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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).*

Much Obligated,

Darren



# FAIRHOPE

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost  
The Gathering: October 24, 2021

OPENING SONG

*Changed*

Shea White, Praise Team

CALL TO WORSHIP

God cares for us completely and asks for nothing less than our total commitment.  
**Christ gave his life for us; our response is to trust our lives to him.**  
Through Christ we have died to sin; and only in Christ are we fully alive to God.  
**Come, let us worship God.**

OPENING PRAYER

**Holy and gracious God, your steadfast love abides with your people in every age.**  
**You teach us to trust in you and call us to live in peace with one another.**  
**Show us the way to live grateful lives, without fear,**  
**knowing the true worth of your creation, including ourselves;**  
**in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

SINGING OUR PRAISES

*Let God Arise*  
*Take My Life (And Let It Be)*

CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY

OFFERING

*Gifts From God*

*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

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Genesis 22:1-14

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Colossians 1:15-23

SERMON

*"Much Obligated...to Availability"*

Dr. Darren M. McClellan

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SENDING FORTH

## CLOSING SONG

## *Keep On Growing*

Assisting in Worship Today: Dr. Darren M. McClellan

Acolytes: Mary Stella Henderson

Music: Shea White and Praise Band

Media and Sound: Robert Hammon, Ontonio Christie, 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

### Celebrations:

**Trey and Amanda Canida** on the birth of a son, **William Miles Canida**, born October 18, 2021. Big sister is **Mattie**, aunt is **Allison Floyd** and proud grandparents are **Lang and Debbie Floyd**.

**Cary and Marcy Thrash** on the birth of a son, **William Parker Thrash**, born October 18, 2021. Big sister is Robin and proud grandparents are **Billy and Adrianne Thrash**.

### Here is a brief summary of our current stewardship:

Offering Received October 17, 2021 - \$40,235

(Online - \$10,772 ~ Mail/Personal delivery - \$29,463)

*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: \_\_\_\_\_

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## DATES TO REMEMBER:

### October 24 "Much Obligated to Availability"

Rev. Laura Parker (Sanctuary)

Dr. Darren McClellan (Gathering)

### October 31 "Much Obligated to Participation"

8:30 - Dr. Darren McClellan | SERVE DAY!

All are invited to gather in front of the CLC at **10:30** for a time of devotion and deployment in service to our community. There will be projects for all ages, some on campus and others beyond our walls. If you are aware of a service opportunity for this day, or are ready to help lead a team, please contact Missions Director Jennifer Myrick, Caring Ministries Director Ann Pearson, or one of the pastors.

### November 7 ~ Time Change (Clocks turned back an hour)

"What Is In a Name?" Dr. Darren McClellan (Sanctuary) | Rev. Laura Parker (Gathering)

On this All Saints Sunday, we will be remembering the lives of those in our congregation who have finished their course in faith in the past year, and gathering around the Lord's Table for Holy Communion.

### November 14 "Honor Day"

Dr. Darren McClellan (8:30 Sanctuary) Dr. Darren McClellan (Combined Service in the Christian Life Center)

This is a day of celebration! On this day, we will offer our thanksgiving for the honorable service and sacrifice of our Veterans, we will honor our future as we recognize the new babies in our congregation over the last year, and we will honor our own commitment to God and each other through the consecration of our financial pledge for 2022. Dinner on the grounds will follow immediately after the 11:00 service. It will be a glorious day!



Join us this Wednesday night, October 27, for Trunk or Treat in the grassy parking area. The Chew Chew Food Truck will be here from 5-7pm. Trunk or Treat will be at 5:30pm. We will resume regular Wednesday Night Supper and programs next week.

One of the things we love to do at Fairhope United Methodist Church is make new people feel at home. We are opening the doors wide for hospitality and hosting a dinner for new members and visitors on Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 pm. Pastors, staff and volunteers will be present for you to get to know, as well as other folks who are somewhat new to our family. Please join us for this fun and informative event.



Childcare can be provided upon request. RSVP to the church office by calling (251)928-1148 or online:

<https://www.fairhopeumc.org/article/fairhope-umc-welcome-dinner/>



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Darren



# FAIRHOPE

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

October 24, 2021

PRELUDE

*Voluntary*

(Stanley)

WELCOME AND MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

God cares for us completely and asks for nothing less than our total commitment.

**Christ gave his life for us; our response is to trust our lives to him.**

Through Christ we have died to sin; and only in Christ are we fully alive to God.

**Come, let us worship God.**

INTROIT

*I Will Trust in the Lord*

FUMC Choir

OPENING PRAYER

**Holy and gracious God, your steadfast love abides with your people in every age.**

**You teach us to trust in you and call us to live in peace with one another.**

**Show us the way to live grateful lives, without fear,**

**knowing the true worth of your creation, including ourselves;**

**in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

\*HYMN OF PRAISE #98

*To God Be the Glory*

\*THE APOSTLES' CREED

\*GLORIA PATRI

OFFERING

*God Who Hears*

(IJames)

\*DOXOLOGY

11:00 CHILDREN'S MOMENT

*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

Faithful God, your love stands firm from generation to generation,  
your mercy is always abundant.

Give us open and understanding hearts, that having heard your word,  
we may seek Christ's presence in all whom we meet. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Genesis 22:1-14

HYMN OF PREPARATION #467

*Trust and Obey*

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Colossians 1:15-23

SERMON

*"Much Obligated...to Availability"*

8:30 Dr. Darren M. McClellan 11:00 Rev. Laura Parker

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN #593

*Here I Am, Lord*

SENDING FORTH

POSTLUDE

*Voluntary*

(Stanley)

Assisting in Worship Today:

Dr. Darren M. McClellan, Rev. Ontonio Christie, Rev. Laura Parker, Emily Garner

Acolytes: (8:30) Sims Peters (11:00) Cate Richardson

Music: Tom Hood, John Richardson, FUMC Choir

Media and Sound: Ontonio Christie, Ann Lyles Tapscott, Colin Richardson



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Childcare can be provided upon request. RSVP to the church office by calling (251)928-1148 or online:

<https://www.fairhopeumc.org/article/fairhope-umc-welcome-dinner/>



*Stay connected!*

# THE LINK

*Weekly Newsletter*

OCTOBER 24, 2021



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



join us for

# TRUNK or TREAT

**WHEN: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27TH**  
**WHERE: PARKING LOT**  
**TIME: 5:00-7:00PM**

SET UP: ANYTIME BETWEEN 4:15-5:00PM  
 \*ALL TRUNKS MUST BE READY TO GO BY 5:00PM\*  
 DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26TH

CHEW CHEW FOOD TRUCK WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR DINNER



TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFO  
 CONTACT JENNIFER MYRICK  
[MISSIONS@FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG](mailto:MISSIONS@FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG)  
 OR 251.510.1628



A  
**Festival  
 OF  
 Carols**

**JOIN THE CHRISTMAS CHOIR!**

**REHEARSALS:**  
**WEDNESDAYS 6:00PM | SANCTUARY**

CONTACT TOM HOOD FOR INFO  
[TOM.HOOD@FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG](mailto:TOM.HOOD@FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG)

## JOIN THE CHRISTMS CHOIR!

YES, we know it is only October but Tom is making plans for the Fairhope UMC Christmas Cantata and is in need of NARRATORS and SINGERS! Don't want to sing year round but want to make a JOYFUL noise at Christmas? JOIN THE CHRISTMAS CANTATA CHOIR!

Here are a few details:

**Name of the Cantata:**

*What Sweeter Music: A Festival of Carols  
 by Mark Hayes*

**Date of the Cantata:**

*Sunday, December 12 (Traditional Services)*

**Rehearsals:**

*Wednesday nights @ 6:30 pm (Sanctuary)*

**Have Questions? Interested?**

*Contact Tom Hood, Director of Music Ministries,  
[tom.hood@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:tom.hood@fairhopeumc.org)*

STEWARDSHIP 2021

# Much OBLIGED



## SERVE DAY

SUNDAY OCTOBER 31ST @ 10:30AM

PROJECTS FOR ALL AGES!

### PROJECTS:

CLEANING BUCKETS-CLC  
KIDZ MEALS (WEEKEND MEALS FOR SCHOOL KIDS)-WESLEY  
HALL FLOWER DELIVERY  
BBQ LUNCH DELIVERY  
GAGA PIT SITE WORK PREP- GRASSY PARKING LOT  
YARD CLEANING PROJECTS

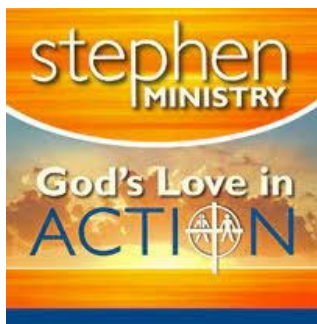
CONTACT JENNIFER MYRICK  
MISSIONS@FAIRHOPEUMC.ORG

## ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

**"PASTOR'S CLASS" UMC 101** ~ Next class is Wednesday, November 3

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.

## CARING MINISTRIES



### Stephen Ministers are ready to care...

There are times when each of us needs the care of another person, a Christian friend and a Stephen Minister. Our Stephen Ministers are trained, confidential, and equipped to serve our church and community. If you know of someone who would benefit from this ministry, contact Dr. Ann Pearson at 251-928-1148 or [ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org).

### Servant Opportunities....

Telephone callers are needed to check in with our members every 4 to 6 weeks. This is a great way for our church family to stay connected. Please contact Dr. Ann Pearson at the church office at 251-928-1148 or [ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org) if you are interested in helping with this ministry.

### Support Ministries...

- **Grief Group** meets every Monday from 3:00 to 4:00 pm in B-114 off of Wesley Hall. This is a sacred confidential place to share ones feelings of loss.
- **Survivors of Suicide (SOS)** meets in person Monday, Oct. 25 at 6:30 pm in B-114. A Zoom option is available upon request by emailing [ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org).
- **Tough Dogs Cancer Support** meets in person Tuesday, Oct. 26 at 12:30 pm in the Church Library. A Zoom option is available upon request by emailing [ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:ann.pearson@fairhopeumc.org).

### Hospital Visitation....

Remember to let your Pastoral staff know when you are in the hospital so we can come and pray with you. We want to walk this journey with you and support you.

## 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.





**NO CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES THIS WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 27<sup>th</sup>. This includes Children's Choir, PIER, PIER34, & SWIFT.**

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-6<sup>th</sup> grade | Wednesdays, 4:15-5:00pm | \*Wesley Hall (Ed Bldg, 1<sup>st</sup> floor)**

\* Children enjoy learning different kinds of worship music which will be sung in various Sunday services.

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

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

\* Students will learn and know how it feels to own their faith. Each week they grapple with a specific question about faith, relationships, 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.

**JOIN US FOR PIER & PIER34**



**PIER & PIER34: K-4<sup>th</sup> Grades | Wednesdays, 6:00pm-7:15pm  
Wesley Hall (Ed Bldg, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor)**

K-4<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to join us for "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!



### ACOLYTES IN ACTION

Have an acolyte that loves to serve? We want to see our #acolytesinaction! We are so proud of our kids for serving in this way. So, take a picture of your acolyte serving and send it to Jenna at [jenna.hood@fairhopeumc.org](mailto:jenna.hood@fairhopeumc.org) to share on our children's Insta page or post it on your own Instagram account for us to see! Don't forget to tag @fairhopeumc\_childrens\_min and use the hashtag #acolytesinaction! We can't wait to see all of our wonderful acolytes!



Sign up at [www.fairhopeumc.org/wednesdayprograms](http://www.fairhopeumc.org/wednesdayprograms)



## **TRUNK OR TREAT & YOUTH AFTER PARTY**

**Wednesday, October 27**

**6:30-8 pm//Education Building//Wesley Hall**

All C Groups are participating in trunk or treat this Wednesday night and need to arrive by 5:00 pm in costume. The trick or treating begins at 5:30pm. If you do not know what your trunks theme is, please message your group leaders for more details or check the groupme account for your grade. Once we are finished, wear your costumes and come on over to the **Youth**

**After Party.** You DO NOT want to miss out on this night of FUN and CRAZY!

What is an AFTER PARTY??? *Food, games, prizes and more just for the 7th-12th grade students and takes place in Wesley Hall.* Can't make it to the trunk or treat because of the time? DON'T WORRY! Just show up at 6:30 pm and wear a costume to enter the drawing for a prize!!! *The location for this Party is in Wesley Hall located on the front part of the campus.* We will have small group leaders posted at the doors of the Education building to let you in.

## **Sunday Night Youth//6:30-8:00pm**

**(October 24, November 7, 14, 28)**

**\*No Youth on 10/31 or 11/21 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. Our C-Groups meet 6:30-7:45pm on Wednesdays.



Do you need to get plugged-into Student Ministry? Students and Parents, you can keep up with all that is going on in our area of ministry and get the news first! You can follow us on social media & receive text messages customized just for Student Ministry information. Follow these simple steps below:

Instagram: @fairhopeumc.youth

Facebook: @fhsaltstudents

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

## **CONFIRMATION 2022**

**Begins January 9th**

**12:30-2:00 pm**

Registration for our upcoming Confirmation Class will be emailed to parents of current 7th graders on November 7. The class begins on Sunday, January 9, 2022 at 12:30pm with an orientation which will include lunch for students participating in the class and their parents. Please watch for the registration link in the bulletin and through our social media accounts.

A requirement for our Confirmation Class is to participate in Discovery Weekend. The important details can be found below. Please save this date as well.

## **DISCOVERY WEEKEND 2022**

**February 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.