

Tri-Angles

September 2026



United in the Spirit, First United Methodist Church of Belmont exists to be more like Jesus Christ for our community and beyond

Dear FUMC Family,

"I am confident of this," Paul writes in the opening verses of his letter to the Philippians, "that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ."

We often hear those words as a promise about the work God is doing within each of us. And they are. But Paul's "you" is plural. He is writing to a community: to people who worshiped, served, struggled, prayed, and grew together. God's good work was taking place not only within them, but among them.

That is one of the convictions behind this fall's **ALL IN** challenge. Grace is deeply personal, but it is never private. God often works in our lives through the people around us: through someone who listens when we need to talk, asks a question that helps us see differently, encourages us when we are weary, or prays for us when we cannot find the words to pray for ourselves.

Later in Philippians, Paul urges the church to be "of the same mind, having the same love." He advises them to look not only to their own interests but also to the interests of others. This does not mean they agreed about everything. In fact, Paul's letter makes it clear that they did not! It means they were learning together to have the mind of Christ: to listen with humility, love generously, and remain committed to one another even when doing so was difficult.

In a world increasingly shaped by division and distrust, we need the mind and mindset of Christ more than ever. But it is a mindset and life that cannot be learned alone. We need relationships in which we can practice it together.

This month, we turn to Philippians in worship, our 2026 Scripture Focus. If you haven't been reading, I hope you will join me over the next month. As we listen together to Paul's words, I hope we will pay particular attention to the kind of community he describes: a church bound together by grace, sharing in the gospel, encouraging one another, and growing together toward the mind of Christ.

I am deeply grateful for everyone who has already made an **ALL IN** commitment. Your response has been tremendously encouraging. By joining a Sunday school class, Bible study, fellowship group, music ensemble, ministry team, or another small group, you are making room for God to continue the good work he has begun, both in you and among us.

If you have not yet made a commitment, there is still time to be **ALL IN**. Our fall groups begin meeting the week of September 14, and we would love to help you find a place. You do not have to know exactly which group is right for you, and you do not have to make a lifelong commitment. You simply have to take a first step: try a group, meet some people, and make yourself available to the grace God so often gives us through one another.

God has begun a good work among us. Let's trust that God will use our life together to carry it forward.

With much peace,





This September, our worship series turns to Philippians, FUMC Belmont's 2026 Scripture Focus. Written from prison, Paul's brief letter offers a powerful vision of life in Christ marked by joy, humility, unity, and hope even in difficult circumstances. Join us as we listen for how God is continuing the good work begun in us and among us.

September 13 ✝ Phil 1:1–11 – Identity & Promise

September 20 ✝ Phil 1:12–26 – Joy Under Pressure

September 27 ✝ Phil 2:1–11 – The Way of Christ

October 04 ✝ Phil 3:7–14 – Desire & Direction

October 13 ✝ Phil 4:4–9 – Peace That Surpasses Understanding

...This Month, Let's Read Philippians Together!

What kind of church do we want to be?

- ▶ *A church filled with deep joy, not shallow cheerfulness that disappears when life becomes difficult, but resilient joy rooted in the confidence that God is present and still at work?*
- ▶ *A church becoming more like Jesus, not simply learning more about him, but taking on his mind: his humility, generosity, and willingness to serve?*
- ▶ *A church held together by something deeper than shared interests or similar opinions. A church whose people are partners in the gospel, joined in genuine friendship and committed to a common purpose?*

That is the vision Paul offers in Philippians, our 2026 Scripture Focus. This September, our worship series will take us through this brief but powerful letter. I hope you will read along with us. Philippians is only four chapters long, so you can read the entire letter in one sitting or spend one week with each chapter.

As you read Philippians, here are six things to notice and some questions to ponder:

- 1. A deep and resilient joy.** The language of joy and rejoicing appears sixteen times, even though Paul is writing from prison. His joy does not depend upon comfortable circumstances; it grows from knowing Christ and trusting God's future. *How can we cultivate this kind of deep joyfulness in our lives and in our church?*
- 2. The mind of Christ.** "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus," Paul writes. Watch how often he points toward the humility, self-giving love, and servant-hearted way of Jesus. *What can help us become more like Christ in humility and service?*
- 3. Partnership in the gospel.** Paul's affection for the Philippians fills the letter. They are more than acquaintances or fellow church members; they are friends joined together in the work of Christ. *What can strengthen our sense of belonging and partnership within the church?*
- 4. Unity without uniformity.** The Philippians did not agree about everything, and some of their relationships were strained. Paul does not demand identical opinions. He calls them to share the mind of Christ and remain centered on the purpose that unites them. *How can we remain focused on our shared mission rather than our personal preferences?*
- 5. A faith that keeps growing.** Paul never claims to have arrived spiritually. He continues to "press on," reminding us that following Jesus means remaining open to grace, growth, and change throughout our lives. *Where is Christ inviting us to press on in discipleship and ministry?*
- 6. Grateful generosity.** Paul gives thanks for the many ways the Philippians have supported him. Their generosity flows from contentment, gratitude, and their deep relationship with Christ and one another. *How can we cultivate grateful and generous hearts in our church and in our daily lives?*

Join us in worship this September, and bring Philippians with you. May God use this ancient letter to deepen our joy, strengthen our life together, and continue the good work already begun among us.

FALL ADULT SMALL GROUPS THROUGH THE WEEK

Groups begin the week of September 13

Childcare may be available for these groups based on interest and advance registration. Please contact Jennifer Martin (jennifer@fumcbelmont.org) as soon as possible if you will need childcare.

- **Sunday 12:30 pm:** The Emotionally Healthy Woman
Led by Patty Hayward and Emily Lyons
- **Monday 6:30 pm:** The Seven Principals For Making Marriage Work
Led by Leigh and Mike Nance
- **Tuesday 6:30 pm:** Disciple - Led by Pastor George and Catherine Ragsdale
- **Wednesday 6:30 pm:** Building Beloved Community
Led by Kim Ingram and Janet Jones
- **Wednesday 6:30 pm:** Men's Group: Engage
Led by Matt Gillespie
- **Thursday 11 am:** The Shape of Living - Led by Pastor Ellen

The number of weeks per class vary

For more details go to fumcbelmont.org/smallgroups



Fall Men's Meetings
Friday, September 4
and October 2
6:30 am - Youth House

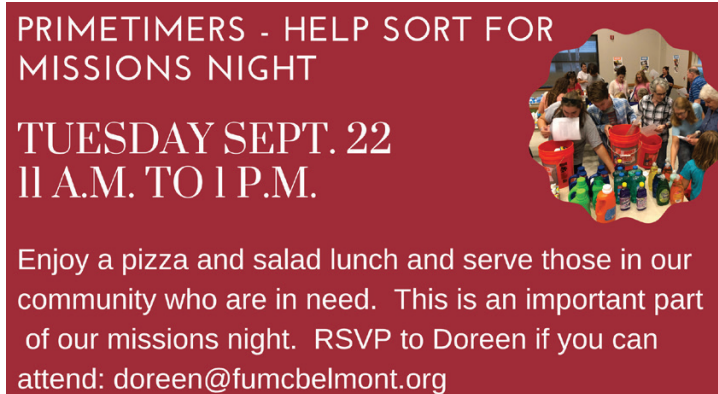
CONTACT TONY WILSON
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
KINGSMTNTONY@YAHOO.COM



SQUARE TWO
All ladies are invited
September 10 - 7 pm
At FUMCB

Make this fun
cork pumpkin
For more info
Contact Pam Stowe 704-678-4685

Bring a
hot glue gun!



PRIMETIMERS - HELP SORT FOR
MISSIONS NIGHT

TUESDAY SEPT. 22
11 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

Enjoy a pizza and salad lunch and serve those in our community who are in need. This is an important part of our missions night. RSVP to Doreen if you can attend: doreen@fumcbelmont.org



Ruth Circle

Thursday September 24 - 6:30 p.m.
Home of Elizabeth Maynard
1066 Assembly Street, Belmont

If you are looking for community, come and join in.
Women of all ages are welcome!

RSVP Doreen Collins
doreen@fumcbelmont.org

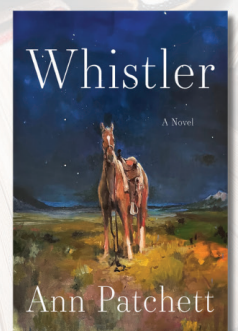
Reading Women -

a book group for women who like to read and discuss a wide variety of books that make us think and enlarge our world!

We begin the year on Monday, September 14 at 7 pm with Whistler by Ann Patchett.

We will then meet the second Tuesday of each month, October through May.

For more information, contact Ellen at ellen@fumcbelmont.org.



SAVE THE DATE

5:30 - 7:30
CARPENTER HALL

**DINNER, BINGO,
INTERGENERATIONAL
BIBLE STUDY**

YOUTH-FUL NIGHT

**ALL PRIMETIMERS (55+) AND
YOUTH ARE INVITED
TO YOUTH GROUP ON SUNDAY
OCTOBER 11**



**Community
FALL FESTIVAL**

**Oct 25 / 4:00-6:30
at Reid Park, Belmont**

**TRUNK OR TREAT, FOOD,
GAMES, AND MORE!**

Sponsored by
Hood Memorial
AME Zion &
First UMC Belmont



All adults 55+ are welcome!

**Primetimers trip to
Bush and Vine Orchard - York SC**

*Lunch in York
(your only cost is lunch)*

Transportation provided

**Thursday October 22
10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

See Doreen
for more information



CELEBRATING A WONDERFUL SUMMER AT THE CDC

The CDC had a wonderful and busy summer! From Mud Pie Days and Art Month to plenty of outdoor play on the playground, our children enjoyed a summer filled with fun, creativity, and wonderful memories.

Our Summer Camp was a great success, serving 34 families throughout the season. Each week brought a new adventure, including trips around the community, swimming at Pinebrook, bowling, Art in the Park, and so much more. We are already looking ahead and making plans for Summer 2027!

Now, we are off and running with our 2026–2027 curriculum. We "blasted off" into the new preschool year on August 17 and were excited to welcome several new families to our CDC community.

We are grateful for another wonderful summer and look forward to fantastic fall.



Fishes & Loaves

Family Service Project

First Kids and Families – sign up today for a 1.5 hour time slot on September 20 (12:30-2:00 or 2:00-3:30). We will learn about Jesus' feeding the 5,000, learn kitchen and food safety, and then you will prepare freezer meals for families hosting foster children.

Sign up today: www.fumcbelmont.org/signup



*Bible
Sunday*



Congratulations to these First Kids and Youth who received Bibles on August 16. We encourage all of our children to bring their Bible every Sunday!

*4th-5th
Graders*



Join us for **Crossroads** on Sunday, September 13 from 5:30-7:30. We'll continue learning how to be more like Jesus. Bring your Bible and invite a friend!

Parents and grandparents — did you know we send a First Kids News email every Friday morning at 9:00? Sign up today and don't miss any great opportunities for children. www.fumcbelmont.org/kids



SCOUTING IS STARTING UP FOR A NEW YEAR!

Come join the Scouting adventure in Belmont!

Pack 56 and Troop 56 are gearing up for another great year of outdoor adventure, leadership, service, friendship, and character formation—and we are excited to announce that a **new girls' troop is also forming!**

Whether your child is just beginning the Scouting journey or is ready to take the next step, there is a place for your family. Come meet Scouts and adult leaders from our Belmont units, learn more about what we do, and see how Scouting helps young people grow in confidence, responsibility, leadership, and virtue.

Scouting Open House — September 14

Come see what Scouting is all about, meet the Scouts and leaders, and learn how your family can get involved. Families with boys and girls of all ages are welcome!

Pack 56 — Cub Scouts (Kindergarten - 5th grade)

Troop 56B — Scouts BSA for boys (11-17 years)

Troop 56G — New Scouts BSA troop for girls, now forming (11-17 years)

Open House: September 14 ♦ **Location:** Scout Lodge, Behind First UMC ♦ **Time:** 6:30pm

For more information or to get connected with one of our units, visit BelmontScouting.org or contact us at bsa56belmont@gmail.com (scout troops) or pack56scouts@gmail.com (cub scout pack)

Come join us for a new year of **adventure, service, and Scouting!**

GATHERINGS FOR YOUTH

Youth Sunday School — We officially expanded our Sunday School offerings on August 16. Middle School youth are meeting in the Youth House and our high school youth are temporarily meeting in the Carpenter Hall classroom. All are welcome to join us as we engage in relevant Bible studies. Beginning September 13, we will begin our Philippians study to coincide with George's Sunday sermons. We will complete two service projects during this study as well. Contact Quanna for more information about our Sunday School programs.

REJOICE IN THE LORD, ALWAYS

THE LETTER TO THE

Philippians

Youth Sunday School
Sept. 13-Oct. 11

AGAIN I WILL SAY, REJOICE

Join our teachers as we read from our sermon series.



SEPT. 18-20

YOUTH BEACH RETREAT

"If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat."
John Ortberg

MADE FOR A MIRACLE

SUNDAY NIGHT
YOUTH
BIBLE STUDY

FROM YOUR ORDINARY TO GOD'S EXTRAORDINARY

SUNDAY NIGHT YOUTH

FUMC BELMONT YOUTH GROUP

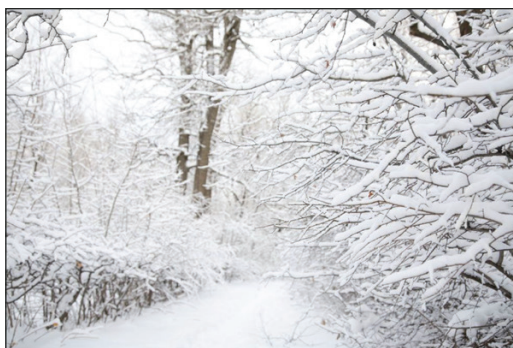
Sundays 5:30-7:30

A place where youth in grades 6-12 can connect to God and one another

Youth Friendly Pickleball Tournament

10/4 12 to 2 pm

Davis Park Courts



Youth Winter Retreat at Lake Junaluska February 12-14

#Nofilter

Worship Leadership
Pickleball Tourney
Bible study Fellowship

MISSIONS

**All are welcome to our Missions Night
on Sunday, September 27!**

We will begin with a potluck dinner at 5:30 and then serve our neighbors in need. We will assemble 72 flood buckets for UMCOR, 400 sandwiches for Roof Above, and write letters to those serving in the military.

Signup today to bring a dish! www.fumcbelmont.org/signup.

HELP FLOOD VICTIMS



Consider donating \$75 to help us achieve our goal to make 72 buckets this year on

**MISSIONS NIGHT |
Sept 27th @ 5:30**

Donations can be made by check or www.fumcbelmont.org/floodbuckets





**Thank you for your overwhelming support
of our Holbrook Middle Supply Drive!**

We donated 21 brooms and dust pans, 55 boxes of tissues, 37 containers of disinfectant wipes, over 160 notebooks and composition books, a generous amount of printer paper and wide-ruled paper, packs of pens and pencils, 28 sticks of deodorant, packs of whiteboard markers, and generous amounts of hand sanitizer, erasers, pencil boxes, and scissors.



WELCOME, FRIENDS, OLD AND NEW!

Pastries with the Pastor

Newcomers & Guests! Join Pastor George and members of our staff and congregation for casual conversation and fellowship! All are welcome!

Sept 13 | 10:00 am | Carpenter Hall





Rally Day!

REFLECTIONS

On August 16, over 130 people joined us for breakfast and the kick off to our Sunday School year. Ed Hanigan and his team cooked 130 eggs and 11 pounds of bacon! Our kids and youth enjoyed a festive parade to their classrooms. It was a great day full of spirit for all ages at FUMC Belmont!



FUMC HOSPITALITY

We are looking for people to extend a warm welcome to our visitors and regular attendees on Sundays.

*We are in need of **Ushers, Information Center Hosts and Greeters.***

Contact Ellen at ellen@fumcbelmont.org for more information!



NEWS FROM THE MUSIC MINISTRY

It's not too late to join one of our fabulous music ensembles!



Alleluia Choir – age 4 years - 5th grade meets on Wednesdays from 5:30–6 p.m. We participate in worship services once a month, as well as the Christmas concert and other events. We learn to read rhythms and notes while having lots of fun!

Worship Team – leads our music at the 8:30 a.m. service every Sunday, singing Contemporary Christian music with guitar, bass and drums. Let us know if you sing or play an instrument! We also lead music on Maundy Thursday, participate in the Christmas Concert and perform in the community. Open to all ages and no audition is necessary!

Bellissimo – is our intergenerational Handbell Choir who rehearses on Wednesday nights from 6–7 p.m. and participates in worship services once a month. We also enjoy attending festivals and workshops, as well as performing at the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden at Christmas. No audition necessary!

Chancel Choir – our non-audition choir is open to middle and high school students as well as adults of all ages. Our Chancel Choir meets on Wednesday nights from 7–8:30 p.m. to prepare to sing at the 11 a.m. service each Sunday. We also sing for special services like Christmas Eve, Good Friday, and other concerts in the community.

Contact Ellen at ellen@fumcbelmont.org for more information!

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE AND SERVE

Feed the HOUSE



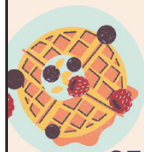
Help the families in residence at Catherine's House by dropping off a simple meal on Sept. 14th or Sept. 28th



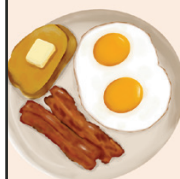
www.fumcbelmont.org/signup

Serve with the Breakfast Crew

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP THIS FUN AND IMPORTANT MINISTRY?



**YOU CAN HELP:
COOK BREAKFAST AT 7 A.M.,
SERVE FOOD FROM 9:15 - 10 A.M. OR
CLEAN UP AFTER BREAKFAST 10 -10:30**



**EMAIL DOREEN
OR SIGN UP AT
FUMCBELMONT.ORG/SIGNUPS**

IN THE GREATER UM CONNECTION



It's Back-to-School season!

Are you familiar with the **Wesley Foundations** on college campuses in Western North Carolina?

Check out all the schools with United Methodist-related ministries at www.wnccumc.org/campus-ministries.

You are welcome to reach out to any of them to see how you can provide support. Campus ministries are an important way to support young adult college students in their faith, relationships, academics, and well-being!



LIGHT IN THE Darkness

Healing, Hope, and Renewal

September 25-27, 2026

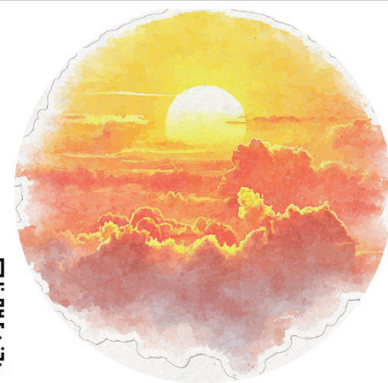
At Lake Junaluska
Conference & Retreat Center

Speakers:

Gayle Smith: Founder of Dahlia Grove, speaker & author.

Sandy Harthan: Local pastor with a heart for spiritual growth and emotional healing.

FOR MORE
INFORMATION AND
TO REGISTER SCAN
THIS CODE.



STAFF UPDATES

We are glad to share several updates from our Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

After an extended search, **Rebekah Huffstetler** has been hired as our next **Business Administrator** and will begin August 31. Rebekah brings more than ten years of experience in church administration, including seven years at Woodland United Methodist Church in Rock Hill. We look forward to welcoming her to our staff and church family.



We are also pleased that **Marsha Patton** has agreed to continue serving as our **Administrative Assistant** on a permanent basis. Marsha has brought warmth, steadiness, and skill to this role, and we are grateful for her continued ministry among us.

As these transitions take place, **Vanessa Shrauder** will conclude her service as Interim Business Administrator. When Mark Sutton's departure left us with an immediate need, Vanessa stepped forward and faithfully served during the transition. We are deeply grateful for her knowledge, commitment, and generous service to FUMC.

Please join us in praying for Rebekah, Marsha, and Vanessa during this season of transition and in giving thanks for each of them.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

September 1	Ashley McGraw Sam Peecksen Nicole Stanforth Cynthia Tilley David Washam	September 10	Jamie Campbell Caleb Campbell Elijah Simpson Tyler Thornton Thomas Young	Sept. 21, cont.	Tina Moore Katie Quispe Mario Quispe
September 2	Kendrick Boehlke Hayden Currier Austin Ramsey	September 11	Barbara Lange Rick Pettus Charles Whitley	September 22	Casey Bork Hollan Delany Kathy Rhyne
September 4	Eddy Bowen Adrian Lunsford Chip Thompson	September 12	Aaron Blanton Susan Burnette Liberty Salata	September 23	Matt Gaskill Marsha Harris
September 5	John Rhodes Christie Etling Cassie Fann	September 13	Barbara Byrum Ludi McGinnis Blaira Reagan Chris Thornton	September 26	Coralyn Davis Josh Elmore
September 7	Doreen Collins Kent Tilley Derek Widenhouse	September 14	Erin Tindall	September 28	Keith Wilson
September 8	Chuck Allen Whitlow Guzaski Carrie Kunder Faith McElyea	September 15	Derek Featherston Aimee Russell	September 29	Caroline Beaty Andrew Langley Jonathan McKee Vanessa Rice
September 9	Margie Ligon Traci Pate Lydia Widenhouse	September 16	Stephanie McCurry	September 30	Bruce Boney Lauren Bryant
		September 17	David Pennington		
		September 18	Bradley Bondurant		
		September 19	Dottie Moore		
		September 21	Jonathan Kalmbach		



THOUGHTS, PRAYERS, AND SYMPATHY

Alice Farris' sister Janet
 Jack Acheson (Chris' brother)
 Mary Rutledge's mother, Alberta
 Jim Griffin
 Jimmy Turner's family upon his passing
 (Cindy Griffin's brother)
 Alex Underhill (Cindy and Jim's nephew)
 Betty Kupneski (Matt Gillespie's grandmother)
 Amanda Owens and her family: Derek, Bentley, Haley,
 and Hunter
 Sarah DesJardins (Teri and Claude Wilson's friend)
 Teri and Claude Wilson's friend, R
 Bill Walton (Maggie Moore's brother)
 Ginger Feimster
 Murphy Clark and family
 Zoe communities in Rwanda

*Submit prayer requests to
prayers@fumcbelmont.org*

FALL 2026 ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

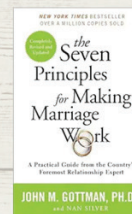
Marriage Class

Room 503

Route 66
Room 304



Led by a team
of teachers



Led by Jennifer &
Brandon Martin

Wanderers

Room 502



Led by a team
of teachers

Salt & Light Fellowship

Narthex Meeting Room

Have real conversations and build relationships. They begin with Scripture discussion and talk about how God is moving in their lives.

Led by Stephanie Beaty

WE ARE ALL IN! FUMCBELMONT.ORG/SMALLGROUPS

OUR STAFF

Doreen Collins | Director of Adult Discipleship | doreen@fumcbelmont.org
Rebekah Huffstetler | Business Administrator | rebekah@fumcbelmont.org
Jennifer Martin | Director of Children's Ministry | jennifer@fumcbelmont.org
Quanna McAlister | Director of Youth Ministry | quanna@fumcbelmont.org
Boyce O'Tuel | Director of the Child Development Center | boyce@fumcbelmont.org
Marsha Patton | Administrative Assistant | marsha@fumcbelmont.org
George Ragsdale | Senior Pastor | george@fumcbelmont.org
Ellen Robison | Minister of Worship and the Arts | ellen@fumcbelmont.org



Potluck Dinner & MISSIONS NIGHT September 27 5:30-7:30



ALL AGES
ARE
NEEDED TO
ASSEMBLE



- *Dinner at 5:30 and stay to serve
 - *Help make 400 sandwiches for the day center at Roof Above
 - *72 flood buckets
 - * Write cards of thanks to those in the military
- Sign up online to bring a dish @ fumcbelmont.org/events or find Quanna to sign up in person

