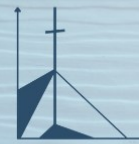


August 2026

The Anchor



First United Methodist Church Fox Hill

A vibrant church, making Christian disciples and enriching lives through outreach.

Staff

Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brian Sixbey

Assistant Pastor

Rev. Becky Holland

Office Manager

Kassandra Brown

Music Director/Organist

Mark Biondolillo

Accompanist

Andrew Blackmon

Youth Director/Worship

Leader

Larissa Luma

Treasurer

Ruth Simkins

Part-Time Sexton

Mikell Bond

Nursery Attendant

Chelsea Kyme

Asst. Nursery Attendant

Helene Kasongo

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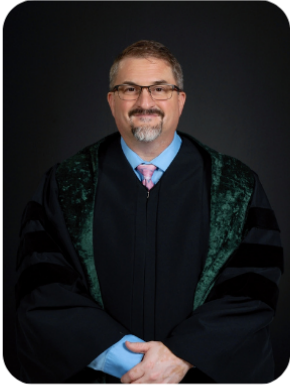
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FROM OUR PASTOR

THE NEXT
FAITHFUL STEP

Rev. Dr. Brian Sixbey



If you keep track of such things, I've used this phrase ("the next faithful step") quite a few times in these articles, and I've done a few sermon series on this theme, including the current one. There's a good reason for that—I have found it to be a useful idea for nearly everything I do.

When I first came to First UMC Fox Hill in 2010, I had all kinds of ideas about what we needed to do, when we needed to do it, and how we should go about it. Some of those ideas were good, some were misplaced, and some were excellent, but the timing was off. It is entirely possible to do the right thing at the wrong time.

“
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possible to
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thing at the
wrong
time.”

You see, I wanted, above all, to help grow First UMC Fox Hill. But there was a problem: we had too much conflict, too many differences of opinion, and too much friction among our people for a focus on growth to be viable at that time. More than that, I've since come to believe that growth is not the purpose of the church. Rather, being faithful witnesses of Jesus in today's world is our ultimate purpose, and growth will result from our witness and from learning how to love—not always in the way or at the time we want, but in God's time and in God's way.

We are in a good place now, with people who look after one another, people who are eager to help each other, and people who love each other. Indeed, while we have not grown significantly in Sunday morning attendance, we are blessed with an expanding cadre of children and youth, especially on Sunday evenings. As I write this, a large contingent is heading to Knoxville to be a blessing to the city in the name of Jesus, and last year many of those same youth traveled to the Navajo reservation to bless the people there.

In my humble opinion, it seems to me that we have a couple of next faithful steps we can take now. First, I would like to see how we can connect our youth and children with the rest of our congregation so that we can become more intergenerational. Second, I'd like to encourage us to take advantage of some of the opportunities we have

to witness to one another and to the community, especially around the Pumpkin Patch—for instance, by planning community events such as a Pet Blessing Day. Third, I believe we need to continue to love and serve one another well and learn how to include our newest members and guests in that love.

“WITH GOD, NOT ONLY ARE ALL THINGS POSSIBLE, BUT THE BEST DAYS ARE YET TO COME!”

My point isn't to lay out a multi-point plan, but rather to find the next faithful step in each area. If you have ideas—and particularly if you have the energy to help carry out those ideas—please catch up with me. I don't keep regular office hours because crises happen when they happen, not when I plan them, but I am generally in the office on Monday through Thursday afternoons, and I respond to texts, emails, and calls.

While we are not numerically the church we were when I arrived in 2010, with God, not only are all things possible, but the best days are yet to come!

As always, I am privileged to be your pastor and a fellow servant of Christ alongside you.

Brian K. Sibley

SUNDAY SCHOOL HELP!

Becky Felix's elementary age Sunday school class will be moving downstairs to the Bible 201 room sometime in September. We could use help clearing out the room, cleaning up the room (including painting if anyone would like to do that!), and turning the room next door into a temporary storage space. If you're interested in helping with the project, please check with Pastor Brian or Becky.

THE NEXT FAITHFUL STEP

The Next Faithful Step is the new sermon series, starting late July. We'll be looking at stories of people who were caught in a "pickle" to see how they navigated through it. The idea for the series is that we don't have to know it all – we only need to imagine and take the next faithful step.

AMBASSADORS NEEDED!

Starting in August, we would love to gain new ambassadors who will greet people for our worship services, especially for the second service. Speak with Maude Casey or Pastor Brian for more information.

SNOW CONE SUNDAY, AUGUST 23!

On Sunday, August 23, the day before school starts, we'll celebrate Snow Cone Sunday. We will have a single, 10am service, followed by free snow cones in the parking lot afterwards. Feel free to invite friends, neighbors, and others to come, and if you would like to help cover the cost, let Pastor Brian know.

MARTHA'S MINISTRY

Martha's Ministry is a wonderful group of ladies who give their dedicated service and outpouring of love to grieving families in their time of need. These ladies graciously prepare a reception for family and friends either at the church or in their homes. This ministry of the church, can always use more help! If you are interested, please call or email Marilyn Eubank.

August Team Leader: Marilyn Eubank

August Members: Marilyn Eubank, Evelyn Boone, Nanci Browning, Amy Johnson, Jo Ann Smith, Joyce Wilson, Beverly Stanley, Pat and Sue Brooker.

FINACIAL FUNDAMENTALS

AUGUST 2026

This report briefly addresses finances at FUMC Fox Hill. The latest information is in the weekly bulletin available at church or through our web site.

First Fox Hill finances continue to be very tight for 2026. We did cover a significant expense to address some needed repairs to the church parsonage, but are behind on our Apportionment shared expenses and planned set-asides for major maintenance. You may have noted that the sidewalk along Salt Pond Road that was part of our roof repair/replacement project is now complete thanks to financial and personal labor gifts. Thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to bringing this project to fruition!

Your donations go to cover many expenses easy to forget about. Some things get our attention like major roof or HVAC repairs, mission programs, and youth trips. And, of course, there are the salaries of our staff. But, without covering the “mundane” expenses like utilities, nothing else could happen. You may be surprised to learn that in the first 7 months of 2026, we have paid over \$25,430 for electricity, \$6,700 for gas, \$1,166 for telephone, and \$1,100 for water, sewer, and trash. Thank you for ALL your support.

By the time you receive this copy of the Anchor, you should have received your second quarter donation statement. As always, please remember these statements are not bills, but our way of letting you help us ensure we are correctly posting your information. If you have any questions or don't receive a statement you are expecting, please contact the office so the finance team can investigate. If you need to update your e-mail address, please call the office, or better yet, send an email to churchoffice@firstumcfohill.org. If you don't have email, that's fine, we will catch you in person at church or send your report by postal mail.

Remember, on-line giving can be a convenient way to provide church support throughout the year. Gifts to the One Fund – General Offering allow the staff flexibility in managing funds effectively. [Click here](#) for easy on-line access. You can also use your phone and the donation QR Code or go to www.firstumcfohill.org, click on give, scroll down to GIVE ONLINE, and click. There you can set up one-time gifts or automatic regular giving on a weekly, twice a month, or monthly schedule.

Please direct **concerns/questions** about FUMC FH finances to our financial staff via the office or Bill Bryan, Finance Chair, at (757) 851-0748 or by e-mail to billb-1111@cox.net.

Total One Fund – Through June 2026		
Income For Planned Expenses ¹		\$213,459
Total One Fund Expenses (excludes pass through ²)	Planned	\$265,920
	Actual	\$226,190
Pass Through Income ²		\$4,893
Pass Through Expense ²		\$5,101
“Pay-It-Forward” Contributions		\$1,335
LUMENs Fund Raiser Income		\$270
LUMENs Fund Raiser Expense		\$0
Roof & Boiler Repair Income 2026 ³		\$4,256
Roof & Boiler Repair Expense 2026		\$14,542
Loan Principal Balance – July 1		\$147,403
¹ Includes regular and memorial contributions, building use income, interest, not listed, etc.		
² Represents contributions for non-budget items, e.g., flowers, special mission programs, not listed, etc.		
³ Does not include \$153,922 net loan for roof project.		



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

REPORT ON 244TH VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

By Melanie Souder

The 244th Session of the Virginia Annual Conference was held in Harrisonburg, Virginia, at the Atlantic Union Bank Center from June 17–20, 2026. I, along with Pastor Brian, Larissa Luma and 2 of our youth, Ferdinand and Tony Clement attended. The conference continued under the banner of “A Conference in Three Movements”. This year marked the second movement, the historical movement, by focusing on “Reclaiming the Heart of Methodism”.

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson led the conference, which included a Laity Address by Martha Stokes, who reflected on themes of faith, identity, and spiritual mentorship through the lens of 2 Timothy 1:4–7. Worship was a central focus, featuring an Opening Worship service, a Memorial Service preached by Rev. David McAllister-Wilson, and a Juneteenth Worship service.

Business conducted during the conference included the passage of reports regarding equitable compensation, pension and health benefit support, and a single-payer plan. Recognitions were held for various ministries and retirements, including the ministry of Rev. M.J. Kim, which benefited from a newly created fund to support immigrant clergy. Additionally, the conference recognized several congregations with "Wesley Flame" awards for their innovative ministries and celebrated new ordinations and pastoral appointments.

The conference also featured presentations from Dr. Ashley Boggan and Rev. Dr. Candace Lewis, who challenged attendees to reclaim the heart of their mission by focusing on heart renewal, small-group discipleship, and a willingness to challenge unjust systems.

All of the session videos and further details may be viewed at <https://vaumc.org/ac2026-session-recordings/>.



FOOD PANTRY UPDATE



Thank you to everyone who volunteered with shopping, bagging, distribution, and cleanup. Your faithful service makes this ministry possible.



88

Households
Served



316

Persons Served
(121 children, 119
adults, and 76 seniors)



135

Bags
Distributed



11

New
Households

Each bag included 10 non-perishable food items, one bottle of maple syrup, and approximately 3 pounds of frozen protein.

Thank you for helping keep the Red Food Pantry stocked and serving our neighbors.



Mary and the Food Pantry Team

FIFTY PLUS UPDATE

As we get ready for a new season of activities, we will gather for our annual **Fifty Plus Potluck Picnic in the Park at Gosnold's Hope Park, 901 E. Little Back River Road**. Plans are to **meet at the Cherry Shelter** (fourth left after entering the park). Mark your calendar now for **5 pm, Tuesday, August 11**. We will provide fried chicken, soft drinks, and paper products; you provide a dish to share. **Cost is just \$3.00**. When you sign up, be prepared to tell us what you plan to bring, e.g., appetizer, salad, vegetable, entrée, dessert, other. In addition to great fellowship, we'll chat about possible future activities.

Contact Anne or Bill Bryan with your ideas and to sign-up so we have a headcount – in person, at abandbb1@cox.net, or by phone to 757-851-0748. Please do it NOW.

Our **first planned outing of the 2026 – 27 season** is a trip to the **Surry Nuclear Power Plant Visitor Information Center** scheduled for **Thursday, September 17**. We'll have a tour then stop for a great lunch and return via the **Scotland – Jamestown Ferry**. Cost is \$5.00 plus your lunch.

And be sure to watch the First Fox Hill pubs to keep tab on activities as soon as they are published so you don't miss out. September and October will be here before you realize – opportunities on the horizon!

BIRTHDAYS

AUGUST 2026

Emma Rogers	8/2	John Rochelle	8/14	Chris Moore	8/24
Mark Biondolillo	8/3	Nanci Browning	8/14	Teresa Hodges	8/25
Heather Dickey	8/3	Samuel Gillespie	8/15	Kaitlyn Walden	8/25
Sandy Williams	8/4	Sean Norton	8/15	Ryan Ferguson	8/25
Ashley Conner	8/4	Rebecca Cross	8/16	Brian Eubank Sr.	8/26
Danielle Gaskins	8/5	Donna Leavell	8/16	Dakota Maninga	8/26
Brian Fatkin	8/5	Mark McKenney	8/16	Janet Holden	8/26
Ashley Harris	8/6	Courtney Darden	8/20	Courtney Blodgett	8/26
Teresa Seekins	8/6	Connie Rowe	8/21	Tiffany Quinn	8/27
Ronnie Gurganus	8/8	Lesley Tonkin	8/22	Mary McAnally	8/27
Jeremiah McKenney	8/8	Doug Peters	8/22	Donnie Coe	8/28
Logan Lindeman	8/8	Mary Johnson	8/23	Cade Black	8/29
Cindy Pereira	8/9	James Hancock	8/23	Brian Gibbons	8/29
Graham Currin	8/10	Kelly Ogdin	8/23	Parker Tuttle	8/30
Royal Greer Jr.	8/10	Rachel Felix	8/23	Steven Alhouse	8/30
Patrick Parker	8/13	Donnie Brookman	8/24	Terrie Galay	8/30
Glenda Helms	8/13	Glenn Emory	8/24	Rhonda Chesson	8/30
Becky Barnes	8/13	Madison Reynolds	8/24	Ginny Tuttle	8/31
Andrew Coe	8/13	Nancy Jo Reynolds	8/24	Crystal McKenney	8/31
				Oliver Haas	8/31

ANIVERSARIES



David & Clela Farlee	8/2
Don & Karen Tackett	8/4
Steven & Martha Alhouse	8/8
Mike & Jennifer Williams	8/8
Ken & Becky Felix	8/9
Tom & Mary Gore	8/10
Les & Debbie Bollinger	8/13
Dave & Kathy Rogers	8/14
Brian & Shan Sixbey	8/14
Paul & Iris Avery	8/14
Kathy & Jim Steinke	8/14
Brady & Lindsay Broich	8/17
Mason & Debbie Green	8/19
Dennis & Martina Lee	8/20
Mark & Patty Biondolillo	8/24

AUGUST CALENDAR

Friday, August 7

1:00 p.m. Buckroe New Hope AA Group Annual
Dinner: FH (set up 1:00-8:30pm Event 5-8p)

Saturday, August 8

11:00 a.m. Church Council Retreat: Tri-X Room
5:00 p.m. Unraveled Group: FH

Sunday, August 9

10:00 a.m. Elevate Youth Tech Services

Monday, August 10

6:30 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting: ESR

Tuesday, August 11 Church Office Closed at Noon

5:00 p.m. Fifty Plus Pot Luck Picnic in the Park
6:30 p.m. Cub Scout Pack 151: Fall Kick Off Meeting

Wednesday, August 12

10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting: Tri-X Room
4:30 p.m. Helping Hands Mission Team: Tri-X Room

Saturday, August 15 Anchor Newsletter Deadline

Monday, August 17

7:00 p.m. The Collective: Youth Council

Tuesday, August 18

6:30 p.m. Cub Scout Pack 151 Summer Activity
7:00 p.m. PPSRC: Tri-X Room

Wednesday, August 19 Church Office Closed

Saturday, August 22

2:00 p.m. Book Club: Robinson Home

Sunday, August 23 Snow Cone Sunday Single Service

10:00 a.m. Combined Worship Service/[Livestream](#)

Monday, August 24

6:00 a.m. Phoebus Women's Club Meeting: Faithlink
Room

Tuesday, August 25

8:00 a.m. Facilities Team Workday
11:00 a.m. Bagging for Food Pantry

Wednesday, August 26

10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting: Tri-X Room
12:00 p.m. Food Pantry

Sunday's Schedule

9:00 a.m. Traditional Service: In-person/[Livestream](#)
10:15 a.m. Faithlink Class: Faithlink
10:15 a.m. Searchers Class: FH Stage
10:15 a.m. Rise Children's Ministry: Ed Wing
10:30 a.m. Modern Service: In-person/[Livestream](#)
6:00 p.m. Elevate Youth: FH
6:00 p.m. Junior Youth: Ed Wing

Small Groups

Monday

10:00 a.m. Yoga: FH Stage
1:00 p.m. "The Book" Club: Tri-X Room

Tuesday

10:00 a.m. Shawl Makers: ESR
12:00 p.m. Dominoes: FH Stage

Wednesday

9:30 a.m. Soul Sisters: Faithlink
3:00 p.m. Love Unites: ESR

Thursday

5:00 p.m. TABS: Tri-X Room
6:00 p.m. Karate for Christ: FH Stage
7:00 p.m. Ballroom Dance Lessons: FH Kitchen

Saturday

9:00 a.m. Sat. Morning Sisters in Christ: Faithlink
6:00 p.m. The Collective: Tabletop
7:00 p.m. Worship Team Rehearsal: Sanctuary

Scouts

Tuesdays: 7 p.m. Scout Troop 151: FH
See Calendar for CS Pack 151 Summer Activities

3rd Thursday 6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 1038:
Ed Wing

2nd & 4th Friday 6 p.m. Crew 1151 Meeting: Tri-X

AA Meetings

Wednesdays & Fridays - 6 p.m.
Buckroe New Hope AA Group: FH - Kitchen

Saturdays - 9 a.m.
Buckroe Men's AA Group: FH - Kitchen

UMM

Dinner and Meeting: 3rd Mon., 6:30 p.m.: FH

Check the bulletin and weekly emails for calendar updates. Meeting times and dates
may change during the summer and/or holidays.