



December 15, 2023

The Weekender

Jesus is ...

Dr. Thomas Martin, Senior Minister

I hope that you have been following along with the daily devotions for the Season of Nativity here at the church. It is a wonderful resource that has been prepared for our spiritual growth during this season. I know it has enriched my thoughts and allowed me to center and recenter myself every day. It is a way that we can truly begin again in the day that Christ Jesus gives us.

The theme for this year is "Jesus is..." It takes us through the four weeks of Advent reminding us that Jesus is Hope. Jesus is Peace. Jesus is Joy. Jesus is Love.

Jesus is our Hope. It is a promise. It is the reminder that something better is coming. In the scriptures, we don't get a lot of descriptions of what heaven looks like, but we know that there will be no more tears. That is hope.

Jesus is our Joy. Isaac, son of Abraham and Sarah, is named laughter. Joy is with us. I can imagine Jesus laughing in the face of the storms of life or sharing an inside joke with his disciples. There is joy when Jesus is with us.

Jesus is Peace. In Isaiah, we see the image of the fullness of creation, where the lion shall lie with the lamb, the child shall play with the snake and a little child will lead them. This is not just the avoidance of conflict, but it is the fulfillment of peace.

Jesus is Love. We remember the words of 1 John 4 that says, "Those who have loved have seen God. For God is love." Jesus demonstrates love to us in his life, death, and resurrection. Jesus is Love.

All of this leads us to proclaim the best of all, that Jesus is with us. What is Jesus to you? Our hope this Season of Nativity is that as you fill in the blank of "Jesus is..." you will know that Jesus is with us, now and evermore.



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8:45 and 11:00 AM

[Online link active at 11 AM and after](#)
SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Rev. Kaylen Short will serve as our new senior minister beginning January 1, 2024. Rev. Short, most recently serving at Pine Mountain UMC, is a graduate of Candler School of Theology and is an elder in full connection with the United Methodist Church. He is moving to the area with his wife, Alli (Allison), and their two dogs.

Rev. Drew West will serve Fayetteville First part-time January through June 2024. He comes to us from Bethany UMC, a church which voted to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. Drew will also serve part-time at New Hope UMC in Palmetto in the first half of 2024. At Fayetteville First, Drew will work with our youth and confirmands, support Messy Church, and have other responsibilities. He is finishing his degree at the Candler School of Theology in the spring. Drew and his wife Amanda have two young children.

On Sunday, January 7, we will celebrate the Epiphany with a Churchwide Potluck Breakfast at 10 AM to welcome Rev. Short and Rev. Drew West to Fayetteville First. Please make plans to attend.

Realm ACS, the church management software provider, is rolling out a suite of accounting services and Fayetteville First is working with them on a beta test of their offering. Realm ACS services span fund accounting and giving integration, transactions, disbursements, account and vendor management, budgeting, reporting, W-2 filings, and audit services among other things. Our current arrangement with Realm ACS is month to month as they scale the service to provide it to other organizations. With Julie Harp stepping away to care for her family, this arrangement could not have come at a better time for FFUMC.

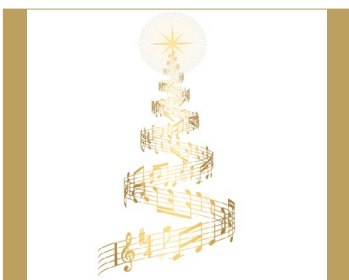
CURRENT NEWS



Reception to honor Dr. Thomas Martin and Family December 17, following 11 AM service

You are invited to a church-wide reception to honor Dr. Thomas Martin and the Martin family following the 11 AM service on Sunday, December 17, in the Fellowship Hall. You are invited to write a letter or card to Thomas and the Martin family and drop it by the church office or in the offering plate before December 17. A basket of notes will be presented to Dr. Martin at the reception.

A love offering for Dr. Martin and family will be collected through December 24, which will be the Martins last Sunday with us, to send them off with our prayers and blessings to their next appointment which begins January 1 at LaGrange United Methodist Church. Please mark gifts "Thomas Martin love offering."



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 AM in the chapel and at 11 AM and online in the sanctuary.



Longest Night Service brings message of hope and peace

December 21 is the actual longest night of the year. It is the day where there is the least sunlight and the longest darkness. It is no coincidence that it is so close to Christmas. Christmas is a time for celebration and hope, yet the holidays may be difficult for some who might be facing an empty chair at holiday gatherings or who are struggling finding joy and hope. The Longest Night Service is a time to come together acknowledging that there are some things that are difficult for some of us. We will pray, sing, and hear a message of hope and peace on the night that is the longest of the year. All are welcome to join us at 6 PM in the Chapel on Thursday, December 21.



Christmas Eve Services

11 AM, 6 PM, 11 PM

Our traditional Candlelight Worship on Christmas Eve will be offered in the sanctuary at 11 AM and 6 PM and in the chapel at 11 PM. The 11 AM & 6 PM services will be livestreamed. All services will offer beautiful music, communion and candlelight singing. An orchestra will present music at the 6 PM service. Nursery will be provided at the 11 AM and 6 PM services and Christmas Activity bags available for children at all services.

[Online links will be available on the worship page at FayettevilleFirst.com.](http://FayettevilleFirst.com)

DECEMBER

31

Worship
First Sunday after Christmas
11 AM

Worship on the First Sunday After Christmas: 11 AM only

We will worship at one service on the First Sunday After Christmas, December 31, at 11 AM in the sanctuary and online. This special service led by Rev. Charles Robinson will include "Wesley's Covenant Service." A nursery will be provided.



End-of-year giving

Ready to wrap up your giving for 2023? These notes will help. Offering items for 2023 may be **dropped in the church office drop box through December 31**. If mailed, all 2023 donations with a post mark of December 31 or earlier will be credited to the 2023 budget year and receive tax credit in the 2023 year. The church business office is ready to assist you with any questions regarding your end-of-year giving.



G3: Good Grief Gals meet December 16: Note changes

G3 will be having our December get together at Karin Shah's home on Saturday, December 16, at 4 PM. Please reach out if you need a ride; we have quite a few people willing to stop by and pick you up/drop you off. We will resume meeting at Partners Pizza in January.

Please plan to bring an appetizer, side dish or dessert to share. The entree will be Honeybaked ham/rolls with sweet tea and water. If you'd like to bring a donation for Fayette Samaritans, we will be collecting these items: Laundry Detergent, Canned Fruit, Boxed Mashed Potatoes, Feminine Products, Jello

Sure hope you can come and share this time of support, laughter & good cheer! Questions? Contact Janet Baileys at jkbaileys11@gmail.com.



Hat and Glove drive for SafeHouse Outreach

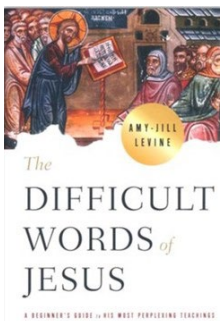
Sponsored by our FFUMC KiDS

Our children have been learning about giving to others for the last month and they want to give needed winter supplies to SafeHouse Outreach. If you would like to join their efforts, you may bring your donations of hats and gloves to the red box in the children's room, B-225, by Sunday, December 17. Contact [Rev. Allyson Lawrence](mailto:Rev.AllysonLawrence) with any questions.



Titus II will meet January 9

The next Titus II will meet on Tuesday, January 9, at noon in the gym. Reservations for lunch may be made with Martha Turner at 770-461-2802.



Bible study starting Wednesday, January 10

with Rev. Allyson Lawrence, 11 AM, Room C-200

Study the difficult words of Jesus beginning January 10 with Rev. Lawrence. We will use the book and video series by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine titled *The Difficult Words of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to His Most Perplexing Teachings*. Find a book at your favorite store and join the conversation as we learn more together. Contact Rev. Lawrence at alawrence@fayettevillefirst.com with any questions.



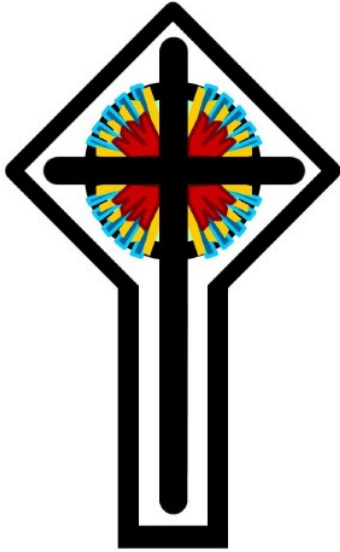
Confirmation begins in January

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](mailto: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 Thursdays and half a day Friday to assist with front desk and administrative duties. If you are interested, please email admin@fayettevillefirst.com.



December 13, 2023 Financials

Operating Budget

Year to Date receipts	\$1,139,451.04
Year to Date expenses	\$1,136,179.04
Difference	\$3,272.00

Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week \$7,575.65

166 benevolence clients assisted year to date for a total of \$48,467.56

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

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

NA Meeting: Thursdays and Saturdays 7 PM

Holiday schedule adjustments:

December 20 & 27 and January 3 — No Wednesday night Programs

December 24: Christmas Eve — Traditional Candlelight Services at 11 AM, 6 PM, 11 PM

December 25: Christmas Day — Church office closed

December 31: First Sunday After Christmas — Worship at 11 AM only

January 1: New Year's Day — Church office closed

January 2 — Church office hours resume as normal

January 10 — Wednesday night supper and regular programs resume for all ages

inspired ...

UWF contributes to charities

United Women in Faith of Fayetteville First is thrilled that the 33rd Annual Christmas Marketplace, held on November 4, was booming with activity! A majority of our 90+ vendors had record breaking sales success, and the event was our largest fundraising effort in 2023 with all \$12,375 in proceeds going to local charities. A total of \$1,375 was donated to each of our local groups. It's an honor to be a small part in helping these nonprofits carry out their various missions each year.



Representatives accepting checks — Front row: Phyllis Avrit, Pregnancy Resource Center Founder & Board member; Ashley Williams, Promise Place Executive Director; Tim Aycock, Square Foot Ministry President. Back row: Stephanie King, Bloom Development Director; Maj. Gen. Jay Flourney, Calvin Center Horses & Warriors Volunteer. Not pictured: Armed Forces Missions, Fayette Samaritans, FFUMC Benevolence Fund and Healing 4 Heroes.

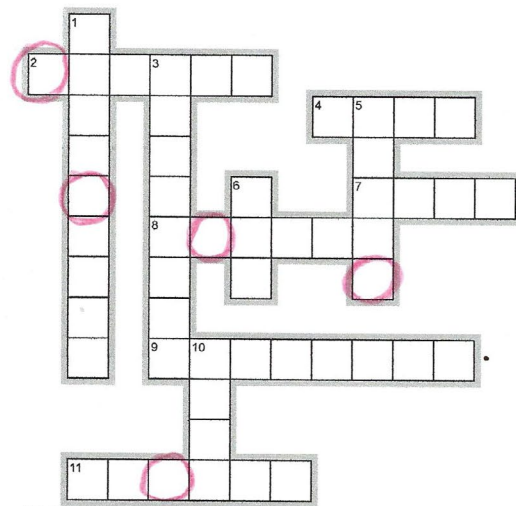


2023 SEASON OF THE NATIVITY

The Season of the Nativity continues with the Third Sunday of Advent on December 17 as we move to the theme Jesus is Joy. This week's music selected by Nick Bowden is [Joy to the World](#).

Work this week's crossword and add the letters circled in red to collect all 23 letters eventually to unscramble a special Christmas message:

Week 3



EclipseCrossword.com

Across

2. Decoration hung on the door
4. Mother of Jesus
7. A precious metal
8. A place where animals live
9. Hang this from the mantle
11. Husband of Mary

Down

1. Decorations hung on the tree
3. The Caesar who ruled when Jesus was born
5. A messenger of God
6. A fee paid to the king
10. Balsam or pine