



September 22, 2023

## The Weekender

### Looking Up

Dr. Thomas Martin, Senior Minister

What is just? What is right? What is fair?

Why is it that we cheer when the bad guy gets what he deserves but cringe and weep when the good people finish last? You do it. I do it. We all do it. We want things to work out for us in the way that it should go for us, in the ways in which we think through the things of life. We've worked hard for something, we deserve it. We know that a hard day's work is equal to an honest day's wages. But my God, when will the scales tip in our favor? What do we do when life is not fair.



If you're already anticipating my next move, you might think that I am going to take Jesus' parable, co-mingle it with Jonah's lament, add a dash of the real world and tells you that life isn't fair. Deal with it. And stop complaining. As I remember the phrase goes: Build a bridge and get over it.

Far from it. Although it is tempting to use this scripture and these verses and say, "See, Jesus doesn't want you to complain," that is not what the scriptures say. Rather, they invite us to think about the balance that we have in life when we cry out for justice and when we cry for our own way of doing things. Balance is key. It just takes a little juggling to help us get the right perspective.

Many of you have probably heard the analogy of the balls that we juggle in life. Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them — work, family, health, friends and faith — and you're keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back.

But the other four balls — family, health, friends and faith — are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same.

What if this parable about the kingdom of heaven is reminding us to keep juggling, even when things seem unfair or unjust? The trick with juggling, as I've heard, not learned, is that you must always look up. When you begin to look down, everything begins to fall apart. The Psalmist says, "I lift my eyes up to the hills. My help comes from there." There is wisdom in looking up.

Whether in life or in parables, may we look up to Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith.



## 17TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

8:45 and 11:00 AM

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

*Jonah 3:10-4:11; Matthew 20:1-16*

Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin

## CURRENT NEWS

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### Come explore Messy Church tomorrow!

Messy Church is tomorrow September 23 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

[Sign up to help with Messy Church by clicking HERE.](#)

Join us and find out how many lives we can touch, how many new people we can meet, and where God is moving through this new ministry and new way of being church. Our theme for this month is “God cares for the little things.” Our scripture focus is Matthew 6:26 and Luke’s story of Zacchaeus.

[If you want a sneak peak, you can click HERE](#) to see September’s working document that lays out our agenda and tasks for the day.

We hope to see you Saturday ... either as a participant or volunteer. All are welcome here!



### Register now for Fall 2023 Contemplative Retreat Calvin Center, Sunday, October 22, 2:30—5:30 PM

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 the Calvin Center on Sunday, October 22, from 2:30 to 5:30 PM. Experience nourishing readings and an introduction to practices from guest leader Kimberly Broerman from Deep Waters Prayer and Exploration along with space and supplies to engage. Cost: \$25 (includes meal and all materials). Questions? Contact Joan Aycock, [jaycock@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:jaycock@fayettevillefirst.com), 770-861-4499. Registration is limited. [Register today at this link.](#)



### Spirit night at Anthony's Pizza benefits FFUMC Preschool

Tuesday night, September 26, 5 to 7 PM

Fayetteville First Preschool and Anthony’s Pizza are teaming up to host a Spirit Night fundraiser! On Tuesday, September 26, between 5-7 PM, we will receive a portion of ALL food and soda sales at Anthony’s Pizza. Please join us in supporting our very own preschool while also enjoying a local favorite — feeding both your family and the young minds at Fayetteville First UMC Preschool.

*Photos: Earlier this week our Fours students went on a field trip to learn about how they make the pizzas!*





October 3

## Judy Hames and David Ellis at October's Titus II

Come to Titus II on October 3 at noon in the gym and hear a musical presentation by Dr. Judy Hames and David Ellis. You'll also have a good meal and plenty of fellowship. Make your reservation by noon on Thursday, September 28, by calling Martha Turner at 770-461-2802. Lunch (\$8): Country Fried Steak, Creamed Potatoes, Peas and Carrots, Bread, Apple Pie.



## Let's eat together on Wednesday Nights

Enjoy meals on Wednesday nights together 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 by noon each Monday. Contact the church office, 770-461-4313, [admin@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:admin@fayettevillefirst.com), or fill out a Fellowship Dinner pew card.

September 27 menu: Tim's Country Kitchen: Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Green Beans, Rolls, Banana Pudding



## 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](mailto:crobinson@fayettevillefirst.com), 770-855-6433.



## Trunk or Treat is coming Saturday, October 28

Only 20 spots available for Trunk or Treat this year! This year we are asking **groups within the church to decorate a trunk and pass out candy.**

Groups can be from Sunday school classes, mission trip travelers (like El Salvador, Safehouse, or Griffin), youth groups, UWF Circles, men's groups, JAG, pickleball friends, yoga friends, Chancel Choir or Seasoned Singers - or any other group. Think creatively, grab some candy or other treats and come celebrate fall and fun! Your trunk can highlight your favorite things about your group or just be fun decorations. Please nothing too scary.

[Sign up here to reserve your trunk or treat space.](#)

**The Trunk or Treat event is Saturday, October 28, from 11 - 1 PM.** It will be part of our Messy Church games. Scripture focus for the event is Joshua 1:9 Lunch is provided. We'll have games, a cake walk, music and just a really great time together. Join the celebration!





## 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](mailto:mwclarke195@gmail.com), for more information as preparations begin soon.



## Woof Stock comes to Fayetteville September 30

Come enjoy the Fayette Love Your Pet event and a dog-friendly vendor and music festival at City Center Park on Saturday, September 30.

### Event schedule:

Fayette Love Your Pet: 10 AM to 1 PM

Vendor and Music Festival: 1 PM to 6 PM

Bring your pet at 1 PM as Pastor Thomas will offer a blessing of the pets.



## National Faith & Blue Weekend: October 7

Join Fayetteville's Police Department and our residents for a special gathering of resolution and reconciliation. It's all part of the National Faith & Blue Weekend - a collaborative effort to build bridges and break biases.

Saturday, October 7, 12 - 2 PM

City Center Park, Fayetteville



## Christmas music will fill the air! Join in!

Our enthusiastic and talented Director of Music & Organist Nick Bowden says, "Come join in! The way things have developed so wonderfully for Christmas is just one of the exciting things I see happening here at FFUMC." Nick is planning wonderful music for this holiday season, and anyone who wants to sing and participate in any or all of the offerings is invited. All ability levels welcome. Not sure? Come just give it a try at rehearsals.

### Here's what to anticipate for Christmas presentations:

The Messiah - Sunday, December 10, 7 PM

Lessons & Carols - Sunday, December 17, 11 AM

Christmas Eve - December 24, 11 AM, 4 PM & 11 PM

For more information on rehearsals or other questions, contact Nick Bowden at 404-932-0877 or [nbowden@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:nbowden@fayettevillefirst.com) or talk to Nick at church.

**Sing for Christmas**

# Gratitude

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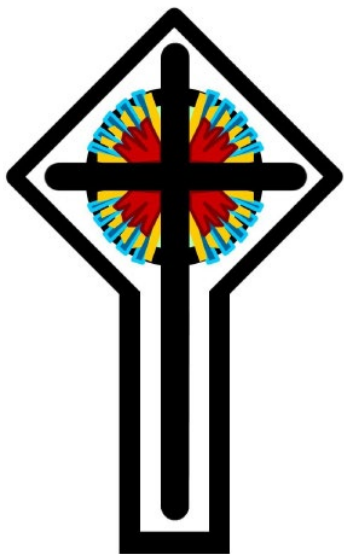


*Dear Shawl Ministry:*

*Thank you for the lovely prayer shawl. It was a bright spot in my day. Each time I cover with it, I will say a prayer of thanks to God for the love that I received with each stitch. I know tht Tommy is with the Lord and is covered with light as bright as the yellow in the shawl. May God bless your ministry.*

*— Sallie (Hattie) Tait*

*I love the soothing lyrics in "There is a Balm in Gilead." Over these past several weeks as I've been recovering from surgery, I feel I've been soothed by the Balm of FFUMC. The calls, cards, and texts of well wishes for my recovery have certainly lifted my spirits. The beautiful flowers from the Flower Ministry and the visit from Yvette and Karen brightened my day. Karen even paid a short visit when she dropped my pictorial directory by for me. Your thoughts, concern, love and prayers have certainly kept me covered in the Healing Balm of FFUMC and I'm thankful and blessed by each one of you. — Trudy Whittington*



## September 20, 2023 Financials

### Operating Budget

Year to Date receipts	\$852,869.26
Year to Date expenses	\$882,309.44
Difference	-\$29,440.18

### Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this month: \$626.00

125 benevolence clients assisted year to date for a total of \$39,046.31

### 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

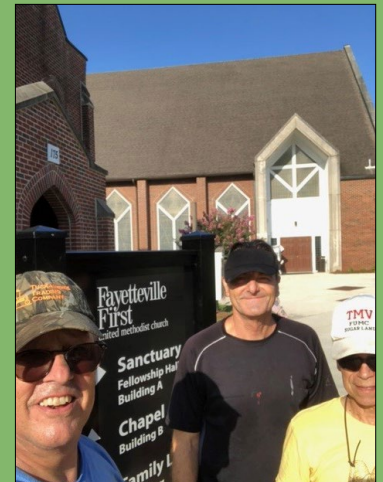
# inspired ...

## They're at it again ... Thank you, JAG

The Jackleg Angels Group continues to show up wherever needed to make our spaces updated, safe, and functioning. Thank you for the new handrails at the church office, for replacing greenery by the sanctuary entrance, for making a worktable for the church workroom, and for putting up new directional signage in our parking lots and outdoor areas ... and more! We appreciate you!

It's easy to be a part of this ministry. Just let Trustee Chair Bob Dunn know you're interested ([radunn14@gmail.com](mailto:radunn14@gmail.com)).

- Have a special skill? Love power tools? Have a few hours to paint or repair something? Get in on the action.
- Feel like you don't have a special skill? No worries! Some projects need extra willing hands. You also can learn some things as these men and ladies share their knowledge and talents.



*How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you?*

*— 1 Thessalonians 3:9*