

PREPARE

2nd Sunday of Advent

Changing Lives by Sharing Christ, Making Disciples, Serving and Giving Hope

Sermon Notes: Thursday, December 7 and Sunday, December 10

Have you ever googled *the perfect Christmas*? I have. With the responses, you will find answers ranging from the title of a Hallmark movie to a Pinterest post for 51 Cheap and Creative Gift ideas. Surprisingly, the responses did not include The Perfect One, Jesus. We who follow him, need to be reminded that “perfect Christmas” begins and ends with Jesus. We also need the reminder that since we live in an imperfect, broken world, we likely will experience everything, but perfection over the next few weeks. However, we can experience perfect love in Christ.

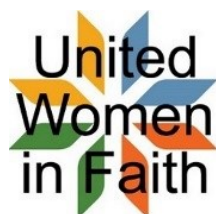
The scripture for the week is Hebrews 1:1-4. This scripture is a powerful description of Jesus. The author of Hebrews reminds us that Jesus is the heir of all things and He reflects the glory of God. Along with God, Jesus is Creator. Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, purification for our sins, and sits at the right hand of God. He ushered in the new covenant and God speaks through Him. As we move through the Advent season and Christmas, may we rely on Jesus and realize that he is the perfect foundation for everything.

Advent Blessings,
Rev. Sherri

Thursday Worship will meet in the Chapel, Room 118, on December 14 .

*Celebration Worship will meet in the Chapel, Room 118, at 9 AM on Sunday December 17, for “Christmas Unplugged”.

Christmas Boutique



Visit the UWF Christmas Boutique on Sunday mornings between the worship services in the Chestnut Foyer during Advent. All proceeds benefit UWF Missions! There will be new Christmas Cards and Note Cards (blank inside) featuring our stained glass windows, Chrismons and more, plus some favorites designs. There will also be handmade jewelry and specialty items that will make wonderful Christmas gifts. We look forward to seeing you this Sunday morning at the UWF Christmas Boutique.

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Worship Opportunities

5:30 pm Thursday Worship

Sunday Mornings:

Celebration 9 am* Traditions 11 am*

*In Person (Sanctuary) and Online

ACOLYTES

December 10 Sara Kate & Jake Thornberg
 December 17 Clementine & Rhett Hilburn

Security for Thursday Worship

December 7 Eric Wright
December 14 Mark Condra
December 21 George Fant

Tech Team Schedule

December 10

Celebration Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Genevieve Corley
Traditions Davis Varner, Wayne Payton, Brad Barnes

December 17

Celebration Christmas Unplugged, in Chapel, Rm 118
Traditions Mark Casey, Parker Casey, Brad Barnes

Sunday SCHOOL
Sunday School Classes for All Ages!

Children's Sunday School Rooms 108 and 104
 Youth Sunday School Room 211
 New Adult Sunday School Room 209
 Pathfinder/Seekers Room 208
 Living Water Room 116
 (Nursery provided for Children under 3)

SUNDAYS 10:00 AM
 FIRST UMC GADSDEN
 115 S. 5TH ST, GADSDEN, AL 35901

It's Time for New Beginnings...Maybe you have never participated in Sunday School or you have been out for a while! YOU Belong in Sunday School! Choose a class to visit—there are lots to choose from!



Join Pastor Sherri for "A Charlie Brown Christmas" Advent Study

Beginning Wed. November 15

11/15, 11/29, 12/6, & 12/13

Wednesday Mornings @ 11 am

Gathering Room, 201

Wonderful Wednesday @ 6 pm

Room 208

Prepare and learn this Advent season with "A Charlie Brown Christmas." This cartoon classic includes the message of Jesus' birth and reminds us of the real meaning of Christmas. Join this study for all ages, which brings the Biblical message of Jesus' birth and deals with the real issues around the holidays. This study uses clips from the cartoon to enhance Biblical study and reflection.

Men at the Well Thursday Mornings, 7:00 am

You are invited to join the weekly Bible study with the Men at the Well small group. They are currently meeting at the Choice Restaurant at 7 am. Their current study is the "12 Tribes of Israel".

Contact Todd Rains, Mark Condra, Mark Casey, or any of the Men at the Well for more information.

Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Dinner 5:15 pm
RSVP: 256-490-5018

Dec. 13 Assorted Sandwiches

**\$7 per person
 \$3 for 11 and under**

Adult Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesdays

"A Charlie Brown Christmas" Advent Study w/ Pastor Sherri

Wonderful Wednesday @ 6 pm

Room 208

Advent Study

"Why In the World-The Reason God Became One of Us"

6 pm, Room 110

Advent and Christmas at Gadsden First UMC ~ PREPARE

Thursday Worship

Nov 30, 5:30 PM
"Celebration of the Chrismons"

Dec 7, 5:30 PM
"Preparing for a Perfect Christmas"

Dec 14, 5:30 PM
Meet in the Chapel, Room 118, this week.
"Preparing with Joy"

Dec 21, 5:30 PM
"Preparing for the Unexpected"

Dec 28, No Thursday Worship

Celebration

Nov 26, 9 AM
"Preparing for Holy Seasons"

Dec 3, 9 AM
First Sunday of Advent
"Hanging of the Green"

Dec 10, 9 AM
Second Sunday of Advent
"Preparing for a Perfect Christmas"

Dec 17, 9 AM
Christmas Unplugged, Chapel
"Preparing with Joy"

Dec 24, 10 AM One Worship Service
"Preparing for the Unexpected"

Dec 31, 10 AM One Worship Service
"Preparing for a New Year"

Traditions

Nov 26 "Preparing for Holy Seasons"

Dec 3, 11 AM
First Sunday of Advent
"Celebration of the Chrismons"

Dec 10, 11 AM
Second Sunday of Advent
"Preparing for a Perfect Christmas"

Dec 17, 11 AM
Third Sunday of Advent
Christmas Music
Chancel Choir With Orchestra

Dec 24, 10 AM One Worship Service
"Preparing for the Unexpected"

Dec 31, 10 AM One Worship Service
"Preparing for a New Year"

Advent and Christmas: PREPARE

Sunday, Dec. 10, 5 PM, Children's Ministry Presents "Star of Wonder" A Children's Musical

Sunday, Dec. 17, 9 AM, Christmas Unplugged, followed by Cookies @ HeBrews, Chapel, 118
11 AM, Christmas Music, Chancel Choir and Orchestra, Sanctuary

Sunday, Dec. 24, 10 AM, One Worship Service

Sunday, Dec. 24, 4 PM, Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Sunday, Dec. 24, 5 PM, Live Nativity, Corner of Chestnut and 5th Street

Sunday, Dec. 24, 6 PM, Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Sunday, Dec. 31, 10 AM, One Worship Service



Order Poinsettias to be placed on the Altar during Advent and Christmas Worship Services!



Cost: \$25.00* ___ # of Poinsettias

Select Date: ___ Dec 17 ___ Dec 24

(Poinsettias will be placed in both services.)

Circle One: In honor of In memory of

Name(s): _____

Given By _____

***subject to change**

Orders must be placed Monday at noon prior to the date you are requesting.

ELC News

Thursday, December 7th we had a wonderful time at the Christmas Program and Parties. Thank you to everyone that made this day extra special. The ELC will be closed for Christmas Break Friday, December 8th through Tuesday, January 2nd. Regular hours will resume Wednesday, January 3rd.

—Helene Haller



Youth Ministry News

- Youth Sundays
10 am,
Room 211



- Youth Group, Wednesdays
6 pm, Room 211

Youth Counselor
Carmen McKiven

Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Dinner

December 13 Assorted Sandwiches

5:15 pm RSVP: 256-490-5018

\$7 Adults, \$3 Children 11 & under

Children's Ministry

Sunday Mornings

Children's Church

9 am and 11 am

Sunday School

10 am

Wonderful

Wednesday

Children's Small
Groups and Activities

6 pm

Wednesday Special

Christmas Caroling

Dec. 13 6 pm



December Missions

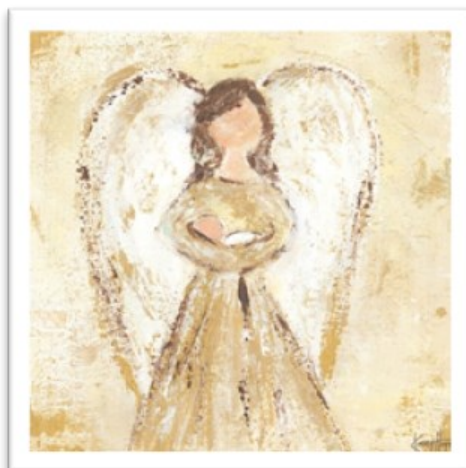
The Angel Tree

The Angel Tree is located in the Sanctuary.

You can select an angel from the tree with a child's wish list for this Christmas. Please sign your name on the angel and leave it on the tree, remove their wish list from the tag and take this with you to purchase gifts for their Christmas.

There is also a sign-out sheet beside the Angel Tree, so be sure to sign your Angel # out so we can know which angel you have selected.

Angel Tree Gifts should be returned to the church, labeled with their number & unwrapped no later than Monday, December 11 at noon.



United Women in Faith

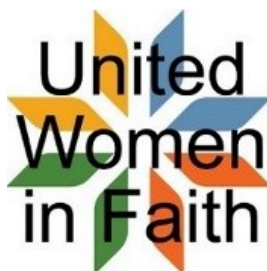
Luverna Waid Circle

The date has been changed due to a conflict that could not be helped. Our Christmas Party will be Monday, December 11th at Jill Vincent's Home 2104 Harbor Lane in Southside, starting at 5:30 pm.

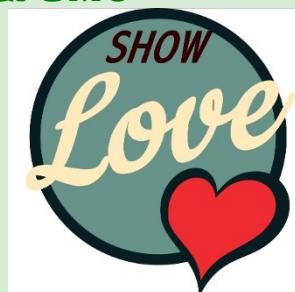
Bring your favorite hors d'oeuvre and a wrapped gift for a friend not more than \$15.00.

The church bus will meet everyone in the church parking lot at 5:00 pm and will leave at 5:15 pm.

It's going to be fun! You don't want to miss it! See you at Jill's on Monday!



GFUMC



"By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35

Ladle of Love

Fridays, 11:00am-12:00pm,
at the Portico entrance.

Donations may be made to the Ladle of Love Fund in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Clothes Closet

Workdays

are Tuesdays before open days from 9:00-11:00 am.

Open to Public

1st & 3rd Wednesdays

December open dates are

12/6 and 12/20

9:00 am to 11:00 am

516 Broad Street Gadsden

Find out more about mission and service opportunities @

Clients Served

September 2023

Ladle of Love 488

Clothes Closet 260

Thanks to our volunteers!

www.fumcgadsden.org/serve

Phone: 256-543-8200

Email: fumc@fumcgadsden.org

#gfumcreconnect2023




 The Division of Fine Arts
 of Gadsden State Community College

Cordially invites you to attend

AN EVENING OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Dec. 12
6:00 p.m.

First United Methodist
Church of Gadsden
115 S. 5th Street

Showcasing A Cappella Choir and GSCC Singers

GADSDEN STATE
SINGERS

A CAPPELLA
CHOIR

Guidelines for End of Year Contributions:

In order for contributions to be posted to your 2023 giving record, they must meet one of these requirements:

1. The gift is received & posted to your account before December 31st.
2. The contribution is put into the offering plate or delivered to the office on or before December 29th.
3. The envelope in which the gift is mailed is postmarked on or before December 31st.
4. An online E-Giving transaction is dated on or before December 31st. (Find link at fumcgadsden.org/giving)
5. Gifts of stock should be transferred before the market closes on December 29th. Please inform the financial office at the church about a stock transfer.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Sheila Witherspoon or Pam Deru in the church office at giving@fumcgadsden.org or 256-543-8200, no later than December 29th. **(Church office closes at 4:00 pm, Friday December 29th)**

DOES AN IRA ROLLOVER MAKES SENSE THIS YEAR?

Did you know that you can reduce your taxes by making a gift from your IRA to your church? An IRA rollover is a simple and easy way for you to use your IRA to help Gadsden First United Methodist Church fulfill its mission.

By transferring some of your IRA required distribution to the church, you may be able to lower your taxable income and capital gains taxes this year. Check with your advisor to see how an IRA rollover gift could impact your taxes while helping the ministries and missions of the church.



He Brews
 ...where your cup runneth over

 FIRST UMC GADSDEN

Inviting Ministries

Please join us for HeBrews Coffee Café
 between the Sunday morning worship services,
 from 10 am to 11 am.

We can't wait to see you there!!!

ROSS & STEPHANIE ISBELL



Ross grew up in Gadsden and has attended our church his entire life. He went to Gadsden High, then Washington and Lee University in Lexington, VA. He graduated from Dental School at UAB and is now in practice with his father, Gordon Isbell, at Isbell Dental. Ross enjoys watching football and basketball, as well as hiking.

Stephanie attended Homewood High School before going to Auburn University. She was a First Grade teacher for 11 years, then decided to stay home with their young son, Wells, who is now 2 years old. We're excited to have a new generation of the Isbell family at our church!

Do You Know?

A weekly interview column by Anna Mullin & Inviting Ministries to help our church family get to know one another. Anna may be calling you soon, so we can get to know you too!

See Page 7 for information on End of Year Giving to First UMC Gadsden.



**Fifty-Nine (59)
"New Beginnings
Estimate of Giving" Cards
have been returned
as of 12.6.23
Thank You!**

During the month of October, we journeyed through Generosity: New Beginnings. In this emphasis you were invited to consider how God is calling you to a new beginning and how you are committing to a new beginning. Through the spiritual disciplines of prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness God transforms us and makes us new. God may have called you to a new prayer emphasis, or a renewed commitment to worship. The Lord might have invited you to tithe or a new avenue of service. God could have nudged you to invite someone to church or share your faith in another way. I am excited to hear about all the new beginning at First United Methodist Church of Gadsden.

If you have not made a commitment to your new beginning and completed your estimate of giving card, I encourage you to do so. Fifty-three giving units within the church have done so already. Your card may be turned into the church office, in the offering plate, or electronically on the church website/app. If you have lost your card, blank estimate of giving cards are available at the information table in the Chestnut Street lobby. Please turn your card in as soon as possible, this helps the leadership plan for 2024 and to be good stewards of resources. Remember that your estimate is just an estimate, and not a binding contract. The information is kept confidential with the financial secretary. In addition to the logistical aspect of stewardship, this year's card includes a space for you to indicate and commit to how God might be calling you to step up in 2024.

God is doing a new thing in the life of First United Methodist Church and I can't wait to see how you are going to be a part of it!

In Christ,

Rev. Shari Reynolds

Generosity: Ways to Give

In-person, at the offering time during worship.

www.fumcgadsden.org/give

Text to Give: 256-344-8464

Mail your tithe or gift: 115 S. 5th Street,
Gadsden, AL 35901



*Strength for Today
Bright Hope for Tomorrow*

Secure Online Giving



Scan the QR Code or
Text to Give: 256-344-8464
First United Methodist Church of Gadsden

Calendar for Dec 10-Dec 16, 2023

Dec 10 Sunday

9:00 am Celebration Worship, Sanctuary

9:15 am Handbell Choir Practice, Room 112

10:00 am Sunday School for all ages

HeBrews Coffee, Chestnut Street Foyer

11:00 am Traditions Worship, Sanctuary

5:00 pm Childrens' Christmas Musical, Sanctuary

followed by "Happy Birthday Jesus Party"

Upstairs in the Gathering Room

Dec 11 Monday ELC closed, will re-open Jan 3, 2024

9:00 am-10:00 am Exercise Group, Gym

5:30 pm LuVerna Waid Circle, at home of Jill Vincent

Dec 12 Tuesday

5:00 pm-6:00 pm Yoga, Gym

5:30 pm Board of Stewards, Gathering Room

6:00 pm GSCC A Capella Christmas Choir, Sanctuary

Dec 13 Wednesday

11:00 am-12:00 pm Wednesday Morning Bible Study

5:15 pm Wednesday night meal, Gathering Room

6:00 pm Children Caroling

6:00 pm Youth meeting at Lori Sokol's Home

6:00 pm Small Group Studies, Room 110 & 208

6:00 pm Choir practice, Choir Room

Dec 14 Thursday

9:00 am-10:00 am Exercise Group, Gym

5:30 pm Thursday Worship, Chapel

6:00 pm Gadsden City High School Choir Concert, Sanctuary

Dec 15 Friday

11:00 am Ladle of Love, Portico

Poinsettias December 10



In memory of Curtis & Toni Furse, given by Judy & Mandell Tillman, & Sally Furse

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. T.R. Tillman, given by Judy & Mandell Tillman

In memory of Sara & Foster Johnson, given by Diana Rampey

Star of Wonder- A Musical of Hope

The children will sing excerpts from the musical during the 9:00 am and 11:00 am services on Sunday, December 10.

On this Sunday, Dec. 10, at 5:00 pm the Children's Ministry will present their Christmas Musical, "Star of Wonder" in the sanctuary.

A "Happy Birthday Jesus Party" will follow upstairs.



The Handbell Choir will play in the 11:00 am service this Sunday, December 10.

Immediate Prayer Concerns

Lisa Dobbins Nancy Smith Bessie Crow

Continued Prayer Concerns

Asher Mae Collins Rodney Thompson Juanita Hammons

Birthdays

Dec 10 Debbie Leach, Debbie Hiltz, Jamie Bowers, Bo Hayes, Noah Sherrouse

Dec 11 Bryant Grizzell, Bonda Vance, Kimberly Hayes, Emma Smith

Dec 12 Jessica Hightower Hopper, Sara Catheryne Freeman

Dec 13 Dick Abel, Danny Jackson, Jon Ford, Jackson Skelton

Dec 14 Neil Mullin, Gloria Rives, Michael Haney, Tommy Hiltz

Dec 15 Danna Dean, Helene Haller

Dec 16 Cindy Norris, Kaci Pritchard, Jennifer Hester



Week of December 3, 2023

In Person Total *197 Worship Total 744

Online 547 Thursday Worship *12

Traditions Service *103/328

Celebration Service *82/219

Sunday School-Adult *17/1 Children *0

Sunday School-Youth *0 Nursery *2

Bible Study Groups *25 Children *43

Youth *11 Santa Brunch *71 *in person

General Offering Budget \$12,777.00

General Offering Received \$14,147.00

YTD General Offering Budget \$626,073.00

YTD General Offering Rec'd \$577,090.09

Requests for Sunday Morning

Announcements must be submitted in writing to the church secretary, Susan Swann by Thursday at noon.

Please note: A limited number of announcements will be made during Sunday worship due to time constraints.

Please submit all church news to the church secretary, Susan Swann, by the deadline of Tuesday at noon, so that it can be included in the newsletter.