

Sumner Center UMC Newsletter

July 2026

The Stars and Stripes

By Kathy Hawkins

The lonely flagpole in the middle of the greens
Stands tall watching over the land without even a slight lean

The red and white stripes remember those tears
Of wars that brought this country many fears

Stars of white on a background of blue
Flies high for those states from old to new

Some call her Old Glory as she shows her wave
Fighting for the freedom and home of the brave

One person alone cannot bring peace to all
It takes a country joining together to answer that call

As the breeze moves this flag for all to see
Asking that we turn us and them into we

Yes, we are the people filled with pride in our hearts
Working together to make this country one instead of parts

Remember our history but build on that beginning
Divisions no more, only help each other to be winning

Our flag as she flies is the same across this country so vast
Let us be neighbors and friends and write a new past

Keep our stars and stripes flying for all the years to come
She flies for all in the country, not just for some

Let your heart feel the love of this beautiful land
That she stands to protect with each caring hand



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

**Sunday Worship:
In Sanctuary at 11:00am
&
Sumner Center UMC
Facebook Page**

Visit our Church Website at:

<http://www.sumnercenter.com>

**Donations may be sent to our mailing
address:**

25378 151st Ave

Spring Valley, Mn 55975

Also via Venmo and Paypal

Pastoral Support Team

Pastor Jon Marburger

Email: marburgerjon@gmail.com

Cell # 1- 507-227-6711

Tony Delhaag

Email: derfahren@aol.com

Cell # 1-612- 968-3811



Grace and Peace in the name of Jesus Christ:

If you have items you would like to be published in the newsletter, please contact Pastor Bridget by the 3rd Thursday of

the preceding month by emailing your information or dropping at Church. The light of God remains to shine bright in our community only by your generous giving heart! If you would like to donate a gift, you may send donations to the address above or deliver it in person during Sunday morning worship service

Calendar of Events

(Subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 
5 11 am Worship 	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 11 am Worship	13	14	15	16	17	15  AT THE RACINE LIONS DINNER Beginning @4pm
19 11 am Worship	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 11 am Worship	27	28	29	30	31	

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS! FROM JULY 2026 TO JUNE 2027
SUNDAY WORSHIP TIME WILL BE @ 11:00AM**

Sumner Center will be collecting school supplies in the month of July



We are asking you to help collect items such as:

Crayons
Colored pencils
Markers
Pencils

Erasers
rulers

Notebooks
Folders

Glue
Glue sticks
Scissors

Backpacks
Pencil boxes

Etc...

**Please drop off your donations at Sumner Center UMC
during the month of July during worship time of 11:15am
or**

**contact Jean McNamara to drop off you items with her
at: 507-421-0942**

email: jeanmac75@gmail.com

Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Prairieland Parish Announcement

It's time for VBS!!!



**VBS NEEDS
VOLUNTEERS!**

Racine UMC will be hosting VBS in August and we need your help!

Date will be set for some time in August. Please reach out to:
Tracy Hoover, Robin Vrieze or Norma Kenning at the Racine church if
you would like to volunteer. We are in need of people to help organize,
set up, teach and/or clean up. Offering your help to one or more of
these areas would be greatly appreciated.

Let's gift all our neighborhood kids the grace and stories of Jesus

2026 Annual Conference highlights summary June 20, 2026

By: Reid Baumann

What a joyful, educational, and thoughtful time we had in St. Cloud at the 2026 Minnesota Annual Conference! Starting with the pre-conference Day of Justice, attendees were motivated to stand up and be heard as we serve joyfully in our communities, and through the United Methodist Connection, across the United States and the world!

Key Details and Theme: About 500 attendees came to St. Cloud, Minnesota from June 16-18 to attend the Minnesota Annual Conference. The theme of this year's conference was "Created to Serve Joyfully", with the scripture focus being Philippians 4.

About 130 people also attended a special "Day of Justice" on June 15 which focused on applying the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church to living into having the courage to do what is right and seek freedom and justice for all of God's children.

Episcopal Address: In her Episcopal Address, Bishop Lanette Plambeck looked back to last year's theme of "Created to Love Boldly" while looking forward to this year's theme of "Created to Serve Joyfully."

"When we left last year, we were in a bold love moment, and we lived it!" said Bishop Lanette.

For this year, Bishop Lanette spoke of the Greek word ek-kaleo, meaning called out, which is how we are being summoned by God into community, witness, and transformation. When God calls people together, "...there is a realignment...a reorientation of our hearts to God's service," said Bishop Lanette.

God summons us to do big things, and to serve those around us. "Can we get in the way? Can we get in the way of injustice?" said Bishop Lanette. "Can we get in the way of oppression? Can we get in the way of things that diminish our human siblings?"

You can read an article about Bishop Lanette's Episcopal Address [here](#) and view a video of the address [here](#).

Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth: Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth, Resident Bishop of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area, was this year's connectional guest. He preached a meaningful sermon about how happiness comes from what is going on in our world, but joy comes only from Jesus!

"What if the church became intentional about putting joy at the center? What if the church became known for joy, what if every minister of the church preached joy, what if every person who names the name of Jesus decided to become a joy ambassador?"

Bishop Bridgeforth also led a special teaching session, where he talked about "stuff of life" that weighs us down, and how we need to lean into Jesus' promise through Scripture to give us peace and rest.

Celebration of Life in Ministry: This year's Celebration of Life in Ministry service was a meaningful and heartwarming event, as the Annual Conference celebrated those who have served in ministry, and those who are just beginning in their ministries.

Retirees were honored with videos in their own words and photos of their life in ministry, and how ministry continues in this new season.

The retirement class of 2026 is Revs. Dan Arvidson-Hicks, Bruce Bjork, Diane Brennan, Debra Collum, Tony Fink, Ralph Holbrook, Laurie Kantonen, Bill Kerr, Laura M. Nordstrom, Glenn Pickering, Kay Schroder-Hacklander and Cathy Lynn Francia Townley.

Lauren Hauger, Jeffrey Speaks, and Amy Van Valkenburgh were commissioning as provisional elders, Moses Hong for transfer into provisional membership from the Korean Methodist Church, and Christy Key and Allison Schwarz for ordination as elders.

New licensed local pastors in 2026 are Sharon L. Fields, Tina Forcier, Eric Kreiner, Ethan Light, Jeremy Peters, Christy Schally, and Mayme Simms. Persons completing the Course of Study are Melissa Kay Deuel and Jen Mathees.

The invitation to ministry toward the end of the service was particularly moving, as people discerned the “still small voice” that may call any of us at any time.

Conference Preacher: This year’s conference preacher was Rev. Dr. Genia Garrett, who gave a passionate and thought-provoking sermon on the power of being loved by God. When things are difficult, or we feel alone, that very fact of being loved by God gives us the courage to stay strong!

TED-style talks: Three TED-style talks were given during the conference by Revs. Elizabeth Macaulay, Chris Carr, and Dana Neuhauser.

Macaulay’s talk focused on the “Singing Resistance” and the power of community song during the ICE activities in Minneapolis. Carr spoke about how fear is stealing away our joy, and how to use tenets of Christianity to get back to the Latin roots of the word security, meaning “without worry”. Neuhauser spoke on her own “subversive joy”, and how there are many ways to express and share joy with those around us!

Bishop’s book study: As we move from this space and out into the world, Bishop Lanette mentioned several upcoming opportunities that we can use to “Serve Joyfully” across Minnesota in this coming year. One of these opportunities is the “Building Beloved Community” book study, which takes place June 27, July 25, Aug. 22, and Sept. 26, 2026.

Bishop Lanette invites you to join her for this study, which will be centered around the book “Building Beloved Community: The Courage to Love in the Face of Tyranny,” written by the United Methodist Council of Bishops. This book study will give people real strategies and ideas to respond to local challenges that threaten to hurt our “beloved communities.”

Order your book or e-book now! You will also need to register for the book study.

See more about this book study at the conference website: minnesotaumc.org

The 2026 Minnesota Annual Conference was truly a special time for all who attended. We thank you for attending and hope it was a meaningful experience that you can take forward with you into God’s world!

Legislation Overview: The 2026 legislative calendar was significantly shorter than in past years, resulting in less debate as well. Legislative activity included the topic of “Answering the Call of Kairos Palestine II”, the recommended apportioned budget, the consent calendar, and the updated elected leadership lists for the boards and councils of the Minnesota Annual Conference.

July

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united states of america

stars and stripes

Statue of Liberty

antique car show

land of the free

corn on the cob

constitution

cotton candy

freedom ring

independence

water fights

betsy ross

flip flops

summertime

watermelon

fireworks

patriotic

sparklers

tee shirt

uncle sam

balloons

barbecue

Liberty

clowns

family

horses

parade

shorts

sirens

brave

candy

music

rodeo

white

Bell

blue

flag

heat

hat

red