



July 26, 2024

The Weekender

Annual Conference Recap Bill Webb and Rev. Kaylen Short

We had the privilege of attending the 158th annual North Georgia Conference in June. We were joined by a number of others from our church representing Fayetteville First UMC well! This conference in Athens was incredibly enriching, engaging, and uplifting.

The theme of the conference was "Becoming an ACTS Church," inspired by Acts 2:42-44: *"The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers. A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. All the believers were united and shared everything."* (CEB)

Our key takeaway is that the church is moving forward from the disaffiliations with a renewed sense of purpose. Churches are being planted, new ministries are being funded, and strong congregations are growing through outreach and evangelism. We even saw young people express a calling to ordained ministry during one of our worship services!



The conference's financial and strategic challenges are being met with strong leadership and careful management. Our collective concern for the future of the church's infrastructure is paving the way for a promising path ahead. Despite the challenges faced by the UMC this year, particularly with disaffiliation, the spirit of the conference remained strong. While the North Georgia Conference saw a reduction in churches and membership, the dedication and resilience of the community were evident. The conference's decision to repurpose certain closed church properties, including transforming Sugarloaf UMC in Gwinnett County into the new conference office, reflects a strategic and forward-thinking approach. We voted as an annual conference to downsize from eight districts

to five, with FFUMC still in the southwest district, and believe this is a step towards greater efficiency and focus.

We saw examples of United Methodists throughout North Georgia navigating their differences by fostering respectful dialogue across the theological spectrum. As we move forward, we hope we can focus on our common good and shared identity in Christ. We believe Fayetteville First is leading this charge by example!

Our collective denomination thrives on the contributions of people from diverse backgrounds, and together, through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness, we can achieve great things. We are blessed with outstanding clergy and laity throughout our conference, and we are confident that our leaders will guide us effectively into the future.

Pictured at Annual Conference: Rev. Kaylen Short, Nancy Ricciardi, Cindy Hall, Rev. Drew West, Amanda West, Lauren Davis, Kathe Hansen, Rev. Charles Robinson, Mickey Robinson, Rev. Allyson Lawrence



10TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

8:45 AM (Chapel) 11:00 AM (Sanctuary & Online)

[Online link active at 11 AM and after](#)

Ephesians 3:14-21 "Deep and Wide"

Rev. Allyson Lawrence

CURRENT NEWS



Saturday and Sunday: Let's cap off the summer!

Back to School Bash: Saturday, July 27

We are going to celebrate the ending of summer and the beginning of a new school year with a fun back to school bash on July 27, 3-5 p.m. Come to The Field beside Parking Lot C and join the party ... and bring a friend!

Blessing of Backpacks: Sunday, July 28, 11:00 AM

At the 11:00 AM worship service on Sunday, school-aged children, teachers, and school administrators will be invited forward to receive a blessing and a backpack tag as they prepare for the new school year. We look forward to celebrating the good news that God is always with them and goes before them as this academic year begins!



Let's meet the challenge: The final piece is within reach

A new development in the Capital Campaign presents an opportunity to avoid ANY construction loan.

NEW: \$100,000 matching gift from anonymous donor

NEEDED: \$160,000 to match gift and complete final piece

COMPLETED: \$823,217 from contributions and reserves

The challenge continues through September 15. Contribution envelopes are available in the Narthex and church office or you may mark your donation as "Capital Campaign" in any giving format.

UPDATE: We have collected \$15,195 toward the \$100,000 challenge. That leaves us \$84,805 away from the full match, and \$144,805 away from a 100% funded campaign! Keep up the amazing work!





Rise Against Hunger: Registration Open

You're invited to help fight hunger by preparing highly nutritious, dehydrated meals for use in crisis areas or school feeding programs around the world at the Rise Against Hunger Packing Event in the FFUMC gym.

August 18, 2024 1 - 3 PM Pack 30,000 meals in 2 hours

Invite friends, groups, neighbors ... all hands appreciated and needed!

[Register here and let us know you're coming.](#)

Please note: To simplify the event and registration, a churchwide lunch will not be offered this year. The Fellowship Hall will be open following the 11 AM service if you would like to bring a lunch.



Park + Snack FFUMC Kids: Come play July 29

Join Rev. Drew West along with his kids Oliver (2) and Lillian (6) for our final Park and Snack of the summer on Monday, July 29, at 9:30 AM at the FFUMC playground. Let's play and get to know each other. Please bring your own snack/lunch. For more information contact Drew at 770-461-4313 or dwest@fayettevillefirst.com.



New session begins Monday, August 19

GriefShare is a program where caring individuals walk with others through the journey of grief. Facilitated by Carol and Bill Webb, classes meet Mondays August 19 through November 18 from 10 AM to 12 PM in Room B350. All are welcome. For more information on the program or to sign up, contact the Webbs at 404-234-1056 or visit GriefShare.org.



UMVIM Mission Trip Opportunity

Have you always wanted to experience how people do Christianity in another country? You can do that in El Salvador, just a short three-and-a-half-hour flight south of here. Don't speak Spanish? Not to worry. We have translators and a lot of people speak English, or a few words, anyway. And a smile and a hug don't need translation. Food concerns? There's chicken and veggies and eggs and bacon and cereal. They even have Coke Zero!

You will participate in Vacation Bible School, visit people in the local communities, and do light construction work (no skills necessary) if you desire. You will come back wondering who blessed whom.

Join us either February 8-15, 2025, or February 15-22, 2025. The final cost will depend on the number of people on the team, actual activities, and donations. Cost is currently estimated to be \$1,300 plus airfare. To reserve your spot, send a \$250 donation to FFUMC. Indicate "El Salvador" on the memo line. Contact Maggie Clarke for more information.



UMCOR Feminine Kits collected by UWF District

United Women in Faith are collecting Feminine Hygiene Kits for the United Methodist Committee on Relief this summer. You are invited to [check the list of needed items](#) and bring any donations to the church office. The collection is from now through September 3. Bins will be available in the Welcome Center area during August.



Help another homeowner be our new Church Street neighbor! Sign up for Square Foot Ministry Build: August 1-3

Square Foot Ministry is building another house next to Parking Lot A on Church Street, this time for Sara Brandao. The walls and windows were installed last week. Come join us to install and paint siding on August 1, 2 and/or 3. All skill levels are needed and "many hands make light work." Go to the easy sign up to let us know you're coming at www.squarefootministry.org/volunteer and also sign the build waiver. If you would like to donate to the build for this great family, please go to www.squarefootministry.org/donate. Questions? Contact Tim Aycock.

Square Foot volunteer: Chuck Grayson, part of the ministry since its inception



United Methodist Men meet on August 6

The United Methodist Men will meet on Tuesday, August 6, at 6:15 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Bring food to share. This meeting will be to discuss details about men serving at the women's event, Let's Do Lunch, on Saturday, August 10.

Everyone who has volunteered to serve at Let's Do Lunch is invited, even if you're not a current member of UMM.

Please contact Raymond Mitchely or the church office to let Raymond know you'll be there.

Potluck & Prep

August 6, 6:15 PM



Men: You're invited to serve at Let's Do Lunch

Let's Do Lunch is August 10 in the Fellowship Hall.

Men, you have this opportunity to serve at this luncheon for ladies.

What to do: Simply contact **Raymond Mitchely** or the church office and say, "Yes! I'll serve."

What to wear: Servers are asked to wear dark pants and white dress shirts.

When: Saturday, August 10, plan to arrive at 10:30 AM; doors for guests open at noon; lunch begins at 12:30 PM; cleanup follows.

Let's enjoy serving our ladies for their third annual event.



Pantry needs from Fayette Samaritans

Donations are one way to help those 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: Canned Green Peas, Canned Black-Eyed Peas, Canned Pinto Beans, Boxed Mashed Potatoes, Hamburger Helper, Rice (2 lb. bags), Jiffy Cornbread Mix, Pancake Mix and Syrup, Cookies, Feminine Products (Pads)

Clothes Closet: Women's socks and women's underwear size extra large and larger



Tour the Fox Theatre with SAGE in August

Let's take a trip to Atlanta and see the Fox Theatre! Our Senior Adults Going Everywhere will take an architectural and historical tour of the facility -- all while enjoying time together! After we'll enjoy a fun lunch at The Varsity.

DATE: Thursday, August 15

COST: \$15 plus \$2 transportation

DETAILS: Meet at church office 8:45 AM; Depart 9 AM; Tour 10 AM

Sign up and pay in the church office or call 770-461-4313.

FFUMC Preschool can use our help!

The school year is fast approaching, and our preschool here at FFUMC could use our help! Please browse our wishlist on Amazon and consider making a donation to our phenomenal group of students and teachers. They're truly the best around and always appreciate your love.

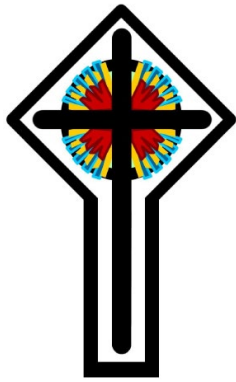
Thank you so much!

Maria Ruhe, Fayetteville First Preschool Director

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/SKR8WIF3AVR8?ref=wl_share



Photos show how past donations have been used and loved!



July 24, 2024 Financials

Please see the Capital Campaign update at the beginning of The Weekender. Our regular financials will be updated next week.

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

AA Meetings: Sundays 3 PM; Mondays 7 PM; Wednesdays 7 PM;
Fridays 7 PM; Saturdays 7 PM

NA Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays 7 PM

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inspired ...

On our way to spread love! - as told to Maggie Clarke

"Hi, there! My name is Betty Box and this is my little brother, Billy Box. We have a big adventure coming up in the next couple of weeks.

Our parents thought we were just going to be plain, ordinary, white boxes. Boring! But then the factory shipped us to some nice people at Fayetteville First United Methodist Church. A bunch of the women from something called United Women in Faith came in. I don't know anything about them, but they must be fantastic people because when they got through with us, we were packed up with all sorts of goodies. I have a dress and some flip-flops and the cutest little stuffed rabbit you've ever seen. Billy has a pair of shorts and a shirt and flip-flops and a really cool Hot Wheels car that looks like an old jalopy. We both have underwear and socks, a washcloth and a toothbrush, and some crayons to go with a little coloring book that tells the story of Jesus' birth. Some of the boxes had other stuff, like pencils, a sharpener, a notepad, and a ruler.

When they finished putting all this stuff into us, there were 92 boxes just like us with other cool stuff. We're going to a place called Decatur, AL. I heard the ladies talking about what's going to happen. We will be joined by boxes just like us to go to places like Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras. We're going to put smiles on the faces of children for Christmas! My box says I'm going to a seven-year-old girl. Billy is going to a five-year-old boy. Oh, it sounds so exciting!"

Thanks to your contributions and helping hands (and lots of organization by coordinator Maggie Clarke), "Betty" and "Billy" and all their Christmas Shoe Box friends are on a wonderful journey to spread love. You make a difference! Thank you!

