

#### FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN . . . . .

In a July 7, 2025, court filing, The U.S. Internal Revenue Service declared that Churches and other houses of worship can endorse political candidates in certain circumstances without risking the loss of their tax-exempt status, despite a decades-old Congressional statute that bans political candidate endorsements. On July 15, 2025, the UMC General Board of Church and Society issued this position statement concerning that declaration: **The General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church strongly opposes the use of churches and houses of worship for partisan political affiliations and endorsements.**

#### **Here is some background:**

The IRS filing is at odds with a law Congress passed more than 70 years ago that's known as the Johnson Amendment and applies to all charitable nonprofits, whether they are secular or religious. This law, introduced by former President Lyndon B. Johnson (hence the name) in 1954, when he was serving as the U.S. Senate majority leader, banned all tax-exempt organizations like churches and charities from "directly or indirectly" participating in politics, specifically in endorsement or opposition of candidates.

Critics of the IRS' court filing say it is not about religion or free speech, but about radically altering campaign finance laws. The IRS decree could open the floodgates for political operatives to funnel money to churches in exchange for support of their preferred candidates, while receiving generous tax breaks at the expense of taxpayers who may not share those views.

#### **What Do United Methodists Believe**

Even though the formal relationships between religious communities and governments vary from country to country, as United Methodists, we generally affirm the independence and integrity of both institutions, and we advocate for a relationship of mutual respect in which neither institution seeks to dominate nor influence the other.

The UM 2025-2028 Social Principles state: "While we do not believe churches should affiliate with particular

political parties, we do encourage churches to speak out boldly on social issues from a gospel perspective. We further believe churches have a right and responsibility to educate and equip their members to be effective advocates for justice in the wider world."

One of the things I love about the UMC is that we are encouraged to think for ourselves and ask hard questions—of ourselves and to God. John Wesley said it best: "Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?"

#### **What Do We Do?**

We do what we've always done: feed the hungry, water the thirsty, clothe the naked, heal the sick, give hope to the hopeless and share the good news of Jesus Christ.

We love. Love has no political affiliation.

Blessings on your heads! Pastor Rob

(Much of this article was taken from <https://www.umcjustice.org/latest/take-action-irs-declares-churches-can-endorse-political-candidates-without-tax-exempt-status-penalty-6973>)

#### **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sunday School at 945 Sundays for adults if you are interested. We are doing a study by James W. Moore, "O Say Can You See? Biblical Stories About Spiritual Blindness." Just let me know if you would like to join us, I'm happy to get more books if needed! Angie

#### **CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council will meet on Sunday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, immediately following the worship service. Please get any agenda items to Shay or Missy by Thursday, August 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

The Annual Ice Cream Social is Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, from 3:30- 5pm. It is a great time to bring a friend or neighbor for some cool treats and warm fellowship! If you would like to bring homemade ice cream or another treat, there are sign-up sheets in the back of the sanctuary.

## **AUGUST POTLUCK**

The next Potluck meal is August 24th, immediately following church. It is a great time! Bring a dish and come join the fun.

## **PARADISE RUBIES**

The Rubies next gathering will be in September for a planning meeting. Please bring your ideas and join in.

## **OUTREACH/MISSIONS**

Thank you for being the hands and feet and seeing needs and helping to address them. We are always on the lookout for other agencies that could use a hand - if you know of any or volunteer with a group - please let Tooti know.

### **July Missions Collections:**

The Smithville Food Pantry – 130 cans of vegetables

Monetary Collection - \$250 for grocery store gift cards to be given out to the Smithville School District and Smithville Housing Authority in place of the reverse Advent boxes

Trimble Food Pantry \$275

UMCOR \$51.80

Valor Ranch \$25

### **August Missions Collections**

Smithville Food Pantry – Toothbrushes& Toothpaste

Plattsburg Food Pantry - Monetary

Festival of Sharing – See article below

### **Unhoused Meals**

We will be providing 1 more meal for the unhoused through the Fishes & Loaves Ministry that Darcy & Scott are involved with. We will be providing a meal December 6.

## **FESTIVAL OF SHARING**

The August mission is Festival of Sharing, which is a cooperative response to hunger, poverty, and injustice

in Missouri and worldwide. It is an interfaith gathering of resources to connect the state of Missouri with a common goal of providing resources for our neighbors in need.

You can participate by:

1) Completing one of the four packs: Reading and Writing Pack; Personal Hygiene Pack; Student Dental Pack; or Paper Product Pack;

2) Donating items towards a pack; or

3) Making a monetary donation either in the pink can or online.

A list of items for the packs can be found on the clipboards in the mission station. All items need to be left in the Family Center by Sunday, August 31st.

## **PUMC DIRECTORY**

Dave Jacobs is a new member who has offered to help with verifying information from our church management software such as name, address, phone, email and pictures to be updated so that we have everyone's most current information. After that it will be printed out (or emailed) if requested and made available to members. For those who use the Church Connect App (if you don't have the app, please let me, Tooti, know and I will help you get it and get set up) you can review your information at any time and also choose what is available to other members of the PUMC church family through the online directory section in Church Connect.

## **MONTHLY REPORT**

The monthly report for July 2025 is as follows:

Beginning Balance:	\$29,724.54
General Offerings:	+\$7,337.50
Capital Improvement:	+917.50
Expenses:	-8,026.14
Final Balance:	\$29,953.40