

SEPTEMBER 2025

# THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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

## GROWING YOUNG: SURVEY RESULTS

by Pastor Maia Gibson

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It's hard to believe summer is almost over! From family dinners and intergenerational evenings in the Brown Street garden to cookouts and bonfires at Congress Street, there has been so much to celebrate. Thank you for faithfully participating in the life of our community these past few months.

One way you've engaged recently is through your active participation in our Growing Young church assessment. Thank you all for your thoughtful responses. They are already helping us reflect on where we are and discern where God is calling us to go.

The results showed us that, you all **believe we are a community that feels warm and welcoming, like both family and good neighbors.** We are present in our local community, partnering, serving, and encouraging one another to live out our faith. **We take Jesus' message seriously, not just in our sense of community, but in our own lives as well.** You shared that you feel challenged and encouraged to live out and grow in your faith in various ways. **We are already a multigenerational community that people want to be part of—what a gift!**

At the same time, the survey reminded us of areas for growth. **We don't consistently prioritize young people and families in our planning or resources. We sometimes struggle to entrust leadership to others and could be more empathetic listeners to young people.**

If one of these areas stood out to you—"I wish we were doing more of that!"—consider how God might be inviting you to respond. What keys could you pass on? Who are the young people you could connect with? How might you help us make young people and families a priority? Pastor Ryan and I would love to talk with you about where God may be nudging you.

We'll continue sharing more insights from the survey in the months ahead. If you'd like to read the full report, please reach out to me or Sarah McCann. Thank you for walking with us as we grow into God's vision for our community.

# What's Happening in Our Community

## SHARE YOUR STORY IN THE NEWSLETTER!

Want to share your thoughts in the newsletter? We'd love to give you a place to do it! Reach out to Sarah either at [info@brownstreetumc.org](mailto:info@brownstreetumc.org) or [info@cosumc.org](mailto:info@cosumc.org) to brainstorm!

### GOING BACK TO (SUNDAY) SCHOOL THIS FALL

If you've been in worship lately or tuning in online, you may have heard Pastors Ryan and Maia share their **plans to bring some good ol' children's Sunday school stories into our services in the months of September and October**. Each week we'll pair these stories with a children's worship song in hopes that our youngest members can continue to see themselves as an important part of the church community.

We know most of us have heard these stories before, probably even many times, but **this is a chance to revisit them with fresh eyes, embrace a little silliness, and rediscover the joy they can hold**. Our hope is that by joining in with open hearts and minds, we'll not only rediscover these stories ourselves, but also plant seeds that our kids will carry with them for years to come.

Below are the dates and stories we'll be covering — come ready to sing along!

#### September 7

Noah's Ark

#### September 14

Joshua

#### September 21

David & Goliath

#### September 28

Esther

#### October 5

Jeremiah

#### October 12

Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego

#### October 19

Daniel & The Lions

#### October 26

Jonah & the Whale

**Interested in helping read a prepared story during children's time?**

**Reach out to Sarah to get signed up!**

## What's Happening at



### MONTHLY MISSION: CARE FUND

Our Care Fund (also known as the Pastor's Discretionary Fund) is used to provide financial assistance to our neighbors in need at the Pastor's discretion. To donate to our Care Fund, mark your envelope "mission" and place it in the collection late on Sunday morning.



## FAMILY DINNER & GARDENING

**Tuesdays**

**Doors @ 5:00pm**

**Dinner @ 5:30pm**

**Gather in the Garden @ 6:15pm**

If you are interested in helping prepare the meal, set up, or clean up, we could always use your help!

Not gifted in the kitchen? No worries!

We could always use people to participate in communities around the table, either by hosting tables or just being present and willing to engage with someone new.

After dinner, stick around to go out to help water, weed, and chat in our community gardens. Lots of veggies are getting close to picking season, so keep an eye out!

## VOLUNTEER AT THE FOOD PANTRY

Brown St. will be helping at the **Food Pantry on Tuesday, Sept. 30 (3:15–6:15 p.m.) and Wednesday, Oct. 1 (11:45 a.m.–3:00 p.m.)**. Since Sept. 30 is a 5th Tuesday, there will be no family dinner that evening, so it's a great chance to jump in and lend a hand to a community partner doing amazing work!

We're hoping for **two volunteers each day** to help serve families. Your presence makes a big difference, and the time together is always rewarding.

**Questions? Want to sign up? Email Sarah: [info@brownstreetumc.org](mailto:info@brownstreetumc.org)**

## What's Happening at



**CONGRESS ST.**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## CIRCLE OF JOY MEETING

**Next Meeting: Monday, Sept. 8th @ 6:30pm, Rm. 201**

**Hostesses:** Chris LeFevre and Tracy Fristoe

All women are welcome to join us!

The ramp door will be unlocked.

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH LUNCH

**Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am**

Sean Lutes will be presenting Historic information about Lafayette, including information about many of our churches. Sean is the founder of Preserve Historic Lafayette, has served on the Lafayette Historic Preservation Commission since 2017.

Lunch of salads and chicken casserole for a free will offering will be served.

All are welcome! RSVP to Sandy Oswalt at:  
Skoswalt1948@icloud.com or 765-337 6853 by **September 8!**

## GARDEN CLEANUP: HELP NEEDED

**Join us Saturday September 13<sup>th</sup> @ 10am to help with garden clean up in prep for fall!**

If you can bring yard bags, shovels, garden rakes or other hand tools, and work gloves. We'll be cleaning out several beds, planting cover crop seeds, and transplanting pepper plants.

If you want to help in anyway, contact Lynn Nelson at: 765-491-7865 or [nelson@cosumc.org](mailto:nelson@cosumc.org)

## DID YOU KNOW?!

Did you know that it takes **620 man hours to produce the 700 dozen pumpkin cookies** that are sold at our pumpkin patch?

That's a lot of work! A huge thanks to all of you who have signed up already-- see below for more opportunities to serve!



# The Great Pumpkin Patch 2025

## PATCH HOURS

Thursday, September 26 - Friday, October 31

Sundays - Thursdays: 12pm - 6pm

Fridays & Saturdays: 12pm - 7pm

## COOKIE CREW

Help us bake and decorate our famous pumpkin sugar cookies to sell in the patch!

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera or [click this link to sign up.](#)



## PATCH CREW

We can always use help working the patch! Help measure and price pumpkins, answer questions, and be a friendly face for our visitors.

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera or [click this link to sign up.](#)



## PATCH PREP DATES

- **Cashier Training:**
  - September 14 and 21 @ 11:45
- **Entrance/Cornstalk Set Up:**
  - September 18
- **Patch Decorating Day:**
  - September 21
- **Mum Delivery:**
  - September 25 @ 5:30pm

## PUMPKIN DELIVERY

**Wednesday, September 24@ 4:00pm**

It's all hands on deck to unload over 2,000 pumpkins and finishing getting set up for opening day!

Meal provided.

If you're willing to help prep/donate food please reach out at [info@cosumc.org](mailto:info@cosumc.org)

## CHARITIES

Oakland Elementary School

Civitan:  
Modified Athletics for Kids  
Shine on University

Beta Sigma Phi:  
Community Cancer Network

## **BROWN STREET STAFF**

**Ryan Traeger**  
Sr. Pastor

**Maia Gibson**  
Associate Pastor

**Amanze Egere**  
Minister of Music

**Sarah McCann**  
Administrative Assistant

## **CONTACT BROWN STREET**

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## **CONGRESS STREET STAFF**

**Ryan Traeger**  
Sr. Pastor

**Maia Gibson**  
Associate Pastor

**Rick Puckett**  
Pastor of Visitation

**Amanze Egere**  
Minister of Music

**Sarah McCann**  
Administrative Assistant

**Shane & Teri Lynch**  
Custodians

## **OFFICE HOURS**

### **Pastor Ryan Traeger**

**Brown St:** Tues, 10a - 1p & 2p - 6p

**Congress St:** Thurs, 10a - 12p & 1p - 3p

**Contact Info:** rwtraeger@gmail.com

### **Pastor Maia Gibson**

**Brown St:** Tues, 12p - 3p

**Congress St:** Weds, 9a - 12p

**Contact Info:** maia.gibson@inumc.org

## **WORSHIP WITH US**

### **Sundays at 9am - Brown Street**

[www.facebook.com/BrownStreetUnitedMethodistChurch](http://www.facebook.com/BrownStreetUnitedMethodistChurch)

### **Sundays at 10:30am - Congress Street**

[www.facebook.com/evolvingfollowers](http://www.facebook.com/evolvingfollowers)

**If you are able and interested in receiving this newsletter via email,  
reach out to us at [info@brownstreetumc.org](mailto:info@brownstreetumc.org) or [info@cosumc.org](mailto:info@cosumc.org).**

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