



# Preparing for Holy Days

Rev. Sherri Reynolds

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

## Sunday November 26 Sermon Notes "Preparing for Holy Seasons"

Something unusual happens in the Christian calendar this year. Advent does not come right after Thanksgiving. Instead Advent doesn't begin until December 3. We get an extra week of giving thanks and preparation for the holidays ahead. So, how do we prepare for the upcoming holidays? The key is in the root of "holiday." This word has its origin in once being called "holy days." Thus, we prepare for holidays by remembering that the upcoming holidays are "holy days" from the Lord. In Zechariah's story (Luke 1:5-20), we meet a priest who had an unusual encounter with the Holy. The angel Gabriel came to Zechariah in the holiest part of the temple and announced that he and his wife would have a child in their advanced age and this child would be favored by God. A messenger from the Lord brought incredible news of a miracle baby. Zechariah's story reminds us of God's Holy Presence, messages, and activity on a holy day in his life. May God's presence, messages, and activity be with us as we prepare and experience the holidays which are ahead for us.

May the peace of Christ richly dwell in you. Sherri

### *Christmas Eve at First UMC Gadsden*

*Christmas Eve is a wonderful time to celebrate the birth of Jesus with friends and family! We invite you to make plans now to come to one or more of these worship services on December 24.*

*10 am, One United Worship Service. This will be a "regular" Sunday morning worship service at a special time, 10 am, as we observe the fourth Sunday of Advent on Christmas Eve morning.*

*There will be two worship opportunities on Christmas Eve, one at 4:00 pm and one at 6:00 pm. Each of these service will be the Gadsden First UMC Tradition of Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship and will include special music, a message, "Preparing for the Baby" by Rev. Sherri Reynolds, the celebration of Holy Communion, and everyone singing Silent Night as handheld candles are lit. Choose the time that works best for you to come and celebrate Jesus' birth! In addition, at 5:00 pm there will be a Live Nativity on the Corner of 5th and Chestnut presented by First UMC Youth.*

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## Worship Opportunities

No Thursday Worship November 23

## Sunday Mornings:

Celebration 9 am\* Traditions 11 am\*

\*In Person (Sanctuary) and Online

## ACOLYTES

November 26 Marit Norris

December 3 Luke Barnes

## Security for Thursday Worship

November 30 Kirk Mabeus

December 7 Eric Wright

## Tech Team Schedule

November 26

**Celebration** Eric Wright, Carmen McKiven, Jacob McKiven

**Traditions** Davis Varner, Carmen McKiven, Jacob McKiven

December 3

**Celebration** Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Sheila Freeman

**Traditions** Wayne Payton, Sheila Freeman, 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**

**Chick-fil-a**

**\$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  
"Lessons 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"

## Celebration

Nov. 26, 9 :00 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, 9 AM  
First Sunday of Advent  
""Lessons of the Chrismons"

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

Dec. 17, 9 AM  
Third Sunday of Advent  
Chancel Choir and Christmas Music  
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, 5:00 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

The ELC will be closed for Thanksgiving from November 20<sup>th</sup> through November 24<sup>th</sup>. Thursday November 30<sup>th</sup> will be Christmas PJ Day. On Monday December 4<sup>th</sup>, our 3k and 4k students will sing for UWF. Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> will be our Christmas Program at 9:30 in the sanctuary. Class parties will follow with early dismissal at 11:00.

—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

November 29 Chick-fil-a

5:15 pm RSVP: 256-490-5018

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

## Children's Ministry



# November Missions

## CommUnity Thanksgiving Meal

Thank you for your donations for the cakes at the CommUnity Thanksgiving. With an estimated 8000 meals being prepared this year, many will be blessed by your generosity!

## Many Volunteers are needed for CommUnity Thanksgiving

There is an online sign up form for volunteers.

Call 256-393-8140 or go to the CommUnity Thanksgiving Facebook page to Sign-Up: Community-Thanksgiving-Celebration.

*If you need more information on receiving a meal by pickup or deliver, please call: 256-393-8140*

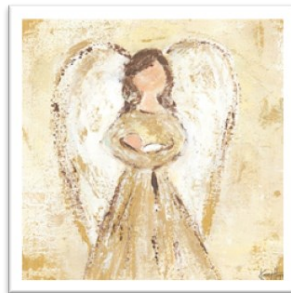
## Thanksgiving Bags for Salvation Army

Thank you to each of you who filled a grocery bag for those in need. Your generations donations were given through the Salvation Army to help with a meal for a family this Thanksgiving.



## December Missions: *The Angel Tree*

*Look for the Angel Tree in the Sanctuary beginning in December and 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.*



## 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



## 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](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/serve)

Phone: 256-543-8200

Email: [fumc@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:fumc@fumcgadsden.org)

#gfumcreconnect2023



## MOLLIE HORTON



Mollie was born in Gadsden and raised in Gallant, AL. She attended Ashville High School, then received her degree as a Registered Nurse from Gadsden State Community College. Having been in nursing for 15 years, Mollie currently works in Labor and Delivery at Gadsden Regional Medical Center and is a Nursery Nurse. Her husband, Kyle Horton, works in Industrial Maintenance for RTI in Rainsville. They have been married for 13 years and have two children, Lydia (9) and Norah Jane (4). Mollie enjoys knitting and loves to "play in plants." She also

enjoys binge-watching Netflix shows. One of the newest members of our church, Mollie has a bubbly personality that should be a great addition!

## LORI SOKOL



Lori grew up in Wadley, AL (in Randolph County) and received a Bachelor of Music Therapy degree from the University of Alabama, then a Masters degree in Civic Leadership from Lipscomb University in Nashville. She became Director of Aging for the non-profit organization, "FiftyForward," which serves older adults in Middle Tennessee, before moving back to Alabama in 2015 and becoming Executive Director of the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission. In 2017, Lori started singing with our Contemporary band, and in 2022 her daughter, Genevieve (age 14), was confirmed at our church. Lori became a member at First Methodist shortly thereafter. Lori is married to Harry Sokol, a Medicare Advisor, and they enjoy Water Sports (Boating),

as well as watching Football and other sports played at the University of Alabama.

## Do You Know?

This series is designed to help everyone at First UMC Gadsden get to know one another! Anna Mullin is volunteering to interview and feature our members for this special article of our newsletter! *Special thanks goes to Anna for her excellent work on this.* Photos may be taken at the time of the interview or you may submit a photo if you prefer. All articles are sent to the members to be previewed and approved prior to publication. Please keep in mind that participation in this interview and photography process is completely voluntary and we invite you to be a part of "Do You Know?"

Anna Mullin may be calling you soon! We hope you will find interesting facts— maybe some things you did not know or things that you may have in common, both with those who have been at First UMC Gadsden for a long time and those who are newer to our church family in the "Do You Know?" section!

# Inviting Ministries

He Brews  
...where your cup runneth over



FIRST UMC GADSDEN

**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-Six (56)**  
**"New Beginnings**  
**Estimate of Giving" Cards**  
**have been returned**  
**as of 11.21.23**  
**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. Shu Reynolds*

### **Generosity: Ways to Give**

In-person, at the offering time during worship.

[www.fumcgadsden.org/give](http://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





# Overflowing with Gratitude

*Rejoice always, pray continually,  
give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is God's will for you.*

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18 (NIV®)

## Nov 26 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

## Nov 27 Monday

9:00 am-1:00 pm ELC Fall Schedule  
9:00 am-10:00 am Exercise Group, Gym  
5:00 pm Trustees Meeting, Parlor

## Nov 28 Tuesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm ELC Fall Schedule  
5:00 pm-6:00 pm Yoga, Gym  
5:00 pm Finance Team Meeting  
6:00 pm Board of Stewards Meeting

## **Calendar for Nov 26-Dec 2, 2023**

### Nov 29 Wednesday

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

### Nov 30 Thursday

9:00 am-10:00 am Exercise Group, Gym  
5:30 pm Thursday Worship, Sanctuary

### Dec 1 Friday

11:00 am Ladle of Love, Portico

Nov 27 Trustees meeting @ 5:00 pm

Nov 28 Finance meeting @ 5:00 pm

Nov 28 Board of Stewards meeting @ 6:00 pm

## **Honorariums & Memorials**

### General Budget Fund

In memory of Dr. James Isbell, given by Leone Norris.

## **Immediate Prayer Concerns**

Family of Alice Hayes (Pastor Sam Hayes mother)  
Lisa Dobbins Nancy Smith Bessie Crow

## **Continued Prayer Concerns**

Asher Mae Collins Rodney Thompson Juanita Hammons

## **Birthdays**

Nov 26 Butch Herb, Inga Livingston  
Nov 27 Jane Jones  
Nov 28 Sally Moss, Lucy Edwards,  
Kim Reed  
Nov 29 Susan Hand, Sandra Hill,  
Karen Winters  
Nov 30 Michelle Morgan,  
Kevin Thornburg, Jake Thornburg  
Dec 2 Elizabeth Hyatt



## **Week of November 19, 2023**

In Person Total \*143 Worship Total 602  
Online 459 Thursday Worship \*16  
Traditions Service \*74/272  
Celebration Service \*53/187  
Adult Sunday School \*41/1 Children \*4  
Bible Study Groups \*29 Children \*50  
Youth \*10 Nursery \*1 UWF \*45  
Volunteers \*17 \*In person

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General Offering Budget \$12,777.00  
General Offering Received \$19,910.00  
YTD General Offering Budget \$600,519.00  
YTD General Offering Rec'd \$530,291.14

## **Important Deadlines**

Information for the weekly  
newsletter is due each  
Tuesday by noon.

All Meetings, Events and Activities  
must be scheduled in advance with  
the church secretary, Susan Swann  
by email or phone,  
[susan@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:susan@fumcgadsden.org)  
or 256.543.8200.

Sign up to receive emails  
from the church  
<http://www.fumcgadsden.org/sign-up-to-receive-emails>