



September 1, 2023

The Weekender

Reality competition and grace

Dr. Thomas Martin, Senior Minister

I wonder if Jesus would have been a fan of reality competition TV shows?

Personally, I think it would be fun to be a judge or a critic on a reality competition TV show. I don't watch a lot of reality competition TV shows, but from what I do watch, it seems that people are presented with some of the best attempts at humor, fashion, food, design, talent, singing, dancing, or any other creative expression...and it boils down to something being good or bad. As the judge, I think it would be fun to measure whether I like something or not. My preferred tastes would then be elevated. My aesthetical preferences would be worshipped. People would try to please me.

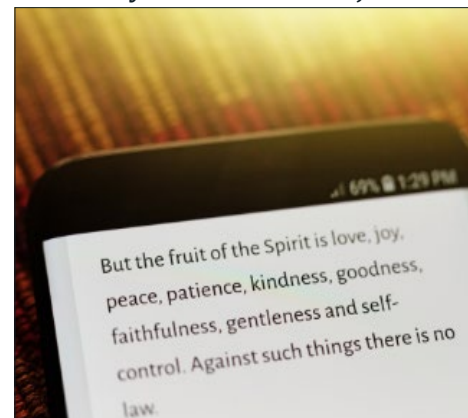
Yet we are reminded from Jesus Christ, "Do not judge or you will be judged. For the same way that you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Mt. 7:1)

I watch athletes, cooks, designers, performers, and entertainers and am quick to pass judgment on what I think is good or bad.

Do I do the same with everyday people in my life? Of course I do. The person who cut me off while driving. The person taking too long at self-checkout. The cashier who was rude.

But do we take the time to extend the grace that we would want if we were in a hurry and accidently cut someone off in traffic? Would we want the grace at the self-checkout because we are letting our kids or grandkids help and make them feel like they are part of the process? Would we want the same grace extended to us when we have a bad day but still have a job to do? I would pray to God that we would.

So why wouldn't we extend that grace to others? I think the challenge for us as Christians is to live in a world that judges, ranks, and scores based upon a metric or measurement where the fruit of the Spirit is not the measuring device. What if, when we had to judge, we did so based upon the metrics of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? That's a reality competition TV show that would be worth watching.





14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

8:45 and 11:00 AM

Online link active at 11 AM and after

Matthew 16:21-28

Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin

CURRENT NEWS



"Living the Way" at FFUMC

We've already kicked off a fresh season at FFUMC. Check out Bible studies, ministry opportunities, senior activities, and new programs for children and youth. [See highlights in the "Living the Way" brochure and get details in this newsletter.](#)



Let's eat together on Wednesday Nights

Enjoy meals on Wednesday nights together! Starts September 6 at 5:15 PM. What's the draw?

Friendship! Be with people you really like.

Hassle Free! Enjoy meals from local restaurants.

Affordable! Adults \$10, Children under 13: \$7 (pay at door)

Sign up each week by noon on Monday. Contact the church office, 770-461-4313, admin@fayettevillefirst.com, or fill out a pew card.

Sept. 6 menu: Piccadilly's Fried Chicken, Potato Casserole, Veggies, Bread, Cake



Celebrate FFUMC's 175th anniversary by helping foster kids

In honor of FFUMC's 175th anniversary, please help Bethany Circle collect 175 of each of the items below for Bloom's older foster children. Donations may be dropped off by September 18 in the church office or on the Bloom table located behind the sanctuary in the Welcome Portal.

Items needed:

Large (9.5" x 7") clear toiletry bag

Shampoo, 3 oz.

Adult toothbrush, individually packaged

Conditioner, 3 oz.

Toothpaste, 2.5 to 3.5 oz.

Bar soap or 3 oz. body wash

Full-size men and women's deodorant

Questions? Contact Karen Neuner, neunernotes@gmail.com.

*Celebrate
FFUMC's
175th anniversary
by helping others*



New! Wednesdays 6 PM

See and Seek: Small Group Opportunities

A new Wednesday night group will meet at Gremlin Growlers from 6 - 7 PM starting September 6. You can have dinner at the church, drop your children off at KiDS 555, and take a few minutes for yourself as you decompress and get recharged. Facilitated by Rev. Thomas Martin, you are invited to come and hang out with old friends, make new friends, and explore scripture and questions like: where did you see God at work in your life this past week? And, how are you inspired to find hope and act in the coming days?

Other groups meet throughout the week. Contact [Rev. Allyson Lawrence](#) to find a group that fits you and your schedule.

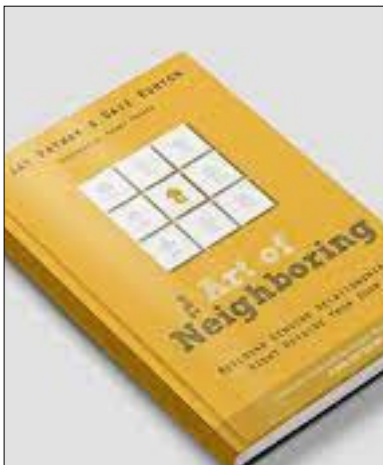


Get your book!
Join AL & A-JV
Sept 6 - Oct 18

Study on Sermon on the Mount

Wednesdays, September 6 - October 18, 11 AM - Noon, Room C-200

Jesus challenges his closest disciples with his Sermon on the Mount essentially saying to them, "Your 'good' could always be better. You may be the salt of the earth, you may be the light of the world, but your salt could be saltier and your light could be brighter." Dr. Amy-Jill Levine says we are invited to "follow Jesus into the Sermon, down the mountain, and out into the world, and to step into the kingdom of heaven." Will you join in this deep dive into the Beatitudes as we study Matthew, chapters 5 - 7, guided by Dr. Levine's book, "Sermon on the Mount: A beginners guide to the kingdom of heaven"? Rev. Lawrence facilitates the discussion each Wednesday. Just get a copy of the book from your favorite provider and discover ways these words of Jesus may speak to us today.



The Art of Neighboring

Jesus said, "Love your neighbor." What if we took his invitation literally? Join a three-session discussion and study of the book, "The Art of Neighboring." It isn't rocket science but it is an eye opening journey through the way we build genuine relationships right outside our doors. After our time together you will have an action plan of how you can be more than acquaintances with the people who live on your street and how you can truly love your neighbor. We will meet September 17, October 1, and October 15 from 3 - 5 pm in room C-200. There is no cost for this group but you will want to buy the book, "The Art of Neighboring" by Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon, before our first meeting.

"Welcome to Fayetteville First!" Usher Info Social

Looking for a great place to serve? Join one of our usher teams! Enjoy an ice cream social and discover more about being an usher on Sunday, September 10, at 3 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Rev. Allyson Lawrence will describe what ushers do, how often they serve (regular and flexible options) and how you can get involved in this great ministry of hospitality and leadership.

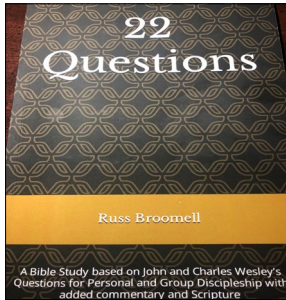




Make plans now for South West District Trip

April 6-13, 2024 El Salvador

You can share Christ and ministry in El Salvador by joining with our South West District mission trip April 6-13, 2024. Be part of construction work (no skills needed), food distribution, meeting folks, and putting on a VBS (translators on-site). Must be 16 years old. Contact veteran leader and trip participant Maggie Clarke, 404-395-8161 or mwclarke195@gmail.com, for more information as preparations begin soon.



Study 22 Questions with Cornerstone Class

The Cornerstone Sunday School Class is currently studying "22 Questions," a Bible study based on John and Charles Wesley's questions for personal and group growth. You're invited to join in this study Sunday at 9:45 AM in Room 270.



Seasoned Singers welcomes you!

Sing with an enthusiastic group of vocalizers that have fun each week on Tuesday afternoons. Rehearsal next Tuesday, September 5, is at 1:30 PM after the Titus II lunch. Contact director Deb Cole for more information, dvcole@hotmail.com.



SAGE goes south to shop and eat

Go with friends to Antique Mall and The Sock Shoppe in Griffin with lunch at Southern Pit BBQ!

September 28 Meet at 8:45, Depart at 9 AM

Save your spot! Reserve at the church office, 770-461-4313

For questions or to suggest future trips, contact Rev. Charles Robinson, crobinson@fayettevillefirst.com, 770-855-6433.



Lean into God's love at UWF retreat

Join Kim Reindl at **Faith, Fun and Everyone: Leaning into God's Love**, a one-day retreat offered by the United Women in Faith South West District on Saturday, September 16, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM at The Bradbury House. To register, contact Kathie Hansen, 678-592-5177. \$20 payable at event.



Green Team helps care for earth: Join in!

The FFUMC Green Team will meet the second Tuesday of each month beginning September 12 at 6 PM in on the Fayetteville First UMC campus in Room 200. Join in and invite anyone you know who is interested in caring for our earth with sustainability. Questions? Contact Tami Kemberling, 678-641-9604 or tamidale57@gmail.com.



"Rahab: Luck or Providence"
September 14 Salad Lunch

United Women in Faith Unit Meeting features "Rahab"

You're invited to experience "Rahab: Luck or Providence" at the next United Women in Faith salad luncheon on Thursday, September 14, at 11:30 AM. Carla Cloud tells the story of this woman's hope, forgiveness, and redemption. Please bring a favorite salad to share. The event will also receive donations for Bloom's older foster children sponsored by Bethany Circle. UWF members should reserve with their circle and others may contact Lauren Davis at lauren-davis@comcast.net by September 10. Nursery available with reservation.



Get your church directory in Welcome Portal

Drop by the Welcome Portal behind the sanctuary and pick up "Our Church Family 2023 Church Directory." Families photographed by The Portrait Cafe will find your copy in baskets arranged alphabetically by last name. Those who purchased and paid for a directory will find yours in a separate basket on the same table. Forgot to order one? We've got you covered. You may pick up a copy in the church office (\$15). Details on how to access this directory online, courtesy of The Portrait Cafe, will be available soon.



That we may be
one

South West District supports racial healing and reconciliation

Join with others to learn and grow together in racial healing and reconciliation through five interactive workshops led by Elaine Beattie. Hear experts and engage in projects and group experiences on topics such as healthcare, education, criminal justice, economics, and church. For more information, contact Denise Wilson, 770-227-1074, southwest@ngumc.net, or [register using this link](#). All sessions will be held at Senoia UMC from 3 to 5 PM on Sundays September 10, 17, 24, and October 8 and 29.



Get away at Fall 2023 retreat at Camp Calvin

Is an approaching new season calling out to you for refreshment and renewal? Are you interested in exploring meditation and contemplative practices? You are invited get away for a Contemplative Retreat sponsored by FFUMC's Study Class at Camp Calvin on Sunday, October 22, from 2:30 to 5:30 PM. Experience nourishing readings and an introduction to practices from guest leader Kimberly Broerman along with space and supplies to explore. Cost: \$25 (includes meal and all materials). For more information, contact Joan Aycock, jaycock@fayettevillefirst.com. Save the date! Registration will open soon.

Children's Ministry



FFUMC KiDS 555 kicks off Wednesday, September 6

Announcing a new schedule for fall! Join the fun on Wednesday nights at FFUMC KiDs with two clubs.

Explorers Club offers rotating activities like game night, Bible study, art time and more.

Grades 3 - 5 meet 5:55 to 6:30 PM; Grades K-2 meet 6:30 to 7 PM

Music Club takes students through a host of adventures including singing, music theory, games and instrument playing as we make all kinds of joyful noises.

Grades K-2 meet 5:55 to 6:30 PM; Grades 3-5 meet 6:30 to 7 PM

We're excited to see you! Questions? Contact [Rev. Allyson Lawrence](#) or [Joan Aycock](#).

Youth Ministry



Youth begin Wednesdays together on September 6

Join Interim Youth Director Austin Baur and other youth in grades 6 to 12 for fun, study, and service together on Wednesdays during 8th period after school from 4 to 6 and youth night from 6 to 8 PM. Contact Austin for details at abaur@fayettevillefirst.com.

Austin Baur with Jack Travis on a middle school retreat this summer

Gratitude to Shawl Ministry



Thank you so much for the wonderful lap robe. I especially appreciate the diligent work you put into it. I do some crocheting myself, but I would never have mastered that intricate pattern you applied. — Ingrid Shields

Thank you for the beautiful crocheted shawl. It is so comforting. It's not easy to lose your mother, but your shawl has filled me with gratefulness for lovely people, talented people like you. Your gift has allowed me to get through these difficult times. I'm truly grateful. The Shawl Prayer was beautiful, too! — Barbara Grayson

Thank you for the lap robe you gave me remembering the death of my dad. I appreciate the support and prayers from this church family. — Tim Aycock

*Thank you so much for the delivery of JOY that came with your gift.... The blanket was one more example of how supportive a faith community can be to a family. So you gave more than you realize with your gift. Thank you so much. We love our FFUMC family.
— Becky Voyle*

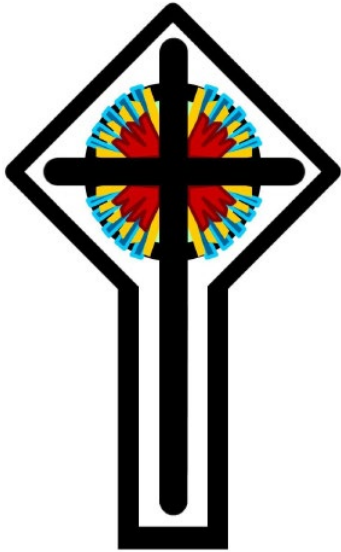


September needs list for Fayette Samaritans

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, Canned Mixed Vegetables, Canned Fruit, Canned Pasta, Boxed Cereal, Pancake Mix, Syrup, Jelly **Clothing needs:** Men's boxer-style underwear all sizes, boys underwear all sizes, socks for men, women, boys and girls

August 30, 2023 Financials



Operating Budget

Year to Date receipts	\$788,709.91
Year to Date expenses	\$839,790.37
Difference	-\$51,080.46

Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week: \$161.00

115 benevolence clients assisted year to date for a total of \$36,707.92

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

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

NA Meeting: Thursdays and Saturdays 7 PM



The church office and campus will be closed Monday, September 4, in observance of Labor Day.

Have a good holiday!

inspired ...

A great time getting Messy!

Our first experience of Messy Church last Saturday offered a chance to do church differently. WE LOVE IT! This new ministry blended the generations together from young to seasoned as we played games, enjoyed arts and crafts, celebrated in worship, and ate together. Nearly 60 participants and volunteers kicked off our first-ever event. One young visitor said, "This is just the BEST church!" We think so too!



Mark your calendars for our next Messy Church on Saturday, September 23, when we explore the theme "God cares about the little things."

