

UPCOMING SUNDAY WORSHIP

September 20 @10:00 a.m.
Salt+Seawater+Soil:
The Cosmic Dance of Creation
ASP Sunday
Rev. Dr. Matt Weiler

September 27 @10:00 a.m.
Salt+Seawater+Soil:
The One in Whom We Live...
“The One Who Gives Life”
Rev. Dr. Matt Weiler

WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE OUR GUEST TODAY! If you are worshipping with us for the first time, please stop by the Welcome Center.

Children are welcome! Child care with trained staff is provided on the second floor for infants to 4-year-olds.

Worship activities for children can be found on a cart outside the side sanctuary doors.

LARGE PRINT Bibles and hymnals are available at the Park Street entrance.

Hearing assistance devices are available at the Welcome Center.

Today’s service is being livestreamed. You can find previous recordings of worship services on our website (www. umc-kzo.org) under the Livestream tab, or find us on our YouTube page.

- Church Staff**
- Rev. Julie Kline..... Lead Pastor
 - Rev. Dr. Matt Weiler Community Formation
 - Jacqueline Stilger Organist/Dir. of Music
 - Cari Beth Croak..... Associate Dir. of Music
 - Julia Librizzi.....Children & Families
 - Drew BoltonBldg. Superintendent
 - Linda HamillOffice Manager
 - Christiane StakelyOffice Assistant
 - Erika Jones.....Communications
 - Cody Collmenter Bookkeeper
 - Bryan Heany..... AV Team Leader
 - Alison EricsonBuilding Host
 - Samantha Lee.....Building Host
 - Jacob EricsonBuilding Host
 - Jim Tiffany.....Custodian
 - Em Norwood..... Young Adult Resident

We are a Reconciling Congregation, Welcoming ALL.

Worship Leaders: Rev. Julie Kline, Rev. Dr. Matt Weiler, Kerry Castor, Julia Librizzi

Director of Music: Jacqueline Stilger

Associate Director of Music: Cari Beth Croak

Musicians: Chancel Singers

Acolytes: Cora and Hazel Welter

Audio-Visual Team: Bryan Heany, Kennedy Hayes, Diego Menchinger, Lucas McGinnis

ANNOUNCEMENTS

 The rosebud on the altar today is to welcome **Joseph Robert Stakely**, born August 26th. His proud grandparents are Christiane and Bob Stakely.

Our Lay Leaders, Vickee Seals and Mary Duncan Whittaker, will be at the 2026-27 ministries bulletin board located in the hallway outside of the sanctuary. They can help answer questions you may have about the upcoming programs and ministries or other questions about the church. Please stop and say hello!

Perks: Join us after worship today in the Perks area for root beer floats!

Our guest today: Hannah Barker Nickolay from Wayfolk Arts in Holland, Michigan, as part of our Making Meaning Together Grant to help children (and all of us) have meaningful experiences in worship and present scripture in an accessible way.

Scripture Enactment Education: We will gather downstairs in the Youth Lounge after worship today, where Hannah Barker Nickolay of Wayfolk Arts will talk to us about learning scripture enactment together during the next few months. Children, youth, and their parents are especially encouraged to join us. This will be Sunday School for Children this week and then next week (September 20th) we will begin meeting in room 206 again.

Fall Academy Class: Beginning today: a 5-week class called “A Primer on Israel/Palestine.” We will look at the geography, people, terminology, ancient and contemporary history, and politics of Israel/Palestine, all in an effort to bring more understanding to this intense and violent region, still thought of as “The Holy Land.” The class will run through October 11. Rev. John Boley will facilitate.

Youth Group - First meeting tonight! The group is open to all 6th-12th grade students and meets every Sunday evening during the school year from 6pm-7:30pm in the Youth Lounge.

First Beats: Our children’s musical ensemble will begin rehearsals this Tuesday, September 15 at 4:15pm. All 3rd - 8th graders are welcome to join to learn and play music together!

Restorative Yoga class meets at FUMC on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:30-10:30 in the Parlor. Led by Ana Lucia Castañeda, this form of yoga focuses on gentle stretching and breathing. There is no fee, but Ana welcomes donations.

Manna, our young adult ministry, gathers every Tuesday in the Youth Lounge from 6:30-8:00pm. For more information, contact our new Young Adult Resident, Em Norwood, at enorwood@umc-kzo.org.

Book Club - We will be studying *For Such a Time as This: An Emergency Devotional* by Hanna Reichel. Led by Miriam Downey and Jan Schoenherr, the study will last for four weeks; beginning on Tuesday, September 15 and meeting every Tuesday at 10am through October 6. To join this book study, let Jan Schoenherr know at schoenherrjan@gmail.com to be added to the email list. This Is a Bookstore on Oakland Drive has books available for purchase.

Faith Milestones - A youth-group-style meeting for our 3rd - 5th grade children meets once a month during the school year. Our first meeting will be Sunday, September 20, 6:00 - 7:30pm. Contact Julia Librizzi at jlibrizzi@umc-kzo.org to learn more.

Confirmation Class - begins September 20 and will meet every third Sunday through May. Confirmation is a time when young people learn about who they are in Jesus Christ, how they belong to the church, and how their lives are part of God’s story. This is a two-year process for students in the 7th grade and older. Contact Pastor Matt Weiler at mweiler@umc-kzo.org if you would like to learn more.

First United Methodist Church Conference: This annual business meeting will be held on Sunday, September 20 at 2pm at Portage Chapel Hill. We will gather as Branch 7 of the Greater Southwest District. Members will vote on the 2027 elected lay leadership roster, the membership report, and celebrate our past year of ministry accomplishments. Please plan to attend and be part of this significant event. We need your presence and input as we make important decisions for the governance of our church community.

- Two New Bible Study Classes this month:**
- **For Teens & Young Adults:** Deacon Cara Weiler and Christine Charles are offering an Old Testament Disciple Bible Study Fast Track for High School Youth and Young Adults Wednesday evenings beginning September 23.
 - **For Adults:** Pastor Matt Weiler is offering an Old Testament Disciple Bible Study Fast Track for Adults on Wednesday evenings beginning September 30.

Contact Pastor Matt at mweiler@umc-kzo.org to sign up for either class or to learn more.



WELCOME TO FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO

Good morning, welcome to Rejoice Sunday as you join us here in the sanctuary and online. As we worship today, please make your presence known in the attendance pads that are found at the end of the pews or by saying “hello” in the YouTube chat. Please pass the attendance pads to your neighbor as you greet them this morning.

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

PRELUDE *Earth and All Stars* (David Johnson, Arr. M. Burkhardt)

***CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING THE SALT LANTERNS** Kerry Castor

One: God created, from nothing. God created from the dust of the earth
ALL: God created in God’s own image.
One: God continues to create through Jesus and the Spirit.
ALL: God’s creativity knows no end.
One: In this season, the lantern shines beauty from inside the stone that God created.
ALL: In this season, salt connects oceans teeming with life with tears shed in grief.
One: May God’s beautiful Creation inspire our worship.
ALL: May God’s love inspire our song.

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLES

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN #152** *I Sing the Almighty Power of God* (UMH - red hymnal)

***WELCOME** Rev. Julie Kline

***LIGHTING THE PEACE CANDLE** Rev. Dr. Matt Weiler

Creator God, Breath of Life, Breathe on us once more. Into the context of each of our lives, bring forth your love for sharing, your joy for celebrating, your purpose for motivating, and your mercy for healing. Stir among us, bringing energy to our worship. Surprise us with your presence. Encourage us for your ways. Make possible all good things, which you bless. Amen.

***PASSING THE PEACE**
You are invited to turn to your neighbor and greet them with gestures and words of peace, such as “Peace be with you.” This practice symbolizes reconciliation, unity, and the sharing of Christ’s love amongst our community.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Genesis 1:1-27a *(The Inclusive Bible)* Hannah Barker Nickolay

One: This is what the Spirit is saying to the church.
ALL: Thanks be to God!

***LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We have arrived today on this holy ground. This place was created by God and is God’s. The dust of the Earth, the rivers that water it, the creatures that call it home, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all belong here, to this holy ground. Since time immemorial, God has welcomed people here who have stewarded this land and its inhabitants, living in ways that allow all to thrive together. With gratitude and humility, we honor Indigenous neighbors and nations, remember histories of harm and resilience, and commit ourselves to learning, justice, care for the land, and right relationship. In the Genesis creation story, God places humanity within creation in right relationship, not as owners, but as caretakers called to tend, protect, and honor the earth and all that lives within it. May it be so.

A TIME FOR THE CHILD WITHIN US ALL Julia Librizzi

HYMN #2233 *This is Where Children Belong* (FWS-black hymnal)
Blessing the Children
ALL: May God bless you and be with you. God loves you. So do we!

SUNG RESPONSE - HYMN #2190 *Bring Forth the Kingdom, vs. 1 - left & right* (FWS-black hymnal)
Please sing as indicated by the leader on the pulpit side or the lectern side.

MESSAGE “Deepen Our Reverence” Rev. Julie Kline

HYMN #2060 *God, the Sculptor of the Mountains* (FWS-black hymnal)

HOLY COMMUNION
All are welcome to the meal Jesus hosts. There is no one here who is ineligible or unwelcome; no one too old or too young; no one who has too many doubts or too few beliefs. You, who are part of God’s creation, are welcome to receive Holy Communion this morning. Come forward by the center aisle, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup of juice and eat it. Servers will offer the bread by saying, “the bread of life,” and “the cup of love.” You may respond with “Amen.” Gluten-free bread is available.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION
Following each intercession, please respond with “Holy One, hear our prayer” when directed.

One: God of seedtime and harvest, fisheries, and markets,
ALL: Have mercy on us and hear our prayers:

One: For children who go to bed hungry at night, and for parents who cannot find food for them.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (UMH - red hymnal, p. 17)

SANCTUS, MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION AND AMEN (UMH - red hymnal, p. 17 - 18)

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

COMMUNION ANTHEM *Bread of the World* (John Abdenour) Chancel Singers

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Ecological/Celtic version, John Philip Newell)

**Holy One beyond all names, eternal Wellspring,
may love rise again in us today with food for every table,
shelter for every family, and reverence for every life.
Forgive us our failings in love and free us from all falseness
that the light of our souls may shine and the strength of our spirits endure
for Earth and all its people this day, tonight, and forever. Amen.**

CALL TO OFFERING *Earth and All Stars* (David Johnson, Arr. M. Burkhardt)

OFFERTORY *Earth and All Stars* (David Johnson)

***DOXOLOGY** (Words © 2026 Paula Meador Testerman) (Tune of *Old Hundredth*)

**All creatures, lift your praises high!
Praise God in earth and sea and sky;
In one great chorus, all your days,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit praise!**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Benevolent God, as we offer our gifts of heart and hands, we ask for your healing touch upon our land. Restore areas damaged by deforestation, pollution, and neglect. Teach us to be better caretakers of the earth you have entrusted to us. Amen.

OUR SHARED LIVES

***HYMN #150** *God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens* (UMH - red hymnal)

BLESSING

Blessed are you, who rest on the seventh day.
Blessed are you, who worship the Creator God on this day.
Blessed are you, who have been created in God’s image.
Blessed are you, creative ones, called to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit.
Blessed are you, for in you, God is doing a good work.
Go in peace, friends. Amen.

POSTLUDE *With Trumpets and Horns* (G. F. Handel)
At the close of worship, the acolytes take the Light of Christ down the center aisle to symbolize that as Christ’s followers, we bear the Light of Christ to the world.

MISSION
We are called to:

- Experience God’s love
- Celebrate God’s love
- Share God’s love

VISION
We are a Christ-centered community where our stories are woven with God’s story.

CORE VALUES

 Love: God is Love and all creation is made in love, by love, and for love.

 Community: Sacred relationship with God and one another

 Inclusion: All identities belong and are loved in Christ.

 Justice: Restoration of equity and wholeness.

THIS WEEK’S EVENTS

Sunday, September 13
10:00 am Worship Service
11:00 am Sunday School for all ages
6:00 pm Youth Group - Youth Center

Monday, September 14
11:40 am Similarities - Wesley Hall

Tuesday, September 15
9:30 am Restorative Yoga - Parlor
9:30 am Worship Planning - Zoom
10:00 am Book Club - Chapel
11:40 am Similarities - Wesley Hall
4:15 pm First Beats - Choir room
4:30 to 6:30 pm - Food pantry open
6:30 pm Manna - Youth Center

Wednesday, September 16
8:00 am Yoga - Zoom
9:00 am Dawn Patrol - Parlor
11:40 am Similarities - Wesley Hall
12:00 pm Cuppa Inspiration - Facebook Live
12:30 to 2:30 - Food pantry open

Thursday, September 17
9:30 am Restorative Yoga - Parlor
9:30 am First Stitchers - Fellowship Room
11:40 am Similarities -Wesley Hall
3:30 pm Outreach Meeting - Parlor