



The  
United  
Methodist  
Church



## *Gull Lake United Methodist Church*

8640 Gull Road, Richland, MI 49083  
(269-629-5137) [www.gulllakeumc.org](http://www.gulllakeumc.org)

# *TRAILBLAZER*

## March 2026

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### **March Sermons & Scripture**

**March 1**, Knowing Who We  
Are: "Local and Connectional"  
Matthew 26: 26-39  
Holy Communion

**March 8**, Knowing Who We  
Are: "A Tenacious Mission"  
1 Timothy 6: 17-19  
1 John 3: 17

**March 15**, Knowing Who We  
Are: "Texts That Shape Us"  
2 Timothy 3: 14-17

**March 22**, Knowing Who We  
Are: "Growing in Grace"  
Matthew 22: 34-40

**March 29**, Palm Sunday  
"Getting Our Marching Orders"  
Matthew 21: 1-11



## *A Quick Check-In*

### **How's everyone doing?**

March has a way of sneaking up on us. One minute we're easing into the new year, and the next our calendars are filling up, and life feels like it's picking up speed. School events, appointments, work deadlines, spring plans... it all adds up quickly.

This time of year can feel busy in a quiet kind of way. Not always overwhelming, just full. Full schedules. Full to-do lists. Full minds.

So, this is just a simple pause — a little check-in.

Take a breath. A real one. Step outside if you can. Notice the longer daylight. Sit still for just a minute before moving on to the next thing.

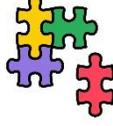
There's a short verse that says it best:

"Be still, and know that I am God."  
~ Psalm 46:10

Short. Simple. Powerful.

We don't have to rush into every new season. It's okay to slow down and take things one day at a time. However March is unfolding for you, we're glad you're part of this community. You matter here, and we're grateful for you.

# MARCH 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 10 am Worship Children's Sunday School 11:15 am Sunday Connections 	<b>2</b> 6:30 pm Ministry Cluster	<b>3</b> 7 am Breakfast Group	<b>4</b> 9 am Wednesday Walkers 	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 10 am Worship Children's Sunday School 11:15 am Sunday Connections 	<b>9</b> 6:30 pm Trustees 6:45 pm Women at the Well	<b>10</b> 7 am Breakfast Group 9:30 am Missions Meeting 10 am Care Team 	<b>11</b> 9 am Wednesday Walkers 10 am Finance Meeting  	<b>12</b> 10 am Puzzling 	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 10 am Worship Children's Sunday School 11:15 am Sunday Connections 	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7 am Breakfast Group	<b>18</b> 9 am Wednesday Walkers 6:30 pm Gov. Board 	<b>19</b> 9 am Trailblazer Articles Due	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 10 am Worship Children's Sunday School 11:15 am Sunday Connections 	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7 am Breakfast Group	<b>25</b> 9 am Wednesday Walkers 	<b>26</b> 10 am Puzzling 	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 10 am Worship No Children's Sunday School 11:15 am Sunday Connections 	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 7 am Breakfast Group				

# MISSIONS



This month we join with all other Methodists to support UMCOR's administrative structure. This allows all gifts to a specific disaster to be used directly and completely for each disaster. Your gift this month pays for:

- Salaries and benefits for staff and volunteers
- Operational systems and logistics for rapid response
- Training and coordination for disaster relief and development programs
- Administrative and governance functions to ensure compliance and transparency.

The Missions Team is looking for other ways to be "in mission" in our world. If you have a suggestion or two how or where we may be effective, please contact Eileen at [edolbee@aol.com](mailto:edolbee@aol.com) with your ideas. If you would like to attend the mission team meeting, please join us in the library on Tuesday, March 10, 9:30 am.



## Richland Mobile Home Park Mission

We will be collecting "Kleenex" tissues for a later delivery to the mobile home park. Please leave your donations on the cart in the Narthex.

# Ministry Cluster

We Follow Jesus...

- Last month we reflected on what it means to say, “We Follow Jesus.” Not as a slogan, but as a commitment to live with faith and love in a divided and distracted world.

This month, let’s take it one step further.

If we follow Jesus, what does that look like in the ordinary rhythms of our church life?

- It looks like trust. Trust that God will provide. Trust that God is at work, even when we cannot see the whole picture. Trust that what we offer, however small it may seem, matters in His hands.

- It looks like fellowship; gathering around puzzle tables, walking trails, coffee cups, and conversations. Jesus formed community wherever He went. He ate with people. He walked with them. He listened. Every time we choose connection over isolation, encouragement over criticism, presence over indifference, we follow Jesus.

- It looks like unity — not uniformity. We will not agree on everything. But we can choose love. We can choose grace. We can choose to see one another first as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Following Jesus rarely happens in dramatic, headline-making ways. More often, it happens in small daily decisions:

- Choosing kindness.
- Choosing generosity.
- Choosing patience.
- Choosing trust over fear.

- In a culture that pushes us to react, argue, and divide, following Jesus calls us to something steadier and deeper. It calls us to faith and love; the same defining characteristics that marked His life.

So as we move into this month, let’s ask ourselves:

- Where is Jesus leading me to follow more closely?
- Where is He inviting me to trust more deeply?
- Where is He asking me to love more fully?
- Imperfectly, yes. But faithfully.

- Let’s continue to make it the throughline in everything we do — in worship, in service, in fellowship, and in our daily lives. We Follow Jesus.

## CHILDREN & YOUTH

Kids' Sunday School (ages 4–10) runs during the second half of the worship service during the school year. After participating in Children's Time with the Pastor, children go to Sunday School and stay until parents pick them up. Sunday School is held weekly except on the last Sunday of the month, provided two volunteers are available.

## We Follow Jesus

Start Your Week with Purpose – Weekly "We Follow Jesus" Scripture

Join us every Monday on our website and Facebook/Instagram for a We Follow Jesus Scripture Update — a moment to realign our hearts, refocus our steps, and walk more closely with Jesus. Each update features a key verse to reflect on and live out — a reminder that following Jesus isn't just about what we believe, but how we live each day. Tune in for encouragement and let's continue growing together to live, love, and lead like Jesus.

## GLUMC SOCIAL MEDIA

Are you willing to help GLUMC in our social media efforts to reach out beyond our current church family to expand our message of Following Jesus to a broader audience? We could use folks who are knowledgeable about social media or like to write and could help with creating content to be shared online.

Contact: Kelly McLeod, Peggy Iler, or Karen Morse

A scenic background image of a campsite with a tent, a fire, and mountains in the distance. Overlaid on the image is text and a wooden sign.

## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CAMP SUNDAY!

**We've Raised \$900  
to Send Kids to Camp!**

Thank you to everyone for helping make this year's Camp Sunday a wonderful success!

We're off to a great start with fundraising, having already raised around \$900 to help send kids to church camp.

Donations to the Jackie Klepper Camping Fund are always welcome throughout the year.

*A special thank you to all who helped organize Camp Sunday and to Pastor Thom for his inspiring message!*

## GLUMC Financial Times Random – February 2026

The GLUMC Finance Committee wants to make sure that the congregation members are aware of the status and activities related to church finances. To that end, and to provide the best up-to-date information, we are going to try something new. As the need arises, we will publish a commentary and notes on financial issues and happenings. This is the first installment.

### 2025 – Good News – Year Ended in the Black

1. Thanks to the generous giving of the congregation and a couple of special gifts, all budgeted obligations were met with a small surplus.
2. Some of the surplus was applied to a couple of special projects, a modest additional sum was paid on our Ministry Shares
3. The remaining funds were added to our cash reserves. The reserves were significantly depleted during Covid and in the years that followed; the Finance Team monitors them monthly.

### 2026 - Status and Challenges

#### 2026 - Budget

1. **The 2026 budget is “barebones”**, based on the actual spending from 2025 with adjustments for items known to be increasing, i.e. building insurance, salaries, utilities, etc. This provides for staff salaries, operation and maintenance of the building and a very limited amount for programs.
2. The 2026 stewardship drive was not as successful as hoped. Pledges came in somewhat lower than last year, leaving an unprecedented gap in pledged funding to support the budget that will need to be covered by unpledged giving and special gifts, should we receive any.
3. The result of this will most likely be an increase in dedicated fund drives for specific needs as they arise.
4. All fund-raising ideas, large or small, are welcomed.

#### 2026 – Delegate Annual Conference expenses

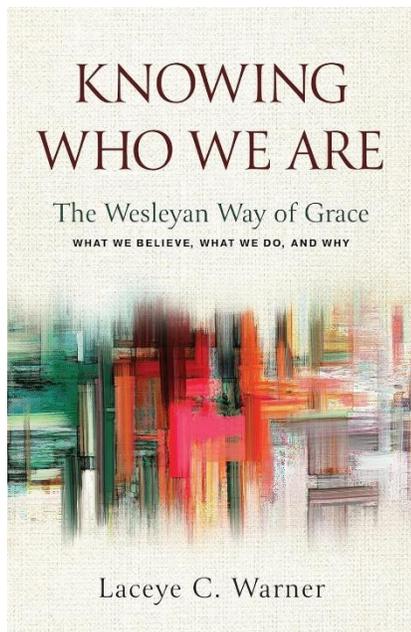
1. Kelly, our church Office Manager, has been nominated to be our delegate to this year's Annual Conference held in the last week of May.
2. If you would like to help offset the travel and lodging expenses for Kelly's trip, now is the time to donate. Please ensure that your donations are clearly identified for “Annual Conference Expenses”.

#### 2026 – Mortgage Interest Adjustment

1. **The building loan principal balance has been cut in half in 5 years.**
2. The five-year interest adjustment on our church mortgage is scheduled for April of this year.
3. New terms of the mortgage interest adjustment are somewhat beneficial to GLUMC.
4. The adjustment will be based on the current mortgage principal balance as of the April payment. Any additional payments made before then will help lower our monthly payment.
5. Any funds received for debt reduction are immediately sent to the mortgage company to be applied to the balance. If you donate, please make sure it is clearly identified as “debt reduction”.
6. The new adjustment and this balance will result in nearly a 30% reduction in our monthly payment, making more cash available to fund expenses; more if additional payments can be made.

## SUNDAY CONNECTIONS

Sunday Connections will take place following worship, from 11:15 to 12 in Hamill Hall.



**LENTEN STUDY: KNOWING WHO WE ARE: THE WESLEYAN WAY OF GRACE:** Join us for a Lenten study based on Lacey C. Warner's book, exploring Wesleyan Christianity, God's grace, and how faith transforms our lives, community, and world. Pastor Melodye's sermon series (2/8–3/22) follows this book.

- **Sundays after worship** – Adult Connections Class, 11:15 am–12:00 pm, starting 2/15/26

All are welcome! Let **Kelly or Pastor Melodye** know so we can order your book. Sample copies are on the Sunday School table in Fellowship Hall. Suggested donation: **\$14**. Books also available via Amazon Kindle.

There is time to get a drink and snacks before class and you are free to bring them with you! Each chapter can be studied on their own; if you have to miss a class, you can always read the lesson and join in the class the next time you can attend.

**PALM SUNDAY**  
**MARCH 29<sup>TH</sup> 10 AM**

*Join us for Palm Sunday! Pick up a palm and celebrate, worship, and mark the beginning of Holy Week together*

*Upcoming Events!*

From the Finance  
Committee

**GLUMC FINANCIAL REPORT**  
Month of January 2026

**Total Cash YTD**  
\$153,749

**Unified Income – January 2026**  
\$ 15,866

**Unified Expenses – January 2026**  
\$ 17,942

**Net Income – January 2026**  
\$ -2,076

**Designated Accounts Balance:**  
\$58,196

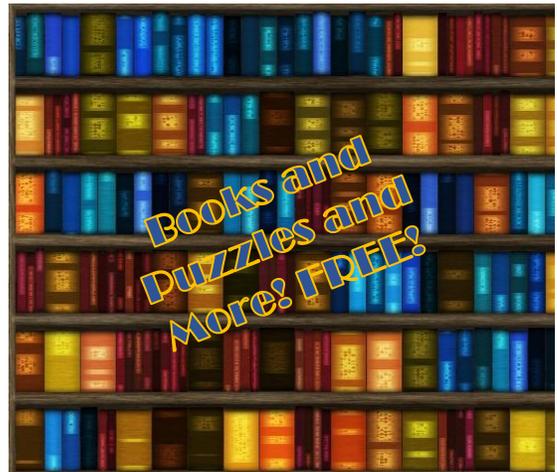
**Current Assets Cash:** \$153,749  
minus dedicated accounts \$58,196  
leaves \$95,553 to pay for expenses  
not paid by dedicated funds.

**Balance of Escrow Account** from  
sale of the parsonage as of December  
2025 is \$93,000 plus interest \$ 4,450  
for a total \$97,450.

**Current Mortgage Balance** as of  
January 2026:       \$130,599

**WEDNESDAY WALKERS**

WEDNESDAY WALKERS MEET @ 9:00  
A.M. AT RICHLAND TOWNSHIP PARK.  
COME ENJOY A MORNING WALK WITH  
FRIENDS — ALL ARE WELCOME!



¿ ¿ PUZZLING ? ?

If you find yourself in town with a little time to spare, feel free to visit the Sunday School wing, where two puzzles are usually available to work on. Many people have already enjoyed spending some free time this way.



# March

# Happy Anniversary

- 2 Shelby Foster
- 2 Emily Wilke
- 5 Sally Warner
- 8 Faye Koestner
- 11 Lizzie Batzer
- 15 Suzanne Rogers
- 19 Lori Morrett
- 21 Barbara Beardesley
- 23 Hilary Dolbee
- 23 Daphne Kreuzer
- 24 Kathy Hoorn
- 25 Janice Mom
- 27 Elizabeth Lane

20 Bruce & Cathy Henniges

### Lost & Found

Items will be collected for three months and at the end of the quarter be given to charity. Look for lost items until the end of March.

Found:  
Nothing at this time



Our Mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.  
We are energized by faith – Engaged to grow – Empowered to make a difference.

## CONNECT WITH US!



Giving



GLUMC Website



Facebook



Facebook Family



YouTube



Instagram

# This 'N' That

## Breakfast at Parkview Perk



Breakfast at Parkview Perk (in the village square), Tuesday's at 7:00 AM. We'd love for you to join us.

## ;;Puzzling??



Puzzling takes place every second and fourth Thursday of the month at 10A for about 2 hours. Sometimes we go out for lunch afterward.

## Sunday Connections



Sunday Connections follows worship in Hamill Hall beginning about 11:15 a.m.

## Wednesday Walkers



Wednesday Walkers meet every week @ 9:00 am @ the Richland Township Park (at the church during the winter months). Please join us!

## Women at the Well



Women at the Well meets the second Monday of each month, at the church @ 6:45 pm.

## From the Editor:

Articles for inclusion in the monthly Trailblazer are due the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month by 9 am.

Make sure to include: Who, What, Where, When, Cost, Contact name and Phone number.

Please submit to:  
[gulllakeumc@gmail.com](mailto:gulllakeumc@gmail.com)

## Office Manager:

Kelly McLeod  
Monday - Friday, 9A-1:00P  
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## Pastor:

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Tuesday 9A-12P  
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517-250-1879

## Trailblazer:

Kelly McLeod  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month, 9 AM  
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269-303-1324