



January 3, 2025

The Weekender

New Year's Tweaks

Rev. Kaylen Short, Senior Minister

Goals are important. Goals help define what we are doing, why we are doing it, and where we are headed. But overly ambitious goals do the opposite. They make us doubt what we are doing, why we are doing it in the first place, and if we are ever going to reach our hoped for destination.



Every year at the beginning of the new year, a lot of people set New Year's resolutions. In many ways this can be healthy. The beginning of a new year is a natural time to reevaluate and reprioritize. It's a time to reflect on the ways you improved last year and determine how you'd like to grow in the year ahead.

However, I believe many resolutions are far too ambitious. I was sitting in a Dunkin Donuts doing some work just before the turn of the year and overheard two friends talking. One was saying how determined she was to give up carbs entirely in 2025. I'm not here to cast judgment on anyone's goal, but I will say that if your default meeting place is a donut shop, then I have to imagine the statistical likelihood of you entirely eliminating carbohydrates is pretty small. Yet every year, so many of us set resolutions that are so ambitious they will almost certainly fail.

So let me offer an alternative: the New Year's Tweak. What's one small adjustment to your life that would lead to growth? What one little thing could you do that would have a big impact on your wholistic health (mental, physical, spiritual, social, etc.)? Instead of making a resolution to lose 30 pounds by March, maybe set a New Year's Tweak to be more active in the year ahead. Instead of making a resolution to stop being angry, maybe you consider what locations or situations tend to make you angry and tweak your behavior to try to avoid those.

In many ways, this isn't just about New Year's resolutions. It's about discipleship. Yes, there are times in our faith walk where we experience rapid transformation and immense growth. Yet, the mark of a true disciple is consistent (and yes sometimes slow) growth throughout our lives. So sure, you can set a resolution to become a Hebrew scholar by April, but maybe a better discipleship goal is to just be more intentional while you're reading Scripture in 2025.



EPIPHANY SUNDAY: JANUARY 5, 2025

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

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

Matthew 2:1-12

"Inside the Manger: Three Wise Men"

The Rev. Kaylen Short

CURRENT NEWS



Epiphany Potluck Breakfast: January 5 at 10 AM

Bring your gifts of breakfast casseroles, sticky buns, fruits ... all your favorites as we celebrate Epiphany with a church-wide potluck breakfast on Sunday, January 5, at 10 AM in the Fellowship Hall.



Messy Church on January 11

We're getting ready for our next Messy Church, January 11, from 11 AM-1 PM. [Sign up here to be part of the volunteer team.](#) Questions? Contact Rev. Allyson Lawrence, Rev. Drew West or Chase Leonard.

January theme: Create, Build, & Grow

Guess what! Our Messy Church was featured on Day 1 of the 12 Days of Messy Church over Christmas by Messy Church USA. Way to go, team!



All blood types are needed.

Schedule your blood donation appointment today.

Give Blood January 12

8 AM to 1 PM, Fayetteville First UMC gym

The next Red Cross Blood Drive at FFUMC is Sunday, January 12, in the gym from 8 AM to 1 PM. Signing up is easy!

Go directly to the American Red Cross site at redcrossblood.org and choose our drive on January 12 and encourage others to donate here at FFUMC. **Please sign up to donate in advance if at all possible.** Email ffumcblooddrive@gmail.com for questions or assistance.



Last chance to order Commemorative Brick: January 6

This is your last chance to order a commemorative brick in the church courtyard on this upcoming order. You may personalize a brick for yourself or your family, honor a loved one, or make a memorial. 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. [Simply complete this form and return it with payment by January 6, 2025 - NEW EXTENDED DEADLINE.](#) Copies will be available in the Narthex or church office as well.



Wednesday night programs will resume January 8

Wednesday Night Supper: 5 PM

Children, Youth, Adult Programs: 5:30 PM



School Sponsorships



School Sponsorships change lives in El Salvador

Education can change a child’s life forever. 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.



NEW! January 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: *Pasta Sauce, Pancake Mix, Syrup, Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate Mix, Jelly, Feminine Products (Pads)*



Wednesday Night Supper January 8

Kick off the new year with a meal together!

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 each week by 4 PM on Mondays. Contact the church office, 770-461-4313, admin@fayettevillefirst.com, or fill out a pew card.

January 8 Menu: Olive Garden Lasagna, Salad, Bread, Dessert



Community handbell group forming

A community handbell group will begin January 23 at Peachtree City United Methodist Church at 7 PM. If you are interested in playing handbells, please plan to attend the organizational meeting that evening. This group will be a partnership between Fayetteville First United Methodist and Peachtree City United Methodist with players from many churches throughout Fayette County. We do ask that you have the ability to read music (treble clef, bass clef, or both) and/or that you have experience playing handbells. We hope to have at least 12 bell players with 3 to 5 alternates. Right now, it looks like Thursdays at 7 PM is our best evening for rehearsals at Peachtree City UMC. A final decision on rehearsal time will be made at the organizational meeting on January 23. If you know of others outside of FFUMC that might be interested, please share this information with them. For more information, contact Judy Hames or admin@fayettevillefirst.com.



SOUPER BOWL IV

SOUPER BOWL IV coming soon!!

Get those cans of soup ready for SOUPER Bowl IV. We'll be collecting soup cans soon to provide healthy meals for those in need. Collect any variety of 16.3 - 18.8 ounce ready-to-eat soup, **not condensed**. We'll let you know soon how this year's event will be organized ... so get ready for some friendly competition!



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? On Sundays, we 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. Sunday, January 5, is our Epiphany Breakfast, so this opportunity resumes January 12.



Wellspring Class begins new series January 26

The Wellspring Sunday Morning small group is excited to start a new series based on the Connected Faith app beginning January 26 from 9:45 - 10:20 AM in Room C-200 (the conference room). The discussion-oriented class is led by facilitator Jay Travis. The class is open to everyone and much of the conversation will revolve around faith in our current time from the perspective of those who have young children through college-aged. Group discussion will start promptly at 9:45 and end at 10:20 to create time for choir members to participate. Contact Rev. Allyson Lawrence with questions.



United
Women
in Faith

South West District Inaugural Meeting

United Women in Faith

"Gather, Prepare, Grow"

Saturday, January 25

Fayetteville First UMC

Continental Breakfast in Fellowship Hall 9:30 - 10:45 AM

Meeting and Worship in Sanctuary 11 AM

You are invited to attend a time of inspiration and fellowship with women from around our South West District on Saturday morning, January 25, here at our church. This gathering is sponsored by the United Women of Faith; however, you don't have to be a member of UWF to attend. More details will be available soon. For more information or to answer any questions, please contact Donna Blackburn.

Our United Women in Faith is hosting this inaugural meeting on Saturday January 25 from 9 AM to 1 PM. We expect more than 150 ladies from around the District to attend. **We need volunteers** to serve as Greeters and Door Guides, help with Registration, Hostesses during the Continental Breakfast, set up & clean up of Continental Breakfast, etc. More information about this event as well as sign up information will be sent to the Circle Chairs. If you are not a part of a Mission Circle Group and would like to help, we'd love your help, too! Questions? Contact Donna Blackburn.

A New Year of UWF Mission Circle Groups! Our church has five amazing Mission Circle Groups who are beginning a new year this month. These groups meet once a month for fellowship, inspiring and informative presentations about missions in our community to around the world, as well as devotionals and how we can be involved in missions from praying for those serving to actual serving ourselves in our community to going on mission trips. These Mission Circle Groups are a great way for you to get to know other women in our church. Here are the Circle Groups and when they meet:

Bethany — Meets: Third Tuesday each month at 5:30 PM

Ethel Taylor — Meets: First Tuesday each month at 2 PM

Friendship — Meets: Second Monday each month at 9:30 AM

Marie Lamb — Meets: First Thursday each month at 4 PM

Mary Martha Hope — Meets: Fourth Thursday each month at 10 AM

For more information contact Donna Blackburn.



Walking with others through grief

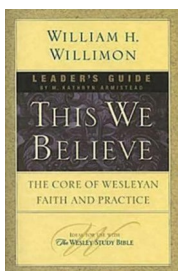
GriefShare is a program where caring individuals walk with others through the journey of grief. Facilitated by Carol and Bill Webb, a new session of classes will meet Mondays February 17 through May 12 from 10 AM to 12 PM in Room B-350. All are welcome. For more information on the program or to sign up, contact Carol or Bill Webb or visit GriefShare.org.

ADULT STUDIES

New Adult Study Opportunities for 2025

Thinking about your New Year's Resolution and how you can include your spiritual life in your plans for 2025? Consider a new small group study. Beginning the second week of January we have two new opportunities for you to dig deeper in your faith and your understanding of how God moves and acts in the world. For each study, purchase the suggested book from your favorite book seller and sign up to let us know you are coming. Signing up means we are able to let you know door codes, room locations, and what you need to know to get started.

This We Believe: The Core of Wesleyan Faith and Practice by William H. Willimon



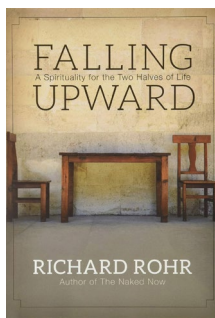
Beginning January 8, 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Led by Jeff Hansen, Room C-210

This 8-week study takes participants through core tenants of faith and offers fresh ways to hear God's voice, share in God's grace, and become more like Jesus. Free books are available for the first 15 participants who register in advance.

[Sign up for This We Believe](#)

Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life by Richard Rohr



Four Sessions — Sundays: January 12 & 26, February 2 & 9 6 - 7 PM

Led by Tim and Joan Aycok, Room C-260

In this book, Rohr teaches us that we can't understand the meaning of "up" until we have fallen "down." More importantly, Rohr describes what "up" can look like in the second half of life. This new edition focuses on practical guidance you can use to live a life of love and meaning in a world of suffering and challenge. Falling Upward is an invitation to living the gospel and a call to ongoing transformation. Either the new 10th anniversary edition or the older version can be used for this class.

[Sign up for Falling Upward](#)

Ongoing Adult Study Opportunities

Parents Bible Study Group on Wednesday Evenings

While the kids enjoy Children's Choir on Wednesday evenings, parents are invited to join Rev. Drew West in Room C-260 from 5:30 to 6:30 PM for a discussion-based Bible study. Together, we'll explore how our roles as parents reflect Christ's patient and persistent love, and how we can embrace that calling with faith and joy while supporting one another. Whether you're navigating toddler tantrums, teenage milestones, or somewhere in between, this group is for parents of all stages.

Sunday Morning Small Groups

Many small groups meet weekly on Sunday mornings from 9:45 – 10:45 AM. Explore the options and visit different groups to find the one that fits you best. Contact Rev. Allyson Lawrence at alawrence@fayettevillefirst.com with questions.

Book Club Class — Participants read a book chosen by the class and then join together in discussion for six to twelve week sessions. Contact Rev. Allyson Lawrence for session schedule.

Format: Discussion

Location: C-260

Circle of Friends — Older and senior adults who learn, live and share the Biblical lessons provided in the International Bible Series.

Format: Lecture, some discussion

Location: Room C-230

Cornerstone Class — Diverse and multi-generational group who study Biblical themes and topics from various books and authors.

Format: Discussion with volunteers leading the sessions

Location: B-350

Family Class — A mix of singles and married ranging in age from the 50s to the 80s, this group concentrates on nourishing the mind and strengthening relationships through study of the Bible.

Format: Lecture with some discussion

Location: C-210

Fellowship/Discipleship Class — This group is a close and caring group of senior citizens who use the International Bible Series and contribute to the missions of Fayette Samaritans, The UM Children's Home, Meals on Wheels, and are in service to one another.

Format: Hymns and time of prayer followed by lecture

Location: Fellowship Hall

Genesis to Revelation — Not defined by age or life situation this group seeks a stronger spiritual relationship with God and connection with one another.

Format: Teacher led with discussion

Location: C-250

Murphy-Lighthouse Class — This class of seniors studies the International Bible Series and supports church members through regular visitations and prayer.

Format: Lecture with some discussion

Location: Brides Room

Wellspring Class — This is a fun-loving group of people made up of singles, married couples, and a mixture of parents with children preschool-aged to high school. *Resumes January 26*

Format: Teacher facilitated discussion

Location: C-200



Royce
Anderson
January 7

Titus II welcomes Royce Anderson on January 7

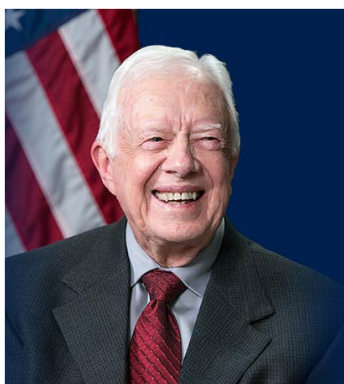
Come for the meal, fellowship and a special program by our very own Royce Anderson on Tuesday, January 7, at noon in the gym. Royce will share some of his favorite songs and maybe a couple of originals.

Lunch: \$8 with the meal provided by a local restaurant

Menu: Chuckwagon Stew, Cornbread, Dessert

Upcoming: February 4 - State Court Judge Jason Thompson

March 4 - Dynamic Duo: Danny Beck & Bill Webb



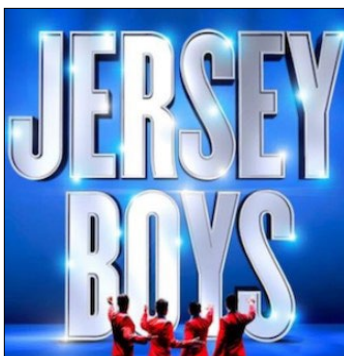
SAGE heads to Carter Presidential Library & Museum

Thursday, January 16 The Carter Presidential Library & Museum

Meet at church office at 8:45 AM for 9 AM departure

Cost is \$10.00 a person plus \$2.00 transportation fee. Lunch will be at the Museum (if the Café is open that day), or at the incomparable VARSITY!

NOTE: This trip is subject to change because of the recent passing of President Carter. A back-up plan is in the works should it be needed, and you will be notified ASAP.



Make plans for February SAGE Trip NOW

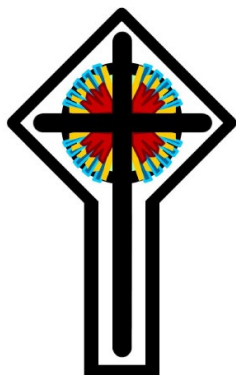
Saturday, February 8 Legacy Theatre: "Jersey Boys"

Meet at church office at 12:45 PM for 1 PM departure

Cost is \$40.00 a person. Plans are to eat at Franks in Palmetto following the show.

Only 20 spots! Reservations and payment are expected by January 25.

Reserve and pay in the church office.



Financials will be reported 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, 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
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inspired ...

Looking back: A good year together



We look forward to all
2025 will bring!

