

THE SPIRE



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FALL 2026



Thank you for picking up a copy of *The Spire*. This seasonal newsletter is published four times a year—during fall, Advent, Lent, and summer—and serves as a platform to share insights and stories about our church and community life.

As we move into the rhythms of fall, we are reminded that God continues to meet us where we are in every season, whether it be families preparing to go back to school during the fall or celebrating the achievements over the summer. In this edition of *The Spire*, we reflect on the ways our congregation is growing in faith, service, and community—from preparing for building projects and supporting our schools through the Greenwood Education Foundation, to the experiences and connections formed through summer camp, preschool ministry, and Kids Craft Camp. We're also looking forward to the beginnings of new ministries as we prepare for Caring Congregations. Whether through worship, learning, outreach, or fellowship, this season invites us to remain rooted in Christ as we grow together in faith and purpose.

Caring Congregation Model To Launch This Fall

Pastor Mandie Gould

Greenwood UMC will launch a new church care ministry this fall. Caring Congregations is a program that empowers church leaders to develop care teams that are equipped and prepared to effectively serve their congregation and communities.



Pastor Josh and Pastor Mandie recognize areas of congregational care that could be more robust or that don't currently exist. We also realize that there are only two of us, and that a team approach will help "spread the load" a bit, but also help us each live into more meaningful discipleship. Just as we are called to love one another, we are called to serve one another as well.

Key leaders have been identified and are currently being trained via The Caring Congregation at Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City. Once training requirements are fulfilled, these leaders will be commissioned during Sunday worship sometime in the fall. Along with the clergy team, those leaders will work to adopt practices and protocols to ensure that the GUMC family is receiving the pastoral and congregational care they may need at any stage in life.



As we are adapting the Caring Congregations model to our context in Greenwood, we are having frank conversations about what kind of congregational care is needed, wanted, and can be sustained, and we invite your input. Reach out to Pastor Mandie at mandie.gould@inumc.org with any questions, ideas, or stories you might have that relate to how we can better care for one another at GUMC and beyond.

Continuing the Conversation: Mission, Vision, and Values

Our conversations around mission, vision, and values are just beginning. Over the coming months, we will continue gathering as a congregation to listen, pray, and discern how God is calling Greenwood United Methodist Church to live out our shared ministry.

This process is about more than writing statements—it is about discovering who God is calling us to be as a church. As we reflect together, we'll explore how our mission, vision, and values can help guide our decisions, strengthen our ministries, and shape the ways we serve our community.

Discernment is not the work of a committee alone. Every member of our congregation has a voice and perspective that is valuable as we seek God's direction together.

We invite you to join us for our upcoming Table Talks, where these conversations will continue in an open and welcoming setting. Whether you attended our first gathering or are joining the discussion for the first time, there is a place for you at the table.

We invite you to join us for our upcoming Table Talks in Suter Hall following worship on:

- August 30, 2026
- September 20, 2026

Whether you've attended previous discussions or this will be your first, we hope you'll pull up a chair and join the conversation. Together, let's continue seeking God's vision for the future of Greenwood United Methodist Church.



GUMC Preschool: Growing Hearts, Growing Minds, Growing in Faith

*Preschool Teachers: Cassie Davis, Payton Thompson, Amy Pendleton
Brittany Ryan; Preschool Director*

Hi! As many of you know, I'm the Director of GUMC Preschool. What an exciting year we had! With new endeavors as our full time program, comes challenges and learning moments as well. I know for myself, I learned a lot through the ups and downs! I couldn't be more thankful for our teachers – Cassie, Amy, Payton and our aide Margaret. We have learned to pivot and adjust to any situation to benefit all of the children in our care. Our Pastors, Josh Lemons and Mandie Gould have provided unwavering support, guidance and listening ears.

More importantly, our little friends thrived this year! They came in shy, unsure but ready to make new friends! From our 2's to our Pre-k it has been so fun to see them learn, explore, grow and be genuinely excited to come to preschool everyday! They've built friendships, attend each others birthday parties and make play dates outside of school! The feedback we have gotten back from Pre-K parents, thanking us for their kids being ready for kindergarten, reminds us of the work we're doing.

This was our first year having a summer program! Although enrollment was low, this gave teachers one-on-one time opportunities with students. Also, this gave us the flexibility to take summer vacations and spend time with family. Our days were filled with playground, popsicles and water! We also had a fun filled week of Kids Craft Camp that would not have been possible without our amazing volunteers!

I'm ready to dive into the 2026-2027 school year! ~ Brittany Ryan

What an amazing year it has been! I believe we've had a successful first year of full-time preschool! This achievement would not have been possible without the trust from our families and the support of our church community. I'm truly excited for the upcoming school year! ~ Cassie Davis

Hello, I'm Miss Payton. Being a first-year/ full day teacher has been a big adjustment, but it has also been an incredibly rewarding experience. During the past two months of our summer program, I have enjoyed getting to know each child and watching them grow. Working with children every day has given me a more positive outlook on life, and their energy and excitement make every day meaningful.

While there are challenging days, helping a child feel better or turn their day around is one of the most rewarding parts of teaching. Seeing the positive impact I can have on their lives reminds me why I chose this profession, and I am excited to continue learning and growing as an educator.

It has been such a blessing to spend my first year as a 2s teacher, witnessing the incredible growth that happens at this precious age. Through extra love, consistent routines, and teaching kindness and manners, I have watched friendships blossom and families become part of a caring community. It has been a joy to see these little ones build foundations that will carry them into the 3/4s classroom, Pre-K, and beyond. This past school year and summer have reminded me that when teachers and families walk together with a shared purpose, lasting relationships are formed. As we begin a new year with the greatest growth our preschool has seen in years, I am grateful to serve alongside Brittany and an incredible teaching team, united in nurturing each child to become the person God has created them to be. ~ Amy Pendleton

A Week of Creativity, Faith, and Fun

Margaret Stivers



There was plenty of creativity, laughter, and excitement throughout Greenwood UMC as children gathered for this year's Kids Craft Camp. Throughout the week, everyone explored a variety of hands-on crafts while building new friendships, sharing stories, and creating memories together.



Each day offered opportunities to learn something new, express creativity, and enjoy time with one another. Whether painting, crafting, or simply sharing laughs with friends, the joy and enthusiasm of the children filled our church with energy.



One of the highlights of the week was watching children encourage one another as they worked on projects together. Every craft became an opportunity to celebrate each child's unique ideas and talents. From colorful creations to imaginative designs, campers were reminded that God has gifted each of us differently and that those gifts are meant to be shared with others.



Kids Craft Camp was about more than just making crafts—it was about creating a welcoming space where children could experience God's love, grow in community, and discover the gifts and creativity God has given each of them. Through conversations, teamwork, and encouragement from volunteers, campers were reminded that they are loved, valued, and an important part of our church family.



As a church, we are grateful for opportunities like Kids Craft Camp that help us invest in the next generation. These moments allow children to build lasting friendships, grow in confidence, and experience the love of Christ through the care and encouragement of our congregation. It is our hope that the lessons, relationships, and memories made throughout the week will continue to inspire them long after camp has ended.



Events like Kids Craft Camp are made possible because of the many volunteers who generously shared their time, talents, and creativity throughout the week. Their dedication helped create an environment where every child felt welcomed, encouraged, and inspired.



Thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated supplies, and supported this ministry. Together, we helped create a week filled with faith, friendship, creativity, and countless smiles. We are already looking forward to what next year's Kids Craft Camp will bring!



Camp Through Hope's Eyes

Margaret Stivers

Summer camp is always full of fun stories, unforgettable adventures, and moments that help us grow in our faith. One of my favorite parts is hearing the stories campers bring home. I had the opportunity to sit down with Hope, the daughter of our bookkeeper, Heather, to hear about her week at Camp Indicoso. From giant swings and zip lines, to worship and new friendships, her experience reminds us why camping ministry has such a lasting impact. Here's a glimpse into camp through Hope's eyes.

For Hope, attending camp this summer was filled with adventure, new experiences, and opportunities to grow in her faith.

Although she was a little nervous when she first arrived—especially because she got there late—it didn't take long for camp to feel like home. She quickly made friends and filled her days with swimming, games, and exciting activities.



One of her favorite memories was doing her very first front flip into the pool, and she especially enjoyed playing games with friends during free time.



Some of the camp's bigger adventures pushed Hope outside of her comfort zone. At first, the Giant Swing made her nervous,

especially knowing it would drop. But after trying it, she discovered it was one of her favorite activities and even rode it three times!

She also loved the high ropes course and zip line, making the most of every opportunity to try something new.



While the activities were a highlight, Hope said worship was one of the most meaningful parts of camp. Each day included both morning and evening worship, and she especially enjoyed the music, with "I Thank God" becoming one of her favorite songs from the week.

Of course, camp wasn't complete without great food! Hope's favorite meal was Taco Tuesday, and she also enjoyed treats like s'mores and ice cream after long, activity-filled days.

When asked what she'd tell someone thinking about going to camp for the first time, Hope's answer was simple: "Camp is fun!" She says she has a lot of stories to tell and wonderful memories from this camp experience.

As the week came to a close, Hope was sad to leave camp. The friendships she made, the adventures she experienced, and the time spent worshipping together made it a memory she won't forget.

Hope's story is just one example of the many ways God works through camping ministry. Through worship, adventure, friendship, and new experiences, campers are invited to grow in faith and discover more about God's love. Thank you to everyone whose prayers, generosity, and support help make these meaningful experiences possible for the children and youth of Greenwood UMC.

Building for the Future

David Penoff; Leadership Team

Last October, the Leadership Team of GUMC met off site for our annual retreat. One of our main goals was to identify and prioritize capital project needs for 2026. After much discussion the consensus was that the following capital projects would be addressed in 2026.

1) Parking Lot



As all of you see when you come to the church, the parking lot is in need of repairs in many areas. The asphalt has been patched and overlaid many

times resulting in a need to remove some of the old material before we can repave it. In addition we need to update and improve wheelchair ramps, add a dumpster pad and repair sidewalks. The total cost to do all of this work is estimated to be approximately \$200,000.00. We have built in a 10% overage for unexpected additional costs, resulting in a total need of \$220,000.00.

The growth in our preschool has resulted in a lot of wear to the rear parking lot so we plan to use \$60,000.00 that had been set aside for the



Preschool but was not needed for renovation. We are proposing that the remaining \$160,000.00 come from proceeds of the sale of Eli Lilly stock that was gifted to the church in the 1990's by Bob & Lou Thompson. The parking lot paving is expected to be completed in the fall of 2026.

2) Restrooms

For those of you who have used the primary restrooms in the Narthex area, you know that other than cosmetic improvements they have not been upgraded for many years, possibly not since the building was built in 1965. In addition to being outdated the restrooms are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



The total cost to renovate the restrooms is estimated to be \$125,000.00 with a 10% contingency for a total of \$137,500.00. The Leadership Team has proposed that we use additional proceeds from the sale of Eli Lilly stock in the amount of \$100,000.00 for the restroom project. We will be asking the congregation to support this project with donations of \$37,500.00. The restroom renovation is expected to start in late 2026.

3) Scout Building

GUMC has been a long supporter of scouting and currently houses Boy Scout Troop 263 and Cub Scout Pack 260.

The Scouts use the building at the southeast corner of the property. The building is in need of repairs to the roof and structure.



We have estimated these repairs at \$40,000.00 but there may be additional needs not yet identified. We plan on using \$35,000.00 of proceeds from the sale of Eli Lilly stock and are asking the congregation to help with \$5,000.00. We have not yet established a timeline for this work.

4) Playground

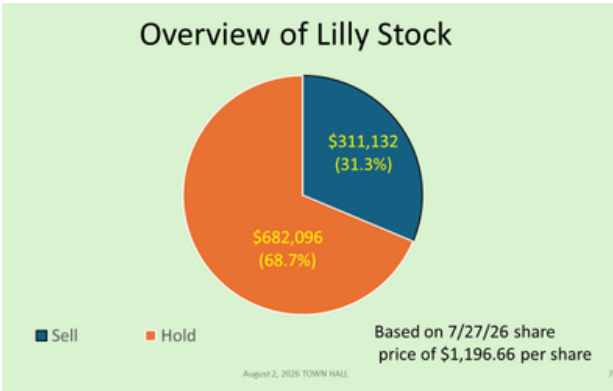
We have a small playground area at the south end of the education wings.



This playground is used primarily by the Preschool but is open for use by the public. There have been some additions and upgrades made in recent years but there is a need for fencing repairs and additional age appropriate equipment.

The Leadership Team has had much discussion about the appropriate size and scope of this playground. We also recognized that we did not have sufficient information about the costs to improve the playground so we have put this project on hold until we can gather more information.

We have allocated \$34,000.00 of funds previously designated for the Preschool to be used for the playground. Several members of the Leadership Team will also be investigating potential grant funds that may be available.

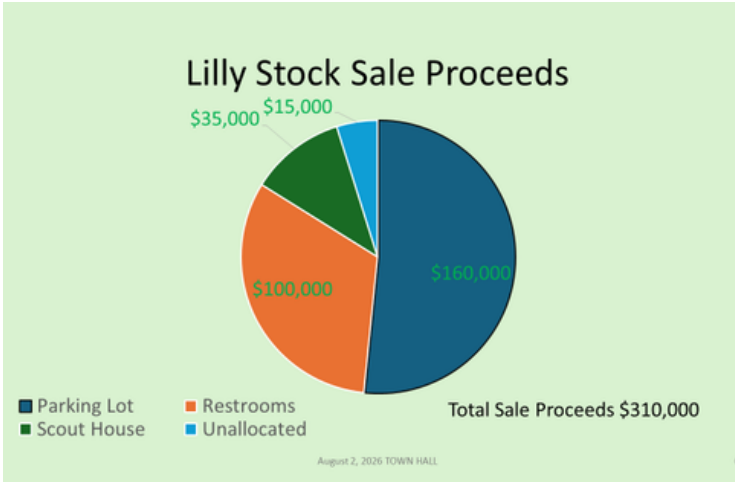


Summary
Our 2026 capital projects address needed repairs and improvements that enhance safety and convenience for our members and guests.

Use of Funds:	Parking Lot	\$220,000.00
	Restrooms	\$137,500.00
	Scout Building	\$40,000.00
	Playground	\$34,000.00
	Unallocated	\$15,000.00
	Total	\$446,500.00

Source of Funds:	Eli Lilly Stock	\$310,000.00
	Existing Funds	\$94,000.00
	Donations/Gifts	\$42,500.00
	Total	\$446,500.00

Based on the 7/27/26 closing price we will have \$682,096.00 of Eli Lilly stock remaining after the proposed sale.



CHARGE CONFERENCE

We will have our Charge Conference on Sunday, August 16, after worship as we discuss and vote on the selling of our Lily Stock.

Making a Difference Together

Tiffany Woods; GEF Executive Director

The Greenwood Education Foundation (GEF) is the nonprofit organization that supports Greenwood Community Schools by providing classroom grants, scholarships, and programs that help remove barriers to learning. While our work has always focused on helping students succeed, the challenges brought on by the pandemic reminded us that some students first need support outside the classroom before they can fully benefit inside it.

That realization led to the creation of GEF Cares program. Today, GEF Cares helps meet students' basic needs by providing healthy snacks to fight food insecurity, warm winter coats, school supply restocks during second semester, free haircuts, mental health services, and other essential resources. In 2022, we transformed a small activity bus into the GEF Cares Bus, allowing us to take these services directly to schools and students who could not attend community events because of transportation challenges.

Each year, GEF Cares provides approximately \$35,000 in services to Greenwood students. Last year alone, the program distributed 397 winter coats, provided 120 free haircuts, delivered 10,206 healthy snacks, and supplied 7,148 school supplies to students in need.

None of this would be possible without the support of our community, and few partners have embraced this mission like Greenwood United Methodist Church.



Pastor Josh Lemons has created a culture of service that extends well beyond the church walls. He has a genuine heart for the Greenwood community and is always looking for meaningful ways for the congregation to respond to local needs. He is an outstanding communicator who consistently shares opportunities for members to make a difference, and the church continually answers that call with generosity.



That spirit of service is especially evident through Mary Kay Anthony and her incredible team of volunteers. For the past 3 years, they have been the driving force behind Greenwood United Methodist Church's school supply collection, helping provide thousands of supplies for Greenwood students. Their organization, enthusiasm, and dedication have made this annual effort one of the most impactful community partnerships GEF has.

On behalf of the Greenwood Education Foundation, thank you to Pastor Josh Lemons, Mary Kay Anthony, and the entire Greenwood United Methodist Church family. Your generosity is making a real difference in the lives of Greenwood students. Because of your support, children come to school with the supplies they need, receive help when they are struggling, and have one more reminder that their community cares about them. We are deeply grateful for your partnership and your commitment to serving Greenwood families.

21st Annual Holy Cow Spaghetti Dinner



Where:
Greenwood UMC
525 N Madison Ave.
Greenwood, IN 46142

When:
Friday, October 9,
2026
4:30pm-7:30pm

Tickets:
Adults: \$10
Children: \$5

Profits to benefit
Greenwood's
Elementary Schools

United Women in Faith: Faith in Action



Over the last two and half years the Lucille Raines Residence Board of Directors has engaged in a strategic look at the organization and sustainability of the ministry at Lucille Raines. With donations decreasing and expenses increasing, the Board determined that immediate and meaningful cost reductions are necessary. Therefore as of June 29, 2026, the positions of Executive Director and Administrative Assistant have been eliminated with immediate effect.

This decision was driven solely by the ministry’s financial circumstances and is not a reflection of the women’s performance. Jodie has contributed to strengthening and improving the minsitry for which we give our grateful thanks, and the Board wants to be unambiguous that this is a no-fault, financially necessated decision. Interim leadership arrangements have been made (with Mariea remaining as “house leader”) so that this vital ministry can continue.

What can we all do now? Pray, of course! But increased giving is essential. If you wish to donate please give your offering to our United Women in Faith treasurer, Julie Penoff.



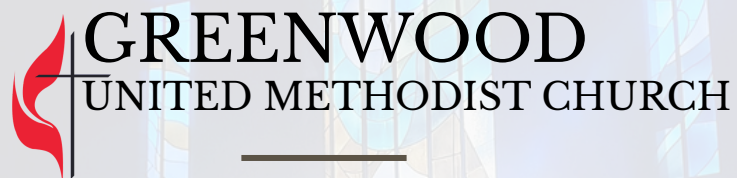
The Greenwood UMC Women in Faith invite you to our Annual Cookie Walk on Saturday, November 21, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

More than a holiday tradition, the Cookie Walk is a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together while supporting local nonprofit organizations and missions serving Johnson County and beyond. Through your participation, you help make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and families while celebrating the spirit of generosity that defines the holiday season.

Browse an incredible selection of homemade cookies, breads, fudge, candies, and other delicious baked treats—perfect for holiday gatherings, gift giving, or simply enjoying at home.

While you're here, be sure to visit our Mission Market, where you can shop for meaningful Christmas gifts that support organizations working to uplift women, strengthen families, build communities, and promote fair trade. Every purchase helps extend hope and compassion both locally and around the world. Feeling hungry? Stop by our Café for a warm lunch featuring homemade soup and sandwiches before continuing your holiday shopping.

Whether you're stocking up on Christmas treats, finding unique gifts, or supporting worthy causes, there's something for everyone at the Cookie Walk. Bring your family, invite your friends, and join us as we celebrate the season by giving back to our community. We look forward to welcoming you!



As we move into the fall season, we look forward to all that God has in store for Greenwood United Methodist Church. From worship and fellowship to service projects and community events, each new season offers opportunities to grow in faith and share Christ's love with those around us.

Whether you're joining us for Sunday worship, attending a Table Talk, volunteering with one of our ministries, supporting local missions, or simply finding ways to connect, we invite you to be part of the life of our church.

Thank you for being part of the Greenwood UMC family. Together, we continue to worship, serve, learn, and grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

CONNECT WITH US

New address?

New phone number?

Interested in Membership
or Baptism?

Curious about our
Ministries?

Simply scan the QR Code to
access our connection card, and
we will be in touch with you!



SCAN ME 



JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 16 AT 7:00PM AS WE
GATHER TOGETHER FOR LITURGY, PRAYER, AND SONG
AS WE RECOGNIZE THAT CHRIST DRAWS NEAR TO THE
BROKEN HEARTED.

THE LONGEST NIGHT

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

10:15 am ~ Worship Service

All are welcome here! Please join us!

WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

Monday

6:30 pm ~ Cub Scouts

7:30 pm ~ Boy Scouts

Tuesday

11:00 am ~ The Shepherd's Table

Wednesday

11:30 am ~ Bring It All AA

6:00 pm ~ AA Groups

Thursday

11:30 am ~ AA Group

6:00 pm ~ Girl Scouts

6:00 pm ~ Bell Practice

7:00pm ~ Choir Practice

Friday

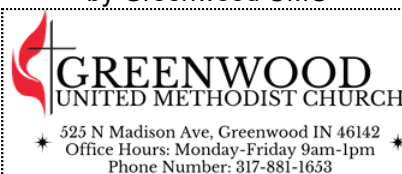
11:30 am ~ GNBB AA Group

Saturday

8:00 am ~ Farmers Market

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August

17~ Leadership Team Meeting

September

7 ~ Labor Day – Office Closed

27~ Leadership Team Meeting

October

9 ~ Holy Cow Dinner

19 ~ Leadership Team Meeting

24 ~Trick or Treat

November

16 ~ Leadership Team Meeting

21 ~ Cookie Walk

26-27 ~ Thanksgiving – Office Closed

Sr. Pastor: Joshua Lemons
josh.lemons@inumc.org

Associate Pastor: Mandie Gould
mandie.gould@inumc.org