

MAY 2025

THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The monthly newsletter of Brown St. & Congress St. UMCs



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My sisters and I were born into Brown Street Methodist Church. Every Sunday we put on our best dresses and went to Sunday School and church. Most everyone would drive to church and drove back home after church. I remember going to MYF, church picnics, church camp and helping with the Turkey Supper. I made some of my best friends at church.

As I got older I began to realized the church was all about themselves. As a teenager I wondered why. I realized the elders of the church had gone through the 1st and 2nd World Wars. They had lived through the Depression. Unfortunately Brown Street continued that mindset. We would pass out fliers for Vacation Bible School but really didn't interact with the neighborhood.

Then one day we got a female Pastor (Barb Marshall) who looked around and said "this church is on this corner for a reason!" A lot of people weren't sure they wanted to change what we were doing. Unfortunately it caused a lot of issues and a lot of arguing. With Pastor Barb's help we started our gardens. We started with three 4x8 raised beds. We now have 25 raised beds. We also became a Reconciling Church. We went out into our neighborhood to talk to our neighbors. Sometimes we would take a table, chairs, cookies and lemonade; we started a garden bible school and during the summer we would invite our neighbors to a dinner using produce from the gardens. The children would argue about who was going to wash the produce!

We had Pastor Barb for a few years, until she was moved. Pastor Ryan Traeger was appointed to Brown Street. Pastor Ryan continued what we had started and help us to grow. He realized we had a lot of children running around the neighborhood unsupervised. He was fixing dinner one evening for himself and his daughters and decided he could fix a meal for the neighborhood children with their parents' permission. That was the start of Family Dinner. We started doing a meal once a month. After the 1st year the decision was made to do a meal the first four Tuesdays of every month.

For me this is the best thing this little church has done. I personally love our Tuesday Dinner. We've had children ages three and up alongside adults in the kitchen helping do the dishes. I may be tired at the end of a dinner but I'm also filled with love and thanks for God and my little, loving church.

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What are some of YOUR favorite things about Brown Street and Congress Street? How could you invite someone to experience those things with you?

What's Happening in Our Community



David Teter

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

What a blessing it was to worship together during Holy Week! Thank you to our volunteers for making these services possible.



David Teter



David Teter

SHARE YOUR STORY IN THE NEWSLETTER

If you feel compelled to share your story - or a meditation or devotion on scripture - we'd love to give you a place to do it!

Reach out to Maia either at info@brownstreetumc.org or info@cosumc.org or talk to her after worship on a Sunday. She can interview you and write something up, edit your own words, or something else. Whatever would be helpful to you!

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Tracy Fristoe (CS)
- 5 - Magnolia Traeger
- 9 - Maxine Brewer (CS)
- 12 - Sarah McCann
- 17 - Renee Dunham (CS)
- 17 - Kurt Kuebler (BS)
- 18 - Linda Miller (CS)
- 22 - Lynn Johal (CS)
- 30 - Winona Graf (CS)
- 30 - Max McClannen (BS)
- 31 - Maia Gibson

MAY OFFICE HOURS

The hours listed below are the hours Maia is in the office. Pastor Ryan is in and out. If you need to meet with him, please reach out to him or Maia to schedule a time!

Brown Street:

Tuesdays: 10am - 4:30pm

Congress Street:

Wednesdays & Thursdays: 10am - 4:30pm

Fridays: Flexible

Pastor Ryan's days off are Friday & Saturday.

Maia's days off are Monday & Saturday.

The office will be closed on 5/2 and 5/15.

What's Happening at



MONTHLY MISSION: FOOD PANTRY

The Tippecanoe United Church Food Pantry provides food, hygiene items, and other necessities to those in need in our community. To donate toward the TCU Food Pantry, mark your envelope "mission" and place it in the collection plate on Sunday morning or write "mission" in the memo line at brownstumc.org/give.

You can also donate food and hygiene items. Please leave your donations at the designated place in the chapel area!

STAFFING CHANGES

As many of you know, our beloved Charis Vander Plaats' last Sunday with us was 4/13. We are so grateful to her for the years she spent sharing her gift of music with us!

We have also had a change in worship leadership at Congress Street. Sunday, 4/20 was Jake Ohlemiller's last Sunday as their Pastor of Worship Arts. He and Janelle have made the decision to step away from pastoral ministry. In order to create space for new leadership, their family has decided to worship elsewhere.

While Jake and Janelle were not officially appointed to Brown Street, they regularly filled the pulpit and sang in our choir. We are grateful to them for sharing their time and talents with Brown Street over the last two years!

If you would like to show your appreciation to Charis, Jake, or Janelle, please feel free to send them a note. Maia can provide contact information.

Pastor Ryan and the SPRCs/Ad Councils of both congregations are still discerning what is next for our community when it comes to worship. Please be in prayer for them as they listen for where God is leading. We will share updates with you as we have them.

In the meantime, Amanze Egere has graciously agreed to be our regular service musician. Marsha Kubler is continuing on as our organist. Please make sure to thank them when you see them!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Pastor Ryan or Maia.

FAMILY DINNER

Tuesdays

Doors @ 5:00pm

Dinner @ 5:30pm

We could always use your help! Kitchen prep begins around 3:00pm and Table Hosts huddle at 4:45pm each week. Come help prepare/serve food, be Jesus to our neighbors around the table, and wash dishes! All are welcome!

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Thank you to our volunteers who helped us get our gardens ready for the season this past April!

Our weekly gatherings in the garden will resume this month! **We will be meeting on Tuesdays at 6:15pm.** Join us for dinner and then come out to the gardens to help weed, water, plant, and mow!

All are welcome; no previous gardening experience or knowledge required.

What's Happening at



CONGRESS ST.
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CIRCLE OF JOY

Next Meeting: Monday, 5/12/25 @ 6:30pm, Room 201

Hostesses: Sandy Oswalt & Karen Erickson

Speaker: Bob Malchow

All women are welcome to join us!

HELP NEEDED!! NEIGHBORHOOD COOKOUT - JUNE

On Sunday, 6/8 we will invite our neighbors to join us for hotdogs and hamburgers with all the fixings. We will have some games and at least one bouncy house. Right now, we are looking for grillers, servers, activities coordinators, set uppers and tear downers to help with the neighborhood cookout. All ages are welcome to help in any of these areas!

Willing to help? Call Chad Johnson at 765-490-2533 and say, "how can I help?" or "I can grill!"
Let's make this a great event!

FLOWER ARRANGING WORKSHOP

Saturday, 5/10 @ 2pm, Fellowship Hall
PreK - Grade 12

Come make a bouquet to gift to someone you love for Mother's Day! Each participant will get to make two bouquets with the help of professionally trained florists.

Parents of younger children are invited to help their child; parents of older children/teens are invited to enjoy conversation and refreshments. There is no cost to participate! All are welcome.

Please RSVP with names and ages to
info@cosumc.org by Sunday, 5/4.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED; KIDS WORSHIP IN JUNE

In June, we want to offer our kids a worship experience geared toward them! Starting on Sunday, 6/1, our kids will join us at the start of worship, enjoy our lesson for young disciples, then head out with Liz Peters for a lesson just for them - centered on the 'I am' statements of Jesus in John's Gospel. We will be looking for additional volunteers to help with this, so please speak with Pastor Ryan if you're interested!

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Gardening season is upon us!

Ways to help: Help is needed with planting, watering, and weeding. Warm weather crops will be arriving this month! Keep an eye out for more details.

Watering is done about 3x's/wk depending on the amount of rain we receive and may take up to an hour. If you have questions or want to volunteer, please contact Lynn Nelson by email at: nelson@cosumc.org or by phone/text at: 765-491-7856.

BROWN STREET STAFF

Ryan Traeger
Pastor

Maia Gibson
Administrative Assistant

CONTACT BROWN STREET

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CONGRESS STREET STAFF

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Pastor

Rick Puckett
Pastor of Visitation

Maia Gibson
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Shane & Teri Lynch
Custodians

WORSHIP WITH US

Sundays at 9am - Brown Street

www.facebook.com/BrownStreetUnitedMethodistChurch

Sundays at 10:30am - Congress Street

www.facebook.com/evolvingfollowers

**If you are able and interested in receiving this newsletter via email,
reach out to Maia at info@brownstreetumc.org or info@cosumc.org.**

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