



December 1, 2023

## The Weekender

### What is Advent?

Dr. Thomas Martin, Senior Minister

We all know that Advent is the season before Christmas in which “every heart prepares him room.” We all know it is a liturgical season, but what is Advent?

Advent is Hope. It is not certainty. It is not knowing everything. It is not having all of the answers right now. Advent is a time where we bring all of life’s uncertainties, all of life’s questions, all of the “unknowns” and admit that we do not know everything and that there is much that is out of our control. Hope helps us prepare.

Advent is Joy. It’s not a dirge. It’s not a pity party. It’s not a death sentence. Yet Advent is a time when we acknowledge all of our emotions and sadness, our losses and griefs, our fears and anxieties. Just because Advent is Joy does not mean that we are always to be joyful. Advent reminds us that Joy is our goal and that Christ goes with us. Joy helps us prepare.

Advent is Peace. Advent is not the absence of conflict, but rather the reminder that God’s peace is active and it takes work. “Peace, be still” the psalmist says. Jesus echoes this in the Gospels during the storm on the Sea. Peace is a state towards which we strive and move. It is not some idealistic function of democratic societies. It is more than a seven-day ceasefire. It is where the lion will lie down with the lamb and a little child shall lead them. Peace helps us prepare.

Advent is Love. It is not the romantic comedies (Four Christmases and The Holiday come to my immediate mind). It is not the just pat on the back, the cookie exchange, the Christmas carolers. No. It is the people behind the gesture, not the gesture themselves which extends the humanity from one person to the next. Love is not cheap. It is not costly. But this love is Godly. Love helps us prepare.

During this season of Advent, may we resist the urge for false hope of the things of this world. May we reject the dirge and doldrums which say conventionally, “If you’re not suffering, you’re not trying.” May we refuse the false peace that thinks that we are the agents of Peace rather than God’s presence in our lives. May we shun the love which tempts us for a moment and exchange it for the “Love that will not let me go.”

May you prepare, this Advent, for Christ’s abiding presence and promise. And may Christ be with us through this Season and all the days of our lives.



### FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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

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

*Mark 13:24-37*

Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin

## CURRENT NEWS

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### Angel Tree available - Gifts due December 7

You have the opportunity to provide Christmas gifts for children affiliated with Bloom, an organization in our community which supports foster children. An Angel Tree located behind the sanctuary provides details for what is requested. If you would like to participate, please follow these guidelines:

**Choose** an angel from the tree.

**Print** your name and phone number on the form next to the tree and the number of your angel. Please take no more than 1 per family.

**Mark** gifts with the number of your angel.

**Deliver** gifts to church office no later than Thursday, December 7.

Questions? Contact Suzie Lusk, [suzielusk49@gmail.com](mailto:suzielusk49@gmail.com).



### December needs from 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 Beef Stew, Canned Fruit, Tuna, Boxed Mashed Potatoes, Peanut Butter, Pasta Sauce, Jiffy Cornbread Mix, Boxed Mac and Cheese, Canned Beans (Black, Pinto, Navy, Black-eyed Peas, etc.) Jelly, Feminine Products, Bar Soap, Toothbrushes and Tooth Paste*

**Urgent needs:** *Women's socks, Women's and Men's Underwear*

### December 2 is our Christmas Messy Church

Join us tomorrow as we play and worship with old and new friends alike. Be sure to invite your neighbors and families to join us, too. Our scripture focus is Luke 2, the birth of Jesus; and, we'll also explore ways that people around the world celebrate the new born Christ child. We will even have a special jolly guest from the North Pole drop in and visit with us.

Want to volunteer? [Click here to see where you can serve.](#)

And many thanks to the wonderful church response to our request for canisters and Christmas trees. We have exactly what we need! Thank you for your donations.

Contact [Rev. Allyson Lawrence](#) with any questions.



### Let's eat together on Wednesday Nights

Enjoy meals on Wednesday nights together at 5:15 PM.

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.

### December 6: Broadway Diner

*Chicken Alfredo, Salad, Rolls, Dessert*

Note: Dinner on December 13 (Anthony's Pizza) begins early at 5 PM to accommodate Christmas Caroling which begins at 5:30 PM.



### Season of the Nativity begins December 3

We move deeper into the experience of God's presence with us through the Season of the Nativity. Opportunities to explore, reflect, and share the reality that "Jesus is..." in our lives will begin on December 3 when the 2023 Season of the Nativity packet will be available. We look forward to sharing this time throughout Advent and Christmas through to Epiphany as our practices, prayers, and activities deepen our devotion together.



### See "3 Redneck Tenors" with SAGE on December 3

'Tis the season to enjoy music and comedy with friends! Go with our Senior Adults Going Everywhere to see "3 Redneck Tenors" at The Nixon Centre in Newnan on Sunday, December 3. Reserve your place at the church office.

Gather at church by 1:45 PM; Bus departs at 2 PM; Show begins at 3 PM

Cost: \$17 (payable in advance at the church office),

plus dinner after the show at Partners II Pizza in Newnan around 5 PM



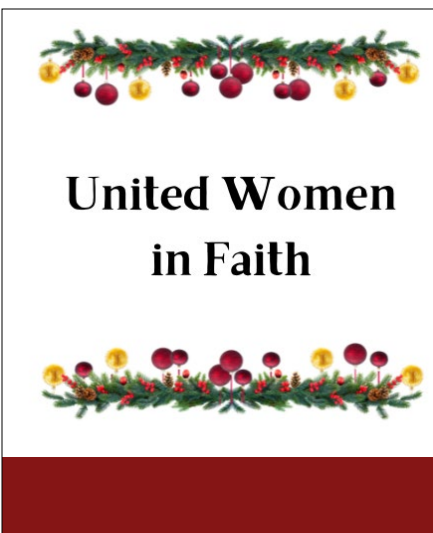
### Titus II welcomes Inman Elementary Chorus December 5

Christmas excitement and music will fill the air at Titus II at noon on December 5 when the Inman Elementary Chorus directed by Pamela Banks will present their Christmas program.



### Everybody gets a part at Christmas Pageant December 6

Let's tell the story together! Join in the FFUMC Christmas Pageant led by Danny and Julie Beck and friends on Wednesday, December 6, at 6 PM following our Wednesday night dinner in the Fellowship Hall. No preparation is needed! Just come!



### United Women in Faith Christmas Banquet December 7

The UWF would like to invite women interested in learning more about our global charity organization to join us at our annual Christmas Banquet in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, December 7, starting at 6 PM with warm cider and appetizers. Dinner begins at 6:30 PM. Please bring your favorite side dish to share. Turkey, ham, desserts, and drinks will be provided. Reservations are due by December 3: UWF members make reservations through their circle and all others contact Lauren Davis, [lauren-davis@comcast.net](mailto:lauren-davis@comcast.net). Please indicate the number of children for the nursery. We are pleased to invite the United Methodist Men to join us again this year.

#### Special entertainment:

Peachtree Road Revival Band with Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin and friends



## The Messiah Concert and Reception December 10

Join in this year's Christmas presentation on December 10. Music will be presented by The Chancel Choir with orchestra, harpsicord, organ and four soloists: Kristin Moye, Maria McDaniel, Jonathon Pilkington, and John Arnold. The program begins at 7 PM and a churchwide reception follows in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your friends and family.

[Want to share the event with others? Here's a link for social media.](#)



## Messiah "Ubers" offered by United Methodist Men

Do you want to attend The Messiah concert on December 10 at 7 PM at our church but do not feel comfortable driving at night? The United Methodist Men may be able to help you out. Contact Rev. Allyson Lawrence, [alawrence@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:alawrence@fayettevillefirst.com) or 770-461-4313, by Wednesday, December 6, and she will pass your request on to the UMM. Someone from the UMM will contact you to arrange your ride.



## Churchwide Christmas Caroling...Wednesday, December 13

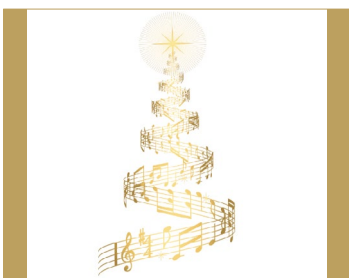
Let's spread Christmas cheer to our church family and friends on December 13. The night begins with Wednesday Night Supper from Anthony's Pizza. Be sure to make your reservation like normal. Note that dinner begins at 5 PM this night! We'll gather in the Fellowship Hall at 5:30 PM to arrange in caroling teams. Then we'll head out to spread good tidings. All ages are encouraged to be a joyful part! You don't even have to sing. Your presence will be appreciated. Help us plan caroling routes by letting us know you'll be caroling. Contact the church office at [admin@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:admin@fayettevillefirst.com) or 770-461-4313.



## Poinsettia orders due Thursday, December 14

Your purchase of poinsettias has at least 3 benefits this year:

1. Poinsettias enhance our worship space through the season.
2. You may give plants in memory or honor of family or friends. They'll be listed in the Christmas Eve Order of Worship. Ordered poinsettias are available to take from the sanctuary following the Christmas Eve service.
3. Proceeds from poinsettia orders benefit the FFUMC Flower Ministry. This group makes flower arrangements to encourage others throughout the year.
4. [Click here to complete the Poinsettia Order Form for honorariums/memoriums and payment online.](#) Alternately, complete a form available in the narthex on Sunday or anytime in the church office. (Cost: \$15 each) DUE DECEMBER 14.



## Service of Lessons & Carols December 17

You are invited to hear the story of God with us through scripture and song on December 17 as the Chancel Choir presents the Service of Lessons and Carols. This beautiful worship service will be offered at 8:45 in the chapel and at 11 AM and online in the sanctuary.



## Confirmation begins in January

Confirmation is coming! Confirmation is the process of making one's faith personal and making a commitment to Christ. Fayetteville First offers a confirmation class for those seeking to make a profession of faith as they learn and grow together. Confirmands meet on Wednesday nights from 7-8 PM and are welcome to join with other youth from 6-7 PM. The first class meets January 10. There will be a retreat the weekend of April 19-21 and Confirmation Sunday will be May 19. [Please reach out to Thomas](#) to register your student or email him if you have any questions.



## We're Hiring

Fayetteville First UMC is looking for some part time help on Thursday's and half a day Friday to assist with front desk and administrative duties. If you are interested, please email [admin@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:admin@fayettevillefirst.com).

## Gratitude

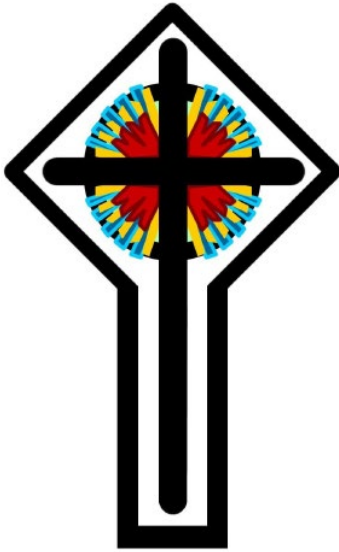
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### Thank you, Church Family:

*Wayne and I appreciate the outpouring of love from our church family. We are so blessed to have all of you to support us during this loss of our dear son, Eric. We thank you for the prayers, the flowers, attending the service, the calls, the shawls, the cards, and the food. I don't know how anyone could ever get through hard times like this without their church family and the strength our faith provides. All of you are dear to us. We love each of you.*

— Judy Reynolds



## November 29, 2023 Financials

### Operating Budget

Year to Date receipts	\$1,084,306.52
Year to Date expenses	\$1,100,269.94
Difference	-\$ 15,963.42

### Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week \$220.00

158 benevolence clients assisted year to date for a total of \$46,416.67

### 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)

Closed Fridays until further notice

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 ...

## Treats for Troops Delivered

Eighty pounds of sweet treats are on their way to our troops! Your contributions to Treats for Troops collected by the United Women in Faith were delivered this week by FFUMC representative Nathan Parr (center in photo) to the Atlanta VA Medical Center and Hospital for distribution. Thank you!



2023  
**SEASON**  
OF THE NATIVITY

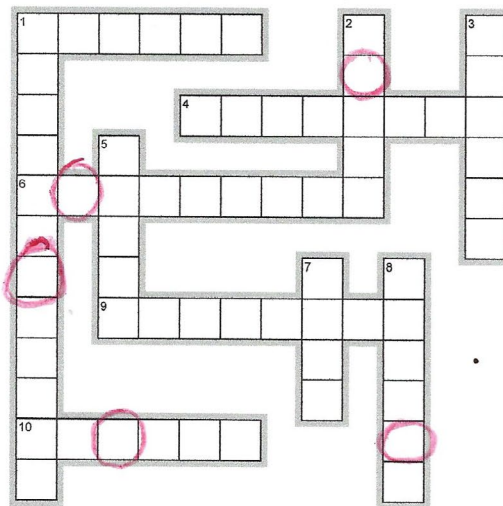
We begin the Season of Nativity on December 3, the First Sunday of Advent. A guide through the season with an Intentional Journal and Calendar will be available. A children's activity will be included in specially marked packets.

You are invited to enjoy music selected by Nick Bowden to highlight this week's theme: HOPE — [Jesus, Joy of Man's Desiring](#) Johann Sebastian Bach.

Work the weekly crossword and collect 23 letters circled in red to unscramble a special Christmas message:

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## Week 1



EclipseCrossword.com

### Across

1. A representation of the Nativity scene
4. Singing Christmas songs to neighbors.
6. They watched their flocks by night
9. One of the most hectic activities associated with Christmas
10. The weeks prior to Christmas Day of watching and waiting for the Messiah.

### Down

1. We celebrate the birth of Jesus today.
2. Jingle \_\_\_\_\_
3. They told the shepherds of the birth
5. Emmanuel is one of His names.
7. Number of candles on an Advent wreath
8. A FAVORITE DRINK OF THE SEASON