



December 13, 2024

## The Weekender

### The Time Charles Got It Wrong

Rev. Kaylen Short, Senior Minister

Charles Wesley is known primarily for being a prolific song writer and the brother of John Wesley. Charles wrote thousands of hymns, and both he and John were unapologetic defenders of the theology expressed in those hymns. In John Wesley's Rules for Singing (found in the front of your UMC hymnal) he tells people to sing hymns "exactly as they are printed, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can." Similarly, Charles Wesley once discovered that people were editing and reprinting his hymns. His response was clear, that people should "take the hymns as they are" or that they should add the "true reading in the margin," so that "we may no longer be accountable for the nonsense.... of other men."



Yet, I am going to do something a United Methodist clergy person rarely does: tell you the time John and Charles Wesley were wrong. When he was 32 years old, Charles wrote the beloved Christmas hymn "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing." The only problem is he wrote "Hark, How all the welkin rings," as the prominent line. Apparently, welkin was a term for the vault of heaven.

I don't know about you, but I have an extremely difficult time imagining myself cuddled up as a child with my parents at Christmas Eve candlelight service heartily singing "Hark! How all the welkin rings!" I imagine that song would've been lost to the sands of time. Fortunately, the Wesleys' good friend (and much more fiery preacher) George Whitefield changed the words to the now known ones. In doing so, George proved once and for all that sometimes even the Wesley brothers got it wrong the first time around.

As we approach Christmas if you make a mess of first attempt at wrapping a gift, your first batch of cookies, or your 1,000,000th attempt to be more joyful and peaceful then just turn on "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" and remember things don't have to be right right away as long as they get there eventually.

*The story about the origins of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" can be found in "Then Sings My Soul" by Robert J. Morgan.*



**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: DECEMBER 15, 2024**  
**8:45 AM (Chapel) 11:00 AM (Sanctuary & Online)**  
[Online link active at 11 AM and after](#)  
Service of Lessons & Carols



## Season of the Nativity continues into January

What is God up to here? You're invited to explore that question as we journey through the Season of the Nativity together. You can get a printed packet with an Intentional Daily Journal, schedule of events, and family activity. You can share in conversations on Facebook as we wait and seek Divine Presence each day.

[Get the full Season of the Nativity Schedule here.](#)

### SPECIAL EVENTS AND SERVICES

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#### **CHRISTMAS AT MESSY CHURCH | DECEMBER 14 | 11 AM TO 1 PM**

This all-ages community church includes games, crafts, music and a meal with lots of Christmas fun!

#### **FAYETTEVILLE FIRST PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM | DECEMBER 12 | 5 PM**

You're invited to enjoy the Christmas program presented by our young learners in the Sanctuary.

#### **LESSONS & CAROLS | DECEMBER 15 | 8:45 & 11 AM**

Worship on the Third Sunday of Advent through music and Word.

#### **CHURCHWIDE CHRISTMAS CAROLING | DECEMBER 18 | 5 PM**

Gather in the Fellowship Hall for dinner and then go out together to spread good tidings. This is a church-wide, all ages caroling event.

#### **CHRISTMAS ON THE SQUARE CONCERT | DECEMBER 22 | 7 PM**

Experience Christmas with the Bach Magnificat and other seasonal favorites provided by The Chancel Choir and orchestra. Free. First-come seating in the FFUMC Sanctuary with overflow in Fellowship Hall.

#### **CHRISTMAS EVE | DECEMBER 24 | 4 PM, 6 PM, 11 PM**

Celebrate the Christ Child with traditional Candlelight Service and Communion. Services at 4 & 6 PM in the Sanctuary and at 11 PM in the Chapel.

#### **FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS | DECEMBER 29 | 8:45 AM & 11 AM**

We gather for worship and praise.

#### **EPIPHANY SUNDAY | JANUARY 5 | 8:45, 11 AM SERVICES; 10 AM BREAKFAST**

Celebrate joy as we move into the new year and the season of Epiphany with worship at 8:45 & 11 AM and a church-wide potluck breakfast at 10 AM.

**SEASON OF THE NATIVITY**

**FAYETTEVILLE FIRST UMC**

# CHRISTMAS GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING

You may have some people on your Christmas list who have everything they need but who you still want to celebrate with a gift. Here are a few ways you can honor them and help others at the same time! Each gift is described with details on how to order and pay.



## Poinsettia orders due Monday, December 16

Your purchase of poinsettias has at least 3 benefits this year:

1. Poinsettias enhance our worship space through the season.
2. You may give plants in memory or honor of family or friends. They'll be listed in the Christmas Eve Order of Worship. Ordered poinsettias are available to take from the sanctuary following the Christmas Eve service.
3. Proceeds from poinsettia orders benefit the FFUMC Flower Ministry. This group makes flower arrangements to encourage others throughout the year. Complete a form available in the narthex on Sunday or anytime in the church office or [place an order with this form and pay online following instructions](#). (Cost: \$15 each) DUE DECEMBER 16.



## Holiday Commemorative Brick Project

Place a commemorative brick in the church courtyard this holiday season! You may personalize a brick for yourself or your family, honor a loved one, or make a memoriam. Commemorate a new baby, baptism, graduation, friendship, ministry, church membership, or new home. The cost is \$100 per brick. Each 8"x4" brick can be engraved with three lines of text with up to 15 characters per line. If desired, you may pick up a card in the church office confirming the purchase which you can place in a Christmas card or letter to loved ones. [Simply complete this form and return it with payment by December 31, 2024](#). Copies will be available in the Narthex or church office as well.

## Christmas gifts to change lives in El Salvador

There is a Christmas gift that can change a child's life forever. That gift is education. Tuition for a child to attend the Methodist School in El Salvador is just \$40 per month or \$480 per year. Two South West District mission teams are heading to El Salvador February 8-15, 2025, and February 15-22, 2025. The teams comprise 19 individuals from five different churches and are collecting money to help deserving children whose families cannot afford even this small amount. The school offers grades 1-10, the only grades that schools there have. The school helps keep the kids out of gangs, drugs, and the risk of human trafficking. The kids learn the usual subjects that we have here, including music. Their marching band has won national competitions. Many of the students are also learning English, which will open many more opportunities for good jobs. The school offers hope to the community.

[You can make a tax-deductible donation by check or online to Fayetteville First United Methodist Church](#). Write "El Salvador Tuition" on the memo. Your gifts will be hand-delivered to Bishop Juan de Dios Peña in February 2025. Questions? Contact Maggie Clarke.



# CURRENT NEWS

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## Thank you for your help at Nativities Around the World

"What a delight to see all the artistry in the exhibit."

"There's baby Jesus!"

"Jesus is everywhere!"

"I think my favorite one is .... well, maybe it's that one ...."

The numerous comments from the more than 750 folks who walked through the Nativities Around the World exhibit in our sanctuary last week express only part of its impact. We extend our gratitude to Wendy Haymans and the Haymans family for their dedication to the Nativities project and for sharing the exhibit here are Fayetteville First. [Thank you also to the many, many volunteers who gave your time, shared your smiles, and welcomed the community. You'll find a list of those volunteers here.](#) We appreciate all you did to make the event a wonderful start to the entire Season of the Nativity.



## Messy Church on December 14 - and on parade!

Our next Messy Church is tomorrow, December 14, from 11 AM-1 PM. After, Messy Church will be in the Fayetteville Miracle on Main Street Christmas Parade sporting a dinosaur theme! The parade stages at Fayette County High School at 2:30 PM. Meet the FFUMC team there to participate. The parade starts at 3 PM. Questions? Contact Rev. Allyson Lawrence or Chase Leonard.



## Wednesday Night Supper December 18

### This is Christmas Caroling night and last dinner of 2024!

Time: **5 PM** Fellowship Hall

Advantages: **Friendship!** Be with people you really like.

**Hassle Free!** Enjoy meals from local restaurants.

**Affordable!** Adults \$10, Children under 13: \$7 (pay at door)

Sign up by 4 PM on Monday. Contact the church office, 770-461-4313, [admin@fayettevillefirst.com](mailto:admin@fayettevillefirst.com), or fill out a pew card.

**December 18 Menu: PIZZA!**

**After this meal, dinners resume January 8**



## Christmas Caroling is Wednesday, December 18

It's time to spread Christmas cheer for all to hear with carols! 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. We hope to have three groups this year, so we'd love to know who might be coming in advance. [Just let us know here.](#)



## **SAGE Trip is December 19: Trip is full - get on waiting list**

Take a SAGE trip to Chick-Fil-A headquarters on Thursday, **December 19**. Gather at the church office at 8:30 AM and depart at 8:45 AM; Backstage Tour (which includes the Test Kitchen) will be from 9:30 – 11 AM. We will stop for lunch at a Chick-Fil-A on the way home. Tickets are \$11 and transportation cost is \$2. **If you have reserved a place but cannot come, please contact the church office to open your spot for someone on the waiting list.** For more information, see [Rev. Charles Robinson](#).



## **December List: Pantry needs from 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 Corn, Canned Mixed Vegetables, Canned Green Beans, Pasta Sauce, Dry Spaghetti, Jiffy Mix, Pancake Mix, Jelly, Coffee, Hot Chocolate Mix, Feminine Products (Pads)*



## **Sunday Morning Coffee & Conversation**

Have you ever had a Sunday where you showed up too late for your Sunday school class? Have you ever arrived extra early for the 11 AM service and you don't know what to do while you wait? Beginning this Sunday, we will offer coffee and conversation in our Fellowship Hall from 9:45-10:45 AM. Each week you can drop in and grab a coffee or something light to eat before you head off to your next thing.

## **Flower Ministry**

Thank you for the lovely flowers. They really brightened my days of recovery.  
— Martha Turner



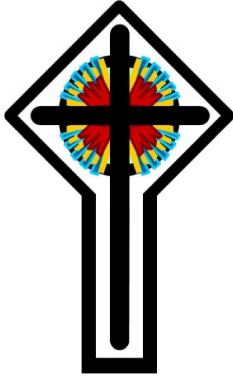
It was a delight to receive the beautiful arrangement of flowers Thank you for all you do to mak FFUMC a loving and caring church. — Lamar MeEachern

Thank you to the two flower angels, Nancy and Barb, for delivering a gorgeous arrangement of flowers to me Monday. I enjoyed my visit with these ladies and feel fortunate to have received the flowers. They help brighten the days ahead while recouping from surgery. This is another ministry FFUMC is

blessed to have serving church members who need to be lifted up and to know they are being thought of and prayed for. Thank you to all who serve on this committee. Please know the joy you bring to others all year long is greatly appreciated. — Lynne Wood

## **Shawl Ministry**

I feel truly blessed to be a recipient of a beautiful shawl made by the loving hands of the Shawl Ministry. It was such a lovely surprise and I have already put it to use. I will enjoy this during my two month recovery time from surgery and after. FFUMC is fortunate to have such talented ladies share their gift of handmade shawls to others. Thank you again for thinking of me. I truly appreciate your thoughts and prayers during this time. — Lynne Wood



## December 10, 2024 Financials

### Operating Budget 2024

Year-to-Date Receipts	\$1,079,353.46
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$1,087,299.22
Difference	- \$7,945.76

### Benevolence

Benevolence funds received this week \$1,878.00

164 Families Assisted Year-To-Date: Total distributed \$40,413.89

### 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, Tuesdays, Wednesdays,  
Fridays, Saturdays 7 PM; Thursdays 7:30 AM

**NA Meetings:** Thursdays 7 PM

Fayetteville First UMC 175 East Lanier Avenue Fayetteville, GA 30214  
770-461-4313 [FayettevilleFirst.com](http://FayettevilleFirst.com)

## Christmas on the Square

December 22

7 PM FFUMC Sanctuary

"Christmas on the Square"  
is our re-branded annual  
Christmas concert.

This must- see event features  
The Chancel Choir with full  
orchestra and guest soloists.

Music from Bach to  
Irving Berlin!

Seating is first-come with  
overflow in the Fellowship Hall.  
Nursery provided.

Free Admission  
Offering Taken

Invite neighbors, family,  
and friends.  
Everyone is welcome!

**CHRISTMAS ON THE SQUARE**

The Chancel Choir with orchestra  
Amy Little Soprano  
Luanne Harms Mezzo-Soprano  
Maria McDaniel Alto  
Johnathon Pilkington Peyton Booth Tenors  
Michael O'Hearn Bass

**ALSO FEATURING**  
Carolyn Hancock Solo Violin  
Valerie Morgan, Sam Burch Conductors  
Jabe Martin Piano  
Charles Higgs Organ  
Nicholas Bowden Conductor and Host

Music for chorus and full orchestra with organ.  
Program to feature Bach's Magnificat as well as seasonal favorites.  
**FREE ADMISSION.  
OFFERING TAKEN.**

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 22, 2024 | 7:00 PM**  
FAYETTEVILLE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
175 East Lanier Ave. | Fayetteville, GA 30214 | 770.461.4313 | Fayettevillefirst.com

# inspired ...

## Doing what we can

When Gloria Wright heard that her hometown of Greeneville, Tennessee, was devastated by Hurricane Helene on October 3, she knew she had to help. With a carload of donations from her UWF Circle and other friends including \$500, she traveled to the area and spent 10 days assessing and delivering aid. A contact working with the victims helped her concentrate her efforts on a cul-de-sac where five homes were flooded. Insulation, ceilings, beds, appliances, sinks: all of it had gone down the river with force. When she left Greeneville, these homes were down to the studs and the task of removing mud was beginning.

FFUMC's Mission Committee has given Gloria funds she can use in early January when she returns to assist these same families as they work to put their homes back together. Her determination to help wherever, whenever, and however she can is an example to us to "do the good" always ... in all ways ... all year long.

