

NOVEMBER 2024

THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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

CELEBRATING BREAKTHROUGHS

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Last year's stewardship letter shared a grave financial picture for both of the congregations in our community: Brown Street, despite faithful and generous giving, was still operating \$14,000 in the red. Giving at Congress Street funded less than 50% of the yearly budget; the remainder was covered by withdrawals from the foundation. At the same time, there were questions being raised about Family Dinner and the Open Table Meal; what was working and what wasn't? What did the future of each look like? After much conversation, the leadership of both congregations decided that the best course of action was to turn to God.

Our Breakthrough Prayer was shared in November of 2023, a way of surrendering our wants and desires to God and asking him to guide our next steps. We prayed it together, in worship and meetings, before Family Dinner and Open Table Meals, at Pizza with the Pastor. Hopefully, we prayed it individually, too.

Within days, God responded. Maybe it was our surrender that created the space for God to move. Maybe God is moving all the time and it was just a shift in focus that allowed us to see it. Maybe it was both. But God is mighty, breaking through and opening doors, ushering in the new and honoring the old, moving in and among us, guiding us with his spirit and the example of his son.

God is moving in our neighborhoods, as our neighbors volunteered at Family Dinner and in our community gardens. God is moving in our sanctuaries, as we baptized babies and welcomed new members, greeted visitors who left as friends, and loved those in recovery who needed a support system. God is moving in our community, as members of Congress Street generously gave to Brown Street, as we filled two sanctuaries on Christmas Eve in 2023, as we unloaded pumpkins and decorated cookies, as we worshiped and fellowshiped together in June and October. God is moving in us. One member of our community shared that "...I have witnessed how God seems to have touched my heart, and the hearts of those around me, to let us see a kinder side of each other." There are more smiles on faces at Family Dinner and in the pumpkin patch, even while unloading pumpkins. Members of our community have found housing, stable employment and transportation, and have begun to find ways to use their stories and transformation to help others. God is moving in our relationships with him. "I pray more - faithfully every day, even when I'm not sure I want to," a member of our community admitted.

The breakthroughs don't stop there; more will be shared in our stewardship letter and even more haven't been shared with us. Take a moment to reflect on the last year, your experiences at church and your own life. Where has God been moving? What are the breakthroughs you have experienced? If God can do all of this in one year, what do you think he could do in two or more?

As we enter a season of stewardship and visioning, we hope that you will take a moment to join us in celebrating all God has done. We hope that you will continue to pray our Breakthrough Prayer, approaching it with the same surrender and trust that you did throughout the last year. And above all, we hope that you will continue to be a part of what God is doing in our community. If you experience a nudge to connect further - starting or helping with something, leading in worship, etc. - or a breakthrough, please share it with Pastor Ryan.

There is so much life and love in our community. The Holy Spirit is moving. We are excited to see what God does in us and in you over the next year!

What's Happening in Our Community

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 (we do have limited space, unfortunately), or something else. Whatever would be helpful to you!

2025 DIRECTORY

Starting Sunday, November 10th, we will be collecting updated contact information for a 2025 directory! Even if nothing has changed, please take a moment to fill out one of the slips outside the sanctuary and place them in the basket! **The deadline for the directory is Sunday, December 15,** but if your information changes after that, please let us know so we can stay connected!

NOVEMBER 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 - 4pm

Fridays: Flexible

Pastor Ryan's days off are Friday & Saturday.

Maia's days off are Monday & Saturday.

The office will be closed November 28 & 29 for Thanksgiving.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

5 - Mary Jo Bartolacci (BS)
11 - Mid Osborn (CS)
13 - Grant Conway (CS)
13 - Bill Fielding (BS)
16 - Dick Leill (BS)
16 - Ryan Traeger
19 - Garrett McCann (CS)
20 - Dan McClannen (BS)
24 - Jeff McClannen (BS)

B&C STREET CHANCEL CHOIR EUROPE TRIP

Ever wanted to visit Germany and/or Austria? The B&C Street Chancel Choir is planning a trip August 11, 2025 - August 17, 2025 and are inviting members of our congregations to go with them! If you are interested or want more information, reach out to Sandy Oswalt at 765-337-6853 or sandy@luxuryjourneytravel.com.

What's Happening at



EVENT DETAILS

Saturday, December 14 at Congress Street
More specific details to follow!
Brown Street will be providing Christmas
for 2-3 families.
Questions? Contact Jan Albertson at
jalbertson48@gmail.com.



MONTHLY MISSION: JUBILEE CHRISTMAS

Each Christmas, churches around Lafayette partner with Lafayette Urban Ministry to provide Christmas for families in need. This year, Brown Street and Congress Street will be working together. If you would like to contribute monetarily, 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.

SHOPPING FOR A CHILD/FAMILY

If you would like to participate by shopping for a child, there will be a Giving Tree with ornaments on it that will have information about the child and items from their wishlist. Please choose one or two ornaments and purchase the items for that child. If you would like to include hats & gloves & scarves, feel free.

SET-UP/DAY-OF HELP

If you're interested in helping set-up, get food together, host a family day-of, or tear down, keep an eye out for sign up sheets!

FAMILY DINNER

Tuesdays

Kids @ 4:30pm | Doors @ 5:00pm
Dinner @ 5:30pm

Dining Room: We need people to participate in communities around the table, either by hosting tables or just being present. If you're willing, please plan to arrive around 4:30pm on Tuesdays.

Kitchen: If you are interested in helping prepare the meal, set up, or clean up, we could always use your help! Reach out to Justin Henry at just.t.henry@gmail.com to volunteer.

COMMUNITY GARDEN THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who helped us with our community gardens this year! A special thank you to our friend, James, who has continued to mow our lawn for us weekly! We are so grateful for you!

VISIONING DAY

Brown Street's Ad Council and Pastor Ryan would like to invite you to join us as we celebrate what God is doing and look toward the future! Plan to stay **after worship on Sunday, Nov. 17** for breakfast and a time of fellowship and conversation about the mission and vision of Brown Street. Questions? Talk to Pastor Ryan or Maia!

What's Happening at



CONGRESS ST.
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CIRCLE OF JOY MEETING

Next Meeting: Monday, Nov. 11th @ 6:30pm, Rm. 203

Hostesses: Brenda King & Penny Glotzbach

We be doing some work for the UWF book for 2025 plus planning for our Christmas Party. The ramp lot will be available for our parking and that door will be unlocked.

All women are welcome; hope to see you then!

JUBILEE CHRISTMAS

General Information:

On **Saturday, Dec. 14th**, Congress Street and Brown Street will host 10 families in our Fellowship Hall.

The sign up for ways to help and the wishlists for gifts will be ready and in the Parlor on Sunday, November 10th.

Want to be on the Planning Committee or have questions? Call or text Chad Johnson at (765) 490-2533.

Ways to Help:

Purchase gifts: Pick up a wishlist or two from the parlor and purchase the gifts requested. The gifts with the form must be returned to the church by

Sunday, Dec. 1st.

Set-Up: Friday, Dec. 13th , 5:00pm-8:00pm

Meet and Greet: Saturday, Dec. 14th, 12pm-1pm

Food Service: Saturday, Dec. 14th , 12pm-3pm

Host a Family: Saturday, Dec. 14th, 12:30pm-3:00pm

Clean up: Saturday, Dec. 14th, 2:30-3:30

OPEN TABLE MEAL & HANGING OF THE GREENS!

NOVEMBER MEAL INFORMATION

Date: Sunday, November 24 after worship!

No delivery this month: we'll be eating together and then decorating the church for Christmas and inviting our neighbors to join us! A pick up option will be available for the neighborhood, too! Plan to stay and join us as we prepare for Advent!

Menu: Jimmy John's sandwiches, chips, cookies

If you can help serve the meal or donate cookies/brownies, please reach out to Chad Johnson at chadj@purdue.edu.

POINSETTIAS

Orders due Sunday, Dec. 22

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia in memory or in honor of someone, complete the order form outside of the sanctuary, attach your payment (mark your check 'poinsettia'), and return to the collection plates! Questions? See Dolores Flynn!

PUMPKIN PATCH: THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who helped set up, unload pumpkins, bake and decorate cookies, work the patch, cashier, tear down, bake pumpkin bread, count money and report sales, etc. The patch would not be possible without you! Final numbers and more details will be available on Sunday, 11/10, when we celebrate the patch and the crew in worship!

BROWN STREET STAFF

Ryan Traeger
Pastor

Charis Vander Plaats
Director of Worship

Maia Gibson
Administrative Assistant

CONTACT BROWN STREET

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CONTACT CONGRESS STREET

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CONGRESS STREET STAFF

Ryan Traeger
Pastor

Jake Ohlemiller
Pastor of Worship Arts

Rick Puckett
Pastor of Visitation

Maia Gibson
Administrative Assistant

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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