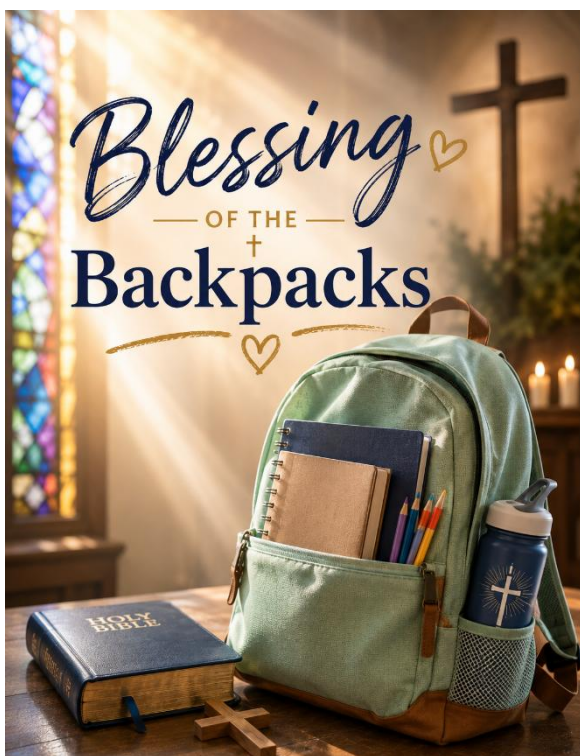




United Methodist
Church of Summit



www.umcsummit.org

Pastor: Rev. Laura Steele

Director of Music: JoAnne Teubner Prussak

CYF Minister: Janice Powell

Office Manager: Kimberle Gray

Mental Health Minister: Dr. Alison Johnson

Sexton: Fred Herse

Video Ministry: Parker LaJeunesse

August 30, 2026

Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

*The United Methodist Church of Summit is a diverse church
committed to serving the Lord Jesus Christ,
dedicated to building disciples, passionate about growing in faith,
and motivated to be a voice of hope for the world.*

PRELUDE Voluntary on the tune *Nearer, My God, to Thee*

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION OF HEARTS AND MINDS FOR WORSHIP

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Lucas Steele

Leader: God calls us in unexpected places and unexpected seasons.

People: We come ready to listen.

Leader: God gives wisdom for the work before us and courage for the road ahead.

People: We come ready to learn.

Leader: Jesus still walks among ordinary people and says, "Follow me."

People: We come ready to follow.

Leader: So let us bring our gifts, our questions, and our whole selves before God.

All: Come, let us worship the God who calls us, equips us, and leads us forward!

***CENTERING PRAYER: (in unison)**

Lucas Steele

Gracious God, as a new school year begins and backpacks are filled for the journey ahead, fill us with your wisdom, courage, and love. Bless all who are learning, teaching, growing, and beginning again. Like Daniel, help us grow in wisdom; like the disciples, give us courage to follow when Jesus calls. Open our hearts to you as we worship together today. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

UMH #145 *Morning Has Broken*

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Laura Steele and Janice Powell,
CYF Minister

Blessing of the Backpacks

Leader: As we begin this new academic year, we bring our backpacks, laptops, lesson plans, and work bags before God. We bring our excitement, our nervous jitters, and our hopes for what lies ahead.

People: "Direct our steps, Lord, by your word. Guide our spirits deep within as we study, work, and pray."

Leader: We pray for the hands carrying these bags: our students of every age. May they discover the joy of learning and grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and neighbor.

People: May God's grace surround them in hallways, classrooms, and playgrounds. Lord, help them to be lights of kindness and inclusion.

Leader: We pray over the weight these bags hold. When the expectations feel heavy, and anxiety creeps in, remind our learners that Your yoke is easy and Your burden is light.

People: Teach us to lean on Your everlasting arms when we feel tired or overwhelmed.

Leader: We bless the educators, administrators, bus drivers, cafeteria teams, aides, and counselors. Fill them with supernatural patience, joy, and endurance as they shepherd the minds and hearts of this community.

People: Lord, equip and sustain all who serve in our schools.

Leader: *(Laying hands over the bags)*

Gracious God, out of whose abundance we receive all good gifts: bless these instruments of learning. May every backpack and device be a reminder of Your presence, Your protection, and the village supporting each carrier.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Laura Steele

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Old Testament: Daniel 1:3-6, 1:17 (NRSVUE)

Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility: young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court. Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah.

To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.

New Testament: Matthew 4:18-22 (NRSVUE)

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. *This is the Word of God, for the people of God; People: Thanks be to God.*

***HYMN OF PREPARATION:** *(please rise as you are able)*

UMH#494 Kum Ba Yah

SERMON: *What's Inside the Backpack?*

Janice Powell,
CYF Minister

OFFERING

(please place offering envelope in basket or text “dollar amount you wish to give” to 908-224-7670)

MUSIC FOR MEDITATION

Variations on *How Deep Our Father's Love For Us*
William Teubner – trumpet

***DOXOLOGY** (*please rise as you are able*)

UMH #95 *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

***CLOSING HYMN:** (*please rise as you are able*)

UMH#657 *This Is The Day* (sung x3)

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE: *Allegro Moderato in D Major* for Trumpet
and Organ

** Denotes please rise in body or spirit as you are able*

**PLEASE NOTE: All of our services are livestreamed publicly.
If you do not wish to have yourself or your loved ones on camera,
please see Pastor Laura.*

This Week's Schedule

Sunday, August 30th:

9:00am-9:30am Instrumental Rehearsal
10:00am-10:30am Summer Choir
10:30am-11:30am In-person/online Worship
11:30am-12:30pm Coffee Hour & Blessing of Backpacks (Social Hall)
7:30pm-8:30pm Pilgrim Group (Fellowship Room)

Monday, August 31st:

7:45pm-9:30pm Gamblers Anonymous (Chapel, Social Hall)

Tuesday, September 1st:

7:30pm-8:30pm Pilgrim Group (Fellowship Room)

Friday, September 4th:

7:30pm-8:30pm Pilgrim Group (Fellowship Room)

Saturday, September 5th:

2:00pm-3:00pm Instrumental Rehearsal
2:00pm-10:00pm Casa de Estudio de Torah (Fellowship Room)

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Al Lord Sr., Gary Friez, Patricia, The LaJeunesse family, Brian Johnson, Chuck Farnham; the Rodriguez Family who lost their home and possessions in a fire; the family of Kathleen Whipps; Laurie Kelly; Roydon Moreau; the family and fans of Kyle Busch; the family of Beverly Alexis; the family of David Quackenbush; the family of Millie Eichhorn; Susan Reitmeyer (UMC Absecon) and family; the uncle of Steven Brown; the family and friends of John L. Troianello,; pray for me to feel home ♥; Shela Waldron; the friends and family of Mateo Kaufman Sandler; Vincenzo Lamanginne's mother Angela and brother Mike, rest their souls.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Blessing of the Backpacks & School Supply Collection August 30th, 11:30AM

As we prepare for a new school year, our church will celebrate with a **Blessing of the Backpacks** during coffee hour on **August 30th**. Students, teachers, school staff, and school backpacks will be handed out for **FREE** to students in need and blessed as we pray for a year filled with learning, growth, courage, and God's presence.



As part of this celebration, we are collecting **new backpacks and school supplies** to share with students in our community who could use a helping hand as they begin the school year. Donations may include backpacks, notebooks, folders, crayons, colored pencils, markers, pencils, pens, glue sticks, scissors, calculators, tissues, hand sanitizer, and other school essentials.

Donations may be placed in the bins at the front and rear of the Sanctuary on **Sunday mornings or dropped to the church office Monday-Friday from 9am-1pm**. Thank you for helping ensure that every child starts the school year equipped, encouraged, and reminded that they are deeply loved by God.



Fall Kick-Off Sunday – September 20!

Join us as we launch an exciting new year of worship, and fellowship at the United Methodist Church of Summit!

9:15 AM – Social Skills Class

9:30 AM – Chancel Choir

10:30 AM – Worship Service

10:45 AM – Sunday School Kick-Off (Children begin in worship before being dismissed to their classes.)

11:30 AM – Church Picnic

12:00 PM – Petting Zoo

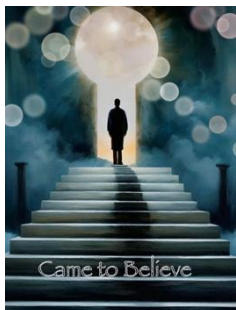
There's something for everyone! Invite your family, friends, and neighbors as we celebrate the start of a wonderful new season together.

**The Sunday School Remix:
Laugh, Learn & Launch!
Friday, September 11th
6:00–8:00 PM**

Join us for an exciting evening of food, fun, laughter, and a preview of our **brand-new Sunday**

School experience! Enjoy refreshments, a clean comedy show, music, classroom tours, and the opportunity to register your children for the upcoming year. Invite friends and neighbors—this is a great night for families to discover all that's happening in our children's and youth ministries!





"CAME TO BELIEVE" WORSHIP SERVICE

Next Service: 9/6/26 at 5:30pm

The UMC of Summit realized that there is a need for a "safe space" for recovering individuals, their friends and families, and saw that our church could provide that space by offering a worship service for all those people whose lives have been

affected by alcoholism and addiction. Everyone is invited to attend the worship service created to speak to the needs of people in recovery as well as their families and friends. Please join us on the first Sunday of every month in the UMC Chapel located on Deforest Avenue. **FREE coffee and refreshments! ALL are welcome!**

Caregivers Support Group

Mondays – Caregivers Support

Group is meeting weekly on Monday evenings in the Library from 7:00–8:15 p.m. This group offers a warm, confidential space for caregivers to support



one another, share both encouraging stories and the moments when we struggle, and exchange helpful resources for the journey. Led by Dr. Alison Johnson, this group is part of Summit UMC's Mental Health Ministry, dedicated to fostering connection, resilience, and hope within our community. All caregivers are welcome.

YOGAFAITH

Christian Yoga is BACK! Friday mornings at 11AM in the Reeves Chapel. Come stretch your faith as we stretch our bodies! No experience necessary, \$10 suggested donation per class.



United Methodist
Church of Summit

MUSIC MINISTRY



Come and share in the wonder of making a Joyful Sound!

Let's share the excitement of beginning our Fall Season. Our Kick-Off Sunday will be September 20th. In preparation, our Chancel Choir will begin rehearsals on Sunday, September 13th at 9:30 a.m., and sing the service music at worship. Our first Saturday rehearsal will be on September 19th at 12:00 noon. The schedule of rehearsals will continue, Saturdays at 12:00 and Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Our Contemporary Ensemble will begin rehearsals on Saturday, September 19th at 1:00 p.m., as we prepare for World Communion Sunday, October 4th.

Our Bell Choir rehearsals will resume on Saturday, September 26th at 1:30 p.m., and Sunday, September 27th at 10:00 a.m., ringing praises.

Our Singing Believers Family Choir will have our rehearsals following worship at 11:45 a.m., beginning on September 27th as we praise "We Are The Church".

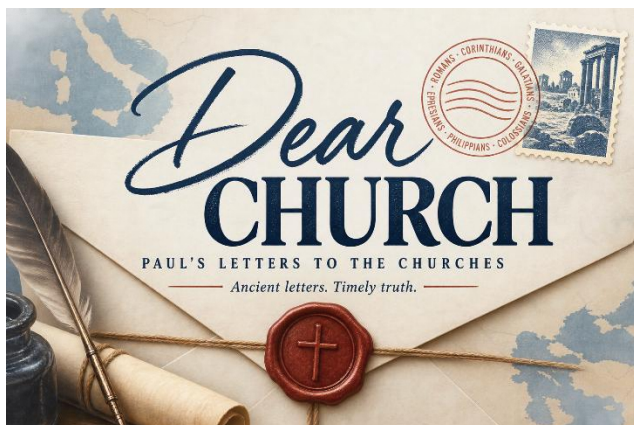
Please note our starting dates as we prepare for an amazing Fall and Christmas Season. Our Christmas Concert is scheduled for Sunday, December 13th at 3:00 p.m.

**"Serve the Lord with gladness,
come into his presence with singing."**

Make a joyful sound and share your gift of music!

With much love,

JoAnne Teubner Prussak, Director of Music



DEAR CHURCH: Ancient Letters, Timely Truth

This fall, join us for a new worship series, *Dear Church*, as we journey through Paul's letters to the early Christian communities. Paul wrote to real churches facing real challenges: conflict, change, disagreement, uncertainty, questions of faith, and the struggle to live together as the Body of Christ. Thousands of years later, his words still have something to say to us.

Each Sunday, we'll open a different letter and ask: What was Paul saying to the Church then, and what might God be saying to the Church today?

DEAR CHURCH

A Fall Worship Series

Beginning September 13

Worship at 10:30 AM

Come discover what these ancient letters can teach us about faith, community, unity, grace, and being the Church together in a very uncertain world.



Annual Charge Conference – Save the Date!!

Sunday November 15th, 2026 – 11:30AM

Our annual **Charge Conference** will be held on **Sunday, November 15, 2026, immediately following worship in the Fellowship Room.**

The Rev. Sam Park will join us that morning to preach during worship and will represent District Superintendent Rev. Williams at our Charge Conference.

Church leaders, please note: All required Charge Conference paperwork must be completed and submitted **no later than September 30, 2026.** Please begin preparing your reports and necessary forms and be sure to mark these important dates on your calendar.

 **Paperwork Due:** September 30

 **Charge Conference:** Sunday, November 15, following worship

 **Fellowship Room**

Thank you to all of our church leaders for your preparation and faithful service to the ministries of UMC of Summit!