

FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH OF BELMONT



SERVICE OF WORSHIP

September 20, 2026 – 11:00 a.m.
The Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost



Saint Paul in Prison, by Rembrandt van Rijn, 1627

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

***The Reverend George Ragsdale, Senior Pastor
807 South Point Road // Belmont, NC 28012
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www.fumcbelmont.org***

REJOICE IN THE LORD, ALWAYS

THE LETTER TO THE

Philippians

AGAIN I WILL SAY, REJOICE

Welcome to First United Methodist Church of Belmont! We are so glad you've joined us for worship this morning! We are continuing our worship series focused on Paul's letter to the Philippians, which is also our 2026 Scripture Focus. We hear Paul today writing from a place of uncertainty and confinement. He is in prison, facing opposition and an unknown future. Because of his relationship with Jesus Christ, his words are marked by courage, freedom, and joy. We come to worship today carrying our own expectations, hopes, disappointments, and fears. How might Paul's witness speak to us, and what might it mean to trust that our lives belong to God even when they do not unfold according to plan?

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAISE AND PRAYER

PRELUDE

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Ellen Jane Lorenz

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 34

Doreen Collins

I will bless the Lord at all times;

God's praise shall continually be in our mouths.

O magnify the Lord with me,

and let us exalt God's name together.

We sought the Lord, who answered us,

and delivered us from all our fears.

Look to God, and be radiant;

come, let us worship the Lord.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 577 *God of Grace and God of Glory*

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess our hearts are slow to trust in you. We cling too tightly to our own purposes and become discouraged when life does not unfold as we hoped. We allow disappointment to narrow our vision and fear to weaken our faith.

Forgive us, and turn our hearts again toward you. Teach us to rest in your grace, to trust your goodness, and to find our joy in your never-failing presence; through 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 1:12-26

John Tria

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

No Longer Slaves

Brian Johnson

You unravel me with a melody

'Til all my fears are gone

You surround me with a song

I'm no longer a slave to fear

Of deliverance from my enemies

I am a child of God

From my mother's womb
You have chosen me
Love has called my name
I've been born again to your family
Your blood flows through my veins

I am surrounded by the arms of the Father
I am surrounded by songs of deliverance

We've been liberated from our bondage
We're the sons and the daughters
Let us sing our freedom
You split the sea so I could walk right through it
My fears are drowned in perfect love
You rescued me so I could stand and say
I am a child of God

Elizabeth Boney, soloist

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. 356

When We Are Living

POSTLUDE

A Day for Rejoicing

Lani Smith

** 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 Rembrandt van Rijn's *Saint Paul in Prison* (1627), now in a major art museum in Stuttgart, Germany. Rembrandt depicts Paul not as a triumphant hero, but as a weary prisoner, surrounded by the signs of confinement and uncertainty. Notice especially the beam of sunlight that falls across Paul and his papers, almost taking the place of a traditional halo. Even within the darkness of the prison, Paul remains illuminated, thoughtful, and still at work proclaiming the gospel.

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.

One week 'til
Mission Night!
Sept 27 @ 5:30



Feed the HOUSE

Help the families in residence at
Catherine's House

by dropping off a simple meal on
Sept 28, Oct. 26, or Nov. 9

www.fumcbelmont.org/signup

GATHERINGS FOR CHILDREN

First Kids and families, our **Fishes and Loaves Family Service Project** is **TODAY!** Come to Carpenter Hall at your scheduled time. Parents, check your email for more details.

Alleluia Choir is on a different schedule this month. Kids ages 4 - 5th grade are invited to join us for rehearsals on Tuesdays at 5:30. (Note, the choir will resume Wednesday rehearsals in October.)

GATHERINGS FOR YOUTH

Youth Sunday School – Join us in Sunday School for a reflection and application of George's sermons on Philippians. On September 27, we're discussing humility and completing a service project for our neighbors in need. Join us!

Potluck and Missions Night – Youth are invited to join our church wide event *next Sunday night* from 5:30 to 7:30. Drop off like normal or bring your parents too. Sign up please.

Pickleball Tournament – All youth are invited to play in our friendly tournament at Davis Park on *Sunday, October 4* from noon to 2. Signup through Quanna's weekly emails or on our website.

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 making excuses and growing beyond them. Meets in room 502, off of the Old Fellowship Hall.



All adults 55+ are welcome!

Join the Primertimers for a trip to Bush and Vine Orchard York SC

Thursday October 22 Lunch in York
10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (your only cost is lunch)

Transportation provided

RSVP to Doreen:
doreen@fumcbelmont.org

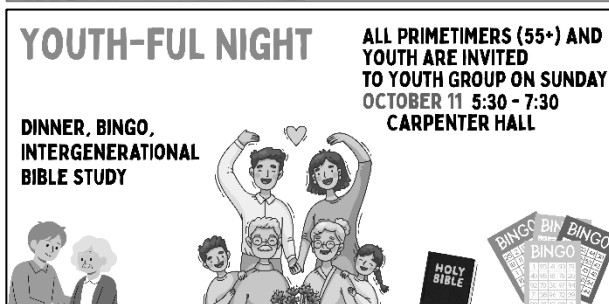


Ruth Circle and Square Two Event

Take a tour of the new Least of These Carolina's facility. October 8th - 6:30 pm

Out to dinner afterwards

RSVP to Doreen - doreen@fumcbelmont.org



YOUTH-FUL NIGHT

ALL PRIMERTIMERS (55+) AND YOUTH ARE INVITED TO YOUTH GROUP ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 11 5:30 - 7:30 CARPENTER HALL

DINNER, BINGO, INTERGENERATIONAL BIBLE STUDY

WEEKLY CALENDAR

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

Monday, September 21

6:00 p.m. Board of Trustees meeting
6:30 p.m. Justice & Equity Ministry Meeting
6:30 p.m. Small Group: Marriage Class

Tuesday, September 22

11:00 a.m. PrimeTimers' Mission & Lunch
11:00 a.m. Small Group: The Shape of Living
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 23

6:30 p.m. Small Group: Beloved Community
6:30 p.m. Small Group: Men's Engage

Thursday, September 24

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

Friday, September 25

Saturday, September 26

Sunday, September 27

8:30 a.m. Worship
9:15 a.m. Breakfast
10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
4:00 p.m. CDC Board Meeting
5:30 p.m. Potluck & Mission Night
5:30 p.m. Youth join Mission Night

PRAYER REQUESTS

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

David Lange

Lee Allen (Director of S.O.C.K.S. and Preston
Taylor's friend)

Ginger Feimster

Murphy Clark and family

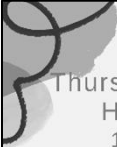
For the Zoe communities in Rwanda, especially
Eric (19) head of household, and siblings
Jean Pierre (15), Jean Claude (13), Charite (7),
and Janette (6)

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

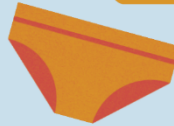
MISSIONS NIGHT |
Sept 27th @ 5:30

Donations can be made
by check or
[www.fumcbelmont.org/
floodbuckets](http://www.fumcbelmont.org/floodbuckets)



DROP YOUR DRAWERS

Underwear drive for
Rice and Beans



Oct. 4-
Nov. 1



We are collecting new briefs for
Rice and Beans Ministry. The need
is for sizes 5, 6, or 7 women's briefs
and all sizes of sports/wireless
bras. Men prefer M, L, or XL boxers.

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
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