

June Edition 2026

It's that time of the year for parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and definitely this uncle to be posting pictures and stories of graduation! As I already shared on social media, I only had 773 pictures of my niece, Kristina, on my iPhone (This is not including iPad and previous pictures that were not sync to the cloud), so I was highly limited to embarrassing my precious niece due to the lack of photos. To not let Kristina down, I did offer to give out my cell phone to any of her close friends or possibly ex-boyfriends who might want to see additional photos of her and her favorite uncle together. In short, it is graduation time for countless teenagers who will continue with college studies or enter into the workforce, and this means transition!



I still remember a few words from my own college campus minister prior to graduating that stuck with me through the ages. Instead of giving a last long lecture or sermon to us soon to be graduates at the last Sunday night chapel service, David challenged each of us before we left the plains of Auburn University to prayerfully discern three questions: i) What am I leaving behind? ii) What am I hoping to find out there? iii) How will I return differently? This little exercise is not only fruitful for graduates, but also for each of us now as children of God. In hindsight, I think these questions were pointing us to view life as a great, incredible pilgrimage. We might initially associate the word pilgrimage with the pilgrims. The English Puritans who came over from England in the 17th Century. However, the word pilgrim was originally used to describe anyone on a spiritual journey. People who are not just traveling for traveling sake. In other words, they are not tourists. However, pilgrims are looking and searching for something. And as people of faith, we are already on one. In fact, if you think about it for very long, you will notice the Scriptures are centered on literal and spiritual journeys. Pilgrimages are at the very heart of what it means to follow God. From the onset, the first time the Bible speaks about faith in a sustained way is a story about movement and relocation. Retired Abram who was living peacefully with his wife and then was called to leave to a new land that God would show them. Specifically, Scripture says that it was in the “going”, their leaving, the journey was a measure of their faith. Not only the story of Abram and Sara but also the centerpiece of the Old Testament, the Exodus, is a story of a journey. And, certainly we cannot forget Jesus’ passion and journey to the cross for all humankind and the world.

If life really is one huge pilgrimage, then I wish my beautiful niece and all graduates to find true joy in their everyday life! Furthermore, if life is about the journey and not just the destination, I hope each of us finds joy right now with each step moving forward while cherishing our past and giving God thanks for the many lives who have, are currently, and who will accompany us. So this summer I want to share some joyful and exciting things around the corner as we move forward as a church walking together. First, this is going to be a summer about singing joyful hymns we adore and celebrating friendships on our journey! Beginning at the end of June and throughout July, we will add a favorite hymn of your selection to the worship service, we will have a sermon series which highlights the backstory of a traditional hymn, and its Scripture and theological emphasis will be weaved into the message. Additionally, on Sunday, June 28, we will have a fun hymn sing day during worship, including a church picnic afterwards. Secondly, one week later, Sunday, July 5, we will have our first official Youth Sunday with many of the kids assisting in worship. While this will still be our traditional worship and order of service, we will add a short play that celebrates the 250th anniversary of our beautiful country. So this will not be a Sunday nor a summer to miss out as we keep the joy moving throughout our SWFL summer.

-Pastor Zach Seitz



Last Month's Prayer Requests

(The "FMCC Cross Connection" email contains the ongoing prayer list)

- Judy Hesse**, fell and broke her elbow, Church Family
- Ingee Stuart**, moved to be with family in New Orleans, Church Family
- Family and friends of Donna**, in the death of Donna, Gail Baumgarten (dear friend)
- Carol Krueger**, recovering from a fall and has a fractured toe, Church Family
- Carol Vickers**, pain in the left knee, Church Family
- Helen Johnston**, diagnosed with a rare and aggressive type of breast cancer, (Betty Johnston's daughter-in-law)
- Johnny Hargrove**, heart surgery in Gainesville, Shirley Fizer (granddaughter's father)
- Maxine Simon**, Church Family
- Garlow Family**, blessings to Bill and Linda Garlow as they moved back to Ohio, Church Family
- Dean Brown**, in the death of his brother Gene Brown, Church Family
- Ulrich Knobel-Simonsmeier**, recovering well after a major stroke, Church Family
- (update) Barbara Wodarczyk**, moved to rehab, Church Family
- Bobby Spitzner**, Church Family
- Marie Eertmoed**, began hospice, Linda Lee (cousin)
- Burns Family**, in the death of Mary's cousin, Fred Poliziano, Church family
- Shirley Runyon**, successful outpatient procedure, Church family
- Donald Hancock**, eye complications, Linda Lee (cousin)

June Birthdays & Anniversaries

(Name Missing? Let us know)

- Scott and Kathryn H. 2nd
- Linda Garlow 3rd
- Sherry Swartz 7th
- Karla Simpson 15th
- Karen Burns 16th
- Sue Fink 17th
- Mary Rubin 17th
- Skylynn Runyon 22nd
- Shirley Fizer 25th
- John and Mary Burns 26th
- Chris and Kathy Harris 30th



Fort Myers Christian Church (DOC) is blessed with faithful, wise, and highly talented retired clergy. Above is a picture of Rev. John Vickers leading children's moment on Pentecost Sunday. Rev. Ed Bodanske will be in the pulpit a few times this summer for Pastor Zach.



Sunday Game Nights = FUN

Mark Your Calendar

- During the summer month, the Monday morning Bible study will be exploring some of Jesus' parables. Join us from 10-11am.
- Sunday, June 21, board meeting after worship in the sanctuary. Join us later from 6-8pm for game night.
- Sunday, June 28, hymn sing and afterwards a church picnic in the fellowship hall. Hot dogs will be provided, so please bring side items and sign up in the narthex.
- The youth will be leading worship on Sunday, July 5.
- Save the date: Memorial Service for Joyce Turney and Sandy Shomper, Sunday, July 12, following worship in the fellowship hall.

Outreach Corner

Well we are headed into summer. Plans are cooking up to do a couple of things with the youth. For instance, we hope to take them on a boat trip and picnic. We are planning to have a youth Sunday with the kids leading the service. -Linda (outreach chair)