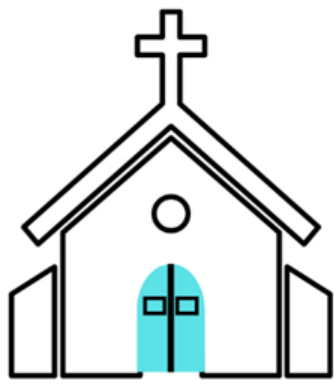
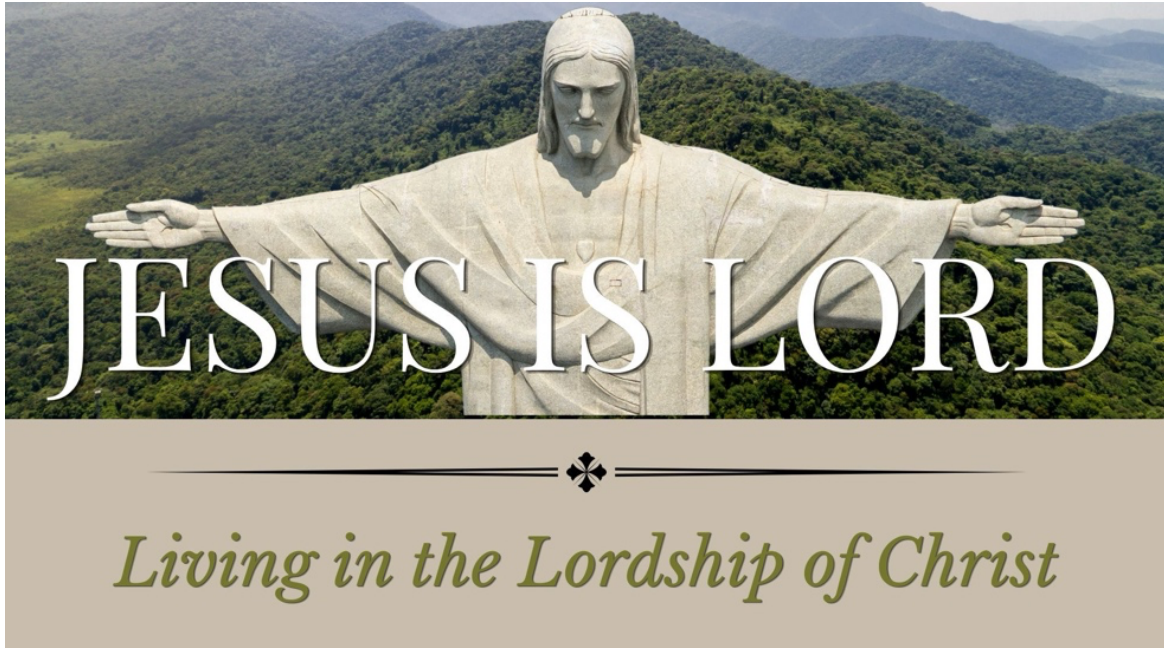




FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
GULFPORT
- the church with the teal doors -



August 30th, 2026
11:15 am • Sanctuary & Online

CHURCH OFFICE

2728 53rd St S • Gulfport, FL 33707
(727) 321-3620 • fumcgulfport.org

Monday 9 am – 1 pm & Wednesday 1 pm – 5 pm
The pastors are available by appointment

Your Pastoral Team

Rev. Erick Ashley – erick@spconnection.org
Rev. Tracie Ashley – tracie@spconnection.org
Rev. Sue Garcia – sue@spconnection.org

Administrative Assistant – Patti Marshall – patti@spconnection.org
Director of Music – Celinda Bailey – baileyc1@mac.com
Sophie's Attic Manager – Patti Borland | Streaming Tech – Max Turner

Bishop of the Florida Annual Conference – Rev. Tom Berlin
Gulf Central District Superintendent – Rev. Emily Hotho

WELCOME

Welcome to First United Methodist Church of Gulfport. Each and every week we look forward to this time to gather as a community. We are glad YOU are here today with us!

You can use this bulletin to help lead through worship and throughout the week. We truly hope you enjoy your time here this morning and hope you return soon.

Some logistics you may find helpful:

- Worship runs about an hour, sometimes a bit shorter & sometimes a bit longer.
- Grab a nametag from the tables at the entrances. If you are a guest, our Connect Team will happily make one for you.
- Restrooms are in the courtyard, near the Fellowship Hall entrance.
- Prayer Cards are available in the pew in front of you.
- Please place your prayer card in the offering plate. It is our joy and privilege to be praying with and for you.
- We have several ways you can give financially to support the mission of FUMC Gulfport.
 1. Place cash/check in the offering plate/boxes or mail to the church.
 2. Text any amount to (727) 604-7325.
 3. Visit fumcgulfport.org/pages/give.
 4. Use your bank's bill payer system.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

UMH: United Methodist Hymnal • TFWS: The Faith We Sing

**Please stand as you are able*

WE GATHER

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship*

Hymn* | *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* – UMH 384

WE PROCLAIM

Affirmation of Faith* | *The Apostles' Creed* – UMH 881

Gloria Patri* | *Glory Be To The Father* – UMH 70

Pastoral Prayer

Passing of the Peace*

Hymn* | *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* – UMH 298

Prayer For Illumination

Scripture Reading | | *1 John 4:7-14* CEB

Choral Response | *He Is Lord* – UMH 177

Message | *Lord Of Love* – Rev. Tracie Ashley

WE RESPOND

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Music

Doxology* | *Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow* – UMH 95

Offertory Prayer*

WE GO OUT

Hymn* | *Lord, I Want To Be A Christian* – UMH 402

Benediction*

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

It's Not Too Late to Join a GROW Group! Come GROW in faith together as we study Bishop Tom Berlin's *Jesus Is Lord*. Jump in this week—we'd love to have you!

- **Clearview:** Sun. 10:45 am | Mon. 6:45 pm
- **First Gulfport:** Sun. 10 am | Mon. 6:30 pm
- **St. Luke's:** Sun. 10 am | Tues. 5:30 pm
- **Lakewood:** Tues. 10:30 am

Town Hall Feedback - Thank you to everyone who attended last week's Town Hall! Your feedback is valuable to us as we seek to strengthen and grow our church and its ministries.

If you haven't already, please return your feedback form in the baskets at either sanctuary door. If you weren't able to attend but would like to offer feedback, there are extra forms available, too. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us!

Wednesday Nights Are Back—with a New Name! Wednesday Night Dinner is now COMMUNITY DINNER! Join us starting this Wednesday (Sept 2) at 6 pm for Dinner, Devotion, & Community.

We'll kick things off with a Potluck Dinner, so bring a favorite dish to share and come hungry. Enjoy good food, reconnect with friends, meet someone new, and grow together in faith. There's a place for you at the table!

Connect One. Drop One. Since beginning our Connect One. Drop One. campaign on April 19, we've dropped 61 blue stones into our jars; that's 61 invitations in 19 weeks, or just over 3 people invited each week.

Now, let's see if we can double it! Who can you invite this week? Invite someone to worship, Sunday School, a GROW Group, or another church event. Each time you extend an invitation, drop a blue stone in the jar.

Together, we're sharing Christ's love; one conversation, one invitation, and one person at a time.

Inviting Can Be Simple! Inviting someone to church doesn't have to feel awkward. Simply say, "Would you like to come with me?" Invite a friend to worship, dinner, a GROW Group, or another church event; and offer to meet them or save them a seat.

Here are a few more ideas:

- "I really enjoy my church. Would you like to come with me Sunday? I'll save you a seat."
- "Our church has a Community Dinner Wednesday night. Want to come eat with me?"
- "I'm doing this group at church that's been really interesting. You'd be welcome to come with me."
- "My church is doing something this weekend that I think you'd really enjoy. Want to go together?"
- "Have you found a church yet? You're always welcome to come with me."
- "Our church has been a really supportive community for me. If you ever want to come, I'd be glad to go with you."
- "We've got a really welcoming group of people at our church. I think you'd fit right in."
- "What are you doing Sunday morning? Come to church with me, and we can grab lunch afterward."
- "I know church may or may not be your thing, but you're always welcome to come with me sometime."

GULFPORT WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

- Jesus is Lord Grow Group with The Blackmans, 10 am – Room 7
- Traditional Worship, 11:15 am – Sanctuary & Online

MONDAY, AUGUST 31

- Church Office Open 9 am – 1 pm
- Jesus is Lord Grow Group with Pastor Tracie, 6:30 pm – Fellowship Hall

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

- Sophie’s Attic, 9 am – 12 pm

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

- Church Office Open, 1-5 pm
- Community Dinner, 6 pm – Fellowship Hall

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

- Sophie’s Attic, 9 am – 12 pm
- Narcotics Anonymous, 8 pm – Room 7

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

- Sophie’s Attic, 9 am - 12 pm
- Alcoholics Anonymous (The Sisterhood), 6 pm – FH

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

- Sophie’s Attic, 9 am – 12 pm

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

- Jesus is Lord Grow Group with The Blackmans, 10 am – Room 7
- Traditional Worship, 11:15 am – Sanctuary & Online

SOUTH PINELLAS CONNECTION UPCOMING DATES

Aug 30	5 th Sunday Offering for Residing Hope	11:15 am	ALL
Sept 1	Virtual Fall Laity Gathering via ZOOM	10 am	ALL
Sept 5	United Methodist Men's Breakfast	8 am	SL
Sept 8	United Women in Faith Meeting & Study	10 am	SL
Sept 13	Campus Ministry Sunday	-	ALL
Sept 14-15	Rooted: Training for Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Warren Willis Camp & Conference Center	-	ALL
Sept 16	United Women in Faith Luncheon	12 pm	FG

KEY

Clearview (CV)	First Gulfport (FG)	Lakewood (LW)	St. Luke's (SL)
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STEWARDSHIP OF PRESENCE & GIFTS

Week of August 23		2026 Year To Date	
Worship	37	Worship (avg)	38
Online Worship	16	Online (avg)	15
Giving Received	\$982.80	Giving Received	\$24,705.48
Giving Needed	\$1,230.77	Giving Needed	\$41,846.18
Surplus/Loss	-\$247.97	Surplus/Loss	-\$17,140.70

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

COMPLETE A PRAYER CARD FROM THE PEW AND PLACE IT IN THE OFFERING PLATE

Gulfport: Pastor Erick

Gulfport Ongoing: Alice Johnson, Allison (Cindy & Per Lee’s granddaughter), Willie

Clearview: My companion, Carl Gunn, has been diagnosed with Dementia (Deborah Deacon), A lady from Cambodia, that I work with, her family is homeless, pray that the family of six find a home soon (Dawn Gibson); Anver Suleman, ongoing health issues (Cassie Berg); My friend Theresa and her husband Scott, as they navigate this difficult time after his father passed (Erick Pierce); Pastor Erick

Clearview Ongoing: Pamela Arnold, Cassie Berg, Eileen Clark, Carol Comerford, Kathy Davis, Stephen Davis, Trevor Davis, Tim Deacon, Genevieve DeHoog, John Goude, Theresa Goude, Amy Gordon, Mary Grauv, Robert “Skip” Hanshe, Ruth Hockersmith, DeeDee Hornby, Marc Jones, Ruth Katzen, Nelson Kimber, Charlotte Klotzbach, Ian Kolaczyk, Carolyn McGovern, Sabrina Mull, Kirstin Owens, Jim Patterson, Scott Pierce, Tiffany R, Tammi Radcliff, George Roth, Sr., Logan Sullivan, Crystal, Hilary, Kelly, Lydi, Max, Blayne, Amber, George, Steve & Alba, Diana

Lakewood: Pastor Erick

Lakewood Ongoing: Joan and family, Otha Hudson (Josephine’s husband), Family of Brian L.

St. Luke’s: Pastor Erick; Cliff Flowers to find a home

St. Luke's Ongoing: Annalise, Bev Becker, Charlie BeVille, Christine Brockway, Madison Brown, Fred Bunnell, Jr., Melissa Celurale, Lisa Duffy, Judith Fain, Cheryl Fennell, Larry Frye, Eric Harvey, Trudy James, The Lieber family, The Leonard Family, Geraldine Parsons, Buck & Sunny Roberts, Harriett Swartzmiller, Joelle Wells, Justin Wells, Jennifer, JJ

South Pinellas Active-Duty Military: Matthew Burdewick, Seth Crist, Will Dudley, Casey Linde-Powers

THIS WEEK'S "AT HOME" DEVOTIONAL

What Happens When Jesus Becomes Your Lord: Romans 6:6–11

GATHERING

Light a candle to remind yourselves that Christ is making us new and leading us from old patterns into a life shaped by God’s love.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for calling us your beloved children and inviting us into new life. Give us the courage to see our past honestly, the wisdom to understand who we are today, and the hope for the people you are forming us to become. Help us say no to habits that harm and yes to your way of love. By your Spirit, make our inner lives and outward actions more like yours. Amen.

CARING CONVERSATION - Take a few moments to check in with one another.

Highs & Lows

- What is one thing that brought you joy this week?
- Where have you noticed growth or positive change in your life?

THINKING ABOUT THE UPCOMING WEEK’S SCRIPTURE

Consider yourselves dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus. — Romans 6:11

Jesus loves us as we are, but his love does not leave us unchanged. Following him means allowing old patterns to die so that a new life of freedom, joy, truth, and love can grow within us.

- What part of your old way of life might Jesus be asking you to release?
- Why is honest self-examination difficult—and how can love make it safer?
- Is your life balanced between doing and simply being with God and others?
- Who do you hope to become as Christ continues to shape your life?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - As you read this week, ask: **How does Christ lead us from our old life into new life?**

DAY	READING	THEME
Sunday	1 John 4:7–18	<i>Loved without Fear</i>
Monday	Mark 8:34–37	<i>Say No to the Old Life</i>
Tuesday	Psalms 139:1–18, 23–24	<i>See Yourself Honestly</i>
Wednesday	Deuteronomy 25:13–16	<i>One Honest Measure</i>
Thursday	Matthew 12:33–37	<i>The Heart Shapes the Fruit</i>
Friday	2 Corinthians 5:14–21	<i>A New Creation in Christ</i>
Saturday	Philippians 3:10–14	<i>Press toward What Lies Ahead</i>
Sunday	Romans 6:6–11	<i>Alive to God in Christ</i>

If your household includes children, feel free to use a children’s Bible or summarize the readings in simple language.

DEVOTIONAL

You are one of God’s favorite children—and so is everyone around you. That belovedness is not a reason for pride; it is the secure foundation from which transformation begins. Because Christ holds us in love, we can face the truth about ourselves without being trapped in shame.

Jesus says that those who follow him must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow. Paul describes this as the death of our old self so that we may become alive to God. Some habits, attitudes, and priorities must die: anger that wounds, contempt for others, dishonesty, selfishness, the misuse of power, and our constant need to control.

This change begins by looking honestly at the past. We often use one measure for ourselves and another for everyone else, excusing our behavior while judging theirs. A fearless moral inventory helps us see what we have done, listen to those we have affected, and invite Christ's healing into places we once defended or ignored.

Transformation also asks us to notice who we are now. Jesus shapes both our being and our doing. He cultivates patience within us so that kindness can flow from us. He quiets anxiety so that courage can grow. What fills the heart eventually becomes visible in our words and actions.

Christ does not erase the gifts, personality, or holy 'weirdness' that make you uniquely you. He heals what harms and strengthens what brings good to others. The Spirit works through your gifts so that your life can contribute something beautiful to the world.

Finally, we look toward the future. Like Paul, we have not already reached the goal, but we press on. When Jesus becomes our Lord, the past can be healed, the present becomes intentional, and the future opens with hope. We become distinct without becoming superior—people alive in Christ who seek the joy and flourishing of others.

PRAY TOGETHER

Invite each person to name one old habit to release and one Christlike quality they hope will grow. Then pray together:

Loving Jesus, thank you for knowing us completely and loving us still. Give us courage to face the past without excuses or shame. Show us what needs to die, heal what has been wounded, and form your love within us. Help us become patient, truthful, courageous, and compassionate. Lead us toward the future you desire for us, alive to God and ready to bless others. Amen.

MEALTIME PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you for this food and for everyone gathered here. Nourish us with your love, free us from what harms, and help us grow into the people you created us to be. Amen.

SERVICE CHALLENGE - *This is one way we share God's love with the world.*

Set aside fifteen quiet minutes this week for a prayerful inventory. Ask: What from my past needs Christ's healing? What is shaping my heart today? Who is Jesus calling me to become? Write one honest answer and take one small, concrete step toward new life.

CLOSING & BLESSING

Extinguish your candle as a reminder that the old life does not have the final word; in Christ, we are alive to God and still being made new.

With permission, make the sign of the cross on one another's hands or foreheads and say: **You are God's beloved child. Let the old life go, come alive in Christ, and press on toward who God is calling you to become.**