

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JULY 26, 2026
8:30 A.M.



✠ Rise in body or in spirit.
The congregation speaks/
sings the text in **bold** type.



For information about the ministries, mission, and activities of Duluth First UMC, please visit duluthumc.org.

ENTRANCE

Prelude

Seoyoung Lee, *Pianist*

Welcome & Announcements

Keenan Klayman

✠ Call to Worship

Beloved, this is the core of our faith: nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Thanks be to God!

God's never-ending love surrounds us and calls us, assuring us that through God's love, all things will work together for God's good purposes.

Thanks be to God!

God's never-breaking love empowers us in the face of temptation, distress, division, and scarcity to hold onto our faith and work together for the flourishing of all God's good creation.

Thanks be to God!

Come, let us worship God who is Love, trusting that through joy and sorrow, happiness and despair, contentment and pain, Love will carry us through.

Thanks be to God who forms, connects, and guides us through love. Amen.

✠ Hymn 156 | *I Love to Tell the Story* – HANKEY



Children are welcome in worship!

Children's activity sheets & crayons are available at the main entrance to help guide them in active participation of worship.

Children newborn through Pre-K are invited to go to **Childcare Corner**, near the Gathering Room.



Listening devices are available during all worship services. Please see an usher or greeter for assistance.

WORD & RESPONSE

New Revised Standard
Version (Update Edition)

✠ Scripture | Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Pam Handley

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ If you have ears, hear!"

¹⁸ "Hear, then, the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

The Word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon | *The Good Sower*

Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles,
Associate Pastor

Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Pardon

Hymnal pg. 12

✠ Sharing of the Peace of Christ

Ministry Moment

Amy Burk

*Report from the 2026 Annual Conference of the
North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church (see insert)*

Receiving God's Tithe & Our Offering

Offertory | *He Lifted Me* - arr. Gary Lanier

Tim Near, *Trombonist*;
Seoyoung Lee, *Pianist*



Your giving is the sole
support of the ministries of
Duluth First UMC.

For online giving, go to
duluthumc.org/
online-giving, or scan the
QR code with your
mobile device.



✠ Doxology | *Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow* – OLD 100TH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING

✠ The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

...

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:
**Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

...

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer our ourselves in praise and thanksgiving,
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

...

All honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom
come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day
our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those
who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver
us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

Breaking the Bread, Receiving the Bread & Cup

Prayer after Communion

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For questions regarding membership, contact
Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles –
arawles@duluthumc.org
or 770.476.3776, x. 128.

Those who wish to join the church today are invited to come forward as we sing the final hymn.

Invitation to Christian Discipleship & Church Membership

SENDING

✠ Hymn 126 | *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above* – MIT FREUDEN ZART

Reception of New Members (as applicable)

Hymnal, pgs. 34, 38

We give thanks for all that God has already given you and we welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the body of Christ and in this congregation of The United Methodist Church, we renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

ALSO SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Audio/Visual Team:
Mark Wettlaufer
Joel McLemore
Ian Toole
Johnathan Ancell

Usher Captains:
David Burleson
Charlie Doerlich

✠ Benediction

✠ Postlude

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DULUTH FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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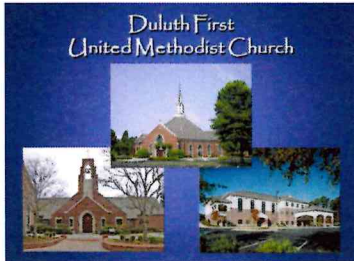
The Sunday Supplement



JULY 26, 2026

Welcome to Duluth First United Methodist Church!

We are glad that you came to worship with us today. The mission of Duluth First United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. If you are looking for more information about Duluth First United Methodist Church and its ministries, Bible studies, and other programs and events, please be sure to visit our church's website at www.duluthumc.org.



To join Duluth First United Methodist Church, please come forward as we sing the song that follows the Invitation to Church Membership.

If you have any questions regarding membership or you are visiting and would like additional information, please contact Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles, Associate Pastor, by e-mail at arawles@duluthumc.org, or call 770-476-3776, ext. 128.

Prayer Concerns

- Pat Brannon • Lorraine Day • Ann Fleming • Shamain Hallett • Tim Heard • Luke Livingston
- Bette Pickin • Marilyn Scheiwe • Jeff Schulz • Donald Southerland • Sharon Swisher

STEPHEN MINISTRY

HELP — HOPE — HEALING

Stephen Ministers are here for you when life gets difficult.

For more information or to request the support and care of a Stephen Minister, contact Rev. Dr. C. Kay Fuino by e-mail at ckfuino@duluthumc.org.



Youth Ministry Sunday Night Gatherings

Students in the 6th through 12th grades are invited to join us on Sunday nights for **Sunday Night Gatherings** from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank"), located on the 1st floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. **Sunday Night Gatherings** include great dinners, fun games, amazing worship, inspirational and relevant messages and life-changing small groups.

The schedule for upcoming **Sunday Night Gatherings** is:

- **Sunday, July 26th: Sunday Night Gathering** at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank").
- **Sunday, August 2nd: Promotion Sunday Fun at Bowlero Lilburn.** As we welcome our rising 6th graders to our Youth Ministry and kick off the new school year together, we will have a fun night of fellowship at Bowlero Lilburn (3835 Lawrenceville Hwy, Lawrenceville) on Sunday, August 2nd. We will meet and depart from the church at 4:45 p.m. and the pick-up time from the church will be at 7:45 p.m. The cost is \$20 per person (includes bowling, shoe rental, a \$10 arcade card, food, and drinks) Please sign up using the following link: <https://forms.gle/o2RoEU5AamAcIYzx9>.
- **Sunday, August 9th: Sunday Night Gathering** at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, August 16th: Sunday Night Gathering** at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, August 23rd: Sunday Night Gathering** at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, August 30th: Sunday Night Gathering** at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank").



If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Min Lee, Director of Youth Ministries, by e-mail at mlee@duluthumc.org, or call 770-476-3776, ext. 119.

Promotion Sunday Celebration: August 2nd

The new school year is beginning soon, and we are excited to celebrate **Promotion Sunday** on August 2nd! Children and youth are invited to the celebration on August 2nd, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall. Children and youth will be together playing games, having a snack, enjoying fellowship with one another, and receiving a goodie bag. We can't wait to see everyone there!

PROMOTION SUNDAY

Back to School Blessing: All Worship Services on Sunday, August 2nd

We invite everyone to join us for a Back to School Blessing on Sunday, August 2nd in all three worship services (8:30 a.m. Traditional Service, 11 a.m. Contemporary Service, and 11 a.m. Traditional Service). We will have a moment set aside during the worship services to pray for the new school year.



Senior Adult Coffee Hour: Wednesday, August 12th

Senior adults are invited to join us once a month this summer for a time of coffee, conversations, and fellowship. Bring a game, something you want to discuss, or just show up to enjoy time together!

We will meet on Wednesday, August 12th, at 9:30 a.m. in the cul-da-sac area outside of the offices on the 1st floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. AnnaKate Rawles, Associate Pastor, by e-mail at arawles@duluthumc.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

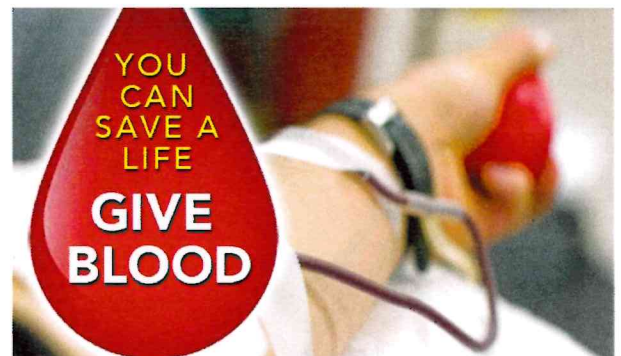


Blood Drive at Duluth First UMC on Wednesday, August 12th

The need for blood doesn't take a summer break! **Every 2 seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood.** The American Red Cross is declaring an emergency blood shortage as the blood supply fell nearly 25% in June. The shortage is especially serious for types O positive and B negative blood and platelets. Donors are urgently needed to give now to help ensure patients receive lifesaving medical care without delay.

An American Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at Duluth First UMC on **Wednesday, August 12th**, from 3 to 7 p.m. in the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall. **To schedule an appointment:**

- Visit www.redcrossblood.org and enter the sponsor code **dufumc**;
- Call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767);
- Contact Tracy Brinker by e-mail at tbrinker@duluthumc.org, or call 770-476-3776, ext. 112.
- Last, but not least, be a "walk-in" on Blood Drive Day.

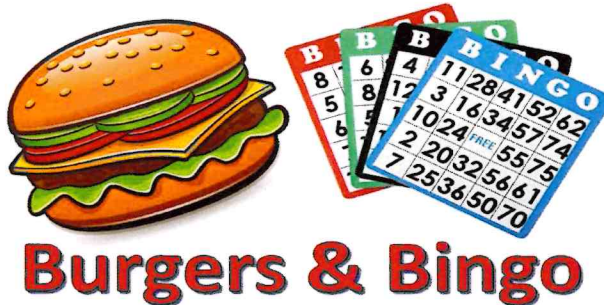


Don't wait - schedule your appointment today. Don't be afraid to save someone's life!

"Burgers & Bingo" Special Wednesday Night Dinner Event: August 12th

All are invited to join us on Wednesday, August 12th, for a special back-to-school "Burgers & Bingo" Wednesday Night Dinner event from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in Hinton Hall, located on the 2nd floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. **The menu includes hamburgers, French fries, cole slaw, baked beans, and dessert. For the kids – the same.** Bingo will begin at 5:45 p.m. and will be played during the dinner time with prizes for our winners!

The prices for Wednesday Night Dinners are: \$10.00 for adults (including seniors and from 11 years up); \$7.00 for children 10 years and younger; \$30.00 for family meals (nuclear family members only – husband, wife, their children under 18 years); \$7.00 for salad bar only, which includes the salad bar, a choice of baked potato or sweet potato, dessert and a drink. Credit/debit card payments, as well as cash and checks, are accepted.



"Simply Something" Classes Resume on Tuesday, August 18th

Our **Simply Something** classes are simply moving on to new things this year. In August we will begin to study the book of Ruth. Ruth is one of only two books in the Bible named after a woman, a woman named in the lineage of Jesus Christ. This short but



important book has some interesting themes of honor, love, and commitment. If you want to know more, then **Simply Something** is just the place to be. Join Rev. Dr. C. Kay Fuino for **Simply Something** on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m., **beginning on August 18th**, in room F147, located on the 1st floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center.

Please bring your Bible and handouts will be provided. Come with your coffee, tea or water, and your open mind to learn from each other. Childcare in **Childcare Corner** will be available. For more information, please contact Rev. Dr. C. Kay Fuino, Associate Pastor, by e-mail at ckfuino@duluthumc.org or call 770-476-3776, ext. 117.

Disciple Fast Track Bible Study Begins August 19th

Join us on Wednesday evenings, beginning August 19th, for 12 weeks of studying the Old Testament with **Disciple Fast Track**, an overview of the books of the Bible in a shortened study. Have you wanted to learn more about the substance of the Bible but could not commit to a long-term study with lots of reading during the week? Does thirty-four weeks of study seem like an eternity? Your body just cannot sit through a 2 ½ hour class no matter how good it is? Then **Disciple Fast Track** is just what you are looking for to learn about what it means to be a disciple by learning the biblical narratives of our faith.

This new format for **Disciple Bible Study** is perfect for busy people. It uses much of the content of the original **Disciple Bible Study**, a small group study that has made a difference in thousands of lives since 1987. The class time and study time have been adjusted to fit our busy lives today. We are scheduling the sessions to fit a time when your youth are also involved in their activities and childcare is available for younger children.



The cost is \$20 per person for the study book. You will also need a study Bible. The class will meet from 6 to 7 p.m. (classroom to be determined). **A minimum number of people must be registered in order for the class to occur.** Please sign up by Monday, August 10th, by e-mailing Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles, Associate Pastor, at arawles@duluthumc.org.

GriefShare Support Group Meetings Begin Wednesday, August 26th

GriefShare Support Group, led by the church's **Stephen Ministers**, will walk alongside you through the loss of a loved one. **GriefShare** is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. Through this 13-week session,

you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. Since there are no neat, orderly stages of grief, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way.

Our next session of **GriefShare Support Group** classes will begin on Wednesday, August 26th, and continue through Wednesday, December 2nd, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in room F153, located on the 1st floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. Gain access to valuable resources to help you through your grief. **GriefShare** also offers **Bereavement Candlelight Services** the Monday (November 23rd) before Thanksgiving, and a "**Surviving the Holidays**" class on Wednesday, November 18th.



GRIEF **SHARE**

Weekly Support Group



The road to recovering from loss is not meant to be walked alone. Come find hope and healing.

For more information, please visit the **GriefShare** website at griefshare.org, or contact Tracy Brinker, Bereavement Coordinator, by e-mail at tbrinker@duluthumc.org, or call 770-476-3776.



Duluth First United Methodist Church

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Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten
Office Phone: 770-497-1743

Report from the 2026 Annual Conference of the North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church

The 2026 Annual Conference of the North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church convened in Athens at the Classic Center on June 18th through 20th. Duluth First United Methodist Church was represented by 5 clergy and 5 lay delegates. Bishop Robin Dease opened the conference by preaching on the scripture theme, Matthew 25:40 – Unto the Least of These. She recounted an experience in Washington when she had been pickpocketed on her way into town. When she realized she had no money to get home, she began to ask strangers for help – just a dollar. Most all passed her by, until a homeless man came forward and gave her a dollar, telling her to get herself home. She urged members to remember those who are overlooked in society – the least of these. This powerful message set the stage for several more messages from a variety of clergy reminding us that we have a mission to help “the least of these”.

Day 1 included a welcome to Athens by the Southeast District Superintendent, the President of the University of Georgia, and the mayor of Athens-Clark County.

This year marks the 70th year since women were given full clergy rights in our denomination.

The Housing & Homeless Council has awarded approximately \$6 million in grants to churches in 72 counties in the conference.

We learned of the disparity in clergy salaries and were urged to dig deep to address this problem.

Murphy-Harpst Children’s Center lost a beloved member, Gary MacDonald, this year. They have implemented a new therapy called MindVox to help its clients with great success.

The One Georgia Report was presented for a vote to approve the unification of the North and South Georgia UMC Conferences into one Georgia Conference. A vote approved this motion by 96%. A combined committee will continue working to merge our 2 conferences into one.

New Licensed Local Pastors, Provisional Member and Full Connection Elders were introduced and challenged serve faithfully, saying, “the church puts a stole around your shoulders, but Jesus puts a towel in your hands”, referring to Jesus washing his disciples’ feet.

An offering of over \$3,000.00 for the Ministerial Education Fund was collected.

Day 2 – After a morning devotion by Rev. Sharon White, the Conference heard reports from Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) presenting a budget which will be amended as a result of unification and a modest increase in the apportionment budget.

The Barnes Evaluation & Administration Team (BEAT) approved 12 applications for church projects this year, totaling \$636,697.00.

The Disaster Response reported on the work done in the Augusta area after the hurricane which is still ongoing.

United Methodist Men & Scouting Ministry is sponsoring a retreat in August at Dauset Trails Nature center in Jackson.

United Women in Faith (UWF) reported a season of unstoppable growth. UWF is helping women by connecting, serving and leading.

Clergy and Lay retirees were recognized and thanked, including our former district Superintendent, Dana Everhart.

A service of remembrance honored those who have passed away this past year.

The Annual Conference special offering of over \$12,700.00 goes to the Center for Clergy Excellence's International Fund to help those serving in far-away places.

It was the business of the conference to elect lay & clergy delegates and alternates to both Jurisdictional and General Conferences. Much voting was required to complete this task.

A number of Boards and Committees gave reports on their progress this year. Members of the Conference approved the Resolution on Voting Rights and Encouraging Civic Engagement.

Eleven churches were presented for closure, including The Fountain, formerly housed in the Sugarloaf facility in Duluth.

Day 3 - More reports including the Episcopacy Comm., North GA Camp & Retreat Ministries, a survey conducted by COSROW of women clergy in the conference, the Georgia United Methodist Foundation, the Frances Asbury Award given to Rev. Dr. Adam Daniels and the Marian Wilder award given to Oak Grove UMC, Wesley UMC Evans, and Madison 1st UMC were presented.

The 160th and last North Georgia Annual Conference concluded with a wonderful presentation by the Korean Church of Atlanta orchestra, a moving message by Rev. Max Vincent, Communion Service of Word and Table and the announcement of the New Appointments list. Duluth First UMC is keeping all our current clergy staff.

A full report on all 3 days of the Conference – with pictures - can be found on the North GA UMC Conference's website - ngumc.org.

Next year's 2027 Georgia Annual Conference will be held in Athens at the Classic center on June 16 – 18, 2027.

Your Lay Delegates:

Jim & Terrie Adkins

Amy Burk

Bryan Johnson

Elizabeth Marcus

— OVER —