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PROJECT NEBO

A PROGRAM TO ADDRESS GENERATIONAL TRANSITIONING
AND CALL EACH GENERATION TO LEADERSHIP.

Team Moses

Sunday, January 21 | 8:30 & 11:00am



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PENSACOLA, FL.



Welcome to First Church

We are delighted that you have chosen to worship with us this morning! This Methodist congregation was founded in 1821. We are the oldest Protestant church in the area and the mother church of Methodism in Florida. We've been here for over 200 years, and we're looking forward to 200 more! It's an historic church that preserves the past and embraces the future, and there's a place here for you.

Today we are continuing in the series we began last week called Project Nebo. During this season after the Epiphany, our church will be taking a trek up Mt. Nebo. In scripture, Nebo is a place of transition. On the mountain, the Lord revealed the promised land to Moses and passed the leadership baton to Joshua—a symbolic transition from one generation to the next. Project Nebo is our response to the recognition of another generational transition in our society and in the Church. Through this program we hope to collectively focus on the future and its challenges, discern God's calling for us, and trust the Holy Spirit to lead us to where God has called. We'll be using the theme of mountain trekking during the series. And today we focus on our first trekking team—Team Moses. For more on the project and Team Moses, you can read the "Field Notes" in the back of the bulletin and visit the Project Nebo page on our website.

Today is also Every Member in Ministry Sunday! We believe that God has called and equipped each of us to serve so that we can be faithful to the Church's mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. There is a booklet available this morning summarizing many of the current opportunities to serve and grow through ministry at First Church. We invite you to read over it, and during worship we'll receive Every Member in Ministry interest cards that we can complete and bring to the altar at the end of the service. Let us worship the Lord in spirit and in truth.

Our Worship of God

Third Sunday after the Epiphany
Every Member in Ministry Sunday
8:30 and 11:00am

Entrance

GATHERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

“Bachiana on an Ancient Chorale” *Gordon Young* Dr. Rick Branch, *organ*

TRINITY CHIME *

CALL TO WORSHIP *

8:30, Rev. Brandon Bures

Leader: Lord, You have always been our refuge. 11:00, Rev. Emily Kincaid
Our ancestors made you their home long ago.

***People:* Before mountains were born,
before you fashioned the earth and filled it with life,
from ages past to distant futures, you are God.**

Leader: A thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past,
or like a watch in the night.

***People:* We flourish and fade, bloom and renew in God’s time.**

Leader: Teach us to number our days,

***People:* that we may receive a wise heart.**

Leader: Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,

***People:* that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.**

Leader: Let your work be manifest to your servants,

***People:* and your glorious power to their children.**

Leader: Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us,

***All:* and prosper for us the work of our hands!**

[from PSALM 90 - A Prayer of Moses]

OPENING HYMN *

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past” **no. 117**

** Stand as you are able*

COLLECT *

O God who calls his people to shared pilgrimage, let us find that when we are gathered, you are indeed present and powerful in our midst. Give us grace, O Lord, to answer readily your call. Let our fellowship be ever blessed by renewed strength and joy and consolation, as we become those who spur one another on to love and good deeds, co-laboring unto the day when your unveiled glories will be made fully manifest in our shared communion and in all of your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

HYMN *

“Go Down, Moses” (stzs. 1,2,5) **no. 448**

WELCOME & REGISTRATION OF ATTENDANCE

Please register your attendance on the registration pads. If you are visiting with us, we’re glad you’re here! Please include your address, phone number, and email so that we may welcome you in a more personal way.

EVERY MEMBER IN MINISTRY

The ushers will now pass out an Every Member in Ministry interest card to each person. Take some time to look over the Every Member in Ministry booklet available in the pews and online. Then pray and consider how you could grow and serve in the church out of your giftedness. Fill out the card as you feel led.

ANTHEM

8:30, “God Is Our Refuge and Strength” *Allen Pote* Sanctuary Choir
11:00, “Be Thou My Vision” *arr. Mark McClure* Piano Flute *duet*

Proclamation and Response

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Children are invited to come down to the front as we sing.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Deuteronomy 30:5-6; 31:1-8

⁵The LORD your God will bring you into the land that your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors. ⁶Moreover, the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live.

...

Joshua Becomes Moses's Successor

31 When Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, ²he said to them: "I am now one hundred twenty years old. I am no longer able to get about, and the LORD has told me, 'You shall not cross over this Jordan.' ³The LORD your God himself will cross over before you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua also will cross over before you, as the Lord promised. ⁴The LORD will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when he destroyed them. ⁵The LORD will give them over to you and you shall deal with them in full accord with the command that I have given to you. ⁶Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the LORD your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you."

⁷Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: "Be strong and bold, for you are the one who will go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their ancestors to give them; and you will put them in possession of it. ⁸It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

SERMON

Dr. Geoffrey Lentz

"Team Moses: A Vision for the Future"

Response:



WORDS: Samuel Stennett (1787); MUSIC: *The Southern Harmony* (1835); arr. Rigdon M. McIntosh (1895)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Emily Kincaid

INVITATION

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,
who earnestly repent of their sin
and seek to live in peace with one another.
Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

CONFESSION AND PARDON.

Merciful God,
we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have failed to be an obedient church.
We have not done your will,
we have broken your law,
we have rebelled against your love,
we have not loved our neighbors,
and we have not heard the cry of the needy.
Forgive us, we pray.
Free us for joyful obedience,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All pray in silence.

Leader to people:

Hear the good news:
Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;
that proves God’s love toward us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

People to leader:

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Leader and people:

Glory to God. Amen.

OFFERTORY

8:30, “Come to the Table” *Allen Pote* Sanctuary Choir
11:00, “Beautiful Savior” *arr. Tom Fettke* Libby K. Hargrave, *solo*

DOXOLOGY *

no. 95

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise him, all creatures here below.
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Thanksgiving and Communion

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

no. 15

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

You are also invited to receive the elements of Holy Communion. Gluten-free wafers are available at each communion station for those who need them.

"Here I Am, Lord" **no. 593**

Sending Forth

ACT OF CONSECRATION

As we sing the closing hymn, you are invited to come forward to the altar with your Every Member in Ministry card and place it in the basket.

CLOSING HYMN *

"Marching to Zion" **no. 733**

BENEDICTION *

GOING FORTH & POSTLUDE *

"Voluntary No. 1 in D" *William Boyce*

HOLY COMMUNION

Everyone is invited to receive communion in the United Methodist Church. The method for receiving communion here is *intinction*; it is the ancient Eucharistic practice of (1)*receiving* the consecrated bread into your open hands and then (2)*dipping* it into the consecrated grape juice before (3)*consuming*. If you need communion brought to you, please let an usher know and communion will be served to you in your seat. Gluten free wafers are available at the each station for those that need them. After you receive communion please feel free to kneel and pray at the rail as long as you like. Any offerings given during communion will go to the pastor's discretionary fund.

DAILY READINGS – EPIPHANY 3

The new year is a great time to commit to reading the Bible each day. These Daily Readings are taken from “The Daily Office Lectionary” in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Read the Bible each week. It will be a blessing.

	<i>Psalms</i>	<i>Old Test.</i>	<i>New Test.</i>	<i>Gospel</i>
MONDAY	44	Gen. 14:(1-7)8-24	Heb. 8:1-13	John 4:43-54
TUESDAY	47, 48	Gen. 15:1-11, 17-21	Heb. 9:1-14	John 5:1-18
WEDNESDAY	49, 53	Gen. 16:1-14	Heb. 9:15-28	John 5:19-29
THURSDAY	59, 60	Gen. 16:15--17:14	Heb. 10:1-10	John 5:30-47
FRIDAY	51	Gen. 17:15-27	Heb. 10:11-25	John 6:1-15
SATURDAY	138, 139	Gen. 18:1-16	Heb. 10:26-39	John 6:16-27



Field Notes

ALL ON TEAM MOSES

In the scriptural imagination, Nebo is a place of transition. On Mt. Nebo, the Lord revealed the promised land to Moses and passed the leadership baton to Joshua—a symbolic transition from one generation to the next. In our contemporary context, the world faces a Nebo moment, characterized by a leadership crisis and the crucial hand-off from one generation to the next. Project Nebo is designed to help the church talk about the historical transition that is occurring and to help each generation discern what God is calling them to do in this season.

Irrespective of the generation we belong to, each of us is akin to a member of Team Moses. Our collective responsibility is to diligently steward the leadership baton, ensuring its progression before passing it on to the next generation. Our entrusted leadership roles find purpose in facilitating this critical handoff. Even those on Team Joshua and Team Rahab would benefit from standing on the metaphorical Nebo, envisioning and preparing for the subsequent relay.

Maintaining a clear goal is pivotal for leaders as they work to establish an order that sustains the church across generations. Drawing inspiration from Numbers 11, where Joshua encounters leaders filled with the Holy Spirit operating outside official channels, there's a crucial lesson. Moses' profound response transcends Joshua's jealousy and need for control: "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit on them!"

In this light, Joshua's role—and by extension, ours—is to be a Moses. The overarching objective is to create an environment within the church that welcomes the movement of the Holy Spirit and nurtures leaders of diverse backgrounds and callings. Rather than seeking control, our mandate is to trust the Holy Spirit to guide the church into a future marked by vibrant faith and diverse leadership.

GOING TO NEBO:



The primary goal of Project Nebo is to take all generations to the mountain, symbolizing a collective focus on the future and its challenges. Congregants are encouraged to discern God's calling for the future, fostering a shared vision without predefined outcomes. By collectively gazing at the future, we trust the Holy Spirit to guide each generation at this crucial Nebo moment. The metaphor of mountain trekking is used to call each "team."

THE FIRST TREKKING TEAM: TEAM MOSES



The older generations, analogous to Team Moses, have faithfully led the church through significant times. Now, facing the end of their calling, they are called to pass the baton and offer a blessing. Despite concerns about the younger generation's capability, they must choose to trust God and lead like Moses to Nebo, rather than succumbing to fear in the desert.

THE OTHER TREKKING TEAMS



Team Joshua: Team Joshua, representing the younger generations, is tasked with offering gratitude and respect to the older generations. Embracing leadership, they are the future leaders we need. As they navigate challenges and failures, they must choose to be strong and courageous, akin to Joshua taking the baton.



Team Rahab: Team Rahab comprises outsiders to the church within the younger generation, bringing fresh perspectives. As newcomers, they possess the ability to see things that insiders may overlook. Like Rahab, who became the great grandmother of David and Jesus, Team Rahab is called to welcome others into the community and be pioneers of the next phase of Church life.

RELAY RACE

In the dynamics of a relay race, success hinges not on individual runners but on the seamless transfer of the baton. The true victory lies in the baton crossing the finish line, with each runner playing their part in propelling it forward. When a participant hesitates to pass or receive the baton, the entire race is at risk. Trust is the linchpin of a successful relay race.

Quoting Philippians 1:6, we are reminded that God, who initiated a good work within us, will faithfully see it through to completion. In the context of our ministry, we are participants in a relay race, passing down the baton from one generation to the next. The essence of a winning relay race is not about the individual runners; it revolves solely around the baton.

Our focal point is the baton, not ourselves; it's about Jesus. Drawing from Paul's wisdom in 1 Corinthians, we recognize that while one may plant and another water, it is God who ultimately fosters growth. Our ministry, like a relay race, involves a continuous handoff, each generation contributing to the collective movement forward.

Let us remain steadfast, keeping our eyes on the baton and understanding that our role is part of a greater legacy. In the grand relay of faith, the ultimate goal is not personal glory but the triumph of Jesus' message passed down through the generations.

THE GOLDEN CALF CRISIS

Amidst the leadership vacuum caused by Moses' absence on the mountain, Aaron opted to take matters into his own hands, rather than placing trust in God to forge a path. The ill-fated result was the construction of the Golden Calf—a tangible embodiment of the anxieties prevailing in that moment. Instead of aiding the smooth transition of the baton, the Aaronic leader, succumbing to the pressures of the times, fumbled the baton.

In the present era, echoes of this crisis resonate as leaders from the Moses generation, perceiving the power vacuums of our age, may be tempted to anchor the community in the past. Rather than trusting God to guide the church forward through the wilderness of uncertainty, there is a risk of entrenching the community around an idol of false security. This regressive move impedes progress, stifles growth, and veers away from the divine path intended for the collective journey through the challenges of the present.



We hope you enjoy the service. We invite you to take this bulletin with you as you go home. Each week in this series has a unique bulletin. And you can scan these QR codes on the backs to revisit the sermon anytime. Content will be available a day or two after the service takes place.



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

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