

CONNECTION
POINT
WINTER
2017-2018

ILLUMINATE

a light shines in the darkness



 **decaturnFIRST**
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

... in relationship with God, each other and with our Decatur community

» 300 EAST PONCE DE LEON AVE. | DECATUR, GA 30030 | 404.378.4541 | DECATURFIRST.ORG «

I've been thinking a lot lately about what it means to live together in community. A core part of our Future Story is being "connected," and I like that very much. To be connected is to recognize that in the family of God, nobody is estranged. We all belong to God. We all belong to one another.

Being connected, though, is difficult. For one, many psychologists believe that a person can only have 150 meaningful relationships. We worship five hundred people each Sunday! What is more, Decatur First is a diverse church with all kinds of people.

- ✦ Some of us are new to faith, while others have worshiped here for eight decades.
- ✦ Some of us are Republicans, and some of us are Democrats.
- ✦ Some of us prefer contemporary worship, while others prefer traditional.
- ✦ Some of us are life-long Methodists, and some of us still consider ourselves to belong to other denominations. Even others of us prefer the simple title of "Christian."

With so many different kinds of people in one building, it is not always easy to live together. In fact, our beloved denomination, the United Methodist Church, faces very real and difficult questions of how it is we will live together within our diversity. We all love Jesus; we just have different opinions about how to live out that love. I must tell you: I see our diversity as an asset, not a liability. Don't get me wrong; I am a person of conviction and strong belief! I just have no interest in serving a church which is overwhelmingly conservative or overwhelmingly liberal. I have interest in serving a church that is on the side of Jesus, above all else, and which models for me the fact that my opinions matter less than the opinions of Jesus! When our religion starts to look like our politics, it often turns out that we are making an idol out of our politics.

As for me, I prefer--and I am much more compelled by--a church with all kinds of people in it, for if each of us carries within us the image of God, then it must likewise be true that the more diverse the congregation, the fuller the picture of the face of God. In fact, one pastor I know who serves in another denomination jokes that he may secretly be a Methodist because of the ways he values diversity. "I love the United Methodist Church," he said, "because of its great theological diversity. Within that diversity are the seeds of innovation."

I love the idea that it is not simply despite our differences that we may find new ways to welcome new people into the life of faith. It may well be because of our differences that we find new ways to welcome. What a gift! And what a responsibility, to continue to welcome all people at Decatur First, to be a church that truly believes that all people are God's children--and welcomes those children in the strong name of Jesus.

Friends, it continues to be a great honor to serve with you. There are so many in our community who do not know that they are loved--by Jesus, or by anyone else. And there is so much love within these walls that it would be criminal not to share it.

Thanks be to God!



The Rev. Dalton T. Rushing

MISSIONS

NOVEMBER MISSION FOCUS DECATUR-AREA EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE MINISTRY (DEAM)



DEAM serves more than 250 local families a month, providing critical assistance to ease hunger, prevent utility service disconnection, provide clothes and purchase life-sustaining prescriptions for qualified residents. **November is Decatur First's month to help stock their pantry.**

- pasta sauce – jelly (grape or strawberry) – small boxes of corn muffin mix
- canned black-eyed peas – canned pineapple – canned collard greens
- canned soups like "chunky" chicken, chicken noodle or cream of chicken or mushroom
- toilet paper – bar soap – deodorant

DEAM can buy food at 16¢/pound from the Atlanta Food Bank and that is the source of most of our canned fruits, vegetables and canned meats. Your donations are always welcome. Please leave them in the labeled containers outside the gym doors. If you prefer, you may write your checks to Decatur First and mark it "DEAM" in the memo line. **If you have questions or want to volunteer, contact Becky Vinson: 404-218-7152**

In August and September the Grow Team hosted five weeks of conversations around *Sticky Faith: Everyday Ideas to Build Lasting Faith in Your Kids*, by Kara Powell and Chap Clark. The book is a short, easy read and worth the time of anyone interested in the spiritual formation of kids of all ages. The whole church has a role to play in building faith in future generations. Parents are important, but other adults are critical to building faith, as well. Check out this top ten list for building Sticky Faith and see where you fit in!

STICKY FAITH TOP 10 LIST

1. We are building a faith identity, not a sin-management system. All people sin and feel separate from God. But we are created good in God's image, redeemed by Christ, and the Holy Spirit is working in us no matter what we've done.
2. The faith you model will have a greater impact on a child's faith than anything else.
3. Authenticity is more important than perfection. Let kids see your faith struggles and let them know when you put your faith into action.
4. Model the unconditional love of God for kids. When they mess up, draw closer to them rather than pushing them away.
5. Go to church. Attend worship regularly and build routines, rituals, and traditions around church life. Help kids find their place in the life of the church. You can ask the pastors and staff for help with this.
6. Talk about faith stuff with children. This goes beyond, "What did you learn in Sunday School?" Share your faith experiences and really listen when kids share their faith experiences with you.
7. Create a sticky web of relationships around children. This could be a covenant group that meets regularly, or individuals a child admires and wants to be like. The key is to be intentional about creating these relationships for children.
8. The likelihood a child will grow into an adult who follows Christ increases with the number of intergenerational connections that exist for them. Missions and worship are great ways to build these.
9. Help kids find meaningful ways to serve others and the church. Participate in mission that involves kids and adults working together, and talk about deeper justice issues together.
10. There is not a foolproof plan for building sticky faith. There's a little research to guide us, but a lot of this is trial and error and depends on your family and the personality of your kids. Just get started and try some stuff and see what works. Talk to other parents and trade ideas and experiences.

HONDURAS MISSION TRIP

Become part of the missional journey at Decatur First UMC as we serve in Honduras: February 10-17, 2018. Come see God's work in the Agalta Valley. **If you're interested in going, we need to know by December 1.** *There are some funds available for assistance.* **To sign-up email Barbara McCullough:** barbaramccullough@me.com

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT (ASP) MISSION TRIP NOVEMBER 12-18, 2017

Decatur First and North Decatur UMC will serve together in Rainelle, WV. Open to adults of any age; construction experience helpful, but not required. **COST:** \$100
Fletcher Daley: fletcherdaley45@gmail.com



ROY'S TOYS 2017

This is the 35th year Decatur First members have provided toys, clothing and books for children and items for senior citizens who would have very little or nothing for Christmas.

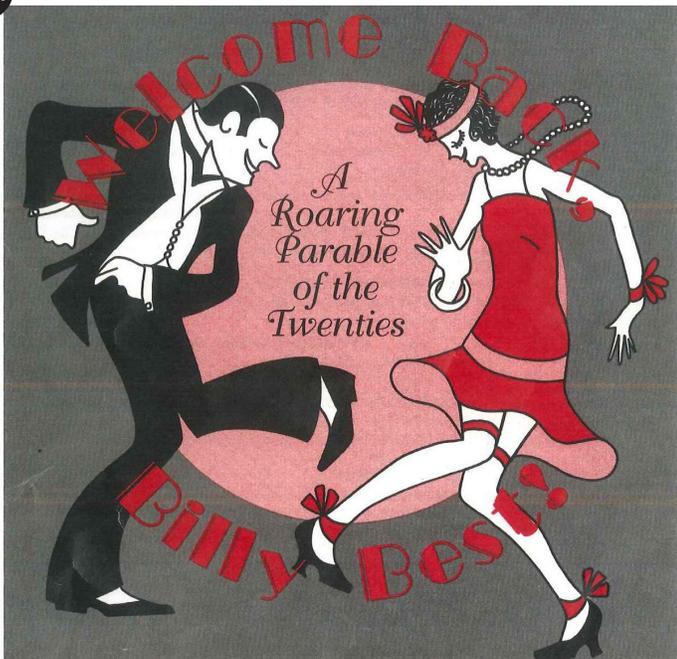
To join the team fill out the bulletin insert and drop it in the collection plate or turn it in at your Sunday School class. You can pickup the name and information about "your person" at the Candler Street entrance to the main building after the 8:30 and 11:00 services or at Café Decatur on Wednesday evenings. If you would rather make a monetary donation, please make your check payable to the church and mark it ROY'S TOYS.

Have YOU Joined the TOY TEAM?

Last year our church provided toys and clothing to many children from the Decatur Community. We need your help to increase our influence in the community. **Here's what you can do:**

- **Adopt a child, several children or a senior citizen.** Fill out the bulletin form and drop in the offering plate. You can pick up your child's name and wish list along with any instructions and recommendations from their parents. Wish list is about \$100. Do your shopping and bring the bag (provided) to church by November 19.
- **Buy a few books, games, dolls or other toys** and place items in the Toy Soldiers at the Candler Street entrance and back parking lot entrance to the main building which will be out November 1-19.
- **Donate money** and a volunteer shopper will buy the toys. Any amount is helpful. Checks payable to DFUMC - mark ROY'S TOYS on memo line
- **Volunteer to help in the final, frenzied fun helping organize the toys and do last minute shopping.** Organizing happens at the church on Sunday, November 26. Any last minute shopping is done on Monday, November 27. We'll deliver the toys to the Season of Giving drop off on November 29.

For information email Peggy Baker: peggybak@aol.com
or Laura Baker lcaker6981@aol.com



CHILDREN'S MUSIC

Welcome Back, Billy Best
Wednesday, November 15 | 6:30PM

Extra! Extra! Read All About It! There's a new children's musical coming to Café Decatur and we'd we love to see you there! The Hosanna Choir will lead us in a grand time as we discover the classic New Testament story of the prodigal son set in the 1920s. We invite you to step back in time as we enter the world of publishing through the William Randolph Best newspaper company. Mr. Best has a big surprise in store when one of his sons, Billy, asks him to "Give Me My Money Now!" Billy also has a surprise or two coming his way when he leaves town to strike out on his own.

We invite you to come dressed 1920s style: prim and proper and dressed for tea at Downtown Abbey or fancy free in Flapper style! So, dust off your dancing shoes, get out your sash or vest, Mary Janes or White Top Shoes and plan on having a Roaring good time with us. **There will be:**

- a 1920s costume contest for those who want to participate. Prizes will be awarded to the Best Dressed Boy, Girl, Man and Woman >>AND<<
- a 1920s Trivia Contest before the performance with prizes for the winning table!

We look forward to seeing you there!

CHILDREN'S ADVENT/CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE - DECEMBER 10

The Children's Choirs are excited to share the story of Christmas and the love of Christ with you on Sunday, December 10, at the 11am Traditional worship service. We invite you to come experience the joys of Jesus' birth in music and song as the children bring the story to life through the eyes of an angel, a shepherd child, an innkeeper's child and a page for the Magi.



EPIPHANY PARTY | JANUARY 3 | 6:00-7:45PM

The choristers in the Children's Choir program will be treated to an Epiphany Party to celebrate the Wise Men's journey to visit the Christ Child. We'll gather together as a musical family to sing "We Three Kings" and "The Twelve Days of Christmas" as the Christmas season comes to a close. We'll have pizza and special party games in the Fellowship Hall.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR MEMBERSHIP

YES, you can join a choir in January! The Decatur First Music Ministry has open enrollment for all children at any time during the school year. No auditions. You don't need to be a member of Decatur First UMC to join in the song with us.

Choristers learn vocal and music reading skills in choir which give them the confidence to lead sung prayer during worship. We also offer the opportunity for children to learn first-hand about serving God. Come join us and learn how to lift your voice in song. Choirs for age 3 through grade 5 meet on Wednesday and Sunday. Just pick the day that works best for your schedule. **For information about rehearsal times, visit:** www.decaturfirfirst.org/kids-music

- **JANUARY 7 | Sunday choir rehearsals resume**
- **JANUARY 10 | Wednesday choir rehearsals resume**

CHILDREN'S MUSIC IN MISSION

"Let Your Light Shine and Give God the Glory"
an Ecumenical Children's Choir Festival, presented Saturday, February 3 at 1pm in the Sanctuary

The Hosanna Choir will lift their voices in song with choristers from area churches. The festival is sponsored by the Atlanta Chapter of Choristers Guild. We are honored to have Carol Reeves, Artistic Director of the Georgia Children's Chorus, as the guest conductor.

All are invited to this special concert! During the weekend, the Hosanna Choristers will visit assisted living homes to share the love of Christ with residents. During the day they'll be together for lunch, rehearsal and some special activities. **Other festival highlights will include singing together in the 11am Traditional Sunday worship service at Decatur First, spending the night in a hotel and swimming in the hotel's heated pool. All 3rd- 5th graders are welcome to join us in January!**

Music 'N More

JUNE 4-8, 2018 | 9AM-3PM

Music 'N More camp is gearing up for a super time this summer! **The camp fee covers camp supplies, snacks and a camp t-shirt.**

WHO Camp open to children who've completed K-4

COST \$50/camper with \$100 maximum per family

HELPERS Middle school and high school students
{**student helper fee:** \$25}

This jam-packed week full of musical experiences offers a quality musical, spiritual, and social program to children of the church and community. During camp, they not only sing exciting music, but also have the opportunity to participate in other areas of the fine arts such as:

- **DRAMA:** Come join in the fun as you expand your imagination and enter the world of acting. A special musical production will be shared with family and friends on the last day of camp.
- **HANDBELLS:** Have you ever listened to the handbell choirs and wondered how do they do that? If you think ringing is fun, you're right! This class will give you the chance to play handbells and learn a little music at the same time.
- **DRUMMING:** Rhythm class uses xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels, drums and lots of fabulous hands-on rhythm instruments.
- **ART AND CRAFTS:** Explore your creative skills in an atmosphere of fun. Make a craft to take home as a memento. Add your handiwork to the stage backdrop.

MUSIC 'N MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Calling all adults and youth to help teach or assist - we can't do it without you! **Michele Wright:** mwright@decaturfirst.org



PRESCHOOL

**DECATUR FIRST UMC
PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN
2017-18 OPEN HOUSE
JANUARY 11 & 22 | 9:15-10:30AM**

For more information, please contact Joanne Hauserman, Weekday Preschool and Kindergarten Director dfumpreschool@gmail.com or 404-377-5784

The Decatur First United Methodist Preschool and Kindergarten has a long, rich tradition of nurturing and educating young children. This year marks the 61st anniversary of its continued stalwart presence as a loving preschool where children play, learn and grow.

www.decaturfirst.org/pre-school-kindergarten



YOUTH

CALLING ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH!

We have weekly Youth Group! Every Sunday we meet from 6:00-8:00pm following Youth Choir! We start out our time together with worship and dinner (provided pro-bono) and then move on to breaking into small groups. We have several gracious Youth Leaders that have really dived in to what we are trying to do for our Youth. Helping our Youth to feel empowered in their faith and that God loves them no matter what is what we strive for. Make sure you don't miss this great opportunity of fun, fellowship, and praising God.

For info, to volunteer as a youth leader or bring dinner, email Youth Director Bill Porter: bporter@decaturfirst.org

HIGH SCHOOL LOCK-IN AT DECATUR FIRST UMC FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10 - SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11 7:00PM FRIDAY - 10:00AM SATURDAY

Wear clothes you can run around in (we'll be playing lots of games!) Bring a pillow, sleeping bag, any meds (with instructions), toothbrush/toothpaste and a snack/drink to share! **Questions? Email Bill:** bporter@decaturfirst.org

ASP!

We ARE continuing our summer with our High School Youth at ASP and hope to keep on growing in numbers each summer! **To register email Bill:** bporter@decaturfirst.org

CONFIRMATION AND YOUTH CAFÉ!

We have been having 8th and 9th grade Confirmation every Sunday now with wonderful teachers and leaders! Our Confirmands have been meeting in G-6 and going through a program called *Confirm*. We have had more students showing up than planned and have been adding more and more chairs! This has been a great start to our Confirmation year! All other Youth Middle and High have been taking part in Youth Café where they get breakfast while studying the word of the Lord. **Bill:** bporter@decaturfirst.org

Help your kids get up in the morning to come to this great meeting time every Sunday!

MUSIC

NOVEMBER 12: HONEYBAKED HAM GIFT CARD ORDER DEADLINE

Having a ham for Thanksgiving or Christmas? Need a great gift idea? Put down those scented candles and order a HoneyBaked Ham gift card instead! Simply order from the music ministry and choose whether you'll pick up your cards or we should mail them. Then you can use them to purchase a ham or give them as gifts. They make especially good employee gifts. 20% of your purchase stays right here at the church and benefits *Music In Mission!*

DECEMBER 3: CALLANWOLDE BAND CONCERT

Callanwolde Band will be in our Sanctuary at 3pm to play holiday music you know and love. Free Admission.

DECEMBER 9 & 10 AT 6:00PM IN THE SANCTUARY CELEBRATION OF EMMANUEL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Most of the ensembles of the music ministry team up to offer the annual Christmas Music Extravaganza which includes brass, widely varied music, and drama (this year featuring the Shepherds and the King). Childcare available. Concert begins at 6:00pm.

DECEMBER 10: HONEYBAKED HAM DEADLINE

Missed it in November? No problem! Order your ham gift cards NOW and you'll have them in time for Christmas!

GETTING READY FOR ADVENT

NOVEMBER 29: PREPARING FOR ADVENT

Feel More Emotionally Grounded, presented by Michel Gribble-Dates, www.beombrella.com founder

The season of Advent is a time to ground your mind and emotions, live from a place of feeling rooted and relaxed, sound and steady. Yet, for many of us, this season is plagued by feeling overanxious, overstressed and overwhelmed. Join Michel Gribble-Dates, Decatur resident and creator of the *Fruitful Living* program, *Liturgical Yoga* and *Story & Stretch: Narrative Yoga for Kids*, on Wednesday, **November 29 at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall** to learn simple strategies for deepening your emotional health by soothing your nervous system. Attendees will receive a tip sheet to take home with eight practices to experience emotional grounding and also have the opportunity to practice two of the rituals during the event.



DECEMBER 2

– Trail Mix (4th & 5th Grade) Glassblowing Outing

DECEMBER 3

– Children's Advent Craft Workshop
(during Sunday School hour)
– Callanwolde Band Concert

DECEMBER 9-10

– *Celebration of Emmanuel* Concert

DECEMBER 17

– Youth Christmas Party

DECEMBER 24

One Morning Worship at 11am in Sanctuary
no children or youth Sunday school; childcare available

Candlelight Christmas Eve Services 4:30pm and 6:30pm | Sanctuary

Services of readings, carols, drama and sermon; concludes with lighting of candles and *Silent Night*. **Childcare is available.**

Candlelight Come As You Are Service 8pm | Chapel

Service will feature our CAYA band, contemporary and traditional Christmas music, scripture, sermon and will conclude with the lighting of candles.

Communion Christmas Eve Service 11pm | Chapel

Service of readings, carols, sermon and communion; concludes with lighting of candles and *Silent Night*.

DECEMBER 25-26

– Office Closed - Christmas

DECEMBER 31

– Regular Services and Sunday school schedule

JANUARY 1 OFFICE CLOSED - NEW YEAR'S DAY

JANUARY 3

– Epiphany Party for Children's Choirs



NOVEMBER SERMON SERIES

In November, we'll talk about why we do the things we do. We'll think about living intentionally. Think about your own "why."

- NOVEMBER 5** *Why Community?*
Hebrews 12:1-2; Ephesians 2:11-16
- NOVEMBER 12** *Why Church?*
Ephesians 5:15-20; John 2:19-22
- NOVEMBER 19** *Why Me?*
Psalm 8; Ephesians 4:1-6
- NOVEMBER 26** *Why Jesus?*
Matthew 25:31-46; Ephesians 1:11-23



LOVE TO TAKE PICTURES OR VIDEO? WE NEED YOUR TALENT!

So many exciting and fun things are happening at Decatur First and we need a way to record and share what God's up to. **To serve as a Greater Decatur Church Photojournalist or Videographer, email Pastor Joya:**
jabrams@decaturfirst.org

all experience levels and ages welcome



COLLEGE-AGE YOUNG ADULTS OUTREACH PROJECT KICKOFF

Sunday, November 5, representatives from each adult Sunday school class will take part in the kickoff of our **College-Age Young Adults Outreach Project**, led by Cherry Morgan.

The goal of this project is to reach out on an ongoing basis to our church high school graduates who may be in college, working or both. We want to continue to show these young adults we, as a church family, love and pray for them. No matter where their life paths are leading them, we are here for them. Initially, each adult Sunday school class will be invited to engage with three to five college-age young adults on an ongoing basis for this project.

This project and the great work by Cherry is a perfect example of the fact it takes the good ideas and hard work of the entire church to create and begin to realize our church's Vision for Spiritual Growth of children, youth and adults and Intergenerational Ministry. We praise Cherry for bringing this important ministry idea to the Grow Team, celebrate her hard work, and encourage all of the members of the church to share their good ideas.

For more information on this project, please email Cherry Morgan: cherry.morgan@att.net or **Dennis Coughlin** coughl_d@bellsouth.net

GIFTS GIVEN

OPERATING FUND

In Honor of Jason Forster
Gué & Bill Hudson

In Memory of Betty Blasingame
Dorothy Blasingame
Susanne B. Kaczor
Lawrence A. Kaczor

In Memory of India Powell
Bitsy Quist

ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of Mary & Bill Fox
Elizabeth Fox

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN CAMP GLISSON

In Memory of Mary Golding
Gretchen & Ed Collins

UMCOR

In Memory of Mary Golding
Alison Dixon

UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME

In Honor of Sharon Brewer
George Hickman

In Memory of Rebecca Barnwell
Ruby Daves
Ann Harrell
Betty Martin
Sara McKee

MUSIC MISSION

In Memory of Bob Biccum
Linder & Harry Clark

SAVE THE DATE



NOVEMBER 4

- Daylight Savings Time Ends
- All Saints Sunday
- Storykeepers Town Hall
- Music Ministry Concert

NOVEMBER 10-11

- Youth Lock-in

NOVEMBER 12

- HoneyBaked Ham Deadline
- High School Youth Service Day

NOVEMBER 15

- Hosanna Choir Musical Performance

NOVEMBER 23-24 OFFICE CLOSED - THANKSGIVING

NOVEMBER 28

- Creation Care Movie Screening

NOVEMBER 29

- Advent Preparation: *Feel Emotionally Grounded*

DECEMBER 2

- Trail Mix (4th/5th Grade) Glassblowing Outing

DECEMBER 3

- Children's Advent Craft Workshop
- Callanwolde Band Concert

DECEMBER 9-10

- *Celebration of Emmanuel* Concert

DECEMBER 17

- Youth Christmas Party

DECEMBER 23

- Christmas Eve Choir *Y'all Come* Rehearsal

DECEMBER 24

- **One Morning Worship at 11am in Sanctuary**
(no Children's or Youth Sunday School)
- **Candlelight Christmas Eve Services**
4:30pm and 6:30pm | Sanctuary
- **Candlelight CAYA Christmas Eve Service**
8pm | Chapel
- **Communion Christmas Eve Service** | 11pm | Chapel

DECEMBER 25-26 OFFICE CLOSED - CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 31

- Regular Services and Sunday School Schedule

JANUARY 1 OFFICE CLOSED - NEW YEAR'S DAY

JANUARY 3

- Epiphany Party for Children's Choirs
- Adult and Youth Choirs Resume

JANUARY 11

- CMO and Preschool Open House

JANUARY 14-15

- Middle School Youth Lock-in

JANUARY 15 OFFICE CLOSED - MLK JR. DAY

- MLK Service Project Workday

JANUARY 20

- Chancel Choir Retreat Day

JANUARY 22

- CMO and Preschool Open House

JANUARY 28

- Scout Sunday



**300 EAST PONCE DE LEON AVE.
DECATUR, GA 30030**