



July 4, 2025

## The Weekender

### Good neighbors, faithful citizens

Rev. Kaylen Short

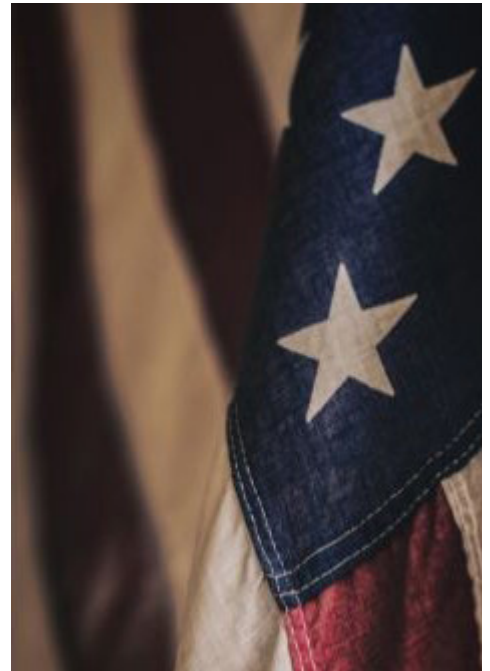
Today we pause to celebrate the Fourth of July. It's a day marked by hot dog eating contests (personally I've never seen the appeal), fireworks, parades, and time with friends and family. It's a chance to enjoy a slower pace for a day and to celebrate the freedoms and ideals at the heart of the American experiment.

I'm aware that national holidays can sometimes feel complicated. We live in a country that has banded together and accomplished incredible things. But we also live in a country that often feels divided and is still learning, still growing, and still reckoning with its past and present. Yet, these are not reasons to withdraw from celebration. They are merely an invitation to celebrate with both joy and authenticity.

The Fourth of July reminds us of the power of ideals: freedom, equality, justice, and opportunity. These aren't just words in our founding document. They're goals we continue striving toward. They're also values that align with many of our deepest convictions about how we should treat one another, care for the vulnerable, and work for a better world.

I'm grateful to live in a place where people are free to speak, worship, vote, and dream. I'm also grateful that we can name what's still imperfect even as we continually try to become a more perfect union.

So however you're spending this Fourth of July, whether you're watching the hot dog eating contest or not, lighting sparklers, flipping burgers, or just taking a nap, I hope it's a time of gratitude, rest, and hope. This Independence Day let's give thanks for all our freedoms, and renew our commitment to being good neighbors and faithful citizens.



**4TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST: JULY 6, 2025**

**8:45 AM (Chapel) 11:00 AM (Sanctuary & Online)**

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

2 Kings 5:1-14

*"Expectations"*

The Rev. Kaylen Short

## CURRENT NEWS

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### Upcoming Blood Drive: July 13

**8 AM to 1 PM, Fayetteville First UMC gym**

The next Red Cross Blood Drive at FFUMC is Sunday, July 13, in the gym from 8 AM to 1 PM. [Signing up is easy: just click here. This takes you directly to the American Red Cross site.](#) **Please sign up to donate in advance if at all possible.** Contact Randy Riddell for questions or assistance or to volunteer to assist at this drive.

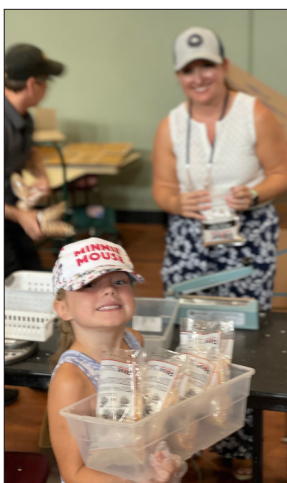


### Back-to-School Block Party: July 26

Join us for our Back-to-School Block Party on Saturday, July 26, from 3 to 5 PM. Outdoor fun, bounce houses, games, and music! Invite your friends!



Fayetteville, GA



### 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.



### Peach Time: SAGE Trip is July 10

SAGE gets peachy this month! Make plans now to enjoy lunch with friends and then go to Concord for a peach adventure.

**Thursday, July 10** Gather at church office at 10:45; Depart at 11:00 AM

**Lunch** at Bistro Hilary in Senoia at 11:30 AM

**Visit Gregg's Farm** in Concord for peaches, ice cream, fritters, vegetables, jams, and more. Return around 2:30 PM.

\$2 transporation; All other expenses on your own. NOTE: Gregg's Farm is CASH ONLY and does not accept credit cards for purchases. [Check them out here.](#)

Sign up for the trip in church office or contact [admin@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:admin@fayettevillefirst.com).





## Let's Do Lunch: Saturday, August 9

It's time to make reservations for our 4th Annual Let's Do Lunch! And 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.

**Event: August 9**

**Reservations due July 26**

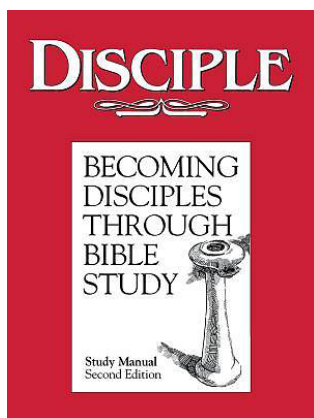
There is no cost to attend this event, but reservations are required. There are 3 easy ways to make your reservation:

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

**Email:** Send an email to Lauren Davis or [admin@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto: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.



## 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](#)



## NEW! 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



January 31-February 7

## El Salvador plans are underway

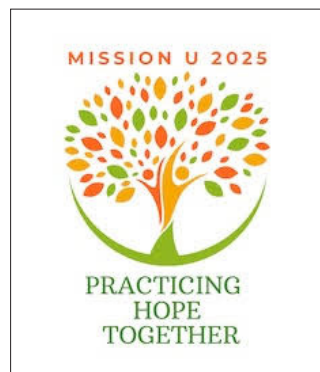
Join Pastor Kaylen, Maggie Clarke, and friends from sister UMC churches for an unforgettable mission trip to El Salvador January 31–February 7, 2026. Together we will share God’s love through service and connection. The cost is \$1,600 plus airfare, and all are welcome to be part of the journey—whether 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.



## 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**



## Mission u 2025 welcomes YOU! Register by July 5

Want to deepen your faith in community? Gain experience interpreting Scripture? Work toward healing for yourself, your community, and all of creation? Mission u is for you!

### Offered through United Women in Faith

July 18-19 — In-Person option

July 22, 24, 29, 31 — Virtual option

**Registration closes JULY 5**

**[Click here for more information or to register.](#)**





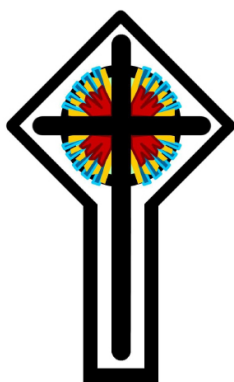
## New Rev. Allyson and Kevin Lawrence Mission Fund

Last Sunday, we shared the exciting news about the naming of the Rev. Allyson and Kevin Lawrence Mission Fund. Since then, several of you have asked how you can get involved. While we kept the initial invitations small to preserve the surprise, anyone is welcome to give to any Legacy Fund at any time. Every gift adds to the fund's principal, and over time, the interest it earns helps support Legacy grants for years to come. The more we grow these funds together, the more good we can do for generations ahead! For more information, contact Legacy Giving chair Lauren Davis.



## Summer Lunch needs and thank yous

Thank you to all the volunteer packers and drivers who participate each Tuesday in the Summer Lunch Program. You can pitch in too! We appreciate your donations of any kind of cookies or boxes of individually wrapped bags of chips. Just leave them in the Fellowship Hall kitchen clearly marked "Summer Lunch."



## June 30, 2025 Financials

### Operating Budget 2025

Year-to-Date Receipts	\$558,261.71
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$581,526.84
Difference	-\$23,265.13

### Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week: \$425.00

93 Families Assisted Year-To-Date: Total distributed \$22,273.28

### 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](http://FayettevilleFirst.com)

**Happy Independence Day!**

# inspired ...

## Messy Church + Water = A Splashing Success!

What do you get when you mix faith, fun, and fifty water-loving folks? A Messy Church Water Day to remember!

Last Saturday, more than 50 children and grown-ups gathered for a summer-soaked edition of Messy Church. Rev. Kaylen Short shared a meaningful story from Acts 16, helping us discover Lydia and the beautiful way God opened her heart to Paul's message.

Then came more fun! After fueling up with pizza, we dove into splashy adventures outside—water balloon battles, high-speed squirt shooter chases, a rocket-style water fountain, and (thank goodness!) cool popsicles to top it all off.

There's more on the way! Save the date!

Back-to-School Block Party July 26 3–5 PM

