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THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

October 2026

St. Paul's UMC

Sunday School/Adult Class:
9 a.m.

Worship:
10:10 a.m.

Jennifer's Office Hours:
Monday-Thursday
9 a.m.-12 p.m. & 1-3 p.m.

Address:
531 W. Main Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

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(712) 225-3955

***Office Texting Number:**
(712) 227-3291

***Office Email:**
cherokeespumc@gmail.com
*checked during office hours

Website:
www.cherokeemethodist.com

 Find us on Facebook
and your podcast app.

Pastor Mike's Cell:
(563) 506-7412

Pastor Mike's Email:
michael.agnew@iaumc.net

Pastor Mike's Day Off:
Friday

St. Paul's Staff

Pastor:
Mike Agnew

Financial Secretary:
Sarah Cook

Administrative Assistant:
Jennifer Agnew

Custodian:
Betty Harman

Organists/Pianists:
Betty Point
Meribeth Adams
Chris Andersen

Bell Choir Director:
Dusty Basten

Chancel Choir Director:
Kathy Brandt

A Moment with Mike

As many of you probably know, we are definitely into the busy season at St. Paul's, with many different ministries restarting. It is a great thing to see the dedication everyone has for the ministries of the church! One thing that goes along with this season is our preparation for our annual Charge Conference. Many forms need to be filled out, and one of those is our budget for 2027.

Our Finance Committee recently met to create the budget and also to see where we are currently with our 2026 financial picture. The good news is that giving has increased about 9%! Thank you for your generosity! Much of this increased giving has been to dedicated funds, and, unfortunately, our giving has not been able to keep up with General Fund expenses for the last several years. As a result, the non-designated balance in the General Fund used to cover this gap has been dwindling and is almost gone. Last year, our checking account balance decreased by \$35,149.97. This year, the balance has decreased by \$37,546.59, and this is without having paid any of our apportionments, which is our missional duty as a United Methodist Church. Overall, based on where we should be this time of year, we are about \$57,000 short of our budget. I hate to sound the alarm, but this will not be sustainable long-term. Financially, we are hitting a wall.

Our new budget for 2027 is \$4,000 less than 2026, but we know this is not enough, so the Finance Committee and Administrative Council have discussed many different options for budget cuts. One option is to stop producing a newsletter. The newsletter takes approximately ten hours a month to create, plus the cost of printing 30 copies to have available at church and 30 copies that are printed and mailed. Most of the information in the newsletter is also shared online (website and/or Facebook page), in our bulletins, and/or on the bulletin boards. Our home-bound members get the bulletin weekly in the *HomeTouch* mailing, so those mostly impacted by this would be those who live out of the area who are unable to use the internet. Doing away with the newsletter could potentially save over \$2,000 a year in wages, paper cost, and postage. No final decision has been made about this yet, and options are being considered.

A second option discussed was selling the church van. Although convenient to have for parades, confirmation and youth trips, and missions deliveries, the van costs about \$2,500 a year in expenses, and we put a little under 1,000 miles a year on it. We reviewed what the van is used for and decided these activities could be accomplished without a van. After discussion, the Finance Committee voted to recommend to the Board of Trustees to sell the van. The Board of Trustees met the next evening and voted to sell it.

A third option discussed was the idea of me requesting to pastor a second, smaller church, so we would be a two-point charge. There are all kinds of configurations for multi-point charges, but I have been in one before where the smaller church paid 10% of my compensation and gave a certain amount to the larger church for office related expenses. This could potentially save St. Paul's around \$25,000 a year. It was decided to table this idea for now but acknowledged that if things do not change, we may have to revisit this in the near future.

(continued on page 2)

A Moment with Mike *(continued from page 1)*

A fourth option mentioned was to reduce Jennifer's (our administrative assistant) office hours. This could potentially save around \$4,000 a year. No decision was made about this option, which would also need to be discussed and approved by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

While this is not a fun letter to write, I think it best that you know how serious this situation has become. Things are not easy right now with the economy and uncertainty about the future, so I know that some of you are not able to give more than you already do. I don't want you to feel guilty about that. I am not asking you to do anything you are unable to do. For those who do have the option to give more, now is the time to do so. The General Fund is not always the most popular fund to give to, but it is one of the most important funds that keeps our church open for ministry. In the next few months, we are going to be highlighting tangible, people-oriented ways in which the General Fund makes a difference. Although dedicated account giving will still be available, and we are going to continue to have special offerings and events every now and then for missional work, since that is who we are as United Methodists, my hope is that, if you are able, you will focus more of your giving energy on the General Fund. Thank you again for all that you do for the work of making disciples here at St. Paul's.



God Bless,
Pastor Mike Agnew

Announcements & Updates



National Custodian Day

National Custodian Day is October 2nd. Thank you to Betty Harman for her hard work here at St. Paul's!

October Office Hours Update

Please note that the church office will be closed on Tuesday, October 6th, as Pastor Mike and Jennifer will be taking their daughter to a doctor's appointment in Omaha that day.



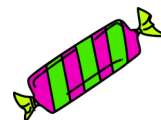
Computer Software



Like many businesses outside of the education realm, St. Paul's uses Microsoft programs, including Publisher, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Publisher is the program Jennifer uses to make the newsletters, bulletins, and many of the posters. Microsoft has decided to stop supporting Publisher in October, which means it will not be available with our Microsoft subscription. That means we wouldn't be able to access years of publications that had been made on Publisher. There would be the option to purchase a stand alone version of Publisher, but that isn't compatible with our system. We are very thankful to Chris Andersen who was able to set up a solution that will allow us to continue to use and access this program and documents.

Homecoming Parade

Walkers and candy are needed for the homecoming parade. If you'd like to donate candy (not chocolate that will melt), please have it to the church office by Monday, September 28th. If you'd like to walk in the parade, please let Pastor Mike know. The parade starts at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, October, 2nd, so our group will meet at church around 1:30 p.m. Chuck Tolzin will be driving the church van.



Charge Conference

Charge Conference is the annual business meeting for our congregation that is held cooperatively with other congregations in our district. In preparation for Charge Conference, many St. Paul's committees have been meeting and doing the required business to complete Charge Conference forms. Thank you to all committee members who have helped with this annual task. Charge Conference is scheduled for Sunday, October 18th, at 2:30 p.m. at Early UMC. Anyone from our congregation is welcome to attend.

Chamber's Annual Costume Parade



Steph Rochleau will be representing St. Paul's at the Chamber's annual costume parade on October

31st by handing out candy and invitations to worship/Sunday School/VBS. Thanks, Steph!

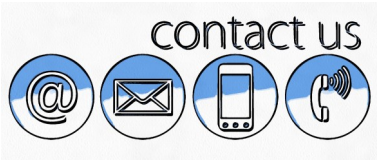
Announcements & Updates

Lay Members to Annual Conference

Each year, United Methodist clergy and laity representatives from Iowa United Methodist Churches meet at the Iowa Annual Conference to celebrate the ministries of the conference, worship, ordain new clergy, and do the business of the church. Our church gets to have three representatives from the congregation. Linda Burkhart will be serving as one of our representatives, but we need two more. The next Annual Conference will take place in Coralville from June 17th-19th, 2027. You may attend online or in person. For those attending in person, expenses can be covered by the church. If you are interested in learning more, contact Pastor Mike. Those who wish to serve as representatives need to let Pastor Mike know by October 11th.

Updated Information Needed

Our church directory hasn't been updated and printed since the pictorial directory in late 2023. If you or a



family member have a new address or phone number, please let Jennifer know. Also, let her know if you don't want your phone number published, even if you have told her in previous years. There are 957 people in our database, so it is a lot to remember. 😊

Salads & Dessert Bars Needed



Salads and dessert bars are needed for the upcoming Fall Missions Dinner, and desserts are also needed for the upcoming Bingo night. Please see the sign ups in the narthex for details, or stop by the office during the week.

Pies Needed

36 pies are needed for the Election Day Luncheon. If you'd like to donate, the sign up sheet is in the narthex on Sundays and in the office during the week.



Volunteer Sign-Ups

Volunteers are needed to assist with funeral luncheons and with worship (liturgist, children's message, and altar flowers). If you'd like to volunteer, please sign up in the narthex on Sunday, or contact the office during the week (M-Th.; 9-12 & 1-3).

2026 Laity Day

Saturday, Oct. 10, 2026

9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Doors open at 9:00 am for fellowship

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

1340 3rd Ave SE

Cedar Rapids, IA 52403-4019

RSVP by Oct. 7th



To RSVP or learn more, visit <https://www.iaumc.org/eventdetail/19658207?month>.

A Prayer Retreat

By:



Join us for worship, lunch and 4 classes on prayer

Saturday, October 17th, 10 AM to 2 PM
Holstein UMC, 208 S. Kiel, Holstein, IA

Cost is \$25.00 per person
Register in advance by emailing rootconnect365@gmail.com

Community Thanksgiving Service

Sunday, November 22, 2026

Cherokee Washington High School Auditorium

Sponsored by the Cherokee County Ministerial Assoc.

Announcements & Updates

Other Upcoming Meetings & Events

Mon. & Wed.	7 p.m.	Alcoholics Anonymous (NE door by parking lot)
Sun., 10/4	10:10 a.m.	Communion Sunday
Wed., 10/7	10 a.m.	Communion (Heartland)
Tues., 10/13	9:30 a.m.	Visitation Team (library) Note date change.
Wed., 10/14	10 a.m.	Cherokee County Ministerial Assoc. (Crossroads)
Thurs., 10/22	—	Newsletter info due
Tues., 10/27	10:30 a.m.	Communion (Accura)
Wed., 10/28	10:30 a.m.	Bible study (The Gardens)
Sat., 10/31	8:30 a.m.	Men's Breakfast (Schuldt Dining Hall)

United Women in Faith Buzz

UWFaith Executive Board

Mon., Oct. 12th, at 9:30 a.m. in Schuldt Dining Hall



October Program

Pg. 78, *Grace, Not Punishment*



Grace Circle

Wed., Oct. 14th, at 6:30 p.m. in Schuldt Dining Hall
Hostess: Cheryl Gordon Program: _____

Joyful Charity Circle

Wed., Oct. 21st, at 1:30 p.m. in Schuldt Dining Hall
Hostess: _____ Program: _____

Ingathering Kit Assembly

Wed., Oct. 21st, at 2:15 p.m. in Feller Lounge
All circle members are invited to help.

Election Day Luncheon Preparation

Monday, Nov. 2nd, at 10 a.m. in Schuldt Dining Hall

Election Day Luncheon

Tuesday, November 3rd, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
in Schuldt Dining Hall



United
Women
in Faith

All women from our congregation and the community are invited to be a part of United Women in Faith.

Contact Linda Christensen—or attend a circle meeting—if you are interested in learning more.



Music Notes



Bell Choir

Practices: Wednesdays at 5:45 p.m. in the sanctuary

Performance: Sunday, October 11th, at 10:10 a.m.

At least two new members are needed to replace several of our members who have moved out of the area.

Chancel Choir



Practices:

Wed., October 7th & 14th
6:30 p.m. in the choir room

Performance:

Sun., October 18th
10:10 a.m. in the sanctuary

Pictured above is the Chancel Choir's fall debut on September 20th, when they sang "In This Very Room."

Thank You Notes

Thank you for your cards, your caring, and your support during my post-surgery time. ~Jan Cook

A big thank you to my St. Paul's family for all the beautiful wishes on my 100th birthday. I enjoyed reading every card, with help from my family. God bless each of you. With a grateful heart, Dorothy Clow

Thank you to everyone who has donated monetary gifts or Sam's Club gift cards to the children's Sunday School snack fund.

Thank you to all for the kind words, cards, and concern. I very much appreciate our church family.

~Dave Appleby

Dear Church Family,

Larry and I have adjusted to our new home and can hardly believe all the wonderful people we have met and enjoy! They smile and laugh with us and cannot believe we will soon be celebrating our 68th year of married bliss! Time certainly has moved fast. Also, let everyone know that we hope to see people in time, but right now we have settled into our new home and are decorating with our daughter to make it more like ours. Everything has been done to the way we made and like home, relaxed in blue and green for the garden that we always had and maybe another down the road. Happy Fall to everyone.

Live, Laugh, and Love,
Larry and Colleen Harmon

Christian Education News

Children's Sunday School

Children's Sunday School resumed on September 13th for kids in PK-8th grade. We are offering two classes this year—PK-3rd and 4th-8th. Both groups meet at 9 a.m. on Sundays and welcome new students, teachers, and high school helpers. Join us!



Children's Choir & Noisy Offering

Sunday, October 25th, during the 10:10 a.m. service
Bring your change to benefit children's ministry!

Teen Time (High School Youth Group)

Due to a change in the YoungLife schedule, Teen Time's October gathering has been moved to October 14th from 6:30-8 p.m. at Craig and Monica Schmidt's home (409 Centennial Drive). All high schoolers are welcome! Pictured below is the group on September 16th.



Adult Class

The Adult Class meets on Sundays at 9 a.m. in Feller Lounge (room south of the dining hall) and is studying *Follow* by Andy Stanley. This is the type of study where the class watches some teaching by Andy Stanley on DVD and then has class discussion, usually led by Jan Cook or Rod Raveling. New members are always welcome! If you aren't able to attend in person, a Zoom (online) option is available by talking to Pastor Mike.



Save the Date for VBS!

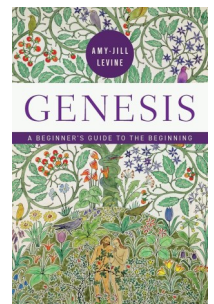
July 11-15, 2027

Free Devotionals Available

A few copies are left of the regular and large print September/October issue of *The Upper Room* daily devotional guide. They are available on the table in the narthex and on the table outside the office.

Fall Small Group Bible Study

This fall, Pastor Mike is leading a small group study over the book *Genesis: A Beginner's Guide to the Beginning* by Amy-Jill Levine. The group will meet at 5 p.m. in Feller Lounge on October 4 and 11 and November 1 and 15. Contact Pastor Mike if you would like to join the group by Zoom (online). Although the group has already started, you are still welcome to join us!



Children's Time During Worship



Deb Samuelson on 9/6



Bonni Conley and Sandy Peters on 9/13

Missions News

Missions Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 21st, at 9:30 a.m.

Ingathering Update

Monetary donations are needed to help pay for supplies and postage for the 100 school kits our congregation will donate for Ingathering in November, as the supplies are purchased in bulk to save money. If you'd like to donate, please make your check out to St. Paul's United Methodist Church and note "Ingathering" on the memo. As of September 20th, \$745 has been donated for Ingathering. For more information about the Ingathering, please visit <https://www.iaumc.org/ingathering/#iac>. Just a reminder that the Ingathering location for our area has moved from here at St. Paul's to Moville UMC.



Sleeping Mat Weaving

Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. in Feller Lounge

Miracle Sunday Update

In May, our congregation gave \$584 for Miracle Sunday. Combined with other UM churches, \$2,123,420 in gifts and pledges were given to help support theological education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines! Thanks for your generosity!

<https://www.endowftecc.org/news/press-releasefeb4-2026>



Food or Funds Drive

October 25 - November 15, 2026

What We Want:
All items should be new and unopened.

- Non-perishable food
- Toiletries
- Financial gifts

How to Give Food and Toiletries:
The building is open on Sundays from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. The north entrance is also open Mon.-Thurs. from 9-12 & 1-3.

- Non-perishable food items and toiletries can be placed in the grocery cart in the narthex or at the north education entrance.

Financial Donations:
Note "Food or Funds" on all donations.

- Cash or checks:** Place in the offering plate, drop in the mail slot at the north doors, or give to the office.
- Venmo**
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
@SPUMC-Cherokee

venmo

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
531 W. Main Street, Cherokee, IA 51012
Website: cherokeemethodist.com
*Email: cherokeespumc@gmail.com
*Phone: (712) 225-3955
*Texting: (712) 227-3291
*Checked during office hours (M-Th., 9-12 & 1-3)

All donations will go to our local food pantries.

Fall Missions Dinner



Sunday, October 25th
11:15 a.m.

Schuldt Dining Hall

Menu:

pulled pork sandwiches,
baked beans, salads,
and dessert bars

The freewill offering will be split between the missions fund and the camp fund. No RSVP is needed. Please join us for a good meal and to support missions!

Worship Notes

North Door Greeters

10/4 Mike & Deb Samuelson
 10/11 Stan & Brenda DeRoo
 10/18 Jim & Peggy Corrington
 10/25 Lowell & Sharon Bennink



Liturgists

10/4 Bonni Conley 10/18
 10/11 Bonni Conley 10/25 Linda Burkhart

Children's Time

10/4 Bonni Conley
 10/11 Bonni Conley
 10/18
 10/25 Heidi Gerstandt



Ushers

10/4 Gene & Jean Anderson, Darrel & Sue Paulsen, and Jeannette Grant
 10/11 Deb & Mike Samuelson, Chuck & Julie Tolzin, and Gigi Boothby
 10/18 Stan & Brenda DeRoo, Kay O'Connor, Shelley Lenz, and Linda Rutter
 10/25 Wes & Sue Parker, Dan & Barb Kratz, and Gigi Boothby

Altar Flowers

10/4 The Conley Family 10/18 Bonni Conley
 10/11 Bonni Conley 10/25

Nursery Attendant

10/4 Megan Courtright 10/18 Ava Agnew
 10/11 10/25

Communion Stewards

10/4 Curt & Kristal Phillips, Linda Rutter, Gigi Boothby, and Jim & Peggy Corrington

Attendance

Sunday	Worship	Sunday School	Wed.	Teen Time
9/6	77	-		
9/13	91	39*	9/16	11*
9/20	100	38*		
9/27	102	36*	* includes adult leaders	

Upcoming Sermon Series

Prayer 101: Praying the Way Jesus Taught

When Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, he said what we have come to know as the Lord's Prayer. We pray this prayer so often that we can say it without even thinking about the



words. Yet, if Jesus taught it to his disciples as a model for prayer, then it must be profound. Join us for this sermon series as we look at how the Lord's Prayer can connect us to God and change our hearts.

10/11 "Our Father"

Matt. 6:7-13; Luke 11:1-4

10/18 "Thy Kingdom Come"

Micah 6:6-8; Matt. 7:24-27

10/25 "Our Daily Bread"

Exodus 16:2-5; Matt. 6:25-34

11/1 "Forgiving Sins"

Matt. 6:7-15; Col. 3:12-17

11/8 "Deliver Us from Evil"

Psalms 143:1-12

11/15 "Thine is the Kingdom"

Luke 11:1-4; 1 Cor. 15:20-28

Online Worship & Sermons Available

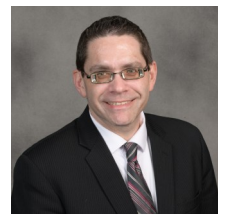
The full worship service is available live on our YouTube channel and as a recording after the fact on our YouTube and Facebook pages. To access it, go to cherokeemethodist.com, and click on the red and white icon on the upper right of the homepage. This will take you to our YouTube page. A link for our Facebook page can also be found on our website and is the blue and white icon on the upper right of the homepage. If you need assistance, please stop by the office, or pick up printed directions on the tables in the narthex and outside the office. Pastor Mike also has a



sermon podcast. The link for it is the green icon on our website's homepage. You can also listen to his sermons on KCHE at 8:45 a.m. on Sundays.

Thank you!

October is Clergy Appreciation Month, also called Pastor Appreciation Month, and Pastor Appreciation Day falls on Sunday, October 11th. Thank you, Pastor Mike!



September Happenings

IA vs. ISU VBS Fundraiser



The Iowa vs. Iowa State fundraiser was a great success again this year. Iowa fans donated \$857, and Iowa State fans donated \$541, for a total of \$1,398. Thanks for supporting our 2027 Vacation Bible School! For those of you who are curious, Iowa fans “won” the competition in 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2026, and Iowa State fans won in 2025.

Back to School

Instead of doing a blessing of the backpacks during worship this year, we sent cards of support to teachers from our congregation and gave the Sunday School kids and Teen Time youth “Little Jesus” key-chains to put on their backpacks, computer bags, or car keys. We hope everyone has a great school year and remembers that Jesus is with you!



Apple Peeling

On September 23rd and 24th, the Pie Ladies and friends assembled 81 apple crisps that quickly sold out after worship on September 27th. So, they made 17 more on September 28th to fill orders! Thank you to the Lundquist family for donating the apples, to Jean Anderson and Shelley Lenz for organizing the project, and to all of the volunteers who helped assemble the apple crisps!

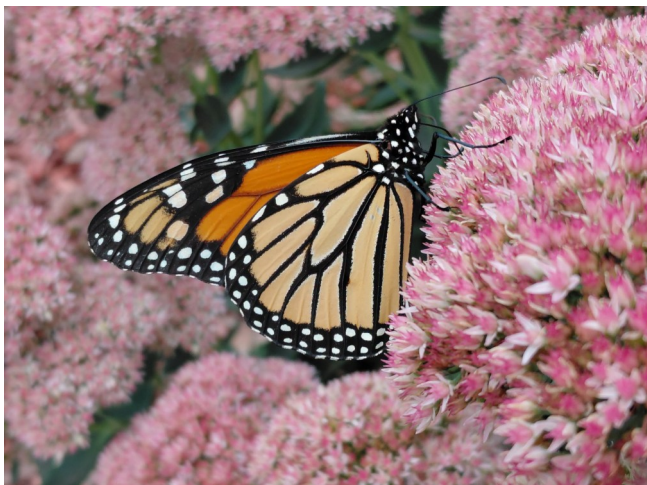


College/Military Care Update



The College/Military Care Team has 16 students and one member of the military on our list this fall. So far, we have sent postcard greetings and care packages. We will also be sending Halloween care packages later in October.

Butterfly at North Entrance on 9/16



September Special Music



Linda Christensen and Betty Point on Sept. 6



Meribeth Adams and Ava Agnew on Sept. 13

September Happenings

Men's Breakfast

Men's Breakfast continues to meet once a month in Schuldts Dining Hall. The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, October 31st, at 8:30 a.m. Pictured below is the September gathering. Thanks to Jeff Fiedler for donating some gift cards to purchase the food.



3rd Grade Bible Presentation

Third grade is an exciting year for kids in our congregation, as they receive their very own Bibles! Pictured below are Jack Cook, Kinnick Knippel, Finley Boothby, and Meredith Rochleau on Sunday, September 27th, when they received their Bibles and a book called *Finding Your Way Through the Bible* during worship. Kade Lucas and Ryver King will also be receiving a Bible and book at a later date.



Christian Education Teacher Appreciation

On Sunday, September 27th, we recognized the Sunday School, Adult Class, and Teen Time leaders during worship. Each teacher received a "Little Jesus" pen as a token of our appreciation. Thank you for your work helping our congregation grow spiritually!



Above: Pastor Mike, Rod Raveling and Jan Cook from the Adult Class, Heidi Gerstandt, Miranda Cook, Steph Rochleau, Whitney Robinson, and Jess Knippel from Children's Sunday School, and Monica and Craig Schmidt from Teen Time

YoungLife at St. Paul's

YoungLife, a community youth group, met in Schuldts Dining Hall on Sunday, September 27th. Thank you to the Outreach and Connections Team for setting up and providing snacks for the group.



Ava Agnew, Miranda Cook, Steph and Meredith Rochleau, Sue Parker, and Heidi Gerstandt

Church Family News

Welcome, Little One!

Hanna (Ludwig) and Bladimir Maldonado welcomed their first baby boy on September 6th. Matteo weighed 6 lbs. 2 oz. and was 18.5" long. Because he was born six weeks early, he will not be able to come home until the original due date, which was October 17th. Christina Sears is the proud grandma, and Gerald and Nancy Sears are the proud great-grandparents. Congratulations!

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Bingo Night

Sunday, October 25, 2026

5:15 p.m. Doors open

5:30 - 6 p.m. Supper (freewill donation)

Menu: Soups, hot dogs, veggies, bread, & desserts

6 - 7 p.m. FREE Bingo

Join us for not so spooky jokes and pathetic prizes! ☺

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

Schuldt Dining Hall, 531 W. Main Street, Cherokee, IA

Questions? Contact us!

Email: cherokeespumc@gmail.com

Phone: (712) 225-3955

Text: (712) 227-3291