

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH OF BELMONT



SERVICE OF WORSHIP

September 13, 2026 – 11:00 a.m.
The Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost



Wisdom's Path, by Jan L. Richardson, 1998

.....
***United in the Spirit, First United Methodist Church of Belmont exists
to be more like Jesus Christ for our community and beyond***
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THE REVEREND GEORGE RAGSDALE, SENIOR PASTOR
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REJOICE IN THE LORD, ALWAYS

THE LETTER TO THE

Philippians

AGAIN I WILL SAY, REJOICE

Good morning and welcome to First United Methodist Church of Belmont! We are glad you are here! Today we begin a new worship series exploring our 2026 Scripture focus, Paul's Letter to the Philippians. Over the coming weeks we'll return to this beloved letter to see what happens when Christ becomes the center of our lives. Today, we begin with Paul's words of introduction. He offers a heartfelt remembrance and prayer for the church he loves. And what he prays is not merely that they will love one another, but that their love will keep growing: deepening in knowledge, insight, and wisdom. As we worship, we join Paul in that prayer, trusting that God is still at work among us, bringing our love to maturity in Jesus Christ.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAISE AND PRAYER

PRELUDE

Il Penseroso

Ellen Jane Lorenz

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 25

Quanna McAlister

Make us to know your ways, O LORD;

teach us your paths.

Lead us in your truth, and teach us,

for you are the God of our salvation.

Lead us in what is right, and teach us your way;

for all your paths are steadfast love and faithfulness.

Let us walk together in the ways of the Lord.

Teach us your truth, and lead us in love.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Praise the Source of Faith and Learning

***Praise the source of faith and learning
that has sparked and stoked the mind
with a passion for discerning
how the world has been designed.
Let the sense of wonder flowing
from the wonders we survey
keep our faith forever growing
and renew our need to pray:***

***God of wisdom, we acknowledge
that our science and our art
and the breadth of human knowledge
only partial truth impart.
Far beyond our calculation
lies a depth we cannot sound
where your purpose for creation
and the pulse of life are found.***

***May our faith redeem the blunder
of believing that our thought
has displaced the grounds for wonder
which the ancient prophets taught.
May our learning curb the error
which unthinking faith can breed
lest we justify some terror
with an antiquated creed.***

***As two currents in a river
fight each other's undertow,
till converging they deliver
one coherent steady flow,
blend, O God, our faith and learning
till they carve a single course,
till they join as one, returning
praise and thanks to you, their Source.***

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

***Most merciful God, you have called us to love you and to love one another, yet
our love is often narrowed by fear, pride, and self-concern. We see what we
wish to see, judge what we do not understand, and seek our own good before
the good of our neighbor.***

***Forgive us, we pray, and free us from all that clouds our hearts and minds. Give
us grace to see with greater wisdom, to love with greater faithfulness, and to
grow into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Glory to God. Amen.

*GLORIA PATRI NO. 70

MOMENTS WITH CHILDREN

Jennifer Martin

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Philippians 1:1-11

Sally Bashant

SERMON

The Rev. George Ragsdale

SILENT REFLECTION

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH No. 881 The Apostles' Creed

INVITATION TO PRAYER *Come, God, and Hear My Cry* Ruth Duck
***Come, God, and hear my cry; My spirit thirsts for you.
My body withers, weary, dry. Come Spirit God, renew!***

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

After each petition, we enter into prayer together with these words:
Lord, in your mercy, ***hear our prayer.***

GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory *An Expression of Gratitude* David Schwoebel

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you. Always in joy in ev'ry prayer for you.

I thank my God for your fellowship in the gospel from the very first day 'til now. And I am sure that he, who began a good work in you, will bring it to completion at the day of Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound more and more. Abound in knowledge, in judgment, that you may approve what is excellent to the glory of God. That you may be pure and blameless, filled with the fruits of righteousness which comes through Christ Jesus. I thank my God!

THANKSGIVING

*ACT OF PRAISE *Doxology*
***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts!
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!, Alleluia!, Alleluia!***

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

*THE LORD'S PRAYER (Hymnal No. 895)

GOING FORTH AS WITNESSES TO THE WORLD

*BENEDICTION

*RECESSIONAL HYMN No. 384 *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

** Those who are able please stand.*

WELCOME

Welcome to First United Methodist Church of Belmont! We're glad that you've chosen to worship with us this morning. We invite you to explore all the opportunities we have for children, youth, and adults of all ages. We seek to be a community of faith that welcomes all as we grow to be more like Jesus Christ for our community, loving and serving God and one another in all that we do.

If you are a guest, we are honored to have you with us. Please stop by the information center as you leave this morning to receive a small gift and more information about our church. We look forward to getting to know you in the days to come! Welcome!

Weekly Devotional Guides offer daily Scripture readings, reflections, and questions for contemplation and discussion. Each guide follows the theme and content of Sunday's sermon and includes a prayer for the week. Copies of the guides, along with transcripts of today's sermon, are available at the Information Center. You may also sign up to receive the guides by email, along with other church updates, at www.fumcbelmont.org/emails.

Today's Bulletin Cover features *Wisdom's Path*, a collage by Jan Richardson, an artist, writer, and ordained United Methodist minister whose work brings word, image, and faith into conversation. Cut from a printed map, hands reach toward the heart beneath an unfolding sky, while winding paths suggest the choices that emerge from discernment. Richardson, a native Floridian, is widely known for her contemplative writing and visual art.

The rosebud on the altar is in celebration of the birth of son, Theodore Dean, to Marshall and Alexandra Joiner on September 4, 2026.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE AND SERVE

Ways to Give at FUMC Belmont:

Online – visit fumcbelmont.org/online-giving.

By mail – Send your gift to the church address on the front of this bulletin.

In-person – drop your gift in the offering plate or the church office drop box.

GATHERINGS FOR CHILDREN

Sign up for a time slot on September 20 for our **Fishes and Loaves Family Service Project**. We will be preparing freezer meals for foster families. Details and sign up at www.fumcbelmont.org/kids.

Crossroads (4th-5th graders) meets **TONIGHT** from 5:30-7:30 for fun, food, and faith conversations!

Sunday School classes available for Birth–5th grade! Email jennifer@fumcbelmont.org for info!

GATHERINGS FOR YOUTH

Youth Sunday School— Our next Bible study goes along with our sermon series on Philippians. Join us each Sunday at 10 for a reflection and application to our scripture. Our high school youth will meet in the Carpenter Hall classroom; middle school youth meet in the Youth House. All youth are welcome.

Sunday Night Youth— All youth are invited to join us tonight for a time of fellowship, dinner, and small group Bible study. We will play Nine Square and act out some of the most important miracles of the Bible.

Winter Retreat— Youth are invited to go on our annual retreat at Lake Junaluska on February 12-14. Our guest speaker that weekend is Michael Beck, pastor, professor, author, and thought leader. We will spend time on Saturday serving the local community and playing pickleball. Sign Up by October 15 through Quanna's weekly emails.

GATHERINGS FOR ADULTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Marriage Class (taking the place of Disciple): Utilizing the book, "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work." Drawing on decades of research, internationally known psychologist John Gottman offers practical tools to help couples deepen friendship, manage conflict, and build a stronger, more lasting marriage. Meets in room 503, off of the Old Fellowship Hall.

Route 66: Is studying *Perfectly Flawed: How God Transforms Our Weakness into Strengths* by Lisa Toney, focusing on the apostle Peter's passions and imperfections and how this flawed disciple lives out his calling to lead people to Christ. Meets in room 304.

Salt & Light Fellowship: Begins with reviewing the Scripture for the week and looks at how God has moved in each person's life, the joys and sorrows. Meets in the Narthex meeting room, in back of the information desk.

Wanderers: are currently studying the book *Yes, Lord, I Have Sinned; but I Have Several Excellent Excuses*, by James Moore. It challenges readers to recognize when we make excuses and to grow beyond them. Meets in room 502, off of the Old Fellowship Hall.

A dark rectangular graphic with a chalkboard-like background. It features decorative elements like leaves and a small book icon. The text is written in a mix of white and yellow fonts.

Fall Men's Meeting
Friday October 2nd
6:30 am - Youth House

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

A dark rectangular graphic with a chalkboard-like background. It features a photo of a group of people gathered around a table. The text is in white and yellow fonts.

PRIMETIMERS - HELP SORT FOR
MISSIONS NIGHT

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

Enjoy lunch and serve our community.
RSVP to Doreen if you can attend: doreen@fumcbelmont.org

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday, September 13

8:30 a.m. Worship
9:15 a.m. Breakfast
10:00 a.m. Pastries with the Pastor
10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
12:30 p.m. Small Group: Emotionally Healthy
5:30 p.m. Crossroads
5:30 p.m. Youth Group

Monday, September 14

6:30 p.m. Service & Missions Meeting
6:30 p.m. Small Group: Marriage Class

Tuesday, September 15

5:30 p.m. Alleluia Choir
6:00 p.m. Handbell Choir
6:00 p.m. Small Group: Disciple
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir

Wednesday, September 16

6:30 p.m. Small Group: Beloved Community

Thursday, September 17

11:00 a.m. Small Group: The Shape of Living

Friday, September 18

4:00 p.m. Youth Beach Retreat

Saturday, September 19

Youth Beach Retreat

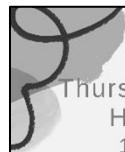
Sunday, September 20

8:30 a.m. Worship
9:15 a.m. Breakfast
10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
12:30 p.m. Fishes & Loaves Family Event
12:30 p.m. Small Group: Emotionally Healthy
3:30 p.m. Youth Beach Retreat Return

PRAYER REQUESTS

Betty Kupneski (Matt Gillespie's grandmother)
Amanda Owens and her family: Derek, Bentley, Haley, and Hunter
Sarah DesJardins (Teri & Claude Wilson's friend)
Teri and Claude Wilson's friend, R
Bill Walton (Maggie Moore's brother)
Carol Tomlinson's family upon her passing
Steve Redmond's family upon his passing
(Shane Redmond's father)
Taylor Hayward
Patty Gibson
Jeff Farris (Alice Farris' brother-in-law)
Harold Byrum
Beulah Mullinax's family upon her passing
Ginger Feimster
Murphy Clark and family
For the Zoe communities in Rwanda, especially Emmanuel (20) head of household, and siblings Patrick (18), Sandrine (9), & Obed (4)

***Submit prayer requests to:
prayers@fumcbelmont.org.
Prayers remain on this list for 4 weeks.
For continued prayers, please
submit a new request.***



Ruth Circle

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

Play a fun game and get to know each other!
If you are looking for community, come and join in. Women of all ages are welcome!

RSVP Doreen Collins
doreen@fumcbelmont.org



Potluck Dinner & MISSIONS NIGHT

September 27 | 5:30-7:30



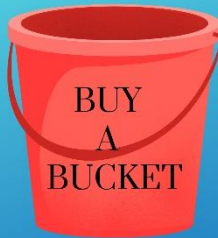
ALL AGES
ARE NEEDED
TO
ASSEMBLE

- *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 RSVP @ fumcbelmont.org/events

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](http://www.fumcbelmont.org/floodbuckets)



Feed the HOUSE



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



www.fumcbelmont.org/signup

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
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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