

Dunes Digest



FROM THE PASTOR

Looking Back; Appreciation Moving Forward

Rev. Lou Grettenberger

Wow! I am celebrating so many things about our congregation today as I write this note on Easter Monday. Easter was a resounding celebration with 420 worship attendees between our 271 people in-person and others online. I am not usually a backward-looking person, but I have to remember and celebrate the incredible joy and exuberant spirit that all of you brought to worship on Easter Sunday. Special thanks to all who prepared, performed, praised, and led us in worship.

I want to use my newsletter space to affirm positive change that has been shared with me by way of a couple of anecdotes. A few weeks ago, several of my children and grandchildren showed up in church. We always enjoy having them here, so I rushed down to fellowship time to share a table with some of them. We sat and talked together and with a couple of you as others stopped by our table, shared a smile, passed out candy, or offered beverages. After a few minutes, my granddaughter looked up quizzically and said, "Why are adults in this church so nice to children?" I was shocked, not that we are friendly, but that my little granddaughter had noticed and felt it was a unique enough experience to her that she needed to comment on it. That is reason to celebrate.

Just this past week one of our newer folks shared with me and others at a Wednesday dinner these thoughts: "I think you need to know that this church has changed. I feel it." I asked her what she meant, and she shared that after the pandemic she had to decide to where she would return to church. She wasn't sure how welcome she felt here at Dunes. She honestly had mixed feelings about returning—unsure of her place here. When she did return, she was overwhelmed by the joy and welcome of those in this congregation. She now believes that this changed congregation is exactly where she needs to be. She feels at home, inspired, and eager to learn and experience more of Jesus Christ.

This month we will receive multiple members, share in the several baptisms, honor our high school graduates, and so much more. I, for one, can't wait!

It is no accident that so many people chose to celebrate the resurrection at Church of the Dunes. The tomb may be empty, but our hearts are full of the love and joy of our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To God be the glory great things God has done and keeps doing!

Peace,

Pastor Lou G.



Important Dates for Your Calendar

Sunday Worship

9:30 a.m.

All are welcome!

Livestream with live chat available at 9:20 a.m. on the church's YouTube channel. Recordings of the services are also available there. To find it, search *Dunes Church Grand Haven YouTube*.

Church office hours:

Monday through Thursday
9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Phone:

(616) 842-7980

Email: office@umcdunes.org

United Methodist Church of the Dunes

717 Sheldon Road
Grand Haven, MI 49417
www.umcdunes.org

Image and illustration credits for this issue:

Pixabay.com, YMCA Tri-Cities

Thursday, May 8 - Craft Circle

Ryder Lounge (main floor), 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, May 11 - Mother's Day

Monday, May 12 - Grief Support Group

Ryder Lounge (main floor), 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 14 - Last Wednesday Supper

Wiltse Center (main floor), 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday, May 14 - Last Guitar Group Lessons

Sanctuary (main floor), 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 18 - Brown Bag Food Gathering

Sunday, May 18 - Travelogue Presentation

Ryder Lounge (main floor), 2:00 p.m.

Monday, May 19 - Caregivers Support Group

Ryder Lounge (main floor), 1:00 p.m.

Monday, May 19 - Dunesmen

Wiltse Center (main floor), 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, May 20 - ROMEOs

Russ' Restaurant (Grand Haven), 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, May 21 - Worship Appreciation Party

Wiltse Center (main floor), 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 24 - YMCA 5K Cheering

Church Parking Lot, 8:00 a.m.

Monday, May 26 - Memorial Day

Monday, May 26 - Fourth Monday Reading Group

Panera Bread (Grand Haven), 1:00 p.m.



Annual Conference 2025
“Unfinished: Growing Up and Into Christ”
 May 30 - June 1, 2025
 Traverse City, Michigan

This is an important annual meeting of conference leaders, pastors, and lay representatives from United Methodist Churches across the state. Please pray for wisdom, insight, guidance, a spirit of peace and cooperation, and safe travels for all who will attend.

BLESSINGS OF COMMUNITY

Dresser Scarves to Hope House

Ann Antaya, Church of the Dunes Craft Circle

Craft Circle will meet on Thursday, May 8 at 10:00 a.m. in the Ryder Lounge (main floor). We will be blessing the dresser scarves we made for Hope House and giving them to Joyce Bowling (a church member with extensive experience working with Hope House) for distribution.



Also on the agenda are plans for future meetings and suggestions for this year's bazaar projects. All are welcome to attend Craft Circle meetings. It is a very informal group. Not all of us are crafters; however, all of us enjoy each other's company! Craft Circle meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month.

CAUGHT ON CAMERA

2025 Photo Directory

Watch this space for important information about our new picture directory coming soon! We're planning a "do-it-yourself" directory, so there will be no high-pressure sales and pictures will be more casual and friendly. We will be accepting personal digital photos from those are able to provide them, as well as offering opportunities for photos to be taken in the church at future dates. Photos will be taken by the Communications Lead, Madelyn. Directories will be available to pick up at our upcoming fall ministry fair.

More details to come!



COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT THROUGH MUSIC

Dunes Music Education Fund Recital

Al Kochanowski, Dunes Music Education Fund Coordinator

You are warmly invited to the 3rd Celebration Recital of the Dunes Music Education Fund (DMEF). The piano students will be performing in the sanctuary at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 1. Our piano teachers: Dianne Prieditis, Laura Quigley, and Marna Jeffery will introduce the students and may offer some musical surprises.

The purpose of the DMEF is to classically train young musicians so they can grow to learn and enjoy performing traditional Christian and classical music appropriate for worship. Since 2023, contributions to the pilot program of the fund from friends and very generous families of the church have made it possible to offer over 650 free music lessons.

The Dunes Church Council has asked for a proposal to continue the pilot program next fall. The committee is considering changes that would expand the outreach and stretch the available funds. Future direction of the pilot program will be announced at the recital and communicated to the congregation at a later date.

Please join us to enjoy the young talent, welcome their families, and encourage the students!

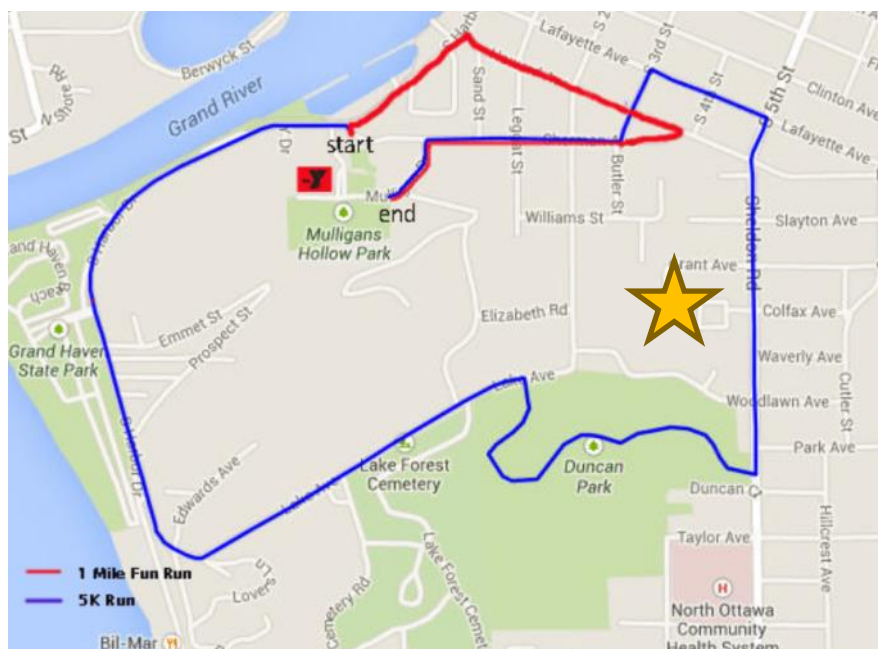
HERE TO CHEER

Cheer on the YMCA Kick-off to Summer 5k Runners!

Madelyn Steinbeck, Communications Lead

Church of the Dunes will be cheering on the YMCA “Kick-Off to Summer 5k” runners on Saturday, May 24. All are welcome to help cheer on the runners! All ‘cheer volunteers’ will gather at the bottom of the hill of the church parking lot (Sheldon Rd.) by 8:00 a.m. There will be coffee and refreshments. Participants are encouraged to bring a chair. If you are interested in participating, please let the communications office know.

The yellow star on the map represents Church of the Dunes. The blue line represents the 5k race course.



Grow in Faith

May Classes and Discussion Groups for Adults

Faith Linked Discussion Group

Sundays, 10:45 a.m.

Ryder Lounge (main floor)

Facilitator: Gail Smart

Drop in or attend weekly to discuss current events and topics from a faith-focused perspective. A new topic is discussed each time.

“The Bible in 52 Weeks for Men” Group

Fridays, 8:30 a.m.

Kenzie’s Be Café (Grand Haven)

Facilitator: Rich Cole

This group meets weekly to discuss reading guides and exercises that walk through each part of the Scripture. All are welcome. Attend as you are able. Books are provided. Please note the time and location change.

Women’s Spring Book Study: “Perfectly Flawed” by Lisa Toney

Begins Tuesday, May 6, 10:00 a.m.

Meets for 6 weeks, Room 2 (lower level)

Facilitator: Cathy Shick

All women are welcome! This study will focus on Peter and his journey through his time with Jesus, from the beginning of Jesus’s ministry to the Resurrection and through Pentecost, when Peter begins to live into his call.

Books are \$12 and will be available during coffee fellowship time in the Wiltse Center (main floor) on May 4. Book scholarships may be available. Contact the facilitator or see the Adult Ministries board for more information and book study sign-up sheets.



Fourth Monday Reading Group: “The Book Woman’s Daughter”

by Kim Michele Richardson

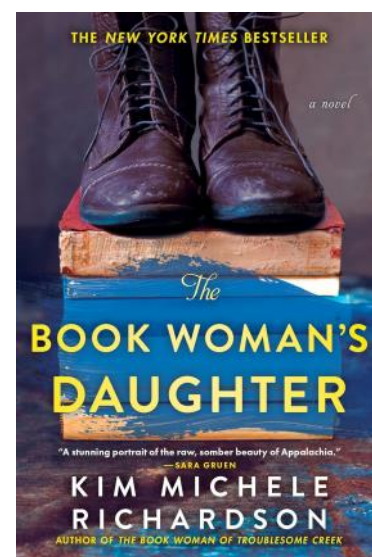
Monday, May 26, 1:00 p.m.

Panera Bread (Grand Haven)

Facilitator: Gayle Cox

The Book Woman’s Daughter follows the fictional story of Honey Lovett and her journey of delivering books to those who need them in remote Appalachia, while fighting for her own freedom.

The Fourth Monday Reading Group meets monthly at Panera Bread in Grand Haven. To get involved, participants should get a copy of the book, read it, and join the discussion. No sign-up is required.



Book image and summary: Amazon.com

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Brown Bag Non-Perishable Food Gathering for Love in Action: May 18

Missions and Social Concerns Commission

This May, Church of the Dunes' brown bag non-perishable food gathering supports Love in Action Tri-Cities. Love in Action provides a wide variety of assistance programs for people in need. To help support our local community members in need, Church of the Dunes will be offering another brown bag non-perishable food gathering on Sunday, May 18. Starting on Sunday, May 11, brown paper grocery bags with a complete list of in-need food items will be available in the Welcome Center (main floor).

The following items are most needed at this time:

- 64 oz. shelf stable juice
- Canned meat
- Canned fruit
- Cereal
- White rice
- Pancake syrup
- Canned pasta
- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Ramen



Needs of local food pantries continue to rise. According to Joyce Bowling, Love in Action's food pantries are using roughly 1,200 pounds of food per week. All donations are greatly appreciated!

“The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed”

Proverbs 11:25

Scholarship Fund Recipient

I am so grateful for the Church of the Dunes Memorial Fund Scholarship that I have received this spring. I am currently a senior at Grand Valley State University studying Writing and Business. This scholarship will be used to pay for the tuition costs of my summer coursework. I want to thank the Church of the Dunes again for their generosity.

- Madelyn Steinbeck

IT'S A HOMERUN!

Church of the Dunes Whitecaps Baseball Game

Dale Zurakowski, Finishing Well Ministries

West Michigan Whitecaps baseball game day is approaching. Join Church of the Dunes at the LMCU Ballpark on Sunday, June 22 at 2:00 p.m. We will be getting Premium seats (padded seat with additional leg room) which are \$21. The cost for parking is \$8 (to be paid when parking). If you are interested in carpooling or providing rides to others, contact Dale Zurakowski and he will coordinate. Please let me know if you are willing to drive or want a ride. Contact the church office for help in making the connection. The final deadline for tickets is Sunday, May 18. Dale will be selling tickets and collecting funds at a table during Coffee Fellowship time in the Wiltse Center (main floor) on Sunday, May 11 and Sunday, May 18.



This event is also great for the youth at Church of the Dunes. We are offering a free ticket for each Sunday School kid and a free ticket for one of their parents or guardians. The first 1,000 kids EAT FREE, and there's pre-game catch and autographs on the field! All kids 12 and under are invited down to the field after the game to run the bases like their favorite Whitecap!

Hope you can make it!

EARLY SUMMER FUN

Updates from Family Ministries

Jodie Freeman, Director, Family Ministries

Greetings from the other side of the net! Family Ministries continues to prepare for the growth that is happening all around us. Classrooms are being transformed for Sunday School. Bucket Drumming is beginning to take shape. Plans are being made for the remainder of 2025. You may have seen some of the artwork that our art classes have produced in the display case outside of the Ryder Lounge (main floor). What an inspiration! Rise & Shine Playgroup is off to its official start as of April 19. Spring is bringing all kinds of new things. Grad Sunday is May 18! This is an opportunity to appreciate our graduating high school seniors in Sunday service and with a card shower. Keep watching the Family Ministries bulletin board in the hallway near the Wiltse Center (main floor) for announcements, activity information, and upcoming opportunities. As always, if you would like to volunteer or participate, we welcome you!

family†ministries



Worship Arts Ministry: Notes from the Loft

by Megan Horist, Director of Worship Arts

MAY 2025

CHRIST IS RISEN!

We enjoyed a meaningful and reflective Holy Week with services on both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Our Easter celebration was fantastic with Celebration Choir, Bells of Glory, and brass players and timpani from our friends at Northern Lights Drum and Bugle Corps. Thank you to all who made these worship experiences possible—musicians, decorators, folks who purchased flowers, and many who participated in set up, tear down and clean up for all the services. What a beautiful way to celebrate our Savior!

SUMMER MUSIC VOLUNTEERS

I am currently scheduling musicians to add to our summer worship schedule. If you would like to sign up, or have an artist you'd like to hear, please email Meg Horist.

YOU'RE INVITED

Mark your calendars! We will be celebrating all our worship volunteers at our **Worship Appreciation Party** on Wednesday, May 21 at 6:00 p.m. in the Wiltse Center. If you have helped in worship this year as a musician, liturgist, served in technology, helped preparing or serving communion, served as usher, at the welcome center or as a greeter, you're invited! A main dish and drinks will be provided, please bring tableware and a dish to pass. Thanks to everyone who makes worship so special at the Dunes!

I hope to see you in church soon!

~Megan

COMING UP IN WORSHIP

- MAY 04** Communion Sunday
CHANCEL CHOIR
In worship
Baptism and
Reception of Members
- MAY 11** **BELLS OF GLORY**
in worship
Mother's Day
Celebrating our moms
- MAY 18** **CHANCEL CHOIR**
in worship
Graduation Sunday
Celebrating our Grads
- MAY 25** **Mission Moment:**
Pathfinders
- JUNE 01** **MUSIC SUNDAY!**
**CHANCEL CHOIR &
BELLS OF GLORY**
in worship for the final
Sunday of the season
With special musical
guests!



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

More Opportunities from Finishing Well!

Susan Thorpe, Coordinator, Finishing Well Ministry

Some reminders for you!

Four Pointes Center for Successful Aging (at Beacon Blvd. and Taylor Str. In Grand Haven) is offering new memberships that come with a \$15 gift card to use for classes at the Center. We have a special arrangement with Four Pointes: simply mention you are from Church of the Dunes to apply! This is an amazing center with many services and programs for seniors! Once signed up you can enjoy exercise classes, special programs and offerings to play pool, build airplanes, quilt, painting and more! There are games available including mahjong, cribbage, dominoes, etc. They also offer services such as Medicare and Medicaid counseling (which is especially useful if you are signing up for the first time) and home care aides. There are also day trips to fun places and entertainment venues. Finally, they offer a loan closet to drop off unused medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, etc. During your recovery times, you can rent these items to use at home.

Are you looking for an easy way to join in and meet new people?

Sign up to be a host at the coffee table after church!

Sign up to be a greeter at the front door before church!

Sign up to be an usher during church!

Please wear a name tag, so we can greet you by name.

There are ongoing classes and groups at church for pickleball, chair yoga, painting, guitar lessons, Community Choir, Chancel Choir, and Celebration Choir. There are small groups and the United Women of Faith for women, and Dunesmen for men to socialize and learn from interesting speakers.

Prayer Chain is a great way to let others know when you need healing prayers for someone you love. Contact Bill and Kay Cansfield or the Church Office for information. We have the BEST prayer partners!

The final travelogue event will be on Sunday, May 18 at 2:00 p.m. in the Ryder Lounge (main floor). The Whitecaps baseball game is on Sunday, June 22 at 2:00 p.m. Finishing Well is offering ride sharing to and from the game at the LMCU Ballpark in Comstock Park. Let us know if you can provide or need a ride!

Finishing Well is Church of the Dunes' group for everyone over 55 years young! Let us know what you would like to add to this ministry!

Finish Well my friends!



THOUGHTFUL AND PURPOSEFUL GIVING

Mission Giving: Fourth Quarter, Year End, and First Quarter

Church of the Dunes provides financial support for mission purposes throughout the year. Some of these allocations are included in the annual budget. In addition, special offerings are planned and gathered for pre-designated organizations, then gifted to the organizations. This report summarizes mission giving for the fourth quarter and annual totals for 2024.

		<u>Q4</u>	<u>Annual</u>
Age Well Services	Contributions	\$100	\$200
Cass Community Social Services	Mission Moment	-	3,614
Grand Haven Area Public Schools	Special Projects - Homeless Activity Fund	1,000	1,000
Family Promise	Budgeted Contribution	500	1,000
Family Promise	Contributions	-	600
Family Promise	Family Meals	141	1,065
Family Promise	Mission Moment	1,517	1,517
Fresh Coast Alliance	Mission Moment	20	690
Friends of Crop Walk	Missions Special Projects	-	500
Gracious Grounds	Contributions	200	500
Gracious Grounds	Mission Moment	-	410
Gun Violence Prevention	Contributions	-	2,165
Habitat for Humanity	Contributions	200	400
Habitat for Humanity	Mission Moment	-	919
Hope Project of Muskegon	Mission Moment	640	640
Humanity for Prisoners	Contributions	100	200
Knitters Group	Contributions	50	80
Love in Action	Contributions	200	400
Love in Action	Budgeted Contribution - Food Truck	-	850
Love in Action	Hunger Offering	937	3,617
Love in Action	Mission Moment	-	1,384
Michigan Conference	Missionary Support - Dornan	-	1,700
Michigan Conference	UMCOR Contributions	1,200	2,800
Michigan Conference	UMCOR US Disaster Response (Advent)	6,385	6,385
Michigan Conference	UMCOR Israel/Gaza (Lenten Offering)	-	3,153
Michigan Conference	UMCOR Ukraine (Lenten Offering)	-	1577
Michigan Conference	UMCOR Blanket Sunday	45	315
Michigan Conference	UMCOR - One Great Hour of Sharing	300	300
Michigan Conference	UMCOR - Mission Moment	305	912
Momentum Center	Contributions	200	500
Mosaic Counseling	Mission Moment	-	482
Pride Festival	Contributions	-	225
Pride Festival	Budgeted Contribution	-	275
Supper House	Budgeted Contribution	-	500
Supper House	Hunger Offering	1,411	5,194

continued on the next page

Missions Giving, Fourth Quarter, Year End, and First Quarter continued from page 10

Supper House	Contributions	\$300	\$600
Teen Challenge	Mission Moment	-	100
The People Center	Hunger Offering	1,338	3,868
The People Center	Budgeted Contribution	-	1,000
The Salvation Army	Contributions	130	130
The Salvation Army	Hunger Offering	-	3,697
The Salvation Army	Mission Moment	-	803
United Methodist Men	Contributions	5	5
United Women in Faith	Contributions - Chickens	270	1,935
United Women in Faith	Contributions	200	2,600
Total		\$17,694	\$60,827

This report summarizes mission giving for the first quarter of 2025.

		<u>1st Q</u>
Family Promise	Budgeted Contribution	\$500
Family Promise	Contributions	966
Gun Violence Prevention	Contributions	282
Humanity for Prisoners	Contributions	1,050
Knitters Group	Contributions	829
Love in Action	Contributions	420
Love in Action	Hunger Offering	1,834
Michigan Conference	Missionary Support-Dornon	800
Michigan Conference	UMCOR US Disaster Response (Advent)	180
Michigan Conference	UMCOR US Disaster Response (Lenten Off)	2,850
Michigan Conference	UMCOR Contributions	550
Momentum Center	Contributions	1,715
Pride Festival	Contributions	250
R.E.A.D	Contributions	250
Supper House	Budgeted Contribution	500
The People Center	Hunger Offering	3,592
The Salvation Army	Hunger Offering	2,528
United Women in Faith	Contributions	2,050
Total		\$21,146