

PREPARE

1st Sunday of Advent

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

Sermon Notes: Thursday, November 30 and Sunday December 3

Advent begins on Sunday. This is a season of preparation and waiting. We remember that as the Israelites waited for the birth of the Messiah, we await the Messiah's return. We also remember that as Mary waited for Jesus to be born, so we await Jesus to be born again in our hearts at Christmas. Advent can be known as the season of anticipation, so we anticipate the coming festivities of Christmas and the weeks ahead. How are you preparing to keep a Holy Advent? Let me offer a few suggestions for personal devotion and spiritual growth.

1. Read a chapter of Luke each day before Christmas in December. You will finish the gospel on Christmas Eve.
2. Invest in or create an Advent Calendar. With the countdown of each day, pray a specific prayer for the season or pray for a different person each day
3. Create your own Advent wreath. An Advent liturgy for lighting can be found online or in the Upper Room Devotional, which can be picked up at the church.
4. Attend worship on November 30 or December 3 and learn more about the symbolism of the season.

Thursday Night Worship and Traditions worship will include a *Celebration of the Chrismos* and Celebrations worship will include the *Hanging of the Green*. However you mark this special season, I pray that you experience the fullness of God's love.

In Christ, Rev. Sherri

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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 3 Luke Barnes

December 10 Sara Kate & Jake Thornberg

Security for Thursday Worship

December 7 Eric Wright

December 14 Mark Condra

December 21 George Fant

Tech Team Schedule

December 3

Celebration Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Sheila Freeman

Traditions Wayne Payton, Sheila Freeman, Brad Barnes

December 10

Celebration Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Genevieve Corley

Traditions Davis Varner, Wayne Payton, Brad Barnes

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, Chrismos 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.

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. 6 Italian

\$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 beginning 11/15

"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
"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. 3, 10 AM, Children's Ministry hosts "Brunch with Santa"

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

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



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



Cost: \$25.00* ___ # of Poinsettias

Select Date: ___ Dec 10 ___ 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

On Monday, December 4th, our 3k and 4k students will sing for UWF. Thursday, December 7th we will have our Christmas Program at 9:30 in the sanctuary. Class parties will follow with early dismissal at 11:00. The ELC will be closed December 8th through January 2nd for Christmas Break.

—Helene Haller

Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Dinner

December 6 Italian

5:15 pm RSVP: 256-490-5018

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



Youth Ministry News

- Youth Sundays
10 am,
Room 211



- Youth Group, Wednesdays
6 pm, Room 211

Youth Counselor
Carmen McKiven

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

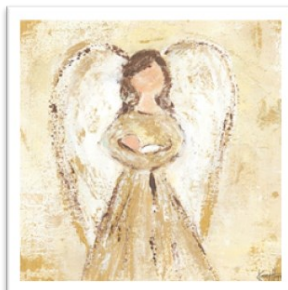
Dec. 13 6 pm



December Missions

The Angel Tree

The Angel Tree is in the Sanctuary December 3 and 10. You can select an angel from the tree with a child's name and wish list to purchase gifts for this Christmas. Angel Tree Gifts should be returned to the church unwrapped no later than Monday December 11 at noon.



What an amazing day for First UMC Gadsden to be a part of in our community! Your donations and gifts for Gadsden First Missions that helped to provide the desserts for the CommUnity Thanksgiving are truly appreciated! Over 10,000 meals were served this year! In addition, many of you served, including GFUMC Youth and Children, at the CommUnity Thanksgiving, either during the week, preparing and packaging the food or on Thanksgiving Day! Thank you to each of you who served!!



United Women in Faith

UWF December Luncheon

When: December 4

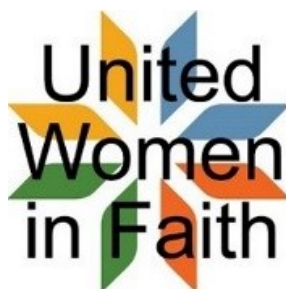
Time: 12:00 noon

Program: ELC children will sing
Please call or text your reservations in to Delores Abney by Friday, December 1 at noon. 256-458-0376

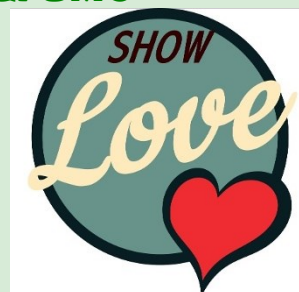
—Barbara Bennett

Luverna Waid Circle Christmas Party

Tuesday, Dec. 12, 6 pm at the home of Jill Vincent.



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

November open dates are

11/1 and 11/15

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

PREPARE

1st Sunday of Advent



Hanging of the Green

REV. SHERRI REYNOLDS
CELEBRATION WORSHIP
DECEMBER 3 9 AM



CELEBRATION OF THE
Chrismons

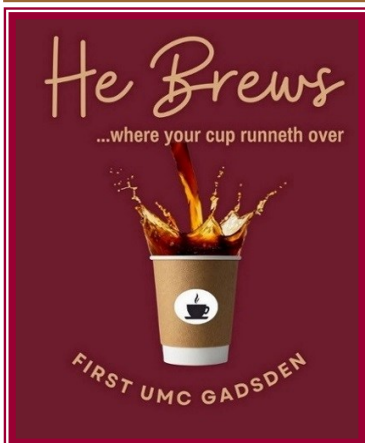
REV. SHERRI REYNOLDS

THURSDAY WORSHIP
NOVEMBER 30 5:30 PM

TRADITIONS
DECEMBER 3 11:00 AM

www.fumcgadsden.org

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!!!**



**Fifty-Eight (58)
"New Beginnings
Estimate of Giving" Cards
have been returned
as of 11.27.23
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



Secure Online Giving



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

Calendar for Dec 3-Dec 9, 2023

Dec 3 Sunday

9:00 am Celebration Worship, Sanctuary

9:15 am Handbell Choir Practice, Room 112

10:00 am Brunch with Santa

HeBrews Coffee, Chestnut Street Foyer

11:00 am Traditions Worship, Sanctuary

Dec 4 Monday 9:00 am-1:00 pm ELC Fall Schedule

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

9:00 am-11:00 am Clothes Closet workday

10:30 am UWF Executive Board Meeting, Room 208

12:00 pm UWF Luncheon, Gathering Room

Dec 5 Tuesday 9:00 am-1:00 pm ELC Fall Schedule

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

In Memory of His Life

Jeff Blackwood

November 29, 2023



Dec 6 Wednesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm ELC Fall Schedule

9:00 am-11:00 am Clothes Closet open

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

5:15 pm Wednesday night meal, Gathering Room

6:00 pm Children's activities Gym, Room 108

6:00 pm Youth Activities, Gym, Room 211

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

6:00 pm Choir practice, Choir Room

Dec 7 Thursday

9:00 am-1:00 pm ELC Fall Schedule

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

9:30 am ELC Christmas Program & parties

5:30 pm Thursday Worship, Sanctuary

Dec 8 Friday

11:00 am Ladle of Love, Portico

Did You Know?

Many Christmas traditions have been handed down to us from the Middle Ages, when the holiday of Christmas became more important than it had ever been. It was during the Middle Ages that St. Francis of Assisi came up with the idea of the Nativity scene, using animals and villagers to re-enact the story of Jesus' birth at Bethlehem, which were eventually replaced by the ceramic, plaster, and plastic figures that we know today.

The evergreen ball comes to us from that time, too. During the Middle Ages, villagers would wind together twine and evergreen branches into a ramshackle ball shape. In the center of this conglomeration of evergreen boughs, they would place a figure of an infant to represent the baby Jesus. These "holy boughs", as they were called, would be hung from passageways and big houses to render blessings and good luck to all who passed under the bough and the Holy Infant.

The Evergreen Ball hanging from our sanctuary chandelier is given in honor and in memory of our parents, Mr. & Mrs. Hubert (Audrey) Owen and Mr. & Mrs. Lee (Jane) Trotter, by Mr. & Mrs. Charles (Kathy) R. Trotter.

Honorariums & Memorials

Music Fund

In memory of Ernest McBride, given by Elaine Spearman.

Immediate Prayer Concerns

Lisa Dobbins Nancy Smith Bessie Crow

The Family of Jeff Blackwood (Dee McCoy's Brother)

Continued Prayer Concerns

Asher Mae Collins Rodney Thompson Juanita Hammons

Birthdays

Dec 4 John McCord, Ginger Ross,
Richard McCoy, Victoria Ogletree,
Hayden Winters

Dec 5 Shannon Campbell,
Matthew Vance, Savannah New

Dec 6 Anna Katherine Hollingsworth,
Erica Shumate, Will Calcote,
John Waid

Dec 7 Margie Freeman,
Olivia Kendrick, Austin Waits

Dec 8 Benilda Kelley,
Silas Tankersley

Dec 9 Caroline Culp, Kailie Jackson

Week of November 26, 2023

In Person Total *132 Worship Total 531

Online 668 Thursday Worship *0

Traditions Service *80/259

Celebration Service *52/272

Sunday School-Adult *42/1 Children *4

Sunday School-Youth *3 Nursery *1

Bible Study Groups *0 Children *25

Youth *8 UWF *8 Volunteers *9 *in person

General Offering Budget \$12,777.00

General Offering Received \$32,651.95

YTD General Offering Budget \$613,296.00

YTD General Offering Rec'd \$562,943.09

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.