



Friday, December 1

The Weekender

~~Merry Christmas~~ Happy Advent

I am on a crusade. A few years ago some department store employees were told, "Don't say, 'Merry Christmas,' say, 'Happy Holidays.'" And people got all excited and mad. Well, I must admit I didn't like the idea of forbidding people from saying, "Merry Christmas." Many of us, even non-Christians, are celebrating Christmas. But "Merry Christmas" does sound sort of strange. Do you use the word 'merry' at any other time of year? Yes, but only when you talk about merry olde England.

I also want people to stop saying, "Merry Christmas." But not because I am afraid they might upset someone who is not a Christian or doesn't celebrate Christmas. I don't think many people are that sensitive. It's not because I am politically correct. It's because I am liturgically correct!

May I remind you that it is not Christmas yet? This is the season of Advent. We are remembering that Christ came long ago and is coming again. On Sunday we will enter the season of Advent. So, I want everyone to start saying, "Happy Advent!" Just imagine all the people who will look at you strangely! Just imagine all the explaining you can do at the checkout register! For the next four weeks, while everyone incorrectly will be saying, "Merry Christmas!" you correctly can be saying, "Happy Advent!"

And then to top it all off, on December 25 you can start saying, "Merry Christmas" during the twelve days of Christmas—while everyone else will be saying, "Happy New Year!"

Happy Advent!

See you Sunday!

In Christ,

John



This Sunday in Worship

December 3

First Sunday in Advent

Anthems:

Light of the World (8:30 a.m.)

The Yearning (11:00 a.m.)

Sermon:

Watch! (Mark 13:32-37)

Rev. John Barnes preaching (8:30, 11:00 a.m.)

Rev. Michael Phillips (9:45 a.m.)

Share Popcorn, Ponies for a Purpose on December 2

Join Pastor Allyson and others tomorrow, December 2, between 4:30 and 8 p.m. to share popcorn and pony rides with families who will be at the Fayetteville Gazebo just off the square for the annual



Fayetteville Tree Lighting Ceremony and Parade. Did you know we aren't just sharing popcorn and ponies though? We are inviting people to "Pop-in" for our Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve services and also our Fayetteville Together Breakfast on New Year's Eve. And even better than that, the real gift we are sharing is God's grace. Your friendly conversation is crucial to making people truly feel welcome at our church and connecting with God's love. Go to this link [Sharing Christmas and Popcorn](#) to sign up for a thirty minute period to greet people, give them popcorn, and invite them to

worship with us. Shortly after you sign up you will get a confirmation email with details on where to meet and what to expect for this fun evening engaging our community. (PS - no previous popcorn popping experience required!) *Rev. Allyson Lawrence and Lea Agnew at The Elf movie popping event.*

Orchestra Hosted at FFUMC Tomorrow, December 2



Enjoy the Southern Crescent Symphony Orchestra with the Rick Massengale Jazz Trio on Saturday, December 2. You can go to the downtown Christmas tree lighting (and even help with the popcorn) and then hear a full orchestra playing Christmas favorites at 7:30 p.m. in our sanctuary. This year features a sing along with the orchestra,

and the concert is free. We are grateful that SCSO plays its one free concert a year at our church. Invite your friends, family, and neighbors.

Service of Healing and Prayer



On Wednesday, December 6, you are invited to a Service of Healing and Prayer in the chapel at 6:15 p.m. In the original language of the New Testament, the root word for "healing" is the same as that of salvation and wholeness. The Bible does not promise us that we will be free of suffering, but it does tell us that God is with us and through it all. As we begin our season of Advent, our season of Hope, let us take our struggles, whether physical, spiritual, emotional or some other kind, and come together to be lifted up in prayer.

Churchwide Christmas Dinner and Bonfire



Join with our church family and friends on Wednesday, December 13, for a meal and fellowship. Enjoy appetizers and entertainment from 4:50 to 5:10 p.m. and then share a Christmas meal of Chicken or Beef Marsala and more (\$6 adults, \$3 children: reserve by December 11). After we will gather on the lawn for carols, hot chocolate and more time together. What a great way to introduce a friend to FFUMC! Let's get to know each other better around a meal and a fire.

Take Christmas to the Homebound with a Carol



Share Christmas carols and love with our homebound friends on Tuesday, December 19, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. as we take groups to sing. If you plan to go caroling, please RSVP to admin@fayettevillefirst.com so that we can plan transportation and caroling routes. No singing skills required; just a cheerful spirit and loving heart!

Square Foot Ministry Matching Fund to Place Family



Square Foot Ministries has an opportunity to place a family into their new home by the end of December. A benefactor has offered a matching pledge of \$5,000, and the ministry is asking that FFUMC match the charitable gift bringing their total to \$10,000. If you can help a family achieve their goal of homeownership, please write a check to the church or donate online and designate your gift to Square Foot Ministry in the memo line.

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Join in the ffumc Christmas Pageant December 10



Come to a care-free and humorous yet touching retelling of the Christmas story on December 10 at 9:45 a.m. The gym will be transformed into Bethlehem! Anyone and everyone will be a part of the story together in an audience-participatory style: shepherds, angels, wise men, and more animals than anyone knows how to handle! Bill Webb (from The Classics Trio) and friends will share music and help us sing along to Christmas carols. Looking forward to a fun morning together!

United Methodist Men Welcome Fire Department on December 5



On Tuesday, December 5, the United Methodist Men will welcome Linda Black, one of our church members, Bill and Betty McKibbon's daughter, and Deputy Fire Chief for the city of Fayetteville. Accompanied by Captain Ben Henning, Deputy Chief Black will talk to us about the fire department operations and in particular fire safety during the Christmas season. Deputy Chief Black has received many commendations during her career with the fire department and most recently was recognized with the Silent Heroes Leadership Award in September in Atlanta. The meeting will begin with the normal potluck meal in the Fellowship Hall at 6:15 p.m.

Make Your Reservation for UMW Christmas Banquet



Enjoy a wonderful evening with friends at the UMW Unit Christmas Banquet and Officer Installation Event on December 7. Appetizers at 6 p.m., Dinner at 6:40 p.m., Entertainment: Sam Burch, soloist, **Reservations due by December 3** through UMW circle chairs or Tammy Cook at tamrarcook@gmail.com or 770-712-9748, Meal (\$8): Ritzy Chicken Salad entree.

Reserved: Parking Lot B

Please remember that Parking Lot B is reserved for visitors and our senior members on Sunday. If you are healthy and are able to walk, please save these spaces for our guests and senior citizens.

District Training Opportunity

If you will begin serving on a committee in January, you are invited to attend the LaGrange District Training Event on Sunday, January 28, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at LaGrange First UMC. Specific classes will be available for members of Finance, Trustees and Staff Parish Relations committees. Other options include training on church security, Safe Sanctuaries, missions and evangelism. Please make plans to attend. See one of the pastors or staff if you have questions.

Upcoming: Get more information on events at fayettevillefirst.com or 770-461-4313.

December 5 — Titus II, Lunch and Program with Inman Elementary Chorus, Noon, Gym

December 5 — UMM Potluck Dinner and Program with Deputy Fire Chief Linda Black, 6:15 p.m., Fellowship Hall

December 7 — UMW Christmas Banquet, 6 p.m., Reservations due today for meal and childcare through UMW circle chairs or Tammy Cook at tamrarcook@gmail.com or 770-712-9748, Meal (\$8): Ritzy Chicken Salad entree.

December 16 — Youth Christmas Lights and Laughter, Reserve at fayettevillefirst.com.

December 17 — Christmas Coffee for College, Career & Young Adults, 9:30 a.m., Gym

December 17 — Christmas Lectio Divina, 9:45 a.m., Room C-230

December 17 — Candlelight Concert, Rick Massengale & Sonia Squires & friends, 6 p.m., Sanctuary

December 24 — Sunday Morning Worship: 10 a.m.

December 24 — Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion Services, 4, 6 and 11 p.m., Sanctuary

December 31 — New Year's Eve, Fayetteville Together Breakfast 8:30; Worship: One Service, 10 a.m. in Sanctuary

January 3 — Regular Wednesday Night Programs resume

Wednesday Night Fellowship Supper Menu: December 6



Order your meal for next week's Wednesday Night Fellowship Supper by noon on Monday, December 4. Sign up at fayettevillefirst.com, e-mail admin@fayettevillefirst.com, complete a pew card or call the church office at 770-461-4313.

December 6 Menu: Chicken Alfredo, Noodles, Salad or Chicken Tenders Meal or Grilled Chicken Salad Meal.

Financial Update for November 28

Income: \$1,266,645.61

Expenses: \$1,337,182.88