Fayetteville First
united methodist church

November 13, 2026

The Weekender

When the Light Goes Low
By The Rev. Allison Keith



As I was preparing for my sermon last Sunday, I came across a beautiful painting from an emerging artist named Emma Earle which depicted the scene of the ten bridesmaids.

Here, instead of small, safe clay lamps or lanterns, the women are holding blazing torches. Five of the women are illuminated by the light and the others are in the shadows. It's a striking piece, not only because of the contrast it shows between the two groups, but because of the range of emotions across each of these 10 women.

Some look like Olympic torchbearers, filled with pride and confidence about the light they carry. Others are desperate and pleading, sputtering along and looking for a little help. But the woman who strikes me the most is in the far left corner. Her torch is so empty that she has set it on the ground. Unlike some of the others, she isn't bothering to beg for more oil. She looks resigned to her fate, covering her face in shame and regret.

She is quite literally in a dark place, unable to pass on the love she has for Christ because she's having a hard time keeping it alight in her own life.

This painting helped me see these women not as either good or bad, prepared or unprepared, faithful or unfaithful, but as full human beings, complex and ever-changing.

I wonder which of these ten you see yourself in today. Are you feeling empowered by Christ's love or in desperate need of it? Are you lighting the way for others or are you sitting in your shame? In any case, I hope that you find a bit of light today. That you might look for it in your own spirit, in the torches of those around you, or in the love of God which brings light to everything. These ten women were tasked with lighting the way for Christ. So too are we.

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NOVEMBER 15, 2026
8:45 AM 11:00 AM (Sanctuary & Online)
Online link active at 11 AM and after
Psalm 23
Matthew 25:14-30
"Use It or Lose It"
The Rev. Kaylen Short

CURRENT NEWS



Vintage Messy at Azalea Estates

Our next Messy Church is right around the corner - literally! On **Saturday, November 14**, we will have a special edition of Messy at Azalea Estates retirement community. People of all ages are encouraged to come to this intergenerational event, where will do crafts, enjoy some music, celebrate communion, and build relationships. Meet at the church office (small brick building across the street) at 2:30pm to carpool together, as parking is limited.

If you have any questions, contact Rev. Allison Keith at akeith@fayettevillefirst.com.



A REMINDER FOR OUR SAGE TRIP!

Just a friendly reminder for everyone on the confirmed list for our November SAGE outing to the Arthur Blank Soccer Center on **Friday, November 20!**

Please be at the church by 9:15 AM.

We will depart promptly at 9:30 AM.

We look forward to a fun day together! Don't forget your $10 payment if you haven't already submitted it.

See you there!



We will be unloading the POD after church on November 22. If you are interested in helping to decorate the church during the week of November 22 please contact Nancy Lindsey at nancylindsey31@gmail.com or phone 770 310-5193.





5th Sunday Breakfast

Join us on **Sunday, November 29** at 9:45am in the fellowship hall for our 5th Sunday intergenerational gathering! Get a break from Thanksgiving leftovers with a potluck breakfast (bring a dish to share!) and enjoy an advent activity to kick off this exciting season in the life of the church. For more information, contact Rev. Allison Keith at akeith@fayettevillefirst.com.

This arose from some congregants who had been asking for recommendations:

We are compiling a list of recommended caregivers to share upon request with members of the congregation. If you or a loved one has had a positive experience with a caregiver, please send their name and the type of care they offered to Rev. Kaylen Short.





November is Bloom Angel Tree Month

Participate in our annual Angel Tree mission project from November 1 - November 22. Stop by the Welcome Center, on Sundays and pick up an angel's request. This mission provides a wonderful opportunity to share your love with foster children this Christmas season. Your gifts will be distributed to the foster parents in December.

How to Participate:

1. Choose and sign out an angel ornament from the tree.
2. Purchase the items listed on your angel's wish list.
3. Return the unwrapped gifts and the angel ornament by Sunday, November 22.

Gifts may be returned to the Church Office or the Welcome Center.

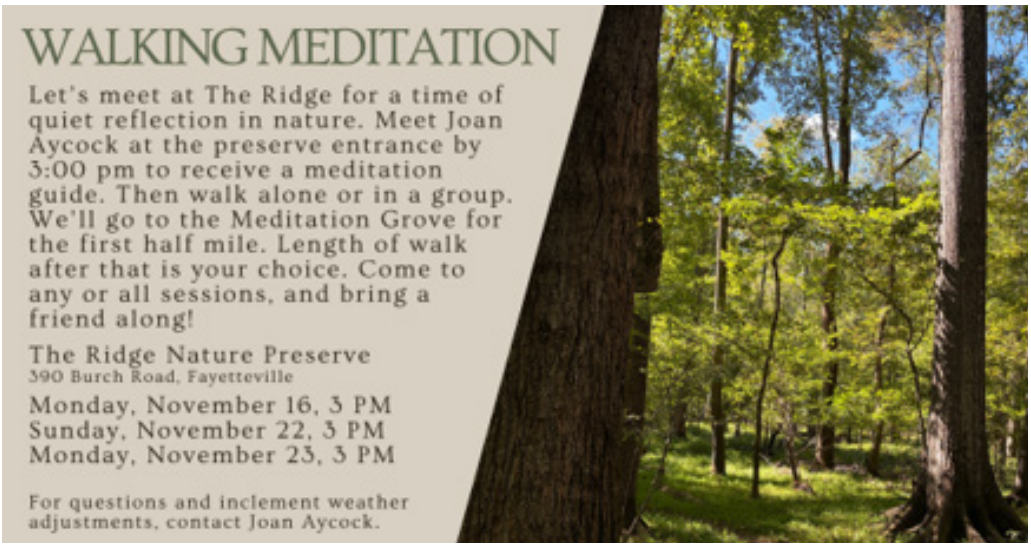
For questions, please contact Charlotte McAdams

Got a Creative Side? We Want YOU!

Do you love coming up with fresh ideas, thinking outside the box, or finding fun and creative ways to connect with people? We're putting together a new Creative Team and would love for you to be part of it! Our goal is to brainstorm unique and welcoming ways to connect with folks who are new to our church and help them feel right at home.

Interested in sharing your ideas and creativity? Give the church office a call! If you have any questions or would like to learn more, contact Pastor Kaylen. We can't wait to see what we can dream up together!

Creative Team





Christmas Poinsettias – Orders Due Wednesday, Dec. 16

Bring holiday beauty to our worship space and honor loved ones! Poinsettias are $15 each, will be listed in the Christmas Eve Order of Worship, and available to take home after the services. Proceeds support the FFUMC Flower Ministry. Grab a form in the narthex on Sundays.

Titus II – December 2

Begin December with music and joy! The Inman Elementary Chorus will present Christmas music at the Titus II Lunch & Learn program for our seniors.

When: **Tuesday, December 1** at Noon Where: Gym

Lunch: $8 per person (meal from a local restaurant)

Call Martha Turner or the church office to make your reservation by Wednesday, November 25.

Join us for a very festive Messy Church!

Come celebrate the season on **Saturday, December 5th,** from 11 a.m.–1 p.m. in the gym. We'll enjoy a festive time together as we explore the wonder of Jesus' birth through hands-on activities, crafts, and storytelling. Families can grab a photo with Santa, share in a warm lunch, and soak in the joy of this special season. All are welcome—bring a friend!

Sharing a Little Christmas Joy!

At the end of Christmas Marketplace, we invited several of our Summer Lunch famil to come "shop" for FREE in Timeless Treasures. They left with lots of wonderful things, which was a blessing for them and helped us find homes for so many items! Today, we received this sweet message from one of the moms:

"I know you get tired of me telling you, but y'all are angels on earth. You are the reaso why Fayetteville is full of joy and happiness because your church does wonders. I reall appreciate the free things from the yard sale on Saturday. My daughter loved it too!"



United Women in Faith – Christmas Banquet

Monday, **December 7, 2026** • 6:00 PM





Tell the story! Christmas Pageant Comes **December 9**

We act out the story of Christmas with our children each year. Just show up for the annual Christmas Pageant. We'll have costumes and a script. No rehearsal needed. After Wednesday night dinner on December 9, we'll get the play together and begin at 6 PM. Questions? Contact Dana Lamb.

A Service of Grief & Hope–

Sunday, Dec. 13th at 6 p.m., Chapel. A gentle, reflective service for anyone navigating loss this holiday season.





It's almost that time again. **Save the date December 16th** for Christmas caroling and spreading cheer. You're invited to enjoy supper at 5 PM in the Fellowship Hall for regular Wednesday Night Dinner; then we'll load vehicles and start caroling at 5:30 PM.

Mark your Calendar Christmas on the Square – **Sunday, Dec. 20** at 7:30 p.m., Fayetteville First UMC.





November is our month! 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 Fruit, Beef Stew, Boxed Mac & Cheese, Mixed Vegatables, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Hamburger Helper, Jiffy Mix Cornbread, Coffee*

Clothes Pantry Needs: All sizes of women's and girl's underwear.



SEASON OF THE NATIVITY

CELEBRATING LIGHT

With the First Sunday of Advent on November 29, we begin our observance of the Season of the Nativity—a sacred journey through Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. Together, we will enter a time of waiting, wonder, and celebration as we open our hearts to the Light. Your FFUMC Guide to the season, available November 22, includes a calendar of events and an intentional daily journal to accompany you. In the meantime, take note of these upcoming opportunities. **Please check with individual leaders to secure any advance materials.**

An Unlikely Advent Randy Riddell, Genesis to Revelation Class
Sundays 11/29, 12/6, 12/13, 12/20 at 9:45 AM - C250
Where might God show up? Explore living faithfully through the season by seeing the Advent themes through unexpected characters like Herod, the Magi, and more. Weekly video by author Rachel Billups and class discussion.

The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem Margaret Whitaker, Book Club
Sundays 11/29, 12/6, 12/13, 12/20 at 9:45 AM - C260
Trace the journey to Bethlehem by exploring people, places, and circumstances of Jesus' birth. Guided by author Adam Hamilton, our way toward Bethlehem can be an enlightened personal journey giving depth and meaning to the season. Book and discussion.

A Defining Advent Jeff Hansen Register by November 23 with church office.
Sundays 11/29, 12/6, 12/13, 12/20 at 12:15 - Fellowship Hall - Light lunch provided
Hope. Peace. Joy. Love. What if these familiar Advent words mean more than we think? Join Jeff Hansen as we explore the rich Hebrew and Greek words behind these beloved themes - tuqva, shalom, simcha, hesed, and more – and discover fresh, meaning-laden insights for the Advent Season. Weekly video and reading available in advance, but not required.

Learning to See: Census at Bethlehem Joan Aycock
4 offerings of same 45 - 60 minute class
Wednesday, December 2, 5:30 PM (B335) Sunday, December 6, 9:45 AM (Narthex Bride's Room)
Thursday, December 3, 10 AM (B335) Monday, December 7, 9:30 AM (B335)
Explore Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting from 1566 called Census at Bethlehem. The process of Visio Divina or "divine seeing" will guide us to look, look again, and then begin to see. Bruegel's depiction of the biblical census set in a more contemporary Flemish winter village summons us to ask, "What am I invited to notice?" No advance preparation needed.

Advent Meditation & Journaling Joan Aycock
Mondays, November 30, December 7 and December 14 B335 and Meditation Room at 10 AM
Join in a quiet hour of devotion, meditation, and journaling on "Wrinkly Time" on November 30, Pieter Bruegel's Census at Bethlehem painting on December 7, and Finding Joy in Advent on December 14. Come to one class or all three. No supplies needed – just a simple willingness to pause and reflect.



Special Wednesday Night: Thanksgiving Potluck

November 18 • 5:00 PM • Fellowship Hall

Join us for a Thanksgiving Potluck! Turkey, Ham, Desserts, & Drinks are provided just bring a side to share. No charge.

Sign up by noon Monday, November 16. Contact the church office, 770-461-4313, admin@fayettevillefirst.com, or fill out a Fellowship Dinner pew card.

Make stocking stuffers simpler this Christmas, buy your Tidal Wave Car Wash tickets today! During November, you can get a $30 value car wash for only $10 and support the future generation of FFUMC. All proceeds will go towards funding a new playground space to support the next generation of believers and students at FFUMC. You can buy your tickets during Wednesday Night Suppers (see Lauren Davis) or from the church office during the week (see Kelly Anderson). Tickets available while supplies last so get yours today!



November 9, 2026 Financials

Operating Budget 2026

Year-to-Date Receipts	$1,130,886.32
Year-to-Date Expenses	$1,051,130.11
Difference	$79,756.21

Benevolence
Benevolence funds received this week: $5,400.00
181 Families Assisted Year-To-Date: Total distributed $48,050.03

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

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inspired

36th Annual
Christmas Marketplace 2026















