

115 So. 5th Street
Gadsden, AL 35901

September 20, 2020

Gadsden First UMC

Changing Lives by Sharing Christ, Making Disciples, Serving and Giving Hope
#GFUMCConnect2020

9-20-20 Sermon Notes "Pop Verses: Jeremiah 29: 11"

Back in the 1990's, some of my favorite TV commercials were for *Snickers* candy bars. They had this whole theme: "Not going anywhere for a while? Better grab a *Snickers*." One I remember had this very serious-faced man working meticulously in the end zone of a football field, painting the name of the NFL team's mascot in giant, white letters on a bright red background. You can hear the football players practicing in the background as the man works in the hot sun. Carefully the man paints the letters, sweating in concentration. Finally he stands up and takes a look. A big football player joins him at his side. Together they look at what the man has just spent hours painting. *CHEFS*. (Not *CHIEFS* – as in Kansas City Chiefs for those of you who are not football fans). And the football player says, "That's nice. Chefs. You know it's spelled..." And the man angrily replies, "Yes, I know!" And under his breath he mutters, "Great googly boogly." And the commercial voiceover in the background says, "Not going anywhere for a while? Better grab a *Snickers*."

I thought of that commercial today as I sat through a FOUR-HOUR ON-LINE WEBINAR. Yes...four hours...I really needed a *Snickers*! But I also thought about the Pop Verse for this Sunday.

Jeremiah 29:11... *For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.* (Jer. 29:11 NRSV)

What a beautiful verse! What a popular verse! This verse has been placed on countless graduation cards. It has been quoted countless times to those who are struggling with whether or not to take a new job, or to follow God's call to a new ministry. It just makes you feel good to read it, doesn't it?

So what's the problem? The problem with making this a Pop Verse – with pulling a verse out of context – is that even if we memorize it, we don't get the full message. We never ask, "What does this really say?" We never ask, "What does it mean in context?" Without that perspective, we miss the powerful message. We must see Jeremiah 29:11 in the context of the entire book of Jeremiah, and with the entire scope of the Bible and the message God is trying to convey to humanity. Everybody wants to memorize and memorialize and popularize the beautiful Jeremiah 29:11. But nobody wants to read Jeremiah 29:10. What does Jeremiah 29:10 say? It says something like, "Not going anywhere for a while? Better grab a *Snickers*." Seriously. It says, "Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place." Did you get that? Seventy years! Yes, God has a beautiful future planned for Israel...but they will still be in exile for seventy years. Some will die without seeing the promised fulfilled. That wouldn't make a very nice graduation card, would it? "Congratulations! God's got a great future planned for you...in 70 years." So what is the message of Jeremiah 29:11? Is it still powerful and relevant, like Phil. 4:13, and Ps. 37:4? Yes! This coming Sunday we will talk about the way Jeremiah 29:11 has a message about how we face our *past*, *present*, and *future*. Join us in-person with masks and social distancing at 9:00 am or 11:00 am, or worship with us online via Facebook Live or YouTube.

Grace and peace, Pastor Sam

Worship Opportunities

- Mosaic: 6:30 pm, Tuesday, Church Courtyard (Social Distancing and masks required.)
- Thursday Worship: 5:30 pm Thursday, Sanctuary (Social Distancing and masks required.)
- Sunday Celebration Worship, 9:00 am, Sanctuary
- Sunday Traditions Worship, 11:00 am, Sanctuary

Generosity

- Give online: www.fumcgadsden.org/give
- TexttoGive: 256-344-8464
- Mail your tithe or gift to the church:
115 S. 5th Street
Gadsden, AL 35901

SEPTEMBER MISSION SUPPORTING THE C.L.I.C.K. PROGRAM



Since they have not been in session during the COVID 19 outbreak and the schools were shut down, we will work with them to see what their needs are when they return. Watch for updates!

Clothes Closet

Workday

1st & 3rd Tuesdays

Open

1st & 3rd Wednesdays

9:00 am to 11:00 am

Ladle of Love

Fridays, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

The number of clients served during June-July-August:

Clothes Closet	456
Ladle of Love	879

Thank you to all our volunteers for helping with these missions!



MISSIONS: SUPPORTING OUR ADOPTED SCHOOL STRIPLIN ELEMENTARY

It is time for school to begin, although extremely different this year! Our students will be starting with Virtual School but there are still many needs that we can help the teachers meet. The three biggest requests from teachers are: HAND SANITIZER

REFILL BOTTLES, PUMP HAND SOAP, AND DISINFECTANT WIPES. *Please help us collect these items!*

We will continue to collect the items for Striplin through the end of August! A BIG THANK YOU to all of you who have already dropped off items! The church office will remain closed but these three items can be dropped off in the lobby by ringing the doorbell. The Mission Team THANKS you for your generous support of this Mission Project!!!

Along with the Beginning of School comes our FUNDRAISER to support our teachers at Striplin through the year. These funds will provide **The Teacher of The Month Program** (50.00 / month), **Teacher of the Year** (100.00) and the **Teacher Appreciation Luncheon** in May. Our teachers work so hard, especially now with Covid 19, so your support will enable us to say, "THANK YOU!"

Please add a donation to your pledge, mail a check to the Church Office, or use e-giving to make sure we are able to provide a much needed "JOB WELL DONE!"

Donations for Striplin Elementary School

Hand Sanitizer (large refill size)

Pump Hand Soap

Disinfectant Wipes



UMW News

Our first UMW Luncheon was a great success! We heard Dr. Chip Griffith tell us about all his mission trips. What a wonderful testimony. A box lunch of "Fancy Nancy" chicken salad was catered by Chicken Salad Chick. Delicious! We met in the gym with social distancing and face masks. It was wonderful to see so many "masked" smiling faces!! The circles will be able to meet with social distancing and wearing of masks. Call a friend and invite them to your circle and our next luncheon on October 12th. Watch the newsletter for more information! Thanks to everyone for being responsible and making our September luncheon a great success!!
See you next month.

Eileen Graham and the UMW Board

Dear friends, if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other. 1 John 4:11

#GFUMCConnect2020

Worship with GFUMC on Sunday mornings online Live:

9:00 am Celebration and 11:00 am Traditions

Where to connect:

Church Website: www.fumcgadsden.org/media

Facebook Live: @FUMCGadsden

Church YouTube Channel: Gadsden First UMC

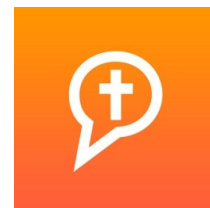
Sermon.net:

First United Methodist Church of Gadsden (search ministries)

Watch on demand:

Church App: **FUMCGadsden**

Church Website: www.fumcgadsden.org/media



Ready to get started with Text to Give?

1. Text 256-344-8464
2. For your first time click "SIGN IN" then "REGISTER FOR AN ACCOUNT".
3. Complete the registration to receive your secure PIN
4. Select the fund, enter the donation amount and payment information.
5. Tap "Save Payment" to use it for future gifts!

It's that easy!

Other text commands:

EDIT— Update your account and payment information

KEYWORD — See a list of Keywords (funds) you can give toward.

REFUND — Made a mistake? Refund your last gift. (15 min. expiry.)





Sunday Morning w/Ken Casey and George Varner, 10:00 am, GoToMeeting

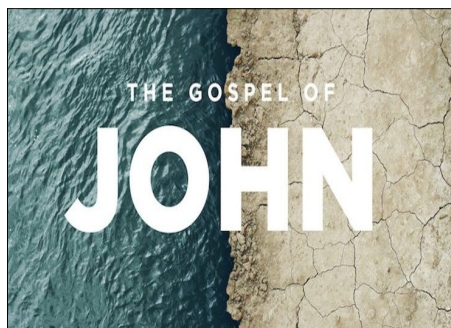
Renew Journey Group w/Mark Condra and Eric Wright, 10:00 am, Sundays, GoToMeeting
Email Mark or Eric for more info:
mcondra3@gmail.com or ericwright@gmail.com

Thursday, Men at the Well, 7:00 am, Zoom,
Mark Condra, Todd Rains, Bob Blount or Mark Casey

Life is a journey. The most important part of the journey is our relationship with God and with others. A Journey Group is a small gathering of individuals who help you grow in your loving relationship with both. We invite all people into a relationship with God and seek to create an outwardly focused community of Christ-followers.

Journey Groups are a great way to stay connected to God and with your church family. All Journey Groups are currently meeting virtually. #GFUMCConnect2020

Interested in leading or teaching a journey group? Contact one of the pastors or Sheila Freeman at 256-490-5018 or Sheila@fumcgadsden.org



Bible Study w/Pastor Sam

A Study of the Gospel of John

Join Pastor Sam online each Wednesday night at 6:00 pm for a study of the *Gospel of John*.

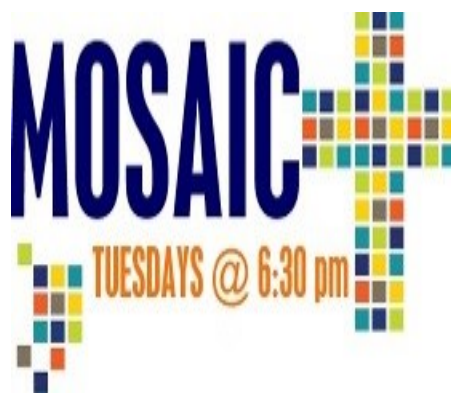
Facebook Live

Wednesdays @ 6 pm

(You can watch the weekly episodes "on-demand" via the church app or website. Each lesson is uploaded to the church app and website following the live broadcast.)

Join Pastor Andy for Mosaic

—A unique worship experience that includes a homily, discussion, and prayer. This service is open to everyone, but is particularly designed for those who have felt hurt or rejected. Come meet with us outside the church in the Courtyard facing 5th Street near the sanctuary on Tuesdays @ 6:30 pm! Social distancing is required. (In case of rain, Mosaic will meet in the gym.)



ELC News

This week at the ELC we enjoyed our first lunchbox revolt. Papa John's pizza was served on Wednesday. School Directories should be going home soon. And we are making plans for special October activities. We are also looking for a fall fundraiser since the Fall Consignment Sale has been cancelled. We would love any suggestions you may have. Thank you ladies!!

—Helene Haller

Youth News

September 23rd: Truth
Grilling Hot Dogs & S'mores &
Yard Games

The Youth ministry will continue to provide online devotionals for those who aren't able to make it on Wednesday night in person.

Virtual Sunday School

Sundays at 10:00 am

Former Youth- check out our college and career Instagram page to stay up to date with future social distancing gatherings.



Join Andy on Facebook Live
or Instagram
Sunday & Wednesdays, 6pm

Youth & Children's Ministry

SHOEBOX MINISTRY



Children's Ministry News

Children's Break continues on Facebook on Sundays and Wednesdays!

Children are meeting in the Green Space with Social Distancing on Wednesday nights at 6 pm. Parents are required to attend with their child/children. See you on the Green!

Calendar for week of September 20-26, 2020

Sept 20, Sunday

9:00 am, Celebration Worship; Sanctuary
 10:00 am, Sunday School, Ken Casey &
 George Varner, GoToMeeting
 10:00 am, Renew Journey Group,
 Mark Condra & Eric Wright, GoToMeeting
 10:00 am, Children's Bible Study, Facebook
 10:00 am, Youth Sunday School, Online
 11:00 am, Traditional Worship; Sanctuary
 6:00 pm, Youth; via Zoom or Instagram

Sept 21, Monday

9:00 am-1:00 pm, ELC Fall Schedule
 9:00 am-10:00 am, Exercise Group, Gym

Sept 22, Tuesday

9:00 am- 1:00 pm, ELC Fall Schedule
 6:30 pm, Mosaic, Courtyard

Sept 23, Wednesday

9:00 am- 1:00 pm, ELC Fall Schedule
 6:00 pm, Children's Ministry, Greenspace
 Youth Ministry, Courtyard
 6:00 pm, Bible Study with Pastor Sam; Online

Sept 24, Thursday

9:00 am- 1:00 pm, ELC Fall Schedule
 9:00 am- 10:00 am, Exercise Group, Gym
 5:30 pm, Thursday Worship, Sanctuary
 7:00 pm, College Group, via Zoom or Instagram

Sept 25, Friday, 11:00-12:00, Ladle of Love, Portico

Flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in gratitude to our church family for the acts of kindness and prayers for comfort in this time of sadness, by the family of Jim Bennett.



Immediate Prayer Concerns

Leda Taylor
 Judy Dressman



Continued Prayer Concerns

Hanky MacFadyen John Hatfield
 Butch Herb Nancy Smith
 Doug Martin John Floyd
 Joanne Hightower Jane Jones
 Herman Humphrey (Jan Humphrey's father)

Pray for our fellow Americans!

Honorariums and Memorials

General Budget Fund:

In memory of Jim Bennett, given by
 Beth Hudgins Johnson.

In memory of Jim Bennett, given by
 Jack & Brenda Spears.

Striplin Elementary Fund:

In memory of Jim Bennett, given by
 Kathye Vance.

**The number of clients
 served during
 June-July-August:**

**Clothes Closet 456
 Ladle of Love 879**

*Thank you to all our volunteers
 for helping with
 these missions!*

Birthdays.....

Sept 20 Vickie Stewart, Pat Martin,
 Cherie Cornelius, Phil Owen
Sept 21 Randy Holland, Hannah Murray
Sept 23 Joan Garry, Kathye Vance,
 Gordon Isbell, Courtney McNair,
 Adam Sollie, Caiden Phillips
Sept 24 Susan Wright,
 Dr. Lowndes Harrison
Sept 25 Sonya Cantrell,
 Barbara Mosley, Caroline Harrison,
 John McNair
Sept 26 Betty Miller



Welcome
 Brad Barnes

Week of September 13, 2020

Online Viewer Total 299
 *In Person Total *172 Total overall 471
 Celebration *53/124 Traditions *62/128
 Mosaic *15 Thursday *17
 Youth *12 Bible Study Groups 47
 Children *13
 General Offering Budget \$15,440.00
 General Offering Received \$16,289.00
 YTD General Offering Budget \$571,280.00
 YTD General Offering Received \$549,182.79

*The church office is still closed to the public.
 We ask that all business be conducted by
 email, phone or text whenever possible.
 In-person visits are by appointment only.
 You may call for an appointment or if you
 have a need that we can help with between
 8:00 am--4:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. If no
 answer, please leave a message and a staff
 member will return your call as soon as
 possible. A MASK is required if you are
 attending any service or activity at the
 church. If you do not have one, we have
 masks available for you. Stay Well. Stay Safe.*

**Text to Give: 256-344-8464
 Online Giving:
www.fumcgadsden.org/give**