





Dear Friends,

In the Christian tradition, beauty is not an optional extra. It is a way of knowing God.

St. Thomas Aquinas called beauty a transcendental, alongside truth and goodness. That means wherever

something truly reflects reality as God has made it, it will also be beautiful. Beauty is not superficial; it is rooted in the being of God.

And beauty does something argument often cannot—it draws us. It awakens desire. It opens the heart. It invites encounter. Beauty helps us perceive God.

I was reminded of this recently in our new ICON space. A visitor from another church walked in and said it felt like stepping into Narnia. The starry ceiling lifts the eye. The new windows tell the story of creation and new creation in light and color. The space does not just hold worship—it participates in it. It draws us in. The same is true of our sanctuary. Its architecture, its stained glass, and the beauty of our music are not extras. They are witnesses. They point beyond themselves.

Hans Urs von Balthasar wrote that before truth convinces and goodness commands, beauty attracts. God is beautiful—and beauty leads us to God.

It is unfortunate that much of the modern church is no longer known for this. Too often, our spaces resemble shopping centers or theaters—functional, but not formative. They do not lift the soul.

But it does not have to be this way. It is time for the Church to recover beauty—not as decoration, but as witness. Because beauty draws people in. And in being drawn, they may just find God.

Practice Resurrection,

Geoffrey

Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Lentz  
Senior Pastor

## MOTHER'S DAY

*Sunday, May 10*

Join us on Mother's day at First Church as we celebrate our mothers and all those who are like mothers to us. We will have a special photo booth in the church office lobby.

## CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

*Monday, May 25*

The Church Office is closed on Monday, May 25 for the Memorial Day holiday.

## COME WALK WITH ME: CAMINO DE SANTIAGO PILGRIMAGE WITH PASTOR GEOFFREY

*September 14 - 24, 2026*

Join Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Lentz for a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage along the historic Camino de Santiago in Spain. This 10-day journey will combine spiritual reflection, Christian fellowship, and the experience of walking one of the most meaningful pilgrimage routes in the world.

Beginning in Burgos and León, and continuing on foot through the beautiful Spanish countryside, pilgrims will walk key portions of the Camino before arriving at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Along the way, we will share in worship, prayer, and the deep rhythm of pilgrimage life.

The journey also includes visits to Finisterre—long considered the “end of the world”—and time in Madrid. This is an opportunity not just to travel, but to encounter God in movement, community, and sacred place.

Please note: this pilgrimage includes daily walking distances of up to 15–18 miles over varied terrain and requires a good level of physical fitness. For more information or to register, contact the church office, click [HERE](#) or scan the QR code.





## JOYFUL JOYFUL

The Joyful Joyful Project downtown is nearing completion. The Upper Room—now home to the new ICON worship service—is finished and ready for use.

We are in the final phase of installing the new HVAC and chiller system that serves the core of our campus. While all units are now in place, the control system is still being calibrated. You may have noticed some inconsistency (a bit warm at 8:30, quite cool by 11:00). We expect these adjustments to be resolved in the coming days. Once complete, the system will not only regulate temperature more effectively but also improve humidity control, helping to protect both our pipe organ and the long-term integrity of the building.

Additional termite remediation is currently underway. This will require scaffolding in the sanctuary over the next few weeks as work is completed in the attic. Following Annual

Conference, there will also be some repairs to the flooring and organ chamber, though this phase should be less disruptive. While this work is not especially visible or exciting, it is essential for maintaining a structurally sound church for the next generation. The good news is that these repairs are fully covered under our termite bond.

At Beulah Chapel, progress continues steadily. Interior work is largely complete, and we anticipate beginning the preschool licensing process later this month. Exterior siding is nearly finished, and the steeple is on the way. This is shaping up to be a campus we can all take pride in.

### THE GREAT FIFTY 50 DAY CHALLENGE

First Church is answering the call and taking the challenge again this year! We are asking all of our members to invite people to church during the season of Easter and to help welcome fifty new people into the life of our church. We will have people joining starting on Easter Sunday, through Pentecost, on May 24. Join us at the next Coffee with the Pastors to learn more about First Church, contact Lacey Adair ([LAdair@FUMCPensacola.com](mailto:LAdair@FUMCPensacola.com)), Director of Membership with any questions and visit the church's website ([FUMCPensacola.com/Membership](http://FUMCPensacola.com/Membership)) or the Church Office to fill out a membership form.

### INFORMATION FOR THOSE WANTING TO JOIN.

Join us at the next Coffee with the Pastors to learn more about First Church.

Contact Lacey Adair,  
Director of Membership.  
with any questions.  
[LAdair@FUMCPensacola.com](mailto:LAdair@FUMCPensacola.com)

Visit the church's website or the Church Office to fill out a membership form.



# SPACE ADVENTURE MADE FOR WONDER

May 31 – June 4, 2026  
Vacation Bible School • FUMC Pensacola

Sunday Kickoff: 9:30am – Noon  
Mon – Thur: 9:00am – Noon



## ABOUT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Get ready for an unforgettable week of faith, fun, and friendship! Come grow in faith, make new friends, and experience the BEST week of summer! All children ages 3 (as of September 1, 2025) through (completed) 5th grade are invited to blast off with us this summer on an amazing journey to the stars at this year's VBS, May 31-June 4! Our theme is "Space Adventure: Made for Wonder." Made for Wonder invites kids to explore the vast universe and discover that the same God who created the heavens created them with purpose. Through out-of-this-world adventures, they'll learn that they are wonderfully made to shine God's light everywhere they go. \$10 donation per child is appreciated. Registration is required. Click [HERE](#) or scan the QR code.

*Parents are encouraged to join their kids for our 11:00am ICON service in The Upper Room on Sunday, May 31 as we celebrate the start of VBS together.*

## WANT TO VOLUNTEER AT VBS?

In order to provide a safe, fun, and loving VBS we need your help! We are calling upon the church to help us with this grand outreach opportunity to share the love of God to the community of Pensacola. There are various places to serve during Vacation Bible School such as: Prayer, snacks, crew leaders (leading children to various stations), station leader assistants (assisting a station leader), registration (checking the children in upon arrival) and many more. Email Lisa Bond [LBond@FUMCPensacola.com](mailto:LBond@FUMCPensacola.com) for more info.



## WISH LIST

We have created a VBS wish list through Amazon. Click [HERE](#) or scan QR code to view needed items. Contact Lisa Bond with any questions.

# FIRST STUDENTS

## GRADUATING SENIORS OF FIRST CHURCH

### BACCALAUREATE SERVICE

Sunday, May 10 | 8:30am | Main Sanctuary

Graduating Seniors will be recognized and given Bibles at the end of the service. Bella Trivison and Jack McAuley, class representatives, will speak at all three services.

### CLASS OF 2026

Lilly Kate Adair  
Miller Caldwell  
Melody Choate  
Tyler Dana  
Taylor Davies  
Dillion DelRosario

Peyton Gagnet  
Daxton Gill  
Mac Gilmer  
Arden Hof  
Bijoux Houghton  
Lawson Killingsworth

Emma Lawrence  
Cooper Lindemann  
Jack McAuley  
Reed Rhodes  
Maya Sandfort  
William Scott

Ruby Seacrest  
Bella Trivison  
Tucker Trivison  
Sarah Westerheim  
Elliott Wiggins

One of the most profound ways I experience God's presence in my life is through the natural world around me. There is something deeply moving about stepping outside and being surrounded by His creation, the towering trees, the open sky, the sounds of the earth, all of it serving as a reminder of His greatness and intentional design. Spending time outdoors is not simply a hobby for me, it is an act of worship. Hiking on trail and serving as a junior staff member have reinforced this feeling. Nature has a way of stripping away distractions and creating space to hear from God more clearly. These moments outdoors have also become opportunities to connect with others on a deeper level, sharing in the beauty of God's creation has a unique way of opening hearts and fostering genuine, meaningful conversations.

Active involvement in my church has been one of the greatest blessings in my life. Especially the many trips we have taken together like choir tours and Wilderness Trail every summer. Through consistent participation, whether in services, small groups, or community outreach, I have

built a strong and lasting community with fellow Church members. The friendships I have formed within my church family are very strong; they are bonds rooted in shared faith, mutual encouragement, and a collective desire to grow closer to God. Beyond personal growth and fellowship, church participation has given me a platform to make a positive impact in my broader community.

I do sense God's call in my career path. I plan on becoming a Veterinarian. I feel led to this not simply because I love animals, but because I understand how deeply they are woven into people's lives. People depend on animals for companionship, emotional support, and their livelihoods. When I care for an animal, I am also caring for the person on the other side of that relationship.. Veterinary medicine feels like a calling to serve both God's creatures and the people who love them. I believe God placed this passion in me intentionally, and I plan to follow it wholeheartedly.

*By: Peyton Gagnet*

### CLASS REPRESENTATIVES



*Bella Trivison*



*Jack McAuley*

# WHAT'S HAPPENING at FIRST CHURCH for

## FIRST KIDS

*First Kids is our children's ministry at First Church. All children 3 years old (as of Sept. 1, 2024) through the 5th grade are invited to be a part of this ministry. We have a great time connecting with each other while singing, playing, learning about God, and learning about ourselves.*

Lisa Bond

Director of Children's Ministry

[LBond@fumcpensacola.com](mailto:LBond@fumcpensacola.com)

### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL SPACE ADVENTURE: MADE FOR WONDER

May 31 - June 4

- Sunday Kickoff: 9:30am - Noon
- Mon - Thur: 9:00am - Noon

[Click HERE to Register](#)

*Parents are encouraged to join their kids for our 11:00am ICON service in The Upper Room on Sunday, May 31 as we celebrate the start of VBS together. All children ages 3 (as of September 1, 2025) through (completed) 5th grade are invited to blast off with us this summer on an amazing journey to the stars at this year's VBS, May 31-June 4! Our theme is "Space Adventure: Made for Wonder." Made for Wonder invites kids to explore the vast universe and discover that the same God who created the heavens created them with purpose. Through out-of-this-world adventures, they'll learn that they are wonderfully made to shine God's light everywhere they go. A \$10 donation per child (\$25 per family) is appreciated but not required.*



## WFAMILY FUN NIGHT LIVE MUSIC & DINNER

Friday, May 15 | 6:00 - 9:00pm

### The Burrow

Come to this fun family event that parents and kids can enjoy together. Come enjoy a meal and listen to our very own DuDads!

## FIRST KIDS SUMMER CAMP

[Click HERE to Register](#)

The Methodist Children's Academy in conjunction with First United Methodist Church, is offering weekly, full day and half day summer camps, May 25 - August 7, 2026 for rising 1st - 6th Graders.



## BLAST (ELEMENTARY CAMP)

July 20 - 24 | Overnight Camp

Blue Lake Camp (Pinewood)

[Click HERE to Register](#)

Blast is a week-long overnight camp for students who have completed 3rd-5th grade. Campers spend the week building friendships, growing in faith, and enjoying classic camp activities like swimming, games, and crafts, along with daily worship and small group time. Cost is \$375 per camper. Scholarships available through Blue Lake. Please inform Lisa Bond once registered.



## CHURCH & SOCIETY

*Church and Society is the agency within the Church that educates, advocates and connects in an effort to implement the Social Principles and other policy statements of The UMC. Continually advocating with policy makers, organizing the grassroots, and educating future leaders, Church and Society works to live faithfully, seek justice, and pursue peace.*

Dr. Rick Branch

[RBranch@FUMCPensacola.com](mailto:RBranch@FUMCPensacola.com)

## PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY

Sunday, May 31

The FUMC Church & Society Committee is pleased to announce that the United Methodist Church will observe Peace with Justice Sunday on May 31.

Peace with Justice Sunday is one of six special Sundays designated for supporting ministries and causes that are important to the entire United Methodist Church. On May 31, churches will unite to celebrate and encourage ministries that work for peace and fairness across the world. Peace and Justice Sunday serves as a reminder to churches and church members to follow Jesus's example and intentionally choose peace in the face of violence and injustice.

United Methodists have long believed that working for peace requires churches to tackle larger societal issues such as racism, poverty and oppression. On Peace with Justice Sunday, churches large and small have the opportunity to do their part in not only ending war and unrest and but also building a world where all people are treated with dignity.

*Continued on Next Page...*

## CHURCH & SOCIETY CONT.

### JUST PENSACOLA: NEHEMIAH ACTION RECAP

JUST Pensacola hosted the Nehemiah Action on April 28 at First Baptist Church of Warrington.



700 people from churches all across Pensacola came together to ask our city leaders to provide more awareness for mental health resources in our community. It was a great turnout for a great night, but there's still a lot more work to do. Click [HERE](#) to read the WUWF article for more information.

### FIRST STUDENTS

*First Students is our youth ministry at First Church for students in the 6th-12th grades. We have many combined activities and occasionally separate into mid-high and senior-high activities.*

Denise Van Atta  
Interim Student Ministries Director  
[DVanAtta@fumcpensacola.com](mailto:DVanAtta@fumcpensacola.com)

### BACCALAUREATE SERVICE

Sunday, May 10 | 8:30am

Main Sanctuary

Graduating Seniors will be recognized and given Bibles at the end of the service. Bella Trivison and Jack McAuley, class representatives, will speak at all three services.

### GRADUATING SENIOR BREAKFAST

Saturday May 9 | 9:00am

Wesley Hall

It is tradition in our church for the junior class to help host the graduating senior class breakfast. The Senior Breakfast is a time to celebrate our graduates. Scholarships, hymnals, and prayer shawls are distributed. Mr. Rick will present a song just for our seniors and a slide show of all of our graduates will also be shown.

### MAY DATES:

May 3: Extended choir rehearsal.

Time to be announced

May 10: Baccalaureate and Mother's Day (no evening activities)

May 11: Last Panera Bible Study

May 13: Last Mid High Morning Bible Study

### PAGES FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE: EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

June 7 - 9 | FUMC Pensacola

Students who have completed 6th - 12th grade are invited to serve as Pages for the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference. Pages assist the Bishop, conference officers, and conference staff throughout the conference. Youth will stay in the Youth Building at First United Methodist Church of Pensacola. Some meals will be provided, with one lunch and two dinners off campus. After page duties are completed on Friday and Saturday evenings, students will enjoy group outings to the beach for dinner and putt putt, and to Sky Zone Trampoline Park. Please contact Denise if your youth is interested at [dvanatta@fumcpensacola.com](mailto:dvanatta@fumcpensacola.com).

### SENIOR ADULTS

*The Senior Adult ministry at First Church is for adults over the age of 50 (but all ages are welcome to participate). It provides opportunities for adults to be in community with one another and share in the gifts and graces of the more experienced members in our congregation.*

Jennifer Piver  
Director of Senior Adult Ministries  
[JPiver@FUMCPensacola.com](mailto:JPiver@FUMCPensacola.com)

### THANK YOU!

As part of our Senior Week Mission, we collected \$1,200 for Methodist Homes of AL & NWFL - Fountain of Love. A special thank you to Libby Kephart Hargrave, Same Waite, and Heidi Branch for donating their time and talent at our banquet.

### LUNCH OUT: MCGUIRE'S IRISH PUB

Thursday, May 14 | 11:30am

[Click HERE to Register by May 12](#)

Join us for a fun-filled afternoon of fellowship and lunch at McGuire's Irish Pub. Pensacola's locally owned award-winning restaurant has a turn-of-the-century, New York Irish Saloon theme. The atmosphere is exciting, and the food is fantastic!



### POPCORN & MOVIE - FLIPPED

Monday, May 18 | 2:00pm - 4:00pm

The Wright Place | \$5

[Click HERE to Register by May 16.](#)

Lights, Camera, Popcorn! Join us for an afternoon of fellowship and watch the Romantic Comedy/Drama, Flipped. This movie set in the 1950's/1960's tells the story of Juli Baker and Bryce Loski, neighbors whose childhood crushes and misunderstandings evolve over six years into mutual affection, highlighted by pivotal moments like a beloved sycamore tree and school science projects. Snacks will be served.



### XYZ TRIP - BEACH, BINGO & BOX LUNCH

Thursday, May 28 | 10:00am - 1:30pm | \$10

Limited Church Bus Seating

[Click HERE to Register by May 26](#)

Join us for a fun filled afternoon of fellowship as we travel to Pensacola Beach on the church buses. Enjoy a ride over 3-Mile Bridge, our beautiful beaches, fresh air, fellowship, beach bingo, prizes and a picnic box lunch.



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## SENIOR ADULTS CONT.

### COFFEE WITH FRIENDS

*Tuesdays | 9:30 - 10:30am*

*Church Library*

We have a small, friendly group that meets each week for coffee and fellowship in the Church Library. We have no agenda other than to get out of the house and enjoy time with friends... new and old. Anyone is invited to join us. Coffee and pastries are provided.

### GRAND MONDAY NIGHTS

*Mondays | 7:00 - 8:00pm*

Grand Monday Nights is a free weekly webinar to help you grow as a Christian grandparent. In these webinars, you'll get practical ideas and information on grandparenting, learn how to nurture your grandchildren's faith and overcome obstacles, and find encouragement. This is a ministry provided by the Legacy Coalition. Register at [legacycoalition.com/grand-monday-nights](http://legacycoalition.com/grand-monday-nights).

### QIGONG/TAI CHI WITH JEAN PARKER

*Wednesdays & Fridays | \$5 per class*

*9:45 - 10:45am | Franklin Building*

QIGONG, the "meditative martial art", has its roots in Chinese Medicine, and is a close cousin to the better-known tai chi. The slow, graceful motions are simple and repetitive, making the practice of qigong accessible to just about anyone. Join us and bring a friend! Dress comfortably. You can sit for class, or hold on to the back of a chair. Even lie down. For more information contact Jean ([jeanp347@gmail.com](mailto:jeanp347@gmail.com)).

**SUNDAY  
SERVICE  
TIMES**

**IN-PERSON & ONLINE**

8:30 & 11:00am in the Main Sanctuary  
& ICON AT 11:00am in Wesley Abbey

*stay connected*    
fumcpensacola

# FIRST CHURCH CARES

Congregational Care Ministry of FUMC Pensacola

*If you would like to add an announcement or purchase flowers please contact: Ginger Raines at [GRaines@FUMCPensacola.com](mailto:GRaines@FUMCPensacola.com)*

## LOVE & REMEMBRANCE

### Members who have died:

*We offer our christian love and sympathy to:*

**Joann Safko, Anna Safko & James Safko** on the death of their mother & grandmother, **Pat Brinson**. Pat died on April 10, 2026.

**Katherine Brooks and Lionel's friends** on the death of her father, **Lionel Brooks**.

**The family & friends** on the death of **Kenneth Bynum Sandiford**. Ken died on April 21, 2026.

### Loved ones who have died:

*We offer our christian love and sympathy to:*

**Brenda Sampson** on the death of her son, **Nathan**. Nathan died April 27, 2026.

## BAPTISMS

**Kylie Fatheree**. Kylie was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026, in the fountain in front of the church!

## CELEBRATIONS

The birth of **Brooke Ellen Vandal**, born April 16, 2026. Brooke is the daughter of Hattie (Larson) & Steve Vandal.

The birth of **Olivia Grace Beck**, born April 23, 2026. Olivia is the daughter of Kait & Trent Beck. Proud grandparents are Melanie & Gary Turner and proud aunt is Danielle Turner.

The birth of **Daniel James Little**, born April 27, 2026. Daniel is the son of Amanda & James Little.

## SANCTUARY FLOWERS

*You may place flowers in the Sanctuary in honor, celebration or memory of someone. The arrangements are \$65.00 each.*

April 5: Given **in honor of the FUMC staff** for all the work they accomplished during the Holy Season.

April 12: Given **in honor of our 2026 Confirmands**.

April 19: Given **in loving memory of Virginia Williams** by Jennifer Fleming.

April 26: Given **in celebration of Wanda Abshire's 80th birthday** on April 19th by the Ferry family. Ms. Abshire is Nicole Ferry's mother.

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## THE LIVING TRUST APRIL 1 - 30, 2026

The Living Trust is a special fund set up to receive gifts for memorials that you may wish to give in memory of or in honor of an individual. This is given to meet extra needs of the church above those of the annual budget. **If you would like to give towards The Living Trust, contact the finance department ([accounting@FUMCPensacola.com](mailto:accounting@FUMCPensacola.com)).**

### IN MEMORY OF:

#### Bob Espersen

By Jon Whitney  
By Mary Ann Taylor  
By Patricia and Richard Meyers  
By Joe and Nancy Strykiewicz  
By Wayne Bradley  
By Elias and Valerie

#### Pamela Schang

By Jon Whitney

#### Larry Hines

##### *For the Kitchen Fund*

By Robin Wright  
By Shelley Frost

#### Fran Terrell

By Susan Goodwin  
By Mim Kiesewetter  
By Judy Corley  
By Pam Switzer  
By Linda Pallin

#### Denise McLendon Kelly

##### *For the Kids Feeding Program*

By Kay Richie, Amanda Richie Bennett and Family

#### Vermelle Perdue

##### *For the Kids Feeding Program*

By Kay Richie and Family

#### Tim Choulat

##### *For the Kids Feeding Program*

By Kay Richie and Daniel, Amanda, Kyler, Kason and Kyren Bennett

#### Chris Felt

By Kay Richie

#### Tommy Pittman

##### *For the Kids Feeding Program*

By Kay Richie and Amanda Bennett

#### Pat Brinson

##### *For the Brinson Laney Music Scholarship*

By Hannah Simmons  
By Clara Wimberly  
By Roger Brinson  
By Sue and Charlie Dungan  
By Gordon and Judith Hambrick  
By Glenn Nye  
By Elaine Mitchell  
By Susan and Tommy Davies



**Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.**

6 E. Wright St. • Pensacola, FL 32501 • 850.432.1434 • [fumcpensacola.com](http://fumcpensacola.com)  
For pastoral emergencies, contact the Church Office or Ginger Raines at 850.259.3177