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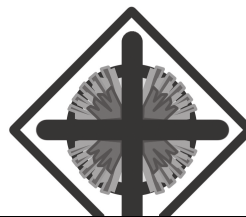
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Connections
to fayetteville first united methodist church

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September 2011

Reality Worship: A Review

Mark Westmoreland

Coming this September, "The Real Worshipers of Fayette County" takes reality TV where it has never been—to church. Certain to make household names of such unique "personalities" as Carson "Dog" Thaxton, Rick "The Situation" Massengale and Kristin "Snooki" Heiden, this cutting-edge, Emmy-potential series captures the wacky world of Wesleyan worship in the Southern Crescent, daring to shine the piercing light of a thousand altar candles on the craziness that begins when the prelude ends.

The series has already proven controversial. "I saw the first episode," one disappointed parishioner told this reviewer. "I guess the 45 minutes I was AWAKE didn't make the final cut. Typical media manipulation!" And Bishop Michael Watson, presiding bishop of the North Georgia Annual Conference, argues that the series fails to depict accurately Georgia's exciting brand of United Methodism. "Had I known the producers would choose Fayetteville First," the bishop said, "I would have appointed a senior pastor who's more charismatic ... and photogenic ... and life-like. Halfway through the sermon I thought I had accidentally switched channels to 'The Walking Dead.' Creepy!"

Actually, the sermon presents little more than white-noise background for the true drama unfolding in the sanctuary. In episode two, while the senior pastor is sharing yet another quotation from Fred Craddock, the camera zooms in on Damocles' hymnal, teetering ominously on the balcony rail ... while 20 feet below an oblivious visitor works on her grocery list. Can you say "bad first impression"? Can you say "bad cranial impression"? This is why churches have liability insurance and why this church ultimately makes for great TV.

Action (the children's moment), suspense (Will we get out by noon?), and romance (middle-schoolers, third row), "The Real Worshipers of Fayette County" has them all. And, yes, there's music, too, offered by FFUMC's magnificent choirs, whose members range from cute and precocious to more "seasoned" and experienced. How can I describe the richly talented Chancel Choir? Well, imagine the cast of Glee in two or three decades, and you get the picture.

Whether they're laughing and greeting each other during the prelude or grumbling under their breath during this week's unsingable middle hymn, these real worshipers are more entertaining than Swamp People and a lot less icky than Animal Hoarders. In fact, don't be surprised if next season there is a glut of copy-cat church reality shows based in Methodist congregations in exurban county-seat towns with really pale senior pastors. It's a phenomenon waiting to happen.

There is, however, one really significant problem with the show. Some viewers will find unrealistic the whole notion that people would attend week after week a production where they themselves have to provide the welcome, the singing, and even the financing. Why do they keep doing it? When I asked one parishioner, I got a cryptic response. "It's simple," she said. "The Real Worshipers of Fayette County really are worshipping."

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District Girls Retreat November 11 - 13

FFUMC Youth Ministry is partnering with Sage Girls Ministry to host a retreat at FFUMC for girls in our district, 6th grade through college. The theme for the weekend is "Rooted" and we are excited about this opportunity for these young ladies and welcome involvement from our congregation.

One way for families to be involved is to "Adopt-a-Room" for this event. This would involve decorating a room with a fun theme, providing snacks for a room and anything else creative to make the girls feel special. We also ask that you be in prayer for this retreat. If you are interested in adopting a room or have questions, please contact Susie Keaton at 404-580-8494.

Inside This Month's Connections

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About Our Church Family

New Members:

- Annis Harrell, 1102 Cobblestone Blvd, Fayetteville GA, 30215, 770-716-7615. Annis transfers her membership from College Park First Baptist. Annis is the mother of FFUMC member, Gerry Mitchell. We welcome Annis as one of our newest members as well as the distinction of our most senior member. Annis celebrated her 104th birthday on July 22.
- Julia Kendrick & Don Upton, 155 Harris Road, Fayetteville GA 30215, 770-461-3914. We welcome Julia from First Christian Church and Don from First Baptist Church Peachtree City.

In Memoriam:

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Hoke "Trey" Smith, III July 21, 2011 | George Copeland July 29, 2011 |
|---|----------------------------------|

In Sympathy:

- Mrs. Kerri Smith and family upon the death of her husband, **Trey Smith, on July 21.**
- Mr. and Mrs. Hoke Smith upon the death of their son, **Trey Smith, on July 21.**
- Mrs. Pauline Copeland upon the death of her husband, George Copeland, on July 29.
- Mrs. Carol Taylor upon the death of her brother-in-law, Chris Georgiades of Tallahassee, FL, on August 15.
- Ms. Sandra Ereckson upon the death of her father from Georgetown, NC on August 17.

Keep Them In Your Prayers:

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Joel Blalock | Judy Devine | Lloyd Groover | Bonnie McCraw | Ed Travis |
| Brylee Bostedt | Annette Evans | Annis Harrell | Hazel Mitchell | Bill Walters |
| Bill Bowman | John Evans | Mike Lashley | Lurlene Perry | Bill Weinmeister |
| Carolyn Croft | Jim Friday | Sadie McCarthy | Cathryn Stephens | Brad Wilkinson |

Church Membership: 2034

Giving Through August 21:

Budget: \$76,090.48
Building Fund: \$3,206.00

Donations

A donation to the Building Fund has been given in memory of George Copeland and in honor of Earle Baker by the Fellowship/Discipleship Class.

Notes From the Pew:

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 5, in observance of Labor Day.

A Healthier Option for Fellowship Dinners

Beginning in September, you will be able to reserve either a hot meal or a salad option for our Wednesday night fellowship dinners. The salads will vary each week from grilled chicken garden salad to oriental chicken salad and many more. When you make your reservation, be sure to specify which option you would like for the week. A salad ticket will be given when you pay for your meal. We are excited to expand our selections and welcome your feedback and requests!

Missions & Outreach

"Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land."

Deuteronomy 15:11



Compassion in Action Day: October 1

Compassion in Action Weekend is an event that brings churches together throughout the metropolitan area to complete service projects and build partnerships that serve the community and share the love of Jesus Christ. It coincides with the weekend of World Communion Sunday. In past years, more than one hundred churches have mobilized over 6,000 volunteers in nearly 300 service projects throughout the city.

What is Unite?

Compassion in Action Weekend is sponsored by Unite, a movement of churches from a variety of denominations, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, partnering together for community transformation.

How do I sign-up for Compassion in Action Weekend?

There will be a registration table in the Welcome Center after each worship service on Sundays, Sept. 11, 18, and 25. The first 50 to register get a free Unite T-shirt. Those registering after that may purchase a T-shirt for \$10. Projects to participate in on Sat., Oct. 1, include: Square Foot Ministry and the Fayette County Pregnancy Resource Center; Tornado Relief in Manchester; Alzheimer's Memory Walk in Peachtree City; Covenant House for Homeless Youth in Atlanta and Christian City. For more information, please stop by the registration table or contact Rev. Andone or Lindsay Blythe.

Pray for Our Missionaries

- June Hanks with Advantage Haiti (www.advantagehaiti.com) has returned to Haiti after being in the states this summer where she trained to become a certified EMT and Wilderness EMT. She asks for wisdom as she works with the Haitian and non-government organizations to provide care. Her health is much improved.
- The Kents with the Navigators, who are ministering in an undisclosed location, gave us an update on their ministry during worship on August 14th. Dr. Kent has a book being published, a novel based on their experiences as missionaries in Africa. To receive their newsletter email cpamrb6@gmail.com. When the book is printed, we will let you know how to get one.
- Elliott, Katherine, and Cason Stotler with the Mission Society in South Africa (<http://www.stotlersinafrica.blogspot.com>). They ask for prayers for the challenges of language learning, the women of their ministry (in honor of South Africa's Women's Day), and the 20 new children enrolled in the preschool!

New Opportunities for Bible Study

This fall, we are excited to offer two Disciple Bible Study programs that will meet on Wednesday evenings from 6:15 - 8:15 p.m. beginning September 7. Contact Kristin Heiden to register at: kheiden@fayettevillefirst.com.

Disciple II – "Into the Word, Into the World" encourages persons to open themselves to hearing what God has to say to them through the Bible and to be guided into service in the world by Scripture and their study of it. Equal attention is given to both the Old and New Testament with concentration on four books: Genesis, Exodus, Luke, and Acts. Randy Riddell will facilitate. Cost of the 32-week study is \$40. Prerequisite: Completion of Disciple I.

Jesus in the Gospels – This 30-week study invites believers to look at Jesus in each of the four Gospels and ask the question, "Who is the Jesus that you see?" Two questions frame this study: "Who is the Jesus you bring with you to this study?" and "Who is the Jesus you take with you from this study?" Len Gough will facilitate. Cost of this study is \$50. Recommendation: Completion of at least one Disciple course.

Kristin's Kids Korner

Talking to your children about God can be an intimidating task. Where do I begin? How should I explain certain things? What if they ask questions and I don't know the answers? The best place to start is to understand how your children perceive God, which changes as they learn and grow. Here is a quick guide, taken from Karen Marie Yust's *Real Kids, Real Faith*, to help you begin to approach the subject of God and faith with your children.

Birth to three years – God is a real person who lives in a place called heaven. God provides comfort, like a blanket, and care, like a parent.

Three to eight years – God is great and powerful, like a superhero. God watches you all the time, like Santa Claus, and acts like a magician who makes things happen without explanation.

Nine to twelve years – God works in many ways to shape the world. God is like a friend who takes a personal interest in one's activities. Who God is and how God works are puzzles we want and need to investigate.

Teens – God is a confidant, guide, and counselor. God is especially concerned with moral behavior. God appears to work behind the scenes and is hard to see or feel in every circumstance.

Wednesday Night Programs for Children

Joan Aycok and Kristin Heiden have joined together to create a new, cohesive program for children ages 4 (as of September 1, 2011) through 5th grade to worship together, participate in music opportunities, and take time for focused Bible study and Christian formation. The new program, *The Big Picture*, is "a world of colors, smells, sounds, tastes, and textures designed to reflect its Creator's beauty" and will begin Wednesday, September 7. *The Big Picture* is a mosaic of kids' talents and gifts united in creative worship." *The Big Picture* will invite children to connect with God, to serve God and one another, and to share God's love with all people. The following is the new outline for Wednesday nights with children:

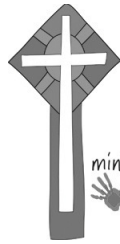
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|---------------|---|
| 5 – 5:30 p.m. | Children's Ensemble with Joan Aycok in B-134/145 |
| 5:15 – 6 p.m. | Fellowship Dinner in the Family Life Center Gym |
| 6 p.m. | All children meet in C-280 for Gathering Time |
| 6 – 7 p.m. | Children celebrate worship together before separating into choir groups and learning groups. |
| | Sonshine Choir (4 years – Kindergarten) meets in C-140 |
| | Melody Choir (1st and 2nd grades) meets in B-225 |
| | Joyful Noise Choir (3rd – 5th grades) meets in B-125 |
| | Learning Groups will be separated by age with 4-year-olds and Kindergarten meeting in C-160 and 1 st – 5 th grades meeting in C-280 |
| 7 – 7:30 p.m. | Kids FLIP (all ages) in C-280 |
| | Children's Chimes (2 nd and 3 rd grades) in B-320 |
| | Children's Handbells (4 th and 5 th grades) in B-14 |

Kids FLIP Pajama Party

Children are invited to wear their pajamas and bring a new or slightly worn pair of pajamas to be donated to Gracie's Closet on Wednesday, September 28, as we celebrate another Pajama Party. Contact Pastor Kristin with any questions.

Students Are Invited To Serve in Worship As Acolytes & Crucifers

The acolyte and crucifer program offers students in 4th grade and above the opportunity to fulfill a traditional role in the church. Our acolytes and crucifers call us in to worship each week as they present the light and cross as a reminder of Christ's presence with us and our charge to take His light into the world to share with others. If you're a student in 4th grade or above and wish to explore what it means to serve in worship, join us for lunch on Sept. 25 following the 11:00 a.m. service. Please contact Julie Harp at jharp@fayettevillefirst.com to reserve your spot.



ministry to families with children
fayetteville first umc

Youth News

Keep Up With Our Youth Ministry!

Be sure to pick up a program guide for youth ministry in the Welcome Center, one of the kiosks or from the church office. You can find descriptions of all of our programs and a calendar that you can put on your refrigerator. Also, if you are not on our email list and would like to be, you can send a request to Chris at cmucha@fayettevillefirst.com.

2012 UMC Girls' Retreat

We will be hosting a retreat for girls from 6th grade through college age here at FFUMC on November 11-13. We will spend the whole weekend pouring into our girls and helping them explore their identity in Christ. We have opened the retreat up to other churches in our district and our conference. Cost for the event is \$50 and is all inclusive. Girls can start signing up now in the Welcome Center.

Senior Adult Ministries

Titus II

"Set an example by doing what is good"—Titus 2:7

Titus II is a luncheon program providing Christian fellowship and encouragement for adults age 55+ and is held the first Tuesday of each month at noon in the Family Life Center. Cost of the meal is \$6.00. Titus II is open to everyone regardless of church affiliation. Invite a friend to join you for lunch and make your reservation by calling Evelyn Starling, 770-716-3744, by noon on Sept. 2. Note: *If you make a meal reservation but are not able to attend, please kindly pay for your lunch as Titus II has to pay for all meal reservations.*

Tuesday, September 6: Scott Ballard, District Attorney will be sharing his experiences as D.A.

Tuesday, October 4: The Senior Chime Choir will be performing.

Seasoned Singers

Anyone 55+ who enjoys singing is encouraged to join the Seasoned Singers. Rehearsals are at 1:30 p.m. each Tuesday in the Choir Room. For information, contact Tom Robinson at robi4131@bellsouth.net or call 770-461-7795.

Senior Chimes

Anyone 55+ who can read music is welcome to join the Senior Chimes. Rehearsals are at 2:30 p.m. each Tuesday following Seasoned Singers rehearsal. Anyone 55+ who can read music is welcome to join. Contact Janie Raines at 770-486-5573 for more information.

Stephens Ministry

Now What?

The last child has left for college - now what? Stephen Ministers are available to help you through times of significant life transitions, including a newly empty nest, a change in marital status, a loss of employment, or a death. To request a Stephen Minister, call Tammy Cook at 770-719-9421, ext.102. Your call and care are confidential.

Fayetteville First, Methodism and You

New to Fayetteville First? Want to know more about UMC and this congregation? Plan to join us for four Wednesdays beginning Aug. 31, as we explore our history and uniqueness as United Methodists and what FFUMC has to offer (and what you have to offer the church). The classes, led by Mark Westmoreland and Julie Harp, will meet in Room C260, 6:15-7:15 p.m. For information or to register, contact Julie Harp at 770-461-4313, ext. 14, or jharp@fayettevillefirst.com.

UM Children's Home Workday Offering

On Sept. 11, we will receive the Workday Offering for the UM Children's Home in Decatur. This offering, received once each year by the churches of the North Georgia Conference, provides a significant portion of the Home's operating income. Since the early 1900s, church members have been asked to contribute one day's pay to the ministry of our UM Children's Home.

Sing, Laugh, Learn With Kindermusik!

Are you ready for some quality time with your little one? It's Kindermusik time. Come join in this international music time for children aged newborn to seven-years-old. We explore steady beat, dynamics, instruments and movement and hear great music. Activities are age appropriate. Join the learning ... join the fun. To register, contact Joan Aycock at 770-861-4499 or aycockmusic@yahoo.com for class times.

Gettin' Fit at FFUMC

Fitness classes continue throughout the Fall here at FFUMC. Instead of signing up for a particular class, you will be asked to purchase a fitness punch card for \$20 which will allow you to participate in 10 class sessions of any format. Cards will be kept at the church and the participant will simply punch his or her card before each class. Cards can be purchased from the church office or during any of the fitness classes:

- PiYo™ meets on Mondays from 7 – 8 p.m.,
- Zumba meets on Tuesdays from 6 – 7 p.m.
- Hip Hop Hustle meets on Thursdays from 6 – 7 p.m.

Please contact Kristin Heiden at: kheiden@fayettevillefirst.com with any questions and to request childcare for any of the classes above.

Ladies - Mark Your Calendar For September 18

FFUMC United Methodist Women (UMW) will participate and be recognized in all three worship

services on Sept. 18, and extend an invitation to all women and young ladies ages 13 and up. UMW Circle Groups will display information in the Family Life Center before and after each worship service.

Are you lost? Need directions?

You've heard of room C260, but where is it? You know there is a active group of UM Men at FFUMC but have no idea when or where they meet. Join in a walking tour of the FFUMC campus on Sun., Sept. 18, at 9:40 a.m. in the Narthex of the Sanctuary. As we walk the campus, we will identify classroom locations as well as opportunities for fellowship and growth.

Finding A Home at Fayetteville First

If you are ready to make Fayetteville First your church home, we encourage you to participate in Celebration Sunday, Sept. 25. We will be welcoming our newest members into the life and work of FFUMC and you are invited to join in the celebration and make Fayetteville First your home during any of our three services. For all the details contact Julie Harp 770-461-4313 ext 14 or JHarp@fayettevillefirst.com

Next Body Recall Session Begins September 28

A new session of Body Recall begins on Wed., Sept. 28. Classes meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings in the fellowship hall from 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. This is an educational and exercise program for people of all ages and all physical abilities. This program is a great combination of fellowship, exercise and fun.

Spiritual Gifts Class

Are you looking for a place to serve but aren't sure what's right for you? Have you ever asked yourself, "Where does God want me to be?" Have you wondered if you have any unique and special gifts, and what they might be? If so, you are invited to participate in a Stephen Ministry-sponsored study, facilitated by Mickey Seigle and Faye Livingston. This is NOT Stephen Ministry training, but is designed to help you discover your spiritual gifts and where in the church and community you might best serve. The 8-module course will be offered in four 2-hour sessions, with a short break in between, on Sunday evenings beginning in October. Dates, times, and cost of the study are still to be determined.

September @ Fayetteville First UMC

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|---------------------|
| 4 (See left for normal schedule) AA: 3:30 | 5 LABOR DAY Office Closed Plyo: 7:00 AA: 8:00 Alanon: 8:00 | 6 Trust: 12:00 Walking Group: 1:00 Seasoned Singers: 1:30 Adult Chime Choir: 2:30 Zumba: 6:00 Ebel/Taylor Circle: 7:00 | 7 Kindermusik 9:30 Body Recall: 10:30 Harp (see left for right schedule) Methodism Class 6:15 Pras in the Gospel: Class 8:15 UMW: 8:30 | 8 Hope Circle: 10:00 UMW Unit Mtg: 1:30 Walking Group: 1:00 Hip Hop Hustle: 6:00 Sq Foot Ministries: 6:30 AA: 8:00 | 9 Body Recall: 10:30 Walking Group: 1:00 AA: 7:00 | 10 AA: 8:00 p.m. |
| 11 (See left for normal schedule) AA: 3:30 | 12 Friendship Circle 9:00 Body Recall: 10:30 Walking Group: 1:00 Plyo: 7:00 AA: 8:00 Alanon: 8:00 | 13 Walking Group: 1:00 Seasoned Singers: 1:30 Adult Chime Choir: 2:30 Zumba: 6:00 Joy: 6:00 Trippy Circle: 7:00 | 14 Kindermusik 9:30 Body Recall: 10:30 Intercessory Prayer: 12:00 (See left for right schedule) Pras in the Gospel: Class 8:15 UMW: 8:30 | 15 Walking Group: 1:00 Hip Hop Hustle: 6:00 UMW Exec Board: 6:30 AA: 8:00 | 16 Walking Group: 1:00 AA: 7:00 | 17 AA: 8:00 p.m. |
| 18 (See left for normal schedule) AA: 3:30 | 19 Walking Group: 1:00 Plyo: 7:00 AA: 8:00 Alanon: 8:00 | 20 Step Ministry: 9:30 Walking Group: 1:00 Seasoned Singers: 1:30 Adult Chime Choir: 2:30 Zumba: 6:00 | 21 Kindermusik 9:30 Body Recall: 10:30 Intercessory Prayer: 12:00 (See left for right schedule) Pras in the Gospel: Class 8:15 UMW: 8:30 | 22 Faith Circle: 10:00 Mary Martha Circle: 10:00 Walking Group: 1:00 Hip Hop Hustle: 6:00 AA: 8:00 | 23 Walking Group: 1:00 AA: 7:00 | 24 AA: 8:00 p.m. |
| 25 (See left for normal schedule) AA: 3:30 | 26 Walking Group: 1:00 Plyo: 7:00 AA: 8:00 Alanon: 8:00 | 27 Walking Group: 1:00 Seasoned Singers: 1:30 Adult Chime Choir: 2:30 Zumba: 6:00 | 28 Kindermusik 9:30 Body Recall: 10:30 Harp (see left for right schedule) Disrupt: 11:15 Pras in the Gospel: Class 8:30 AA: 8:00 | 29 Walking Group: 1:00 AA: 8:00 | 30 Body Recall: 10:30 Walking Group: 1:00 AA: 7:00 | |

Normal Sunday Schedule

- Choir Practice: 7:50
- Worship in Sanctuary: 8:30
- Wonders of Worship: 8:30, 11:00
- Sunday School: 9:40
- Confirmation Class: 9:40 (begins Jan. 9)
- Worship in Chapel: 9:45
- Orchestra Practice: 10:00
- Choir Practice: 10:15
- Worship in Sanctuary: 11:00
- Open Court Basketball: 2:00

Normal Wednesday Night Schedule

- 8th Period: 3:30
- Children's Ensemble: 5:00
- Wed. Night Dinner: 5:15
- 1/99 Mid. & HS: 6:00
- Children's Choirs & Learning Time: 6:00
YOGA: 6:00
- Children Bells: 7:00
- Children Chimes: 7:00
- Kids Flip: 7:00
- Solomon's Porch: 7:00
- Chancel Choir: 7:30