

Dunes Digest



FROM THE PASTOR

New and Upcoming Series in Worship

Rev. Lou Grettenberger, Pastor

FROM BISHOP DAVID ALAN BARD MICHIGAN AREA OF THE UMC:

“I write to you to share information about an important initiative in The United Methodist Church. The Council of Bishops, with support from the Connectional Table and the General Council on Finance and Administration, invites all congregations worldwide to join a God-led, Holy Spirit-empowered six-week campaign, April 12 - May 17, 2026. The Love Boldly, Serve Joyfully, Lead Courageously and Miracle Sunday Initiative will unite 30,000 congregations worldwide to extend the mission of The United Methodist Church and to raise vital support for 500 clergy a year through The Endowment for Theological Education outside the United States. I invite you to set aside the six weeks following Easter, so that your congregation can join other local UMC churches to be part of this worldwide effort.”

The United Methodist Church of the Dunes Council recently agreed to support this endeavor by having a six-week worship series during Easter that will help us rebirth the identity of the United Methodist Church in us.

The Themes of the six-week series are:

- April 12: Disciples Formed by Jesus Christ
- April 19: Disciples Empowered by the Holy Spirit
- April 26: Disciples Love Boldly
- May 3: Disciples Serve Joyfully
- May 10: Disciples Lead Courageously
- May 17: Disciples Transform the World - Miracle Sunday

We invite you to join us in-person or online for this series.

As your pastor, I am excited to lead you into the future of a more vibrant and inclusive church guided by the new vision statement of the United Methodist Church:

“The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.”

Also, we are being made aware by our bishops that 70% of U.S. clergy hold a theological degree, while fewer than 5% of clergy outside the U.S. do, creating a stark disparity in pastoral formation. We are invited together with others worldwide to help close that gap by funding and sustaining theological education for emerging pastors in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. Please be praying about your commitment to that offering, which will be received on Sunday, May 17.

Easter only begins on Sunday, April 5. Join us for the full celebration of Easter as we worship together through all of April and May. God is alive and at work in us.

- Lou

Remembrance

Bob Ogle died on March 3, 2026. Please keep his loved ones in your prayers.

Phyllis Moody died on March 20, 2026. Please keep her loved ones in your prayers.

Sunday Worship

9:30 a.m.

All are welcome!

Livestream available at 9:30 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

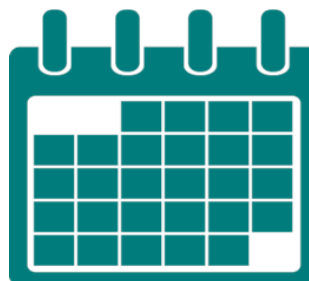
Email: office@umcdunes.org

United Methodist Church of the Dunes

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Mark Your Calendars

- Thursday, April 2 - Maundy Thursday Worship Page 7**
Church Sanctuary (main floor), 7:00 p.m.
- Friday, April 3 - Good Friday Worship Page 7**
Church Sanctuary (main floor), 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, April 5 - Easter Sunday Worship Page 7**
Church Sanctuary (main floor), 9:30 a.m.
- Monday, April 6 - Pet Food Drive Begins Page 3**
- Thursday, April 9 - Craft Circle Page 4**
Ryder Lounge (main floor), 9:30 a.m.
- Saturday, April 11 - Serving Saturday Page 5**
Kenzie’s Be Cafe (Grand Haven), 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
- Monday, April 13 - Grief Support Group**
Ryder Lounge (main floor), 1:00 p.m.
- Saturday, April 18 - Rise & Shine Playgroup Page 3**
Grand Haven City Beach (Grand Haven), 10:00 a.m..
- Sunday, April 19 - Chess & Checkers Game Day Page 3**
Wiltse Center (main floor), 3:00 p.m.
- Sunday, April 19 - ‘Connect2’ in coffee time Page 5**
- Monday, April 20 - Graduate Info Due Page 3**
- Monday, April 20 - Dunesmen Meal and Meeting**
Wiltse Center (main floor), 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 21 - ROMEOs Breakfast**
Russ’ Restaurant (Grand Haven), 8:30 a.m.
- Sunday, April 26 - New Member Inquirer’s Class**
Ryder Lounge (main floor), 6:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 27 - Fourth Monday Reading Group Page 8**
Panera Bread (Grand Haven), 1:30 p.m.

COMBATTING GUN DEATHS

Soul Box Updates and Ongoing Efforts

Kate Cole, Gun Safety Task Force/Violence Prevention Group

The Soulbox Project illustrated that on average 1,406 people in Michigan die by firearms each year. Suicides account for 56% of these deaths. Children as young as one year old have been victims of either unintentional shootings or homicides. Children as young as two years old have the finger strength to fire a handgun. Statistics show that three in four children know where firearms are kept in their home. Locked guns and separately locked and stored ammunition can prevent such deaths.

In addition to the Soulbox Project, the Gun Safety Task Force and Violence Prevention Group have been distributing safety bags to childcare centers and festivals for the last three years. These safety bags can be locked with a combination lock and contain a gun cable lock, information on how to talk to your child about guns, and a copy of Michigan's gun safety laws. The bags can also be used to store ammunition, prescription medications, or edible CBD. These safety bags are free and are available near the weekday entrance to the church. You are welcome to take one for yourself or for a loved one who would be able to utilize it.

UPDATES FROM FAMILY MINISTRIES

Teaching Missions and Learning New Things

Jodie Freeman, Director of Family Ministries

Hello to all our church family from Family Ministries! In February, our Sunday school friends hosted a lemonade stand during coffee fellowship time. They raised funds for Love in Action and The People Center. In April, our Sunday school friends will be having a pet food and supply drive for Harbor Humane Society and the Noah Project. The kids are aware that during difficult times, animal shelters struggle with meeting needs of animals in their care. Brown bags to put pet food and supply donations in will be available in the weekday entrance beginning Sunday, April 5, and in the welcome center on Sunday, April 12. The bags will have a list of shelter request items attached. We will be collecting the bags in the weekday entrance near the missions bulletin board. Bags are due back by Sunday, April 19. Our Sunday school friends are planning on doing two mission efforts per year and are already looking at ideas for 2027.

April Events and Deadlines:

- On **Saturday, April 18** at 10:00 a.m. our **Rise & Shine Playgroup** will be heading to Grand Haven City Beach to fly kites (weather permitting).
- On **Sunday April 19** at 3:00 p.m. we will be hosting a **game day** in the Wiltse Center (main floor). This is open to all ages and abilities. There will be a variety of games. If you are interested in learning to play chess, we will have some very good teachers to help. Pizza and refreshments will be provided!
- The **deadline to be included in Graduation Sunday** is **Monday, April 20**. Any high school students who are graduating this spring can be included in Graduation Sundays on Sunday, May 17. See Jodie Freeman for the graduate information form that needs to be submitted.

SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 21**Church of the Dunes at the West Michigan Whitecaps**

Barb Kish, Finishing Well Ministries

Grab your ball caps, baseball mitts, and sunscreen! Join members of your Church of the Dunes family for a West Michigan Whitecaps game on Sunday June 21, at 2:00 p.m. This is a home game at LMCU Ballpark in Grand Rapids. The Whitecaps will be playing the Lansing Lugnuts. The Finishing Well team is hoping to invite as many Church of the Dunes members, as well as their families and friends, to share a fun afternoon together. We have reserved premium seats, padded seats with additional leg room, which are \$21 a seat. Advanced parking passes are also available for \$8 (\$10 on game day). Food vouchers may also be purchased, more details to come. If you are interested in carpooling, please reach out to Barb Kish or Dale Zurakowski. Tickets will be available for purchase during coffee fellowship time on Sunday, May 10 and Sunday, May 17. Stayed tuned for more information in next month's Dunes Digest and upcoming bulletins.

CRAFT CIRCLE MEETING
Quilts of Valor Local Efforts

Ann Antaya, Craft Circle

Join Craft Circle on Thursday, April 9 at 9:30 a.m. in the Ryder Lounge (main floor) to learn about "Quilts of Valor." Annette Allen and Jill Gallagher will be presenting on the project. Both are accomplished artists who give of their talents to this outstanding program. All are welcome to join for this meeting, no sign-up required.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**
Get Involved with 'Jesus the Star Child'

Cathryn Marshall

An exciting event is coming to Church of the Dunes: Jesus the Star Child, an immersive art experience. This event will feature a walk through 'Bethlehem' where local artists' work will be displayed. Each work of art is inspired by a piece of scripture that tells the story of Mary and Joseph and the birth of Jesus. Participants can visit a marketplace, and many of the art pieces will be featured in a silent auction. Proceeds from the event will support Love in Action, the Salvation Army, and The People Center. The experience ends with visitors being allowed to take a few moments for reflection in the church sanctuary. Dates and times for the event will be released soon.

This event will take many volunteers to make it a wonderful experience for all. If you would like to find out more about volunteer opportunities or many ways to get involved in this free community event, stop by the information tables set up during coffee fellowship time on Sunday, May 3.

Jesus the Star Child
an immersive art experience

FINISHING WELL UPDATES

Spring Into a Full Calendar

Susan Thorpe, *Finishing Well Ministries*



Hello Finishing Well ambassadors! We have a full calendar of upcoming opportunities.

- **Coming Up:** On Sunday, April 19, Love in Action will be joining Church of the Dunes during coffee fellowship time to provide information on their new program: "Connect2." This is an exciting revamp of the Kids Hope Project with new leadership and training. Plan to stop by their table during coffee fellowship time to get the scoop and perhaps be inspired!
- **Volunteer Needs:** We are in need of a small group to help maintain work on light outdoor garden landscapes and decor. This would include raking, spreading mulch, planting, pruning, dividing perennials, and other various landscaping tasks. It is not required to have experience with gardening or your own tools. Someone with experience in landscaping or gardening would be preferred to lead the group. If you are interested in participating or leading the group, contact Susan Thorpe for more information.
- **Looking Back:** Our program on 'Grandparenting in Faith' was attended by many on Sunday, March 8. This program taught us how to approach a sometimes sensitive topic with our grandchildren and their parents. Our presenter, Dr. Ray Francis has written a book called Spiritual Grandparenting which is available for purchase on Amazon.com.

As a reminder, there are so many ways to get involved with Church of the Dunes. There are many spiritual growth programs, conversations, book clubs, circles, and men's and women's groups, all with a goal of learning and taking care of each other. To enrich us intellectually, there are musical groups, concerts, lectures, art classes, piano lessons, and health-related programs. For our physical wellbeing, we offer chair yoga, greater balance, line dancing, circuit training, pickleball, and a Sunday walking group. The physical health resources of Finishing Well have grown immensely to the point we are attracting new members who want to worship with us and stay healthy: body and soul. We are a buzz around town and you ambassadors are helping to spread the Word! We are succeeding in our goal of worshiping, singing, studying to take care of our bodies and minds. The Lord IS among us!

SUPPORT KIDS' FOOD BASKET

Service Saturday Event: April 11, 9:00 - 11:00 AM

Join Church of the Dunes for an opportunity to serve your community and enjoy some coffee on Saturday, April 11! We will be decorating brown bags for Kids' Food Basket from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. at Kenzie's Be Cafe in Grand Haven. Bags and coloring materials will be provided. A representative from Kids' Food Basket will be present to provide information on what Kids' Food Basket is, the organization's efforts locally, and ways to get involved.



**Kids' Food
Basket**

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN

How To: Communications Processes

Madelyn Steinbeck, Director of Communications and Community Engagement

So many are involved in the processes and procedures that create the communications materials you see regularly (such as the weekly emails, the Dunes Digest, or the Sunday bulletin), so knowing who to contact and when can be confusing. Below is a basic guide to the contacts and timeline for how to publish necessary information regarding events at Church of the Dunes.

Who is a part of these communications processes?

- Director of Communications and Community Engagement: Madelyn Steinbeck
 - Weekly email, bulletin insert, Sunday announcements and tv slides, Dunes Digest newsletter
- Office Administrator / Church Office: Cathryn Marshall, Shirley Chappell
 - Weekly bulletin, calendar, building use
- Kay Cansfield
 - Prayer chain
- All of you! By communicating with all necessary parties involved, you are helping the church to run smoothly and communicate effectively. Thank you!

Want to put something in the Dunes Digest newsletter?

- Email Madelyn Steinbeck by the 15th of the month prior to the newsletter's release month with your article or event information. Please coordinate within your small group or organization to ensure that only one article is published on an event per month. If given enough advanced notice, contact can be put in the newsletter for more than one month.

Want to have your need added to the church's email prayer chain?

- Contact Kay Cansfield with your request. Your request will be sent out to the prayer chain, and prayer warriors will pray for you. Contact the church office for help making the connection.

Want to put an upcoming church event in the Sunday bulletin?

- Contact the church office to ensure your event is on the church calendar and that the appropriate space is reserved.
- Talk to Madelyn Steinbeck with at least one week's advance notice of your event, by Tuesday of the week prior at 1:00 p.m. at the latest. Events may get up to two or three Sundays in the bulletin depending on a variety of factors.

Want to have your thanks or celebration message added to the 'praises and prayers' section of the bulletin?

- Contact the church office with your thanks or celebration message (one to two lines of text) and your message will be added to a bulletin in the upcoming weeks. If you need your announcement added to a particular date, please specify the Sunday needed. Advance notice is preferred when possible.

Want your event to be advertised with an announcement on Sunday morning or with a slide on the screens?

- If your event has already been confirmed with the church office and Madelyn Steinbeck, the event will be advertised with announcements and slides as necessary and possible. There are no further efforts needed after that first step.

Have a specific need or concern about how to communicate needs or information? We encourage you to reach out to a staff member to ask about the appropriate timeframe and contact person needed. Contact information for staff is available in the weekly bulletins.



Worship Arts Ministry: Notes from the Loft

By Megan Horist, Director of Worship Arts

April 2026

HOLY WEEK

Holy week begins on March 29 this year, which starts with Palm Sunday worship at 9:30 a.m. featuring music provided by our Celebration Choir. Palm branches will be available to all in worship. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship services will be held in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday (Thursday, April 2) is a reflective worship service with communion around a large table, along with Taizé music which features instruments and singers. Good Friday (Friday, April 3) will be a Tenebrae (Latin for darkness) service where we extinguish candles and remember Jesus' last moments before his death. Chancel Choir will provide the music. Easter Sunday will be a huge celebration with two baptisms, Chancel Choir, Bells of Glory, Brass and Timpani. Join us as we celebrate the Risen Christ together!

ONLINE WORSHIP

All of the worship services here at church are live-streamed to our YouTube channel (just search Dunes Church Grand Haven on YouTube). Join us online for worship on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. (we go live at 9:20 a.m.). Can't make it on time? No problem, join us at any time! All services are available in full at the conclusion of the live stream.

YOU'RE INVITED

Join us this spring in Chancel Choir on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m., for Bells on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. (contact Megan for music before you arrive) or come to our guitar club, 'Strings and Things' on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. These groups are open to anyone, please join us!

COMING UP IN WORSHIP

- APRIL 02 - Maundy Thursday**
Worship at 7:00 p.m.
Communion and
Taizé music
- APRIL 03 - Good Friday**
Worship at 7:00 p.m.
CHANCEL CHOIR
in worship
- APRIL 05 - Easter Sunday**
CHANCEL CHOIR,
BELLS OF GLORY, &
BRASS & TIMPANI
from Northern Lights
Drum and Bugle Corps
- APRIL 12 - SPECIAL MUSIC**
in worship
- APRIL 19 - CHANCEL CHOIR**
in worship
- APRIL 26 - BELLS OF GLORY**
in worship
Mission Moment:
Salvation Army



Grow in Faith

April Book Discussion Groups for Adults

(includes both religious and secular reads)

Faith Linked Discussion Group

Sundays, 10:45 a.m.

Ryder Lounge (main floor)

Facilitator: Gail Smart

The Faith Linked discussion group discusses current events from a faith-focused perspective. The group is currently reading *Separation of Church and Hate* by John Fugelsang. No sign-up required.



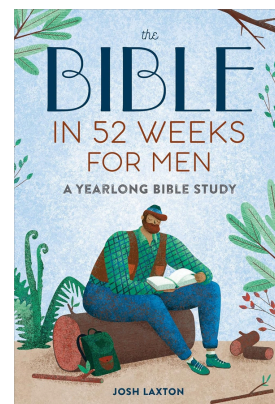
“The Bible in 52 Weeks for Men” by Josh Laxton

Fridays, 8:30 a.m.

Conference Room (lower level)

Facilitator: Rich Cole

“Contemplate God’s teachings with discussions that reflect on topics like relationships, family, work, and health.” There is no sign-up required, reach out to the facilitator for book information. This group will now meet in the conference room (lower level) here at church, as they have outgrown their previous meeting space at Kenzie’s Be Cafe.



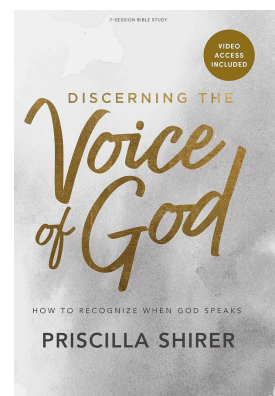
“Discerning the Voice of God” by Priscilla Shirer

Tuesdays, begins April 14, 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study Room (lower level)

Facilitator: Cathy Shick

A book study on discovering how we can listen to God with greater confidence, clarity, and discernment. This group will meet for seven weeks. Books are \$10 and will be available during coffee fellowship time on Sunday, March 29. See Cathy Shick if interested.



Fourth Monday Reading Group: “Seventy Times Seven” by Alex Mar

Monday, April 27, 1:30 p.m.

Panera Bread, Grand Haven

Facilitator: Gayle Cox

“What are we demanding when we call for justice? Is forgiveness an act of desperation or of profound bravery? As Bill and Paula’s friendship deepens, and as Bill discovers others who have chosen to forgive after terrible violence, their story asks us to consider what radical acts of empathy we might be capable of.”

There is no sign-up required. Participants should get their own copy of the book. To participate, just read the book and join in on the discussion.

