



The Weekender

January 9, 2026

"A New Year and New Possibilities"
Rev. Drew West, Associate Minister

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." -Isaiah 43:19

People are deeply retrospective. I find that most of the time when I talk with friends, we end up reflecting on great moments and cherished memories from the past. In our church and around Fayetteville, we walk by many commemorative plaques marking when something was built, when a significant historical moment took place, or when a notable person once stood in a particular spot. Remembering comes naturally to us.

Yet as we stand at the beginning of a new year, the more I dwell in Scripture, the more I realize that while Scripture certainly remembers crucial and formative moments from the past, it is often oriented toward the future. Scripture tells us of a God who is still calling us into newness and holiness today. God is shaping what is to come and calls us to holiness of heart and holiness of life.

The Bible's emphasis on vision and hope for the future can be seen clearly in the way the Gospel writers quote the Old Testament. When an Old Testament passage is quoted in the Gospels—and throughout much of the New Testament—our English translations often read, "As it *is* written..." Notice that they do not say, "As it *was* written." This reflects the Greek perfect tense. In ancient Greek, the perfect tense acknowledges something spoken or done in the past, while emphasizing that its meaning and impact is ongoing. This points to a deeper truth: much of our sacred text is less concerned with merely telling us what happened and more invested in proclaiming anchoring realities that shape our imagination and lives for what lies ahead—a future marked by hope, salvation, and renewal.

Of course, many of the details of that future remain unknown. I believe this is why looking backward can feel comforting, while looking forward sometimes carries pangs of anxiety. As Christians, however, we are invited to face the future with hope. The same God who spun the stars and skies into being, the same God who formed us in the divine image, is still on the move. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. While many things remain uncertain, we can know with confidence that God is faithful and that God will lead us as we learn to live with increasing trust.

So, what new things are already unfolding? What new things is God doing among us in 2026? Confirmation began this week with a wonderful group of eight confirmands. Our choir and musicians continue to reach greater heights in worship, leading us into deeper joy and praise. Our preschool is growing, and its director is filled with passion and energy for the future. Rev. Kaylen Short is preparing sermons that will stir and awaken our faith in the days ahead. Lent begins next month, followed by Easter and then Pentecost. I could go on and on. God is doing new things in our midst. The question is not whether God is at work, but whether we will perceive it.



BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY
JANUARY 11, 2026
8:45 AM 11:00 AM (Sanctuary & Online)
Online link active at 11 AM and after
Matthew 3:13-17
"The Beginning"
Rev. Kaylen Short

CURRENT NEWS



A huge thank you for a successful preschool and Tidal Wave car wash fundraiser!

A huge thank you to everyone who purchased car wash tickets for our pre-school fundraiser. All of this round of tickets are spoken for. Don't fret if you missed out! The pre-school is planning another round right around the time that the clouds of pollen descend from Georgia trees. Stay tuned.

SOUPER BOWL V — Begins January 11!

Get those cans of soup ready! SOUPER Bowl V kicks off January 11, and we'll be collecting soup to help provide healthy meals for those in need. Please donate any variety of 16.3–18.8 oz ready-to-eat soup (not condensed). We will have four teams this year represented by team captains Kaylen Short, Drew West, Charles Robinson, and Nick Bowden. Our goal is to collect 2,600 cans this year and eclipse 10,000 since the start of FFUMC's Souper Bowl!



SOUPER BOWL V

sponsored by
FAYETTEVILLE FIRST UMC

Messy Church – January 31 | 11:00 a.m.

Join us for Messy Church on Saturday, January 31 at 11:00 a.m. for a Ren Faire Mess full of fun, creativity, and hands-on faith for all ages! We're excited to welcome special music guests Barehead Bards, bringing lively, Renaissance-inspired sounds to our celebration. Come ready for a joyful, interactive morning of music, activities, and fellowship—costumes welcome!



Our next SAGE (Senior Adults Going Everywhere) Trip will be Thursday January 22nd to the Delta Flight Museum. We will meet at the Church Office at 8:30 a.m. and depart at 8:45 a.m. for the tour that begins at 9:30 a.m. Please sign-up with the Church Office ASAP. The maximum number of folks we can have attending is 25. Cost will be \$20 plus \$2 transportation fee. Here is some really Good News...Veterans go for FREE...A much deserved bonus! Please contact Charles Robinson for more information.

Confirmation Begins in January!

Confirmation is back! Confirmation is the process of making faith personal and making a commitment to Christ. We offer a confirmation class for those younger youth seeking to make a profession of faith as they learn and grow together. Confirmands meet on Wednesday from 5:30-6:30 PM and are welcome to join other youth until 7 PM. The first meeting was on January 7th, but there is still time to join. Confirmands are also invited to a retreat the weekend of January 30-Feb 1st at Camp Glisson. Please reach out to Drew West to register your student or email him if you have any questions: dwest@fayettevillefirst.com.



Wednesday Night Supper — January 14

Time: 5:00 PM | Location: Fellowship Hall

Cost: Adults \$10 | Children under 13 \$7 (pay at the door)

Menu: Olive Garden Lasagna, Salad, Breadsticks & dessert.

Sign up by 4:00 PM Monday via the church office (770-461-4313), admin@fayettevillefirst.com, or a pew card.

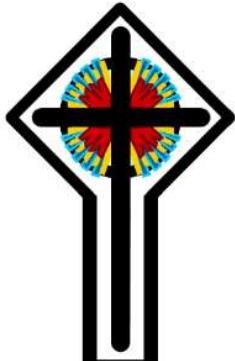




NEW! January List: Pantry needs from Fayette Samaritans

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.

Most Needed List: Pasta Sauce, Pancake Mix, Syrup, Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate mix, Jelly, Feminine Products (Pads)



December 31, 2025 Financials

Operating Budget 2025

Annual Operating Budget Receipts	\$1,201,129.62
Annual Operating Budget Expenses	\$1,198,806.46
Difference	\$2,323.16

Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week: \$50.00

188 Families Assisted Year-To-Date: Total distributed \$44,669.87

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

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

SOUPER BOWL V



SOUPER BOWL V has started! 2,600+ cans is goal!

KICKOFF! SOUPER Bowl V is officially underway to collect 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 and join the friendly competition.

The Challenge:

This year two divisions have been established. Teams within those divisions will be competing to see which minister will win the playoff and Lead Coaching rights on January 25.

How It Works:

Tallies will be taken at 10 AM on Sunday, January 25, to determine which team within each division will be the **Division Champion**. The Division Champion minister will be announced at the 11 AM service. Each division winner will be the **Lead Coach** to take their entire division to the Souper Bowl IV Championship on Sunday, February 8.

Alpha Division: Last Names A-K:

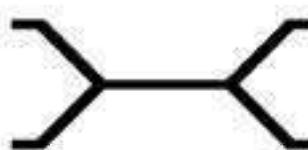
Rev. Kaylen Short (Last Names A-D)

Rev. Charles Robinson (Last Names E-K)

Omega Division: Last Names L-Z

Rev. Drew West (Last Names L-R)

Nick Bowden (Last Names S-Z)



Final tallies will be taken at 10 AM on Sunday, February 8. The Souper Bowl V Champion will be announced at the 11 AM service.

2026 Extra Challenge: 2,600+ Cans

Exceed the 2,600 total can donations from last year's competition, and the entire church staff will prepare and serve a FREE Wednesday Night Supper for a church-wide celebration.

Mark Your Donations:

Mark the bottom of each can with the **first letter of YOUR last name**. A Sharpie will be available at the donation site. Cans will be credited to the Team Captain for those letters. Any cans that are received without letters will be divided between the two teams.

Who will be the Lead Coach for each division? We'll find out on Playoff Sunday, January 25. Who will be the Souper Bowl V Champion with all the bling and bragging rights? You decide on Souper Bowl V Sunday, February 8.

Hut, Hut, Hike! Let's get going!