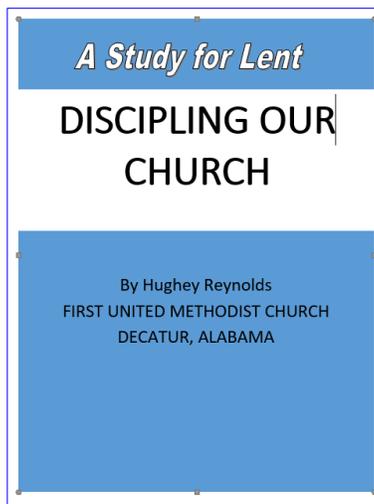


“Discipling Our Church”

Lent is a time of special devotion in the Church during which we exercise additional spiritual disciplines to prepare us for Easter. **Our church’s Lenten observance starts Wednesday, March 1 at 6:00 p.m. with a church-wide Ash Wednesday worship event called *The Imposition of Ashes Service*.** One of the ministers in our church will make a mark in the shape of the cross on the foreheads of worshippers as we kneel at the altar. The ashes are from the palm fronds used in last year’s Palm Sunday service. Palm Sunday was a time when some of the followers of Jesus thought the hard journey was over and Jesus would be crowned as King and make all things right. Those hopes were dashed days later when he was arrested, abused, unfairly tried, scourged, and crucified. Our Lenten journey is training for the tough times, for the Friday before Sunday comes, for the cross before the resurrection.

During Lent, in addition to any Bible study or Sunday school class you are already attending for your spiritual growth, I invite you on a Lenten journey during which we will read, pray, and reflect upon the same biblical passages and writings from noted Christian leaders and consider the same questions for forty days. I urge you to join me in a Lenten Study that I have titled “**Discipling Our Church.**” You will recognize this title as the first phrase in the Purpose Statement Decatur First United Methodist Church adopted in November 2016: **Discipling Our Church to cultivate a legacy of Gospel-inspired servant leadership.**



The purpose of this year’s Lenten study is to help us disciple one another as a church. This study is offered to deepen the flow of God’s grace into our hearts, minds, hands, and feet. Consider this study series personal training sessions to strengthen you as a member for the challenges the Body of Christ has before us in our church, our homes, in Decatur and beyond. Never before has there been as much competition for our attention, our time, our resources, and our loyalty as we have today. Lent is a great time to establish stronger disciplines that connect us to the resources through which God communicates grace and mercy to us: Bible study, prayer, holy conversation, worship, service, and witnessing to our faith.

By undertaking this study during Lent you will be challenged to hear Christ (week 1), proclaim Christ (week 2), become like Christ to the world (week 3), reach the un-reached (week 4), grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ (week 5), live as an empowered disciple of Jesus Christ while you empower others (week 6), and experience all of this through the grace of God (week 7). The study will be available in a daily email sent from the church office and in printed form covering the entire Lenten season and Easter Day. Let’s take this Lenten Journey together and meet Jesus at the foot of the cross and the empty tomb.

In Christ,

Hughey

CPR/AED Ready

Twenty of our Church Ushers and our Pastor are certified trained in CPR (heart resuscitation) and AED use (shock of heart). The AED unit is located in a box on the wall at the intersection of the Fellowship Hall and hallway from the Portico. The AED is self contained and portable. In case of a medical emergency, the trained Ushers will be responsible for AED use. However, if no trained person is available and a cardiac emergency arises, a non-trained person can use the AED. One can follow the AED voice commands that guide you through the process. The AED makes all decisions regards the shock process. You simply follow its commands.



Clean the Basement Day

On Saturday, March 4th, the UMM are holding a clean up day for the basement of the Church. This includes the basement under the sanctuary and the old fellowship youth room under the administration wing. These areas are cluttered with various "no longer used" items and represent a fire hazard and eye sore. In addition, we need this space open for shelter in case of severe weather threat.

All men of Church and ladies also are welcomed and encouraged to join the UMM in this effort. We will assemble in the Courtyard entrance at 9:00 a.m. that Saturday and you will be assigned a specific area to clean. All trash will be placed in a special designated container on the street. We hope to be finished by 1:00 p.m. depending on the number of volunteers. Please wear appropriate clothes and bring your gloves. Breathing filter masks will be supplied for your use.

The UMM



Family News

Congratulations to **Alex Austin** of Fayetteville, Georgia (son of **Gary** and **Susan Austin**) who recently attained the rank of Eagle Scout. He joins his brother, **Charlie**, who became an Eagle Scout in 2015. Alex and Charlie are the grandsons of **Mary Jane** and **Clyde Sasser**.

Your News Wanted

Please let the church office staff know about news that happens to you. Include anything you'd like to share with your church family. Shared joy is multiplied. What would you like to see in this newsletter?

Write it down and submit it before Tuesdays at 3:00. If you choose to e-mail, please use address aquinn@decaturfumc.org. Thanks!

Church Prayer List Feb. 15 Edition

Sympathy - Please keep Sharon Gamble and family in your prayers as they mourn the loss of Mick Hubbard who died on Feb. 14 in an automobile accident.

Joyce Weaver, Decatur Morgan Hospital Room 373

Alice Ackley, rehab in Savannah, TN close to son

Mary Archibald, moving to Pennsylvania to be closer to son

Linda Foster

Jane Nabors

J.B. Atkinson

Clyde Sasser

Katherine Johnson

Ed Kirby

Unspoken

Our Nation

Please fill out a prayer card found in the pew pockets or email your prayer requests to aquinn@decaturfumc.org for publication in the next newsletter.

Hilltoppers

The Hilltoppers trip in March will be on Thursday, March 16 from 10:00-2:00. We will be traveling to "Yesterdays" in Athens for lunch and a concert by "The Cadillacs" who sing oldies, doo-wop, and old country. The cost is \$12 per person for lunch and the show. Money will be collected as you sign up for the trip outside the Fellowship Hall. We will also collect gas money the day of the trip. Call Beth with any questions.

2017 Gardening Classes

First United Methodist Church will host the second gardening class on Saturday, February 25 from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. in the Wesley Fellowship Hall. **Hunter McBrayer** will speak on garden insects, disease, and integrated pest management for organic gardening. There is no cost for participants. Call the church office at 256-355-0277 to reserve a seat and materials.

Mission Moments

Shannon Booth, Director of Outreach and Evangelism
256-221-0348

Why Seasons of Love?

When we began conversations about not hosting a Global Impact Celebration in 2017, the mission team wanted to make sure that we did not lose our emphasis on missions. Our church is a very generous congregation, with both finances and time. One of the things that people are looking for in a church is a way to make a difference in the world. We are doing a great job of this, and I am constantly amazed at the connections that we have in agencies in our neighborhood and around the world.



To me Seasons of Love reflects our involvement in making an impact on the world in every season. We have seen the seasons change in our Community Garden. It is beautiful to see a cleared spot of land turn into a place that yields harvest as time and work are invested. Just as the garden requires different types of work during each season so do our other kingdom ventures, but there is never a time when we are inactive. We have packed backpacks of food, served on leadership teams of local agencies and ministries, packed shoeboxes full of Christmas goodies, served meals at the CCC, and much more.

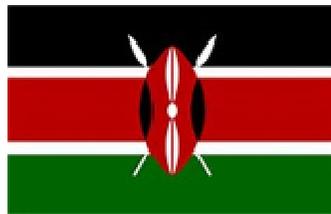


When I think of how I can seek to live a “missional life” I remember how Jesus calls us to task in two “great” ways, the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:35-37). The Great Commission tells us to go to everyone and make disciples, and the Great Commandment tells us to love God and love our neighbors. These tasks can be accomplished everywhere, from the workplace to the ball fields, to the classroom, to the soup kitchen. Let us work together to find ways to live out these two “Greats” every day. The song “Seasons of Love” is one of my favorites. It asks the question, “How do we measure the life of a woman or a man?” and although the song tells us many ways to measure life (in daylights, in midnights, in sunsets, in cups of coffee) the resounding answer is “measure in love.” I hope that I live my life in a way that shows that I loved big.

We have the flags of the countries that represent the countries in which our Faith Promise partners serve. We hope these flags remind you of our congregation’s impact “around the world,” but in order to do that you may want to know how to recognize these flags. In addition to these flags, be on the lookout in the Fellowship Hall for reminders of all of the agencies and missions that we support. Missions Commitment Sunday will be Feb. 26.



Africa Inland Mission
Jonathan & Abby St. Clair
Lesotho



Life for Children Ministry
Michael Agwanda
Kenya



Nigerian Partnership
Rev. Robert Sparkman
Nigeria



One Hundred Days
Dr. Scott Sasser
Rwanda



Peru Mission Society
Paul Wiegert
Team Arequipa/CUDA
Jeremy and Katie
Daggett
Peru



**Pioneers/
The Mission Society**
Mark & Robin Howard
Spain



Voz de Libertad
Carlos & Karla
Cunningham
Costa Rica



Water 282
Zambia

First Church Children's Ministry

Alexia Claborn, Director of Children's Ministry 256-606-8646



Please join us!

**4th Annual Birthday Bag Celebration
Wednesday, February 22 during First Fellowship**

Birthday Cake will be served!



**To benefit families through
Committee on Church Cooperation (CCC)**

Neighborhood Christian Center (NCC) Austinville Elem. Backpacks

We are asking our church families to help make other's lives a little happier by collecting the following items. This year our Children will assemble the bags so please bring the items in a grocery bag and we will do the rest!

- **Cake mix**
- **Can of frosting**
- **Candles**
- **Party napkins (a package with a minimum of 8)**
- **Party cake plates (a package with a minimum of 8)**
- **Party table cloth**
- **Party Cups (8)**

Please drop the items off for the bags to Alexia's office, or outside the Fellowship Hall in the green tubs. We will need them by Feb. 22nd. Our goal is to make 70 bags to provide an instant birthday celebration for children/youth/adults who sometimes don't know where their next meal will come from. If you have any questions please contact Alexia Claborn, 256-606-8646.

Children's Choir

Children's Choir will be singing for our Seasons of Love closing celebration in both the 8:45 & 11:00 services on Sunday, February 26th. Please have your child meet in the Parlor 15 minutes before the service.



Save the Date

Feb. 19th - Children's Choir - both services

Wed., Feb. 22nd - Birthday Bags at First Fellowship

Sunday, April 9th -Easter Egg Hunt

June 19th -22nd - VBS



Sunday Morning Volunteers

Volunteers for Sunday, Feb. 19

Sunday School

**Pre-school - Room #215 Leigh Ann Blankenship
Jessica Mitchell**

**K - 2nd - Room #207 Jami Buckner
Assistant - Jan Dean**

**3rd-5th - Room #306 Betty Ann Mitchum
Assistant-Lou Underwood**

Children's Church

**8:45 Service Teacher- Alexia Claborn
Assistant- Jim King**

**11:00 Service Teacher-Alexia Claborn
Assistant- TBA**

Volunteers for Sunday, Feb. 26

Sunday School

**Pre-school - Room #215 Leigh Ann Blankenship
Jessica Mitchell**

**K - 2nd - Room #207 Barbara Ashwander
Assistant - Vicki Dukes**

**3rd - 5th Grade - Room #306 Betty Ann Mitchum
Assistant -Jane Ann Ford**

Children's Church

**8:45 Service Teacher- Alexia Claborn
Assistant- Bailey Copeland**

**11:00 Service Teacher-Alexia Claborn
Assistant- Ashley Ashwander**

Acolyte Information

	8:45 SERVICE	11:00 SERVICE
Feb. 19	Bristol Rayne Teal, Mary Elizabeth Booth	Miller and Davis Roberts
Feb. 26	Bristol Rayne Teal, Mary Elizabeth Booth	Mary Emma Harper and Lydia Matthews

Children's First Fellowship

First Fellowship Resumed Jan. 11th

Elementary

5:30 -Elementary Choir 6:00-7:00- Bible Story and Lesson

Pre- School

6:00- Pre-School Choir 6:20-7:00 -Bible Story and Lesson

Youth Dates

Saturday, February 18

9:00 End Hunger Now
Event at FUMC



Sunday, February 19

10:00 Sunday School
No UMYF

Wednesday, February 22

5:00 First Fellowship Dinner
6:00 Youth Bible Study

Thursday, February 23

7:30 Sr High Prayer Breakfast at Chick Fil A

Sunday, February 26

10:00 Sunday School
5:00-6:00 Confirmation Class at FUMC
6:30-7:30 *Armor of God* study at Miranda Nichols' house

Wednesday, March 1

5:00 First Fellowship Dinner
6:00 Ash Wednesday Service
7:00 Youth Ministry Team

Thursday, March 2

7:30 Sr High Prayer Breakfast at Chick Fil A

Armor of God Study for Youth

Starting February 26, the youth will be studying *The Armor of God* at **Miranda and Ed Nichols' house** (2203 Fleetwood Dr SE) on Sunday nights. Meet at the Nichols' home at 6:30 p.m. We will finish by 7:30 p.m. Those in the confirmation class who want to go to the *Armor of God* study will be able to ride to their house with Beth. Plan to eat dinner before or after the study. This class will meet Feb. 26, March 5, 12, 19, April 2, and 9.



Confirmation Classes

Our 6th grade confirmation class had a great retreat Feb. 10-11 at Camp McDowell. We were able to learn about Creation, Sin, Redemption and the Holy Spirit. Classes at the church will start on February 26 from 5-6:00 p.m. on the youth floor. Confirmants will need their Bible and journal they received on the retreat. The dates of the classes are Feb. 26, March 5, 12, 19, April 2, 9, 23, and 30. The confirmation dinner will be May 3 at 5:30 and Confirmation Sunday is May 7. Please be in prayer for our confirmants:

Reagan Atkins
Mac Hillis
Davis Roberts
Hannah Winkler



College

Beth will be visiting Auburn University on March 7 and Troy University on March 8. If you would like to make homemade cookies or goodies to send to the students, please let Beth know! We have 12 students between the two schools!



8th Annual "Soup for Souls" Fundraiser benefits The Neighborhood Christian Center's Children & Youth Programs

Location: Sykes Place on Bank 726 Bank Street

Date & Time: Thursday, March 2nd, 5:30-7:30 PM

Silent Auction for a variety of art items by local artists

Tickets for the Soup for Souls event are \$30. Tickets purchased in advance (by February 25th) are guaranteed a hand painted soup bowl at the event. Those who buy their ticket at the door will receive a hand painted soup bowl on a first come first serve basis. If they would like to paint their own bowl for the event, they can come to the Neighborhood Christian Center to paint a bowl (by February 25th) that they will use at the event. **Please call or email the Neighborhood Christian Center for more information 256-351-7633 or 256-616-3144 or email decaturncc1994@gmail.com** This year we would like the funds generated to be designated for new & current curriculum within our Education and Discipleship Programs. Thank you for your faithful support.



Hartselle FUMC Offers Memory Café

Memory Café is an informal coffee break connecting those within early stages of memory loss and their caregivers - for conversation, activities, and refreshments. It is on the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. at the Hartselle FUMC Student Center. Please call 256-773-6952 for more details. This is for individuals with early to moderate Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia and their Care Partners. Please call the week before to make a reservation. You will find a friendly, relaxed atmosphere for building relationships and sharing the journey.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, February 18

9:00 a.m. - End Hunger Now Event at FUMC

No UMYF on Feb. 19

Tuesday, Feb. 21, 10:00 a.m., Women's Bible Study, Courtyard Conf. Room

2/21, 5:00 p.m., First Grace Board Meeting, Courtyard Conf. Room

Wednesday, Feb. 22, 5:00 p.m., First Fellowship Meal and Classes, Fellowship Hall and Sunday School Rooms (BIRTHDAY BAGS)

Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m., Chancel Choir Practice

Feb. 23, 6:30 a.m., UMM Bible Study, Minister's Conf. Room

Feb. 23, 7:30 a.m., UMM Breakfast, City Café

Feb. 23, 7:30am Sr. High prayer breakfast @ Chick Fil A

Feb. 23, 6:00 p.m., Worship Team Practice

Feb. 25, 9:00 a.m., Gardening 102 Class, Fellowship Hall



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Alexia Claborn, Director of Children's Ministry, aclaborn@decaturfumc.org

Shannon Booth, Director of Outreach, shannon@decaturfumc.org

Charlie Elliott, Custodian
Melissa Wiley, Housekeeper

Wayne Keller, Accompanist
Ruth Moyers, Organist

Upcoming Worship Services

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

"Discipling our church to cultivate a legacy of Gospel-inspired servant leadership"

MISSION STATEMENT:

"Making Disciples of Jesus Christ who become servant leaders for the transformation of our church, our homes, our city, state, nation, and world."

Sunday, Feb. 19

8:45 and 11:00 a.m. Rev. Charles Boling, preaching
"WHY BE A CHRISTIAN?" Philippians 2: 5-11

Sunday, Feb. 26

8:45 and 11:00 a.m. Rev. Hughey Reynolds, preaching
"THE SOBERING EFFECT OF HANGING OUT WITH JESUS"
Matthew 17: 1-9

Wednesday, March 1

6:00 p.m., Ash Wednesday Service, Rev. Hughey Reynolds
"FOR YOUR EYES ONLY" Matthew 6: 1-21

Scheduled To Serve Feb. 19

Acolytes:

8:45 a.m.-Bristol Rayne Teal & Mary Elizabeth Booth
11:00 a.m. - Miller and Davis Roberts

Ushers:

8:45 a.m.-Kin Copeland, Sage Copeland, Norman Roby, Jim Surber
11:00 a.m.-Larry Weaver, Sam Houston, Jimmy Ray Smith, Jim Riant, John Alderman

First Fellowship Resumed Wednesday, Jan. 11

First Fellowship is our Wednesday night ministry. Dinner is served from 5:00-6:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Children's ministries start at 5:30 and youth ministries start at 6:00. We have several Adult Small Group options for this semester! Please consider signing up for one of the following classes being offered.