

# The FIRST-CENTENARIAN

**Vision Statement:** Build a healthy and diverse community of disciples of Jesus Christ.

**VOLUME 17, NO. 27**  
**AUGUST 28TH, 2026**

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST-CENTENARY

**SUN.**  
Aug 30th

8:30AM: Sanctuary Worship Service  
9:30AM: Sunday School  
10:45AM: Sanctuary and The Vine Worship Services  
12:00PM: Free College Student Lunch  
4:30PM: Sunday Night Youth Group  
5:00PM: Sunday Night Worship & Dinner  
5:00PM: Positive Christian Singles Walk at Northgate Mall  
6:00PM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal

**MON.**  
Aug 31st

10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry  
3:00PM: The Centenary After-School Program  
6:00PM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal

**TUES.**  
Sept 1st

10:00AM: Church Staff Meeting  
10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry  
10:00AM: Crafty Capers  
10:00AM: Positive Christian Singles Charley's Coffee Talk  
3:00PM: The Centenary After-School Program  
6:00PM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal

**WED.**  
Sept 2nd

10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry  
3:00PM: The Centenary After-School Program  
4:45PM: Wednesday Night Youth Program  
5:15PM: Prime Time Wednesday Meal  
5:45PM: JumpStart Children's Choir  
6:00PM: Children's 4yr. - 1st Grade Choir  
6:00PM: Chancel Ringers  
6:30PM: Prime Time Wednesday Classes  
6:30PM: Wednesday Night Children's Program  
6:35PM: Children's Instrumental Music  
7:00PM: Chancel Choir

**THURS.**  
Sept 3rd

10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry  
10:00AM: ABIDE Caregiver's Support Group  
1:30PM: Aldergates Vibrations  
3:00PM: The Centenary After-School Program  
6:00PM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal

**FRI.**  
Sept 4th

3:00PM: The Centenary After-School Program

**SAT.**  
Sept 5th

8:30AM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal  
10:00AM: Creation Care Devotional Hike  
10:00AM: Positive Christian Singles Lunch at McAlisters



## DEVOTIONAL HIKE

Our last Devotional Hike of the summer will take place at **10:00 a.m. on September 5th at Enterprise South!** These hikes offer a meaningful time to connect with God through scripture and the beauty of the outdoors. We will meet at the Visitors Center before the hike. All are welcome to join us!

For more information, contact Caroline Archer at [carcher@firstcentenary.com](mailto:carcher@firstcentenary.com).



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**@FIRSTCENTENARY**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:**  
**FIRSTCENTENARY.COM**





## CLERGY CORNER

Rev. Mary Thompson

Acts 9: 1-6 "Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he

found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he journeyed, he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

I am married with two sons (ages 5 and 9). Every Friday we can be at home, we have family movie night. My 5-year-old recently asked to watch Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker and we explained he needed to watch the first two movies in that trilogy first. Two weekends later we have finished The Force Awakens, The Last Jedi, and The Rise of Skywalker.

Watching these movies with my kids has made me think a lot about stories of redemption. In The Rise of Skywalker, Finn, the former stormtrooper (bad guy), now rebel fighter (good guy), meets more rebel fighters that he learns were once also stormtroopers. He is shocked to learn that others have made the same radical transformation that he made.

There are a lot of redemption stories in Scripture, but this particular Star Wars example reminded me of Saul, the Christian persecutor, becoming Paul, the Christ-follower and evangelist. Both Saul and Finn go from people who persecute and even kill the "good guys" to become people who lead and defend the "good guys."

Everyone loves a good redemption story. Some part of us is satisfied when we see a person transformed into a better person. What is shocking is how few people think that the same could be true for them. We can all be forgiven and redeemed. God has given us numerous examples in Scripture of persons having their sins forgiven and becoming a better disciple and Christ-follower. Many of these persons have done horrendous things. But we celebrate when they are redeemed. We rejoice like the Prodigal Son's father upon his return. But do we accept this as true for ourselves?

May we all show ourselves the same grace that we feel others deserve. May we all see that because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we have been redeemed. May we all eagerly anticipate the better than Hollywood ending when Christ comes in final victory.

~ Mary



## PRIME TIME WEDNESDAY

**Meal:** 5:15 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.      **Chancel Ringers:** 6:00 p.m.  
**Classes:** 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.      **Chancel Choir:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Children's, Youth, & College Programs:** 6:30 p.m.

## THIS SEASON'S CLASSES

**Salvation on Sand Mountain:  
Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia  
by Dennis Covington**

led by Pastor Jason in the Prigmore Room

**Saving Grace**

led by Pastor Will in the Oak Street Center Room 101/102

**A Most Tolerant Little Town:  
The Explosive Beginning of School Desegregation  
by Rachel Martin**

led by Pastor Michelle in the Parlor

## DINNER INFORMATION

Please make dinner reservations by 4 p.m. Monday

### Costs:

**Adult Meal:** \$10  
**Child's Meal:** \$5  
**Family Meal:** \$30

### Menu:

#### September 2nd

Tuscan Chicken Pasta, Roasted Seasonal Vegetables, Garden Salad, Garlic Bread, Nut & Craisin Salad, and Honey Bun Cake



our beautiful stained-glass windows. **Payment is due by September 16th.** We're also planning a fall foliage cruise in October—more details to come!

JOYs is a new group for active adults 60+ looking for opportunities to connect with friends. Our first event is a **Lunch & Learn on September 18th at 11:30 a.m. in the Prigmore Room.** Enjoy an Apple Spice lunch for \$15 while Sally Richardson shares the history and symbolism of

## AMPLIFY MEDIA

First-Centenary UMC has an account with Amplify Media where anyone who is a church member or active participant can set up a personal account to have access to this service. Think of this as like "Netflix" for bible studies, book studies, and even worship reflections. This is a great resource for Sunday schools, bible studies, small groups, or individuals. Please use the following code to set up your free account:

**Congregation Access Code: WMNPZV**





Preschoolers are little artists. They experience so much joy when they create something and say, "Look at what I made!" But we want preschoolers to know that THEY are made by God and that they are important to God. So this month, our bottom line for preschoolers is God made me wonderful. Monthly Verse: "How you made me is amazing and wonderful." Psalm 139:14



Our Elementary series this month is 'Masterpiece—Made by God,' and we're talking about what God made and how what God made has a purpose. This isn't about the stars or the mountains or the oceans, but you! You are a masterpiece. Designed by God. Built with a purpose. That means you're not random, and you're not just one of many—you are one of a kind! It's going to be a great month! Monthly Verse: "How you made me is amazing and wonderful. I praise you for that. What you have done is wonderful. I know that very well." Psalm 139:14

**All Sunday School classes are located in the Children's Wing on the second floor.**

### Sunday School and Worship Opportunities

- Early Service Childcare: 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
- Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
- First Kids Worship: 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
- First Kids Sunday Night: 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.



## 3RD GRADE BIBLES

Join us on September 13th at 10:45 a.m. in the Sanctuary as we celebrate our 3rd graders! During the worship service, each 3rd grader will receive their very own Bible as they continue learning more about God's Word. A reception will follow the service. We look forward to celebrating this special day with our 3rd graders and their families! **For more information, contact Ellen at [firstkids@firstcentenary.com](mailto:firstkids@firstcentenary.com).**



## FORWARD GRIEF GROUP

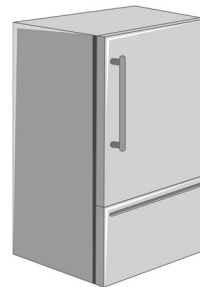
Forward is an group which offers support for those who have lost a spouse. There will seven sessions beginning **September 12th from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the Parlor.**

These groups on Saturdays, offer space for the bereaved to share experiences and begin to

find ways to step Forward into the future. **If you or someone you know is interested in joining this group, please contact the Church office at 423-756-2021.** There is no charge to participate.



United Women in Faith is collecting feminine hygiene products to support Love, Period. of Chattanooga's Back to School drive. Donations of unscented, individually wrapped tampons, thin pads, liners, and small, clean cosmetic bags can be dropped off in the Welcome Center through August 31st. If preferred, you can use the Amazon Wish List found on the "Donate" section of the Love, Period. webpage to shop for your items. This mission is supported by St. Timothy's Episcopal Church.



## COMMUNITY FRIDGE

The College Ministry/Wesley Center is opening a Community Free Fridge and Pantry to combat student food insecurity on UTC campus. They are looking for a donation of standard sized fridge in good condition to help with this project. If you are interested in helping, please contact Kirsten: [kshipp@firstcentenary.com](mailto:kshipp@firstcentenary.com).



## DONATE TO THE CENTENARY!

The Centenary After School Program needs your help to welcome 94 students for the 2026-27 school year! Donations of composition books, colored pencils, copy paper, index cards, highlighters, tape, glue sticks, dry erase markers, and kindergarten writing pads would be greatly appreciated. **Please drop off any donations in the Welcome Center.**

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## YOUTH BACK-TO-SCHOOL BASH 2026



## SUNDAY WORSHIP

August 30th, 2026

**Sanctuary Services:**  
**8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.**

"I Will Be With You"  
Exodus 3:1-15  
Rev. Mary Thompson

**The Vine Service:**  
**10:45 a.m.**

"Lessons from Moses: Follow the Rules"  
Exodus 20:1-20  
Rev. Dr. Will Lauderback

**Mustard Tree Service:**  
**5:00 p.m.**

**The Vine**  
Rev. Dr. Will Lauderback

**Lectionary Readings:**

Exodus 3:1-15  
Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b  
Romans 12:9-21  
Matthew 16:21-28

**WDEF-TV Televised Sermons:**  
**11:30 a.m. Sundays & 12:35 a.m. Mondays**

"The Book of James"  
Rev. Jason Gattis