

## Sunday Service is at 9:45 AM

- May 03 Acts 7:55-60  
1 Peter 2:2-10  
John 14:1-14
- May 10 Acts 17:22-31  
1 Peter 3:13-22  
John 14:15-21
- May 17 Acts 1:6-14  
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11  
John 17:1-11
- May 24 Acts 2:1-21  
1 Corinthians 12:3b-13  
John 7:37-39
- May 31 Genesis 1:1-2:4a  
2 Corinthians 13:11-13  
Matthew 28:16-20

## HOW TO FIND US



### United Methodist Church Of Grand Rapids

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2 blocks west of the Grand Rapids Airport  
218-327-2216

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<https://umcgrmn.org/>



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# May 2026

United Methodist Church  
Of Grand Rapids  
1701 SE 5th Avenue  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

**Mother's Day Angel Food:**

In celebration and honor of our mothers, angel food cake with sherbet topping will be served on Mother's Day, May 10th following the 9:45 church service.



**GROW**  
*in love of  
God and neighbor*

**REACH**  
*new people*

**HEAL**  
*a broken world*

**STAFF**

**Pastor**

Rev. James Crecelius

**Administrator**

Jodi Martin

**Accompanists**

Susan Hoolihan

**Ready Set Grow  
Preschool**

Mary Hanson  
Shari Tverberg

**Custodial**

Louis Baumel

**Office Hours**

Jodi:  
M-F, 9am-3pm

**Pastor Jim:**

M-F, 9am-Noon &  
By appointment

**Louie:**

Mondays - and as  
needed for special  
events

**As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. 1 Peter 4:10**



This month, we would like to share some opportunities that have come to us from our community.

**MISSIONS MEETING FOR MAY:** our Missions meeting will be May 18th at 11:00 AM

**ELDER CIRCLE:** My name is Lori Whitted, and I serve as the Volunteer Services Coordinator with AmeriCorps RSVP at ElderCircle. We are currently working to expand volunteer opportunities that help older adults in our communities remain active, independent, and connected to resources. In the past, I have had churches reach out expressing interest in getting involved, and I would love the opportunity to connect with members of your congregation!! If there is interest within your congregation to volunteer, we host a quarterly Volunteer 101 class. Our next class will be held on May 14th at Central Square Mall, Suite 123, from 11 AM - 12:00 PM. We recommend preregistration, which can be done by reaching out to me by email or phone! If it does not work to attend Volunteer 101, I would also be happy to briefly meet, either in person or virtually, to share more about how individuals or groups can make a meaningful impact through volunteer service supporting local seniors.

Thank you for all that you do for the community. I truly appreciate your time and consideration, and I look forward to the possibility of working together!!

Warmest regards, Lori Whitted AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer Services Coordinator

**NEW BEGINNINGS PREGNANCY PROGRAM:** The WALK for LIFE will be on Saturday, May 2nd, starting at 10am at First Lutheran. Come walk with us for life, for prayer and to remind our community we are Here to Help! Walker Sponsor Forms are available, give us a call to request yours today. From: Melissa Wheelock<events@newbeginningspregnancy.com>

**WIG CLOSET:** Sharon wants to thank the UMC Knitters for the prayer shawls and beanies you are making for the Wig Closet guests. They are so beautiful and appreciated. We're thankful that the word is getting out to the community. If you know anyone who might be interested in a wig, please share information about our Wig Closet.

**COAT RACK:** As you begin your spring cleaning, please remember to save your adult winter coats that you won't be using next year. We were short of many sizes in 2025.

*We don't expect everyone to donate and/or volunteer for every opportunity we present, but we hope that you will prayerfully consider missions that speak to your heart!*

**Fireside Readers**

The May selection is "The Time of The Child". By Niall Williams.  
May 25th at 6:30 at the church.





Spring is here.....I think. End of last week, we had our first 70-degree high temperature of the year – and two days later, a high in the twenties and snow. Well, if Spring’s not totally here, it will be soon. Time to start yard work and planting schedules. At our place we have two flower gardens, a vegetable garden, and this year we’re adding a pollinator garden. Jodel and I walked the yard this weekend naming all the plans we have for this coming growing season – and all the work that will need doing to get them done. (Kinda a “double-edged sword” kind of thing).

I do very much enjoy working in the garden and doing lawn work – but that list does seem a bit daunting. I’m renewed and fed spiritually when I’m out in the lawn or gardens, but there is work involved – and pretty much continually throughout the season. (But thank goodness not constantly). But that’s what it means to “tend to your garden and lawn”. I find it very applicable to one’s journey in faith and more specifically, discipleship – following Jesus or living out “the ways of Christ”.

With the snow finally gone, it’s time to pick-up sticks; walking the yard collecting and removing all the sticks (and some larger branches) that have been blown down during Winter: kind of “De-cluttering” the lawn. Same with the gardens. Sticks don’t only fall in the yard, and it seems some of the leaves that were raked up in the fall have found their way into the garden beds and now the beds need to be raked out.

Our lives need to be “De-cluttered” or need raking out. It’s a natural thing that sticks fall and leaves collect. It’s also a natural thing for our lives to get cluttered - by too much busyness, or littered from the consequences of our brokenness, poor choices, or destructive behaviors and actions. It’s just part of the human experience. But we can experience new growth and abundance! We are called to tend to our lives so that the lawn and growing beds of our lives are free to grow; catching the full sun of God’s grace and raked free to receive the rains of God’s goodness and faithfulness.

The good news is God is with us! The Holy Spirit fills us with the power of the Living Christ! In fact, it is the Holy Spirit who does the Uncluttering and rakes free our lives. We need to allow the process! We are directed to move in new directions and reorient ourselves to the rays of God’s grace and activity in our lives. That’s our part, the activity the Lord requires of us to make this happen. In fact, in scripture, it names what our response to God’s grace should look like: To do Justice, to Love Kindness and Walk humbly with God.

These activities of discipleship, these responses to God’s gracious activity on our lives builds our relationship with the Lord. The lawn of our lives grows greener and the “grass” which is what makes up the lawn grows thicker and more lush. The beds, where we plant the fruits of our discipleship are now free to blossom and bloom displaying the evidence of God’s Spirit in our lives. We begin to display the myriads of colors that show and express the presence and activity of God and God’s Spirit in our lives!

May God be with you and us all as a faith family, in this season of growth and possibility as followers of Jesus and disciples of Christ!

Be God’s, Pastor Jim

**Blessing of the Bikes  
Sunday, May 17th**

**Following the Service in the Parking Lot.**



Bring your Motorcycle, Moped, E-Bike, or Bicycle for a special blessing before the summer riding season.

**Church Directory Update:**



The Photo directories are due to arrive sometime in May! We will let you know when they are ready to be picked up at the church. Thank you for your patience.

**THANK YOU** to the committee for their hard work on this HUGE project!



March 2026 Monthly Snap Shot			
	Income	Expenses	Net Income
General Fund	27,155	28,097	(942)
Full Year 2026	77,824	86,399	(8,575)
Monthly average - 2026	25,941	28,800	(2,859)

Thank you for your continued support of the daily ministry of our church. We try to be careful stewards of your gifts.

## News From the Office: Database Update & Online Directory Reminder:

### Database Update:

I'm sorry for the delay. I hope to start sending the individual invitations in early May. You should receive the following email: You have been invited to join UMC Of Grand Rapids. You've been added to Ministry Brands Amplify with UMC Of Grand Rapids. Click "Accept Invitation" to join and set your password! This will allow you to view your profile on the database, your giving history, and the Online directory. Please note that you will only be able to see church family that are 18 and over that have not opted out of the directory.



### After you set up your profile here are a couple things you will need to know:

If you click the 3 dots beside your name and profile visibility, you will be able to control what others in the church family will see when they go to your profile on the directory. I have set the directory to not show birthdates or anniversaries, if you want yours visible you can change it there. The other thing to know is the Partners button at the bottom next to My Giving on the home page, please ignore that. I asked if it can be removed but it cannot be removed.

### Important Information about the Online Directory:

Everyone that is currently in our database will automatically be included in the online directory. NOTE: only people in our church family will have access to your contact information in the online directory. YOU MUST Opt-Out if you DO NOT wish to have your contact information included in the online directory!

Email Jodi: [secretary@umcgrmn.org](mailto:secretary@umcgrmn.org) to opt-out.

### App Update:

You will not be able to log into the app until your profile is set up from the invitation. After the individual invitations have been sent, I will begin sending direction for the App.

## Children & Family Ministry Event:

**Bring Your own Picnic in the Park & Playdate - Sunday, May 17th - 11:30 am - 1:00 pm**

**at Maplewood Park 1400 SE 4th Ave. Grand Rapids.**

**Bring a meal for your family & a lawn chair if you wish.**

**Text Jodi to RSVP 218-256-8250**

**(Alternate Rain Date will be 5/31)**



# UMCGR Endowment Fund NEWS



In January 2022 at the Charge Conference, a Strategic Plan for the next three years was adopted. One of the goals under the Finance Committee umbrella was to increase the principal of the Congregational Trust Fund by 50%. For three years we had a Fifth Sunday Special Offering where people could give a gift in honor or memory of loved ones. Starting in 2025 we changed from every Fifth Sunday to inviting people to make a contribution of a Special Offering on Memorial Day in May and/or All Saints Day, the first Sunday in November.

First, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has given gifts, particularly these last four and a half years. Folks have given generously to the Special Offering requests. We have also gratefully received a number of memorial gifts for members of the congregation who have passed away this past year.

Second, you will be receiving the Memorial Day Special Offering letter and giving envelope in mid-May with possibly some exciting news from the EF Committee. Watch for your letter to arrive .

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## A Message From Our Lay Leader:

It's May, and I am reminded humbly of Memorial Day. I must remember amidst the turmoil and fears coming across the news waves these days, to utilize God's unending replenishing promises stated in His Holy words; "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, The people He has chosen for His own inheritance." Psalm 33:12 Though this was not written for the United States of America. . . Reflecting on all the convictions written for our country, we as Christians may need to put on "God's" armor (Ephesians 6:10-17) and stand for the base of our country's foundation. Do we remember. . .

The Star Spangled Banner: *Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,  
And this be our motto - "In God is our trust,"*

America the Beautiful: *"America! America! God shed His grace on thee"*

The Pledge of Allegiance : *"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America,  
and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God. . ."*

My dad was assigned GRS in WWII; Graves Registration Services. He never spoke of his duties . I learned from my brothers after his passing. Graves Registration Services are responsible for the identification, recovery, and temporary or permanent burial of deceased military personnel, particularly in overseas or combat theaters.

My papa tagged those who gave their lives for you, for me, for *We The People*. . .

God's reminder to all, is His undeniable explanation of Heroism as is written in John 15:13 There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

I believe in our nation's founding beliefs and I believe all who fought/fight for them, would appreciate us remembering; "Whose armor are we wearing?"

Today, and every day, I remember you and I thank you sincerely! Humbled in God's love and each of your services.

Your Lay Leader Teresa

## MEMORIAL DAY



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## Youth News!



The trip to Duluth was a great time! Sky Zone was full of jumps and springs, an obstacles course and lots of laughter. Then time to walk about Canal Park, maybe get a souvenir and then an early dinner at Grandma's restaurant. Great to have such a big bunch and a delight to meet Ethan and Anna! So, for the rest of the school year we have meetings on May 3rd and 17th. We'll end the last meeting with another "Nerf War" and pizza! Big part of these meeting will be planning and selecting dates for the big trip to the cities!! We'll need everyone's input so please be there for these last two meetings of the school year! As always, we meet 1st and 3rd Sundays at 6:30 and end between 7:45/8:00. Come for the prizes, the conversation about "real life", good food, videos and more!

## UMC of GR 3rd Annual Plant/Garden Fundraising Sale ~ Wednesday, May 27th

Please consider ways that you can participate in our plant & garden plant sale. Here are a few ideas, but I imagine you can think of even more ways to contribute:

Mark your calendars and plan to shop (Wednesday, May 27th)

Take a Flyer from the church to share in the community.

You may start to bring your Seedlings to the church beginning on May 10th.

Split and repot some house plants

Dig up perennials or small seedling trees for the sale

Clean out your garages and sheds to find items for our sale (garden tools, wind-chimes, planters, birdbaths, bird feeders/houses, garden flags, etc.)

Volunteer sign-up sheets will be made available in early May

Thank you, in-advance for your participation in this fundraiser! Sincerely, Miss Mary (Text or Call me with Questions 218-259-9346)

**APRIL SHOWERS**  
Bring  
**MAY FLOWERS**



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### Finance Committee:

As you are reading this I am hoping that we have finally quit having snowy days. Winter was long but very busy. It seems like we just finished the budget for 2026 and it's already well on its way to being a third over. Many thanks to each of you for your generous participation in the Easter fun, the upcoming plant sale, the effort to give the very young a new playground, and the smiles you share as we catch up on happenings. We are still looking for someone to be UMC treasurer. It is energizing to be busy and fun to be a part of the UMC family.

### The Finance Committee is Seeking a New Church Treasurer:

As you may know, our treasurer has given notice so we are looking for someone to take over those duties. Please note that due to the software changeover, the earliest training could begin would be in June. If you think this is a something you might like to do for your church, please let Jodi know and stop at the office to get a copy of this volunteer job description.

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### Troop 41 News:

The promise of spring is on its way and we're gearing up for some camping with some outdoor activities. Our troop has been working on Cooking merit badge. We are learning about meal planning, food safety, nutrition, and cooking methods. On our upcoming camping trips we'll be able to put them into practice.

On one outing early in the month, we visited a family in Sugarbush and helped drill and tap trees. We learned how to identify maple trees, where to correctly locate taps based on tree size, sunlight and old tap holes. We tapped about a dozen trees and set the collection bags and watched those first few cups of sap drip.

Coming full circle, we had a private tour of Fidely's commercial syruping operations just this past week. We saw their collection methods, pumps and storage tanks. Saw the evaporator and other systems in syrup making. We had some samples and learned a bunch.

Our troop went on a geocaching hike. An annual favorite activity, the scouts learned about GPS technology, how to navigate safely, and found some caches.

We had a booth at the Home and Cabin show promoting our program. We recruited two new scouts, made some connections and had some great outreach to the community. The new pack at UMC is also growing, feel free to reach out to [becky.langenecker@scouting.org](mailto:becky.langenecker@scouting.org) if you know of anyone interested in scouting.




- 3 Barb Green
- 4 David Watson
- 5 Nancy Grose
- 7 Dennis O'Toole
- 7 Nancy Tank
- 7 Marlene Zabel
- 9 Mary Ritter
- 10 Ardith Voehl
- 10 Dave Rourk
- 11 Madeline Larson
- 11 Faye Mostoller
- 12 June Johnson

- 13 Scott Hauser
- 13 Kathy Mahaffey
- 15 Harry Huffer
- 18 Jeanne Folsom
- 20 Bonnie Drake
- 20 Jane Gilbert
- 20 Tysen Lenzen
- 26 Lois Nelson
- 26 Lisa Randall
- 27 Heather Smith
- 30 Sandra Grina
- 30 Chuck Becker

- 1 Dave & Marilyn Hutchins
- 1 Bob & Donna Schuder
- 2 Ron & Justine Williams
- 9 Jim & Cindy Ridley
- 17 Cole & Mackenzie Selliers
- 25 Bruce & Bonnie Larson
- 25 Jim & Gretchen Danielson
- 26 Kurt & Julie Werner
- 28 Ron & Michele Olson
- 30 Pat & Joni Namyst
- 30 Joel & Lisa Zimmer



**Graduation Sunday is May 31st.**  
 Congratulations to Abigail Zimmer on her graduation.

**Hospitality MINISTRY** **Coordinator:**  
**Alice Anderson & Faye Mostoller**

*The captain will contact you if there is a need for help serving a lunch, funeral or other event*

Chuck Becker	Barb Green	Marilyn Hutchins
Pat Kutzorik	Julia Statsman	Ellen Verry
Roni Skoglund	Patty Sawdey	Judy Reddish

**Playground Project Update:**



Some of our young families had a vision to build a better playground for their children when they are at church, for the children who are in Ready Set Grow, and as an outreach to children in the neighborhood. In consultation with the Trustees, the Finance Committee, and the Ad Council a plan was developed and brought to the Church Conference on January 26, 2026 for approval. In January we started having the Noisy Offering each Sunday given to the Playground Fund. In March the Youth Group gave the proceeds from their cinnamon rolls sale to the Playground Fund.

On Friday, April 17th Steve Zimmer with his fork lift and Andrew Buell and Matt Buchaker with their muscles met a truck that had traveled 1,100 miles from Pennsylvania to deliver the equipment for the new playground. The Friday class of Ready Set Grow were able to watch part of the unloading process as sidewalk supervisors.

On Saturday, April 25th Matt and Andrew removed a few trees to make room for the installation and there will need to be some groundwork to level the land. Stakes have been placed to show the outline of where it will be. If you are interested in getting some of the wood, contact Steve Zimmer or the church office.

June 8th is scheduled for the day of assembling the new playground with the supervision of a representative from the company here to direct assembly. (Tuesday, June 9th is the alternate day in case of rain). Watch for sign up sheets to be out with descriptions of tasks. The company asks that the church have 15 volunteers.

In February the Ad Council also approved having Playground Pyramid Fund Raiser asking people to take an envelope with a designated amount to contribute. The Pyramid was launched April 12th and will run through Pentecost on May 24th. The envelopes range from \$2,000 to \$5 so that everyone would have an opportunity to contribute.

**CRUNCH TIME: Payment is due thirty days after delivery, (which will be May 17th, so your prayerful contributions are needed fairly quickly.** Watch the Monday Message and Friday Forecast for updates. As of April 20th the amount in the Playground Fund is \$30,505. Thank you to all who have donated!