

Lent and Easter 2025



Jesus in His Own Words

Lent 2025 | First UMC Belmont

I AM. They are among the most powerful words in the world. What you put after them shapes your entire reality. In the Gospel of John, Jesus often speaks of himself using these words. As one scholar put it, they are more than a novelty of John's Gospel because they reveal the truth of his own identity, fully human and fully God. Join us this Lenten season as we discover and imagine how what Jesus puts after his "I am" statements can truly shape our faith and life in Him.

March 9 – Exodus 3:1-14, John 8:58

March 16 – I AM the Bread of Life: John 6:24-35

March 23 – I AM the Light of the World: John 7:2, 14 and 8:12

March 30 – I AM the Good Shepherd: John 10:11-18

April 6 – I AM the True Vine: John 15:1-8

April 13 – I AM The Way, the Truth and the Life: John 14:1-7

April 20 – I AM the Resurrection and the Life: John 11:17-26

LENT BEGINS

Ash Wednesday Services of Worship Wednesday March 5 / 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. This moving service includes the Imposition of Ashes, a reminder of our penitence and mourning, and a time of recommitment to our relationship with God. The 6:30 p.m. service will be live-streamed.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL DURING LENT

Disciple Reviews Bible Project videos and uses questions to start conversations about what we believe as Methodists and how we respond to people who think differently. No topic is off the table and each Sunday may look and feel quite different, that's part of the fun.

Route 66 Studying "*Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week*" author, professor, Amy-Jill Levine explores the biblical texts surrounding the Passion story. She shows us how the text raises ethical and spiritual questions for the reader, and how we all face risk in our Christian experience.

Wanderers Studying "24 Hours: That Changed the World" by author and pastor Adam Hamilton. Hamilton retraces the day that changed human history in his usual straightforward yet easy, conversational style that speaks to both long-time Christians and those who are simply curious about the story of Christ's crucifixion.

Salt and Light Fellowship Begins with reviewing the Scripture for that week and then looks at how God has moved in each person's life, the joys and the sorrows.

GROW IN YOUR FAITH

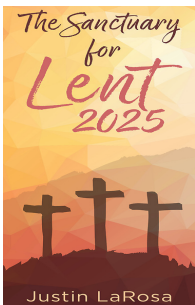
To register for any of the following activities go to www.fumcbelmont.org/signup

Adult Lent Studies Wednesdays | March 12 - April 16 at 6:30 p.m. and Thursdays at 11:00 a.m.

Churchwide group study, *Practicing the Way* by John Mark Comer. Join in on the discussion; How do we become more like Jesus?

Prayer Labyrinth Throughout Lent | Daylight hours

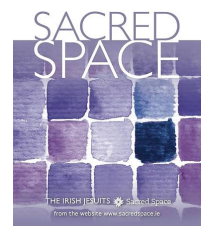
Our outdoor pavilion includes a prayer labyrinth, installed in March of 2021. A labyrinth is a geometrically designed walking path leading to and from a central point. It is not a maze; you cannot get lost. There are no dead ends. The point is not disorientation, but orientation. Labyrinths have been used by Christians for prayer and mediation for centuries. The most famous labyrinth is in Chartres Cathedral in France. Our labyrinth is modeled after the Chartres labyrinth. For medieval Christians, walking the labyrinth was imagined to be a spiritual journey to the Holy Land. For others, it provides a metaphor for the Christian journey itself, offering time to listen, discern and respond to God as you walk its sacred path. You're invited to walk the labyrinth this Lenten season.



The Sanctuary for Lent 2025 our annual Lenten Devotional begins Wednesday March 5.

In addition we will also offer copies of **Sacred Space for Lent** produced by the Jesuits. You can pick these up at the information desk and in the church office beginning on Sunday March 2nd. We hope these offerings will enrich your relationship with God and draw you deeper into the Lenten journey.

for Lent 2025



SERVING AND GIVING

To sign up for any of the following opportunities go to www.fumcbelmont.org/signup

Rice & Beans Special collection throughout Lent

We will be collecting new briefs for those seeking assistance through the Rice & Bean ministry. We are specially collecting Hanes or Fruit of the Loom briefs in sizes medium or large for men and women. Please drop your donations in the bin located in the narthex. To learn more about this ministry and other needs they have, go to www.fumcbelmont.org/riceandbeans.

Stock the BCO Sundays. March 3 | April 7

We will be collecting non-perishable foods and staples for the Belmont Community Organization (our local food pantry) as we always do the first Sunday of every month.

Community Cafe Every Thursday 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. (cafe will be closed April 24)

Come for a delicious lunch in Carpenter Hall which is prepared by Dahlia Grove in our kitchen. Specialty sandwiches, salads and child friendly meals will be on the menu. Donations will support the women in the Dahlia Grove residential community who are survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence or addiction.

Feed the House- Catherine's House Mondays April 7 & 21

Twice a month we provide the community meal for the residents at Catherine's House. Volunteering can be as simple as dropping off a gift card to cover the meal cost, or having a doordash deliver the meal. For a special treat most of our helpers will cook a home cooked meal for the mom's and their children. To find out more about this amazing ministry to women and children who face homelessness go to www.fumcbelmont.org/catherineshouse.

Feeding the Children April 15, 18, 21 and 24

We coordinate with local Gaston County schools to make sure all children in our community who lack food resources receive several hot meals and grocery bags of non-perishable food during the spring break. Help is needed to cook, pack and deliver the food.



Room in the Inn March 8

Only one more Saturday is open for volunteers to prepare a meal and make beds for our neighbors who are without houses and need emergency shelter. To learn more about this ministry and our partnership with Christ UMC in Charlotte go to www.fumcbelmont.org/roomintheinn.

Soup for the Soul Ongoing

If you know of a person in need of compassion and care you are invited to remove from our freezer a quart of Chicken Noodle soup to deliver to anyone in need. Our cooking team keeps our freezer stocked to serve others. If you would like to join the cooking team please contact Debbie Thames at dhthames@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAYS

Midweek Eucharist Service Wednesdays | March 5 - April 16 | 5:30 p.m.

The Risen Christ comes to be with us whenever we share in Holy Communion. What better way to remain focused and centered during this holy season than to feast with Christ? The service each week is brief, concluding by 5:40 p.m. Join us!

Meet in the Middle Meals Wednesdays | March 5 - April 16 | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Join us in Carpenter Hall to enjoy food and fellowship with our church family. Meals cost FUMC \$10 per adult and \$5 for children. We are asking those who join us to contribute what they can. No reservations needed. The menus are available at www.fumcbelmont.org/meetmiddle

LENT AND EASTER WITH CHILDREN

To register for any of the following activities go to www.fumcbelmont.org/signup

Lent Car Talk Back by popular demand! Sign up to receive daily texts during Lent that will prompt you with a Bible verse, thought-provoking question, and prayer. These are designed to be used while you are in the car with your kids- on the way to school, practice or even church! Scan the QR code to sign up.

Countdown to Easter: Small Groups for Kids Wednesdays March 12-April 16 6:30-7:30 Preschool-5th grade.

Each week we will use storytelling, crafts, and snacks to learn as we follow the footsteps of Jesus through Holy Week. (Nursery childcare is also available.)

The Final Road Trip (Family Lent Packets) will be available for pick up on March 2 and 5 in the narthex. The packets include a road map with short daily Bible passages, family devotions, and more.

LENT AND EASTER WITH YOUTH

Connect Sundays | 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Come join Youth in grades 6-12 in connecting to God and each other through fun, food, and Bible study!

"The Walk" Lent Youth Study Wednesdays | grades 6-12 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

How do we walk with Christ daily? How do we follow, grow, and faithfully serve him? Deepen your walk with Christ as we explore the five essential practices of worship: study, serving, giving, and bearing witness to our faith. This youth Lenten study is open to all sixth through twelfth graders. Our leaders for this small group study are Elizabeth Boney and Tina Moore. Please join us in the Youth House for games, fellowship, and study.

Engage Lent Study Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

God's ultimate invitation to us is to get closer to Him in Christ and let the Holy Spirit work within us, transforming us to look more like Jesus. Pretty amazing, right? Christian spiritual disciplines and practices are all about making that happen. Think of spiritual disciplines as the tools we use to draw near to God—things like prayer, meditation, study, and serving others. Then, there are spiritual practices—actions, words, and ways of living that Jesus himself demonstrated, and we aim to follow his lead. Join Kim and Tresca each Sunday in the Youth House for this exciting study during Lent.

HOLY WEEK



Palm/Passion Sunday April 13 | 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Join us for worship as we remember Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem, marking the beginning of his final week leading to the cross.

Stations Wednesday, April 16 through Easter Sunday, April 20

Prayer stations will be set up in the Sanctuary and in the Narthex. This will give you an opportunity to reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross and ultimate sacrifice for us, and what God is calling you to let go of this season?

Maundy Thursday Service of Worship Thursday, April 17 | 7:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday is named for the mandatum (Latin for "commandment") Jesus gave on this night to love one another as he shared his Last Supper with the disciples. This year, we gather on this night to feast with him again in the celebration of Holy Communion. The service includes beautiful music and a "stripping" of the altar, removing ornamentation and color from the chancel to mark the solemnity of the occasion. The service will be live-streamed.

Community Cross Walk Friday, April 18 | 12:00 noon | Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

Join our brothers and sisters in Christ from around Belmont for a moving, walk through downtown Belmont, remembering Christ's journey to the cross. The walk concludes at First Presbyterian Church.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service Friday, April 18 | 7:00 p.m.

Our Tenebrae Service, or "Service of Shadows" retells the story of Good Friday through Scripture, music and a gradual dimming of the sanctuary to total darkness. The service will be live-streamed. We remember on this night what makes Good Friday good, for on this day God's deepest love for us was revealed in the death of Jesus Christ.

Community Easter Sunrise Service Sunday, April 20 | Greenwood Cemetery

We'll gather as a community with our brothers and sisters from around Belmont to celebrate the resurrection.

Easter Sunday Service of Worship Sunday, April 20 | 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Join us for Easter Sunday Worship with Holy Communion and special music. It will be a grand day as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death and claim our place as God's "Easter People!"