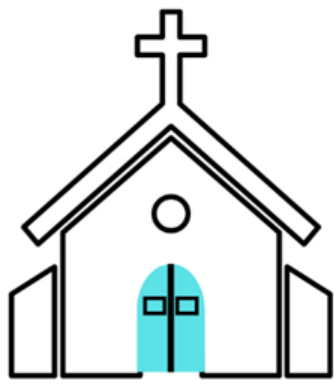
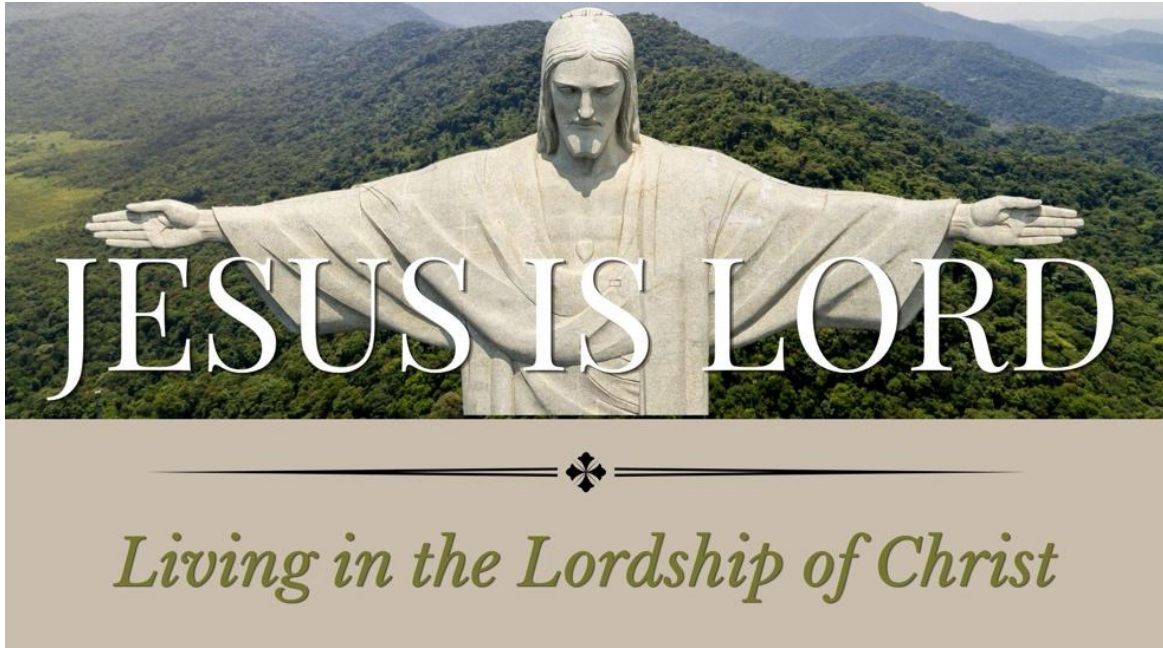




FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

GULFPORT

- the church with the teal doors -



September 20th, 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* | *The Gift of Love* – UMH 408

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* | *We Are The Church* – UMH 558

Prayer For Illumination

Scripture Reading | *Ephesians 3: 14-19* CEB

Choral Response | *He Is Lord* – UMH 177

Message | *Compassion* – 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* | *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* – TFWS 2223

Benediction*



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Is God Calling You to Lead? We’re beginning to identify leaders for 2027. If you’d like to become more involved in our church’s leadership and be considered, please let one of the pastors know as we prayerfully discern together.

Join the AV-Tech SERVE Team - Help with sound, slides, or livestreaming on Sunday mornings. No experience needed; we’ll provide all the training, and it’s easier than you think! Sign-up sheets are available today, or talk with a pastor to learn more.

Leadership Board Meeting – Our next Leadership Board meeting is Thursday, September 24 at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to attend as we discuss the ongoing life, ministry, and future of our church. We hope you’ll join us!

Connect One. Drop One - Who can you invite this week? Invite someone to worship, Sunday School, a GROW Group, or another church event—and drop a blue stone in the jar. Together, we’re sharing Christ’s love, one invitation at a time!

There’s a Place for You at the Table! Join us every Wednesday at 6 pm for Community Dinner, an evening of good food, meaningful conversation, and a little time with Jesus. Come as you are, bring a friend, and join the community!

Here Comes the Pumpkin Patch! The 29th year of the Clearview Pumpkin Patch is almost here, and we need YOU to help make it happen! Plenty of opportunities to serve, meet our neighbors, and be part of this beloved community tradition.

Sign up for a shift on our website (www.clearviewumc.org). Grab a shift—or more—and help us make year 29 a great one!

SOUTH PINELLAS CONNECTION UPCOMING DATES

Sept 23-29	Pastors Erick & Tracie on Vacation in Vermont	-	-
Sept 27	FREE Community Dinner	5-6:30 pm	CV
Sept 30-Oct 2	Emotionally Healthy Leadership Conf In New York City (Pastors Erick & Tracie)	-	-
Oct 3	United Methodist Men's Breakfast	8 am	SL
Oct 3	Pumpkin Patch Tent Set Up	8 am	CV
Oct 9	Pumpkin Patch Decorating	5:30-8:30 pm	CV
Oct 10	Pumpkin Unloading & Opening Day	8 am	CV

KEY

Clearview (CV)	First Gulfport (FG)	Lakewood (LW)	St. Luke's (SL)
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GULFPORT WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

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

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

- Church Office Open – 9 am – 1 pm
- Jesus is Lord Grow Group with Pastor Tracie, 10 am – Room 7
- Suncoast Masterworks Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm - Sanctuary

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

- Sophie’s Attic, 9 am – 12 pm

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

- Church Office Open, 1-5 pm
- Community Dinner, 6 pm – Fellowship Hall
- Suncoast Masterworks Orchestra Rehearsal, 7 pm - Sanctuary

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

- Narcotics Anonymous, 8 pm – Room 7
- Leadership Board Meeting, 6:30 pm – Fellowship Hall

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

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

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

- Sophie’s Attic, 9 am – 12 pm

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

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

STEWARDSHIP OF PRESENCE & GIFTS

Week of Sept 13		2026 Year To Date	
Worship	38	Worship (avg)	38
Online Worship	19	Online (avg)	15
Giving Received	\$444.80	Giving Received	\$27,903.08
Giving Needed	\$1,230.77	Giving Needed	\$45,538.49
Surplus/Loss	-\$785.97	Surplus/Loss	-\$17,635.41

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

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

Gulfport: Jean Blackman, recovering from surgery.

Gulfport Ongoing: Alice Johnson, Valerie Schmidt, Allison (Cindy & Per Lee's granddaughter), Debbie S, George (Jack Wamhoff's son), Mary & Bill; Pam & Jeff, Willie

Clearview: My Mamaw recovers fully and well from her recent surgery to fix hearing loss; Aunt Teresa, who recently fell and is awaiting news on whether her ankle will need surgery for the break (Ericka Pierce); Rycky Holliman has been in the hospital

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, Carl Gunn, Robert "Skip" Hanshe, Ruth Hockersmith, DeeDee Hornby, Letha & Marc Jones, Ruth Katzen, Nelson Kimber, Charlotte Klotzbach, Ian Kolaczyk, Carolyn McGovern, Sabrina Mull, Kirstin Owens, Jim Patterson, Scott Pierce, Tiffany R, Tammi Radcliff, Donna Robertson, George Roth, Sr., Linda Stanley, Anver Suleman, Logan Sullivan, Crystal, Eldridge Jr, Hilary, Kelly, Lydi, Max, Blayne, Amber, George, Rollie, Steve & Alba, Diana, Theresa & Scott

Lakewood: No requests received

Lakewood Ongoing: Joan and family, Otha Hudson (Josephine's husband), Family of Brian L., The family of JoAnn & Richard Knight, Pastor Sue's Aunt Sharon

St. Luke's: Nina Hartly on the passing of her son, Mark; Our Son-in-law, Gary Antonellis (Buck & Sunny Roberts)

St. Luke's Ongoing: Bev , Lisa, Trent, Mike, LouAnn Jacob & Jess Becker, Christine Brockway, Madison Brown, Fred Bunnell, Jr., Melissa Celurale, Jeannine Colbert, Judith Fain, Cheryl Fennell, Cliff Flowers, Larry Frye, Marian Galloway, Eric Harvey, Trudy James, The Leonard Family, Geraldine Parsons, Buck & Sunny Roberts, Harriett Swartzmiller, Joelle Wells, Justin Wells, Annalise, Audrey, Ellie, Jennifer, JJ,

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

THIS WEEK'S "AT HOME" DEVOTIONAL

Justice: Luke 4:16–21

GATHERING

Light a candle to remind yourselves that Jesus brings good news, freedom, healing, and hope—and calls us to join his work of justice.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

God of justice and mercy, open our eyes to suffering and our hearts to your vision for the world. Free us from indifference, prejudice, and the desire to protect only ourselves. Teach us to listen humbly, speak truthfully, and act courageously. Through the Holy Spirit, make us partners in the liberating work of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

- 1. What is one thing that brought you joy this week?
- 2. Where have you seen someone treated fairly—or unfairly—this week?

THINKING ABOUT THE UPCOMING WEEK’S SCRIPTURE

In his hometown synagogue, Jesus reads Isaiah’s promise of good news, freedom, sight, and liberation, then declares that this Scripture is being fulfilled. Justice is not separate from Jesus’ mission. It is God’s healing work that confronts what harms people and seeks their flourishing.

- 3. What does this passage reveal about the mission of Jesus?
- 4. Where do you see people burdened, excluded, or denied what they need to flourish?
- 5. Why must the work of justice include listening and learning?
- 6. What is one faithful action you can take without making another person your enemy?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - As you read this week, ask: **How does God call us to seek justice, practice mercy, and repair what is broken?**

DAY	READING	THEME
Sunday	Luke 7:11–17	<i>Compassion That Acts</i>
Monday	Isaiah 1:16–17	<i>Learn to Do Right</i>
Tuesday	Psalms 146:5–10	<i>God Upholds the Vulnerable</i>
Wednesday	Isaiah 58:6–12	<i>Worship That Repairs</i>
Thursday	Micah 6:6–8	<i>Do Justice and Love Mercy</i>
Friday	Matthew 25:31–40	<i>Christ among the Vulnerable</i>
Saturday	James 2:1–9, 14–17	<i>Faith without Favoritism</i>
Sunday	Luke 4:16–21	<i>Jesus’ Mission of Justice</i>

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

DEVOTIONAL

The world is filled with injustice: hunger beside abundance, unequal treatment, violence, and systems that place heavy burdens on some people. Yet Scripture is clear that God sees those who suffer and calls God’s people to seek justice.

Justice is more than individual kindness. Compassion responds to immediate pain; justice also asks why the harm keeps happening and what must change. It seeks healing, fairness, accountability, and the flourishing of every neighbor.

Jesus places this work at the heart of his mission. In Luke 4, he announces good news for the poor, freedom for prisoners, sight for the blind, and liberation for the oppressed. His ministry then makes those words visible as he heals, welcomes outsiders, confronts religious hypocrisy, and restores people to community.

The work of justice begins with listening and learning. We approach those most affected with humility, resist reducing people to labels, and examine how our choices may contribute to harm. We seek understanding and join others whose experience can guide wiser action.

Justice also requires perseverance. Problems shaped over many years rarely change quickly. We may become tired, discouraged, or tempted to treat opponents as enemies. Christ calls us to remain grounded in love—to tell the truth without contempt, pursue accountability without revenge, and work for the good of the whole community.

We cannot repair everything, but we can offer ourselves to God’s work. We can share resources, speak for those ignored, support fair practices, and join ministries addressing immediate needs and their causes. When Jesus is Lord, justice becomes a way we embody his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

PRAY TOGETHER

Invite each person to name an injustice that concerns them and one person or community from whom they need to learn. Then pray together:

God of justice, thank you for hearing the cries of your people. Forgive us when comfort, fear, or prejudice keeps us from responding. Teach us to listen before we speak, to seek truth without contempt, and to act with courage and humility. Show us how to repair harm, protect the vulnerable, and reflect the liberating love of Jesus. Amen.

MEALTIME PRAYER

God of abundance, thank you for this food and for everyone gathered here. Make us grateful, generous, and committed to a world in which every neighbor has what they need to flourish. Amen.

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

Choose one justice concern in your community. Listen to someone directly affected, learn from a trustworthy local organization, and take one concrete step through service, advocacy, generosity, or personal change.

CLOSING & BLESSING

Extinguish your candle as a reminder that Christ sends you to carry good news, freedom, healing, and hope into the world.

With permission, make the sign of the cross on one another’s hands or foreheads and say: **‘Go in the justice and mercy of Christ. Seek what is right, repair what is broken, and let God’s kingdom become visible through you.’**