



The altar flowers are for the glory of God and are in honor of the congregation.



PRAYERS FOR HEALING

Kenzie & Devin Vercera, Marti Herring, Elizabeth Young, Bernice Motal & family.

PRAY FOR OUR HOMEBOUND

Kay Halcom

THOSE IN NURSING HOME/CARE FACILITIES

Lynne Bigelow, Stuart Hill, Gladys Leyendecker, Jean Redus, Delores Stancik, Dolores Odstreil, Doug Lilie, Jesse Armstrong, Dolly Ladokas, and Bob & Nancy Stiles.

OUR CHURCH LEADERS

Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey
District Superintendent Rev. Tracey Beadle
Pastor Sunshine Reyes

PRAYERS:

Bonnie Lout - continued prayers.
For people without shelter.
Rex - prayers for healing, buckle fracture on arm.

PRAISE:

Tammy & Rudy Rodriguez had grandchildren visiting.
Stephanie Mattix in church Sunday.

NOTE:

Names on the prayer list in the bulletin will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.

Columbus Food Pantry

“HEB Turkey Vouchers” will be presented to clients on a first-come-first-served basis at the November distribution.

If you would like to participate by mailing a donation, please mark “Turkey” or “holiday vouchers” on the memo line of your check. Please make check out to the Columbus Food Pantry. Alternatively, you may donate on their website on the home page: www.columbusfoodpantry.org

First United Methodist Church

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Office Hours:
Monday-Thursday 9:00am-5:00pm
Friday: Closed
Pastoral Emergency
Pastor Sunshine Reyes 512-308-2616
Wesley Nurse 979-732-5275

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“The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”



SUNDAY, October 25, 2026

DEUTERONOMY 34:1-12

Moses’ death comes after a forty-year journey in the wilderness, when they had come to the plains of Moab. Although God promised to go before the Israelites on their sojourn to Canaan, without Moses’ leadership and intercession on more than one occasion, the people would have been destroyed by God, perished from hunger or thirst, or been killed by their enemies. Yet Moses would not accompany the people as they prepared to enter the land. Instead, the narrator reports that before dying, Moses is only allowed to view the land from the top of Mount Nebo (also Pisgah) overlooking Canaan. Standing east of the Jordan, Moses sees “the whole land”—the north, southwest, and west. The scope of the details is described according to territorial boundaries by tribe, which have yet to be allotted. God reiterates that this is the land promised to their ancestors: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The concluding words of Deuteronomy are a fitting eulogy for the man Moses, who was a prophet par excellence. The narrator recounts that there was no prophet like Moses before or since. The notice that no other prophet had the distinction of knowing God face-to-face should not overshadow the tradition that the only legitimate prophets were like Moses. Yet Moses was still regarded as unequaled, except to God, in the signs and wonders and mighty deeds he performed in the wilderness. Whether Joshua will meet this standard in the eyes of the people is yet to be seen. By God’s great grace, all of God’s adopted sons and daughters share something with Moses. After all, while God has no literal face, we’ve seen the Lord. In seeing Jesus Christ, whether in person or in the Scriptures, we have, according to John 14:9, “seen the Father.” The Scriptures also give us a glimpse of our land of promise. Christians no longer die with only that glimpse. After all, when God’s people die, God immediately takes us into God’s eternal presence, in preparation for eternity in the new heaven and earth. That land will flow with something far, far better than milk and honey.

ACTS 10:44-48

In today’s text, the apostle Peter poses a rhetorical question in the home of the Roman centurion Cornelius in Caesarea: “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” The answer is that no one should deny baptism to the devout, God-honoring Cornelius (and his household)—notwithstanding his identity as an uncircumcised Gentile and a Roman military officer. To do so is tantamount to resisting God. This inclusive theme extends to the end of Acts, which doesn’t so much end as cue an open-ended continuity. Though Paul is confined under house arrest in Rome, his gospel mission continues as he “welcomes all who come to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.” Peter’s preaching exceeds his practice. Accepting fellow “devout Jews” is one thing; accepting other people is another matter. He needs more than Pentecost for that. As it happens, while Peter takes a noontime prayer, he suddenly has a dramatic vision in which Christ plays the role of a table-waiter projecting a menu on a sheet-like screen lowered from heaven, featuring numerous “unclean” animals. But instead of taking Peter’s order, Christ gives the order, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat,” three times, each one drawing Peter’s strong objection. But Christ drives home the divine principle: “What God has made clean, you must not call profane, or common.”

The point is not to expand Peter’s diet and palate but rather his mind and mission to embrace all people—including “unclean” Gentiles. The point, as the Spirit clarifies, is to persuade Peter to go and minister to the God-fearing, uncircumcised centurion Cornelius and his Gentile household. Cornelius happily welcomes Peter, eager to hear his words. Peter cuts to the chase: “I truly understand” (after considerable heavenly persuasion) “that God shows no partiality, but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him”. To attempt to block the saving, embracing, impartial God and dam the freeing, flooding, boundary-busting Spirit is foolish and ultimately futile. Just ask Peter. But unfortunately, in the meantime, “we” often continue to hunker down in our “us”-protecting, “other”-suspecting trenches to fight senseless wars against perceived enemies (foreign and domestic). May God help us; may the Spirit interrupt and overcome our discriminatory ways—and may we diligently preach and practice “peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all”.

MATTHEW 22:34-46

Here, in this passage, the disputations and entrapments orchestrated by religious leaders during Jesus’ final visit to Jerusalem come to an end. But before being silenced, a legal expert among the Pharisees asks Jesus one last question to test him, “Which commandment in the law is greatest?” Jesus’ answer is classic. Loving God is the first and most important thing. But with it comes a corollary: to love God means loving God’s people. What more can be said after this? Silenced, the Pharisees finally withdraw from the fight. The key problem in interpreting this double commandment for our time is that we lose sight of the biblical meaning of love. Our culture has equated love with intense emotion. To love is a stronger response than to like. And both are measures of a passive response to something outside us. But biblical love is not passive and it is not strictly emotional. In the Old Testament, there are references to many kinds of love, but the love referred to here by Jesus is the love of Deuteronomy 6:5, the love of Yahweh. This love is far from passive. It is the active response of the faithful person to the love of God. These commandments are connected, “the greatest commandment” and the “second, which is like it”? When we love God’s people, we are always, at the same time, loving God. They are inseparable. Surprisingly, sometimes our emotions follow suit, and we actually feel love for others or for God. But the emotion is not commanded. Only the action of love is commanded. In Christ, we can do this, even when we don’t feel like it. Being schooled in the way God’s law is held together by the axes of love, and being shown how incomplete their own mastery of God’s ways and plans is (i.e., not having the complete sense of who the Messiah is), has led the Pharisees to some humility. God has used their focus on particularity against them, revealing how the specificity of the Scriptures points to a grand reality rooted in love and how the world is ruled by a Messiah we cannot quite wrap our heads around. May Christ’s revealing work through the Holy Spirit continue to upset our foundations so that our lives may be as grand and loving as God intends.



Readings for Next Sunday, November 1, 2026

Revelation 7:9-17

Psalm 34:1-10, 22

1 John 3:1-3

Matthew 5:1-12