

The FIRST-CENTENARIAN

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

VOLUME 17, NO. 24
AUGUST 7TH, 2026

THIS WEEK AT FIRST-CENTENARY

SUN.
Aug 9th

8:30AM: Sanctuary Worship Service
9:30AM: Sunday School
9:45AM: First Kids Parent and Volunteer Meeting
10:45AM: Sanctuary and The Vine Worship Services
10:45AM: Blessing of the Backpacks
12:00PM: Back-To-School Bash
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 10th

10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry
2:00PM: Executive Team Meeting
5:30PM: Positive Christian Singles Ceramics Painting Class
6:00PM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal

TUES.
Aug 11th

10:00AM: Church Staff Meeting
10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry
10:00AM: Crafty Capers
10:00AM: Positive Christian Singles Charley's Coffee Talk
6:00PM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal

WED.
Aug 12th

10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry
12:00PM: Staff Parish Relations Committee Meeting
4:45PM: Wednesday Night Youth Program
5:15PM: Prime Time Wednesday Meal
5:30PM: Positive Christian Singles Dinner at Champy's
6:30PM: Prime Time Wednesday Classes
6:30PM: Wednesday Night Children's Program
6:30PM: Creation Care Meeting

THURS.
Aug 13th

9:00AM: Garden Mission
10:00AM: ABIDE Respite Ministry
6:00PM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal

FRI.
Aug 14th

No events scheduled

SAT.
Aug 15th

8:30AM: Oak Street Playhouse Rehearsal



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

As a new school year begins, we invite all students to join us for our annual Blessing of the Backpacks during the **10:45 a.m. worship services in The Vine and the Sanctuary on August 9th**. Bring your backpack as we pray for God's guidance, protection, and blessings over the upcoming school year. Every student will receive a special backpack tag as a reminder that God is with them wherever they go.



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FIRSTCENTENARY.COM





CLERGY CORNER

Rev. Jason Gattis

I'm sure this has been pointed out in the past, but I don't think we truly realize what a blessing it is to have a retired bishop as an ACTIVE part of our congrega-

tion. Typically, retired bishops may attend worship from time to time in the areas they retire, but I haven't known or heard of any who diligently participate in all aspects of the church like Bishop Looney does at First-Centenary. The Morgan Class and folks who sit around him on Sunday morning know of this blessing, as do the clergy staff, but I would guess it doesn't extend much further than that.

That blessing was witnessed a couple of years ago when I invited Bishop Looney to preach on a Sunday morning. Bishop Looney had set a goal to preach in every church he had served during the year of his 90th birthday. He preached about how believers can prepare for the end of our lives and "end well." I was humbled when he received a standing ovation. It was quite powerful and can still be watched at firstcentenary.com/media/6dz9hgw/let-s-prepare-for-our-funeral.

Someone was in worship that day who had not understood the delight of Bishop Looney and realized that something needed to be done to make sure his impact extends to future generations. Our current Lay Leader, Andy Johns, took his awareness by the horns and began work on a podcast that is now in the works. Over the past two months, Andy has organized some of the greatest clergy minds associated with the Holston Conference to have a conversation with Bishop Looney on a variety of topics from storytelling to grief. Included, I may add, are some current and former FCUMC clergy that you will certainly recognize.

I offer this to you now so that you can be on the lookout for the podcast release in September, which we will communicate through all of our media channels when it gets close. Believe me when I say it will be something you won't want to miss!

See you Sunday.
Pastor Jason



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

Starting August 12th

Bible Study

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 Conference Room

DINNER INFORMATION

Please make dinner reservations by 4 p.m. Monday

Costs:

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

Menu:

August 12th

Chicken tenders, Green Beans, Mac & Cheese,
Rolls, Nut & Craisin Salad, Vegetarian Option:
Vegan Plant-Based Chik'n Strips, and
Banana Pudding



NEW 5TH GRADE BIBLE STUDY THIS FALL!

This Bible study is designed especially for 5th graders as they prepare for the exciting transition into youth group. Together, we'll take a deeper dive into God's Word through engaging discussions, thoughtful questions, and practical ways to apply biblical truths to everyday life. Students will build confidence in reading and understanding the Bible, strengthen their faith, and develop friendships with other preteens in a welcoming, encouraging environment. This class serves as a meaningful bridge between children's ministry and youth ministry; a "launch point" helping 5th graders feel prepared, connected, and excited for the adventure ahead.



BACK-TO-SCHOOL BASH

Kick off the new school year with an afternoon at our Back-to-School Bash! The youth are invited to **meet at the Student Center at 12:00 p.m. on August 9th** before we head out for the day. It's a great way to reconnect with friends, welcome new students, and start the school year. We can't wait to see you there! **For more information, contact Tori at tcrook@firstcentenary.com.**



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

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.



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



Join us for two opportunities as we explore our call to love our neighbors. On **August 18th at 6:00 p.m.**, take part in a guided Civil Rights Walking Tour through downtown Chattanooga. Then, on **September 23rd**, join us for Prime Time Wednesday Movie Night with **dinner at 5:15 p.m. and the film at 6:15 p.m. in The Vine**. Both events are sponsored by the First-Centenary Faith and Justice Committee and are open to all. To register visit our website's announcements page at firstcentenary.com/announcements.



Join us for the First Kids Parent and Volunteer Meeting on **August 9th at 9:45 a.m. in the Oak Street Theater!** This is for all First Kids parents, current volunteers, and anyone interested in getting involved. We'll share important updates, what's coming up in the year ahead, and talk about ways you can be part of all that's happening in First Kids.



EXPRESSING GRATITUDE: The Impact of ABIDE Scholarships

While our ABIDE program days offer valuable socialization for participants, they also grant crucial respite to caregivers. Additionally, the Al and Chris Bowles Scholarship helps alleviate financial burdens for numerous families. Highlighting the impact of this support, one recipient caregiver shared: "Thanks to the incredible participants, amazing volunteers, and superb leadership at Abide she now participates in conversations, enjoys company, exercises, plays games, and looks forward to her days at the Abide program with joy and excitement. Without the Scholarship Program she wouldn't have this beautiful opportunity. I thank Abide from the bottom of my heart for making this possible and bringing my mother back to me."

Please consider making a donation to either our Al and Chris Bowles Scholarship or our general fund by visiting firstcentenary.com/abide to help sustain our support for current and future ABIDE families.



FCCOLLEGE HIWASSEE TUBING

fcCollege is bringing the summer to a close! Join us on August 23rd at 12:00 p.m. as we head out for tubing on the Hiwassee River. We'll meet at the church and carpool down together. Lunch is included, and the cost is \$10 for the trip. Don't forget to bring a little extra spending money if you'd like! RSVP and pay by contacting Kirsten Shipp at kshipp@firstcentenary.com.

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SUNDAY WORSHIP

August 9th, 2026

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

"The Book of James"
James 2:14-17
Rev. Jason Gattis

The Vine Service:
10:45 a.m.

"Life Lessons from Moses: Listening Skills"
Exodus 3:1-15
Rev. Dr. Will Lauderback

Mustard Tree Service:
5:00 p.m.
The Vine

Rev. Dr. Will Lauderback

Lectionary Readings:

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28
Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b
Romans 10:5-15
Matthew 14:22-33

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

"The Book of James"
Rev. Jason Gattis