



March 25, 2022

The Weekender

The makings of peace

Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin

The absence of conflict is not peace.

As the Russian invasion of the Ukraine continues to escalate, I have taken time to learn about the history of conflict in addition to praying for peace. But one of the things that I have learned through this season of wars and rumors of wars is that the absence of conflict does not mean that there is peace. Because just below the surface could be hearts that are calculating and manipulating and waiting for the right moment to come out of the woodwork. Perhaps that is one of the reasons Jesus says, "It is not what goes into the mouth of a person that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth that defiles."

This past Tuesday, we welcomed Rev. Gary Mason to our congregation. [If you weren't able to attend you can watch the video of that presentation here.](#) It is worth your time. He said something that I've been thinking about all week. "Jesus is going to not only judge us by our actions, but by our words." I had not thought of salvation and judgment in such a way before. Like you, I have read Matthew 25 where the Judge separates the sheep and goats and says that those who *did* unto the least of these have received their reward. Those who *have not done* unto the least of these will depart and go to the place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. With such emphasis on doing or not doing, you can see how revelatory it is to hear that Jesus will judge us by what we say.

We have all been hurt by things people have said to us or about us. Most likely, we have also hurt people by what we have said about them or to them. It does not mean that we were at war with that person or they with us. It means that if there is hurt, there can be healing. If there is conflict, there can be peace. But it takes the ability to talk things out, to use words, to engage with someone you might not want to hear from.

The world is constantly at war and it doesn't just have to be militaristic: politicians, pundits, leaders, neighbors, even Christians who profess the same Prince of Peace. But just because there is an absence of conflict, does that mean that there is peace. As people who follow a risen Lord who overcame even death, we too, surely, can find hope in the struggles, even as we are judged by our actions and our words. May both our actions and our words be those of peace. And may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer.



Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 27, 2022

8:45 a.m., 11 a.m.

[Online link will be active at 11 a.m. and after](#)

2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-24

No Handholding Kumbaya

Guest speaker: Rev. Brian Tillman

CURRENT NEWS



Brian Tillman speaks this Sunday: March 27

Rev. Brian Tillman is a cabinet-level appointed clergy person and serves as Director of Inclusion and Advocacy for the North Georgia Conference. In his role, he provides consultation, support, and training aimed at strengthening engagement with and advocacy for the communities in which churches serve. Tillman's work is aimed at helping congregations bolster both justice and discipleship ministries. An ordained elder in the North Georgia Conference, Rev. Tillman has served as Chair of the Conference Commission on Religion and Race for five years. His previous appointment was as associate pastor of Ben Hill UMC in Atlanta. He has served at Johns Creek UMC, McEachern Memorial UMC, and Powers Ferry UMC. Rev.

Tillman has traveled internationally to study with peacebuilders in Northern Ireland and Germany. He plans to travel to South Africa in the next year with his clergy continuing education group (ACE2). As a pastor and advocate for racial healing, he holds Luke 4:18-19 as his charge to share God's love, grace, mercy, justice, and righteousness to all.

Hear Rev. Tillman at both services on Sunday, March 27, and discover why Thomas thinks he might be the best dancing clergy person in the North Georgia Annual Conference. [Click here for a livestream of the worship service at 11 a.m.](#)

You are invited to a special forum on Peace and Justice led by Rev. Tillman during the Sunday School hour in the sanctuary on Sunday, March 27, at 9:45 a.m. [This forum will be livestreamed and available at this link.](#)

[Read more about Rev. Tillman's background and goals here.](#)



Engaging in Peace, Advocacy & Reconciliation

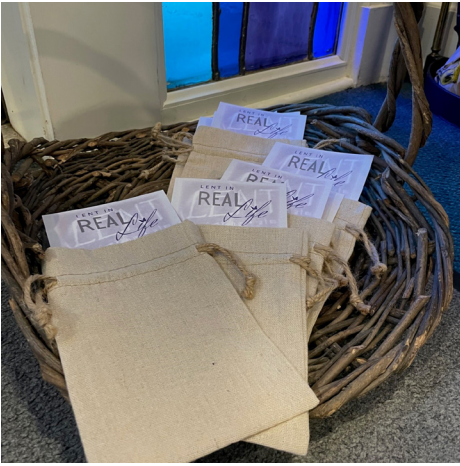
After this week's presentations, would you like to become more active in reaching our community in peace, love, and connection? [Next Steps: Click here to learn about upcoming opportunities to engage with others on this journey and complete a quick interest survey.](#)



Blood Drive Sunday, March 27, 2021

You can help relieve the severe blood shortage by donating at the next American Red Cross Blood drive at FFUMC on March 27 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. To reserve a specific donation time and help plan for workers, please schedule at redcrossblood.org and enter sponsor code FFUMC. For assistance in registering, email ffumcblooddrive@gmail.com. Donors will receive free COVID antibody test results. Masks are required.



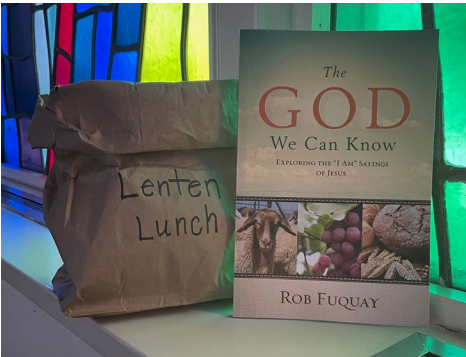


Lenten Offering for Rise Against Hunger

During Lent our thoughts turn to God and to others. You are invited to use your Lenten Offering Bag to collect an offering over these weeks to place on the chancel rail Easter morning.

The money we raise will support our Rise Against Hunger meal packing event later this year. During the event, highly nutritious, dehydrated meals are prepared for use in crisis areas around the world.

[Click here for a schedule of Lent and Holy Week opportunities.](#)



Lenten Meditation Theme: "I AM" Sayings of Jesus

Our Lenten Journey continues next Thursday, March 31, as Connie Hyder explores another chapter on the *"I AM" Sayings of Jesus* based on Rob Fuquay's book *The God We Can Know*. The Mary Martha Hope Circle will provide a light lunch (\$5) at noon in the Fellowship Hall with the meditation to follow.



Lunch with friends at Titus II

Sheriff Barry Babb joins us for the next Titus II on April 5 to speak on safety. Make a lunch reservation with Martha Turner, 770-461-2802, by noon on Thursday, March 31, before the meeting on Tuesday, April 5. Menu: Fried Chicken, Roasted Green Beans, Deviled Eggs, Biscuits, Dessert. (\$8)



Support Ukraine through UMCOR

As we continue to lift the people of Ukraine in our prayers, you are also invited to give through the United Methodist Committee on Relief. 100% of donations given to UMCOR through the gifts you give go directly to those in need in the war-torn areas. You are invited to give through the church (mark your donation "Ukraine") or through the website: <https://umcmission.org/umcor/ukraine/>.

Note: UMCOR Giving Sunday is this Sunday, March 27.



Let us know how the "EGG"-ing goes

As you share some love and fun with your neighbors and community using your Egg Your Neighbor kit, snap a few photos of you hiding eggs, of someone finding them ... any part of the adventure! Send them to Joan Aycock, jaycock@fayettevillefirst.com, or text 770-861-4499.



New requests from Fayette Samaritans

Every little bit helps! Donations for Fayette Samaritans, our community food pantry and clothes closet, may be placed in the hallway cart behind the sanctuary or dropped by the church office.

Most Needed in April (but all donations are welcome and appreciated):
Laundry Detergent, Dried Pasta (no spaghetti needed), Canned Fruit, Chicken Broth, Tea Bags, Mustard, Ketchup, Bar Soap, Shampoo, Feminine Products

SOFTBALL SCHEDULE



Cheer for FFUMC Softball Team

Give a shout for Coach Jack Gilson and the FFUMC Softball Team! Enjoy an evening outside and cheer them on. [See the season schedule here.](#)

[First game is Thursday, March 31, at 7 PM](#)
[All games are at McCurry Park, Field 6](#)



JAIL MINISTRY

Reading glasses
 Bibles
 Paperbacks

LAST CALL: Share books and reading glasses at jail

Reading glasses, Bibles and paperbacks needed for our Jail Ministry. Teams from our church have visited the men's and women's wings of the Fayette County Jail for Bible study, conversation, and prayer, making a difference in the lives of inmates. While visitation is not permitted now due to COVID restrictions, we can still offer something. Chaplain Mike Helton has requested paperback books in good condition and Bibles (no staples) as well as plastic reading glasses. Donations will be collected in the church office through March.



Serve next week at SafeHouse Outreach

Want to help serve a meal at SafeHouse? Thursday, March 31, is our next service to the homeless in downtown Atlanta. Contact Randy Riddell for details if you'd like to help serve at randyhr8@gmail.com.



SafeHouse Outreach
 Providing a hand-up not just a hand-out



High School Beach Retreat: Sign up by April 15

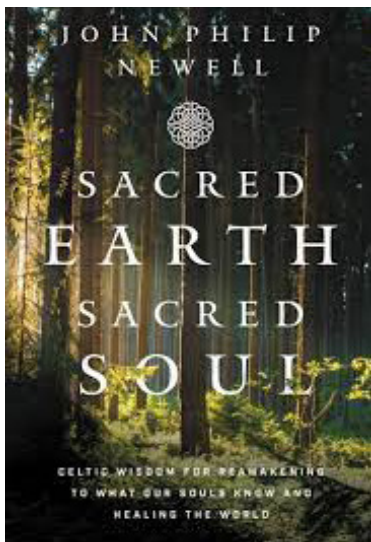
FFUMC Youth is headed back to the beach June 3-6 for the annual high school beach retreat! Youth will engage in community building activities, devotional time, and more. This retreat is for youth who will have recently completed 9th-12th grade as of June 2022. Deadline to sign up is April 15. [Be sure to secure your spot soon, as there are limited spots available.](#) Use these codes as you need them: GRACE 50% off, LOVE 100% off.



Need from Summer Lunch families

REQUESTS: Queen size mattress and box springs, Refrigerator

Families who are in the Summer Lunch Program have some specific needs. Can you help? If you have what is listed or other items to donate, just snap a photo of the item and email it to Cindy Hall at harvecin@charter.net or text the photo to 678-656-4117.



Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul Study begins April 3

The Study Class (aka The Book Club) will explore John Philip Newell's book "Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul." This class will meet in-person and virtually in Room C270 on Sundays beginning April 3. All are invited as we explore the long, hidden tradition of Celtic Christianity, explaining how this earth-based spirituality can help us rediscover the natural rhythms of life and deepen our spiritual connection with God, with each other, and with the earth. Newell introduces some of Celtic Christianity's leading practitioners, both saints and pioneers of faith, whose timeless wisdom is more necessary than ever. "Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul" offers a new spiritual foundation for our lives, one centered on encouragement, guidance, and hope for creating a better world. For more information, contact Tim Aycock at timaycock@gmail.com.



Say "You are LOVED" with an Easter Lily

Express your love with the gift of an Easter Lily in honor or in memory of someone. Recognitions will be included in the April 17 Easter Sunday Order of Worship. Lilies will enhance worship on Easter and will be available for pickup following the 11 a.m. service. [Just follow this link and order by April 11 to be included in recognitions.](#) Cost: \$15 each. Printed order forms will be available in the church office and narthex as well. Proceeds support the FFUMC Flower Ministry.



Notes of Gratitude to Flower Ministry

Thank you very much for delivering a beautiful bouquet of flowers.
— Mabel Wilbanks

We hope you all NEVER doubt the importance of your ministry. What may seem like a simple act of kindness brings great joy and comfort to those who receive the beautiful floral arrangements carefully constructed from worship flowers. Thank you for sharing your talents, love and support with our family. We are grateful!

— Allen, Julie, Don Harp and family

inspired ...

Resolving conflicts abroad and at home

We welcomed Rev. Dr. Gary Mason this week as he spoke to the church about conflict resolution from his personal experience. With expertise as an active peace advocate and negotiator for the Good Friday Agreement in Ireland and ongoing conflicts in the Israeli Palestinian conflict and more, Dr. Mason shared how identity, land and religion have and continue to impact nearly every conflict. Serving as ordained Methodist clergy since 1987 and ministering in Belfast throughout the civil conflict in his native Ireland, Dr. Mason is uniquely positioned to offer guidance on action in which our church can engage.

Did you miss this forum? Do you want to know how we can engage in peace? Follow these links and you'll hear Dr. Mason's perspective on conflict resolution abroad and right here at home in our nation and community.

[Click here to access the full presentation at FFUMC on our YouTube channel.](#)

Hint: You may find accessing CC (Closed Caption) helpful.

For links to presentations on the North Georgia Conference website, go to ngumc.org or [click here — Being One With Each Other: Learning from Rev. Dr. Gary Mason.](#)

For more information about Dr. Mason and links to Rethinking Conflict, the organization he founded and directs, please visit <https://www.rethinkingconflict.com/>.





Egg Hunt, April 10 on The Field, Noon

A church-wide Easter Egg Hunt will be offered after the 11 a.m. Palm Sunday Worship Service on The Field. Bring your Easter basket and your running shoes. We will have fun family games and four different egg hunts for our under 4s, PreK 4 and Kindergartners, first and second graders, and third through fifth graders. Join us for an EGG-straight good time!

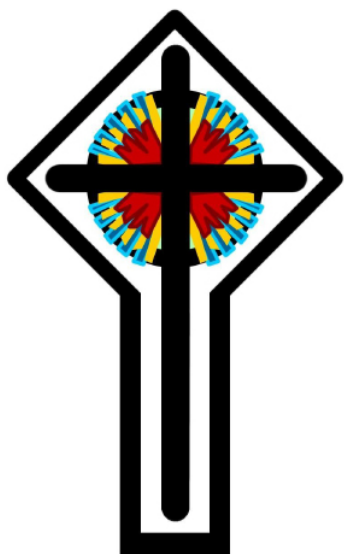


Now you know!

How is Fayetteville First UMC meeting the present and planning for our future? What steps are we taking to reach out to our community and world in faithful love as followers of Christ? Find out in these reports from your leadership team and the Church Council.

[March 2022 Staff Reports](#)

[February 2022 Council Meeting Minutes](#)



March 23, 2022 Financials

Operating Budget

Year to Date receipts	\$290,959.46
Year to Date expenses	\$249,835.17
Difference	\$41,124.29

Benevolence

Received this week \$725.00

33 families assisted in 2022 for a total of \$10,805.05

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

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

AA Meetings: Sundays 3 PM; Mondays 7 PM;

Wednesdays through Saturdays 7 PM

NA Meeting: Thursdays and Saturdays 7 PM