

PASTOR'S NOTE

The holiday rush is behind us now. But it seems as though the rush never really ends in our culture. In large measure we remain slaves to our clocks and calendars no matter what the season. Interestingly, winter is a so called "dormant" season. The landscape tells the story of barren trees and brown yards. Of course, our environment, to the delight of many, is less impacted by the harshness of winter. Yet even in South Alabama there is a difference to this season. For some who struggle with "seasonal depression" it is especially felt. I think previous centuries experienced this season as a much slower time, with fewer activities than we experience today. It seemed a natural process that was used to "slow down" human activity in particular. Human ingenuity has created ways around this process so that there is no "down time" in this season. Seasons do not create natural breaks in our activities as much as simply switching to different activities. So the rush just changes lanes more than slows down or ends.

Ecclesiastes 3 tells us that there is a season for every purpose under heaven. Interestingly in the list of opposites (i.e. a time to be born and a time to die), a time of rest is not specifically mentioned. But it is interwoven in the subjects that are written. It is also established from the creation as God set aside a Sabbath day for rest. Might it be that in our driven culture that this season might be a time when we consider creating more "margin" in our lives. Obviously, for some, as health care professionals, this season might involve a greater work load. Nonetheless, I think this season points us naturally toward a greater season of rest. I pray you might find this season a time when you can develop greater margin in your life and to know the value of rest, creating greater health for both body and soul.

Blessings, Bill

WORSHIP

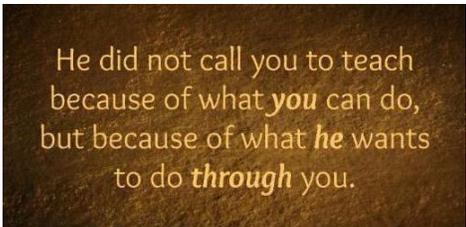
Join Us Sundays for Worship and Fellowship

Traditional Worship: 8:45 a.m. in the Sanctuary
Contemporary Worship: 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

STUDY

Adult

Teacher/Leader Orientation - We are inviting all teachers and leaders of adult small groups, Sunday School classes, and Bible Studies to join us for lunch after services on **Sunday, January 8th** in the Fellowship Hall.

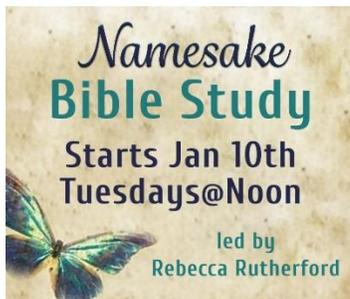


He did not call you to teach
because of what *you* can do,
but because of what *he* wants
to do *through* you.

We will have a time of sharing together what has been done in discipleship previously, as well as visioning and planning for the future. Rev. Rebecca Rutherford will be leading this time together. Please let her know if you can not make it.



We are looking to see if there would be a group interested in taking Financial Peace University in early 2017 or in the Fall. If you are interested, please contact Rev. Rebecca Rutherford at 626-1334.



A New Tuesday Women's Lunch Bunch Bible Study begins January 10th, at Noon. We will be studying ***Namesake: When God Rewrites Your Story*** by **Jessica LaGrone**. The class will be led by Rev. Rebecca Rutherford.

Namesake is a six-week Bible study that explores the transformational power of God through the stories of biblical characters who met God and whose lives and names were changed forever. You

will discover that God wants to be just as intimately involved in your story, offering an identity that shines with the purpose for which you were created. Cost is \$12. If you are not already in the class, please contact Michele Chapman at 370-7381.

childcare provided

Beginning January 11th on Wednesdays from 6 p.m. - 7:15 p.m. on the West Campus, Room PD 102, Rev. Rebecca Rutherford will be leading a 10 week Bible Study using the curriculum ***Invitation***.

There will be videos with Dr. Brian Russell, Old Testament professor at Asbury Theological Seminary. This is an introduction to the OneBook series published by Seedbed. This is an overview of the whole Bible that provides a helpful foundation for how to read, study, and understand scripture. You can preview the material and a video **[HERE](#)**. Cost for student book is \$25. **There will be a limited number of seats for this class, so register with Rev. Rebecca quickly and no later than January 2nd.**



Men, mark your calendars...

Annual Men's Retreat
February 10-11, 2017
Camp Baldwin
Cost is \$55

Registration is due in the church office by February 1st.





Just a note from Finance...

All 2016 contributions must be mailed (postmarked) or delivered to the church office by December 30, 2016 in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2016.

Checks that are placed in the offering plate on January 1 will not qualify even if the check is predated to 2016, or was actually written in 2016. They will be credited to 2017. Final contribution statements for 2016 will be mailed in January.

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
December 23 at noon until January 2 at 8:00 a.m.

[Service Pledge Card](#)

[Financial Pledge Card](#)

Connect @ MidWeek!

Adult Classes | **DINNER** | *Kid's Activities*

Join us on Wednesdays from 5:15-6:00 p.m. for dinner in the Fellowship Hall.
 After dinner, enjoy one of the many great activities available for all ages.

Come & get connected.

MID-WEEK will resume Wednesday, JANUARY 11, 2017

Need Math Help?

All middle and high school youth are invited to join us in the youth area on Monday afternoons from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. Rachel Robinson will be providing assistance to those wanting to improve their math skills. The help is free and no reservation is needed! If you have a question, please contact Beth Allen in the church office at 626-1334 or beth@spanishfortumc.org.

A Note from Your Associate Pastor: New Contact Format

We are excited to share with you our newest platform for sharing information from the church office. We are streamlining our former version of the bi-monthly Contact Newsletter in order to communicate with you more efficiently and effectively. We are using a new email system that allows content to come to your screen that is more user friendly. You will be able to click on links to sign up for things or to find more information elsewhere.

As you can see, our format will be organized into our three major focus areas: Worship, Study, Serve. We will also have other sections for notes from the pastor and community events. This will be a work in progress, so be patient with us while we fine tune it. As a part of this process, we are requesting that all information for the next month's newsletter be submitted in writing to Carmen Walker in the front office no later than the 15th of the month. **Therefore, in order to submit something for the February newsletter, please have all information turned in by January 15th.** This gives us enough time to organize the information, make graphics if needed and prepare it for publication. This deadline is for both staff and any ministry areas within the congregation. We will be sending out the newsletter at the end of the month prior. Therefore, February's Contact will be available the end of January.

By streamlining our information, you will receive this publication only once. There will be reminders sent out for particular ministry areas as needed. *Note: if you "unsubscribe" to one publication electronically from Spanish Fort United Methodist Church, you will no longer receive any of the publications.* However, if you are not receiving our electronic publications, please note this when you register your attendance on Sunday morning or by contacting the church office at ministries@spanishfortumc.org.

We are using social media a lot more these days, as well, to share our upcoming events as well as stories of what's happening. Make sure you like us on [Facebook](#) or find us on Twitter [@spanishfortumc](#). Let us know if you have any questions. Those receiving printed publications will continue to receive them. If you would like a hard copy of a publication, you can print it yourself or let us know to send you one. Thank you for allowing us to communicate with you more effectively.

Rev. Rebecca Rutherford

STAFF

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Jennifer Robertson - Children's Director
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Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday / 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. | Friday / 8:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
251-626-1334 phone | 251-626-1325 fax

*****when you unsubscribe you are unsubscribing from all email/electronic communications from Spanish Fort United Methodist Church*****

