and our website to go to it rather than the old site. But we need for all of you to go to it as well, both to view and to subscribe. Here's the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqpZMaBxsplwTZHv1MnEutQ>

it's THAT TIME OF THE YEAR!!

**Let our Youth
help you in your**

YARD OR GARDEN

**Financial donations towards
Summer Camp or Youth Activities
are encouraged.**

**Contact Ms. Joy with questions
or to schedule a time!**



ANGELS ON HIGH PRESCHOOL AND PDO A SPECIAL MINISTRY OF HSUMC

Elisha Lynn, Director
Angels on High Preschool
& PDO

765.216.7919

aohpreschool@munciehighstreet.com



Important Dates in May:

May 4-8: Teacher
Appreciation Week

May 21: Preschool
Graduation @ 10AM

May 22 & 25:
CLOSED

MAY DONATIONS:

- Bubbles/Sidewalk Chalk
- Paper Plates (Small & Reg. Sizes)
- Plastic Spoons/Forks
- Ziploc Baggies (all sizes)
- Monetary Donations for Teacher Appreciation Week
- Monetary Donation for Cookies/Cupcakes for Preschool Graduation

The Lotion Company fundraiser orders are due **Friday, May 1**. Order forms are available in the church office. This fundraiser helps us purchase Bibles, and each student will receive one at preschool graduation. This year, 19 AOH graduates will be gifted Bibles. Thank you for your continued support of our students and preschool!

Be sure to check out the display case at High Street UMC! Throughout the month of May, it will showcase all of the 2026 Angels on High Preschool Graduates. The boys and girls are so excited to graduate preschool and move on to Kindergarten - we are going to miss them so much! Graduation will be held on Thursday, May 21 at 10 AM in the sanctuary. We are currently collecting donations for our special Preschool Reception immediately following graduation. If you would like to donate rainbow sherbet, lemon lime soda, and/or monetary donations for cookies and cupcakes, please drop off items at the preschool or church office. Thank you for your support!