

# INFORMED & inspired

CONNECTED AT FAYETTEVILLE FIRST UMC

## The power of new things Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin

In the third and final book of Ferrol Sams semi-autobiographical book "When All the World was Young," Sambo is serving abroad when we comes to a realization about life. It is beautiful and complicated. In a moment of self-awareness that has perhaps been eluding the main character throughout the trilogy, he acknowledges, *"The best of men are conscious above all others that they are men at best."* I've been clinging to that quote long before I ever imagined I'd be serving Fayetteville First UMC. It's a good quote, but Paul helps amplify the meaning when he writes, *"On my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses."* (2 Corinthians 12:5)

If we do not boast in ourselves, then in whom do we boast? We boast and celebrate what God is doing in our lives and in our world. No one can take credit for what God has done. Paul again gives advice of how to live for those who claim to follow Christ, *"Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are."* (Romans 12:16)

If it seems counter-cultural to be humble in our world, to admit our weakness, to admit we don't know everything, that is because it is. So now that we know how to live, we have to ask ourselves, in what do we hope? If Christians are not to boast in our own accomplishments or strengths, but rather our weaknesses, what do we have left?

We have the hope of God which makes all things new. Again, Paul writes, *"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"* (2 Cor. 5:17) We anticipate God doing new things this week in the life of our church with our Wednesday night service. It is not something that happens on its own but through God's power. It is an opportunity to give thanks for all that has happened and is happening in our world. Not only have we begun a new worship service outside, we have been the church through putting together flood buckets for those recovering on the gulf coast. We have given to missions and served locally and impacted others beyond our community. This is not boasting in ourselves, but boasting in what God is doing.

May we continue to acknowledge that at best we are human and let God glorify our weakness so that God's name may be great. May we approach this world with humility. May we, as new creatures of Christ, find hope in every new day.



**Outdoor Worship**  
**Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.**  
**The Field at FFUMC**  
*Led by Rev. Carson Thaxton*  
*For everyone — all ages!*  
*Church-wide & Community-wide*  
*Follows Lectionary scriptures*  
*Handicap accessible*

Bring a chair and mask and join us for our first outdoor worship on Wednesday, October 7, at 6:30 p.m. on The Field. Rev. Carson Thaxton, Sonia and Mark Squires, readers of all ages and others will lead our time in song and word. [Click here for more info and guidelines.](#)

**Before Outdoor Service:**  
 FFUMC YOUTH meet on The Field at 5:30 p.m. for friendship and activities.

FFUMC KIDS meet on The Field at 6 p.m. for games, lessons and fun.

## So, what's happening at FFUMC?

**Fall Day Retreat for Youth:** Youth are invited to a Fall Day Retreat at the Hansen Homestead on Saturday, October 24, from 2:30 - 8:30 p.m. for a time of rest and Sabbath, along with games, time to hang out with friends, a bonfire, and hayrides. UMW will be providing chili and are asking youth for a \$3 donation at the retreat to go toward fundraising efforts to support our local community. Contact Hannah Vickery, [hvickery@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:hvickery@fayettevillefirst.com).

**More Table Groups forming** — Are you ready to go deeper in scripture and in your relationship with God and others through small groups? New groups will meet Sundays at 9:45 a.m. (ZOOM) and Wednesdays (in-person) at 5:45 p.m. Contact Rev. Allyson Lawrence at [alawrence@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:alawrence@fayettevillefirst.com) to find the group just right for you!

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## UMCOR & volunteer hurricane relief

When disaster strikes, the people of the United Methodist Church spring into action to help others pick up the pieces of their lives and build their “new normal.” Here’s how we have helped recently:

- Direct donations to UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief.
- Flood buckets (five-gallon buckets filled with cleaning supplies). FFUMC assembled 100 buckets in September.
- Participation on Early Response Teams (ERT). These teams enter disasters areas as soon as first responders (power crews, police, fire fighters, etc.) deem it safe to work.
- Listen to homeowners as they struggle to rebuild.

In February 2020, a team from FFUMC rebuilt a deck, repaired a front porch, and built a wheelchair ramp in Southwest Georgia.

Within the past two years, Maggie Clarke has served with the Southwest District mucking out houses in North Carolina and in the past few weeks removing debris in Foley, Alabama. The scenes in Foley were heartbreaking. Street after street of people’s belongings were thrown to the side of the road. Sofas. Chairs. Televisions. Clearing trees was a major job as branches covered driveways and trees leaned on houses. The group stayed at Foley United Methodist Church sleeping on air mattresses, taking showers in the facility’s bathrooms, and preparing breakfast and sack lunches in the kitchen. In the evening, UMW circles provided meals and snacks.

Maggie said, “The people in these disaster areas expressed their gratitude that we took our time to help them. They said that it helps to know that they are not alone.” [Click here to read more about Maggie Clarke’s recent trip and the work of UMCOR.](#)



### Blood Drive October 18

Sign up now to give blood on October 18. Follow the directions at [FayettevilleFirst.com](http://FayettevilleFirst.com) to reserve your place or contact [ffumcblooddrive@gmail.com](mailto:ffumcblooddrive@gmail.com).



FFUMC team in southwest Georgia earlier this year. Maggie Clarke making repairs in Alabama. Flood bucket donations and assembly at FFUMC.