

## From Our Pastor

### God Does Not Change

Spring is in the air. The birds are singing. The sky is bluer. The grass is greener. The leaves on the trees are starting to bud and the flowers are starting to bloom. Spring symbolizes life. Spring is the one season that shows, in stark terms, how good always triumphs over evil, light over darkness, life over death. Spring, for many, is a symbol of new beginnings. When the first green emerges from the ground and the first bud opens, people all over the world celebrate life's triumph over death. The earth comes to life once more. Spring is steeped in love and joy - the essence of all that is good - and gives way to the ideas of rebirth, renewal, resurrection and regrowth. Spring symbolizes life in all its glory.

As Christians, we are given new life and new mercies every morning. Spring provides a wonderful reminder to us that we should be living a full life and leaving the old dead parts of life behind. There is always hope during the coldest, darkest winters of life. Spring will come and new life will come forth! So how can we take advantage of what God is doing in the spring of our life? Listen to God's Word in the Song of Songs 2:11-13, "See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land. The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me." God is inviting us to join him in this season of singing. And as Paul reminds us to give thanks to God, "who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

But the seasons come and go, so our focus needs to be on the God who is unchanged and unchanging. Things change so fast in our world that it's hard sometimes to keep up with all the changes. We turn on the television or glance at the newspaper and we see just how much our world has changed, not always for the better. It makes us painfully aware that our kids are growing up in a world far different than the one we knew as children. But amid all the changes one thing, one person, never changes—our eternal God. The psalmist writes, "Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God" (Psalm 90:1, 2). The Lord is the one constant we can count on season after season.

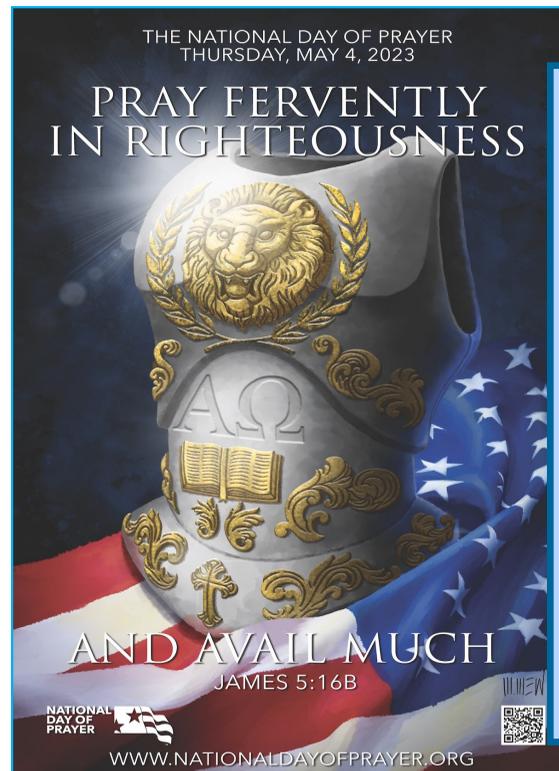
J. I. Packer rightly points out that God does not change. His life is always the same. His character is always dependable. His truth, ways and purposes do not change. His Son does not change. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). This world may fade and the seasons may change. But the God who has been our help in the past, the one who sustains our souls, will be our help for years to come. In Him, we have incomparable peace, unshakeable joy, unbreachable security, a living hope and everlasting life.

My prayer for you and your family during the month of May is that you will focus on the unchanged and unchanging God no matter how this world tries to distract you. Remember God always has the last word in our lives and it is a word of victory.

**In Christ's arms, Brother Matt**



**Mother's Day—  
Sunday, May 14**  
Join us as we honor  
and celebrate our  
mothers and those  
who serve as  
mothers in our  
lives.



**Join us on  
Thursday, May 4  
at 12:00 noon at  
Gold Star Park to  
participate in The  
National Day of  
Prayer. Local and  
national events  
are happening.  
To view the  
national events,  
go to  
[www.nationaldayofprayer.org](http://www.nationaldayofprayer.org).  
Please pray for  
America!**



*Thank you for providing beautiful altar flowers:*

May 7—Communion

May 14—Sonya Arnold & Lauren Marion

May 21—Neal & Leah Pridgen

May 28—Eddy Brantley

**SUNDAYS:**

- Sunday Worship 8:00 A.M. (CHAPEL)
- Sunday School 9:00 A.M.
- Sunday Worship 10:00 A.M. (Sanctuary and Wesley Hall)

**WEDNESDAYS:**

- Wednesday Morning Bible Study in Wesley Hall at 9:30 a.m.
- Wednesday Night meal 5:15—6 P.M. (FLC)
- Children and Youth After School 3 P.M.
- Choir Practice 6 P.M. (Chapel)
- Wednesday Night Bible Study 6:15 P.M. (Cornerstone Classroom)

**Our NURSERY (located on the first floor in the Education Building) is available for all services. (See page 5 for pictures)**



*Chancel Choir on Easter Sunday. The Sanctuary was so beautiful with brilliant white flowers.*



**Memorial Day  
Monday,  
May 29**



Thank you for providing fresh flowers that adds so much to our Sunday worship! **Please contact the church office to reserve one of the following available dates:** September 24, October 22 or December 31.



**TRAILS TEMPLE MINISTRY NEWS!!!**

Randy Knox has volunteered to help with Trails Temple Ministry! We will be discussing some possible new walks in the not too distant future... *watch for details!!!*



**Join the Prayer Shawl Ministry on Fridays from 10 a.m. until 12 noon** upstairs in the Education Building. Bring your crafting projects with you or just come for the sweet fellowship.



Happy May! We are excited to hear our kids sing again on Mother's Day. Please join us in the late service so you can hear them make a joyful noise! Our End of the School Year Party will be Wed, May 17. This will be our last bus pick up since school will be out. We hope everyone has a wonderful, fun-filled summer.

**SAVE THE DATE!** VBS is Sun, June 4-6 in the evening and dinner will be provided. Be sure to mark your calendar so your kids and their friends can be a part of it! We will have pre-registration forms available in the education building on the table. Please turn them in to me once you have them filled out. A BIG thank you to all those who attended our VBS dinner/training!

This month our kids are learning all about the confidence you have when God is by your side! They will learn about the great commission and ascension, the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Peter and John, and Philip and the man from Ethiopia. Our memory verse is *"So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.'"* Hebrews 13:6a

**In Him,  
Ms. Michelle**

***Congratulations  
Ava Glass and  
Sophie Arant for  
completing  
Confirmation!***



It's time to celebrate our amazing seniors' upcoming academic and life accomplishment!! See the graduation section of this month's newsletter for more details about who our super talented seniors are, and how we will honor all their hard work on May 14<sup>th</sup>! We are so proud of all they have achieved and can't wait to encourage and cheer them on during this time of excitement, big feelings, and huge transition!

Also speaking of exciting transitions, Promotion Sunday is this month on May 21st! We can't wait for all the upcoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders to be part of the student ministry and see how God continues to transform them into His likeness! We know He will use their gifts and talents to bless the lives of those both inside and outside of it!

#### This Month's Discussion Focus:

Have you ever heard someone say something that seemed unreasonable? It's not always easy to ask questions or express doubt when other people seem so certain, and that's especially true when it comes to faith. If you ask hard questions about God or are honest about the things you're not sure about, what will people think? Will they judge you? Will they laugh at you? This month we'll explore the Gospels and other Biblical scripture together and discuss how, when we have doubts and questions, we don't need to ignore them or sweep them under the rug. Instead, we can **look to Jesus, look to the Holy Spirit, look to God's words, and look for God in unexpected places** to address those doubts and help us become more transformed into the likeness of Christ!

For all the other exciting, weekly, and community building things happening this month, check out our page on the church's website, and/or contact me through e-mail at [Jamie@firstwetumpka.com](mailto:Jamie@firstwetumpka.com) if you have any questions! Please make sure you are on our text and e-mail list for all updates and access to other helpful tips, tools, and resources for growing a relationship with God personally and as a family!

**In Him, Jamie**



**SENIOR SUNDAY—May 14**  
**CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!!!!**



On Sunday, May 14th the 1335 Student Ministry will celebrate **Mary Katherine (Kat) Macon, Samantha (Sam) Wheat, and Anna Willis** from 9:00 a.m.-9:40 a.m. on the front lawn of our church campus! They'll be treated to an encouraging and God centered speaker, nicely decorated tables set up for them and their families to sit at, and a selection of delicious breakfast foods made available by menu and brought directly to their table by our incredible volunteers. A gift bag will also be given to them containing a letter of encouragement from their parent(s) and items to help them continue growing in their walk with God during this time and into the future.

Afterward, our whole church family will get to be part of celebrating their milestone achievement during the 10:00 a.m. service with a processional, slideshow, sharing of the seniors' future plans, and a prayer of blessing and wisdom for them during this hugely important time! We are so proud of these seniors, and if you see them around the church, encourage them and make them feel loved by saying hi, congratulating them on completing this important stage of their lives, telling them how proud you are of what they have accomplished, and letting them know you are here for and praying for them during this next stage of life!

**Vacation Bible  
School is  
coming soon!**

**June 4—6!!!**  
*Shine a light on  
Jesus' love!*



**Our NURSERY**  
(located on the first floor  
in the Education Building)  
is available for all  
services.

**Pictured to the right is  
our fabulously loved  
Mrs. Becky and  
Ms. Barbara.**

**Below are two of our  
precious little ones.**



# Senior Adult Ministry

**Notice: NO Game day for now—it will be discussed again in the fall.**

April showers brought us beautiful flowers! If you missed the edible flower luncheon, you missed the most wonderful food and the best edible flowers you have ever tasted and other delicious desserts. The hibiscus tea punch was fantastic and beautiful. Everyone had a small tub of whipped honey butter infused with flowers to take home. Almost everyone ate a flower or two, most thought they were beautiful and delicious. There were flowers in ice cubes floating in the punch and the pictures of water. They were so pretty. Also we had candied flowers, and candied lemon and lime slices, yummy. Jamie ate some of all the flowers and petals and said they were delicious. Lol, he was a good sport. Brother Matt ate a sugared hibiscus petal, do not think he liked it much. Our speaker did not make it so guess what happened? Gloria talked. Well what's new, she does that a lot. We had a wonderful time thanks to everyone that helped in any way to make this day the great success that it was. God gives us beautiful flowers and on that day we celebrated his wonderful gift to us.



**Please do not miss this luncheon it will be a very special one also: Derby Day Luncheon Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon in the family life center. Ladies wear your beautiful Derby Day hats that you have made. We will have judges and there will be prizes for first, second, third place winners. We will have wonderful food and great fellowship, so please don't miss this day.**

The month of June will be a quiet one as everyone is getting into the start of summer. Now July is going to be a special lunch, it will be a fresh vegetable garden lunch. Good home cooked vegetables, cornbread, tea and great desserts.

***Proverbs 17: 22. A cheerful heart is good medicine,  
but a broken spirit saps a person's strength.***

**Always Believe, Gloria (334-312-1764)**



## Disaffiliation Fund Update

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church will meet to approve our congregation's February decision to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. At that time, our church will officially become the **First Methodist Church Wetumpka** and affiliated with the Global Methodist Church, which is fully congruent with our core beliefs.

In April our Administration Board met and voted to create a short-term Disaffiliation Fund to run until the end of this year to meet the financial cost of our congregation's decision to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. The \$75,000 goal of this fund will enable the full disaffiliation cost of \$172,767 to be paid without having to finance any portion of the amount through a bank. Any money raised over the \$75,000 amount will go back into the General Fund to replenish reserves. The \$172,767 amount is for our church's calculated portion of the Unfunded Pension Liability and Post-Retirement Medical Benefit for United Methodist clergy retired now and a calculated apportionment based on church size. Upon paying this disaffiliation cost the conference will release the title of all church property to **First Methodist Church Wetumpka**. The current total insured value of our church's physical properties is \$12,300,000. Therefore, the \$172,767 disaffiliation cost is not to purchase our property.

**As of April 16<sup>th</sup>, we have received \$28,640 toward the \$75,000 goal for our Disaffiliation Fund.** Thanks to all who have already given to this fund and to all who are giving prayerful consideration to give now or before the end of this year. You may contact Sonya Arnold, Financial Secretary, to let her know you wish to make a specific commitment to this fund before yearend. To make a tax-deductible donation, please memo your check, envelope, or online gift for Disaffiliation Fund.

It is indeed a blessing to report that giving to this special fund is not impacting the faithful giving to the general fund needs of our 2023 budget. Through Easter Sunday, which is 15 weeks in our budget year 2023, the general fund collections are 2.15% ahead of 2022 collections. On behalf of the full array of ministries provided through our church, thank you for faithfully responding to God's call to give your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness for Kingdom work.

**Serving with you,  
Dennis Fain, Treasurer**



## Important information from our Church Treasurer...

**Beginning Sunday, May 7**, please make all contributions to the church payable to: **First Methodist Church Wetumpka**.

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***Moving Forward...***

*Here is our new logo and the importance of each detail. Thank you Andrea and Jamie for working so hard on making just the right logo for us!*

From the design team: After much prayerful discernment and talking to Matt and other members about the heart of, and vision for, the church moving into this new season, this logo design is the outpouring of those events, discussions, and God's guidance.

**The goal:** To create a logo that honors our past, looks to where God is guiding us forward, and conveys the heart and vision of our church to all who see it. (To love everyone inside and outside of our congregation as Christ does)

**-The cross** in the middle of the heart is pulled from our old logo to honor our church's history

**-The blue ring**, broken up into 3 circular parts, represents the Godhead Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) while also making a nod to the three rings in the Global Methodist Church logo referencing the Trinity as well

**-The blue of the circle** is official Global Methodist Church blue to represent

where God is leading us currently

**-The hand at the innermost part of the blue circle and close to the heart**, in combination with the encircling nature of the design element it is attached to, is meant to convey to those looking at it as embrace. When this idea is linked with the cross inside the heart it surrounds, and the fact circles can also make people think of the shape of the world; the goal is for those who see it to understand our church's heart, and as a result vision and atmosphere, is to embrace and love everyone as Christ does.



**READING THE BIBLE THROUGH: May**

- ☐ 1 1 Sam. 22-24 Ps. 52 Acts 11
- ☐ 2 1 Sam. 25-27 Eccl. 11:1-5 Acts 12
- ☐ 3 1 Sam. 28-29 Ps. 53 Acts 13
- ☐ 4 2 Sam. 1-2 Eccl. 11:6-10 Acts 14
- ☐ 5 2 Sam. 3-4 Ps. 54 Acts 15
- ☐ 6 2 Sam. 5-6 Eccl. 12:1-8 Acts 16
- ☐ 7 Reflect on God as Sovereign
- ☐ 8 2 Sam. 7-8 Ps. 59 Acts 17
- ☐ 9 2 Sam. 9-10 Eccl. 12:9-13 Acts 18
- ☐ 10 2 Sam. 11-12 Ps. 60 Acts 19
- ☐ 11 2 Sam. 13-14 Job 1 Acts 20
- ☐ 12 2 Sam. 15-16 Ps. 61 Acts 21
- ☐ 13 2 Sam. 17-18 Job 2 Acts 22
- ☐ 14 Reflect on God as Shepherd
- ☐ 15 2 Sam. 19-20 Ps. 62 Acts 23
- ☐ 16 2 Sam. 21-22 Job 3 Acts 24
- ☐ 17 2 Sam. 23-24 Ps. 63 Acts 25
- ☐ 18 1 Kings 1-2 Job 4 Acts 26
- ☐ 19 1 Kings 3-4 Ps. 64 Acts 27
- ☐ 20 1 Kings 5-6 Job 5 Acts 28
- ☐ 21 Reflect on God as Hope
- ☐ 22 1 Kings 7-8 Ps. 65 Rom. 1
- ☐ 23 1 Kings 9-10 Job 6 Rom. 2
- ☐ 24 1 Kings 11-12 Ps. 66 Rom. 3
- ☐ 25 1 Kings 13-14 Job 7 Rom. 4
- ☐ 26 1 Kings 15-16 Ps. 67 Rom. 5
- ☐ 27 1 Kings 17-18 Job 8 Rom. 6
- ☐ 28 Reflect on God as Rest
- ☐ 29 1 Kings 19-20 Ps. 68 Rom. 7
- ☐ 30 1 Kings 21-22 Job 9 Rom. 8
- ☐ 31 2 Kings 1-3 Ps. 69 Rom. 9

**Support Group**

Fresh Start meets at 6 p.m. each **MONDAY** in Wesley Hall.

Children's activities are provided!

If you know someone who is struggling, please let them know that the **Fresh Start**

**Recovery Group** is here for them. For more information please contact Paul Henderson at 334-201-5428.



<b>05/02</b>	Pearl	Albritton	<b>05/13</b>	Nancy	Holdbrooks
<b>05/03</b>	Dora	Eggert	<b>05/14</b>	Jonathan	Smith
<b>05/03</b>	Gloria	Johnson	<b>05/14</b>	Kristina	Macon
<b>05/04</b>	Annie Pearl	Pugh	<b>05/17</b>	Kristy	Graham
<b>05/06</b>	Mark	Matthews	<b>05/18</b>	Larry	Mann
<b>05/06</b>	Euriah	Smith	<b>05/18</b>	Megan	Boles
<b>05/08</b>	Felix	Dudley	<b>05/19</b>	Maggie	Van Wagner
<b>05/10</b>	Harrison	Smith	<b>05/25</b>	Paul	Henderson
<b>05/12</b>	Janice	Whorton	<b>05/26</b>	Caleb	Jeffers
<b>05/12</b>	Zeb	Pugh	<b>05/29</b>	William	Cousins



<b>May 9</b>	Amanda & Ryan Pugh
<b>May 13</b>	Ronald & Deanna Nelson
<b>May 21</b>	Dennis & Lynda Fain
<b>May 22</b>	Jerry & Alice Barnhart
<b>May 25</b>	Jimmy & Cheri Martin
<b>May 30</b>	Ronald & Brysene Lee
<b>May 30</b>	Edward & Lou Tatum

*If you are a member of FUMC and your birthday or anniversary is not listed, please notify the church office so that we can celebrate with you.*



**FIRST NEWS**

Phone: 334-567-7865

Email: [secretary@firstwetumpka.com](mailto:secretary@firstwetumpka.com)

Website: [www.wetumpkafirst.com](http://www.wetumpkafirst.com)

**May 2023**

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- From our Pastor
- Our Children, Youth and Senior Adults
- Mother's Day & Senior Sunday
- Birthdays & Anniversaries
- News from our Stewardship Team
- New Logo
- Reading the Bible Through Scriptures
- Fresh Start Support Group



Connect with us any time on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and our website at [www.WetumpkaFirst.com](http://www.WetumpkaFirst.com)