



# THE MESSENGER



DULUTH FIRST UMC'S NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025

## BLOCK PARTY

### Join Us and Invite a Friend to the "Sunday Fun Day" Block Party on Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>

Join us on Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 7 p.m. for an awesome "Sunday Fun Day" **community-wide block party**! There will be something for everyone - hamburgers, hot dogs, inflatables, a DJ, Toofpick the clown, cotton candy, and a lot of fun and fellowship! What a wonderful opportunity to invite our community to join us for a fun and fellowship-filled event at our church!

Please scan the QR code located to the right with your smart phone or tablet to sign up to bring/donate food items and/or to volunteer at one of the inflatables. Thank you for helping to make our "Sunday Fun Day" Block Party a great community-wide event!



#### INSIDE THE MESSENGER

News & Announcements.....1-14

Prayer Requests.....14

Finances.....14

Attendance.....14

#### Duluth First United Methodist Church

3208 Duluth Highway 120

Duluth, GA 30096

Phone: 770-476-3776

website: [www.duluthumc.org](http://www.duluthumc.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DuluthFirstUMC](https://www.facebook.com/DuluthFirstUMC)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/duluthfirstumc](https://www.instagram.com/duluthfirstumc)

#### Sunday Mornings

8:30 a.m.—Traditional Worship service

11:00 a.m.—Contemporary Worship service

11:00 a.m.—Traditional Worship service

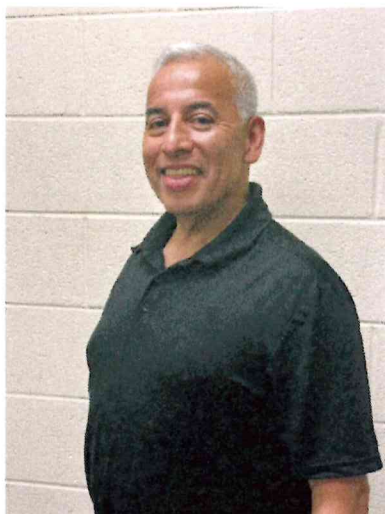
All services can be viewed online at [www.duluthumc.org](http://www.duluthumc.org)  
or on the Duluth First UMC Worship channel on YouTube –  
search for Duluth First UMC Worship.



## Welcome to Our New

### Food Ministry Manager, Juan Venegas

Please extend a warm welcome to Chef Juan Venegas as our new Food Ministry Manager. Juan has over 25 years of experience in the food service industry. He has experience with churches as well as other types of businesses. He and his wife reside in the Duluth area. Stop by on a Wednesday Night to say hello to Juan and join us for Wednesday Night Dinner!



*Juan Venegas, our new Food Ministry Manager.*

### Duluth First UMC's Childcare Corner

**Childcare Corner** (formerly known as the Nursery) is a place where kids love to hang out and play with toys, make new friends, create crafts and have stories read to them. On Sunday mornings during the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship services, children from birth to pre-K (4 years old) are invited to stay at **Childcare Corner** while their parents attend either the Traditional or Contemporary Worship services.

During the 9:30 a.m. Sunday School hour, the children are taught a Bible lesson, do a craft and have a snack as well, as good old fashion playtime. When the weather is good, we even will have some outside time. When there are other events going on around the church, such as Bible studies, choir rehearsals, etc., **Childcare Corner** is available for children as old as 5<sup>th</sup> grade. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Wettlaufer, Childcare Director, by e-mail at [lwettlaufer@duluthumc.org](mailto:lwettlaufer@duluthumc.org).



## DuluthKids: Big and Exciting Changes

**DuluthKids** is a fun opportunity for kids, ages Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, to gather together for fellowship, music, Bible study and missions. Programming is age-appropriate with curriculum designed for the kids.

**DuluthKids** meets on Wednesday evenings, beginning at 5:45 p.m. in the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall for a time for fellowship.



The new **Children's Chime Choir**, for ages 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades, is an exciting way to learn music and provide music at worship. This group will learn to play the tone chimes, which are similar to handbells. **Children's Chime Choir** meets from 6 to 6:30 p.m. during **DuluthKids** time.

The **Children's Bell Choir**, for ages Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, is a place where children will learn the fundamentals of music in a fun group environment! The **Children's Bell Choir** meets from 6 to 6:30 p.m. during **DuluthKids** time.

All of the children (ages Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) come back together from 6:30 to 7 p.m. for a time of Bible study and missions.

If you have any questions or would like to be involved in this ministry for children, please contact Leslie Yokeley, Director of Children's Ministries, by e-mail at [lyokeley@duluthumc.org](mailto:lyokeley@duluthumc.org), or call 770-476-3776, ext. 138, or Verena Anders, Minister of Music & Worship Arts, at [vanders@duluthumc.org](mailto:vanders@duluthumc.org), or 770-476-3776, ext. 116.





## Christian Beginnings and Children's Ministry News

We are thrilled to kick off a brand-new school year for our **Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten** and **Children's Ministry**. Pre-planning for our **Christian Beginnings'** staff (see picture below) is already off to an amazing start! A huge "Thank You" to our congregation for fulfilling the **Christian Beginnings Wish List**—your generosity is such a blessing to our classrooms.

We also want to celebrate our incredible volunteers! From Vacation Bible School to Sunday School to Wednesday nights, you make our **Children's Ministry** come alive each week, and we couldn't do it without you.

**Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten** was recently featured in the *Southwest Gwinnett* magazine. You can read the article by scanning the QR code located below with your smartphone or tablet.



*Our Christian Beginnings Preschool  
& Kindergarten staff.*



*Scan this QR code to read the Christian Beginnings  
Preschool & Kindergarten article in the  
Southwest Gwinnett magazine.*



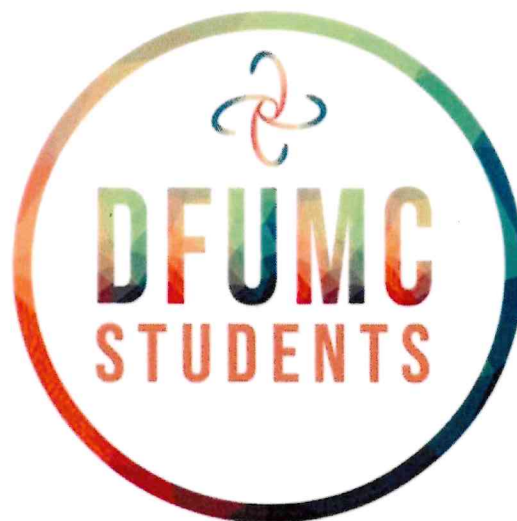
## Youth Ministry Sunday Night Gatherings for September

Students in the 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

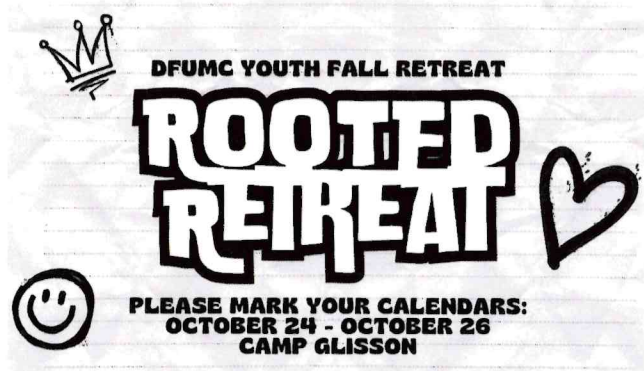
**Our schedule for the month of September is:**

- **Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>:** "Sunday Fun Day" Block Party from 5 to 7 p.m. in the church's front parking lot (see the information on front page);
- **Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>:** Sunday Night Gathering at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup>:** Sunday Night Gathering at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup>:** Sunday Night Gathering at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank").

Please visit the **Youth Ministry's** website at <https://dfumcstudents.org> for more information. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Min Lee, Director of Youth Ministries, by e-mail at [mlee@duluthumc.org](mailto:mlee@duluthumc.org).







### Register by September 7<sup>th</sup> for the Youth Fall Retreat on October 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>

We are excited to be participating in **The Rooted Retreat** (North Georgia UMC Conference Retreat) hosted by Glisson Camp and Retreat Center for our Youth Fall Retreat, on **Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, through Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>**. It will be an incredible weekend with powerful worship experiences, dedicated youth group time, fun activities, and food and lodging at Glisson Camp and Retreat Center. We are looking forward to a meaningful and fun fall retreat together!

The cost is \$195 per student, and we want every student to be able to attend, so scholarships are available if needed. You can pay by cash, check, or online. Register online by Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, by scanning on the QR code located below with your smartphone or tablet.

If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Min Lee, Director of Youth Ministries, by e-mail at [mlee@duluthumc.org](mailto:mlee@duluthumc.org). For additional information about the Glisson Camp and Retreat Center, please visit their website at <https://glisson.org>.



*Youth Ministry Fall Retreat  
Registration QR Code*

### Wednesday Evenings at Duluth First

#### UMC: Something for Everyone!

Join us on Wednesday evenings at Duluth First United Methodist Church for activities for everyone:

- **Wednesday Night Dinners:** 5 to 6:30 p.m. in Hinton Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center;
- **Book Bunch for kids (ages 3 – 4):** 6:15 to 6:30 p.m. in the Louise McDaniel Memorial Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center;
- **DuluthKids (ages Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade):** 5:45 to 7 p.m. in the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall and Children's (C and D wings) classrooms;
- **Youth Bible Study (grades 6 – 12):** 6 to 7 p.m., room F149, 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center;
- **Parent Connection Group:** 6 to 7 p.m., room F207, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center;
- **"The History and Archaeology of the Bible" Class for Adults:** 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. in room F145, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center.
- **Happy Sacks:** 6 to 6:30 p.m., room F152, 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center;
- **Yarn Art Ministry:** 6 to 7 p.m., room F205, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center;
- **Handbell Ensemble rehearsals:** 6 to 7 p.m., in the Sanctuary;
- **Chancel Choir rehearsals:** 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Don Lee Music Suite.

Please visit the church's website - [duluthumc.org](http://duluthumc.org) - for additional information.

### Seeking Volunteers for Altar Guild,

#### Sacristans (Communion Servers), and Liturgists at the 8:30 Service

If you have a great eye for detail, enjoy caring for the Sanctuary, a talent for speaking, or enjoy serving at worship, please consider joining one of these teams: Altar Guild, Sacristans (communion servers), and Liturgists. These volunteer positions do not take very much time and training is provided. Please contact Verena Lucía Anders, Director of Music and Worship Arts, by e-mail at [vanders@duluthumc.org](mailto:vanders@duluthumc.org) to volunteer or for more information.



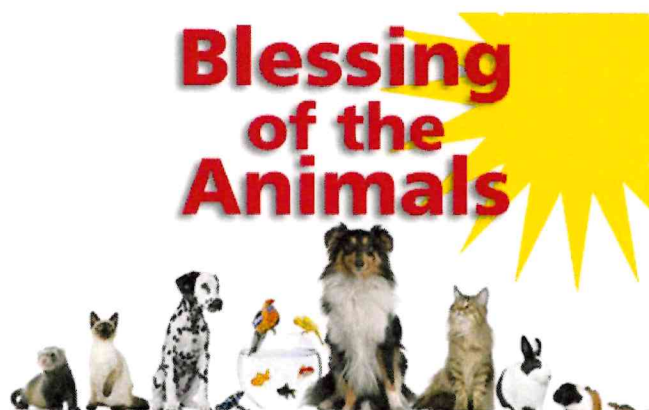


## **"Blessing of the Animals" Service:**

**Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>**

Bring your pets for our "Blessing of the Animals" service on Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, at 3:00 p.m. on the Fellowship Terrace, located in front of the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall. We will gather for a short service and offer a blessing for each animal individually. All friendly leashed, crated, or contained animals are welcome! Your pet not interested in being with other animals? Bring a photo or a special toy to have blessed!

In case of rain the service will be held under the rear portico entrance of the Sheldon Family Life Center. Please contact Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles by e-mail at [arawles@duluthumc.org](mailto:arawles@duluthumc.org) with any questions.



## **Save the Date for Our Annual**

**Trunk or Treat: Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>**

Bring your friends and family to our Trunk-or-Treat event on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in the church's front parking lot. Come in costume, park your car, and pop the trunk! Set-up time begins at 4:30 p.m. and trick-or-treating begins at 5:00 p.m. Share a trunk load of goodies with your friends and neighbors, or just join in the fun as a trick-or-treater. Help us reach our goal of 40 decorated trunks this year!

Please contact Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles by e-mail at [arawles@duluthumc.org](mailto:arawles@duluthumc.org) or call 770-476-3776, ext. 128, with any questions or to sign up as a trunk.



## **Join Us for Wednesday Night Dinners** **in Hinton Hall**

**September 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Pulled pork on a bun, corn pudding, Brunswick stew, cole slaw, and dessert.  
For the kids – hot dogs and French fries.

**September 10<sup>th</sup>**

Chicken Piccata, noodles, English peas, broccoli casserole, garlic bread, and dessert.  
For the kids – chicken tenders and fries.

**September 17<sup>th</sup>: "Breakfast for Dinner"**

Assorted quiche, choice of sausage or bacon, cheese grits, tater tots, French toast sticks, biscuits, and dessert.  
For the kids – the same.

**September 24<sup>th</sup>**

Fried catfish, hushpuppies, corn pudding, fried okra, collard greens, and dessert.  
For the kids – fish sticks and chips.

**Dinners are served from 5 to 6:30 p.m.,  
with to-go boxes available from 6 to 6:30 p.m.**

Dinner is served in the Hinton Hall of the Sheldon Family Life Center. Enjoy fellowship around the table with family and friends.

The Dinner Belles and Beaus prepare excellent meals at very reasonable prices.

**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.

**You can pay using a credit/debit card!**

**NOTE: Menus are subject to change.  
For the week's menu please visit the church's website at [duluthumc.org](http://duluthumc.org).**







***“Where are you serving?”***



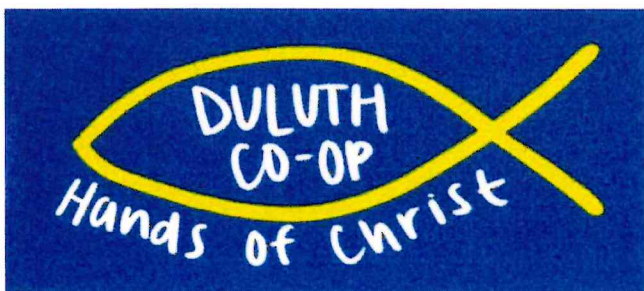
### **Wednesday Night Food Drives for September**

The **Wednesday Night Food Drive** at Duluth First UMC for the **Hands of Christ Duluth Co-op** is our weekly mission project, combined with the many Wednesday evening activities offered at the church.

**Items needed during the month of September are:**

- September 3<sup>rd</sup>: Boxes of cereal;
- September 10<sup>th</sup>: Cans of diced tomatoes;
- September 17<sup>th</sup>: Oatmeal;
- September 24<sup>th</sup>: Cans of tuna fish.

Join us for a delicious dinner and fellowship in Hinton Hall, pick up a to-go dinner for your family, join us for any of our Wednesday evening activities, and drop off food items to help other families in need. We thank you for your support!



### **Forum Class Volunteers at the North GA UMC Mission Hub**

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, members of the **Forum Sunday School Class** came together to volunteer at the Mission Hub at the campus of The North Georgia Conference of The United Methodist Church, located at 1795 Old Peachtree Road NW (the former location of Sugarloaf United Methodist Church) in Duluth. Class members **verified and packed 300 hygiene kits** for the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), which meant **6 boxes of hygiene kits** are ready to ship when needed.







## MISSIONS

### ***“Where are you serving?”***

#### **Operation Christmas Child**

We are gearing up for this year's **Operation Christmas Child**, our annual participation in **Samaritans Purse's** mission for God's children around the world. For 2024, **Samaritans Purse** delivered **over 11.9 million shoeboxes** in **over 170 countries and territories**. Since the inception of the program in 1993, **over 232 million shoeboxes** have been delivered to children around the world.



By filling shoeboxes with toys, school supplies and hygiene items, you not only give to children in need the only gift they will likely receive for Christmas, but also help deliver hope, joy and the gospel of Jesus Christ to them and their families.

Many children who receive these shoeboxes gifts will also enroll in **Operation Christmas Child's** 12-lesson discipleship program, ***The Greatest Journey***. In 2024, **over 5.5 million children** participated. This program teaches children about God's amazing love and guides them through what it means to faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

**Empty shoe boxes will be available beginning Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, in the Veterans Memorial Gathering Room, in the hallway by Hinton Hall, and outside of room F145, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center.** Inside each box you will find ideas on how to pack a shoebox gift, what not to include, and the adhesive box label.

*(Continued in the next column.)*

#### **Operation Christmas Child**

*(Continued from the previous column.)*

There is a \$10 per shoebox processing donation for the empty shoeboxes you take and fill yourself. This not only covers the processing of the shoebox and shipping, but also supports the in-country ministry training and materials for ***The Greatest Journey*** activities. Using the adhesive labels allow you to register your shoebox(s), make your donation, and track your shoebox online. See additional information included in the empty shoebox.

Duluth First UMC will have a special web site for you to use if you choose to complete your shoebox online. This year we have increased the goal to **80 online shoeboxes** and expanded the timeframe. Additional information about the web page and specific instructions available for use of the online process will be available at the shoebox distribution locations throughout the church.

Please return your completed boxes to the Veterans Memorial Gathering Room, the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall stage, in Hinton Hall, or outside room F145, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center, **no later than Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>.**

This is such a worthwhile and fun project for our Sunday School classes, Women's Circles, our Youth Group, and families with their children to undertake. Let's try to better Duluth First UMC's total of **160 boxes** we packed last year!

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact Charlie Doerlich by e-mail at **chaz3d@gmail.com** or call 678-662-2115.





# MISSIONS

## *“Where are you serving?”*

### Online Option for Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

The time has come for this year's **Operation Christmas Child**, our annual participation in **Samaritan's Purse's** mission for God's children around the world. As we did last year, there will be physical shoeboxes available to be completed by you, as well as the option to complete shoeboxes online.



If you wish to do your shoebox(s) online, please use the **DFUMC GOAL PAGE**, a special personalized website available for use to complete your online shoebox. The **DFUMC GOAL PAGE** is now active, and the cost of the Build Online Shoebox option is \$30 per online shoebox. These online shoeboxes are delivered to certain locations that need special customs and cultural needs met. With the **DFUMC GOAL PAGE** there are two options this year: build the shoebox yourself by selecting items to be included in the shoebox, or you can select an option where the shoebox is built by **Samaritan's Purse**. This option is a "one and done" approach. You can also include the **"Greatest Journey"** materials to go along with your online shoebox for an additional \$6. Please consider this option.

This year we have increased our goal of online shoeboxes completed through the **DFUMC GOAL PAGE** to **80 shoeboxes**, and we have extended the timeframe **until Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**. Specific instruction sheets have been prepared for using the **DFUMC GOAL PAGE** online process and are available at the **Operation Christmas Child** distribution locations around the church. By using the online **DFUMC GOAL PAGE** you will help make sure that every online shoebox from our church is counted toward our goal!

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact Charlie Doerlich by e-mail at [chaz3d@gmail.com](mailto:chaz3d@gmail.com), or call 678-662-2115. Thank you for your support of our annual **Operation Christmas Child** campaign!

### Operation Christmas Child Kick-Off and Shoebox Packing Party a Major Success!

On Thursday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, **Operation Christmas Child** in the Gwinnett Metro area held its first **Shoebox Packing Party** in Buford as a kick-off for this year's campaign. The goal for the event was to **pack 1000 shoeboxes** in one day, as well as to raise awareness of the importance of the mission. While everything to fill the shoeboxes was provided, there was doubt and concerns that there would be enough volunteers attending to achieve this goal.

**Needless to say, there was much joy and praises to God when the 1000 shoeboxes were completed in the FIRST hour of the packing party!** There were people assembling the shoeboxes, while others moved through the various donations selecting items to include in the shoeboxes.

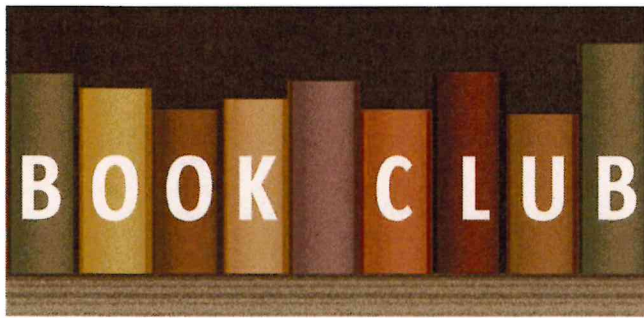
As a result of this great success, the goal for next year's Gwinnett Metro area **Packing Party** has been set for **5000 shoeboxes**. Thanks to the organizers, the many volunteers, supporters, and **Samaritan's Purse** who provided the shoeboxes and the logistics.

Please contact Charlie Doerlich by e-mail at [chaz3d@gmail.com](mailto:chaz3d@gmail.com) or call 678-662-2115 for additional information and any questions about **Operation Christmas Child**.



**Share the love of Jesus, through  
the power of a simple gift, with  
children around the world.**

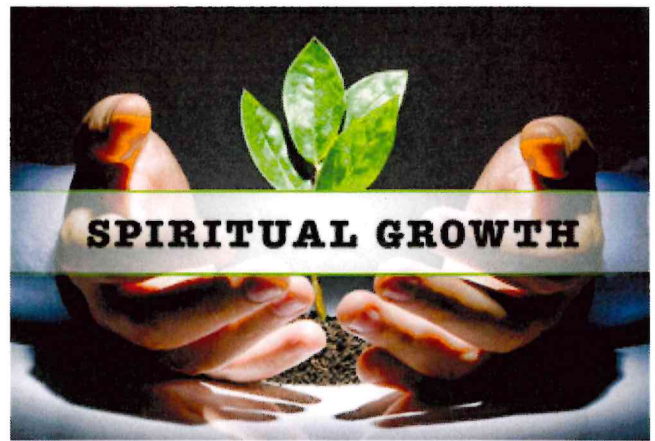
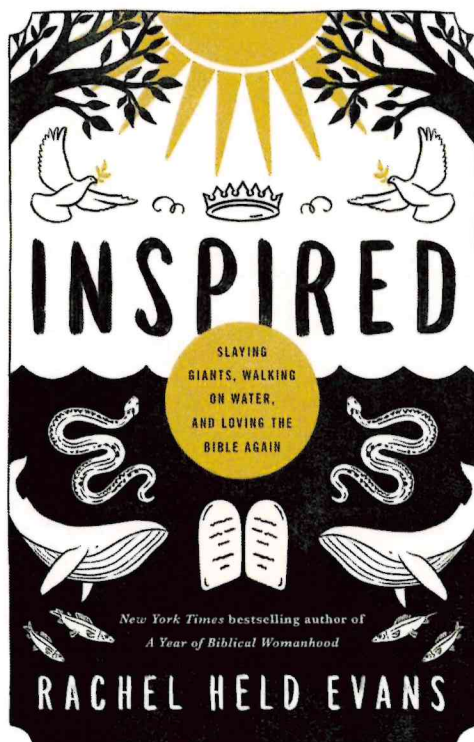




**Book Club to Discuss “Inspired:  
Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and  
Loving the Bible Again”:  
Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Join us on Monday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, as the **Book Club** discuss Rachel Held Evans’ **Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again**, her book on falling in love with the Bible again. “If the Bible isn’t a science book or an instruction manual, what is it? What do people mean when they say the Bible is inspired? When New York Times bestselling author Rachel Held Evans found herself asking these questions, she embarked on a journey to better understand what the Bible is and how it’s meant to be read. What she discovered changed her--and it can change you, too.”

The **Book Club** will meet from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in room F-145, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles by e-mail at [arawles@duluthumc.org](mailto:arawles@duluthumc.org) or call 770-476-3776, ext. 128.

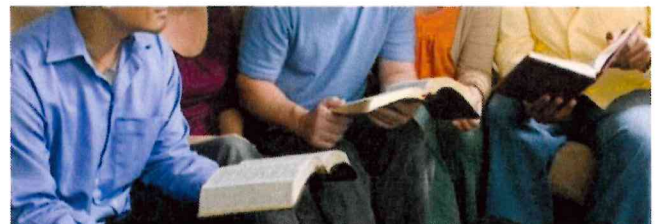


**Simply Something:  
A New Weekly Discussion Opportunity  
of All Things Theological, Biblical, Social,  
Methodist, or Life in Today’s World**

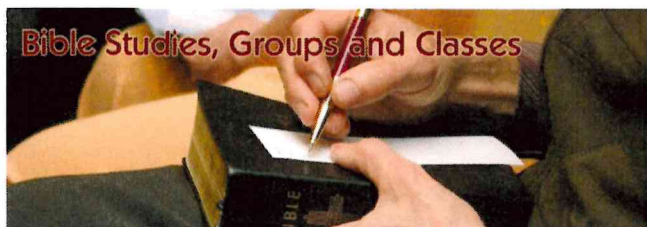
Have you ever had a topic that you simply wanted to talk about with others at church but there doesn’t seem to be a class or group to focus on that one thing? Then ***Simply Something*** is just the place to be. Join Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles and Rev. Dr. C. Kay Fuino on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. in room F145, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center, for ***Simply Something***, a weekly discussion place to bring up all things theological, biblical, social, Methodist, or simply on your mind about life in today’s world.

Each week at ***Simply Something*** will begin with prayer and a short devotion, followed by discussion about a variety of topics chosen by the group. Join us with your list of topics to plan for our future time together. Bring your coffee, tea or water, and your open mind to learn from each other.

For more information, please contact Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles, Associate Pastor, by e-mail at [arawles@duluthumc.org](mailto:arawles@duluthumc.org) or 770-476-3776, ext. 128.







### **Join Women Studying Together for Book of Ephesians Study on Thursday Mornings**

You are invited to join **Women Studying Together**, the Thursday morning women's Bible study group, as they study the New Testament Book of Ephesians. This study will continue through September 18<sup>th</sup>.

The author of Ephesians makes some rather wordy theological statements while also referring to Jesus as Lord over 20 times. How did understanding that Jesus is Lord affect the Ephesians or us? What behaviors are encouraged/discouraged? Don't be overwhelmed with the writing style. We need both an understanding of what we believe and how we are to live it. This book has much to teach us about the church and the unity of the body. Even in the midst of this 'mystery', we are reminded that grace and faith are expressed in acts of love. After that, there is nothing left to do but praise God!

There is no book to buy, just bring your Bible and join us. We meet on Thursday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30 am in room F145, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center, and discussion is led by Jenny Masterson. As we study, we ask questions, search for answers, share our stories, laugh and pray together. Sometimes, we even sing! We welcome all women.

If you would like more information, please contact Jenny Masterson by e-mail at [jennybobm@comcast.net](mailto:jennybobm@comcast.net) or call her at 678-591-0800.

### **Men Studying Together Thursday Morning Bible Study**

The **Men Studying Together** group meets for Bible/book studies on Thursday mornings from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in room F206, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. This study is led by Rev. Terry Tippens. The group is currently studying the Gospel of Matthew.

All are welcome to join us, any time, and every class time will allow for individual input and group discussion. Please contact Tracy Brinker by e-mail at [tbrinker@duluthumc.org](mailto:tbrinker@duluthumc.org) or at 770-476-3776 for more information.

## **GriefShare Support Group Meetings**

### **On Wednesday Evenings**

**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 **GriefShare Support Group** classes started on Wednesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, and meet from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in room F153, located on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 before Thanksgiving, and a "**Surviving the Holidays**" class on Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.

For more information, please visit the **GriefShare** website at [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org), or contact Tracy Brinker, Bereavement Coordinator, by e-mail at [tbrinker@duluthumc.org](mailto:tbrinker@duluthumc.org), or call 770-476-3776.

### **Volunteers Needed:**

#### **Camera and Streaming Operators**

#### **Needed for All Worship Services**

Did you know that through live streaming our three worship services that we reach approximately 200+ members and visitors each week? And those are just view numbers on YouTube and Facebook that don't take into account how many people are watching together on the same device.



Our streaming ministry is a vital connection and extension of our on-campus worship. We need more volunteers at all three worship services to help keep this ministry going. If you have experience with camera or streaming operation, or are willing to learn how — both are EASY! Please contact either Johnathan Ancell, Director of Worship Technology, by e-mail at [jancell@duluthumc.org](mailto:jancell@duluthumc.org), or Verena Lucía Anders, Minister of Music & Worship Arts, by e-mail at [vanders@duluthumc.org](mailto:vanders@duluthumc.org).



## Recent Blood Drive a Great Success

WOW – we had a very successful blood drive on August 13<sup>th</sup>! **Thirty-six pints of blood were collected**, and as a result of this, we will be able to **provide care for over 100 people!** Thank you to my wonderful volunteers – Pat Brannon and Angie Doerlich.

A special “Thank You” to the following people whose blood donations helped save lives: Wendy Armstrong, Matthew Ault, Hope Binklet, Tracy Brinker, Amanda Brown, Rafael Rodriguez Camacaro, Donna Clark, Michael Deans, Portia Dhanasekaran, Kenneth Doss, James Dykes, Sue French, Maureen Gee, Gabrielle Gillespie-Fitzgerald, Charlene Gordon, Richard Gordon, Bob Griffeth, Jim Hall, Andrew Holmes, Nancy Martin, Joel McLemore, Bill McLess, Laurie Moeller, Mike Montgomery, Amir Paziraei, Cynthia Peterson, Karen Phillips, Lindsay Schuiteman, Allen Servedio, Lucas Servedio, Carol Stalcup, Bryan Taylor, Gail Waigand, and Julia Wharton.

Two donors gave two units of red blood cells during the blood drive using a special automated machine. This process, called apheresis, separates and collects the red cells, then safely returns the remaining blood components and saline to the donor. Power Red donations are particularly beneficial for donors with O+, O-, A-, or B- blood types, which are in high demand.

Mark your calendars and make plans to come save a life on Wednesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, from 3 until 7 p.m. in the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall at our next blood drive.

THANKS  
for donating  
BLOOD

## 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Duluth Fall Festival:

### September 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>

Mark your calendars and save the dates for the **42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Duluth Fall Festival** being held Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. Duluth First United Methodist Church and its congregation take an active roll in the **Fall Festival** each year.

The **Fall Festival** kicks off on September 27<sup>th</sup> with a parade through downtown beginning at 10 a.m. This year’s Grand Marshals will be Kathryn Willis and Ann Odum — sisters, long-time members of Duluth First UMC, and long-time residents of Duluth.

On, September 28<sup>th</sup> the **Duluth 5K Donut Dash** race, a qualifier for the Peachtree Road Race, starts at 8 a.m. The race attracts both the serious competitive racer and the occasional runner/walker, and provides an opportunity for participants of all ages to help this year’s race beneficiary, **Wellroot Family Services**, supporting their vision of a world where every child is raised in a loving, compassionate, and nurturing home. For additional information about **Wellroot Family Services**, please visit their website at [www.wellroot.org](http://www.wellroot.org). To sign up for the **Duluth Donut Dash**, please go to [www.duluthdonutdash5k.org](http://www.duluthdonutdash5k.org).

Join us for **Worship on the Town Green** on September 28<sup>th</sup> with a community worship service beginning at 10 a.m. at the Duluth Town Green. Duluth First United Methodist Church’s Rev. David Burchett will be leading the morning’s worship service, with the church’s Contemporary Worship Praise Team leading the worship music.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

- On September 28<sup>th</sup>, our Contemporary Worship Service will take place at Duluth Town Green for the **Duluth Fall Festival’s Worship on the Town Green** with Rev. David Burchett preaching.
- The 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship services and **WILL MEET** in the Sanctuary with Rev. C. Kay Fuino preaching.
- Sunday school classes for children and youth will not be held on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

For additional information about the **Duluth Fall Festival**, please visit [duluthfallfestival.org](http://duluthfallfestival.org).





**BSA Troop 419's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual**  
**"Cars for Campouts" Classic Car Show,**  
**Cruise In, and BBQ: Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup>**

BSA Troop 419 will hold their 9<sup>th</sup> Annual "Cars for Campouts" Fundraiser Car Show, Cruise In, and BBQ on Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the church's front parking lot. If you have a special vehicle (all years, makes, models) – muscle cars, classics, resto-mods, exotics, bikes, and one-offs – if it rolls, please bring it and participate.

Preregistration by October 3<sup>rd</sup> is \$20, and registration on the day of the show is \$25. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/cars4campouts-2025>. Sixty participant-judged awards will be presented. If you just want to see some cool vehicles, feel free to attend as admission for spectators is free.

Food and beverages will be available. Enjoy great food, hot dogs, BBQ (available on-site or for take home) snacks and beverages.

If you have any questions, please send an e-mail to [carshow@bsatrop419.org](mailto:carshow@bsatrop419.org), or call Mike Ringham at 770-815-4206. All proceeds from the event help make BSA Troop 419's program one of the best in the council, and with your support, will continue to do so.



## **CARS FOR CAMPOUTS**

### **Struggling and Feeling Alone?**

Request the support and Christ-centered care of a **Stephen Minister**. 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](mailto:ckfuino@duluthumc.org) or call Stephen Leader Ann Fleming at 678-644-9108.



**Crafts, Pieces of Art, and Baked Goods**  
**Needed for "Bundle Up for Buffalo"**  
**Annual Fundraiser: November 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>**

Crafters, potters, artists, and bakers of all kinds – your talents will be needed in November! It may seem a long time from now, but it really isn't and it is not too soon to be thinking about our annual missions fundraiser, ***Bundle Up for Buffalo***, on Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. All proceeds from the ***Bundle Up for Buffalo*** fundraiser help our sister church, Seneca Street United Methodist Church in Buffalo, NY, keep the heat on their facility during the winter months which fall from October 2025 through April 2026. This helps provide a safe, warm, after-school location for neighborhood children to go to.

You have been so faithful in prayer for this "pocket of poverty" in the North for many years. Please consider what you can make, and something that others would enjoy purchasing. Thank you for your support.



*Seneca Street United Methodist Church  
in Buffalo, NY.*



## Christmas for a Soldier 2025

The **Hugs for Soldiers Ministry** is collecting care package donations for soldiers serving overseas. Take part in **Christmas for a Soldier 2025**, our 22nd Christmas for supporting our troops. Please help us spread some holiday joy to troops who can't be home during the holidays by donating the following items.

**Christmas Cards:** Deployed service members would love to receive a handcrafted or signed card from you with holiday wishes. Do not seal your cards in envelopes; we do not need envelopes. All cards are mixed and re-boxed into larger boxes so that your cards are received at various military bases. **PLEASE...NO GLITTER on cards!** Glitter will come off during the two-week shipping overseas.



### **Snack Items:**

- Individual packets of hot chocolate, apple cider, assorted flavors of tea bags individually wrapped;
- Instant Ramen Noodle Soup 3 oz. packets;
- Microwave popcorn;
- Holiday candy (this is a great time to ship chocolate);
- Cereal/granola/energy bars, Trail mix, nuts, sunflower seeds, fruit snacks;
- Slim Jims, beef jerky.

### **Other Items:**

- Handmade holiday ornaments. Use your creativity and skills to make ornaments! From painted wood ornaments to beaded wreaths and everything in between, your ornaments can be anything you like.  
**PLEASE NOTE:** No glitter, no breakable ornaments, nothing dangerously sharp and nothing made out of food/candy.
- A new pair of socks.

**The deadline for donations is Friday, November 21<sup>st</sup>.** Donation boxes will be located inside the back entrance to the Sheldon Family Life Center and on the stage in Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall.

Monetary donations are also appreciated to help purchase items not received and for postage. Checks are made payable to **Duluth First UMC** with **Hugs for Soldiers** written in the memo section, or go to the **ONLINE GIVING** page on the church's website – [www.duluthumc.org](http://www.duluthumc.org) – click on **MISCELLANEOUS GIFT** and specify **"Support Our Troops/Hugs for Soldiers."**

For further information, contact Angie Doerlich by e-mail at [hugsforsoldiers@gmail.com](mailto:hugsforsoldiers@gmail.com) or call 404-316-8183. For additional information about the **Hugs for Soldiers Ministry**, please visit their website at [www.hugsforsoldiers.org](http://www.hugsforsoldiers.org).

## Giving to the Church and Best Practices for Giving

We are thankful for your gifts to the church and we welcome them in many ways. Below are some of the ways you can give:

### **Preferred (safe):**

- **Recurring online gift.** Click on **ONLINE GIVING** on the church's website - [duluthumc.org](http://duluthumc.org) - and follow the prompts to set up recurring giving. This allows you to give automatically a specific amount at whatever interval you choose - once a week, once a month, once a year, whatever works best for you. If you are growing one step each year toward the tithe (10%), as many of us are, all you have to do is change the amount once each year to reflect that growth, and it's done!
- **Giving online, whether in-person or remote.** Click on the QR code printed in the order of worship if worshipping in-person, or click the link on the screen if you are worshipping online.
- **Through the church website anytime:** [duluthumc.org](http://duluthumc.org), go to the **ONLINE GIVING** page (bank account or credit card).
- **Check in-person.**
- **Cash in-person.**

### **Not preferred (less safe):**

- Check or cash sent through the mail.
- Using the bill pay service through your bank (this ends up being a paper check that is sent through the mail).

While the church welcomes any gift, we have found the most safe and efficient ways to give are in-person or online through the church website and we recommend recurring giving. **We would recommend NOT sending gifts through the mail at this time as we have had a few issues receiving gifts through the mail.** Additionally, if you are using your bank's bill pay service to send your gifts, they are likely sending your gift by check through the mail.







### Prayer Concerns

- Kathy Anderson • Reed Balkcom
- Doris Brackett • Sara Brewer
- Gen Butterworth • Cynthia Daniel
- Erica Hall • Shamain Hallett
- Carol Hitchcock • Bruce Houston
- Linton Jones • Luke Livingston
- ShirleyGrace Madajewski • Dottie Moor
- Lynne Ometer • Tom Owens • Joy Parsons
- Henry Roerig • Jeff Schulz
- Mary Jo Southerland • Ann Tiberghien
- Clara Truesdell • Dale VanPelt
- Easton Wall • Betty Worthington
- Tracy Brinker & family in the death of her uncle.
- The family of Sam Chambers in his death.
- The family of Doris Langston in her death.
- Tonie Owens & family in the death of her mother.

### Deadline for the October 2025

#### Edition of "The Messenger" Newsletter

The article deadline for the October 2025 edition of *The Messenger* newsletter is Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, at 9 a.m.

To keep up-to-date with all of the happenings at Duluth First UMC, please visit the church's website at [duluthumc.org](http://duluthumc.org) and/or pick up a copy of our weekly newsletter, *The Sunday Supplement*, available on Sunday mornings at all of our worship services.



### General Church Fund

Received on August 3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$21,413.94
Received on August 10 <sup>th</sup>	\$18,413.21
Received on August 17 <sup>th</sup>	\$19,935.10

### Year-to-Date, 2025

Received as of August 17 <sup>th</sup>	\$906,111.84
--	--------------



### "Crossing the Finish Line"

#### Capital Campaign: Year-to-Date, 2025

Received as of August 17 <sup>th</sup>	\$195,966.45
--	--------------



### Worship Attendance

*(includes in-person attendance and online views)*

August 3 <sup>rd</sup>	624
August 10 <sup>th</sup>	595
August 17 <sup>th</sup>	569