

REV. KEN CASEY

# At Home

Sunday, December 29, 2024

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

## Sermon Notes: No Service Thursday, December 26 One Service on Sunday, December 29 at 10:00 am

Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2: 41-52

### At Home

"Tis home where e'er the heart is" is a phrase from a poem published in 1829 in several newspapers in the U.S. The poem is probably the source of the phrase "home is where the heart is". The exact wording we now use is found first, in 1857, in the novel Scandal by J. T. Bickford: 'Describe me a home, Willie.' 'Well, I should say, a woman of Kate Bently's appearance-' 'Nay, I said not a wife, but a home.' 'Home is where the heart is, Katie'.

In Luke 2, Jesus appears to be comfortably at home in the Temple listening to the teachers. While his parents are upset because he has been missing for three days, Jesus is perfectly content. He is at home with people who have thoughts and wisdom that he questions or treasures. He is at home with the teachers. Being "at home" does not necessarily pertain to a building or even surroundings. It can mean the people you are with. A home without people is only a building.

I have felt that I was at home with the universe and with the Creator of the universe on a couple of occasions in my life. This is a rare gift, at least for me. God wants us to be "At Home" with Him. Have you felt that serenity, that deep abiding peace, that feeling of being At Home? —Ken Casey

**Sunday, December 29**  
**One United Worship Service, 10 am**  
**(Sunday School will not meet.)**

## Table of Contents:

- Page 1**-Sermon Notes; Tech Schedule; Acolyte Schedule; Christmas Eve Worship
- Page 2**-Sunday School Classes; Small Groups
- Page 3**-ELC News; Student Ministries; Youth Fall Calendar of Activities; Children's Ministry
- Page 4**-GFUMC Missions News; Clothes Closet; Ladle of Love; United Women in Faith News
- Page 5**— Generosity 2025; Ways to Give; Online Giving; Venmo
- Page 6**- HeBrews; Pickleball; Do You Know?
- Page 7**—Sermon Series for January
- Page 8**-Calendar; Prayer Concerns; Memorials; Birthdays; Weekly Reports; Save the Dates

## Worship Opportunities

**Thursday: No Service December 26**

**Sunday Morning: One service at 10 am Dec 29**

\*In-Person and Livestream or On Demand

[www.fumcgadsden.org/media](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/media)

## ACOLYTES

December 29: Volunteer

## Thursday Worship Security

December 26 No Thursday Worship

## Tech Team Schedule

December 29

One Service, 10 am — Bill Haller, Allie Haller, Brad Barnes

January 5

Celebration: Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller, Carmen McKiven

Traditions: Sheila Freeman, Neil Mullin, Rob Reynolds

## The Chosen Season 2 Bible Study



Rev. Sherri will be leading a Bible Study of Season 2 of the Chosen starting January 8. Each week will focus on a particular episode, reviewing the corresponding scriptures while engaging both with thought provoking questions. The class will be offered at 11am and 6pm on Wednesdays in room 208. The class will last until April 9 (with the night session skipping March 26 for spring break.)

## Wednesday Fellowship

**Wednesday night meal will return January 8, 2025.**

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study @ 11 am, Gathering Room**

**w/ Rev. Sherri Reynolds**

**Adult Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesdays**

**Will resume on January 8, 2025.**

# Sunday School for All Ages



- ♥ Children's Sunday School -Room 104 & 108  
4 years through 5th Grade
- 👉 Youth Sunday School -Room 211 w/ Becca  
6th Grade through 12th Grade
- ❖ Transitions (New Adult) -Room 209
- Pathfinders/Seekers -Room 208
- 📷 Living Water/Martin Fellowship -Room 116

★ Nursery Available for Children 3 and under

## “Men at the Well” Thursday Mornings, 7:00 am

You are invited to join the weekly Bible study with the “Men at the Well” at the 278 Restaurant. **Contact Todd Rains, Mark Condra, Mark Casey, or any of the Men at the Well for more information.**

## ELC News

We hope everyone had a great time celebrating our Savior's birth. We wish you all a Happy New Year!!

—Helene Haller



## STUDENT MINISTRY

### Upcoming Events for Youth

Christmas Eve Live Nativity, 5 pm December 24  
Ice Skating- December 29 (Chattanooga or Gadsden)

**Youth Wednesdays, 6 pm**  
Senior High, Rm 211/Middle, Rm 209

**Youth Sundays, 10 am**

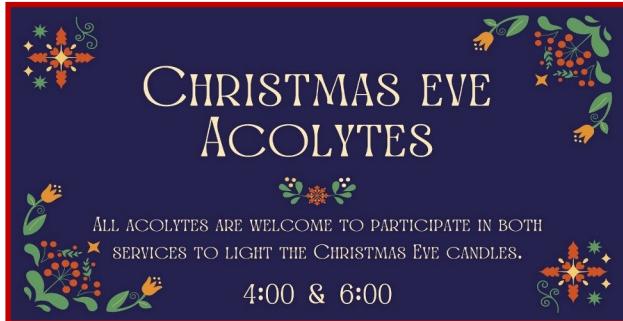
Youth Sundays w/ Becca  
Sunday mornings, Room 211  
Middle School and Senior High

### Wednesday Fellowship

**Wednesday night meal and small groups will return January 8, 2025.**

## Children's Ministry

**Sunday Mornings @ 9 am and 11 am, Children's Church & 10 am Sunday School**



*Thank you to all the children and families, and to Ola Mize, Katharine Barnes, Helene Haller, and Denise Floyd and to everyone who worked to make this evening of worship so beautiful!*

## December Mission Focus

# The Angel Tree

Thank you to everyone who has given for the Angel Tree Gifts this year! Many lives were touched through your generosity.



**Embrace Kids** (formerly the United Methodist Children's Home) Since 1890, we've stood in the gap for the most vulnerable of children. More than 130 years later, our commitment has only strengthened. We provide homes, healing and hope to children coming from families in crisis, no longer able to live with families due to possible neglect, abuse or abandonment.

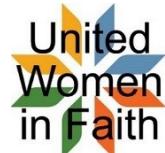
While children are our first priority, we also work with families to address harmful behavior, giving them a second chance at restoration and a glimpse of God's unconditional love. As a result, we're often able to help both children and families thrive despite the arduous challenges they face.

### United Women in Faith

Thank you to everyone who shopped out Christmas Boutique this year! Our Mission Fund will be able to help those agencies who use money to help those in need.

Save the Date: Our next UWF Luncheon is Monday, January 13, 2025 at 12:00 noon.

—Delores Abney, President      —Olivia Kendrick, Vice-President



**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 date is 1/15**

**9:00 am to 11:00 am**

**516 Broad Street Gadsden**

**Find out more about mission and service opportunities @ [www.fumcgadsden.org/serve](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/serve)**

**Phone: 256-543-8200**

**Email:**

**fumc@fumcgadsden.org**

**#gfumcreconnect2024**

**Ladle of Love  
Clothes Closet  
October**

**LOL 379**

**Clothes Closet 315**

**November**

**LOL 404**

**Clothes Closet 310**

**Thanks to our  
Volunteers!**

## Stories of Generosity from Luke

One of my continuing prayers over the past year has been for God's financial provision for First United Methodist Church. I am so thankful for that prayer being answered and people like you who helped answer it. **As of December 15, 68 commitments have been made for Generosity 2025, for a total of \$461,396 toward our general budget fund.**

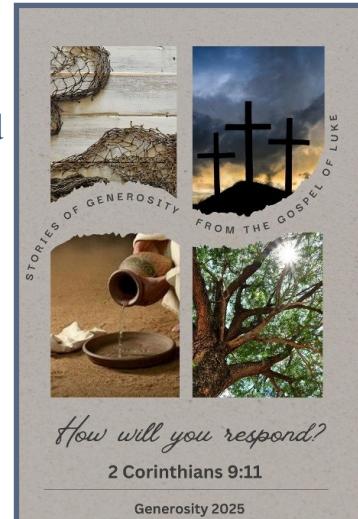
We are continuing to receive cards, so it is not too late to participate in your commitment for the coming year. You may return your card through the offering plate, at the church office, or online ([www.fumcgadsden.org/give](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/give)). If you need more information or a printed card, contact the church office. Your estimate helps us plan for our 2025 budget. Please know that the estimate of giving cards are not legally binding and are kept confidentially within the church office.

Also, remember that our financial staff is here to assist you with end of year giving. If you need an update on your 2024 giving you can contact the church office. Someone will be in the office in the morning on December 27 and 30, if you have money to be turned in and credited for 2024. The office will be closed on the 31<sup>st</sup>, but if your contribution is postmarked on the 31<sup>st</sup> or given online/venmo on the 31<sup>st</sup> then you will receive credit for 2024. The financial staff can also direct you for assistance with stock gifts or IRA distributions.

In gratitude,

*Rev Sherri Reynolds*

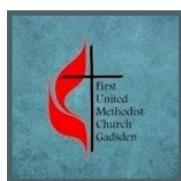
Rev. Sherri



**First UMC Gadsden**  
is a registered charity and can receive  
donations through Venmo:  
**@FirstUMCGadsden**  
(Please search in Venmo under charities  
or follow the link in the QR Code.)



Download our Church App  
Search First UMC-Gadsden  
In the App Store for Android or iPhone.



### Generosity: Ways to Give

In-person, at the offering time during worship.

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

Text to Give: 256-344-8464

Venmo **@FirstUMCGadsden**

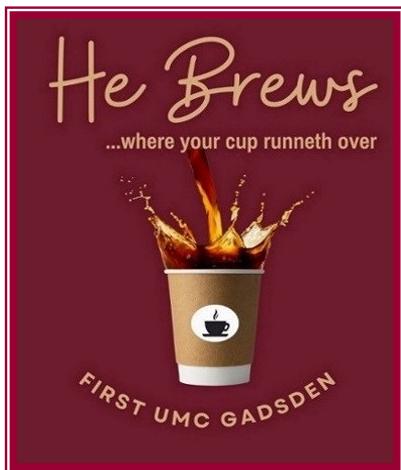
Mail your tithe or gift: 115 S. 5th Street, Gadsden, AL 35901



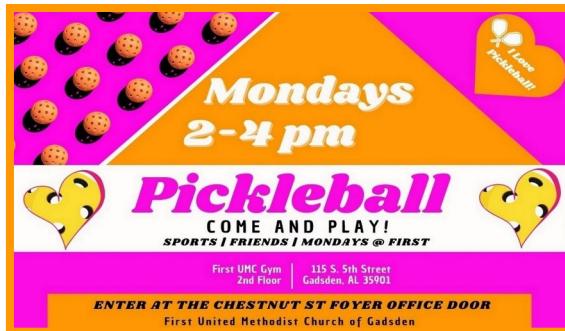
### Secure Online Giving



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



**HeBrews Coffee Café will not serve on  
Sunday, December 29.**



**Pickleball  
will resume  
on Monday,  
January 5.**

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## RUTHIE HESTER

Ruthie grew up in Wrightsville, GA, and was graduated from Wrightsville High School. She attended Emory at Oxford for two years, then was graduated from Augusta University with a degree in Elementary Education. After teaching school for several years, she managed her husband's medical practice in southwest Georgia, then retired. A member of our church's United Women of Faith, Ruthie's interests include reading and playing on the computer. Her husband, Jesse, an obstetrician-gynecologist, passed away two years ago. He loved to read and play tennis and had been active in his church in Georgia as a member of the choir and as a Sunday School teacher. Jesse and Ruthie moved to Gadsden 20 years ago to be near their son, local pediatrician Dr. Ben Hester (wife, Shelly), and their two grandchildren. Ruthie and Jesse also have a daughter, Laura Hester Fickle, who lives in Woodstock, GA, and is a consultant to legal firms nationwide.

*Too Practical  
to Follow a Star*  
January 5, 2025

*Can You  
Still See It*  
January 12, 2025



*Sermons for the New Year*

*Rev. Sherri Reynolds*

## **Ring in the New Year in Worship @ First UMC Gadsden!**

**January 5- Epiphany Sunday**

Celebrating the visitation of the Wise Men  
"Too Practical to Follow a Star"

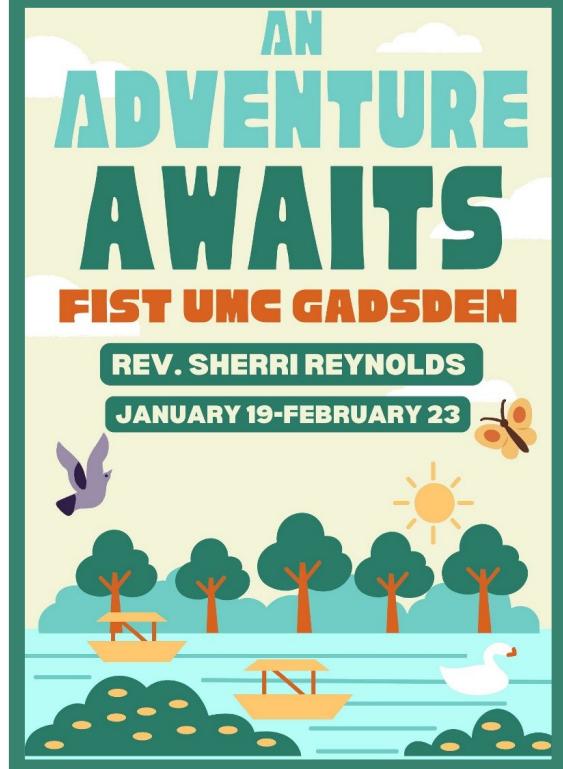
**January 12- Baptism of the Lord Sunday**

Remembering our Baptism  
"Can You Still See It?"

**January 19- February 23**

***Adventure Sermon Series***

Our journey of faith is a great adventure. With Moses as our guide, we will spend a season of looking at the great adventure of following Jesus and how that relates to us not only as individuals, but as First United Methodist Church of Gadsden.



# First UMC Gadsden

## Calendar for Dec 29, 2024-Jan 4, 2025

### December 29, Sunday

10:00 am-One combined Service, Sanctuary

No Sunday School

No HeBrews Coffee

### December 30, Monday

ELC closed until January 6, 2025

8:30 am-1:00 pm-Finance Staff available to take end of year contributions.

No Pickleball

### December 31, Tuesday

Office Closed All Day

### January 1, Wednesday

Office Closed All Day

### January 2, Thursday

5:30 pm-Thursday Worship, Sanctuary

6:00 pm-8:00 pm-Basketball Practice

### January 3, Friday

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

Office closed at 12:00 pm



### **Year-End Giving Reminder:**

Someone will be in the office in the morning on December 27 and 30, if you have money to be turned in and credited for 2024. The office will be closed on the 31st, but if your contribution is postmarked on the 31st or given online/Venmo on the 31st then you will receive credit for 2024.

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the delicious lunch you had for my family. Everyone enjoyed it. And thank you for being my friends. I love every one of you.

—Merry Christmas and Love, Evelyn Pierson

### Immediate Prayer Concerns

Mary Tom Hale

Family of Elsie Garrick (grand niece of Seth and Gail Spotnitz)

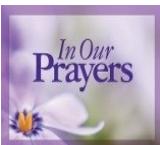
Rinaldus Scicluna (son-in-law of Susan Swann)

Kathleen Ruhleder

### Continued Prayer Concerns

Asher Mae Collins

Amy Epperson



### **Honorariums & Memorials**

#### General Budget

In memory of Glen Pierson, given by Margaret Freeman

In memory of Glen Pierson, given by Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Sexton

#### Emmaus Fund

In memory of Ede Meier, given by Mr. and Mrs. Steve Watson

#### Howell Erwin Medical Fund

In memory of Glen Pierson, given by Leone Norris

#### Caring Angels

In memory of Glen Pierson, given by Dottie Ivey

### Birthdays

**Dec 30** Sheila Freeman

**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

*Please update your family's record in the church office to include all dates of birth. Thank you!*



### Week of December 22, 2024

In Person Total-\*224 Worship Total-1143

Online- 919 Thursday Worship-\*9

Celebration-\*42/297 Traditions -\*86/319

Children's Musical: \*87/303 Bible Study \*4

Sunday School Adult-\*18/1 Children SS- \*5

Sr Hi & Middle SS- \*0 Wed/Sun-Children\*60

Wed/Sun-Nursery \*1

Wed/Sun-Sr.Hi \*0 & Middle Youth \*0

General Offering Budget \$ 11,400.00

General Offering Received \$ 22,446.18

YTD General Offering Budget \$581,400.00

YTD General Offering Rec'd \$666,680.00

### **Important Deadlines**

**Deadline for the January 5 newsletter is noon, Monday, December 30.**

*All requests for spoken announcements for Sunday mornings must be turned in by Thursday @ noon, in writing to Susan Swann in the office.*

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