

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**GULFPORT**

*- the church with the teal doors -*

**Alive  
in Christ**

*A people being transformed*



**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

**April 26, 2026**

**11 am • Sanctuary & Online**

**CHURCH OFFICE**

2728 53<sup>rd</sup> St S • Gulfport, FL 33707

(727) 321-3620 • [fumcgulfport.org](http://fumcgulfport.org)

Monday 9 am – 1 pm & Wednesday 1 pm – 5 pm

The pastors are available by appointment

Co-Pastor – Rev. Erick Ashley – [erick@spconnection.org](mailto:erick@spconnection.org)

Co-Pastor – Rev. Tracie Ashley – [tracie@spconnection.org](mailto:tracie@spconnection.org)

Associate Pastor – Rev. Ellie Fox – [ellie@spconnection.org](mailto:ellie@spconnection.org)

Administrative Assistant – Patti Marshall – [patti@spconnection.org](mailto:patti@spconnection.org)

Director of Music – Celinda Bailey

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](http://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

Call to Worship\*

Worship Music\* | *Thine Be the Glory* – UMH 308

## **WE PROCLAIM**

Affirmation of Faith\* | *Adapted Version of the Apostle's Creed*

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

Pastoral Prayer

Passing of the Peace\*

Worship Music\* | *And Can It Be* – UMH 363

Children's Moment

Prayer For Illumination

Scripture Reading | *Acts 16: 16-34* CEB

Choral Response | *He Is Lord* – UMH 177

Message | *Freedom That Changes Everything* - 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**

Worship Music\* | *He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought* – UMH 128

Benediction\*

~Restrooms are in the courtyard, near the Fellowship Hall entrance~

# Alive in Christ - Weekly Practice

Sunday, April 26 • Praise in the Pressure - GROW

- **When stress/frustration hits: Pause**
- **Name it honestly**
- **Then say (out loud if possible): “God is still at work here.”**
- **Add one small act of gratitude**
- **Why: Forms a non-reactive, holy response to hardship**

## WHAT’S HAPPENING?

**A BIG Thank You** - Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Lenten Hygiene Collection! Your generosity made a real difference—every item donated is now supporting neighbors in our community through The Funky Flamingo. We are grateful for your compassion and willingness to serve in such a meaningful way.

**Yard Sale Soft Launch** - A heartfelt thank you to Celinda and Susan for launching our Yard Sale Market! What a wonderful event for our community—bringing people together, creating connection, and sharing in the joy of something new. We are so grateful for your vision and the energy you brought to make it happen!

**Do You Have A Name Tag?** If not, we’d love to make one for you! As part of our commitment to Connect, we’re working on getting to know one another by name. If you need a name tag, please add your name to the sign-up sheet at the entrances. It’s a simple way to help us grow closer as a church family!

**Considering Membership?** - If you’ve been worshipping with us and feel ready to take the next step, we’d love to talk with you about becoming a member. Membership is a meaningful way to grow in faith and share in the mission of our church. Interested? Contact Patti at [patti@spconnection.org](mailto:patti@spconnection.org).

**Leadership Board Meeting Update** - The April Leadership Meeting has been postponed. We will now gather on **May 14**. Thank you for your flexibility—we look forward to being together then!



Invite someone to church and drop one **blue** stone in the bowl.

**#PracticeConnection**

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

### **SUNDAY, APR 26** – 4th Sunday of Easter

- Adult Sunday School, 9:45 am – Room 7
- Traditional Worship, 11 am – Sanctuary & Online
- Fellowship & Coffee, 12 pm – Fellowship Hall

### **MONDAY, APR 27**

- Church Office Open, 9 am – 1 pm

### **TUESDAY, APR 28**

- Sophie's Attic, 9 am – 12 pm

### **WEDNESDAY, APR 29**

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

### **THURSDAY, APR 30**

- Narcotics Anonymous, 8 pm – Fellowship Hall

### **FRIDAY, MAY 1**

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

## SATURDAY, MAY 2

- Sophie's Attic, 9 am – 12 pm

## SUNDAY, – MAY 3 – 5th Sunday of Easter

- Adult Sunday School, 9:45 am – Room 7
- Traditional Worship, 11 am – Sanctuary
- Fellowship & Coffee, 12 pm – Fellowship Hall

## SOUTH PINELLAS CONNECTION UPCOMING DATES

Apr 26	FREE Community Dinner	5-6:30 pm	CV
Apr 27-May 3	Pastors Erick & Tracie away for graduations	-	-
May 2	United Methodist Men's Breakfast	8 am	SL
May 4-6	The Pastoral Team at The Pulpit Project	-	-
May 23	Lay Servant Ministry – Basic Course Oakhurst UMC	9am - 4 pm	CV
Jun 4-6	Annual Conference Florida Southern College	-	-

### KEY

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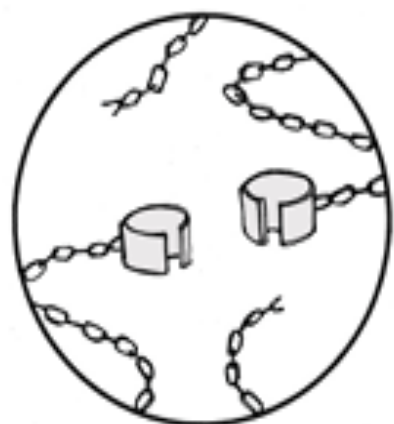
## STEWARDSHIP OF PRESENCE & GIFTS

Week of Apr 19		2026 Year To Date	
Worship	28	Worship (avg weekly)	46
Online Worship	27	Online (avg weekly)	15
Giving Received	\$330.00	Giving Received	\$16,883.01
Giving Needed	\$1,230.77	Giving Needed	\$19,692.32
Surplus/Loss	<b>-\$900.77</b>	Surplus/Loss	<b>-\$2809.31</b>

## PRAYER LIST

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

**Ongoing:** Alice Johnson



# Sharing GOD'S STORY @ home

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THE WEEK

They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

— Acts 16:31

## MEALTIME PRAYER

We call on your name, dear Jesus, to come and dine with us. We give you thanks for all you have given us. Amen.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

*One question to ponder this week as you read: **How does God's word change who you are from the inside out?***

Sunday	Acts 16:16-34	Paul and Silas in Prison
Monday	Acts 16:35-40	Paul Released from Jail
Tuesday	Acts 10:1-23	Conversion of Cornelius, Part 1
Wednesday	Acts 10:24-33	Conversion of Cornelius, Part 2
Thursday	Acts 10:34-48	Conversion of Cornelius, Part 3
Friday	Acts 17:1-9	Paul Goes to Thessalonica
Saturday	Acts 17:10-15	Paul Goes to Berea
Sunday	Acts 17:16-31	Paul in Athens

*If your household includes younger children, use a child-friendly Bible. You might find that the children's Bible you are using may not include the very story assigned for the DAILY BIBLE READINGS. Read to your kids anyway. Just pick a story!*

## SERVICE CHALLENGE

*SERVICE is how we enact God's great love for the entire world.*

Using a hymnal or online search, find your favorite hymn or praise song. Sing a song of praise, together or solo. Once done, talk together or journal on how singing impacts your mood and energy.

## DEVOTIONS

*Think about devotions as a continuation of our community's worship. The following basic pattern could be one way of forming your household's devotions. Adapt as necessary!*

### GATHERING

✠ Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time."

#### ✠ Prayer of the Week

God, we sing to you songs of praise, knowing that we have been freed from the troubles of this world. Your Son, Jesus Christ has liberated our minds and removed the shackles from our hearts so that we are able to share your love with everyone. Amen.

### CARING CONVERSATION

*Take a moment to check in with each other or to use the questions below.*

- ❓ **Highs & Lows:** What is one thing that made you sing praises today? What is one thing that made you sad?
- ❓ **Thinking about This Week's Story:** Paul and Silas are imprisoned for spreading the good news. While there, they sing their way through an earthquake. The jailer, who fears for his life, learns about the love of Jesus from Paul. When was a time today that you were afraid? What did you do?
- ❓ **Getting Ready for Next Week's Story:** Paul travels to the city of Athens and speaks with the people there. Many disagree with him. When have you agreed with someone today? When have you disagreed?

### DAILY BIBLE READING

*Read aloud from the DAILY BIBLE READING from the front. What do you want to remember from this reading?*

### PRAY TOGETHER

✠ Sit or stand in a circle, and pray for those who are imprisoned that they might find liberty and freedom in Jesus Christ.

### CLOSING

✠ If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotion time.

#### ✠ Rituals & Traditions: A Blessing to Share

*With permission, hold each other's hands, and say, "God frees you from all sins."*

The "Four Key Faith Practices"—Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service, and Rituals & Traditions—are a framework developed by the Rev. Dr. David Anderson of Milestones Ministry and used by permission from Vibrant Faith Ministries, Bloomington, MN ([www.vibrantfaith.org](http://www.vibrantfaith.org)). For more information about the Four Keys, go to <http://milestonesministry.org/>.