

# The Anchor

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

**April 2026**

*In This Issue*

<b>From Despair to Praised</b>	<b>p.1-2</b>
<b>Financial Fundamentals</b>	<b>p.3</b>
<b>Announcements</b>	<b>p.4-6</b>
<b>Birthday/Anniversary</b>	<b>p.7</b>
<b>Calendar</b>	<b>p.8</b>

## Sunday's Schedule

<b>9:00 a.m.:</b>	<b>Traditional Service</b>
<b>10:30 a.m.:</b>	<b>Modern Service</b>
<b>10:30 a.m.:</b>	<b>Faithlink Class</b>
<b>10:30 a.m.:</b>	<b>Searchers Class</b>
<b>10:30 a.m.:</b>	<b>Rise Children's Ministry</b>
<b>4:00 p.m.:</b>	<b>Women in the Word</b>
<b>5:00 p.m.:</b>	<b>Confirmation Class</b>
<b>6:00 p.m.:</b>	<b>Elevate Youth</b>
<b>6:00 p.m.:</b>	<b>Junior Youth</b>

## Staff

<b>Senior Pastor</b>
Rev. Dr. Brian Sixbey
<b>Assistant Pastor</b>
Rev. Becky Holland
<b>Office Manager</b>
Kassandra Brown
<b>Music Director/Organist</b>
Mark Biondolillo
<b>Accompanist</b>
Andrew Blackmon
<b>Youth Director/Worship Leader</b>
Larissa Luma
<b>Treasurer</b>
Ruth Simkins
<b>Part-Time Sexton</b>
Mikell Bond
<b>Nursery Attendant</b>
Chelsea Kyme



## “From Despair to Praised”

For some unknown reason, my brain occasionally works on a problem I didn't know I had. Recently, I was puzzling over words and the word “praised” popped into my head. I bounced the word around a little bit, looking for another word that used all of the same letters, and I realized that “despair” used the same letters as “praised.” Interesting! Or perhaps not...

I have found that praise is the answer to those moments when I believe I am stuck and without hope. I have found that praise is the answer when I get down in the mouth and feel frustration. However, it usually takes something else to prod me into praise. It is not automatic. I have to choose

Continued on page 2

praise before despair can be turned into praise! Or, if you want some more word play, I have to “parse” my “despair” until God is “praised!”

For a case in point, I have been noticing our decline in worship attendance for some time. We finally turned a corner following Covid and began growing again, but in the past couple of years, we reached a plateau, and while we still receive guests and visitors, our overall worship attendance has declined again. I am not a charismatic leader, nor am I a miracle worker, so I have been feeling down in the dumps about it.

Until... until I realized that we are not a Sunday morning church only! We have always had activities and groups beyond Sunday morning. Sometimes, those groups will feed our worship attendance, but not always. Likewise, I have read more than one article that says churches need to look beyond Sunday morning these days to see what God is doing. At the same time, many of us have been noting that we are growing older, all of us, and that is not a good recipe for the future.

But – all it takes is to look beyond our worship space and see what is happening in the other rooms and on Sunday evenings. On Sunday mornings, we have children in two or three rooms for Sunday school and the nursery, and on Sunday evenings, we are moving beyond twenty youth towards thirty. And one thing will be essential to turning those young people into strong members of our congregation – for us to get to know and engage with them

We have everything we need to turn despair into praise – all it takes is looking where God is moving rather than looking at where we want God to be moving!

It is my joy to praise God alongside you!



### **Who Do You Say I Am?**

As we complete the season of Lent and move into the season of Easter, our series' theme will be “Who do you say I am?” Not only was that one of the crucial questions Jesus asked his disciples as they ascended the mountain of transfiguration, but it continues to be a key question for us to ask ourselves. Who is Jesus to us? Who are we to Jesus? Who are we to each other? Join us as we explore these questions for some surprising and blessed answers!

### **Confirmation**

We are nearing the end of our confirmation journey as we move closer to Pentecost. Our field trip will be Friday, April 10 (if you are interested in joining us, please let Pastor Brian know).

### **Confirmation Sunday May 3, 2026 10AM Combined Service**

Please note that we will have a single service followed by a light reception for Confirmation Sunday. Please join us in the fellowship hall following worship where you can learn more about our confirmands and enjoy a light reception.

### **Upcoming Travel**

Please note that Pastor Brian will be going with his family on an Alaska cruise in May (May 12-25) so that his adult children can see some of the sights and experiences we had during our “honeymoon year” there. While he is out, Pastor Becky will be the point of contact, 757-251-8371.

### **Holy Week**

**Maundy Thursday – April 2 – 7 p.m.** – we celebrate Jesus' Last Supper in our sanctuary, along with the pastors and people of Phoebus UMC and Wesley UMC.

**Good Friday – April 3 – 7 p.m.** – We will have a service of Tenebrae (light and darkness), combined with the 7 Last Words of Jesus.

**Community Easter Egg Hunt – April 4 – 3 p.m.**

**Easter Sunday – April 5 – 9:00 and 10:30 am services**

# Financial Fundamentals April 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.

We have begun the year with some challenging financial experiences. Missing two in-person Sunday services in January did not help. Since then, we continue to lag behind compared with our anticipated expenses. Thank you to all who have maintained their support, in-person and on-line. If you aren't there yet, we encourage you to help refill that gap. Church area leaders are carefully watching expenses, but a significant percentage of our expenses are pretty much fixed and, of course, expenses don't go away just because we are not here on any given Sunday.

**An important reminder:** We are planning to make **future distribution of quarterly Donation Statements via e-mail.** This will get you the information much quicker and save substantially on mailing and related costs. Please be sure that we have a good address for you by sending it, preferably from that e-mail address, to [churchoffice@firstumcfoxhill.org](mailto:churchoffice@firstumcfoxhill.org). If you do not have access to e-mail where you can receive your statements, let the office know so alternate arrangement can be made.

We are in the heart of tax time and encourage everyone who may receive a tax refund to consider sharing it with your church. If you have reached the point where an annual IRA required minimum distribution is part of your life, consider First Fox Hill for a Qualified Charitable Donation which can help both you and your church. Be sure to talk to your financial/tax advisor and our Finance Chair, Bill Bryan, before you take any unfamiliar actions.

Gifts to the One Fund – General Offering allow your financial staff flexibility in managing cash flow effectively. Many people find making on-line donations convenient. If you are reading this online [click here](#) for easy on-line access. You can also use your phone and the donation QR Code or go to [www.firstumcfoxhill.org](http://www.firstumcfoxhill.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](mailto:billb-1111@cox.net).

Total One Fund – Through February 2026		
Income For Planned Expenses <sup>1</sup>		\$ 53,732
Total One Fund Expenses (excludes pass through <sup>2</sup> )	Planned	\$ 92,208
	Actual	\$ 66,968
Pass Through Income <sup>2</sup>		\$ 3,173
Pass Through Expense <sup>2</sup>		\$ 3,066
“Pay-It-Forward” Contributions		\$ 407
LUMENs Fund Raiser Income		\$ 20
LUMENs Fund Raiser Expense		\$0
Roof & Boiler Repair Income 2026 <sup>3</sup>		\$ 1,374
Roof & Boiler Repair Expense 2026		\$ 11,815
Loan Principle Balance – Mar 1		\$ 148,598
<sup>1</sup> Includes regular and memorial contributions, building use income, interest, not listed, etc. <sup>2</sup> Represents contributions for non-budget items, e.g., flowers, special mission programs, not listed, etc. <sup>3</sup> Does not include \$153,922 net loan for roof project.		





Jones Middle School  
Jimmy Roberson  
Bruce Fleenor  
Wendy: Nanci Browning's daughter  
Michael Adams  
Brian Eubank, Sr.

We continue to pray for our homebound, those with chronic conditions, and for those unspoken prayers.



## Easter Lily Dedications

### In Honor Of:

Kassandra Brown  
Our Church  
To the Glory of God  
Pastor Tommy

### Given By:

Jean Bernstrom  
Pat & Mary Parker  
Jennifer & Mike Williams  
Becky Thompson



### In Memory Of:

Mom, Dad, & Big Bro  
Our Parents  
Don Hulton  
My Parents & My Husband:  
Haik & Helen Varteressian;  
John T Chapman III

### Given By:

Dave Sharp  
Jane & Jesse Barbour  
Bonnie Hulton  
Jeanne E. Chapman



### 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.

**April Team Leader:** Marilyn Eubank,

**April Members:** Marilyn Eubank, Judy Adams, Kathy Cato, Joyce Fly, Bonnie Herncall

### Missions Team Update

Ongoing prayer is a vital part of our Mission Team partnership with Jones Magnet Middle School. As a church family, please join us in praying for the students, families, and staff as they finish this week and begin Spring Break (April 4–13).

Our prayer focus: **Encouraged & Restored**

We pray that all feel encouraged in the days ahead, and that this break brings rest, renewal, and focus for the final weeks of the school year.

### Scripture:

"He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." — Psalm 23:3

## Food Pantry March Update

Thank you to all who volunteer and support our Food Pantry ministry. Because of you, we continue to make a meaningful difference for our neighbors in need.

This month, we had our second busiest pantry day ever:

- **102 households served**
- **351 individuals** (142 children, 131 adults, 78 seniors)
- **161 bags distributed** (1,610 non-perishable items)

Each bag also included frozen protein. Due to increased need, we have adjusted from 3 to 2 pieces per bag to ensure everyone is served.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our congregation through donations to the Red Food Pantry tub. Many who came expressed heartfelt thanks for this ministry and the support it provides.

Mary and the Food Pantry Team

P.S. Easter Egg Hunt flyers were shared with families—we hope to see many there!

## Women's Get Together

**1. Our next “Fun, Fellowship, and Friends for Females” gathering is planned for Saturday, April 11, from 4–6pm.** A relaxed and joy-filled time set aside just for the ladies to connect, recharge, and enjoy one another.

**2. Looking ahead to the fall, we're planning a Day Apart — a mini-retreat designed to give us extended time together.** Expect a blend of spiritual refreshment, gentle pampering, meaningful conversation, and space to let God speak into our lives.

**3. We are also prayerfully exploring a potential trip to spend time with our Navajo sisters in Christ.** This would be a weeklong “Unraveled” journey focused on creating space for God, deepening spiritual practices, and culminating in a weekend retreat alongside our Navajo sisters.

- **Estimated cost:** \$1,200 per person
- **Possible dates:** Monday, August 30 – Tuesday, September 7
- **Who we hope this will serve:** We feel especially called to encourage and support our working women, who carry full schedules and many responsibilities. Our prayer is that this trip could be a life-giving opportunity for them to step away and reconnect with God.
- **How the church family may come alongside:** To help make this possible, we are exploring ways the wider church community can support families while the women are away — such as preparing meals, assisting fathers with children's routines and activities, and offering help during the after-school window until parents get home from work

## Fifty Plus

Don't risk missing out as we enjoy the Tony award winning patriotic musical **1776** performed by the **Williamsburg Players** in celebration of our nation's 250th birthday! Reserve now for our limited seats on **Sunday afternoon, June 14**. Witness the birth of a nation as our forefathers struggle to craft the Declaration of Independence. It's the summer of **1776**, and the nation is ready to declare independence...if only our founding fathers can agree to do it! **1776** follows John Adams of Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania and Thomas Jefferson of Virginia as they attempt to convince the members of the Second Continental Congress to vote for independence from the shackles of the British monarchy by signing the Declaration of Independence. Afterward we will stop for a meal. **Cost is \$19 plus your meal.**

More to come. Watch First Fox Hill publications for more details. For questions or to sign up, contact **Anne or Bill Bryan** ([abandbb1@cox.net](mailto:abandbb1@cox.net) or 757-851-0748).



# Mini Photo Shoots

Sunday  
**12**  
April

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
\$30 for 3 digital images

For more information or to register, scan the QR code or call Larissa Luma at (757) 646-5838



ELEVATE YOUTH

## OLYMPICS LOCK IN

FOOD-GAMES-FUN

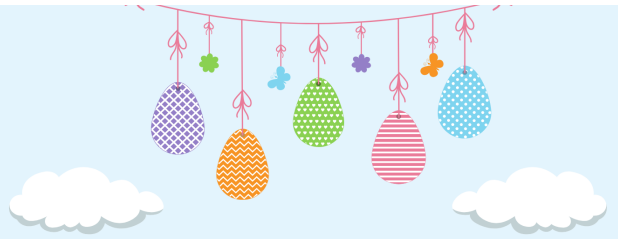
7:00 P.M.-7:00 A.M.

FRIDAY, APRIL 10TH-11TH

REGISTER HERE:



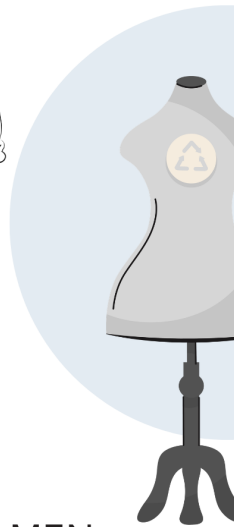
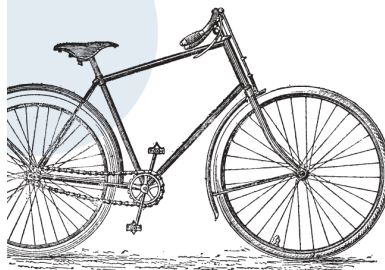
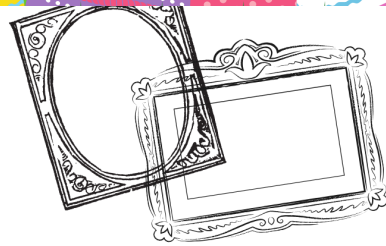
1 SALT POND ROAD | FOR MORE INFO: LARISSA LUMA (757) 646-5838



# COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT

SATURDAY, APRIL 4TH  
3:00 P.M.

1 SALT POND ROAD HAMPTON, VA  
FIRST UMC FOX HILL



UNITED METHODIST MEN

## Annual Indoor Yard Sale

Come and find your treasures!

May 9, 2026  
7 AM to 1 PM



If you would like to donate any items for the UMM Yard Sale please bring them to the Fellowship Hall: Wed - Fri, May 6-May 8, from 5- 8 p.m.

First United Methodist Church Fox Hill  
1 Salt Pond Road, Hampton, VA 23664

## Birthdays

Leslie Kollra	4/1	Daniel Holcomb	4/10	Al Francis Jr.	4/22
Jackie Ehrlich	4/3	Tristen Lauffer	4/10	Kim Thomann	4/22
Steven Cato	4/3	Matthew Durkee	4/11	Robin Carroll	4/22
Dennis Lee	4/4	Ruby Gilbert	4/11	Brian Phillips	4/23
Joanne Holley	4/4	Jessie Fisher	4/12	Bob Helms	4/23
Julie Allen	4/4	Danielle Tatum	4/13	Grayson Sandford	4/24
Catherine Westphal	4/4	Greyson Harsley	4/13	Chad Williams	4/24
Jeanne Chapman	4/4	Jason Seely	4/14	Delia Davis	4/24
Tony Clement	4/4	Ed Colton	4/15	Kenny Ward	4/25
Laura Dudley	4/5	Katrina Taylor	4/16	Caedmon Sixbey	4/25
Paula Malinowski	4/5	Jessie Hodges	4/16	Clara Sokkar	4/26
Woody Wilson	4/5	Casey Smith	4/16	Robert Cross	4/27
Ann Hays	4/5	Carroll Honeycutt	4/16	Randy Godwin	4/27
Kathleen Leary	4/6	Nathan Savage	4/16	Kathy Jo Carey	4/27
Madeline Ridout	4/6	Mary Savage	4/16	Shantae Bowen	4/28
Doug Fisher	4/6	Yousif Ridha	4/17	Laine Welch	4/29
Charles Bullock III	4/6	Julie Williams	4/17	Madison Ward	4/29
Elizabeth McCabe	4/6	Debbie Green	4/17	Meribeth Maxey	4/30
Jo Ann Johnson	4/7	Bonnie Hulton	4/18	Chelsea Kyme	4/30
Chris Leary	4/8	Sara Currin	4/19	Charles Galay	4/30
Ann Drummond	4/8	Carrie Barroso	4/19	Lauren Chitman	4/30
Brittany Williams	4/8	Bruce Milne	4/20	Mikell Bond	4/30
Mary Lewis	4/9	Destine Fowler	4/20		

## Anniversaries

Nick & Carrie Hopkins	4/5
John & Lynda Routten	4/6
Danny & Sandi Hodges	4/13
Tom & Erika McLemore	4/14
Ron & Vandy Belbin	4/14
Al & Eva Francis Jr.	4/21
Brian & Cindy Gibbons	4/24
Angela & Charles Roach	4/27
Hunter & Donna Francis	4/29



## April

### Wednesday, April 1

12:00 p.m. Light and Prayer: Sanctuary

### Thursday, April 2 Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service

### Friday, April 3 Good Friday

7:00 p.m. Service of Light and Darkness (Tenebrae)

### Sunday, April 5 Easter Sunday

### Saturday, April 4

2:00 p.m. Community Easter Egg Hunt

### Monday, April 6 Church Office Closed

### Wednesday, April 8

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting: Tri-X Room

### Friday, April 10

9:00 a.m. Confirmation Field Trip

7:00 p.m. Elevate Youth Lock IN

### Saturday, April 11

4:00 p.m. Women's Get Together: Fh

### Sunday, April 12

10:00 a.m. Elevate Youth Tech Services

10:00 a.m. Elevate Youth: Mini Photo Shoot Fundraiser

### Monday, April 13

6:00 p.m. The Collective: Youth Council

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

7:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting: Tri-X Room

### Tuesday, April 14 Fifty Plus Spring Trip

### Wednesday, April 15 Anchor Newsletter Deadline

12:00 p.m. Fellowship of Circumstance for Women

### Tuesday, April 21

11:00 a.m. Bagging for Food Pantry

5:30 p.m. Girl Scouts Info Session: Faithlink

7:00 p.m. PPSRC: Tri-X Room

### Wednesday, April 22

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting: Tri-X Room

12:00 p.m. Food Pantry

5:30 p.m. Howe Farms HOA Meeting

### Saturday, April 25

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

### Monday, April 27

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

### Tuesday, April 28

8:00 a.m. Facilities Team Workday

## 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

5:45 p.m. Wesley Bells Rehearsal

7:00 p.m. 1st Fox Hill Family Choir Practice

### Thursday

11:00 a.m. Hour of Prayer: Tri-X Room

5:00 p.m. TABS: Tri-X Room

6:00 p.m. Karate for Christ: FH Stage

### Saturday

9:00 a.m. Saturday Morning Sisters in Christ: Faithlink

6:00 p.m. Elevate Youth: The Collective

7:00 p.m. Worship Team Rehearsal: Sanctuary

## Scouts

**Tuesdays:** 6:30 p.m. Pack 151 Meeting: FH  
7 p.m. Scout Troop 151: FH

**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

## UMW

**Thursday Morning Circle:** 1st Thurs., 10 a.m.: FH

## 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.**