



DULUTH FIRST UMC'S NEWSLETTER

# THE MESSENGER



OCTOBER 2026

## Join Us for Our Annual Trunk or Treat: Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>

Bring your friends and family to our **Trunk or Treat** event on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in front of the church. Come in costume, park your car, and pop the trunk! Volunteers are needed to host a trunk at **Trunk or Treat** as we welcome our community to Duluth First UMC for an afternoon of fun. We hope to have at least 35 trunks and YOU can be one! Decorate and/or have a game at your trunk for the opportunity to win the soon to be coveted Golden Pumpkin prize! **Set-up time begins at 3:30 p.m. and trick-or-treating begins at 4:00 p.m.**

Volunteers are also needed to help with set up, refill candy, run carnival games, and clean up. You sign can sign up to reserve a trunk space and/or to volunteer by scanning the QR code located to the right with your smart phone or tablet.

Candy donations (bags of individually wrapped candies) are needed for **Trunk or Treat**. Drop off any candy in the **Trunk or Treat** bins located around the church. You can help us be sure we have enough to share with our community!

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.



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### 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)

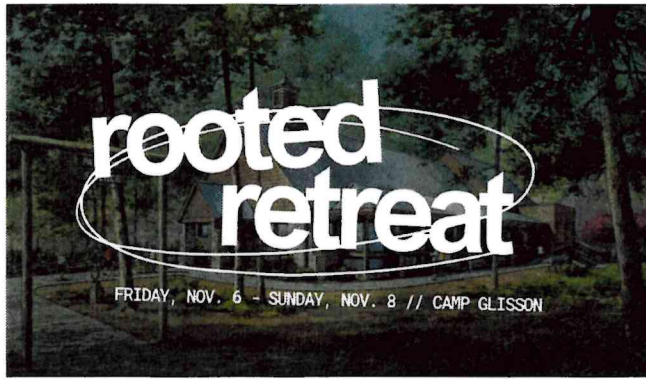
### Sunday Mornings

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.



## **Youth Fall Retreat is November 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>**

We are excited to participate in **The Rooted Retreat** (North Georgia UMC Conference Retreat) hosted by the Glisson Camp and Retreat Center, from Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, for our youth fall retreat! 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.

### **Information for the Rooted Fall Retreat is:**

- **Dates:** Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>;
- **Location:** Glisson Camp and Retreat Center (690 Camp Glisson Rd., Dahlonega, GA 30533)
- **Cost: \$195 per student** (You can pay in cash, check, or online). We want every student to be able to attend—scholarships are available if needed.
- **Registration Deadline:** Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>.
- **Camp Glisson Website:** <https://glisson.org>.

To register, please scan the QR code located to the 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).



*Youth "Rooted Retreat" Registration*



## **Youth Ministry's**

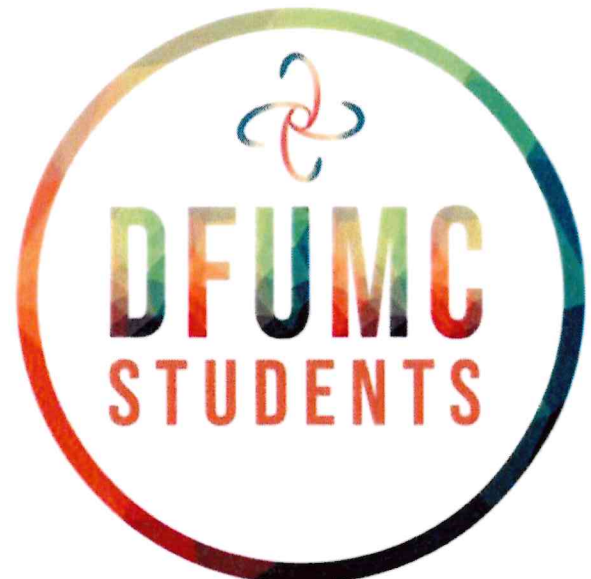
### **Sunday Night Gatherings**

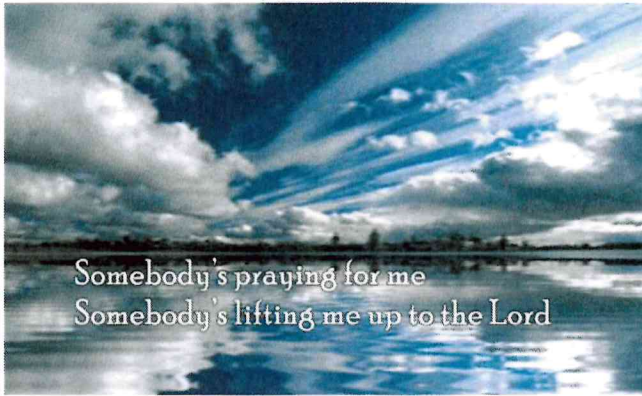
Students in the 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades are invited to join us on Sunday nights for **Sunday Night Gatherings** from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank"), located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. **Sunday Night Gatherings** include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

### **The Sunday Night Gathering schedule for October is:**

- **Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>: Sunday Night Gathering** at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>: Sunday Night Gathering** at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup>:** Packing Thanksgiving boxes for the Hands of Christ Duluth Co-op at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank");
- **Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>: Trunk or Treat** from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the front of the church.

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).





Somebody's praying for me  
Somebody's lifting me up to the Lord

### **Prayer Concerns**

- Doug Bridges • Ann Fleming • Lawrence Gibbs
- Jim Green • Sherry Griffeth
- Shamain Hallett • Linton Jones
- Judy Lutz • tia Lynn • Marilyn Scheiwe
- Staci Castleberry & family in the death of her father.
  - Jane Johnson & family in the death of her husband, Jim.
- Jo Ellen McLees & family in the death of her sister.
  - Bill McLees & family in the death of his brother.
- Mike Stansbury & family in the death of his mother.
- Jennifer Taylor & family in the death of her mother.



### **General Church Fund**

|                                |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Received on September 6, 2026  | \$14,782.30 |
| Received on September 13, 2026 | \$45,195.20 |
| Received on September 20, 2026 | \$20,252.48 |
| Received on September 27, 2026 | \$40,541.38 |

### **Year-to-Date, 2026**

|                                   |                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Received as of September 27, 2026 | \$1,191,855.21 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|



### **"Crossing the Finish Line"**

### **Capital Campaign: Year-to-Date, 2026**

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Received as of September 27, 2026 | \$172,129.61 |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|



### **Worship Attendance**

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

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| September 6, 2026  | 529 |
| September 13, 2026 | 515 |
| September 20, 2026 | 745 |
| September 27, 2026 | 539 |

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

**October 7<sup>th</sup>**

Chicken Parmesan, spaghetti noodles,  
Italian green beans, roasted zucchini and squash,  
garlic bread, and dessert.

For the kids – spaghetti and meat sauce.

**October 14<sup>th</sup> - “Breakfast for Dinner” Night**

Ham and cheese quiche,  
a choice of bacon or sausage,  
hashbrown casserole, cheese grits,  
French toast sticks, fresh fruit,  
biscuits, and dessert.

For the kids – the same.

**October 21<sup>st</sup>**

Honey-baked ham, sweet potato soufflé,  
macaroni and cheese, green beans,  
rolls, and dessert.

For the kids – the same.

**October 28<sup>th</sup>**

Baked Chicken Alfredo, penne pasta,  
steamed broccoli, Italian mixed vegetables,  
breadsticks, and dessert.

For the kids – the same.

**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.

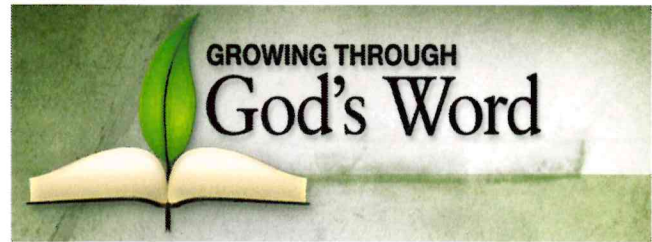
The Dinner Belles and Beaus prepare excellent  
meals at very reasonable prices.

**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 and  
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).**



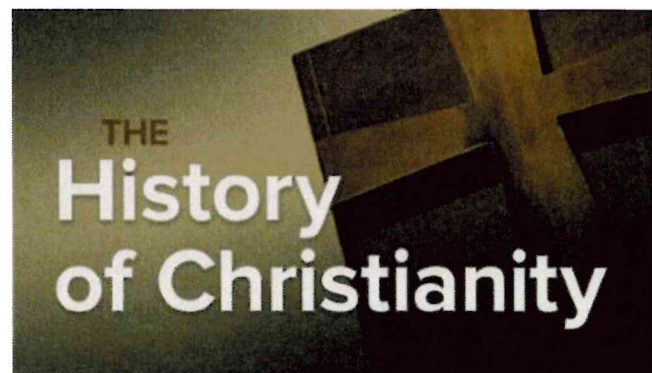
**“The History of Christianity” Class**  
**Begins October 20<sup>th</sup>**

A new adult class, **The History of Christianity from the Reign of Theodosius to the Dawn of the Reformation**, will be held on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday evenings beginning October 20<sup>th</sup> and October 21<sup>st</sup>. You are invited to attend whichever day works best for your schedule. The class will last 22 weeks, concluding near the end of March. Each class session will last 1.5 hours and will include a 30-minute lecture by Dr. Luke Timothy Johnson, Professor Emeritus at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, followed by one hour of discussion.

Some of the lectures include Expansion Beyond the Roman Empire, the Rise of Islam, the East-West Split, The Crusades, the Great Plague, and many others. Participants will encounter a thorough grounding in the development of Christianity for its first 1,500 years.

The Tuesday morning class will begin at 10 a.m. in room F153 and the Wednesday evening class will begin at 5:45 p.m. in room F145. Both rooms are located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. Pete Fleming, our church historian, will lead the class. No books are required, although Pete will introduce a comprehensive bibliography throughout the series, and he will also provide articles from various authors on related subjects from time to time.

People wishing to participate in the **The History of Christianity** class should contact Rev. Dr. AnnaKate Rawles by e-mail at [arawles@duluthumc.org](mailto:arawles@duluthumc.org), or Pete Fleming by e-mail at [lfleming3832@att.net](mailto:lfleming3832@att.net).



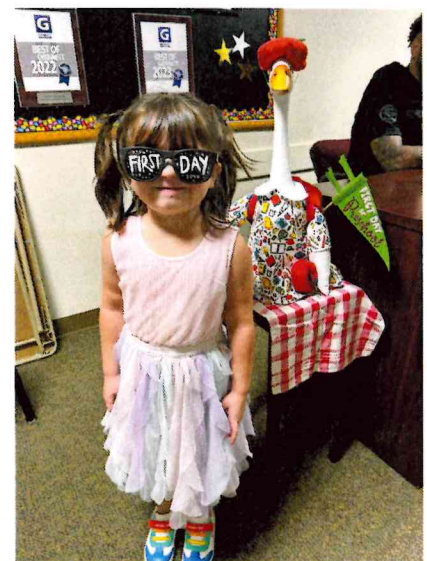
# Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten: A Wonderful Start to a New School Year!



**Christian Beginnings**  
*Preschool & Kindergarten*



*where smiles happen!*



## The Children's Ministry: Growing in Faith at Duluth First UMC!



# Christian Beginnings

*Preschool & Kindergarten*



*where smiles happen!*

## Christian Beginnings

### Preschool & Kindergarten

#### Nominated for "Best of Gwinnett" Award

We're excited to share that our **Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten** has been nominated for the "**Best of Gwinnett**" award again this year! We would love your support as we work toward another "**Best of Gwinnett**" win. Voting is open now through December 31<sup>st</sup>, and you can vote once each day. Every vote helps!

If you have a few seconds, please consider voting each day and sharing the opportunity with friends and family who love **Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten**. To vote, please scan the QR code located below with your smart phone or tablet and look for "**Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten**" under "**Pre-K or Kindergarten Schools**" to vote.

Thank you for supporting our school and helping us spread the word! We are so grateful for our wonderful **Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten** community.



*Vote for Christian Beginnings Preschool & Kindergarten "Best of Gwinnett" Award*

## Gift Cards for Care Packages for Our College Students

We are collecting gift card donations to be included in care packages for our college students. As finals weeks are quickly approaching, we want to show our love and care for our college students by sending them gift cards to enjoy during their finals! If you would like to donate, please purchase any of these gift cards – Chick-fil-A (most requested by students), Starbucks, or Dunkin' – with the amount of \$25 per card, and drop them off in Rev. Min Lee's office (Director of Youth Ministries), located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center by **Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>**.

If you have a college student (or if you are the college student) who is a member of Duluth First UMC, we ask you to scan the QR code located to the right and fill out the contact information form and update the student's mailing address.



## Senior Adult Coffee Hour:

### Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>

Senior adults are invited to come together on Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 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 at 9:30 a.m. in the cul-da-sac area outside of the offices on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center. Coffee is provided by Break Coffee Roasters. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. AnnaKate Rawles, Associate Pastor, by e-mail at [arawles@duluthumc.org](mailto:arawles@duluthumc.org). We look forward to seeing you there!





***“Where are you serving?”***

## **The Missions Ministry** **at Duluth First UMC**

Our **Missions Ministry** at Duluth First UMC continues to find more ways to reach and connect with those in



need in our world and our community. Over the past year we have been involved with Hands of Christ Duluth Co-Op, Duluth High School Care Team, Rainbow Village, Family Promise of

Gwinnett, C Kay Fuino School in Liberia, Wellroot Family Services, Murphy-Harpst Children's Center and other ministries.

If you would like to become involved with our **Missions Ministry**, we invite you to join us on Sunday afternoons from 4 to 5 p.m. in room F205, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center, as we plan and share in devotions. For more information, please contact Rev. David Burchett by e-mail at [dburchett@duluthumc.org](mailto:dburchett@duluthumc.org).

## **Wednesday Night Food Drives**

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 October are:**

- October 7<sup>th</sup>: peanut butter and jelly;
- October 14<sup>th</sup>: boxes of spaghetti and pasta;
- October 21<sup>st</sup>: canned fruit;
- October 28<sup>th</sup>: canned peas.

Donated items can be left on the Food Drive table located outside of the main entrance to Hinton Hall. 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!

## **An Opportunity to Serve -** **Packing Thanksgiving Boxes:** **Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup>**

If you're looking for an opportunity to serve those around you in our community, we've got just the thing for you. Join us on Sunday evening, October 18<sup>th</sup>, in the Youth Center ("The Fish Tank") at 5:30 p.m. and join those of all ages to help pack boxes for the Thanksgiving season for those being served at **Hands of Christ-Duluth Co-op**. It's going to be a lot fun for everyone. We hope to see you there!

## **Crafts, Pieces of Art, and Baked Goods** **Are Needed for "Bundle Up for Buffalo"** **Annual Fundraiser: November 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>**

Crafters, potters, artists, and bakers of all kinds – your talents will be needed in November! Our annual missions fundraiser, **Bundle Up for Buffalo**, will be on Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, November 15<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 2026 through April 2027. Last year, we raised enough money to designate this church to be a warming center, where people could come into the building and get a bite to eat if their own heat had been turned off or was not working. **This was major – YOU helped do this!**

Volunteers are needed on Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, at 2:30 p.m. to help set up the tables and sale items in the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall. If you can help with the set up, or have items you would like to donate to the sale, please contact Beth Intondi by e-mail at [Beth.intondi@outlook.com](mailto:Beth.intondi@outlook.com).

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.



## Operation Christmas Child

**Operation Christmas Child**, our annual participation in Samaritan's Purse's mission for God's children around the world, is underway. In 2025, Samaritan's Purse delivered **over 12.2 million shoeboxes to 170 countries and territories**. Since the inception of the program in 1993, **over 244 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 *The Greatest Journey*, Operation Christmas Child's 12-lesson discipleship program. Since 2009, over 52 million children have participated in this program, teaching them about God's amazing love and guiding them through what it means to faithfully follow Jesus Christ.

Empty shoe boxes are available in the Veterans Memorial Gathering Room, in the hallway by the entrance to Hinton Hall, and by the cul-de-sac are 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. There is a \$10 processing donation which supports the in-country ministry training and materials for *The Greatest Journey* activities, as well processing and shipping the shoebox. Using the adhesive labels allow you to register your shoebox(s), make your donation, and track your shoebox online.

Duluth First UMC has a special web site for you to use to complete your shoebox online, and **our goal is 80 online shoeboxes by December 19<sup>th</sup>**. You can access the web page by scanning the QR code located to the right with your smart phone or tablet. You can also get printed instructions for using the goal page at the **Operation Christmas Child** tables around the church.



Please return your completed boxes to the Veterans Memorial Gathering Room, the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall stage, inside 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 15<sup>th</sup>**.

This is a worthwhile and fun project for our Sunday School classes, Women's Circles, our Youth group, and families with their children to undertake. 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!

## "Christmas for a Soldier" 2026:

### 23 Years of Supporting Our Troops

The **Hugs for Soldiers Ministry** is collecting care package donations for service members serving overseas – mostly in the Middle East where many of our troops are facing long deployments. **Over 200 Georgia Army National Guard soldiers have asked for support during their deployment.** They are working long hours, exhausting days, missing precious moments with their loved ones. Help us spread some holiday joy to troops who can't be home during the holidays.

**Items that can be donated for the Christmas care packages include:**

**Christmas cards:** deployed troops would love to receive a handcrafted or signed card from you with holiday wishes. **PLEASE...NO GLITTER** on cards or any other product that could come loose during the two-week shipment overseas.

**Snack Items:**

- Individual packets of hot chocolate, apple cider;
- Cereal/granola/energy bars, trail mix, nuts, fruit snacks;
- Holiday candy;
- Slim Jims or Beef Jerky;
- Cookies (small individual packs).

**Other Items:**

- Puzzle books (crosswords, Sudoku, Word Find);
- A new pair of socks;
- Small holiday-themed items (Dollar Tree is a good source).

**The deadline for donations is Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.** Donation boxes will be located inside the back entrance to the Sheldon Family Life Center and on the stage in The Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall. **If you would like help pack the care packages, join us on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. at the Scout Hut, located at the back corner of the church's property.**

Monetary donations are always 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 – [duluthumc.org](http://duluthumc.org) – click on **MISCELLANEOUS GIFT** and specify **"Support Our Troops/Hugs for Soldiers."**

For further information, please contact: Angie Doerlich by e-mail at [hugsforsoldiers@gmail.com](mailto:hugsforsoldiers@gmail.com) or call 404-316-8183. Thank you for your support!



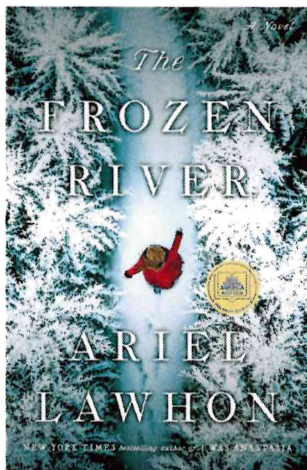
## Library Book Club to Discuss

### "The Frozen River" by Ariel Lawhon:

**Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup>**

The **Library Book Club** will meet on Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. in room F145 (located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Sheldon Family Life Center) to discuss the month's book choice, **The Frozen River** by Ariel Lawhon.

**The Frozen River** is a gripping historical mystery based on the real-life diary entries of Martha Ballard, an 18th-century midwife who found herself at the center of a murder trial. Maine, 1789: When the Kennebec River freezes, entombing a man in the ice, Martha Ballard is summoned to examine the body and determine cause of death. As a midwife and healer, she is privy to much of what goes on behind closed doors in Hallowell. Her diary is a record of every birth and death, crime and debacle that unfolds in the close-knit community.



Clever, layered, and subversive, Ariel Lawhon's newest offering introduces an unsung heroine who refused to accept anything less than justice at a time when women were considered best seen and not heard.

**The Frozen River** is a thrilling, tense, and tender story about a remarkable woman who left an unparalleled legacy yet remains nearly forgotten to this day.



## Gifts in Memory and In Honor of Others

The following people and groups have given gifts to the glory of God in memory or in honor of others:

### In Memory of Ron Abner

*The Reeves Family*

### In Memory of Marion Harley

*Randy & Marilyn Rhea*

### In Memory of Time Heard

*The Vaduga Family*

### In Memory of Luke Livingston

*Annette McIntosh  
Luanne Teague*

## Save the Date - Sweets with Santa:

**Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>**

Mark your calendars, save the date, and invite your family and friends to **Sweets with Santa** on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. in the Dorothy L. Rainey Fellowship Hall. This will be a great time for pastries, crafts, fellowship with others, and the chance to meet Santa!



Additional information will be available closer to the date of the event.

## Goodwin/Bentley Cemetery

### Restoration Information Meeting:

**Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup>**

All are invited to attend a Goodwin/Bentley Cemetery restoration information and planning meeting on Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Duluth Public Library, located at 3180 Main Street in Duluth. The meeting, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., will include discussion of the restoration and care of the historic Goodwin/Bentley Cemetery, located near the intersection of Hall Circle and Highway 120 in Duluth.

One of the oldest cemeteries in Duluth, Goodwin/Bentley holds some founding families of the city and has a rich history. The general public, local churches, and descendants of those buried in the cemetery are invited to participate. We would especially appreciate any family history, old photographs, stories, documents, or other information that can help us learn more about the people buried there.

There are over 100 burials in the Goodwin/Bentley Cemetery, and many are unmarked. The goal is not simply to improve the cemetery site, but to preserve its history and bring the stories of the people buried there to life. We want to ensure descendants to have a voice in the project and an opportunity to provide feedback before plans move forward. The Daughters of the American Revolution are helping to fill in the gaps and will be writing up a complete history.

## Deadline for the November 2026

### Edition of "The Messenger" Newsletter

The article deadline for the November 2026 edition of *The Messenger* newsletter is **Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 9:00 a.m.** Please send all articles/information to Ken Willi, Director of Communications, by e-mail at [kwilli@duluthumc.org](mailto:kwilli@duluthumc.org). 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.