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PROJECT NEBO

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

Going to Nebo

Sunday, January 14 | 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 beginning a new series 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. As you may have noticed, we'll be using the metaphor of mountain trekking during the series. For more on the project, you can read the "Field Notes" in the back of the bulletin. Let us worship the Lord in spirit and in truth.

Our Worship of God

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Going to Nebo

8:30 and 11:00am

Entrance

GATHERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

“Toccata in F Major” *Dietrich Buxtehude* Dr. Rick Branch, *organ*

TRINITY CHIME *

CALL TO WORSHIP *

8:30, Rev. Brandon Bures

Leader: Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.

11:00, Rev. Emily Kincaid

People: **Before the earth was formed, you were God.**

Leader: Let your favor be upon us.

People: **And bless the work of our hands.** [PSALM 90]

OPENING HYMN *

“Lift Every Voice and Sing” **no. 519**

COLLECT *

O God, who has taught us to keep your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the spirit of peace and grace, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to each other with a pure will; Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN *

“Be Thou My Vision” **no. 451**

** Stand as you are able*

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.

JOY OF SERVING MISSION MINUTE

Robin Wright, *Lay Leader*

ANTHEM

8:30, Rick & Heidi Branch, Libby K. Hargrave

“Many Gifts, One Spirit” *Allen Pote* 11:00, Sanctuary Choir

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 34:1-4

34 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the Lord showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, ² all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, ³ the Negeb, and the Plain—that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar. ⁴ The Lord said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.”

SERMON

Dr. Geoffrey Lentz

“Project Nebo: Empowering the Generations”

**I am bound for the promised land,
I am bound for the promised land;
oh, who will come and go with me?
I am bound for the promised land.**



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, “Be Thou My Vision” *arr. Mark McClure* Piano Flute *duet*
11:00, “Beautiful Savior” *arr. Tom Fettke* Sanctuary Choir

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.

"Sweet, Sweet Spirit" **no. 334**

Sending Forth

CLOSING HYMN *

"Battle Hymn of the Republic" **no. 717**

INSTALLATION & RECOGNITION OF LEADERS IN THE CHURCH *

Members of the Church Council and all church committees (Lay Leadership, Finance, Trustee, SPRC, etc.) are invited to come forward to be recognized and installed for a new year of service in the church.

BENEDICTION *

GOING FORTH & POSTLUDE *

"Musette" *Gordon Young*

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 2

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	9, 15	Gen. 8:6-22	Heb. 4:14--5:6	John 2:23--3:15
TUESDAY	36, 39	Gen. 9:1-17	Heb. 5:7-14	John 3:16-21
WEDNESDAY	119:25-48	Gen. 9:18-29	Heb. 6:1-12	John 3:22-36
THURSDAY	37	Gen. 11:1-9	Heb. 6:13-20	John 4:1-15
FRIDAY	35	Gen. 11:27--12:8	Heb. 7:1-17	John 4:16-26
SATURDAY	42, 43	Gen. 12:9--13:1	Heb. 7:18-28	John 4:27-42



Field Notes

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.

Sociologists William Strauss and Neil Howe's generational theory illuminates the paradigm shifts occurring across generations. We are currently in a significant generational transition, that they call the "Fourth Turning", which is marked by challenges akin to historical upheavals such as the Great Depression, World Wars, Civil War, and revolutionary periods. At the core of this transition lies the challenge of passing the baton to the next generation of leaders.

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 THREE TREKKING TEAMS



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.



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.

THE BLESSING:



Project Nebo concludes with a blessing, where Team Moses blesses and commissions Team Joshua and Team Rahab. In this culmination, Team Moses is acknowledged and blessed for their faithfulness while receiving their calling to pass the baton to the next generation.

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 FOURTH TURNING IS HERE

The Strauss-Howe Generational Theory, developed by William Strauss and Neil Howe, posits that societal cycles recur approximately every 80 to 90 years, which aligns with four generations. This cycle consists of four "turnings," each representing a distinct era with unique societal characteristics and moods. These turnings shape the attitudes, values, and behaviors of the generational cohorts living through them.

First Turning (High): A period of strong institutions and communal values, where society is focused on building and strengthening structures.

Second Turning (Awakening): A phase of spiritual revival and cultural change, often challenging established norms and institutions.

Third Turning (Unraveling): Characterized by individualism and the decay of established social structures.

Fourth Turning (Crisis): A time of significant upheaval and transformation, leading to the rebuilding of society's structures and values.

These cycles are driven by generational archetypes:

Prophets: Value-driven and visionary, often leading change during Awakenings.

Nomads: Independent and pragmatic, typically coming of age during Unravelings.

Heroes: Community-oriented and collective, usually maturing during Crises.

Artists: Adaptive and consensual, often growing up in the aftermath of a Crisis.

Applying this theory to the local church involves recognizing that each generation brings its distinct perspective and values, influencing everything from worship styles to leadership approaches. As the world enters the “Fourth Turning” and the time of crisis. Each generation is called to assume its role during this time.

This transition must be managed with an understanding of the strengths and limitations of each generation. While younger generations may bring fresh perspectives and energy, the wisdom and experience of older generations are invaluable for guidance and stability. A successful transition would involve a blend of innovation and tradition, respecting the insights of all generations while moving forward. As the Church enters the “Fourth Turning,” a period characterized by crisis and transformation in the Strauss-Howe Generational Theory, each generational archetype has a distinct role to play, contributing uniquely to navigating and shaping this era:

Prophets (e.g., Baby Boomers): Born during a High, Prophets are now in elderhood. Their role is to provide wisdom, guidance, and a moral compass. They can help the Church understand and interpret the larger societal shifts and moral questions arising in the Crisis period. They are well-positioned to offer a sense of continuity and stability, grounding the Church’s responses in a broader historical and ethical context.

Nomads (e.g., Generation X): Born during an Awakening, Nomads are now in midlife. Their pragmatic and independent nature makes them well-suited to manage the Church’s practical challenges during the Crisis. They can act as mediators between the idealistic younger generations and the more traditional older generations, applying

their resilience and realism to find workable solutions to immediate problems.

Heroes (e.g., Millennials): Born during an Unraveling, Heroes are in young adulthood during the Crisis. Their community-focused ethos and collective spirit make them instrumental in rallying the Church community and wider society. They can lead new initiatives, especially those that require teamwork and a sense of shared purpose, like community outreach or social justice projects.

Artists (e.g., Generation Z): Born during a Crisis, Artists are in childhood and youth during this period. Their overprotected upbringing in a time of upheaval could make them sensitive to the needs of the vulnerable and open to new ways of thinking. As they grow, they can bring fresh perspectives, empathy, and adaptability, helping the Church to stay relevant and responsive to a changing world.

Each generation’s strengths and perspectives can complement each other, creating a dynamic intergenerational response to the challenges and opportunities of the Fourth Turning. For the Church, embracing this diversity means incorporating the wisdom of the elders, the practicality of the mid-lifers, the energy and idealism of the young adults, and the fresh perspectives of the youth.



Bound for the Promised Land



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.

6 E. Wright St. • Pensacola, FL 32501 • 850.432.1434 • fumcpensacola.com

For pastoral emergencies, contact the Church Office
or Ginger Raines at 850.259.3177