



Gull Lake United Methodist Church

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TRAILBLAZER

August 2026

Sunday Worship	1
Pastor's Message	2
Calendar	3
Announcements	4
Announcements	5
Ministry Cluster	6
Birthday/Anniversary	7
This 'N' That	8

August Sermons & Scripture

August 2: "Love is Not Irritable"
Scripture TBD

August 9: "Love is Envy Free"
Scripture TBD

August 16: "Love Always Trusts"
Scripture TBD

August 23: "Love is Patient & Kind"
Scripture TBD

August 23: "Life is Better Together"
Ecclesiastes 4.9-12

Annual Conference: Save the Date!

The Michigan Conference has recently approved a restructuring plan that will reduce the number of districts across the state. As part of these changes, our church will continue to be a member of the Greater Southwest District. However, our branch assignment has changed from **Branch 6** to **Branch 8**.

This reorganization is intended to better serve churches throughout the conference while strengthening collaboration and ministry within each branch.

Looking ahead, our **Branch 8 Annual Conference** is scheduled for **Sunday, September 27, 2026, at 2:00 PM**. The meeting location has not yet been determined and will be announced as soon as it is finalized.

We encourage everyone to keep this date on your calendar and look forward to gathering with our fellow Branch 8 churches as we continue serving together in ministry.

A Message from Pastor Ron:

When Does Darkness End?

I had trouble sleeping the other night and so I got up and stepped outdoors. I don't recall the time but I remember thinking to myself that it was somewhere between night and day. It was dark but seemed to be getting lighter but sunrise was no where in sight.

I often, as of late, feel like that evening. I look around our world and it seems so dark. I think of fears around AI and disinformation everywhere, geopolitical volatility, conflict, political dysfunction, ecological and climate catastrophe staring us in the face, and an ever more fragile economy nationally and worldwide. It seems awfully dark still and sunrise seems far away. But then I remind myself about how hope is always waiting for us on the other side of the boat (seems like someone once gave a sermon on that) and that is so very close. Light is breaking forth if we look for it and nurture it.

As I stood there I remembered an old rabbinic story.

A student once asked his Rabbi, "How do we know when night has ended and day has begun?"

One student answered, "When you can look into the distance and tell the difference between a sheep and a dog."

Another answered, "When you can distinguish a fig tree from an olive tree."

The Rabbi shook his head.

"No," he said. "Day begins when you can look into the face of another human being and recognize your sister or your brother. Until then, it is still night."

Most of us believe we know what darkness means. We often see it as ignorance, danger, or simply the lack of light. But the rabbi teaches darkness starts when we can no longer see ourselves in each other.

A couple of weeks ago I shared a quote about love from Harry Stack Sullivan, **"Love begins when a person begins to believe another person's need is as important as their own."** Love and light are connected. Love lightens loads and shows us the way forward in the darkest of days. When we see ourselves in another compassion and understanding replace fear and criticism and until then it's still dark.

Jesus said we are the light of the world and we should not hide that light under a bushel basket. A few weeks back we were given \$10 to use to share some love, spread some light. I hope you find something wonderful to do with it and not hide your light under a bushel basket because the world needs your light. The world needs your love..

We know how darkness spreads. First, people are made to feel distant from each other. Then fear grows. Finally, some are convinced that certain lives deserve less care, dignity, protection, and belonging than others. Eventually people stop seeing neighbors and begin seeing enemies.

We also know when day begins. It begins the moment you look into the face of another human being and see your brother or your sister. Be light and the darkness will flee away from your life, our community, and our world.

It feels a little lighter to me. How about you?

August 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 10 am Worship Service Communion 11 am Meet & Greet with Pastor Ron #4	3 5:30 pm WDT 6:30 pm Ministry Cluster	4 7 am Breakfast Group 10 am Care Team 	5 9 am Wednesday Walkers 	6 10 am Positive Perks 		
9 10 am Worship Service	10 6:30 pm Trustees 6:45 pm Worship Design Team	11 7 am Breakfast Group 9:30 am Missions	12 9 am Wednesday Walkers 10 am Finance Meeting  	13 10 am Positive Perks 10 am Puzzling  		
16 10 am Worship	17	18 7 am Breakfast Group	19 9 am Wednesday Walkers 6:30 pm Gov. Board 	20 10 am Positive Perks 	21	22
23 10 am Worship	24	25 7 am Breakfast Group	26 9 am Wednesday Walkers 	27 10 am Positive Perks 10 am Puzzling  	28	29
30 10 am Worship	31					

FINANCE UPDATE FOR JUNE 2026

Total Cash YTD: \$164,496

Unified Income June 2026: \$10,126

Unified Expenses June 2026: \$10,483

Net income 2026: \$-357

Comment: In addition to Unified expenses for the month, the mortgage principal should be added to our cash flow. Principal amount for June \$348, would reduce our net income to minus \$705, expenses to income for the month of June.

June 2026 YTD Unified Income: \$80,492

June 2026 YTD Unified Expenses: \$75,799

June 2026 YTD Net Income: \$ 4,693

LOCAL CHURCH ASSESSMENT TEAM

You've heard this was coming, and it's here. A team has been formed to help plan for the future of GLUMC. We ask for your prayers as they begin this important work.

The team is working to assess historical trends, strengths and challenges, and future goals and objectives as we seek to strengthen the ministry of GLUMC for the long term. The team includes Coach Rev. Ron Brooks and GLUMC members Steve Rogers, Jim Kuch, Angie Harvey, Kelly McLeod, and Lorence Wenke.

The team has met once in person and is currently completing data collection. Pastor Ron will be connecting with team members soon to schedule their next meeting. As this process continues, the congregation will have opportunities to provide input and share ideas.

Please continue to pray for the team as they move through this important process. Stay tuned for updates this fall, including opportunities for the congregation to participate in shaping the future of GLUMC.



MISSIONS

Missions will be supporting the First Day Shoe Fund in August. Kids are getting ready to go back to school and will need new shoes! FDSF reaches out to every school in the county to provide new shoes to those who need them.

Children's Ministry: We Want to Hear From You

Children are an important part of the GLUMC community. We love having them in worship, in ministry, and in service. We know family schedules can be busy, and being together every Sunday is not always possible. As we look ahead, we want to hear from families about how we can best support your children and youth in their faith journey.

If you have children or youth in your family, please take a few minutes to complete the Google survey sent by the church office. You can also scan the QR code provided to access the survey. Your feedback will help us understand how we can best provide opportunities for children and youth to grow in faith and be connected to the life of GLUMC.

Plans are underway for fall programming, so please share your ideas and help us shape the future of Children's and Youth Ministry at GLUMC.



SCAN ME

Welcome Rise Sports!

We are excited to welcome **Rise Sports** as they use our church space for their sports camps!

A sports camp led by occupational therapists provides a unique combination of skill-building and holistic development for all participants. Occupational therapists offer individualized support by adapting activities for varying abilities while focusing on overall physical and sensory development.

Their inclusive coaching fosters confidence for children with unique needs, and the sensory-friendly environment provides a calming experience. Team games also enhance social and emotional skills, helping participants build friendships and resilience.

We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with Rise Sports and look forward to seeing the positive impact they will have on children and families in our community. Please join us in giving them a warm welcome!



Loving our Neighbors

Jesus said, when asked which is the greatest commandment, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” Matthew 22:37-39

How Do We Love Our Neighbors?

As we continue exploring our neighborhood and learning about neighbors whose lives may be different from our own, we are challenged to love others more fully, just as God loves us.

For more than 45 years, GLUMC has faithfully reached out to those in need, especially where our financial resources can make a practical difference. Through food, home repairs, and other acts of generosity, we have sought to share God's love in tangible ways.

This month, we invite you to look more closely at the issue of poverty and consider how we can continue to help in ways that are thoughtful, compassionate, and effective.

Did You Know?

- In 2024, about **35.9 million Americans (10.6%)** lived below the poverty line.
- In 2026, the U.S. poverty guideline for a family of four is **\$33,000** in annual income.
- Worldwide, an estimated **847 million people** live in extreme poverty, surviving on less than **\$3** per day.

An article from **UMC.org**, "*5 Things We Can Do About Poverty*" by Ryan Dunn, reflects on Jesus' teaching that poverty will remain a reality in our world (**John 12:8**). He also calls us to care for those in need and marginalized (**Matthew 25:34–36; Mark 10:21–22; Luke 14:12–14**). Dunn suggests five practical ways we can respond:

1. **Get educated** about the causes of poverty.
2. **Change how we talk about poverty**, recognizing it is about more than money—it also involves hope, dignity, and belonging.
3. **Provide community** by building relationships with those in need.
4. **Advocate** for positive change in your community.
5. **Live within your means** so you can faithfully steward your resources and help others.

To read Ryan Dunn's complete article, "*5 Things We Can Do About Poverty*," visit [UMC.org](https://www.umd.org).

August



Happy Birthday!

5 Jan Elwell
5 Kevin Flynn
6 Jaidyn Knight
7 Phil Mains
9 Brook Wilke
9 Bruce Henniges
9 Amy Knight
16 BJo Waltz
18 Emma Walters
26 Kathy Ruger
29 Larry Ellison

Happy Anniversary!

16 Lorence Nancy Wenke



Take, Swap, Enjoy!

There are books, puzzles, games, and more on the table in the fellowship hall. Feel free to **take, exchange, or swap** items with others!

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 10 AM for about 2 hours in the classroom in the education wing. All are welcome to join the fun! 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 3rd Thursday of each month by 9 am.

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

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