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Unlike gifts received from Santa Claus, whose gifts are the end of the story, God's gifts oblige us to something further. To what do God's gifts oblige us? What is the nature of obligation? How do we make the transition from self-centeredness to God-given generosity? (Volf, p. 39).

At first, I must admit that I stumbled on the notion of "obligation." At our core, most of us do not like to be told what to do by anyone (not even God!). So how do God's gifts oblige us? And what might possibly motivate us to respond in a way that is inspired not by guilt, but grace? Clearly, there is room to grow in our understanding of how God gives and for what purpose.

In thinking about this, we are going to spend several weeks in worship experimenting with a particular formula:

Acceptance of Obligation + Surrender to Love = Joyful Obedience

Christian obedience should always be based on surrender to a person, not simply acceptance of an obligation. That person is Jesus Christ! Thus, the 'abundant life' requires a surrender to love, not just submission to duty.

Too often people only see Christianity in terms of rules and morality—a system of obligations and prohibitions. This entirely misses the point of Christ following. Christian obedience is more like what loving families give each other than what soldiers give their superiors. At their best, families demonstrate their love for each other by doing for one another out of adoration and delight. And so it should be with Christians and their God.

"Far from being incompatible with obedience, surrender provides the motive for obedience. We should obey God because he has won our hearts in love. If he has not, our focus should not be so much on obedience as on knowing his love. For once we get that solidly in place, obedience begins to take care of itself" (*Surrender to Love: Discovering the Heart of Christian Spirituality* by David Benner).

Is it time to fall in love all over again? How wonderful that would be!

My prayer for the people of Fairhope United Methodist Church throughout this series is that Paul's encouragement to the church at Colossae will be true for us as well:

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving (Colossians 2:6-7).

Darren



FAIRHOPE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
The Gathering: October 10, 2021

OPENING SONG

Faith

Shea White, Praise Team

CALL TO WORSHIP

Blessed are you, O God, creator of all that is.

Blessed are you, O God, creator of all that will be.

Blessed are you, O God, who made us in your image.

Let us remember what our God has done! Praise be to God!

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and Holy God, give us diligence to seek you, wisdom to perceive you, and patience to wait for you. Grant us, O God, a mind to meditate on you, eyes to behold you, ears to listen for your word, a heart to love you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SINGING OUR PRAISES

*Your Grace Is Enough
Graves Into Gardens*

CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

Baker Portman Pierce

Son of Carol and Matt Pierce

OFFERING

Generous Giver

Children 4 years-2nd grade can meet at the side doors for Children's Church. They are to be picked up immediately following the service in the CLC Fellowship Hall. Nursery is also available for children 4 years and younger in the Education Building.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Living God, help us so to hear your holy Word
that we may truly understand;
that, understanding, we may believe and believing,
we may follow in all faithfulness and obedience,
seeking your honor and glory in all that we do;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

1 Kings 19:9-10, 15-18

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Colossians 1:1-8

SERMON

"Much Obligated...To Faith"

Rev. Laura Parker

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS

Tia & Bobby Janicki

SENDING FORTH

CLOSING SONG

Assisting in Worship Today: Rev. Laura Parker

Music: Shea White and Praise Band

Media and Sound: Robert Hammon, Jamie Waldhour, Amelia Koser



We love knowing you were here today. Thank you for choosing to worship with Fairhope UMC! If you are a member, regular attender or a visitor, scan this QR code and register your attendance for today.

Prayers for the People

Medical personnel and first responders

Sympathy:

J.D. and Hazel Odom in the loss of her sister-in-law, Margaret Booth.

Melissa and Mike Adams in the loss of his sister, Carla Foss.

Here is a brief summary of our current stewardship:

Offering Received October 3, 2021 - \$35,129

(Online - \$14,062 ~ Mail/Personal delivery - \$21,067)

For those of you who would like to bring your offering to the church, we have a mail slot located in the door across from the glass doors in the breezeway entrance of the education building. Thank you so much for your continued support to Fairhope United Methodist Church.

Jeff White, Business Administrator

Invitation To Join The Church

Present this to the pastor during the last song.

Name(s) _____

Phone _____ Email _____

_____ Joining by Transfer of Church Membership

Transferring from: _____

_____ Joining by Profession of Faith (have not previously been baptized or a member of a church.)

_____ Joining by Reaffirmation of Faith (have been baptized but not sure last church where membership was held.

If you are not yet ready to join but would like more information about church membership, contact one of our pastors or attend the next Coffee with the Pastors on November 14.



SUNDAY VESPER SERVICE TONIGHT!

Please join us this evening for a time of scripture, prayer and song at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary.



LAST DELIVERY TO THOMAS HOSPITAL!

We need to all come together and fill the baskets for our last delivery on Oct. 18. Keep the snacks coming in! You have all done a wonderful job in supporting our local healthcare workers. You have been such a blessing!





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Darren



FAIRHOPE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 10, 2021

PRELUDE

"Our Father Who Art in Heaven"

J.S. Bach

WELCOME AND MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Blessed are you, O God, creator of all that is.

Blessed are you, O God, creator of all that will be.

Blessed are you, O God, who made us in your image.

Let us remember what our God has done! Praise be to God!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious and Holy God, give us diligence to seek you, wisdom to perceive you, and patience to wait for you. Grant us, O God, a mind to meditate on you, eyes to behold you, ears to listen for your word, a heart to love you, and a life to proclaim you, through the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*HYMN OF PRAISE #98

"To God Be The Glory"

*THE APOSTLES' CREED

*GLORIA PATRI

OFFERING

"Shall We Gather At The River"

arr. Carter

*DOXOLOGY

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*PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Send your Spirit among us, O God, as we meditate on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Prepare our minds to hear your Word. Move our hearts to accept what we hear. Purify our will to obey in joy and faith. This we pray through Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

1 Kings 19:9-10, 15-18

HYMN OF PREPARATION #38

"Let Us Plead For Faith Alone"

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

John 10:10, 11:21-27

SERMON

"Much Obligated...To Faith"

Dr. Darren M. McClellan

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

CLOSING HYMN #163 *"Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know"*

RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS Becky & Jim Tate (8:30)

SENDING FORTH

POSTLUDE *"Our Father Who Art in Heaven"* Johann Krieger

Assisting in Worship Today:

Dr. Darren M. McClellan, Rev. Ontonio Christie, Elizabeth Hammock

Acolytes: Jackson & Ellie Strunk (8:30)

Cate Richardson & Hacket Robertson (11:00)

Music: Tom Hood, John Richardson, FUMC Choir

Media and Sound: Josh McClellan, Colin Richardson



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Jeff White, Business Administrator



SUNDAY VESPER SERVICE TONIGHT!

Please join us this evening for a time of scripture, prayer and song at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER DURING SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR TODAY!



Rev. Eric Soard will be visiting our church this Sunday. He is currently Executive Director of the Wesley College Foundation and until recently he and his wife Liz were working as missionaries with the United Methodist Church in Tanzania. He will be sharing with Living Word Sunday School class this week (B212) during the Sunday School hour, 9:45-10:40.

Any who are interested in hearing Rev. Soard share his inspiring and powerful testimony are invited to join Living Word in B212. Scan the QR Code for more information!



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You have been such a blessing!

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If you are not yet ready to join but would like more information about church membership, contact one of our pastors or attend **Coffee with the Pastors today @9:45 am** (Parlor).

Stay connected!

THE LINK

Weekly Newsletter

OCTOBER 10, 2021



WE SEND THIS BY
EMAIL WEEKLY
NOT ON OUR EMAIL LIST?
SUBSCRIBE USING
THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR
PHONE CAMERA:



WEDNESDAY SUPPER AT FAIRHOPE UMC

5:00PM-6:00PM/ OCTOBER 13, 2021



MENU

BARBEQUE
BRISKET

SOUTHERN
COLLARD GREENS

MACARONI &
CHEESE

CORNBREAD

\$5 FOR ADULTS
\$4 FOR CHILDREN
MAX \$20 PER FAMILY

PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH
OFFICE OR GO ONLINE TO
MAKE YOUR RESERVATION
251-928-1148

WWW.FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG

join us for
**TRUNK
OR TREAT**

OCTOBER 27
Where: Grassy Parking Area @ Fairhope UMC
Chew Chew Food Truck: 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Trunk or Treat: 5:30pm

The poster features a dark blue background with several orange and yellow striped triangles scattered around the edges. The text is centered and uses a mix of fonts: a cursive script for "join us for", a large serif font for "TRUNK", a small sans-serif font for "OR", and a large, bold, yellow serif font for "TREAT". The date "OCTOBER 27" is in a white sans-serif font, and the location and times are in a smaller white sans-serif font at the bottom.



Online registration remains open for the following Wednesday night programs – the link is provided below! If you have an interest in serving in one of these programs, please contact Jenna Hood, Director of Children's Ministries at 928-1148. As always, you do not need to have a child in children's ministries to serve!

Children's Choir: K-6th grade | Wednesdays, 4:15-5:00pm | *Wesley Hall (Ed Bldg, 1st floor)

* Children enjoy learning different kinds of worship music which will be sung in various Sunday services. Check them out today in our Gathering service!

* New friends always welcome! Pre-registration is greatly appreciated.

SWIFT: 5th & 6th grade | Wednesdays, 6:00-7:30pm | Attic (CLC, 2nd floor)

* Students will learn and know how it feels to own their faith. Each week they grapple with a specific question about faith, relationships and choices and search God's Word for answers. This group engages in large and small group discussions, mission projects, free-play in the gym and social get-togethers!

* New friends always welcome! Pre-registration is greatly appreciated.

PIER & PIER34 START THIS WEEK!



PIER & PIER34: K-4th Grades

Wednesdays, 6:00pm-7:15pm

Wesley Hall (Ed Bldg, 1st Floor)

Kindergartners through fourth graders are invited to join us this week as we study "The Game of Life: Learning to Live by God's Rules." This fun series uses classic family games to teach all about living for Jesus! All Pier & Pier34 kids will gather together in our large group experience and enjoy energetic worship, our Bible story & message, and participate in some exciting opening games. Then, we will split into our Pier & Pier34 small groups and learn how to apply what we have just discovered to our lives through

activities and discussion! It is going to be so much fun. Grab a friend and make plans to be there!

Pre-registration is greatly appreciated!

Sign up at www.fairhopeumc.org/wednesdayprograms

CARING MINISTRIES



Treats for Thomas...

We need to all come together and fill the baskets for our last delivery on Oct. 18. Keep the snacks coming in! You have all done a wonderful job in supporting our local healthcare workers. You have been such a blessing!



Weekly Bible Study on John

John Drop-in Bible study continues on Mondays from 1:00 - 2:15 pm in Wesley Hall. This week we will be studying Chapters 11-15. Come and be a part of this study of the scriptures.

Opportunities to Serve...

We need volunteer servants to make phone calls to our membership. If you would like to be a part of the team contact Dr. Ann Pearson.

Weekly Support Ministry Groups...

Mondays:

Grief Support 3:00 - 4:00 pm in B-114

Survivors of Suicide (SOS) meets Monday, October 11 at 6:30 pm in Wesley Hall. A Zoom option is available upon request from Dr. Ann Pearson ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org.

Tuesdays:

Cancer Care Support Group meets Tuesday, October 12 from 12:30 – 1:30 pm in the Church Library. This group meets in person but a Zoom option is available by contacting Dr. Ann Pearson ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org.

RECREATION MINISTRIES



UPWARD BASKETBALL FOR YOUTH

Registration is now open for all boys and girls, 4 yrs. old – 4th grade. K4-5 and 3-4 grade, Teams will be coed.

Register online at <https://registration.upward.org/UPW81095> or use your camera to open the QR Code. Registration is \$95. Deadline to register is October 28. First Practice- Monday, November 1.
First Game- Monday, November 29.



ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

SMALL GROUP STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

JOHN BIBLE STUDY

Daytime Bible Study on the book on John Continues this week, facilitated by Dr. Ann Pearson. Everyone is welcome and invited to come with their friends and neighbors to this study that will take place in Wesley Hall, 1:00-2:15 pm.

"PASTOR'S CLASS" UMC 101

All are invited to join Pastor Darren for an interactive Bible study and discussion of the historic theology, beliefs, and mission of the United Methodist Church. Meets in the Fellowship Hall immediately following supper. Wednesdays, 6:10-7:10 pm. Books may be offered but will be optional. No registration necessary. Please note: Nursery can be provided upon request for children 4 years and under.

STUDENT MINISTRIES



Sunday Night Youth//6:30-8:00pm
(October 17, 24, 31) *No Youth Oct 10)

7th-12th grade

Sunday Night Youth takes place almost every week and includes: worship, games, free time in the gym, dinner and so much more. We provide an opportunity for every student in grades 7-12 to worship together with one another and we give them space to build relationships. We can't wait to see you there! There's no need to register and you can always bring a friend. We hope to see YOU this Sunday night! Parents, if you'd like to know more about what youth series we are studying. Simply download the PARENT CUE and read the email updates that are sent out at the beginning of every new series. We provide discussion starters and new ideas on how to continue the conversation and growth at home.

Wednesday Nights//6:30-7:45pm

7th-12th grade

Community Groups are for students in grades 7-12. We provide an opportunity for every person committed to attending C-Groups to grow deeper in their faith with a community of believers their own age to support & pray with them. Every C-Group will have 2 adult leaders committed to walking their faith journey with them. Our C-Groups launch on Wednesday, September 1st @ 6:30-7:45pm. The 10-12 grade C-Groups will meet off campus every Wednesday in a host home with their adult small group leaders. The 7-9 grade C-Groups will meet on-campus upstairs in the CLC. Sign-up is now open for the 2021-22 school year.



The new school year is ahead and it's time to get plugged-in! Parents, did you know that you and your students can stay connected and hear about ALL the activities in student ministry as they're first announced? If you are on social media, follow us:

Instagram: @fairhopeumc.youth

Facebook: @fhsaltstudents

Text Message Reminders: Text the word "Saltstudents" to the number "43506"

SAVE THE DATE:

DISCOVERY WEEKEND 2022

FEB 11-13, 2022

Discovery is a 43-hour spiritual retreat designed for Middle School students held on our church campus and led by High School students and Adult Mentors. Registration for 7th-8th grade participants & 9th-12th grade High School leadership will open on October 1! Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details. If you'd like to help in an adult leadership role, please contact our DW Directors, Larry or Megan Smith.