

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BELMONT



SERVICE OF WORSHIP

September 7, 2025 – 11:00 a.m.

The Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost



Saint Peter by Marco Zoppo, 1468

.....
*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
P: 704-825-2106 // F: 704-825-2176
www.fumcbelmont.org



Welcome to worship at First United Methodist Church of Belmont! Today we begin a new series, **Hope Rising**, as we turn together to the letters of 1 and 2 Peter. Written to scattered and anxious Christians in an uncertain world, these letters remind us from the very beginning who we are and who we are becoming. In today's reading we hear Peter's opening blessing: in Christ we have been given a living hope, an inheritance that is "imperishable, undefiled, and unfading." Nothing—no trial, no doubt, no suffering—can take it away. This hope enlivens us, sustains us, shapes us, and calls us to joyful obedience and faithful living.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAISE AND PRAYER

PRELUDE

"Fairest Lord Jesus"

arr. Douglas E. Wagner

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Doreen Collins

Sing to the Lord a new song, for God has done marvelous things.

God's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.

The Lord is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Though trials may come, God's promises will not fade.

This is the day the Lord has made!

We will rejoice and be glad in it, for hope is rising in the presence of Christ.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN NO. 66

"Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, you promise us a living hope, yet we confess how easily we settle for despair. You offer us an inheritance that cannot fade, yet we chase after treasures that perish. In times of trial, we doubt your presence; in seasons of suffering, we wonder if we still belong. Forgive us, Lord. Remind us again that we are your children—chosen, included, and beloved. Renew in us the joy of your salvation, that our lives may bear witness to the hope we have in Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. 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

1 Peter 1:3-9

Alice Farris

SERMON

The Rev. George Ragsdale

SILENT REFLECTION

RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH No. 881

The Apostles' Creed

INVITATION TO PRAYER

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

Ken Medema

***Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.***

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

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

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GIVING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory

"Hope is Near"

Abby Lockaby

Even in the desert, rain will fall.
Graceful showers, blessing one and all;
pouring from the heavens, drenching arid ground.
Even in the desert, rain will fall.
Child of God, lose your fear,
through the drought, Hope is near.
Even in the darkness, light will shine,
Tracing out the path of love's design.
Gleaming in the shadows, streaming through the veil.
Even in the darkness, light still shines.
My Hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Jennifer Martin, flute

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

*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!***

TAKING THE BREAD AND CUP

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (Hymnal No. 17-18)

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

*BREAKING THE BREAD

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

"Here is Love"

arr. Molly Ijames

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EXTENDING THE TABLE

This morning, lay communion servers come forward to receive consecrated bread and juice from worship to share with homebound members who cannot be present today. We pray for them, remembering God's grace unites us as one within Christ's holy church. If you are aware of someone who would like to receive but cannot be present, speak with Pastor George after service.

GOING FORTH AS WITNESSES TO THE WORLD

*BENEDICTION

*RECESSIONAL HYMN NO. 178

"Hope of the World"

*POSTLUDE

"When I Can Read My Title Clear"

arr. Douglas E. Wagner

**Those who are able please stand.*

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 and stages of life. 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!

Today's Bulletin Cover features *Saint Peter*, painted by the Italian artist Marco Zoppo around 1468 and now in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Peter is almost always shown with keys because of Jesus' words in Matthew 16: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The keys symbolize not only authority, but also the assurance of God's faithfulness in Christ. Through him, the way to the kingdom of heaven is opened, and God's promises are held secure. As Peter's own letter reminds us, we are given a living hope and an inheritance that cannot fade—a gift held safe in God's keeping, and a source of strength for our faith today.

Prayer after each worship service is available in the prayer room off of the Narthex. Our Congregational Care Ministers and retired clergy are available to pray with you.



SAVE THE DATE

BLOOD DRIVE

Sunday, September 14 | 10 - 2

SIGNUP @
ONEBLOOD.ORG/DONATE
(USE CODE 77697)

ALL DONORS WILL RECEIVE A \$20 EGIFT CARD, FREE T-SHIRT AND WELLNESS CHECK



 **SAFER SANCTUARIES**
Nurturing Trust within Faith Communities

All persons leading our children or youth are required to attend a Safe Sanctuaries training. We are committed to providing a safe environment for all in our ministries. Our next training is:

September 21, 10am
Carpenter Hall Classroom

Email jennifere@fumbelmont.org to register.

GATHERINGS FOR ADULTS

Sunday School

Disciple: If you are wondering what we teach the youth in confirmation classes visit the Disciple class. They will talk about essential lessons of the Christian faith and Methodism.

Route 66: *"What's God Up To: Bible Stories Through New Eyes."* by A.J. Levine

Salt & Light Fellowship: A place to have real conversations and build relationships.

Wanderers: *"Twelve Extraordinary Women"* by John MacArthur



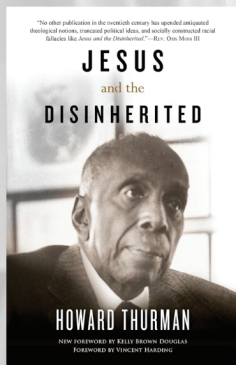
STORIES TO LIVE

EXPLORING SPIRITUAL MEMOIRS

Monthly on Sundays with Pastor George
Beginning Today

Email Pastor George to sign up today!

Reading Women – a book group for women who like to read and discuss a wide variety of topics that make us think and enlarge our world! We begin the year on Monday, September 15 at 7 pm on Zoom with **Happy Land** by Dolan Perkins-Valdez. We will then meet on Zoom the second Tuesday of each month in October through May. For more information, contact Ellen at ellen@fumcbelmont.org



Fall Adult Small Group

Six week study
Beginning September 17 or 18
Two classes offered:
Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday at 11 a.m.

Hatred does not empower--it decays. Only through self-love and love of one another can God's justice prevail.

Sign up at fumcbelmont.org/signup



Experience the thrill of *Little Shop of Horrors*

A PLANT'S WILD ADVENTURE

A thrilling show with laughter, love,
and a quirky plant!

Music directed by our own Minister
of Worship and Arts, Ellen Robison

Contact Doreen for tickets doreen@fumcbelmont.org

**AT
THEATRE
CHARLOTTE**

Sunday
September 28
at 2:30 pm
Tickets \$34. each

PRIMETIMERS EVENT!

All "seniors"
and youth are
invited to
Connect

Youth-Full Night



Supper, Bingo, & intergenerational
small group Bible study

October 12

**5:30-7:30
in
Carpenter
Hall**



GATHERINGS FOR CHILDREN

Today, 5:30-7:30 Crossroads, a special group for 4th-5th graders, kicks off in the Old Fellowship Hall. We will play games, talk Bible, eat supper and complete a service project for the Society of Saint Andrew.

September 17, 5:30-6:00 First kids ages 4-5th grade are invited to join Alleluia Choir. Email ellen@fumcbelmont.org to join.

September 17, 6:00-7:30 First Kids are invited to our Piece of Cake Project. We'll eat supper together and assemble birthday cake kits for Catherine's House. Visit www.fumcbelmont.org/kids for more details.

GATHERINGS FOR YOUTH

Engage Sunday School - All youth are invited each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Youth House. Currently we are studying how Jesus' presence is found in movies, tv, and games. Beginning September 21 we will begin a new study called "Welcome All." We will read the Old and New Testament as we explore our own idea of welcoming all and displaying the spirit of Christ in our everyday lives.

Today - 5:30-7:30 - All youth are invited to Connect tonight, where we will begin a small group Bible study centered around HOPE. Youth will also receive their new t-shirt and prayer bookmark.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE AND SERVE

For the entire month of September, the youth group is collecting the following items for donation: spray cheese, unsweetened apple sauce, canned pumpkin, low sodium chicken broth, and soft dog treats. We are collecting on September 7, 14, 21, 28, and at the Blessing of the Animals event on October 5 at 5 pm. We will have a bin in the narthex.



Feed the HOUSE

Help the families in residence at Catherine's House by dropping off a simple meal on September 22, or October 13

www.fumcbelmont.org/signup

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday, September 7

- 8:30 a.m. Worship
- 9:15 a.m. Fellowship Breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:00 a.m. Confirmation Parent Meeting
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 5:30 p.m. Connect
- 5:30 p.m. Crossroads
- 6:00 p.m. Stories to Live Small Group

Monday, September 8

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 6:30 p.m. Service & Missions Mtg

Tuesday, September 9

Wednesday, September 10

Thursday, September 11

- 11:45 a.m. Community Cafe'

Friday, September 12

Saturday, September 13

Sunday, September 14

- 8:30 a.m. Worship
- 9:15 a.m. Fellowship Breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:00 a.m. OneBlood Blood Drive
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 5:30 p.m. Connect

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

The family of Cathy Hansen, Jeff Hansen's mother, who passed away
Annie Smith (Shanda Fangman's six year old niece)
Janet Matijkwi (Judy Kelty)
Brook Rowland (Becky and Tom Fortenberry's daughter)
Amy (Lewis) Dominov and her parents Barry and Roberta after the death of her brother Peter
Nicole and Greg Stanforth
Ginger Feimster
The family of Paul Wallace, Judy Harris' brother, who passed away
Halo Wilson
Adam Lowrance
Trevis and Adrian Lunsford
The family of Humpy Wheeler, Angie Wheeler's brother, who passed away
Anne Haxton, Dottie Moore's mother
Doug Moody
The Family of Paul Kitchens upon his death (Dawn Finn's uncle)
Marshall Stowe, brother of Sally Bashant and Wes Stowe
Murphy Clark and family
For our ZOE communities in Rwanda, especially:
Shemeya 16, head of household, and siblings,
Clarisse 14 and Didier 10

*You can submit prayer requests to
prayers@fumcbelmont.org*

Prayers remain on this list for 4 weeks. If your loved one needs continued prayers, please resubmit a new request.

k Ways to Give at FUMC Belmont k

Online – Visit fumcbelmont.org/online-giving to give securely anytime.

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

In Person – Drop your gift in the secure Drop Box outside the church office, available 7 days a week.



ZOE



not-so-silent

AUCTION **Breakfast**

Sunday, October 26, 2025

TIME: during Sunday breakfast and Sunday School

TICKETS ARE FREE ALL AGES WELCOME NURSERY AVAILABLE

GET READY! BIDDING STARTS OCTOBER 5th

Silent auction baskets will be in the narthex for

3 consecutive weeks prior to the auction

Beach Condos Lake House Family Fun Cosmetics Artwork

Bidding on silent auction baskets will be final on October 19 at 12:30 PM

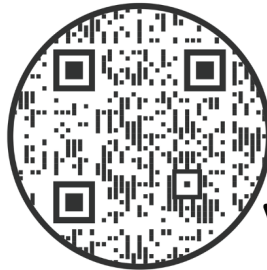
Live Auction Items will be auctioned at breakfast October 26th

HELP

NEEDED!

Want to volunteer?
email Kristen Surratt

kristensurratt@gmail.com



Want to
DONATE?
amazon list



OUR STAFF

Carole Bertino | Administrative Assistant | carole@fumcbelmont.org

Doreen Collins | Director of Adult Discipleship | doreen@fumcbelmont.org

Jennifer Martin | Director of Children's Ministry | jennifer@fumcbelmont.org

Quanna McAlister | Director of Youth Ministries | quanna@fumcbelmont.org

Boyce O'Tuel | Director of the Child Development Center | boyce@fumcbelmont.org

George Ragsdale | Senior Pastor | george@fumcbelmont.org

Ellen Robison | Minister of Worship and the Arts | ellen@fumcbelmont.org

Mark Sutton | Business Administrator | mark@fumcbelmont.org