

## #WeAreFirst



## Forging Disciples

Matthew 28:16-20  
Rev. Sherri Reynolds

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

## Sermon Notes: Thursday, January 8 &amp; Sunday, January 11

We are First United Methodist Church of Gadsden, and we are called to share Christ, make disciples, serve people, and give hope. We do this so that lives may be changed in the name of Christ. The charge to make disciples comes from Jesus' commission in Matthew 28: 16-20. Jesus tells his disciples, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." This is known as the Great Commission and was a charge not only for the first disciples, but our charge too. We are called to make disciples, not just as a church, but also as individuals.

The Great Commission is a simple reminder that we are called to go and think beyond our walls. *Making disciples* is an adventure mentality, reminding us that the work of the church should focus on what is beyond the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets. How are you called to help others grow in their relationship with God, as you go into the world on your great adventure of discipleship?

**#Wearefirst**

Rev. Sherri

***A new adventure begins at 10 am, January 11th, in Room 209! You are invited!***

**Practicing the Way**

by John Mark Comer

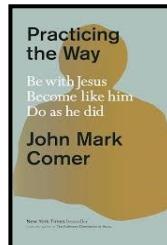
We are constantly being formed by the world around us. To be formed by Jesus will require us to become his apprentice.

To live by what the first Christian disciples called a Rule of Life—a set of practices and relational rhythms that slow us down and open up space in our daily lives for God to do what only God can do—transforms the deepest parts of us to become like him.

This introduction to spiritual formation is full of John Mark Comer's trademark mix of theological substance and cultural insight as well as practical wisdom on developing your own Rule of Life.

These ancient practices have much to offer us. By learning to rearrange our days, we can follow the Way of Jesus. We can be with him. Become like him. And do as he did.

***Join Dawson Harmon for eight weeks of Spiritual Formation.***

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**Worship Opportunities**

**Thursday Worship, 5:30 pm, January 8, 2026**

**Sunday Morning\*: Celebration, 9 am**

**Traditions, 11 am** \*In-Person and Livestream or On Demand [www.fumcgadsden.org/media](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/media)

**Security for Thursday Worship**

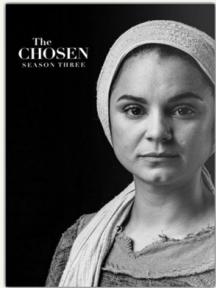
January 8 : Steve Frederick January 15:

**ACOLYTES**

January 11: Luke Barnes &amp; Brooks Bone

January 18: Clementine &amp; Rhett Hilburn

**Tech Team Schedule****January 11****Celebration:** Mark Condra, Brad Barnes**Traditions:** Mark Condra, Wayne Payton, Rob Reynolds**January 18****Celebration:** Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller**Traditions:** Neil Mullin, Sheila Freeman

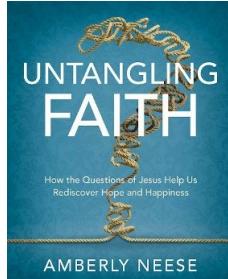


## Bible Studies & Small Groups for Adults

**Join Rev. Sherri for a Bible Study based on *The Chosen* (Season 3) starting January 7.** Each week will focus on a different episode with a Bible Study of the scripture behind the scenes and each week will stand alone, so you can plug in as your schedule permits. **Classes will be at 11 am and 6 pm in Room 208.** (Skipping February 18 for Ash Wednesday and April 1 for Spring Break/Holy Week). The classes will end at the church picnic in May.

**Untangling Faith by Amberly Neese, Wednesdays, 6 pm** —Your questions can lead to a deeper faith and trust in God. Have you ever felt you struggled to find your faith footing? Join Amberly Neese as she explores the questions Jesus asked as a way to reclaim that faith. Chapters explore our own questions like Can God Be Trusted? and How Can I Grow in Faith. **We look forward to seeing you on January 7—Harriet Murray**

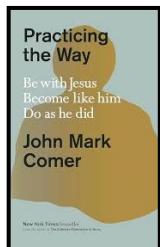
Amberly's unique humor and wit help the whole group find their way through deep and rich issues of personal faith, doubt, and growth.



**Wonderful Wednesday Dinner**  
**January 15 Menu—Chicken Fingers**  
**\$7 Per Person, \$3 age 11 & Under**  
**Please text 256.490.5018 to make or change a reservation.**

## Sunday School: New Adult Studies

**Transitions 10 am, Room 209**



**A new adventure begins January 11th in Room 209! You are Invited!**

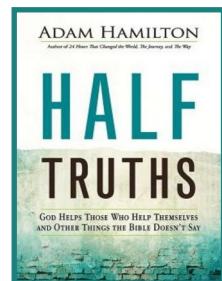
**Practicing the Way** by John Mark Comer—The disciples spent 3 years being apprentices to Jesus. They watched His every move and hung on every word. They were with Him 24/7. As a result, they, over time, became more and more like Him and began to do many of the things He did. With the Spirit's help, with John Mark Comer as our guide, and with each other as encouragers, we too can learn to walk in Jesus' steps.

**Join Rev. Dawson Harmon for this new small group study! Everyone is welcome!**

**Pathfinders/Seekers 10 am, Room 208**

**Half Truths** by Adam Hamilton—Beginning in January 2026

They are simple phrases. They sound Christian—like something you might find in the Bible. We've all heard these words. Maybe we've said them. They capture some element of truth, yet they miss the point in important ways.



**Living Waters 10 am, Room 116 Rev. Ken Casey**

**Questions You Always Wanted to Ask About the Christian Faith and the Bible**

**“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

ELC faculty and students returned this week. Just a few tears from students but wide smiles from our mommas. We hope that you will support our King Cake Sale. All orders and monies are due Wednesday, January 21st. The ELC will be closed Monday, January 19th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr day.  
—Helene Haller



### Wonderful Wednesday Dinner January 7– Chicken Fingers

\$7 per person \$3 Age 11 & Under

Please text 256.490.5018 to make or change a reservation.

# Children's Ministry

## GFUMC children january & february

### january Unit

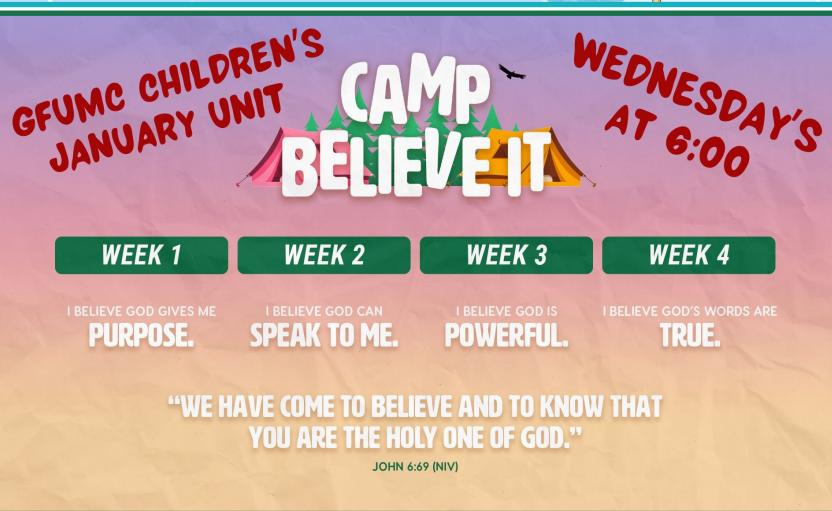
WE HAVE COME TO BELIEVE  
AND TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE  
THE HOLY ONE OF GOD.  
JOHN 6:69 NIV

Camp Believe It!

### february Unit

YOU ARE THE GOD WHO PERFORMS  
MIRACLES; YOU DISPLAY YOUR POWER  
AMONG THE PEOPLES.  
PSALM 77:19 (NIV)

Miraculous



**Youth**  
Sunday School  
10 am, Room 211

### Wonderful Wednesday

Youth Group, 6:00 pm

Will resume on Jan 7.

*"Let's Build a Solid Foundation!"*

Matthew 7:24

### Wonderful Wednesday

Small Groups and Activities  
@ 6 pm

Fellowship Dinner, 5:15 pm

January 15

Chicken Fingers

\$7 per person

\$3 ages under 11

### Sunday Mornings

Children's Church  
during worship, 9 am & 11 am  
Sunday school @ 10 am

Need more info?

Katharine@fumcgadsden.org

Mrs. Katharine Barnes

Children's Director



Follow the  
QR  
Code  
for the  
Online  
Order  
Form

### ELC Authentic Louisiana King Cakes Order Form (2026)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Cake	Quantity	Price	Total
<b>Small Traditional 12" Circle, Feeds approx. 10</b>		\$ 30.00	
<b>Small Cream Cheese Filled* 12"</b>		\$ 35.00	
<b>Small Apple Filled 12"</b>		\$ 35.00	
<b>Small Strawberry Filled 12"</b>		\$ 35.00	
<b>Medium 12"x16" Oval, Feeds approx. 25</b>		\$ 35.00	
<b>Medium Traditional</b>		\$ 40.00	
<b>Medium Cream Cheese</b>		\$ 40.00	
<b>Medium Strawberry</b>		\$ 40.00	
<b>Total Quantity and Total Amount Due</b>			

## Mission Focus

### Ladle of Love—Volunteer Opportunity

The GFUMC Ladle of Love Ministry is a weekly outreach dedicated to sharing nourishment, dignity, and hospitality with our community. Each week, a team of volunteers comes together to prepare and pack approximately **100 take-out lunches**, offering a simple but thoughtfully prepared meal to anyone who comes. A typical lunch includes a **sandwich, chips, fruit, and a dessert**—often an individually wrapped Little Debbie. At times, the menu may vary and include options such as **barbecue sandwiches, soup and sandwiches, burritos, or other hearty meals**.



Lunches are distributed **every Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon** at the **covered portico facing 6th Street**. There is **no request for names, identification, or proof of eligibility**—all are welcome. To ensure fairness and availability, **one lunch is given per person present**. Through this ministry, GFUMC seeks to meet immediate needs while extending Christ's love through compassion, generosity, and respectful service.

**Volunteers are essential to this ministry's success.** We are currently seeking a **team leader and volunteers for the third Friday of each month**, and **additional volunteers are also needed for other weekly teams**. If you would like to volunteer or learn more about the Ladle of Love Ministry, please contact the church secretary, **Susan Swann**, at **256-543-8200**.

### GFUMC Clothes Closet Ministry

The GFUMC Clothes Closet Ministry is a welcoming outreach that provides free clothing to anyone in the community who has a need. **Donations of clothing are received throughout the year**, helping ensure that the Closet remains well stocked for all seasons. At present, **seasonal winter items** are especially needed, including **jackets, sweaters, hats, gloves, scarves, and socks**. Simply call the church office to schedule a time to drop off items.

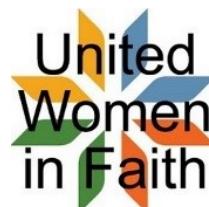


A dedicated group of volunteers works behind the scenes to make this ministry possible. Volunteers gather from **9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on the Tuesday preceding each open day to sort, organize, and prepare donated clothing**. The Clothes Closet is thoughtfully arranged like a retail store, allowing guests to enjoy a dignified shopping experience. Some volunteers even use their creativity to design **attractive window displays**, adding a warm and inviting touch.

The Clothes Closet is **open to the public on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** All clothing items are **provided at no cost**, and there is **no requirement for names, identification, or proof of need**. Guests are simply invited to come in, browse, and select the **clothing styles and sizes that best meet their needs**. Through this ministry, GFUMC offers care, respect, and generosity to the community. **New Volunteers are always welcome!** Contact Susan Swann, 256.543.8200 for more information.

### United Women in Faith

The next UWF Luncheon will be Monday, January 12, 2026 at 12:00 noon. Our Guest Speaker will be The Honorable Mayor Craig Ford, City of Gadsden. Please make a reservation by texting or calling Olivia Kendrick: 205.454.4375. The LuVerna Waid Circle will meet Tuesday, February 3, at 6:00 pm at the church in room 208.



### 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.

**Volunteers are needed to serve on Ladle of Love Teams. Contact the church office for more information on how you can serve.**

**Clothes Closet Workdays are Tuesdays before open days from 9:00-11:00 am.**

#### Open to Public

**1st & 3rd Wednesdays**

**January open dates are 1/7 and 1/21**

**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**

**Ladle of Love Clothes Closet November**

**LOL 502**

**Clothes Closet 378**

**December**

**LOL 208**

**Clothes Closet 321**

**Thanks to our Volunteers!**

## January Mission Focus



JOIN THE MISSION TEAM & YOUTH IN JANUARY FOR

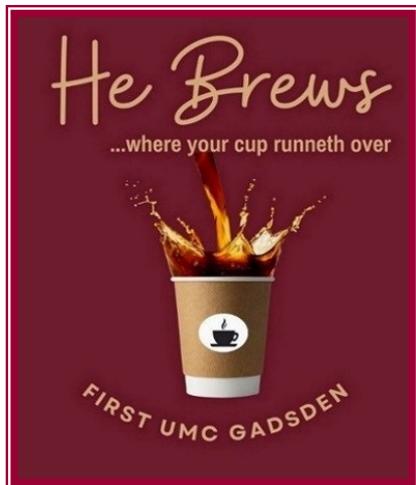
# A MYSTERY MISSION

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE!

DETAILS COMING SOON!



FIRST UMC GADSDEN



Follow us on  
Facebook and Instagram.



HeBrews Coffee Café will be closed on December 28!

We look forward to seeing you on January 4, 2026.



You are invited to connect with the GFUMC Family in a new and exciting way. Connect through the church app today by scanning the QR code above. You will now be able to find groups and connect with Teams, Leadership Groups, Sunday school classes, UWF Circles and more within the App.

**Follow these steps to connect:**

- Scan the QR Code and Click the link.
- “Join” by creating your profile with a password in the app (use “continue with email”).
- Discover your connections to the GFUMC church community, a smaller community (like UWF, choir, or Children’s Ministry, etc.) or a small group (like a Sunday school class or small group) or a church leadership team. There are so many ways to connect!
- Request to join or accept an invitation to join.
- You are now ready to send and receive notifications, messages, notices, reminders, prayer requests, and more within your GFUMC connections.



## Greeters & Ushers for Worship

Sunday, January 11

Celebration: Nancy McCorkle & Vickie Handy

Traditions: Judy & Mandell Tillman; Margie & John Freeman

Sunday, January 18

Celebration: David & Brenda Holmes

Traditions: Leslie & Phillip Johnson; Lori Varner; Gail McNair; Grover Kitchens

*If you would like to serve as an Greeter/Usher, please contact Susan Swann in the church office, email: [susan@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:susan@fumcgadsden.org) or phone: 256.543.8200.*



## “Building Upon a Solid Foundation,” our 2026 Generosity Emphasis



This has been a great celebration of generosity with estimate of giving cards being turned in and wonderful church-wide brunch. Thanks to all who made this special emphasis a success.

***As of December 7 3 estimate of giving cards have been returned with a commitment of \$501,328.00***

There was also a great commitment to continue to support First United Methodist Church of Gadsden with prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

If you have not had an opportunity to turn in your estimate of giving card you may do so by placing your card in the offering plate, returning it to the church office, mailing it to the church office, or completing an online card (via the church app or website). The finance department will continue to receive those until the end of the year. Remember that your estimate of giving is held confidentially in the church finance office and is not legally binding. This is a commitment between God and you and helps the church plan for the coming year's budget. You should have received your *2025 Impact Report* in the mail. If not, please contact the church office. Hold on to this report and remember the impact that your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness have on the church, Gadsden, and beyond. We are making a difference by changing lives in the name of Christ!

Building a Firm Foundation,

Rev. Sherri Reynolds

**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.)



**venmo**

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

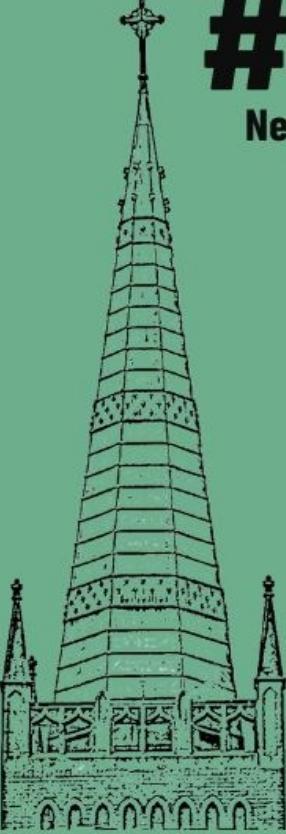


### Secure Online Giving



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

**Sunday, January 11, Worship @ 9 am & 11 am**  
**“We Are First” Sermon Series Begins**  
**10 am, Sunday School**



**#WeAreFirst**  
New Sermon Series begins January 11  
Rev. Sherri Reynolds

**Forging Disciples  
Introducing Christ  
Rendering Hope  
Serving People  
Transformation**

**Forging Disciples—January 11, 2026**

**Introducing Christ—January 18, 2026**

**Rendering Hope—January 25, 2026**

**Serving People—February 1, 2026**

**Transformation—February 8, 2026**

**A limited supply of “Light Green” long sleeve t-shirts will be available.**

**Reserve yours now!**

**Email: [sheila@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:sheila@fumcgadsden.org) or turn this order form into the church office.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**T-shirts Requested :**

S  M  L  XL  2XL  3XL

# First UMC Gadsden Jan 11-Jan 17, 2026

## Jan 11, Sunday

### **9:00 am-Celebration Worship**

10:00 am-HeBrews Coffee; Sunday School

### **11:00 am-Traditions**

## Jan 12, Monday

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

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

10:30 am-UWF Executive Board Meeting

12:00 pm-UWF Luncheon, Gathering Room

2:00 pm-4:00 pm-Pickle Ball, Gym

5:30 pm-7:30 pm-Basketball practice, Gym

## Jan 13, Tuesday

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

1:15 pm-Staff Meeting, Adult Library

5:00 pm-Finance Meeting; 5:00 pm-6:00 pm-Yoga, Gym

6:00 pm-8:00 pm-Basketball practice, Gym

## Jan 14, Wednesday

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

11:00 am-Wednesday Morning Bible Study

5:15 pm-Wednesday night meal, Gathering Room

6:00 pm-Children's Activities, Room 108

Youth Activities, Room 211 & Gym

6:00 pm-Bible Study Groups, Room 110 & 208

6:00 pm-Choir Practice

## Jan 15 Thursday

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

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

### **5:30 pm—Thursday Worship**

5:30 pm-7:30 pm-Basketball Practice, Gym

## Jan 16, Friday

11:00 am to 12:00 am —Ladle of Love

12:00 pm-Office Closed

## **Important Alert!**

Remember that Rev. Sherri and FUMCG staff members would never approach you for donations of cash money, wire transfers, or gift cards. All money (including benevolence) goes through the finance office and not paid directly to any staff member. If you have any questions or are suspicious of a scam, contact the church office. Please beware of scammers who use text and email to falsely solicit funds on behalf of FUMCG.

GFUMC's United Women in Faith is hosting their monthly luncheon on January 12 at 12 noon and welcoming The Honorable Mayor Craig Ford, City of Gadsden as the guest speaker. Everyone is welcome to come. Please make a reservation for lunch by calling or texting Olivia Kendrick, @ 205.454.4375.

## Immediate Prayer Concerns

Family of Georgia Eugenias

Olivia Kendrick

James Dial (Taylor & Jay Dial's newborn son)

Donnie Gray Linda Harwell

## Continued Prayer Concerns

Maitland Adams Jackie Herlong

Julia Lopez Dawn Rains

Amy Epperson (dtr of Gene & Danna Dean)

Andrew Swann (grandson of Danny Swann)

## **Please excuse our progress!**

Improvements are being made by

the City of Gadsden to 6th St including sidewalks and the entrance/exit for our parking area near the portico/greenspace. The use of the exit on 6th St will be closed intermittently for improvements.

Please remember, for those needing assistance, entrances at the ramp on Chestnut or the Courtyard doors are available.

## **Birthdays**

**Jan 11** Tallie Beckett, Alli Gardner

**Jan 13** Craig Marble, Heather New, Bay Brown, Sylvia Harbin

**Jan 14** Alexis McCollum

**Jan 15** Joan Bigelow, Ralph Whitfield, Michele Atkins

**Jan 16** Dr. Bill Haller

**Jan 17** Stephen Kirk, Mary Claire Payne, Jessica Harbin



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

## **Attendance Week of Jan 4, 2026**

In Person Total \*164 On Line Total 479

Worship Total 643 Thursday Worship \*0

Celebration \*52/256 Traditions \*112/223

Nursery Sun/Other services \*5

Adult Sunday School \*40 Children's SS \*33

Youth SS \*3 Bible Study 0

No Wednesday activities for Children & Youth

## **Year 2026 Week of January 4, 2026**

General Offering Budget \$12,955.00

General Offering Received \$10,170.00

YTD Gen. Offering Budget \$12,955.00

YTD Gen. Offering Rec'd \$10,170.00

## **Weekly Newsletter**

Subscribe to the weekly newsletter by submitting your email to the church secretary, Susan Swann:

[susan@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:susan@fumcgadsden.org)

You will receive the weekly newsletter by email on Friday mornings. The Newsletter is also available in the GFUMC Church App and on the Church Website.