



July 21, 2023

## The Weekender

### Beauty, Wonder, Mystery

Dr. Thomas Martin, Senior Minister

When Leslie and I moved from our first apartment to a house that we rented with a yard, we went overboard in planting a garden. There was an 8'x4' raised bed in the backyard. We over planted, underwatered, and ended up feeding the squirrel population in the neighborhood. I'm not sure that anything we ever grew we ever ate. Maybe half of a tomato or something. I can't exactly remember.



What I do remember is that we agreed not to do the same thing the next year. So we didn't. But what I do remember is that before we knew it, things that were dormant for a season were re-emerging from the ground. Despite our best efforts the previous year, new life was breaking forth.

Perhaps there's a reason that Jesus speaks in metaphors using the land and nature around him. One, it was practical. People lived on the land. They knew the commandments that had to do with the land because of the Torah. It was ripe for the picking as far as analogies go. Two, it was there. If you are trying to teach, you reach for the things that are closest for illustrative purposes. Third, it was mysterious. I don't think they had words like photosynthesis or mitochondria. But they did learn from years of passing down information and studying the land.

I probably could ask many of you in the church about botany or plants or gardening and you would explain it better than I ever could seek to understand. But there are things that are still shrouded in mystery, observation, and trial and error.

When Jesus speaks in parables about the land, the disciples need explanation. We need explanation. Because all of the horticulture classes in the world, even all the knowledge available to the human brain, fails to fully comprehend the beauty and wonder and mystery of God. We continue this life-long journey together. I'll see you Sunday.



**EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**JULY 23, 2023**

**8:45 and 11:00 AM**

[Online link active at 11 AM and after](#)

*Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43*

Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin

## CURRENT NEWS

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### Hoofin' It for Harp

You're invited to join the Race to Cure Sarcoma in honor of Don Harp, hosted at Fayetteville First UMC.

#### Saturday, July 22

8:30 AM FFUMC gym gathering

9:00 AM Walk 1 mile around Fayetteville Town Square

[Join the team or make a donation to our team page](#)

Together we can race to cure Sarcoma and raise much needed funding for research, education and advocacy.

[Spread the word! Share this flyer with family and friends on social media.](#)



### School supply drive for local students: Bring by Monday

School supplies have become increasingly more expensive and we are wanting to help families curtail some of that cost. Would you begin collecting school supplies so we can give them out at our back-to-school event on July 29? [To see example suggestions of needed school supplies, check out this local school's list: https://www.fcboe.org/domain/1433.](#) Please place donations in the Welcome Portal bin or church office by Monday, July 24.



### Back to School Bash, July 29, 3-5 PM, FFUMC Gym

Join us for an epic party as we celebrate summer and kick off the new school year with bouncy houses, popcorn, cotton candy, and more. We will have three 'grand prize giveaways' of backpacks stuffed full of school supplies and smaller prizes of various other school supplies provided by this generous congregation. Bring your friends, your friends' friends, grandkids and neighbors.



### We wish you blessings, Allie and Justin

We appreciate the work of Allie Hansen as Assistant Director of Children and Family Ministry and Justin Maxey as Director of Music and Organist. We would like to show our appreciation by receiving a love offering. If you would like to give to that cause, please designate "Hansen Love Offering" or "Maxey Love Offering" on your check or online contribution. We hope to have these donations in by July 30.

Thank you, Allie and Justin, for all your contributions to the life and ministry of FFUMC.





## Save the date for meal packing event on August 20

You're invited to help fight hunger by preparing highly nutritious, dehydrated meals for use in crisis areas or school feeding programs around the world at the Rise Against Hunger Packing Event on Sunday, August 20, from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Fayetteville First UMC gym.

[Sign up to PACK meals from 1-3 PM here.](#)

Would you like a light lunch before the packing begins? Sign up for yours by contacting the church office at 770-461-4313 or email [admin@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:admin@fayettevillefirst.com).



**All ages (from 4 years up) can help!**

**Label bags, fill meal packets, seal, box — There is a job for you!**



## Tables are full for Let's Do Lunch — Get on waiting list!

Reservations are currently full for the 2nd Annual Let's Do Lunch coming Saturday, August 12. A waiting list is now available.

If you made a reservation but can no longer attend, please cancel your reservation to free up a place.

To cancel or be placed on the waiting list, contact Lauren Davis at [lauren.davis@comcast.net](mailto:lauren.davis@comcast.net) with your name and details.

**Donations are accepted to offset the costs of this event. Mark any donation as "UWF-Let's Do Lunch."**



## Summer Delights on Wednesday Nights

Enjoy food and fellowship throughout the summer. Meet at the Bus Barn Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. Bring a dinner of your choice or order from Hog Pit BBQ right there at the City Center. We can enjoy the nice summer evenings, the ice cream shop, the playground, inside/outside dining, and simply being together all summer long.



## House Build in Griffin, Georgia: Help Square Foot Ministry

Square Foot Ministry is a volunteer organization that builds homes to provide permanent housing for families. [Don't know about their work? Find out more!](#) **Volunteers are needed each Saturday** during July and August to complete the home started the first weekend in July. Come help us build a home for Vanessa and her two children, shown here. A job is there for everyone. Please sign up at [squarefootministry.org](http://squarefootministry.org) using our [sign up genius form](#). Also, fill out the volunteer waiver form online to save time when arriving. (If you have a group that can work during the week, contact us at 770-329-7736 to set up a special day.) For questions, contact Judy Reynolds at 404-386-1190.



## New classes begin Monday, August 14

GriefShare is a program where caring individuals walk with others through the journey of grief. Facilitated by Carol and Bill Webb, classes meet Mondays August 14 through November 13 for a 13-week session from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Room B350. (No class on Labor Day). All are welcome. For more information on the program or to sign up, contact the Webbs at 404-234-1056 or visit [GriefShare.org](http://GriefShare.org).



## Ready to play handbells?

Beginning August 31, handbells will begin regular rehearsals on Thursdays from 5:30-6:30 PM every week. Have you wanted to join this group? Some new players are needed, and one could be you! Please contact Judy Hames, [jhames@bellsouth.net](mailto:jhames@bellsouth.net), for more information.



## General music reading and theory: One class left

Would you like to read music well enough to play a variety of instruments or sing? Join us for our final session on Thursday, July 26, from 5:30 to 6:30 PM for a music reading and basic music theory class. Questions? Contact Judy Hames, [jhames@bellsouth.net](mailto:jhames@bellsouth.net).



## Portraits are here! Pick up in office or the welcome portal

The Portrait Cafe has sent the photos you ordered! Get yours in the church office during the week or in the welcome portal behind the sanctuary this Sunday. After Sunday, the remaining photos will be in the church office only for pickup.

Pictorial directories are in production and should be here by the first of September. We'll let you know when they arrive!



## Back to School Blessing Sunday, July 30, 11 AM service

All teachers, students, school staff and administrators, bus drivers: gather your backpack (or workbag) and join us at the **11 AM worship service on Sunday, July 30**, for a special blessing of the backpacks for you and the new school year.



## July "Most Needed" List for Fayette Samaritans

Donations are one way to help those with food insecurity and other needs. Food and clothing donations may be placed in the hallway cart near the gym or dropped by the church office.

**Most Needed List:** *Canned Chicken, Canned Green Beans, Canned Corn, Boxed Mac and Cheese, Hamburger Helper, Peanut Butter, Soup (no Cream of Chicken, please), Dried Pinto and Black-eyed Peas, Rice, Cookies, Feminine Products*

**Clothing needs:** *Men's boxer-style underwear all sizes, boys underwear all sizes, socks for men, women, boys and girls*



## Apples needed for final week of Summer Lunch Program

Our Summer Lunch Program will deliver our last meals on Tuesday, July 25. All we need are some apples for the lunches. Just leave your contributions in the Fellowship Hall marked "Summer Lunch." Contact coordinator, Virginia Pope, at [vgail.pope@gmail.com](mailto:vgail.pope@gmail.com) or 678-361-1722 with any questions.



## United Women in Faith mission project continues

You are invited to participate in the United Women in Faith Southwest District mission projects for this year which include UMCOR and Rushton's Hope.

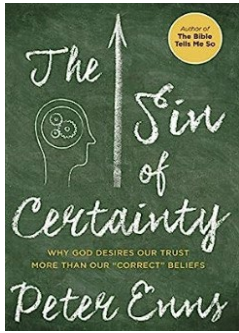
**UMCOR disaster relief needs** boxes of 33-45 gallon heavy duty trash bags and bottles of concentrated liquid household cleaner, 16-40 oz.

**Rushton's Hope** is a ministry serving the impoverished, homeless, rejected and hurting people in the area of Griffin. They provide for physical needs through food, clothing, toiletries, household items, and furniture, and will take used mattresses as well as monetary donations. They also minister to spiritual needs through a worship service, jail ministry, a crisis pregnancy ministry, and special events through the year.

Rushton's Hope needs jelly, crackers (any kind, either individually wrapped packs or short stacks), microwavable cups of Rice-A-Roni and Mac & Cheese, but other items will be accepted. For more information on Rushton's Hope or for pick up of large items, please call Faye Livingston at 770-401-9761. If you have furniture to donate, Cindy Hall and Faye Livingston will coordinate with the Summer Lunch Families and Rushton's Hope so that needs are met where they are the greatest.

A box will be in the Welcome Portal to collect for these two projects through September 1.





## New study begins July 30 and you're invited

Participate in meaningful group discussions on Sunday mornings beginning July 30 at 9:45 AM in Room C260 as the Study Class begins "The Sin of Certainty" by Peter Enns. Discuss how a vibrant faith can view skepticism not as a loss of belief, but as an opportunity to deepen religious conviction with courage and confidence. The book combines Enns' reflection of his own spiritual journey with an examination of Scripture to model an acceptance of mystery and paradox that all believers can follow. Secure your book from your favorite bookseller and join in!

## Acolyte Party: Wednesday, July 26

Let us celebrate you! All Acolytes are invited to come to a party in their honor at Royal Lanes Social for DuckPin on July 26 from 4 – 5 PM. When we finish bowling we will take the church van to the City Center, eat pizza and hang out there till 6:30 PM. Parents can drop off at the church at 3:15 PM and pick up in front of Hog Pit BBQ and Scoops at 6:30 PM. DuckPin and pizza is free!



## Green Team fills first CHaRM TRAIN

Ready to put some energy into recycling while exposing the need for accessible recycling options closeby? Join forces with the Green Team! We have started one TRAIN for saving recyclables at home, sorting them on an agreed "team" date, and delivering them to the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials on a rotating basis. **This TRAIN is full, but there is interest in starting another train.** To get more information about **starting your own TRAIN among friends, family and neighbors**, contact the FFUMC Green Team at [green@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:green@fayettevillefirst.com) or call Joan Aycock in the church office at 770-461-4313..



## Note of Gratitude

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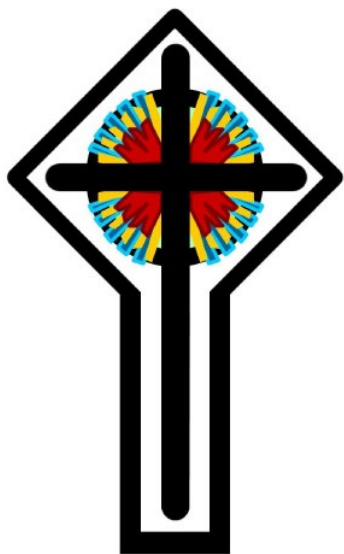
### Flower Ministry:

*Thank you for the beautiful yellow roses. My daughter and son-in-law were very surprised and grateful for your thinking of them while he is going through treatment for stomach cancer. We pray he will get better soon. Thank you for your kindness — Vicki Turner*

### Church Family:

*We just wanted to take this moment to let the members know how much we truly enjoyed the flowers, phone calls, cards, and prayers we received when my sister, Joyce Wheeler, passed away. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." Matthew 5:4 — Bobby and Beverly Mobley*

## July 19, 2023 Financials



### Operating Budget

Year to Date receipts	\$675,132.14
Year to Date expenses	\$692,157.80
Difference	-\$17,025.66

### Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week: \$298

88 benevolence clients assisted year to date for a total of \$27,716.60

### You can continue your financial support in many ways:

[Online giving: Click here.](#)

Mail check to church or place it in the drop box at the church office.

Use electronic funds transfer with your bank.

### Regular Church Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed 12-1 p.m. lunch)

Fridays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Fayetteville First UMC 175 East Lanier Avenue Fayetteville, GA 30214  
770-461-4313 [FayettevilleFirst.com](http://FayettevilleFirst.com)

AA Meetings: Sundays 3 PM; Mondays 7 PM; Wednesdays 7 PM;  
Fridays 7 PM; Saturdays 7 PM

NA Meeting: Thursdays and Saturdays 7 PM

# inspired ...

## Christmas Shoeboxes ready for Central America

Many thanks to the generous people of this church who provided the clothing, toiletry items, and toys for this year's Christmas Shoe Box project. Because of you, this year's project was a huge success. Also, a BIG "thank you" to those of you who helped behind the scenes and who participated in the packing event held on June 15, 2023. After the United Women in Faith Unit Meeting that evening, many stayed behind to pack 108 boxes.

By early next week, Tami Kemberling and I will have delivered these boxes to the North Alabama Conference Disaster Relief Warehouse in Decatur, Alabama. From there, these boxes will carry the strong message that God loves them to children somewhere in Central America. Last year, the Warehouse sent almost 6,000 boxes to Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and other Central American countries. Churches and other organizations from all over the country participate in this project each year .

Without these boxes, some of the children might not receive Christmas presents. From my trips to El Salvador, I know that some families in these countries barely have enough money to buy food. Clothing is often hand-me-downs from the clothing mission teams leave. And toys are even harder to come by. These new clothes and the new toys will be treasures for these children. — Maggie Clarke

