



January 5, 2024

The Weekender

Lessons from an Itinerant Minister

Rev. Kaylen Short, Senior Minister

Ask anyone who isn't a United Methodist what they know about the UMC, and if they know anything, it's probably that "y'all like to move your pastors around." The itinerant system, or the way we deploy our pastors in the UMC, is a unique system. The system isn't perfect because no human system can be perfect. However, as someone who is living into it, I believe there are some important lessons that can be learned through it.

Lesson #1: Surrender Control — When I got the call that Alli and I would be moving to FFUMC in January, my first thought was a phrase I've said many times coming back to haunt me: "We make plans and God laughs."

Our system is a living manifestation of something of which we all need a reminder: we do not get to control everything. I am grateful that God is patient with me the many times I forget that I am not the one in control.

Lesson #2: Tell People How You Feel — While leaving a church you've pastored is hard, there is one really great part about it. You get to tell people exactly how much they mean to you, and you get to hear people tell you what you mean to them. I think this is a lesson we all need to learn. Our time with people is much more finite than we realize, and in my experience, it's always better to share how you feel with people as you go.

Lesson #3: Reject Materialism — "Why do we have so much stuff?!" That's the question that Alli and I asked each other more than any other while packing boxes over the last month. It never becomes more obvious how easy it is to just accumulate stuff than when you have to pack all that stuff away. We would all be better off buying less, giving away more, and investing in relationships instead of just more stuff.

The Most Important Lesson: The Church is about God and the People — As a pastor, I know and cherish the responsibilities of this calling. Yet, I know that the two most important parts of the church are the people who comprise it and the God they worship. The pastors are a very distant third. I have heard nothing but wonderful things about the people here at FFUMC, and I know that whatever success we have in our years together, it will be because of the grace of God and because of all of you.

I can't wait to see you all Sunday,

Kaylen



EPIPHANY SUNDAY: JANUARY 7, 2024

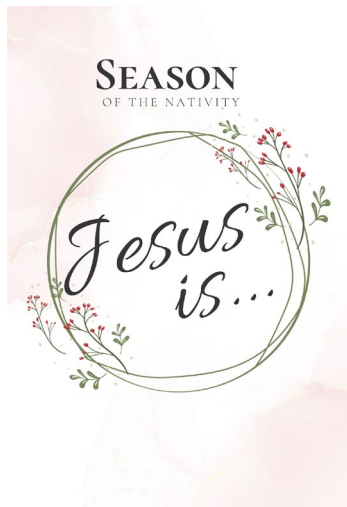
8:45 AM & 11:00 AM

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

"Bringing Our Best" Matthew 2:1-12

Rev. Kaylen Short

CURRENT NEWS



Epiphany Breakfast: Season of the Nativity

Reception to welcome Rev. Kaylen Short and Rev. Drew West

January 7, 2024 10:00 AM

You are invited to welcome our new senior pastor, the Rev. Kaylen Short and his wife Alli, and new Interim Children and Families Assistant, the Rev. Drew West, his wife Amanda and their children, at a church-wide Epiphany breakfast. It will be held January 7 in the gym starting at 10 AM.

This will be a potluck breakfast, and volunteers are needed to bring any of the following:

Egg/sausage or other breakfast casserole

Muffins/sweet rolls

Fruit bowls

Juice - orange or apple

For planning purposes, volunteers please contact Lea Agnew, leaagnew@bellsouth.net, 404-697-1938, or Carol Webb, carolbass@bellsouth.net, 404-234-1056, to let us know what you would like to bring.

Let's Wear Name Badges on Sunday! Order one if you'd like!

Do you have a FFUMC name badge? Please wear it Sunday as we greet our new ministers at our Epiphany Breakfast.

Would you like a customized name badge? Did you lose one you may have had previously? Let us know if you want one by contacting the church office at 770-461-4313 or admin@fayettevillefirst.com. The deadline to place your order is Monday, January 22. Cost is \$10.

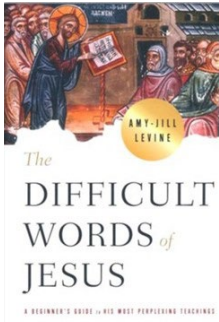


Meet Rev. Drew West this Sunday

The Rev. Drew West has joined our staff on an interim basis as Assistant Minister of Families and Children. In this role, Rev. West will teach the Confirmation Class, help with Messy Church, and join in other ministries. Be sure to welcome Rev. West, his wife, Amanda, and their two children, Lillian and Oliver, this Sunday at worship services and at the special Epiphany Breakfast in the gym.

Rev. West and his wife Amanda are originally from Colorado (though Amanda is the true "native"). Drew and Amanda moved to Georgia in 2018 after living for four years in Lusaka, Zambia. In Zambia,

Drew completed a bachelor's degree in theology from Justo Mwale University while Amanda worked for Mennonite Central Committee (though neither of them are Mennonites!). Drew and Amanda have two children: Lillian who is six, and Oliver who is two. Drew is currently a student at Emory University's Candler School of Theology where he will graduate in May with a master's in divinity. Drew has served as a local licensed pastor in North Georgia since 2021 and has worked a wide array of ministry positions inside and outside of the local church before becoming a pastor. Drew loves to get outside, drink tea, and listen to music. He has a podcast titled "Slow Faith with Drew West."



Bible study starts 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.



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

January 10 menu: Wings & Things

Boneless Wings, Tater Tots, Pasta Salad, Dessert



FFUMC KiDS 555 is ready for you January 10

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.



Confirmation begins January 10

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 will 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 Rev. Drew West to register your student or email him if you have any questions.](#)



G3: Good Grief Gals meet January 11 at 5:30 PM

Encouragement along the path is available for you. Women moving through life after the death of their spouses meet each month to support and uplift each other. If you are also walking through this season of life and would like to be a part of this support network, please plan to join us each month on the SECOND THURSDAY. Our next gathering will be held on Thursday, **January 11, at 5:30 PM** at Partner's Pizza in Fayetteville. Everyone will be responsible for their own dinner and beverage. Questions? Contact Janet Baileys at jkbaileys11@gmail.com.

Special note for January: *You're invited to bring a can of soup to jump start the 2024 Souper Bowl III. G3 will be forwarding a blessing onto others as we share the gift of our time together.*



Messy Church is January 13

For the fall months, Messy Church lessons focused on knowing that God loves us and is with us in all things. During the winter and spring months, we will be learning how we respond to God's grace and love. Our focus verse is from Isaiah: "Then I heard the Lord's voice saying, 'Whom should I send, and who will go for us?' I said, 'I'm here; send me!'" Isaiah 6:8.

During our craft and teaching time, we will use this book: [The Dot - by Peter H. Reynolds, story read here](#). This story helps show us

how God sees us and how we can live into that divine vision. All of our activities will revolve around this powerful theme. You won't want to miss this worship, learning and fellowship experience.

If you want to help make Messy Church an even greater success as we kick off the new year together, [you can sign up here to volunteer](#).



Sign up for Blood Drive Sunday, January 14

8 AM to 1 PM, Fayetteville First UMC gym

Our next Red Cross Blood Drive will be on January 14, 2024. The FFUMC Blood Drive team would like to thank you for your willingness to donate at our church or at any collection site! In 2023 we collected 141 units, which is 20 more than 2022.

Please sign up for the next drive using the Red Cross website at redcrossblood.org and choose our site or contact any of the team: Wayne Harris, Larry Brannon, Mike Clark or Randy Riddell with questions or assistance with signing up or email ffumcblooddrive@gmail.com.

Let's see if we can donate 20 more units in 2024 than in 2023!



SOUPER BOWL III

SOUPER BOWL III kicks off January 14

SOUPER competition begins in 2024 as we kick off Souper Bowl III on January 14. This event brings fun and friendly competition as our third Souper Bowl challenge seeks to raise soup for healthy meals for those in need. Bring any variety of 16.3 - 18.8 ounce ready-to-eat soup, **not condensed**, to the Welcome Center beginning January 14, and let the competition begin!

Here's the "competition" part of Souper Bowl III:

Mark the bottom of each can with the first letter of YOUR last name. A Sharpie will be available at the donation site. Those with A-J will be credited to TEAM ALLYSON and K-Z will go to TEAM KAYLEN. Any cans that are received without letters will be divided between the two teams. Who will win? We will find out on Super Bowl Sunday, February 11, when either Allyson or Kaylen will be presented the Souper Bowl III championship trophy.



SIX or SEVEN for Supper

Meet new people over a meal and get to know your church family better through Six or Seven for Supper. Groups meet three times over a three-month period beginning in February. Why participate? Here's what Rebecca Stevens shared: "We had a wonderful time with Six for Supper. It was amazing how easily conversation flowed and how quickly the evenings passed. We had the chance to get to know folks who, we now realize, we frequently cross paths with and it's fun when we have those quick moments along the way to catch-up." [Sign up right away using this link](#) to be included.



The Practice of Letting Go

Sunday nights at 6 PM starting January 21

Do you desire more freedom and peace in 2024? Let's learn more about a few spiritual practices to help us release unnecessary and unhelpful things and patterns that may stand in our way. Each session will introduce a discipline, prayer, or practice and offer a time of unpressured exploration. Join Joan Aycock on Sunday nights from 6 to 7 PM in the chapel on January 21, January 28 and February 4. [Sign up here.](#) Also, please let us know if you are interested but need a different meeting time.



Walking with others through grief

GriefShare is a program where caring individuals walk with others through the journey of grief. Facilitated by Carol and Bill Webb, classes meet Mondays February 12 through May 6 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Room B350. All are welcome. For more information on the program or to sign up, contact the Webbs at 404-234-1056 or visit GriefShare.org.



With Gratitude

Flower Ministry:

Thank you for the beautiful floral arrangement brought to our house on Sunday, December 31st. It was my pleasure to lead in worship that morning. Please know how much I appreciate your ministry week after week. You all are making a positive difference, and for that I'm grateful. Blessings!

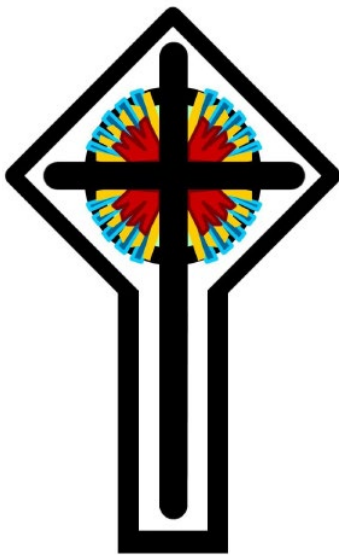
— Rev. Charles Robinson



GIVING STATEMENTS

2023 Year-End Giving Statements

2023 year-end giving statements will be sent via email by the end of January. You may check your giving statement at any time using your individual Realm account.



Financials

In this period of transition, our financials are being completed and should be reported next week.

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)

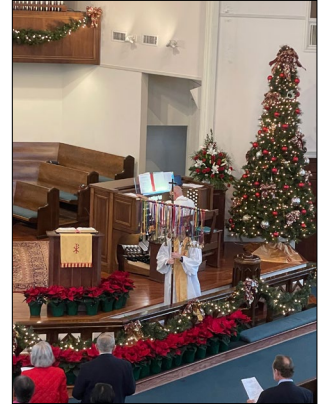
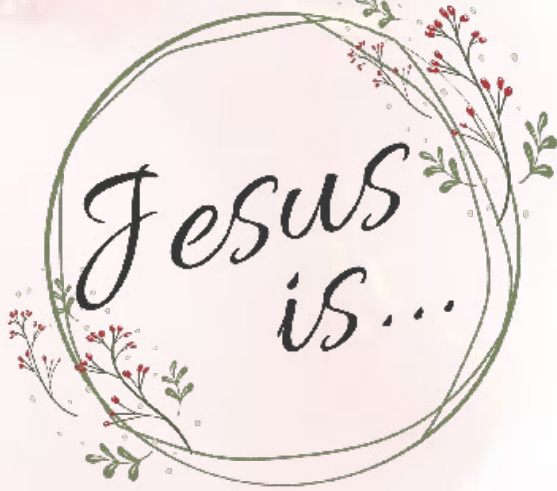
Closed Fridays until further notice

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

inspired ...



We conclude our Season of the Nativity this Sunday with breakfast together to celebrate Epiphany and welcome our new ministers. Please join the celebration at 10 AM in the gym (see the announcement on page 2 for what you can contribute to the breakfast).

Enjoy this final overview of the season as we prepare for new things in 2024!

*Pictured: (Below) Ethel Taylor Circle
(Right) FFUMC Handbells, Kaitlyn Lawrence and Janet Gazaway, Ben and Karen Smith with grandkids, Seasoned Singers*

