



FIRST UNITED

METHODIST CHURCH

AUGUST 2026

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PASTOR'S PAUSE AUGUST 2026



VITAL CONVERSATIONS ON RACE, CULTURE, AND JUSTICE...

Revelation 7:9: *After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.*

Greetings to my FIRST UMC church family, when our congregation began conversations about LGBTQIA+ inclusion, members also expressed a desire for us to engage more deeply with race, racism, and racial equity. Beginning in September, we will have two opportunities to continue growing together as disciples of Jesus Christ.

As part of the work recommended by our Social Justice Ministry Team, we will offer a four-week series (**September 20 & 27, October 4 & 11**) following 10am worship called **Vital Conversations on Race, Culture, and Justice**. Through music, art, video, and group conversation, we will have space to listen, learn, ask honest questions, and reflect on how race and culture shape our lives, our faith, and our relationships. Together, we will grow in our discipleship and consider how God is calling us to build a more welcoming and just community.

Similarly, and separate from the four-week conversation series, we will offer a book-reading opportunity for those who enjoy reading. Copies of **I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown** will be available (In church office - \$11 per) for anyone who would like to participate. I can personally attest to its powerful message and accessible writing style. It is a book that invites reflection and may change the way we see ourselves, our church, and the world around us. Author Austin Channing Brown will also be speaking at Hamline United Methodist Church on Thursday, **September 24, from 6:00 - 8 pm**. You can learn more about the event by clicking here. <https://austinchanning.com/eventsold/2026/9/st-paul-book-tour-stop>. Our hope is that participants will read the book, attend the event if they are able, and then gather in October (TBD) for conversation and reflection.

I invite you to participate in one or both opportunities as you feel called. These gatherings are meant to be places where we can listen, learn, ask honest questions, and grow together without needing to have all the right words or answers. Scripture gives us a beautiful vision of people from every nation, tribe, people, and language gathered in God's presence, and living into that vision is part of our discipleship.

My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will meet us in these spaces, deepen our faith, strengthen our relationships, and help us grow in how we understand and talk about race as we become a church that more fully reflects the justice, mercy, and the love of Jesus Christ.

In God's peace,
Pastor Jenny

A SPECIAL THANK YOU...

In this hot dry summer you may have noticed that the potted flowers in front of the church are always beautiful. Chris Nelson is the one to thank. Thanks Chris for all the extra trips to water and keep the plants seasonal and lovely.



SCRIP ORDER SEPTEMBER 6

The Scrip Order Schedule is posted on the church website homepage <https://fumcstillwater.com/> under Announcements and on the church Information Center. The next order will be placed on **September 6**. Orders can be placed after Sunday worship services or anytime by email to the church office at fumcstillwater@gmail.com. Order blanks are available at the church Information Center or in the office. Payment for email orders can be dropped off at the church during office hours.



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UNITED METHODIST MEN (UMM) AUGUST 20

The joint FIRST UNITED/Prairie View Summer Barbecue will be on **August 20 at 5:30 pm**. Sign up on the Barbecue List posted on the church Information Center. **Meet at the church at 4:45 pm** to carpool to the event or contact the church office for directions.



BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group will meet **September 4 at 12:30 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. Beginners are welcome! Contact the church office at fumcstillwater@gmail.com to join the Bridge Group mailing list.



CARING TEAM MINISTRIES

The Caring Ministries Team is focused on the care and support of friends and members of our congregation. This is done in the form of:

- Grief Ministry for those that have lost loved-ones
- Card Ministry for those that are ill, grieving, or are alone
- Soup Ministry for those that are ill, homebound or otherwise in need of food
- Meal Train for those that are ill, homebound, or unable to purchase or cook their own food
- Home Communion for those that are homebound and desire to share in monthly Communion
- Conversation Partners for those that are homebound, ill, depressed, or otherwise in need of a friend.

New team members are welcome

We would love you to join our team if you would like to participate either:

- As a member of the team who meet every 4-6 weeks to plan, review, and determine steps necessary to fulfill our multiple ministries OR
- Participate in one or more of the above ministries and have **NO MEETINGS**.

Next meeting of the Caring Ministries Team is **Thursday, August 20 at 10:30** in the Wesley Room or via Zoom.



MUSIC MINISTRIES

Fall, Winter, Spring Music Rehearsal Schedules for 2026/2027

Rivertown Ringers Handbells Rehearsals will resume on **Wednesday, September 9 at 6:00 pm.**

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsals will resume on **Wednesday, September 9 at 7:00 pm.**

Open Circle Rehearsals will continue leading our Sunday morning service on the **second Sunday of each month** and our first rehearsal will be on **Wednesday, September 9th at 4:00 pm**, and will lead worship **Sunday, September 13th.**

I'm very excited and truly looking forward to this Season of Music for FIRST UNITED Methodist of Stillwater. With the addition of our new Boston Grand Piano and the new Sound and Media Platform, I am confident that we now have the ability to expand our music ministry in some new and exciting horizons, including a possible concert series, special music offerings and events!

I invite you to become part of this vibrant ministry, whether it be running sound and media, ringing handbells, singing in the choir, small groups, solos, duets or playing an instrument!

If have any questions please contact me at (407) 973-8839, musicdirector@fumcstillwater
OR schroeder1954@yahoo.com. I would love to speak with you about the possibilities!

Making A Difference in God's Kingdom as we Wrap All People in God's Love!

Gregory Schroeder
Director of Music Ministries



WEDNESDAY POTLUCK PICNIC

Wednesday Potluck Picnics are held each week at Washington Square Park at **5:30pm**, with the **last picnic of the season on August 26**. Bring a dish to share and enjoy the fellowship of friends. If you enjoy games, stick around for a board game.



AUGUST

Aug. 16 Connie Schmid; Aug. 17 Judy Trimbo; Madeline Leines, Grace Meline; Aug. 19 Nancy Nelson, Jacob Wright; Aug. 21 Jeanne Lundeen; Aug. 22 Linnea Shinn; Aug. 23 Dennis Harcey; Aug. 24 Alex Frederick; Aug. 26 Bruce Clark, Nicholas Cossetta, Barb Wilson; Aug. 27 Dan Schmid; Aug. 30 Tracy Clark, Steve Roll; Aug. 31 Sarah Funck.

SUMMER FINANCE UPDATE

We want to publicize some recent church finance activities:

In June, the AV platform was completed, and we purchased a new-to-us baby-grand piano. The breakdown of cost and received donations is below:

	AV Platform	Piano
Cost	\$22,000	\$14,355
Donations	\$15,360	\$8,040
Unfunded Portion	\$6,640	\$6,315

Thank you to all who have generously donated so far! Of course there is still time to donate. If you care to donate to either of these much-needed additions, please write a check and make notation in the memo line.

Other Activities:

The Pancake Breakfast, held on June 6, netted \$1116 with \$558 added to our Grace Scholarship Fund (financial assistance for high school youth going to college) and \$558 to Sunny Hill's scholarship program. Again, thanks to all of you who helped and attended. Because of its success, we may do it again - stay tuned.

The FIRST UNITED Endowment Fund by-laws were amended and approved by a Church Charge Conference. These amendments were to clarify the goals and management of the Endowment fund. The Fund is held in a growth mutual fund account with Dakotas/Minnesota United Methodist Foundation. As a reminder, the Endowment Fund consists of principal and income. Our Endowment Fund is set-up such that principal is to be held in perpetuity and invested to produce income over time. Currently, (as of 6-30-26) the Endowment Fund principal is \$129,100 and has invested income of \$63,231. Income balance will fluctuate slightly every month due to market fluctuation. According to the Endowment Fund by-laws, the Income may be used for a number of purposes, as directed by the Ad Council. The Ad Council has directed the use of Endowment Fund Income money to pay the Unfunded Portion of the AV platform and piano costs.

If you have any questions, please contact Jesse Hartley or Jim Nelson.