



UMARMY Descends Upon FirstNac

As June was coming to an end, a signal of the season arrived in the form of almost 100 United Methodist

including The Village Nac. According to adult leaders of the group, some who have led similar teams to Nac in recent years, the welcome they receive from FirstNac is extraordinary. On one hot and humid afternoon, one of the host families showed up at the worksite with frozen drinks for the crew.

youth and adults from the Houston and Dallas metro areas. As is the custom, the First United Methodist Church family threw open our doors and welcoming arms to this army of young visitors to our community. The Parlor, conference rooms, every classroom, the Family Life Center and almost every inch of floor space became overnight accommodations to these young men and women in our midst.

To kick things off, the First Family food team pulled together a chicken spaghetti dinner for the night of arrival, served up by our own youth. Then, homes from across our congregation were offered as shower houses where the weary youth could end their work



day with a refreshing shower, air conditioning, a snack or two and Christian fellowship with their new found shower hosts.

The army was kept busy with numerous projects around town, arranged through organizations

As the week approached its end, the visitors hosted a very special dinner in the church for those they had served and those who had served them. This show of love allowed clients who had benefitted from the work performed all week to share a meal with the UMARMY kids and those in the church who had hosted them for the week. As the weekend approached, new relationships had been created, new friendships were born and a United Methodist summer tradition drew to an end.

OUR PURPOSE

To Build a Vibrant, Christ-Centered Community Where ALL are Becoming Deeply Committed Christians

What's Going On In July?

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

Popsicle Playdate with Mom's Group, Playground, 10 – 11am
Poolside Youth Group, Amy Still's, 6 - 8 pm
Donuts with Dads, FLC, 6 pm

THURSDAY, JULY 2

Service Opportunity

Sew Blessed, Scout Hut, 10:30 am

FRIDAY, JULY 3

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

JULY 4TH

4 TH of July Ice Cream Social and Community Meet the
Pastor, Stephanie Hughes

SUNDAY, JULY 5

Worship, 8:45 & 11:05 am
Sunday School, 10 am
Pastor Stephanie Hughes, Parlor Reception, Noon
Service Opportunity
ICAN Sunday

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

Popsicle Playdate with Mom's Group, Playground, 10 – 11am
First Forward Meeting, Parlor, Noon
Poolside Youth Group, The Johnson's, 6 - 8 pm
Adult Bible Study, Library, 6 pm
Goodies with Grands, FLC, 6 pm

THURSDAY, JULY 9

Service Opportunity

Sew Blessed, Scout Hut, 10:30 am
Circle VI Meeting, Clear Springs, Noon – 1 pm

SUNDAY, JULY 12

Worship, 8:45 & 11:05 am
Sunday School, 10 am

MONDAY, JULY 13

Service Opportunity

GODTEL 1902 Douglass Rd, 5 – 6 pm, prepare & serve dinner
Youth Mission Project with HOPE 8:30-12:30

TUESDAY, JULY 14

Service Opportunity

HOPE Evening Food Distribution, 2100 E Main St., 5 – 7pm

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

Popsicle Playdate with Mom's Group, Playground, 10 – 11am
Service Opportunity
GODTEL, 1902 Douglass Rd, 5 – 6 pm, prepare & serve dinner
Poolside Youth Group, Amy Still's, 6 - 8 pm
Adult Bible Study, Library, 6 pm
Muffins with Moms, FLC, 6 pm

FRIDAY, JULY 17

Youth Movie Night, Youth Lounge, 6 – 8 pm

SUNDAY, JULY 19

Worship, 8:45 & 11:05 am
Sunday School, 10 am

MONDAY, JULY 20

Board of Stewards Meeting, Parlor, 6 pm

TUESDAY, JULY 21

Service Opportunity

Produce Distribution, west parking lots, packing items starts
at 2:00 pm and food distribution starts at 3:30 pm

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22

Popsicle Playdate with Mom's Group, Playground, 10 – 11 am
First Forward Meeting, Parlor, Noon
Poolside Youth Group, The Johnson's, 6 - 8 pm
Adult Bible Study, Library, 6 pm

THURSDAY, JULY 23

Service Opportunity

Sew Blessed, Scout Hut, 10:30 am

FRIDAY, JULY 24

Family Life BBQ, FLC, 6 – 8 pm

SUNDAY, JULY 26

Worship, 8:45 & 11:05 am
Sunday School, 10 am

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29

Popsicle Playdate with Mom's Group, Playground, 10 – 11 am
Service Opportunity
Love INC, 917 Ruby Street, 9:30 am - Newsletter Folding
Poolside Youth Group, The Johnson's, 6 - 8 pm

THURSDAY, JULY 30

Service Opportunity

Sew Blessed, Scout Hut, 10:30 am

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

Quarterly Blood Drive, FLC, 8:30 am - 1 pm

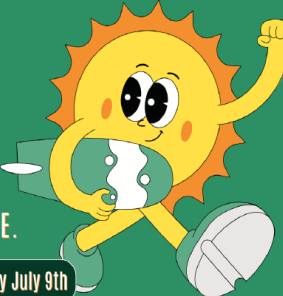
LOOKING AHEAD TO AUGUST

TJR Teacher Appreciation Luncheon
TJR Welcome Back Students on the 1st Day of School
Luau Block Party
Blessing of the Backpacks
NACISD starts August 12
Feed the SFA Band
SFA All-Faith BBQ
Nac in a Nutshell
Wesley Sunday Service Welcome for Freshman & Meal
SFA Purple Sunday
SFA starts August 24

FIRSTNAC UMC
YOUTH MISSION PROJECT



JOIN US
 MONDAY, JULY 13TH
 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM
 AS WE SERVE
 OUR COMMUNITY AT
 NACOGDOCHES H.O.P.E.



To register contact tony.c@fumcnac.org or (936) 371-9848 by July 9th

FAMILY LIFE

BBQ Party

FRIDAY, JULY 24
 6 p.m. in the FLC



I CAN Sunday
1st Sunday of every month

Help replenish non-perishable supplies for:
 Buckley's Food Pantry, H.O.P.E. & SFA Food Pantry



July 21st
We need volunteers for
Produce Distribution
2 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the upper parking lot.
 Contact Le'Ann Solmonson (936) 645-3109
 or Kathy Cochran (903) 724-8169



YOUTH MOVIE NIGHT



Friday,
July 17
6 p.m.
Youth Lounge

Join us for

POPSICLE PLAYDATE

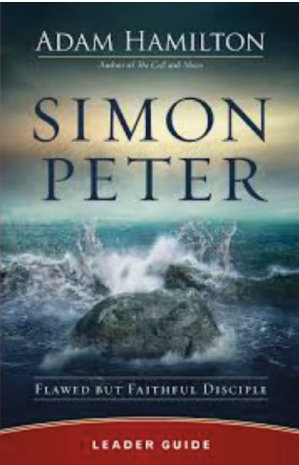
EVERY WEDNESDAY
 10 - 11 A.M.



Adult Bible Study

beginning
 Wednesday, July 8
 6:00 p.m. | Parlor

Facilitated by different leaders
 each week



POOL SIDE

Bible Study

Wednesdays 6 - 8 p.m.

Check out FirstNac UMC Youth on Facebook
 or fumcnac.org for details



The FirstNac Family Hosts Camp Nac

A Look Back at VBS



Camp Nac reopened in The Family Life Center this summer just as promised with lots of adventure. Campers once again spent a week in the woods with trees, a waterfall, cabins, and woodland scenery including Otter Lake, Rabbit Burrow, Fawn Meadow and Fox Den. The youth helped the young campers with all sorts of activities too. The counselors, campers and youth danced, sang, played games, and made crafts like caterpillar terrarium, wildflower seed balls and planted oak trees. Lots of things to help our environment to grow and flourish!



At Camp Nac, campers learned that God provides everything that living things need to live: air, shelter, food, water, and community. Each night a group added to a mural depicting how plants and trees grow. They learned about different soils and seeds.



Every year during VBS, FirstNac UMC partners with a nonprofit for a service project. This year, the project will benefit HOPE food pantry. One thing they don't often have enough of is canned fruit. The campers brought a variety of canned fruit. Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time and talents to this year's VBS. God is good all the time, and all the time, God is good!



A FirstNac Highlight



I'm Tess Ibarra and I am currently a graduate student at Stephen F. Austin State University pursuing my Master's degree in Horticulture. I earned my bachelor's degree in Hospitality Administration with a concentration in Meeting and Event Planning, which has given me a strong foundation in organization, communication, and creating meaningful experiences for others. I enjoy finding ways to combine my background in hospitality with my passion for plants, people, and community engagement.

This summer, I serve as the Children's Ministry Events Intern at the church. In this role, I help plan and coordinate events that create a fun, welcoming, and faith-centered environment for children and their families. I assist with organizing activities, preparing materials, and supporting volunteers to ensure each event runs smoothly and leaves a positive impact.

What I love most about working with the children is their openness and genuine kindness. They truly do not meet a stranger; every child is quick to smile, introduce themselves, and include others. It is incredible to watch how easily they form connections, often leaving with new friendships by the end of the day. Their joy, energy, and authenticity make every moment rewarding. Being part of a space where children feel safe, valued, and excited to learn about their faith is something I deeply cherish.

My First

Hi, I'm Jana LaFour. I've been married to my husband, Gary, for 44 years. We have three grown sons, three wonderful daughters-in-law, and three precious granddaughters.

Our family moved to Nacogdoches in 1995 and joined First United Methodist Church almost immediately. Aside from my family and my church, I have two great passions—country music and the Houston Astros. Please don't hold that against me! When we joined the church, we hit the ground running. Over the years, I have taught children's Sunday School, led Wednesday night children's programs, and facilitated several women's Bible studies.

FUMC has been our church home for more than 30 years, and we are grateful for the friendships, faith, and opportunities to serve that we have found here. I love the direction our church is heading. The food distribution ministry we share with the East Texas Food Bank is both rewarding and fulfilling. I'm also proud of the many ways our congregation serves the community through organizations such as Godtel, Love INC, and Hope Food Pantry. I can't wait to meet our new pastor and children's intern. And if you've already met our new youth director, Tony, you know he's a keeper! The excitement and energy throughout the congregation are contagious.

If you haven't joined us recently, I hope you'll come visit. I'd love to see you soon!

- Jana LaFour





Message From the Pastor

Greetings to you, my new friends at First Nac! I cannot tell you how excited I am to begin a new journey with you as your pastor. As I write to you, I am surrounded by boxes and slightly controlled chaos as my family, and I prepare for this move. It's amazing how much stuff and the plethora of memories a family of four can accumulate over 11 years. I came across my marriage license I had tucked away in a safe place along with other important documents. My husband Maac was my first date when I was 16. We dated on and off for a long time before we decided to tie the knot 25 years ago. Later, I came across my firstborn's baby book that included a letter I had written him the day he was born and then another when he turned one. I cried like a baby as I

read them with him for the first time. My son, Ethan, will be 22 in August. He's engaged to a beautiful Texas City girl and is staying behind. They'll be married in December. It's no wonder, I'm crying like a baby even when I'm not reminiscing and sitting on the edge of my son's bed reading letters from times gone by. This is truly an end of an era for me, as my daughter, Emily also hit a major milestone this year. I was grateful to be in the car alone as I drove from the high school stadium crying like a baby, again! The baby pictures, family photos, family heirlooms have all been tucked away in a mountain of boxes. And of course, I've cried with all the precious goodbyes from all the friends I've made in the past 11 years. In the midst of tears, there is joy. Joy for a new beginning. Joy for the planting of new friendships. Joy for the opportunity of living in beautiful Nacogdoches. Joy and gratitude to the Bishop and Cabinet for sending me to be your pastor. Joy that my daughter will just be minutes away on the campus of SFA. Joy that my son has met his forever girl, Charlotte, and her family loves him. Joy that my husband and I get to share in this new journey! God is so good in the mingling of the joy and tears. So, I will give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18). I am looking forward to seeing you soon with great anticipation. I may even shed a few tears of joy upon my arrival!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Stephanie Hughes

**Good
Things**
at FirstNac



Focus on the First Five

The First Five represent five essential practices that can help us on our journey to become deeply committed Christians. They certainly are not all of the essential practices but they represent keys to our growth and align with the vows we make to the church.

July Focus: Our Vision

To share God's love by touching hearts, changing lives and transforming our community.



THE FIRST FIVE

WORSHIP: Pray five times a day and worship weekly.

STUDY: Read five verses of the Bible daily and study the Bible in a small group.

SERVE: Practice five acts of intentional kindness a week and serve with others.

GIVE: Extend five acts of generosity toward others each month and give generously to God through the church.

SHARE: Let others know you are a Christian and invite five people to church each year.

When we practice these actions, we are living out our vows to the church and our commitment to Our Purpose.

A Really Cool Refuge on a Hot Summer Day



migrate toward Main Street to take in the festivities on the second Saturday in June. This year, the church provided two locations for families to cool down, under the big white tent right in front of the church columns and on Fredonia Street under the giant crepe myrtles. A big Portacool system kept a refreshing breeze blowing on visitors as church members handed out ice cold bottles of water to more than 1,000 attendees. Organizer Terri Thompson said the event can be a lifesaver for those not quite prepared for the heat of a June Texas day.

"People can get really overheated in a hurry and before they realize it when walking on the brick streets," Terri said. "Helping keep them hydrated is important and we love the opportunity to serve our community in that way."

Volunteers gathered on the Friday before the festival in the Cantwell House (scout hut) to apply FirstNac labels to case after case of bottled water that had been contributed by church members. Early the following morning, the water was iced down, the fans fired up and the cooling station was rolling. Rolling so well in fact that more than a thousand bottles of water had been distributed before noon.

The Coolest Place during the Texas Blueberry Festival in downtown Nac was the front lawn of First United Methodist Church. For the past several years, the church family has provided a 'cooling station' for the thousands of people who

"We learn new things every year about how to best serve festival goers," said Terri. "This year we learned we're going to need more water for June 2027!"

Update From the Board of Stewards

The Board of Stewards met on June 15 at 6:00 p.m. in the Parlor. Pastor Marlin opened the meeting with prayer and a story reminding us why we don't have to "lift our feet to God," setting a thoughtful tone for the evening. The board spent time in prayer for Pat Jenlink and expressed its support for Karen before approving the minutes from the previous meeting. Tony, our new Youth Director, shared encouraging reports about recent poolside youth gatherings and the strong participation of our students during Vacation Bible School. Board Chair Rob McDermant passed along feedback he had received from church members, including interest in exploring an updated church directory. Terri Thompson reported

that the First Forward leadership retreat on June 6 was a success and shared excitement about the upcoming July 4 celebration on the church front lawn. SPRC continues its search for a Children's Director, while Trustee Sam Smith updated the board on several facilities projects, including repairs to parking lot lighting, improvements to both parsonages—especially the Raguet parsonage in preparation for Pastor Stephanie's arrival—and progress on updating the church sign with more uniform lettering. Work on the sidewalk leading to the Scout Hut is expected to begin soon, and the board noted that UM ARMY would be using the church facilities during the week of June 22. Finally, we look forward to welcoming Pastor Stephanie, who will begin serving with us during worship on June 28. The next meeting of the Board of Stewards will be held on Monday, July 20, at 6:00 p.m. in the Parlor, and all church members are invited to attend.

You are receiving this edition of the FirstNac News, a requested printed newsletter to help us communicate better as a church. If you prefer to receive an electronic version only, please let the church office know and we will remove you from the mailing list.

First United Methodist Church
201 E Hospital Street
Nacogodches, TX 75961

The FirstNac News is published monthly by the Communications Team of First Forward.



Need to talk to a pastor?

When there is a hospitalization, a death in the family or any other time you may need urgent pastoral care, we encourage you to use these numbers.

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm: 936.564.8308

Evenings and Weekends: 936.564.8308