

Dear FUMC Family,

It is a bittersweet moment for me as I write this letter to all of you. I have loved my time here at FUMC and have grown both in ministry to young people and in my own faith journey. One of the things I have loved is how much this church is like a family. We take care of each other, and that is a blessing that should never be discounted.

Thank you for supporting the youth of this church. It means so much to have a congregation that truly loves and cares for young people. You all have shown support through prayer, finances, and love of teenagers that truly shows your hearts for God and for people.

Thank you for loving my children, my own biological children, and my "youthological" children. Thank you for graciously putting up with toys, bikes, and scooters all over the yard, the church parking lot, and many other places I'm sure! Thank you for babysitting, teaching Sunday school, and Wednesday children's programming. Andrew and Christopher have truly enjoyed their time here and have felt loved and cared for. While we are excited to rejoin Phil in Alabama, we will also truly miss our church family here.

Most of all, thank you for being the body of Christ. Thank you for praying, filling needs, donating food, coats, and money for Bread of Life and the Samaritan fund. Thank you for paying for kids to go to camp, sending cards to seniors, and being confirmation mentors. You may feel like these are small things, but they make a huge impact on the lives of young people. You are teaching them what it means to be the body of Christ, and don't ever forget they are learning from you.

A youth ministry study once showed that a great indicator of a youth staying with the church through adulthood was the number of adults in the church who showed interest in them. A great ratio is 5:1, that's 5 ADULTS to every 1 YOUTH! You may look at that and think I'm crazy, but it's true. When a youth has at least 5 adults who show interest in them at church, they are more likely to stay in the faith.

So be part of a kid's 5, go to her softball game, or sit with him in MorningSong and ask about how his week was at school. Being part of a kid's 5 doesn't necessarily mean coming to youth group every week, although our volunteers are invaluable, it can be done in any number of ways.

I am truly excited for what lies ahead in the youth ministry at FUMC, I know Andrew Davis is going to be a great addition here, and I know he will find a church family here just as we have. Thank you for all you have done, and will continue to do for the youth at FUMC.

Shalom,
Sara Galyon
(and Andrew, Christopher, Grandma, and Skeeter)