

THE LINK



FAIRHOPE UMC'S MONTHLY JOURNAL

fully iconic



OCTOBER 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS:



WELCOME

- A Note from Pastor Michael

pg 3



CONNECT

- October & November At A Glance

pg 4



DISCIPLESHIP

- Adult Ministries
- Children's Ministries
- Caring Ministries
- Student Ministries
- Worship Ministries
- Missions Ministries
- Recreation Ministries

pg 7

pg 8-9

pg 10-11

pg 12

pg 13

pg 14-15

pg 16



ADMINISTRATIVE

- Committee Reports
- Budget Report - August

pg 19

pg 20



CELEBRATIONS

- New Faces, New Friends
- Memorials

pg 22

pg 22



GROW THE PROMISE

- Commitment Card
- Commitment Sunday Recap
- Building on the Promise: 2026 Calendar

pg 24

pg 25

pg 26-27

FROM PASTOR MICHAEL

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you.

- Philippians 4:8-9

When I die and my children reflect on all the fatherly wisdom I've handed down to them, they won't remember anything practical. They won't remember how I taught them to replace a spark plug or field dress a deer because I can't do the former and so far they've never cared about the latter (though Ian may still come around). The very few home improvement projects I've successfully executed came from things I learned on YouTube: I expect my kids will learn those things the same way. If Elsa's history repeats with the younger two, I probably *will* teach Evelyn and Ian to drive but that's about it.

But there is one lesson that I know they'll all carry with them, a little phrase I've said so often they may be tempted to engrave it on my tombstone: "all celebrity is fiction." This is my answer when they ask which side I'm on in the latest pop star feud. I repeat it to them when they tell me how happy they are for someone they've never met, and I say it with equal enthusiasm when they discover that some photogenic stranger is actually a personality nightmare. "Celebrity is fiction" doesn't mean that all celebrities are lying or don't do anything real. Famous singers make real songs; famous politicians make real laws with real consequences; TikTok stars really understand lighting and editing and the other real skills that make their videos addictive. When I tell my kids that "all celebrity is fiction" I only mean we should never believe we know someone we don't know.

The apostle Paul was not writing as a celebrity when he composed the letters that are included in the Bible. When Paul wrote to a church, he wrote to people he knew by experience, and who knew him in return. They didn't just know his opinions or beliefs, they knew how he lived his daily life because Paul had lived among them and pastored them. Paul was bold enough to say "do what you've seen me do," because he knew that these churches had not seen an edited or performative version of his life. They had seen the real thing.

Christians have always drawn a distinction between "idols" and "icons." Idols point to themselves; "icons" point beyond themselves and give their attention to God. Celebrity is a kind of idol, demanding our attention and doing everything to hold it.

Christian faith, like everything else in the world, has its own celebrity cultures—some offer more wisdom than others, but none of them are the thing itself. None of them are the daily experience of discipleship in a "community of character."

But thanks be to God, Christians have always had icons as well; those living saints who point beyond themselves and show us *real* life, in abundance. Throughout the month of October, we will be following the journeys of Paul, and we will be telling the stories of real life icons, some of whom belonged to this very church, so that we can see the kind of holiness that shines a light, rather than demanding the spotlight.

Whether it's our kids, our neighbors, our co-workers, or our enemies, every one of us can be *Fully Iconic*, in the life of someone else. Let's make sure they learn and receive and hear and notice from us the things that will show them the God of peace.

Michael

COMING SOON...

Weekly

Sundays

8:30am Traditional Worship
9:45am Sunday School
11am Traditional Worship
11am The Gathering Worship

Mondays

9:15am Walk & Talk with Jesus
10am Knit or Crochet
3pm Grief Support Group
5pm UPWARD BBall Practice

Tuesdays

9:30am Twelve Disciples Study
10am Epic of Eden: Ruth
5pm UPWARD BBall Practice
6pm Experiencing God
6pm Handbell Choir

Wednesdays

9am TJ's Food Ministry
10am Intercessory Prayer Life
1:30pm Dr. Ann's Bible Study
4:15pm Lighthouse Kids' Choir
5pm Wednesday Night Supper
6pm PIER Kids & SWIFT
6pm Salt Students
6pm Adult Choir
6pm Bible Studies

- Deep Dive Drop-In Study
- Companions in Christ

THURSDAYS

9am TJ's Food Ministry
5pm UPWARD BBall Practice

FRIDAYS

9:30am Reservation Nursery
11am - 1pm Community Cafe

October

OCT 6

9:30am MOMCO
6pm Stephen Ministry

OCT 7

9:30am Caregivers Support
5pm Scholarship Committee

OCT 12

9:45am Coffee with the Pastors

OCT 13

6:30pm Survivors of Suicide

OCT 14

10am New study begins

"Epic of Eden: Ruth"



6pm CHARGE CONFERENCE

OCT 15

6:30am fm3 Men's Breakfast

OCT 18

British Car Show

OCT 19

6:00pm Praise, Worship &
Prayer Service with AUC

OCT 20

10-11:30am Fall Birthday Celebration

5pm Upward BBall Practices Begin

6pm Stephen Ministry

OCT 21

6pm Anchored in Hope

OCT 21

8:30am Pickleball Tournament

OCT 26

9:45am Journeys of Paul Info Meeting

12pm Packing for Fall Deliveries

5pm Costa Rica Info Meeting

OCT 27

11am Prayer Ministry Meeting

6:30am Survivors of Suicide

OCT 28

6pm SPR Committee

OCT 29

5pm Wednesday Night Supper

6pm Trunk or Treat

Looking Ahead

NOV 2

All Saints Sunday

NOV 3

9:30am MOMCO

6pm Stephen Ministry

NOV 4

6pm Nominations Committee

NOV 10

6:30pm Survivors of Suicide

NOV 11

12:30pm Tough Dogs Support

1:30pm Chemo Care Bag

Nov 14

Preschool BBQ Fundraiser

Nov 17

6pm Stephen Ministry

Nov 18

Anchored in Hope

NOV 24

6:30pm Survivors of Suicide

Nov 25

12:30pm Tough Dogs Support

Nov 26-28

Church Office Closed -
Thanksgiving Holiday

Nov 27

11am - 1pm Thanksgiving Day
Community Lunch



SCAN THE QR CODE
FOR LOCATIONS,
DETAILS, AND
SIGNUPS





SAVE THE DATE FOR FAIRHOPE UMC'S

TRUNK

OR TREAT!



WHERE? GRASSY PARKING LOT

WHEN? OCTOBER 29



TIME? 5:00 PM DINNER | 5:30 - 7:00 PM TRUNK OR TREAT!

FOOD, GAMES & MORE!

FAIRHOPE UMC | 155 S SECTION ST | FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG



DISCIPLESHIP

ADULT MINISTRIES

Dr. Kristen Curtis Wright, Associate Pastor

☎ 251-928-1148 , ext. 261

✉ kristen.wright@fairhopeumc.org

One of the great truths of our faith is that God calls not just a few, but all of us. The Apostle Peter proclaims, “*You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*” (1 Peter 2:9, NRSV). This isn’t a verse reserved for pastors or church staff; it’s for every disciple of Jesus Christ. Every believer has been given the holy calling of worship and witness.

This means worship is never just something we attend; it is something we embody. The word liturgy itself comes from a Greek phrase meaning “the work of the people.” When we gather, worship is not meant to be a performance by a few up front; it is the offering of the whole church. When someone lifts a prayer, reads a psalm, or proclaims the Word aloud, they are exercising their God-given priesthood. And when the congregation responds, whether with an Amen, with song, or even with silent reverence, we together form a living sacrifice of praise to God.

One of the beautiful mysteries of the Gospel is that God equips ordinary people for extraordinary service. Scripture is full of examples: Moses who said he couldn’t speak well, Jeremiah who thought he was too young, Mary who was an unknown girl in Nazareth - all called, all used by God. Each new liturgist who steps forward in our services is a continuation of that story: ordinary people saying “yes” to God’s extraordinary call.

This summer at our worship planning retreat, we voiced a desire for more varied leadership in our services. I believe the Spirit planted that desire in us, and now we are seeing it come to life. In recent weeks, you may have noticed new voices guiding our worship. This is no small thing! It is a sign of God’s faithfulness and a reminder that the church is strongest when many hands and many voices join together in praise. As the old hymn says, “I am the church, you are the church, we are the church together! All who follow Jesus, all around the world, yes we’re the church together.”

With joy and gratitude, I celebrate those who have served—or will soon serve—as liturgists in our services:

- **Traditional Services:**

Emily Garner, Steve Christensen, Carolyn Kidd, Gene Lammers, Ann Pearson, Steve Pearson, Jan Pringle, Hackett Robertson, Katie Turner

- **Gathering Service:**

Miles Barnhardt, Sidney Carol, Emery Capstraw, Jennifer Myrick, Alicia Searcy

Their voices have enriched our worship, but even more, their willingness is a witness to the truth that worship belongs to the whole body of Christ. And maybe God is stirring in you the same call! If you feel a nudge to step into leadership, whether reading scripture, leading prayer, or serving in other ways, please let me know! We would love to find a place just for you.

Grace and peace,

Kristen



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Jenna Hood, *Director of Children's Ministries*

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Article submitted by Will Autrey, Children's Ministries Chair

With fall in the air and more comfortable temperatures outside, I am reminded that raising children to follow Christ is not limited to only church services or structured Bible lessons. True discipleship is lived out in daily life—woven into activities children already enjoy. Whether through sports, outdoor adventures, or quiet moments at home, everyday experiences become powerful opportunities to point children toward Jesus.

Jesus modeled this for us. While He preached sermons to the crowds, much of His instruction to the disciples happened during ordinary activities—walking along the road, fishing, eating meals, or simply spending time together. He showed that discipleship happens not only in formal settings but also in the flow of life. Parents and other caring adults can embrace this same model today.

Fall is a busy time for sports, a natural training ground. The field or court isn't just about learning skills; it's also about shaping character. When coaches, parents, or mentors guide children to treat others kindly, celebrate victories humbly, or respond to losses with grace, they are instilling lessons that reflect Christ's example.

Outdoor activities like camping and hiking create similar opportunities. The wonder of creation naturally points us to God. Sitting around a campfire or under a night sky, parents, grandparents, or leaders can remind children of Psalm 19: "The heavens declare the glory of God." Conversations like these weave eternal truths into everyday moments.

Quiet times also provide space for discipleship. Reading Scripture before bed, offering prayers at dinner, or talking through a hard day models reliance on God. These practices don't need to be elaborate. Simply being consistent—showing up at games, listening at bedtime, or being present after a long day—demonstrates the steady love of Christ. Faith is often caught more than taught, and children notice when adults choose to be there.

Discipling children is the job of the entire body of Christ working together—parents, mentors, teachers, and church family—to surround children with living examples of faith. A coach's encouragement, a grandparent's prayer, or a parent's quiet example may seem small, yet each builds confidence and plants seeds of faith. When discipleship is woven into sports, activities, quiet moments, and daily presence, children see that following Jesus is not just something we do occasionally, but who we are every day.

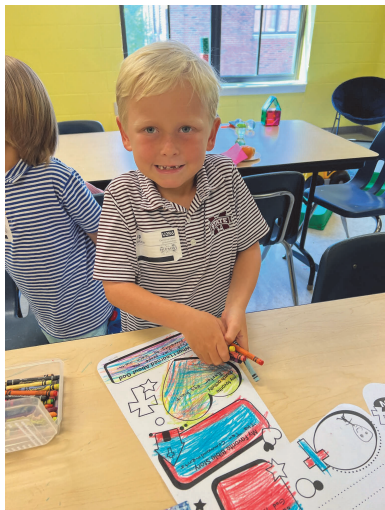
The fall season is always a busy and exciting time in Children's Ministry. Alongside regular Sunday morning and Wednesday night programming, there are special opportunities for families to connect, grow, and celebrate together. Each event is designed not only for fun, but also to point children, families, and our community toward the joy of Christ.

On **Wednesday, October 29**, our church will host Trunk or Treat. This community-wide event is a fun evening of costumes, candy, and fellowship with friends and neighbors. It isn't just for the small kids. Children of all ages (and even us "kids" with white hair!) can enjoy decorated trunks, games, and laughter—all while shining the light of Christ to our community.

As we move into Christmas, we look forward to one of our most beloved traditions: Breakfast at the Manger on Saturday, December 6. This event is also for the entire church family and community, not just those with young children. It's a wonderful way to kick off the season. Our fm³(our men's ministry) will prepare a delicious pancake breakfast, and there will be interactive activities along with reflection on the true meaning of Christmas—the birth of Jesus Christ. We'll also enjoy a special reading of the Christmas story by a familiar guest in a red suit and white beard.

While these special gatherings are meaningful, I also want to thank those who show up faithfully every week. I am especially grateful for our Wednesday night leaders. Like a squeaky wheel, it's easy to notice when something isn't working, but when things run smoothly, they can be taken for granted. Wednesday nights run well because of the dedication of our leaders. They commit their evenings to guiding our Pier (K–4th grade) and SWIFT kids (5th–6th grade), pouring time, energy, and creativity into each lesson. With patience and joy, they help children see how God's Word connects to daily life. Their efforts don't stop at teaching Scripture. They lead engaging, hands-on activities that keep kids excited to return week after week. Whether through creative projects, group games, or lively discussions, they foster a welcoming environment where every child feels valued and encouraged. Their servant hearts and steady presence model the very lessons they teach. I am deeply grateful for these leaders, whose quiet sacrifices are shaping the faith of the next generation.

Through the weekly and seasonal events, our Children's Ministry continues its mission to draw children closer to Jesus – to know Him, trust Him and follow His example of love, forgiveness, and compassion for others. We invite everyone to join in and see how God is at work in the lives of our children.



CARING MINISTRIES

Dr. Ann Pearson, *Director of Caring Ministries*

☎ 251-928-1148 , ext. 230

✉ ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org

It is with great joy and deep appreciation that I thank you for your love and support of Caring Ministries at Fairhope United Methodist Church. The Caring Ministries team is deeply thankful for your continued support and your belief in the work we do to serve both our Church and our community. May we continue to discover new ways to serve and make an impact, as together we cast the light of Jesus into the world.

Ann



PRAISE, WORSHIP & PRAYER SERVICE

An evening of Praise, Worship & Prayer featuring the African Universal Choir!

Sunday, October 19 @ 6pm in the Sanctuary.
Come and be blessed by this wonderful choir.

CANCER CARE ANGELS

Tough Dogs Cancer Care Ministry has expanded their ministry to include giving grants to individuals who have a cancer diagnosis. Caseworkers, at the 4 facilities associated with Tough Dogs, will be submitting applications. There is a Review Council consisting of *Mary Hodgkins, Patti Hanafourde, Nancy LeBlanc and Mary Kathryn Metzger and Bud Walden* who will be reviewing applications. The grants will be given out twice a year, the first one in October. The facilities are Infirmary Cancer Care, Mitchell Cancer Center, Southern Cancer and USA Children and Women's.

WALK AND TALK WITH JESUS

Each **Monday morning at 9:15am** on the track of the CLC we gather to pray for the needs of our church & community. In October we will be focusing our prayers on the health & wellness of our members and community at large. If you can't make those Monday mornings, come anytime when the CLC is open (**8am-5pm M-F**)

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Quarterly Come and Go Birthday Celebration **Monday, October 20 in the CLC Parlor from 10:am-11:30am**. If you have a birthday in September, October or November this is your time to come and be celebrated. Please RSVP to Dr. Ann Pearson at 251-928-1148 or ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org.

NEW SUPPORT GROUP

Anchored in Hope: Infertility and Loss Support Group meeting **Tuesday, October 21 at 6pm** in the CLC Parlor. This once a month support group is for women walking through infertility or pregnancy loss.

WAYS TO VOLUNTEER AND SERVE

PACKAGING AND DELIVERIES

You are invited to join us on **Sunday, October 26 at 12:15pm in Wesley Hall** in packaging 750 gifts for home delivery. Drivers are needed for delivery of the gifts. Pick up is October 27 – 30 with delivery being done October 27-November 7. Delivery lists are provided, and we try to tailor them to your neighborhood. Please contact Dr. Ann Pearson at 251-928-1148 or ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org if you are able to serve.

TJ'S FOOD MINISTRIES

Caring Ministries has partnered with the African Universal Church in Daphne to package & distribute boxes of food in a drive-thru setting. **Volunteers can come any Wednesday or Thursday from 9-11am. The address of AUC is: 8355 Jonesboro Road, Daphne.**



IN-HOME COMMUNION: A Message From Helen Ingram

I have just come in from serving two of our members who can no longer attend Sunday Worship. What a JOY it is to serve these people where they live! One was sitting outside with a friend, and I offered her communion as well. The friend said, "It has been such a long time since I have had communion." The other member I served today was overjoyed that I found him in his new surroundings. God blessed me today!

Last month I was serving a fellow member in a rehab facility. As I was leaving, I found and had the privilege of serving Bible study friends who were at the facility. We celebrated that I had the elements in my hand, and I served the friends communion also. It was God's timing that I met them in the hall. Yes, God is Good! All the time!

The elements, bread and juice, are consecrated during 1st Sunday worship. Lay members can then take these blessed elements as a continuation of our worship service. At present, we have 6 volunteers who serve but we would welcome other volunteers to this ministry. This is another opportunity to share God's love.

If you or a family member would like to receive communion, please notify the church at 251-928-1148 or Dr. Ann Pearson at ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org.

WEEKLY SUPPORT GROUPS:

CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

1st & 3rd Tuesday, 9:30am, Library

SEEKING PEACE GRIEF GROUP

Every Monday, 3:00pm, B114

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE (SOS)

2nd & 4th Monday, 6:30pm, B114

TOUGH DOGS CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

2nd & 4th Tuesday, 12:30pm, Library

CHEMO CARE BAG ASSEMBLY

2nd Tuesday, 1:30pm, Wesley Hall

ANCHORED IN HOPE:

INFERTILITY & LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

3rd Tuesday, 6:00pm, Parlor

STUDENT MINISTRIES

Miles Barnhardt, *Director of Student Ministries*

☎ 251-928-1148 , ext. 243

✉ students@fairhopeumc.org

Here's a fact of life that may surprise you: Our Youth will one day age out of the Youth Ministry.

Maybe that doesn't come as a surprise. Still, it's a simple truth we often forget. Eventually, our students will head off to college or begin their careers, moving on from this formative chapter of their lives. So why bring up this very obvious information?

I tell you this to let you know that though our Youths' time is limited in this group, I will continuously strive to equip our Youth with the talents and skills that God has given them.

Each Wednesday evening, our youth are stepping up: they lead announcements, help facilitate (or participate) in games, lead worship, and are the driving force behind the meaningful conversations that happen in their C-Groups each week. I ask them to take on these roles not just because they're capable, which they absolutely are, but because it's vital for them to develop and refine these gifts before stepping into the "real world."

When our students leave Fairhope UMC, my hope is that they'll be equipped with the spiritual foundation, confidence, and skills they need to make a difference in the world and in whatever church community they become a part of.

One exciting new way this is happening is through our Breakfast Club on Tuesday mornings. Not only are students showing up at 6:45 AM to share a meal together, but they are also leading devotionals they've written themselves to start their school day. These moments give our youth a powerful opportunity not just to lead, but to thoughtfully reflect and share what's on their hearts with their fellow students.

I continue to be inspired by the energy and ownership our students bring to the Youth Ministry. They are becoming leaders in their own right, modeling what they've seen from so many of you in the broader church community.

I'm looking forward to all that they will continue to share as we grow together through this weekly time of fellowship.

Miles



WEEKLY

ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY
9:45am-10:45am | Sunday School

TUESDAY
6:45am-7:35am | Breakfast Club

WEDNESDAY
6:00pm-7:45pm | WN Youth

4TH SUNDAY
6:00pm-8:00pm | 4th Sunday Night

WORSHIP MINISTRIES

Tom Hood, Director of Worship & Music Ministries

☎ 251-928-1148, ext. 228

✉ tom.hood@fairhopeumc.org

CHOIR MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

Mary Parsons



We are delighted to celebrate Mary Parsons, a cherished member of our choir since 1984. Mary's roots trace back to Nashua, Iowa—home of the historic “Little Brown Church in the Vale”—a fitting connection for someone who has devoted so much of her life to church music. One of her favorite hymns, “Precious Lord, Take My Hand,” reflects her deep faith and love for worship through song. Beyond the choir loft, Mary enjoys capturing beauty through photography, another expression of her creative spirit.

Thank you Mary for your commitment and heart to serve!

LIGHTHOUSE KIDS CHOIR
FAIRHOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HEY KIDS...

JOIN US FOR MUSIC, FUN, AND FAITH
AS WE LIFT OUR VOICES TOGETHER!

K-6TH GRADE | WEDNESDAYS
4:15 - 5PM | CHOIR ROOM

COME SING
WITH US AND
SHINE YOUR
LIGHT!

QUESTIONS? CONTACT TOM HOOD, TOM.HOOD@FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG

JOIN THE CHOIR

CHOIR REHEARSALS
WEDNESDAYS
6PM | CHOIR ROOM

FAIRHOPE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MISSIONS MINISTRIES

Jennifer Myrick, *Director of Missions Ministries*

☎ 251-928-1148

✉ missions@fairhopeumc.org

One of my favorite quotes is “Preach the gospel at all times; use words if necessary.” Although the quote has been attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi, there is no concrete evidence that he actually crafted these words. I am not sure where I first heard this wisdom, but it has resonated with me for many years serving in missions. Missions has been a huge part of my life for the last 20 years. I participated in my first mission trip to Tennessee when I was in high school, but it wasn’t until my first mission trip to Costa Rica in 2005 that the Lord really opened my heart to serving. In 2005, I was a recent college graduate and my middle sister, Jessica, somehow convinced my entire family to go and serve with Costa Rica Mission Team from the church. My sister was a part of the first teams that went in 2003 and 2004, and I remember saying out loud, “WHY IN THE WORLD would anyone want to go and serve in a third world country.” Little did I know, that I would be a member of that same team just two years later and that my life would be forever changed!

For over 22 years, the Costa Rica mission trip has contributed to the rich history of our church serving faithfully both locally and internationally. What started as an exploratory trip back in the early 2000’s has turned into a wonderful relationship between Fairhope UMC and the Amor en la Calle Ministry. Amor en la Calle, translated as “Love in the Streets” is a ministry that is lead by Sonia and Edwin Brenes, two people who have given their lives to ministering to those in need all over Costa Rica! Their primary focus has been working with teenagers, pulling them off the streets or providing a home instead of juvenile prison through the boys and girls ranches that are located in a very rural part of Costa Rica. They also offer a discipleship program to children and their families, as well as ministering to the elderly and homeless in some of the most difficult parts of the country. Our team has been fortunate to serve alongside this ministry for 10-12 days every May. This church family has been apart of the story, through giving supplies, bibles, pocket crosses, donating suitcases, toiletry items and supporting the construction projects and VBS through our missions budget. Due to the fact many of us are not fluent in Spanish, the idea of “use words if necessary” resonates when serving in Costa Rica. The Lord has used our willingness to serve and love to build relationships with our friends in Costa Rica. Those experiences have made a huge impact, not only in the lives of those we are serving, but also in each of us as team members. We are so thankful for this church family and the continued support of this mission trip. We are looking forward to our upcoming trip in May 2026. We are having an information meeting on **Sunday, October 26th @ 5:00pm.**

Included at the end of this article is an email that I sent in 2019 as we were starting to prepare for our upcoming trip in 2020. A trip that we did not get to make because of COVID, however our church faithfully gave the financial support that would have normally been given. We missed back-to-back years, returning in 2022. It is a testament to this church and community for answering the call to serve and build relationships.

Join us! We would LOVE for you to be apart of the great work the Lord is doing in Costa Rica!

Jennifer

Email Dated: 10/25/2019 @ 12:27 AM

I pray that you are all having a great week! We are looking forward to our upcoming mission trip May 2020! As many of you know this will be our 18th year of serving alongside the Amor en la Calle ministry. It is amazing to think that it has been 18 years! God has truly blessed the lives of so many through our relationship with the Amor en la Calle ministry and we are grateful to continue our support! What a blessing for our church to be apart of the work God is doing in Costa Rica for the last 17 years.

The last 17 years= 17 weeks= 170 Days= 4,080 hours= 244,800 minutes of SERVING with our friends in COSTA RICA!

17 years also equals=

- **5,100+** Bibles distributed
- **1,200+** Toiletry Bags given to Juvenile Prison (6 years)
- **8500+** Children served through VBS (8500+ Bubbles too!)
- **250+** Teenagers served at the Boys and Girls Ranches
- **275+** Walks across the Bridge
- **68+** VBS offerings=136+ Amazing Skits preformed
- **400+** Team Members have served in CR (several multiple times)
- **560+** Lbs of Rice have been consumed on the Ranch (Per Elmer :-0)
- **10,200+** Elmer's Cookies or Pastries consumed (Per Elmer ;-0)
- **6,000+** Cinder Blocks moved (Last 3 years) Probably more from years past!
- **250+** Sewing Projects
- **Countless batches of concrete and Countless lives changed!**



RECREATION MINISTRIES

Jamie Waldhour, *Director of Recreation Ministries*

☎ 251-928-1148, ext. 249

✉ jamie.waldhour@fairhopeumc.org

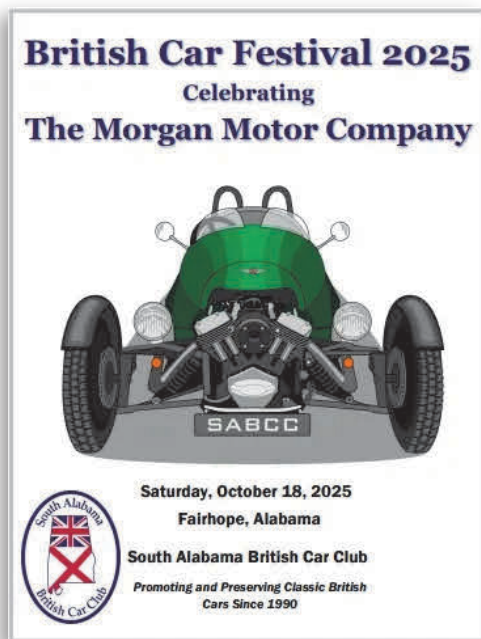
LAST CALL FOR UPWARD BASKETBALL REGISTRATION!

Registration for Upward basketball wraps up on **October 10!** Don't let this chance slip by! Join us at Fairhope UMC Upward, where children ages 4 to 9 can bounce their way into a world of fun and faith! We provide a supportive environment where everyone feels included, learns the game, and experiences the immense love that God has for them. Make sure you don't miss out—register today!



THE BRITISH CAR SHOW IS BACK

We are once again hosting the British Car Show here on campus on **Saturday, Oct. 18.** What started as a fun gathering has now become a beloved community tradition that brings people from all around to our church. It's more than cars—it's about conversations, laughter, and building connections with neighbors and friends. Each year, this event gives us a special opportunity to share the gift of hospitality, to welcome new faces, and to deepen the sense of community we value so much. We invite you to join the festivities, not only to enjoy the sights and sounds of the day but also to experience the joy of being part of something that blesses both our church family and our community.



DID YOU KNOW?

Recreation Ministries are about far more than sports or activities—they create spaces where relationships flourish, generations connect, and faith grows stronger. Whether on the court, in the gym, or walking the track, recreation provides opportunities to build community, welcome new people, and share the love of Christ in a fun and meaningful way.

Time to Paddlz Up!

Pickleball Fundraiser **to benefit Fairhope UMC's Community Café**

DATE: Friday, October 24

TIME: Begins @ 8:30 AM

COST: \$30 per person donation

BRACKETS:

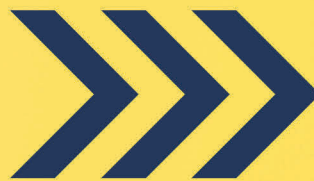
- **Mens**
- **Womens**
- **Mixed**

Lunch & light snacks provided!

Proceeds support the Community Café.

(additional donations welcome!)

**SCAN QR CODE BY
OCTOBER 21 TO REGISTER**



LOVE
BOLDLY



community café



FAIRHOPE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

For more info or sponsorship opportunities, contact:

JEFF THOMPSON • 251-424-5868
JUDY THOMPSON • 251-421-1436

ADMINISTRATIVE



Photo Credit: John Estes

CASTING LIGHT... EVEN AT NIGHT!

When you drive past the sanctuary after the sun goes down, you'll see that we are still "casting the light of Jesus into the world," thanks to the newly installed illumination of our bell tower and sanctuary.

Our Trustees thank Dr. Ann Pearson, Jamie Waldhour, and Jeff White for their collaboration with Randy Woodham of American Wholesale lighting, who installed low-wattage, beam-focused lighting to illuminate the sanctuary windows, including those in the balcony, the rose window, and the bell tower.

Funding for this project came from several generous memorials and honorary gifts. We are proud to honor those gifts with a visible sign of our legacy: a church that shines from the inside out, a beacon of faith and beauty, even in the dark.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

SPR (Staff Parish Relations) Noah Funderburg, Chair

The Staff Parish Relations Committee has reviewed and made recommendations regarding our pastor's salaries in 2026. We also are reviewing our staffing needs for 2026 and recommendations for staff salaries for 2026.

TRUSTEES Jennifer Jones, Chair

Our church continues to embrace Jesus' teaching to show hospitality. This past Sunday, we showed hospitality to a neighboring congregation, the Fairhope Church of God in Christ, by inviting them to worship in Wesley Hall on Sunday afternoons while their church building undergoes renovations to repair unsafe conditions. Whether it is quilters blessing veterans with their handiwork masterpieces or pickleball players looking for camaraderie on an air conditioned court, our church opens its doors to the community. We are blessed with beautiful and functional facilities, and we want to use them to bless others not just on Sundays but every day of the week.

To that end, the Trustees continue to address maintenance and repair needs as they arise, while at the same time planning for larger capital expenses. We took a close look at our bell tower and found that its masonry walls are in need of repair and weatherization, similar to the work that is almost complete on the north and south walls of the Sanctuary and the east wall of the Education Building. Thus, the Trustees are making plans for a second phase of masonry repair, re-caulking, and weatherproofing to include the bell tower and additional walls of similar age and condition. As we plan our budget request for 2026, we are mindful that the HVAC units at the CLC are nearing the end of their anticipated lifespan as are the roofs of the Education Building, Children's Wing, and Wesley Hall. In all decisions, we strive to be good stewards of the gifts we have been given, which includes our facilities, so that they can support the ministries and outreach of this church both now and for years to come.

FINANCE Allen Mitchell, Chair

The Finance Committee is excited about the progress we have made this year. The Financial Policies and Procedures have been thoroughly reviewed and revised. Progress is well under way for additional detailed reporting that will enable the Finance Committee to better track the funds that flow outside the budget, primarily designated giving. The Board of Stewards has approved our recommendation to conduct a capital campaign to pay off our mortgage in the spring. We are interviewing firms to conduct our financial audit. Our Discipleship Campaign is going well.

All of the above progress has been made easier by the good financial position that we find ourselves in this year. When we can spend less time reviewing the financials, we can spend more time on matters that move us forward. As of the end of August, we are on track to match both our budgeted income and budgeted expenses for the year. The church remains in good standing financially. As of the end of August, we have our 90-day expense reserves and an additional \$130k in undesignated reserves.

In conjunction with the Trustees, we have identified the unmet reserves required for proper maintenance of our facilities. When we pay off our mortgage next year, we will have the funds available to meet these maintenance needs. We are grateful to those members who have provided us with our debt-free facilities. We now need to honor them by keeping our facilities in top condition.

We are still anticipating additional funds from the IRS for the Employee Retention Credits (ERC) for which the church made application several years ago. We have received the funds for one calendar quarter but still have several quarters outstanding.

The Finance Committee wants to again thank the members for their faithful giving.

BUDGET REPORT | AUGUST

Fairhope United Methodist Church

FUMC Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual

January through August 2025

	Aug 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	Jan - Aug 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget
Income						
04000 Pledge Contributions	91,485.60	109,340.00	-17,854.40	943,306.50	878,980.00	64,326.50
04001 Non Pledge Contributions	40,399.19	59,792.00	-19,392.81	390,498.42	480,285.00	-89,786.58
04002 Cash Contributions	2,656.00	2,310.00	346.00	19,717.02	18,570.00	1,147.02
04003 Adult Sunday School	160.00	116.00	44.00	820.00	931.00	-111.00
04004 Fees	4,900.00	701.00	4,199.00	12,990.00	5,628.00	7,362.00
04005 Other Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	56,019.40	33,500.00	22,519.40
04006 Interest Income	3,561.37	2,500.00	1,061.37	28,683.51	20,000.00	8,683.51
Total Income	143,162.16	174,759.00	-31,596.84	1,452,034.85	1,437,894.00	14,140.85
Gross Profit	143,162.16	174,759.00	-31,596.84	1,452,034.85	1,437,894.00	14,140.85
Expense						
10000 Worship	1,124.41	1,035.00	89.41	7,577.74	7,390.00	187.74
10100 Music	1,453.77	1,110.00	343.77	10,250.72	11,575.00	-1,324.28
10200 Evangelism/Navigator	0.00	0.00	0.00	638.36	500.00	138.36
10300 Adult Spiritual Growth	-11.65	280.00	-291.65	5,682.99	7,141.00	-1,458.01
10400 Church Family Ministry	264.00	1,761.00	-1,497.00	2,428.81	5,322.00	-2,893.19
10500 Children's Ministry	2,227.11	1,125.00	1,102.11	28,147.53	24,460.00	3,687.53
10600 Youth Ministry	4,946.56	12,589.00	-7,642.44	58,831.46	53,928.00	4,903.46
10700 Caring Ministry	0.00	375.00	-375.00	2,625.00	3,000.00	-375.00
10800 Communications	967.52	1,009.00	-41.48	9,481.60	8,533.00	948.60
10900 Missions	3,252.92	18,321.00	-15,068.08	77,327.85	56,956.00	20,371.85
11000 Nursery	73.40	220.00	-146.60	652.30	1,150.00	-497.70
11100 Recreation Ministry	594.90	1,090.00	-495.10	6,112.85	6,800.00	-687.15
11200 Gathering	510.67	480.00	30.67	5,368.26	3,990.00	1,378.26
11400 Stewardship Campaign	0.00	1,400.00	-1,400.00	0.00	1,400.00	-1,400.00
11500 Hospitality	114.43	200.00	-85.57	114.43	1,600.00	-1,485.57
11700 Discretionary Fund	2,134.86	500.00	1,634.86	4,121.16	1,700.00	2,421.16
11800 Wednesday Night Supper	2,503.95	0.00	2,503.95	6,322.23	3,250.00	3,072.23
20000 Trustees	65,127.39	37,173.00	27,954.39	159,590.28	151,778.00	7,812.28
20100 Utilities	7,945.11	9,820.00	-1,874.89	64,419.12	57,910.00	6,509.12
20200 Office Expense	5,306.16	4,775.00	531.16	33,249.75	34,511.00	-1,261.25
20300 Kitchen Supplies	1,268.35	1,275.00	-6.65	8,532.42	10,200.00	-1,667.58
20400 Custodial Supplies	1,547.68	1,300.00	247.68	10,156.21	10,300.00	-143.79
20500 Financial Audit	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,000.00	-12,000.00
30000 SPR (Salary/Contract)	91,341.30	102,292.00	-10,950.70	764,731.32	821,250.00	-56,518.68
40000 Conference Apportionments	11,670.90	11,670.90	0.00	93,367.20	93,367.20	0.00
40100 District Apportionments	1,808.80	1,808.80	0.00	14,470.40	14,470.40	0.00
50000 Mortgage Interest	2,363.58	2,300.00	63.58	19,660.35	18,400.00	1,260.35
60000 Mortgage Principle	16,406.20	16,470.00	-63.80	130,497.89	131,760.00	-1,262.11
Total Expense	224,942.32	230,379.70	-5,437.38	1,524,358.23	1,554,641.60	-30,283.37
Net Income	-81,780.16	-55,620.70	-26,159.46	-72,323.38	-116,747.60	44,424.22



CELEBRATIONS

NEW FACES, NEW FRIENDS...

We are thrilled to welcome our newest members into the Fairhope UMC family! Each new face is a reminder of God's grace and the beauty of community. We can't wait to grow together in faith, service, and fellowship.

Join us in praying for and celebrating these wonderful new members—may their journey here be filled with love, purpose, and joy!



Mary Elizabeth & Sam Willams
Joined 8/31/2025



Dawn & Mike Herrin
Joined 9/21/2025

HONORARIUMS & MEMORIALS

We are deeply grateful for the gifts given in remembrance or in honor of loved ones. Your generosity not only blesses the church but also creates a lasting legacy of faith and love.

Honorariums:

Elizabeth Sandoe by Sherry Herron
Dr. Ann Pearson by Wills Moore

Memorials:

Steve Vogle
by Barbara Ramsey (*Caring Ministries*)

Elsie Butgereit
by Eleanor Mangold (*Costa Rica Missions*)
by Emily C. Jones (*Butgereit Scholarship*)
by Linda D. Tomlin (*Butgereit Scholarship*)
by Lisa & Joel Calhoun (*Butgereit Scholarship*)
by Little Pink Houses of Hope (*Ministerio Amor en la Calle*)
by Janet M. Thomas (*Costa Rica Missions*)

Sanctuary Gift

We are grateful to Brian Norris for the beautiful Bible given in loving memory of
Emma John "Johnnie" Wiggins Walker.



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God". - John 1:1





Use this QR Code if you prefer to complete this pledge online, or visit fairhopeumc.org



COMMITMENT CARD

With this pledge, I/we make the following commitments to Fairhope UMC for 2026:

Name(s)

Address

Email(s)

GIFTS

In 2026, I/We Commit To Give

\$_____ per () week () month () other_____

If two people are making commitments below, initial the boxes to identify who is making each commitment.

PRAYERS

Please add me to the Five-Day Devotion mailing list.

I will send a card to each church or pastor we pray for in 2026.

PRESENCE

I am a member of a small group/supper club/etc.

I would like help finding a small group, etc.

I will teach or serve behind the scenes in Children's Sunday School 4x a year.

SERVICE

I am currently serving my fellow church members by_____.

I am looking for a place to serve, please contact me.

I'll be a test pilot by serving on a Zechariah Team for one Sunday in Lent.

WITNESS

Please pray for_____. I am praying they will know and love Jesus.

I already serve beyond our walls by_____.

I'd like to learn about, pray for, or lead the way in homelessness ministry for Baldwin County.



Commitment Sunday

Commitment Sunday was a celebration to remember! The Fellowship Hall was packed for our celebration brunch; the Lighthouse Children's Choir and the Youth Praise Band vocalists led us powerfully in worship; Vivien Harris and John Hodgkins took the prizes for meeting new friends in "Getting to Know You Bingo."

And, 125 families or individuals made a pledge of their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness for the coming year; that includes 14 families who had never made a pledge before.

As we do every year, we will continue receiving pledges throughout the month of October, then in November we will set the teams and budget that will help us accomplish our 6 priorities for 2026!

If you still need to return your pledge, you can tear out the commitment card on the opposite page and return it to the church, or use the QR code to complete your pledge online!

2026 in the Life of our Church

In addition to all we do during weekly and monthly, here are some of the special celebrations we are looking forward to in 2026.*

JANUARY

4th: KidsMin Poptarts & Pajamas
7th: Biblical Storytelling with Rita Sweatt
11th: Leader Orientation
11th: Deadline for Scholarships
23rd-25th: Discovery
30th-Feb. 1: Kids' Winter Retreat



FEBRUARY

1st: Guest Preacher: Bishop Jonathan Holston
15th: Jazz Sunday
18th: Ash Wednesday
24th-25th: Wonderfully Made (5th Grade)



MARCH

29th: Palm Sunday
29th: VBS Registration Opens



APRIL

Date Pending: Chancel Choir Spring Concert
1st: Kids' Easter Celebration
2nd: Maundy Thursday
3rd: Good Friday Crosswalk
5th: EASTER!!!
19th: Confirmation
26th: KidsMin Takeover



MAY

3rd: Senior Sunday
13th: Last Wednesday Night Programming
17th: Summer Missions Commissioning
TBD: Costa Rica Mission Trip
26th-Jun. 5 : Journeys of Paul
31st-Jun. 4: Vacation Bible School



JUNE

7th-9th: Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference
22nd-26th: Youth Oakwood Camp



JULY

Date Pending: Regional Mission Trip
6th-10th: Kids' Blue Lake Camp

AUGUST

2nd: Choir Kickoff
9th: Blessing of the Backpacks
9th: Youth Kickoff Party
16th: 3rd Grade Bibles
16th: Sunday School Open House
19th: Youth and Kids Wed. Night Activities Resume
23rd: Mission Celebration

SEPTEMBER

Stephen Ministry Recruitment Begins
9th: Wednesday Night Kickoff
16th: Wednesday Night Adult Studies Resume

OCTOBER

Pending: Charge Conference
28th: Trunk or Treat
25th: Stephen Ministry Recruitment Ends

NOVEMBER

1st: All Saints' Day
11th: Last Wednesday Night Programming
15th: Baby Recognition
18th: Advent Wreath Making
26th: Thanksgiving Day Lunch

DECEMBER

5th: Breakfast at the Manger
6th: Children's Choir Musical
13th: Traditional Lessons & Carols
20th: The Gathering Lessons & Carols
24th: Christmas Eve



All dates are subject to change. be sure to
subscribe to our newsletters (and The Link) for
the latest info.





COFFEE WITH THE PASTORS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12 | 9:45 AM PARLOR

WE ARE SOCIAL!

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We **EXIST** to **LOVE BOLDLY**, casting the **LIGHT** of **JESUS** into the world.