



July 18, 2025

The Weekender

What Matters?

Rev. Charles Robinson

I've been thinking about a widely advertised credit card whose slogan has been "Chase What Matters." The first time I heard that phrase I thought to myself, "There's a sermon in there somewhere. Or at least a church newsletter article." And I knew that if I kept searching long enough, I would eventually find it. Such as it is, here it is...

"Chase What Matters." What are we chasing? What is it, exactly, that we'll have when we catch it? Have we come to that place in our lives where we realize that what matters most cannot be purchased? Not with a credit card nor by any other financial transaction.

"Chase What Matters." The more I thought about it the more it evolved into a question: "What's chasing us?" We United Methodists, being part of the larger Wesleyan Family of Faith, believe in a theological concept called *Prevenient Grace*. Prevenient Grace is the notion that God loves us and is pursuing us before we are even aware of it. So, what will it be? "Chase What Matters." Or embrace the idea that "What Matters Is Chasing Us?"

Speaking of something that matters, or more accurately somebody who matters, I've been remembering the life and ministry of my favorite preacher of all times, Dr. Fred B. Craddock. He died just over a decade ago in his mid-eighties (that used to seem old to me; not any more). The first time that I heard Dr. Craddock speak was Minister's Week at Emory University in 1982. The topic assigned to him was "How the Church Shapes the Bible." He said, "This subject has about it a whiff of heresy." I was hooked and took advantage of every opportunity to hear him preach or lecture.

Please allow me to share a Craddock story that makes me think about chasing and being chased. The story consists of a conversation with a retired dog, a greyhound...

I said, "Do you miss the glitter and excitement of the track?"

He said, "NO, no."

I said, "Well what's the matter? You got too old?"

"No, no. I still had some race in me."

"Well, did you not win?"

He said, "I won over a million dollars for my owner."

"Then what was it, bad treatment?"

"Oh, no, they treated us royally when we were racing."

I said, "Then what? Did you get crippled?"

He said, "No, no, no."

I said, "Then what?"

And he said, "I quit."

I said, "Why did you quit?"

And he said, "I discovered that what I was chasing was not really a rabbit."

He looked at me and said, "All that running, running, and what I was chasing...not even real."



Thank You, Dear Teacher, for reminding us about what really matters.



6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - JULY 20, 2025
8:45 AM (Chapel) 11:00 AM (Sanctuary & Online)
[Online link active at 11 AM and after](#)
Psalm 15, Luke 10:38-42
"Mary and Martha"
The Rev. Kaylen Short

CURRENT NEWS



Event: August 9

Reservations due July 26

Reservations close July 26 for Let's Do Lunch

It's time to make reservations for our 4th Annual Let's Do Lunch On August 9! Remember to bring friends, neighbors and family with you. Don't wait! You have until **July 26** to reserve your seat.

This year, we are delighted to have Diana Cowan as our special guest to share her incredible story about "The Lost Sheep", which has motivated women all over the country. Come prepared to be entertained, encouraged and inspired.

Guests will enjoy a tri-salad plate for lunch, as well as the chance to browse all the uniquely decorated dining tables in the Fellowship Hall.

There is no cost to attend this event, but reservations are required. There are 3 easy ways to make your reservation:

Online: [Click this reservation link](#), fill in the form & hit Submit.

Email: Send an email to Lauren Davis or admin@fayettevillefirst.com with your name, email address, phone number, and the names of any guests coming with you.

Phone: Call the church office at 770-461-4313.

You may make reservations for you and your friends at the same time. If you made a reservation but can no longer attend, please be sure to contact Lauren to cancel.



Back-to-School Block Party: July 26

Join us for our Back-to-School Block Party

When: Saturday, July 26 from 3 to 5 PM

Where: Outdoors and inside gym

What: Bounce Houses, Face Painting, Balloons, Music, Games, Kona Ice, and more!

Invite your friends!



Supported by
Messy Church



**Let's DREAM
together!**



Join the DREAM of Messy Church

Do you ever dream of a church where faith is hands-on, laughter fills the room and people of all ages come together just as they are? Welcome to Messy Church, a monthly worship experience where the love of God meets the joy of creativity, where questions are welcome, and mess is celebrated!

You're invited to join the Dream Team, a group of people who meet quarterly to generate seasonally themed, Christ-centered Messy Church experiences:

When: July 27 at 4 PM

Where: Room C260

Who: All ages! Elementary-aged kids through adults

Questions? Contact [Rev. Drew West](#).



YOUTH:
**Get ready for
a GREAT year!**

Want to learn more about our youth program?

Who: Youth (Grades 6-12) and Parents/Guardians

What: Dinner and Conversations

When: Wednesday, August 13th (Dinner: 6 pm, Conversations: 6:30 pm)

Where: The Foundry — Room C280

Why: We want to get to know you!

Join us for food, a brief devotion, conversations, fellowship, and fun.

We have big plans for the upcoming school year, and we can't wait to share this with you!

Hope to see you on August 13!

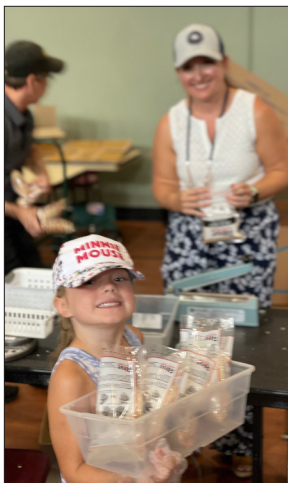
Youth Team: Austin Baur, Jordan Hart, and Caroline Creel



January 31-February 7

El Salvador plans are underway

Join Pastor Kaylen, Maggie Clarke, and friends from sister UMC churches for an unforgettable mission trip to El Salvador January 31–February 7, 2026. Together we will share God's love through service and connection. The cost is \$1,600 plus airfare, and all are welcome to be part of the journey—whether by going or by giving. Donations will help offset expenses for FFUMC participants, making this meaningful experience more accessible for all. For details on the trip, contact Maggie Clarke.



Rise Against Hunger: Let us know you're coming!

You're invited to help fight hunger by preparing highly nutritious, dehydrated meals for use in crisis areas or school feeding programs around the world at the Rise Against Hunger Packing Event in the FFUMC gym.

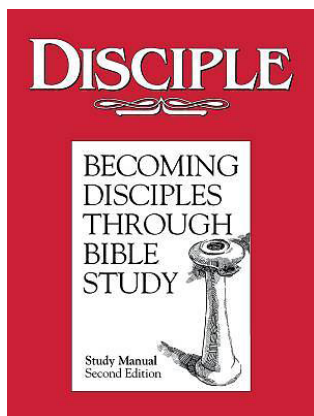
August 17, 2025 1 - 3 PM Pack 25,000 meals in 2 hours

Invite friends, groups, neighbors ... all hands appreciated and needed! Fill up a table with people you know or want to get to know better as you do a fun activity that helps others.

[Rise Against Hunger requires a waiver/registration for the packing event. Please take care of this as soon as possible through this link.](#)

This year, lunch will be provided after worship and before the packing event. (No reservation needed. No charge. Donations accepted.)

Dress in very casual, comfortable clothes for worship August 17. One outfit for the whole day! We can head straight to lunch for nourishment and fellowship and on to the packing event.



Get ready: Disciple I is coming to FFUMC

Disciple I is a 34-week Bible study program that provides an overview of the entire Bible, emphasizing the Old and New Testaments equally. It aims to develop strong Christian leaders through disciplined Bible study and encourages participants to become disciples through Bible study. The study involves daily Bible reading and weekly group meetings where participants discuss their readings and insights. FFUMC will be offering the course beginning August 13 under the leadership of two teachers: Barb Combs and Jeff Hansen.

Why take Disciple I at Fayetteville First? According to leader Barb Combs:

- You will never read the Bible in the same way again.
- You'll be learning from other people as they share what they know and have learned and you share what you know and have learned.
- You'll learn how the Old and the New Testament work together.

The program will be offered on Wednesdays from 3 to 5 PM with another offering of the same class from 6 to 8 PM. A single Kickoff Meeting (Week 0) on Wednesday, August 13, at 5:30 PM will introduce the program. Weeks 1-34 will begin the following week with the two separate class times. Please indicate in the memo on registration which class time you desire. There is no charge for the class or materials; donations are accepted. For more information about the program, contact Barb Combs or Jeff Hansen.

[Registration link for Disciple I Bible Study 2025-2026](#)



July pantry needs at Fayette Samaritans

Donations are one way to help those in our community 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. **Volunteers** are also needed in the food pantry, clothes closet, receptionist area, and as interviewers with a 3 hour commitment each week.

Most Needed List: *Canned Chicken, Canned Beef Stew, Tuna, Canned Corn, Dried Pasta (not spaghetti), Pasta Sauce, Hamburger Helper, Tea, Jelly, Jello*



Save the Date: Great Day of Service September 20

Get ready for another Great Day of Service, a work time set aside for us to go be the hands and feet of Christ in our community. What to do right now? **SAVE THE DATE!** Registration will open in August.

Great Day of Service coming September 20



Prayer List Guidelines

Bulletin Prayer List

In an effort to keep the prayer list provided on each Sunday's Order of Worship a current and useful tool in the prayer life of our church, **we will be completely refreshing the prayer list on the first Sunday of each month.** Here are some guidelines:

- If you or your family member desire to be included on the prayer list, please request directly to the church office at 770-461-4313 or admin@fayettevillefirst.com by Monday at noon before the first Sunday of each month. (For example, **to be included on the Order of Worship on August 3, contact us by Monday, July 28**).
- Requests will be accepted directly from an individual or a family member only to ensure privacy as desired by our church family.
- A request will remain for the month unless you ask to have it removed.

Questions? Contact the church office.

Notes of encouragement for Summer Lunch

Our last packing day for the 2025 Summer Lunch Program is coming Tuesday, July 22. To encourage the recipients as they head back to school, we'd like to include a handwritten note in each bag that day. Will you help?

- Write a favorite scripture or encouraging words on a 3" x 5" or similarly sized card. Faye Livingston will have blank cards in the narthex if you would like some.
- Place completed cards in the collection basket in the Welcome Center or church office by Sunday, July 20. **We need 350 cards, so make as many as you would like!** Feel free to encourage the whole family or any small groups to participate.
- Pray for those who will receive your card(s) as they begin a new school year.



The Lord your God
is with you
wherever you go.
Joshua 1:9



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, a new session of classes will meet Mondays August 11 through November 10 from 10 AM to 12 PM in Room B-350. All are welcome. For more information on the program or to sign up, contact Carol or Bill Webb or visit GriefShare.org.



Preschool Amazon Wishlist – Last Prime Day Giving!

Amazon Prime Days are wrapping up, and it's the perfect time to help support our church preschool! We've put together a wishlist of items that will bless our sweet students and their learning environment. If you're shopping anyway, consider taking a moment to check it out and give. Every little bit helps! [Click here for the wish list: https://tinyurl.com/PreschoolWishlist25](https://tinyurl.com/PreschoolWishlist25)



Medicine bottle collection through August

Have you emptied some medicine or vitamin bottles? They can be reused! Here's how:

- Clean bottles, remove labels, keep lids on.
- Mark bottles as "Pill Bottle Collection" and leave them inside the Welcome Center cabinet or in the marked collection bin at the gym stairwell.

Contact Faye Livingston if you have questions.



A Path to God: The Enneagram as Spiritual Practice

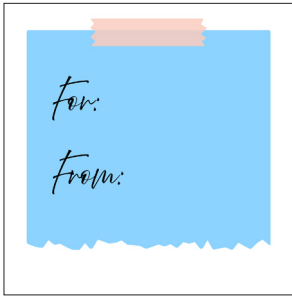
The Enneagram is growing in popularity as a personality typing tool, but it is so much more! In fact, the Enneagram is a wonderful tool for spiritual formation. Learning our Enneagram type can help us identify specific ways in which we are invited to share God with the world, the patterns that get in the way of our doing that, and the spiritual practices that return our focus to God and our true calling. Join us as we explore this fascinating tool.

Saturday, August 23 10 AM to 4 PM FFUMC Fellowship Hall

FREE — Reservations required

This course will be taught by Kristen Vincent. [Learn more and register here.](#)

Want to know more about the Enneagram before the workshop? Our workshop leader recommends these books (not required reading, but highly recommended!): "The Road Back to You" by Cron/Stabile and "The Enneagram Guide to Waking Up" by Beatrice Chestnut. If you are interested in a pre-workshop information session, contact Joan Aycock, jaycock@fayettevillefirst.com.



Please mark items left for others

If you are leaving anything on the church property for others to pick up, please be sure to **clearly mark** the items with a specific name and ministry.

Unmarked items will either be donated or taken to our lost/found area (near the gym and Fayette Samaritans drop-off basket).

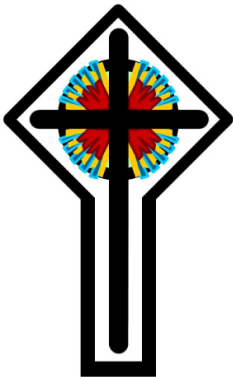
Thanks for helping get the items to your intended ministry and for keeping our campus neat and orderly.



Flower Ministry

Thank you for all you do and for the flowers, and especially all the prayers. — Joyce Ramsey

Thank you for the beautiful floral arrangements delivered Sunday afternoon. They are lovely! Thanks also to the "special angels" who remembered it was Andy's and my anniversary. What a blessing the flower ministry is to so many! — Nadine Anderson



July 14, 2025 Financials

Operating Budget 2025

Year-to-Date Receipts	\$598,960.40
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$652,536.78
Difference	-\$53,576.38

Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week: \$432.00

100 Families Assisted Year-To-Date: Total distributed \$24,229.50

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

AA Meetings: Sundays 3 PM; Mondays, Wednesdays,
Fridays, Saturdays 7 PM; Thursdays 7:30 AM

NA Meetings: Thursdays 7:30 PM

Fayetteville First UMC 175 East Lanier Avenue Fayetteville, GA 30214
770-461-4313 FayettevilleFirst.com

inspired ...

Marvelous Mission Monday

Rev. Drew West

I was deeply inspired by the Mission Monday gathering hosted by Jami Maguire, Director of Special Needs Ministry, on July 14 for our friends in the church and wider community. Jami has been hosting these events each Monday throughout the summer.

With a fun and meaningful theme—"We're All a Pizza the Family of God!"—Jami led a time of discussion, games, and shared food that celebrated our differences and reminded us that, through Jesus, we are all adopted into one beautiful family, the Church. Her creativity, love for Jesus, and deep care for these friends are always evident at every event. We're so grateful to have her on the Fayetteville First team!

The next Mission Monday will take place on July 21 at 10:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Stop by and say hello!

Note: Our Sunshiners will have their Vacation Bible School in the evenings next week. Led by Susie Arrington and a dedicated team of volunteers, all our adults with special needs are sure to have a great Road Trip of their own as they are On the Go with God!

