



The Weekender

December 19, 2025

When It Matters Most

The Rev. Kaylen Short

Several years ago, I was talking with a mentor of mine, another clergyperson, about the people who only seemed to show up on the "big days." Christmas. Easter. Maybe a baptism or wedding. I was venting a little when she gently stopped me and offered a different way of seeing it. She said, "Those people are telling you something important. When it matters most, they consider your church their church home." I've never forgotten that.

It shifted everything for me. The people who walk through our doors during Advent and Christmas aren't really strangers. They may not be here every Sunday, but they've connected this place with something meaningful. With hope. With welcome. With faith. When the world gets heavy or tradition calls or they need to feel close to something sacred, this is where they think to come. Honestly, that's beautiful and it's not that different from why most of us come here.

Here's what I know about this congregation: you're good at welcome. Really good at it. New members tell me all the time that what they first noticed about the church was how welcoming you all are, how warm the atmosphere feels, how someone took time to say hello or point them in the right direction. How you all make them feel like they belong. That doesn't happen by accident. It happens because you show up with open hearts, week after week, and you genuinely care about the people around you.

Over the next few weeks, things are going to get busy. The sanctuary will be fuller and there will be faces you recognize and plenty you don't. Services might feel a little less predictable, a little more unexpected. And I hope we embrace every bit of it.

This is what we're here for. This is the church doing what the church is meant to do: gathering people together to celebrate the miracle of Christ's birth, to sing the old songs, to light the candles, to remember that we are not alone in this world.

So here's my hope for us this season: let's lean in with joy. Smile at the person next to you. Scoot over and make room. Introduce yourself to someone new. Be patient when things take a little longer. Extend the kind of grace you'd want to receive. Trust that everyone who shows up is here for a reason, even if their story is still unfolding.

When it matters most, they're choosing to be here. Let's make sure they know how much that means to us. I'm so grateful to walk through this season alongside you.



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2025

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

Online link active at 11 AM and after

Luke 1:26-38

Series "Let Heaven and Nature Sing"

Sermon "What Child is This?"

CURRENT NEWS

CHRISTMAS ON THE SQUARE


Fayetteville First
united methodist church

Gloria | John Rutter
and Traditional Christmas Music
for Organ, Brass and Percussion

The Chancel Choir
Savannah Cathey,
Madalyn Mentor
Soprano
Luanne Harms
Mezzo-Soprano
Marty Alexander,
Charles Higgs
Organ
Sam Burch
Conductor
Nicholas Bowden
Conductor, Organist and Host

**FREE ADMISSION.
OFFERING TAKEN.**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025 | 7:30 PM
FAYETTEVILLE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
175 East Lanier Ave. | Fayetteville, GA 30214 | 770.461.4313 | Fayettevillefirst.com

Preschool and Tidal Wave Car Wash Fundraiser!

Looking for the perfect gift for that hard-to-shop-for person?

We've got you covered! Support our Preschool by purchasing a Graph-X4 Car Wash ticket—a \$30 value for only \$10!

To reserve your tickets, email fayettevillefirstpreschool@gmail.com.

Payments can be made online (choose "Preschool Car Wash" from the drop down menu) or by cash/check.

Give the gift of a sparkling clean car and support a great cause!



Coming Up in January

January 4 – Epiphany Sunday Potluck Breakfast | 10 AM

Join us for a church-wide celebration with your favorite breakfast dishes!

January 6 – Titus II Luncheon | Noon

A warm gathering for fellowship, food, and connection.

January 7 – Wednesday Supper & Programs Resume

Kick off the new year with a great meal and the return of all midweek ministries.

January 11 – Souper Bowl V Can Drive Begins

Help us kick off our annual collection of canned goods for our community partners.

January 31 – Messy Church

Bring the whole family for hands-on faith, crafts, and fun!

Mark Your 2026 Calendar!

Stay tuned for details as we begin preparing for next year's events.

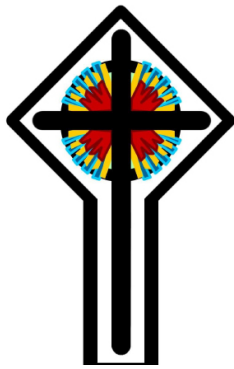


Thank You from our Pre School

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Honey Baked Ham fundraiser! With your support, we raised \$240 during the month of November to help benefit our Preschool. We truly appreciate your generosity and continued support of our program!

Be Vigilant This Christmas

Unfortunately, the Christmas season is a busy time for scammers and fraudsters too. There are already reports of several churches receiving scam emails from scammers pretending to be the senior pastor requesting gift cards. Thus far, we do not know of any of these emails targeting our folks this time around, but we encourage you to stay vigilant. Any gifts that the church is giving to the staff have already been distributed and we will never request gift cards directly from members.



December 15, 2025 Financials

Operating Budget 2025

Year-to-Date Receipts	\$1,115,629.86
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$1,124,426.53
Difference	-\$8,796.67

Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week: \$2,420.00

175 Families Assisted Year-To-Date: Total distributed \$42,252.19

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 AM to 4 PM (closed 12-1 PM lunch)

Closed Fridays

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

NA Meetings: Thursdays 7:30 PM

inspired ...

Photos from our Church Christmas Pageant and Preschool Program celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.

What a glorious time of year as our children share the joy, wonder, and hope of the Christmas season!



