Decatur First United Methodist

Mission
Changing lives by moving hearts and employing hands for the cause of Christ.

Description
Decatur First is a 2,600 member congregation 2 miles from Candler School of Theology. The church is less than a 5 minute walk from the center of the resurgent city of Decatur, which was recently recognized as one of the 10 Best Neighborhoods in the country by the American Planning Association. One of our key values is that all of God's children are welcome, no exceptions.

Unique Opportunities in Ministry
We strive to give interns a chance to be involved in all aspects of ministry in the local church. This includes worship, missions, administration, outreach, etc. We offer three distinctly different styles of worship, a variety of opportunities for mission with and for people of all ages in many different settings, and a chance to work and have fellowship with people in the growing city of Decatur. This is a particularly exciting time in the life of our church, as we are in a process of discernment and visioning for our future. Interns will have an opportunity to observe and be part of this process, which is being led by one of the country's most respected church "coaches," as well as helping to strategize and implement ways for Decatur First to live into this vision. We encourage our interns to be involved in a wide range of church activities in addition to finding one or two specific ministry areas to focus on.

Site Details

Outreach
We have active partnerships with Decatur Emergency Assistance Ministries, Decatur Cooperative Ministry, and the United Methodist Children's Home, through which many of our members serve. In the fall we have a local missions week in which we work with several local organizations such as Action Ministries, DCM, and the city of Decatur, to engage members in outreach in the community. We sponsor the Arrendale Women's Prison Ministry and are a host kitchen for Senior Connections/Meals on Wheels, serving and delivering more than 13,000 meals per year.

Meeting the Five Areas of Ministry

Administration:
Interns are invited to observe any of our staff meetings and administrative committees and boards. They are encouraged to meet with lay and staff leaders to learn about the administrative processes of the church, the financing and budget process, personnel management, etc.

Liturgy (Worship and Preaching):
Interns may take part in all aspects of worship planning and may participate in any of our three worship services. In addition, we invite interns to be particularly involved in planning and carrying out special services throughout the year including Ash Wednesday, Blessing of the Pets, Taize prayer services, etc.
In addition to the above, interns will have the opportunity to preach on at least one Sunday morning in one or more of our regular worship services, and possibly additional times as opportunities arise.

Mission and Outreach:
Interns may take part in any number of our mission and outreach projects. Some interns have even taken part in regional and international mission trips. We also encourage interns to help groups within the church identify and carry out short-term mission projects.

Pastoral Calling and Congregational Care:
We encourage interns to accompany our pastors and staff on visits to members in the hospital and our home-bound members. We also encourage interns to take advantage of fellowship opportunities to build relationships with members of the congregation.

Religious Education:
Interns are invited and encouraged to teach or lead Sunday School classes or short-term Bible studies. Those with particular interest in children or youth ministry are encouraged to be involved with those programs.

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<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>United Methodist</th>
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<tr>
<td>Location Type</td>
<td>Urban</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Attendance</td>
<td>Approximately 570 at all three services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Times</td>
<td>Shorter, simpler traditional at 8:45; traditional in the sanctuary at 11; alternative in the chapel at 11.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Schedule</td>
<td>Three worships services (traditional in the sanctuary at 8:45 and 11; alternative in the chapel at 11); Sunday School and choirs for all ages; relational groups for men, women, and youth; Cafe Decatur Wednesday night suppers and fellowship; a variety of Bible studies; local, regional, and international service projects; Percolate (a coffee shop conversation group); Meals on Wheels; scouting for girls and boys; youth mission summer choir tour; handbell choirs for all ages; AA; Weight Watchers; Grief Support Group; Divorce Recovery; Children's Morning Out; Preschool and Kindergarten; Cancer Knitting Group; Divorce Care for Kids; Foster Parent Training; etc.</td>
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<td>Stipend?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance from Candler</td>
<td>2 miles</td>
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<td>Accessible to persons with disabilities?</td>
<td>All of our buildings are accessible for persons with developmental disabilities except for the gymnasium, which is going to call for some major retrofitting. The main sanctuary and educational building has wheelchair ramps at two levels and is equipped with an elevator that goes to all three floors. The chapel is equipped with a wheelchair ramp. The sanctuary is equipped with a hearing-assistance system. We also have an American</td>
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Sign Language interpreter in one of our adult Sunday School classes and our 11 o'clock sanctuary service.

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<tr>
<th>Accessible via public transportation?</th>
<th>Yes, by bus and MARTA</th>
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<td>Can women be ordained?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>What role do women play in leadership?</td>
<td>Katy Hinman is in her fourth year as our associate pastor and we have asked for her to be reappointed. The chairs of our Staff-Parish Relations Committee and our Finance Committee are women. A woman recently rotated off after serving three years as chair of our administrative board, and of our two lay leaders is a woman. Our youth minister and our children's minister are both females. This is the third church in which our senior pastor has worked with a female associate.</td>
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Contact
www.decaturfirst.org

David Jones, Senior Pastor
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300 East Ponce de Leon Avenue
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404-378-4541

Additional Comments:
Katy Hinman, associate pastor, will also be serving as a Con Ed Site Mentor.

khinman@decaturfirst.org

Our senior pastor was the chair of the NGA Board of Ordained Ministry for 8 years and has a special place in his heart for working with people who are heading toward ordination as deacons or elders.