



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

Sunday, December 31

There will be One United Worship Service at 10 am on December 31.

As 2023 ends, I want to offer a few questions for reflection. May these questions be a spiritual guide to you as you look back over the past year.

Where and how did you experience the love of Jesus most during the last year?

What from 2023 do you want to take with you into 2024?

What do you need to let go of as you move into a New Year?

What could you do now that would make the biggest difference in your life next year? In ten years? In eternity?

Where and how is God guiding you as you say goodbye to 2023?

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift His countenance upon you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26

Merry Christmas!

Rev. Sherri

Beginning January 17 *The Chosen Bible Study*

Rev. Sherri will be leading a Bible study based on *The Chosen*, Season 1. This popular Christian historical drama focuses on people who encountered Jesus, and how Jesus may have been viewed through their eyes. The study will include episodes from the show, examination of relevant scriptures, separation of scripture from dramatization within the episodes, theological reflection, and personal application. The study held will be at 11am and 6pm on Wednesdays, starting January 17 in room 208. No books are required. Classes will last until March 20 (skipping February 14 for Ash Wednesday).

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Worship Opportunities

5:30 pm Thursday Worship

Sunday Mornings:

December 24 & 31 One Service at 10:00 am

*In Person (Sanctuary) and Online

ACOLYTES

Dec 31 Celebration Worship @ 10 am

Security for Thursday Worship

December 28 No Service

January 4 Todd Rains

January 11 Mark Condra

Tech Team Schedule

December 31

One Service at 10:00 am: Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Brad Barnes

January 7

Celebration: Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Brad Barnes Traditions, Davis Varner, Neil Mullin, Carmen McKiven

Sunday SCHOOL

Classes for All Ages!

Children's Sunday School Rooms 108 and 104
Youth Sunday School Room 211

New Young Adult Sunday School Room 209
Pathfinder/Seekers Room 208
Living Water Room 116

(Nursery provided for Children under 3)

Please note: Sunday school classes will not meet on New Year's Eve, Sunday, December 31!

*Please join us at 10 am in the Sanctuary this Sunday, December 31
for a United Worship Service in the Sanctuary!*

Wednesday morning Bible study w/Pastor Sherri will resume on Jan. 17

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.

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

Adult Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesdays

Will resume on Wednesday, January 10.

6 pm Small Group with Harriet Murray, Room 110

"I Guess I Haven't Learned that Yet"

Beginning January 17

Rev. Sherri will be leading a Bible study based on *The Chosen*, Season 1. This popular Christian historical drama focuses on people who encountered Jesus, and how Jesus may have been viewed through their eyes. The study will include episodes from the show, examination of relevant scriptures, separation of scripture from dramatization within the episodes, theological reflection, and personal application. The study held will be at 11am and 6pm on Wednesdays, starting January 17 in room 208. No books are required. Classes will last until March 20 (skipping February 14 for Ash Wednesday).

**Wonderful Wednesday
Fellowship Dinner 5:15 pm**

**Will resume on
January 10**

ELC News

Our 3K and 4K students gave a great performance for the Judicial Staff at their Christmas party on Monday, December 11th at the Judicial Building. 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



Jan 7-Pastor Sherri
Jan 14-Sheila Freeman

More Fun Stuff Coming
WW resumes on January 10.

Youth Counselor
Carmen McKiven

Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Dinner
Will resume on January 10

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

GFUMC CHILDREN'S CALENDAR JANUARY 2023

Children's Church, Sunday's 9:00 & 11:00

Wonderful Wednesdays @6:00

MEASURE UP: JESUS' EARLY LIFE

January 10: God guides us to safety

January 17: Love God with our actions

January 24: We can follow Jesus

January 31: We are ready at the right time

January 24 🤡

National Belly Laugh Day

Bring a joke this Wednesday!

www.fumcgadsden.org/children 

Children's Ministry



GFUMC Youth and Children's Ministries
Christmas Cheer!



A Year of Missions 2023

January- UMCOR US Disaster Relief

February- Tornado Buckets for UMCOR Disaster Relief Warehouse

March- Spring Cleaning @ GFUMC

April- Charlsie House

May- Striplin Teacher Appreciation Luncheon & A/B Honor Roll Party

June- GFUMC Clothes Closet

July- Christmas in July Stockings Gift to Gadsden

August- Striplin Adopt-A-School "Welcome Back Teacher Breakfast"

September- Etowah Free Clinic

October- 2nd Chance Shelter

November- CommUnity Thanksgiving Thanksgiving Food Bags

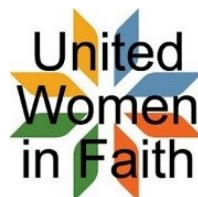
December- 40 Angel Tree Children

Thank you for all your hours of service and generous donations for 2023! Watch for exciting news for GFUMC missions for 2024!
—Your 2023 GFUMC Mission Team

United Women in Faith

The next luncheon will be January 8, 2024 at 12:00 noon. The program will be Rev. Sherri Reynolds speaking "Women As Leaders in UMC". To make a reservation please text Olivia Kendrick by noon on Friday, January 5th. 205-454-4375

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



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

January open dates are

1/3 and 1/17

9:00 am to 11:00 am

516 Broad Street Gadsden

Find out more about mission and service opportunities @

www.fumcgadsden.org/serve

Phone: 256-543-8200

Email:

fumc@fumcgadsden.org

#gfumcreconnect2023

Clients Served

October 2023

Ladle of Love 377

Clothes Closet 247

November 2023

Ladle of Love 294

Clothes Closet 248

Thanks to our Volunteers!

"I'm about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 42:19

I wanted to follow up on 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 so excited about all the ways First United Methodist has stepped up and responded. Many of you have answered the call to follow God into a new discipline in the coming year. This new commitment includes an increased commitment to giving, with a greater amount pledged for 2024 and being just three commitments shy of surpassing last year's number of pledges.

If you have not made a commitment to your new beginning and completed your estimate of giving card, I encourage you to do so. 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 estimates of giving cards are available at the information table in the Chestnut Street lobby. Your commitment is not a binding contract but helps the leadership plan for 2024 and to be good stewards of resources. The information is kept confidential by 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. If you are planning on carrying your 2023 commitment to the coming year, please let our financial secretary, Sheila Witherspoon, know even if the amount remains the same. All of this allows you to be a part of new beginnings which are happening here.

I am so excited about the year ahead. By the power of the Holy Spirit, I can feel that God is doing a new thing at First United Methodist Church, and I am blessed to be on this journey with you!

In Christ,

Rev. Shu Reynolds

**Sixty-three (63)
"New Beginnings
Estimate of Giving" Cards
have been returned
as of 12.20.23
Thank You!**



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

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

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.

Inviting Ministries



**On Sunday morning, Dec. 31, coffee will be available
prior to the worship service at 10 am.**

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

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

BARBARA BENNETT



Barbara grew up in Jacksonville, AL, and attended Auburn University, then Jacksonville State, where she graduated with a degree in English Education. She taught 12th grade English for many years at Jacksonville High School before retiring. Her husband, Jim, now deceased, graduated from Auburn with a Business degree, then owned and managed Bennett-Knight Furniture, which had stores in Piedmont, Oxford, and Anniston. He was a member of our choir and had a wonderful

personality and great sense of humor. Barbara is currently the Traditional Worship Leader for our church and has taught Sunday School for the Martin Class and 3rd grade classes. She and Jim were both certified as Master Gardeners. They have four accomplished children—Beth, Maury, Cory, and Barry—and 3 grandchildren. The flag used on the altar for our Veterans Day service belongs to their son, Cory, who carried the flag on every mission he flew in Afghanistan. Barbara says it represents her gratitude to God for bringing him home safely.

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!**

Calendar for Dec 31, 2023 through January 6, 2024

Dec 31 Sunday

One Service at 10:00 am, Sanctuary
No Sunday School

Jan 1 Monday

ELC closed, will re-open Jan 3, 2024

Office Closed for Holiday

Jan 2 Tuesday

No Yoga

Jan 3 Wednesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm, ELC Reopens

No Wednesday Morning Bible Study

No Wednesday night meal

No Children or Youth activities or Small Groups

No Choir practice

Jan 4 Thursday

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

5:30 pm Thursday Worship

Jan 5 Friday

11:00 am-12:00 pm Ladle of Love

Honorariums & Memorials

General Budget Fund

In memory of George Varner, given by his loving wife, Lori and sons, Davis and Collin.

In memory of George Varner, given by Danny & Kelly D'Eath.

In memory of George Varner, given by Mr. & Mrs. Steve Frederick.

In memory of George Varner, given by James & Jami Shelnett.

In memory of George Varner, given by Living Waters SS class and LuVerna Waid Circle.

In memory of George Varner, given by Mr. & Mrs. Mandell Tillman.

In memory of George Varner, given by Marian Ford.

In memory of James Isbell, given by Marian Ford.

In memory of George Varner, given by Judy & Tommy Chase.

In memory of George Varner, given by Debbie & Thomas Noble, classmate Macon Academy 1976.

In memory of George Varner, given by Jim & Beth Prucnal.

Ladle of Love

In memory of George Varner, given by Mr. & Mrs. Cleve Estis.

In memory of Jane Herb, given by Louise Ferguson.

In memory of Jane Bugg, given by Louise Ferguson.

In memory of George Adams, Sr. given by Louise Ferguson.

In memory of George Adams, Jr. given by Louise Ferguson.

Music Fund

In memory of Jane Gardner, given by Louise Ferguson.

This Sunday, December 31, 2023
10 am One United Worship Service

We Welcome

Rev. David E. Holmes
UMCNA Retired Pastor
as our guest preacher.

Immediate Prayer Concerns

Janie Gray
Regina Holloway



Continued Prayer Concerns

Lisa Dobbins Asher Mae Collins Rodney Thompson
Juanita Hammons Bessie Crow Nancy Smith

Birthdays

Dec 31 Bill Leach

Jan 3 Paula Wilson, Scott Adams,
Molly Page

Jan 4 Steven Williams, Shelly Hester,
Franklin Leach, Ethan Dennis,
Luke Barnes, Sadie Marie Ross

Jan 5 Christie Knowles, David McCoy

Jan 6 Nancy Whitt, Lowndes Harrison,
Harry Hager, Robert Hager,
Tommy Hiltz



Week of December 24, 2023

In Person Total *369 Worship Total 1,021

Online 652 Thursday Worship *8

One Service 10 am *98/246

4 pm *174/185 6 pm *89/221

Sunday School-Adult 0 Children 0

Sunday School-Youth 0 Nursery *1

Bible Study Groups 0 Children *29

Youth *14 Misc. *6 *in person

General Offering Budget \$12,777.00

General Offering Received \$19,986.00

YTD General Offering Budget \$664,404.00

YTD General Offering Rec'd \$631,673.00

Online Giving

Venmo: @FirstUMCGadsden



venmo

Text to Give: 256.344.8464
(through GFUMC's eGiving platform)