

## #WeAreFirst



## Rendering Hope

Psalm 62:5-8

Rev. Sherri Reynolds

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

**Sermon Notes: Thursday, January 22 & Sunday, January 25**

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. Giving hope may not be a tangible aspect of what we do, but it is an important part of what we do. Too often, people go through life expecting the worst, without passion, and not believing that there is something better ahead. Hope allows us an optimistic outlook. Hope in Jesus reminds us that the worst day is not our last, and we are not alone.

Psalm 62:5-8 is a song of hope and supports the source of our expectations in the Lord. It is an affirmation of where the Psalmist's hope comes. The Psalmist affirms that he is waiting for God, because is where he finds hope. God is hope because God is a rock, or a firm foundation. God is hope because God is salvation. God saves us from our troubles. He is our fortress and protects us in a time of need. He delivers us and rescues us. God is a refuge and we can always trust in Him. This is a comfort for us when we lose our way and a message for us as we seek to render hope to others.

We are first.

Rev. Sherri

**Ash Wednesday Worship****6 pm****Wednesday, February 18****Feb 18 Fellowship Dinner @ 5 pm****(We will begin serving 15 minutes early.)****Everyone is Welcome!****RSVP: Text 256-490-5018**

*(If you have a standing Wednesday night reservation, you do not need to rsvp, unless you want to modify your reservation.)*

**\$7 per person, \$3 under 11, \$20 Family Max**

**Muffalettes, Red Beans & Rice, & Jambalaya  
King Cake**

**Table of Contents:**

**Page 1-** Sermon Notes; Ash Wednesday Worship;  
Tech Schedule; Acolytes, Thursday Worship Security

**Page 2-** New Bible Studies & Small Groups;  
Adult Studies for Sunday School Classes

**Page 3-** ELC News; Student Ministries; Youth Calendar  
of Activities; Children's Ministry

**Page 4- Do You Know?**

**Page 5-** GFUMC Missions News; Clothes Closet;  
Ladle of Love; United Women in Faith

**Page 6- January Mystery Mission**

**Page 7-** HeBrews; Pickleball; Usher/Greeter Schedule

**Page 8-** "Building a Solid Foundation" Generosity  
2026; Ways to Give; Online Giving

**Page 9- #We Are First, January Sermon Series**

**Page 10-** Calendar; Prayer Concerns; Births; Deaths;  
Memorials; Birthdays; Weekly Reports; **Year-end  
Giving Report**

**Worship Opportunities****Thursday Worship 5:30 pm****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 29: Bob Blount

**ACOLYTES**

January 25: Sara Kate, Jake, &amp; Carter Thornburg

Feb 1: Anna Kate Casey, Jade Collins, Layne Godfrey

**Tech Team Schedule****January 25**

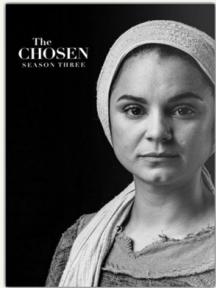
Celebration: Rob Reynolds, Bill Haller, Brad Barnes

Traditions: Davis Varner, Neil Mullin, Rob Reynolds

**February 1**

Celebration: Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller

Traditions: Neil Mullin, Sheila Freeman

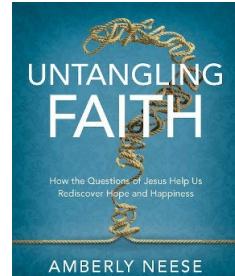


## Bible Studies & Small Groups for Adults

**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.

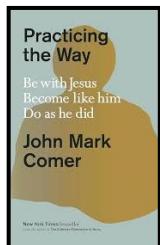


### Wonderful Wednesday Dinner

**January 28 Menu- Chick Fil A \$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!**

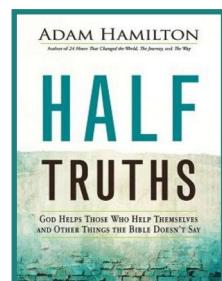
**Practicing the Way** by John Mark Comer—The disciples spent 3 years being apprentices to Jesus. They watched His every move and hung on every word. They were with Him 24/7. As a result, they, over time, became more and more like Him and began to do many of the things He did. With the Spirit's help,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

Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup> is our annual teacher Meet and Greets for those going into 2K, 3K and 4K.  
 Thank you for supporting our king cake sale.  
 Number details coming soon.  
 Pick up will be Saturday February 7<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 11 am.

—Helene Haller



## Youth

Sunday School  
 10 am, Room 211

## Wonderful Wednesday

Youth Group, 6:00 pm  
 Room 211 & Gym  
 Packing RAK bags on Wednesday Jan 21  
*"Let's Build a Solid Foundation!"*  
 Matthew 7:24

### Wonderful Wednesday Dinner January 28– Chick Fil A

\$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



Camp Believe It!

### february Unit



Miraculous

Sunday morning  
Children's Church  
9:00am&11:00am

Sunday School  
10:00am

Wonderful  
Wednesday's  
6:00pm



## Wonderful Wednesday

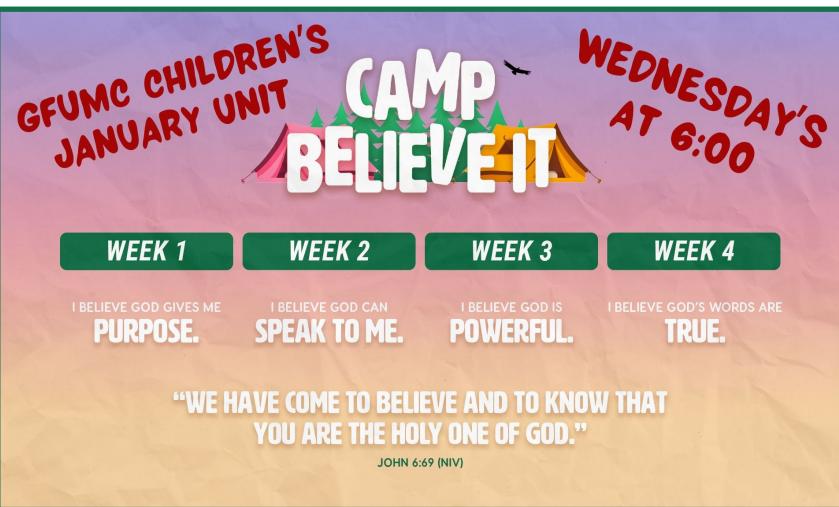
Small Groups and Activities  
 @ 6 pm  
 Fellowship Dinner, 5:15 pm  
 January 28  
 Chick Fil A  
 \$7 per person  
 \$3 ages under 11

## 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



# Do You Know?

## NEIL & AMANDA SUMMERS



Neil grew up in Murphreesboro, TN, and graduated from The Webb School, a college-preparatory school in Bell Buckle, TN. He then attended Auburn University, where he received a degree in Agronomy and Soils with a concentration in Turfgrass. He is the owner of Neil Summers Outdoors, an irrigation, landscape lighting, and lawn treatment company.

Amanda grew up in Gadsden and graduated from Gadsden City High School. She attended UAB on a golf scholarship and received a degree in Sports Economics, followed by a degree in Civil Engineering. Amanda currently works as a Distribution Engineer for Alabama Power Company.

She and Neil have two young boys: Charlie (age 3) and Conley (age 1). In their free time, Neil and Amanda enjoy playing golf, and Neil also likes to hunt.

## HAL RHEA



Hal grew up in Gadsden and was in the first graduating class from Gadsden City High School. He attended the University of Alabama, where he received an undergraduate degree in Finance. He then received a Masters of Business Administration from Auburn University. He currently serves as a technology consultant for the National Center for State Courts.

Hal has a three-year-old daughter, Lilly, and says that his hobbies and interests include Alabama football and music. He plays both the piano and guitar.

## 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.

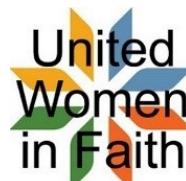


A dedicated group of volunteers works behind the scenes to make this ministry possible. Volunteers gather from **9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on the Tuesday preceding each open day to sort, organize, and prepare donated clothing**. The Clothes Closet is thoughtfully arranged like a retail store, allowing 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 LuVerna Waid Circle will meet Tuesday, February 3, at 6:00 pm at the church in room 208. We will be starting our New Year with a special meeting. We will decide who will be leading us into 2026, focusing on our vision. We will sign up a leader, someone to keep the money, a program/project leader, and someone to communicate information to members. Come join us and be part of this circle. Help us make a difference in the ministries of our church!



**February Luncheon** 12:00 noon, Monday, February 9

“*Looking Toward the Future*” Rev. Sherri Reynolds

### 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**

**YTD 2025**

<b>LOL</b>	<b>4831</b>
<b>Clothes Closet</b>	<b>3215</b>

**Thanks to our Volunteers!**

## January Mission Focus

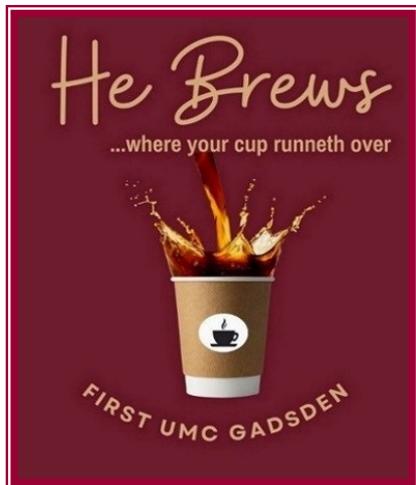


JOIN THE MISSION TEAM & YOUTH IN JANUARY FOR  
**RANDOM ACTS OF  
KINDNESS  
“KINDNESS KITS”**

GFUMC YOUTH & THE MISSION TEAM HAVE  
PREPARED “KINDNESS KITS” FOR YOU TO TAKE &  
SHARE WITH OTHERS IN OUR COMMUNITY TO  
INTRODUCE CHRIST AND RENDER HOPE!

“KINDNESS KITS” ARE AVAILABLE IN WORSHIP ON 1/25





Follow us on  
Facebook and Instagram.



HeBrews Coffee Café, Chestnut Foyer, Sundays, 10 am  
We look forward to seeing you on Sunday Morning!



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 25

Celebration: Kim & Cynthia Whitt

Traditions: Delores & Charles Abney; Jennifer Jackson; Bobby Robinson

Sunday, February 1

Celebration: Helene Haller, Elizabeth Gilbert

Traditions: Terry & Sheila Bishop; Bob & Becky Oltman



*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

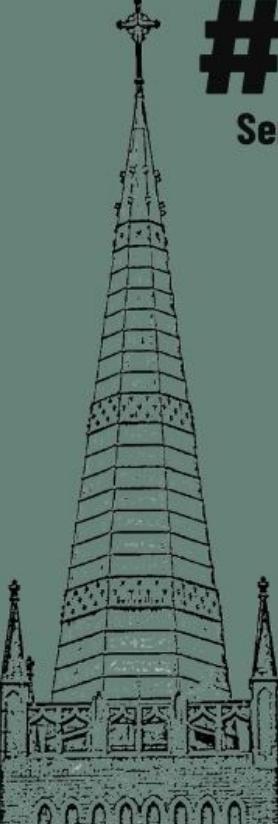


### Secure Online Giving



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

Thursday Worship 5:30 pm Sunday Worship @ 9 am & 11 am  
“We Are First” Sermon Series Begins



**#WeAreFirst**  
Sermon Series January 8 - February 8  
Rev. Sherri Reynolds

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

Forging Disciples—Jan 8 & 11

Introducing Christ—Jan 15 & 18

Rendering Hope—Jan 22 & 25

Serving People—Jan 29 & Feb 1

Transformation—Feb 5 & 8

A limited supply of “Light Green” long sleeve T-shirts are now available.

Pick one up in the church office or email: [sheila@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:sheila@fumcgadsden.org)



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

T-shirts Requested :

S

M

L

XL

2XL

3XL

# First UMC Gadsden Jan 25-Jan 31, 2026

## Jan 25, Sunday

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

10:00 am-HeBrews Coffee; Sunday School

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

## Jan 26, Monday

ELC Winter Schedule

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

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

5:00 pm-Trustees Meeting, Parlor

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

## Jan 27, Tuesday

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

1:15 pm-Staff Meeting, Adult Library

5:00 pm-6:00 pm-Yoga, Gym

5:00 pm, Finance Meeting, Parlor

6:00 pm-Board of Stewards, Gathering Room

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

## Jan 28, 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 29 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 30, Friday

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

12:00 pm-Office Closed

**“Light Green” long sleeve “We Are First “T-shirts are now available for \$20 .**

**Sizes Adult Sm-3X. Supplies are limited.**

**Pick one up in the church office or email: [sheila@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:sheila@fumcgadsden.org)**

## **Weekly Newsletter**

Subscribe to the weekly newsletter by submitting your email address 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.

*Update your contact info!*

## **Immediate Prayer Concerns**

Georgia Reese Moran (infant daughter of Dallas & Shannon-grandparents Jill & Rick)

Olivia Kendrick Marionette Bishop

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

## **Continued Prayer Concerns**

Trish Blount Fred Chase Clay Hix

Maitland Adams Donnie Gray

Linda Harwell 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 may 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 25** Dr. Richard Caldwell,

Carla Watson, Laura Bone



**Jan 26** June Longshore,

Charlotte Rutland

**Jan 27** Brad Barnes

**Jan 28** Marian Ford, Caroline Thornburg

**Jan 29** Eldred Davis, Michael Blevins, Sara Katherine McCord, Cora Kotlerov

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

*Thank you! Susan Swann*

## **Attendance Week of Jan 18, 2026**

In Person Total \*169 On Line Total 488

Worship Total 657 Thursday Worship \*6

Celebration \*66/280 Traditions \*97/208

Nursery Sun/Wed \*11 Youth SS \*4

Adult Sunday School \*52 Children's SS \*7

Bible Study \*32 Children Sun/Wed \*32

Youth Sun/Wed \*16 UWF \*45

## **Year 2026 Week of January 18, 2026**

General Offering Budget \$13,040.00

General Offering Received \$46,486.00

YTD Gen. Offering Budget \$39,120.00

YTD Gen. Offering Rec'd \$65,840.00

## **Year End Giving**

### **2025**

#### **General Offering Received**

\$21,211.00

#### **YTD Gen. Offering Budget**

\$644,800.00

#### **YTD Gen. Offering Rec'd**

\$699,344.00

*Thank you for your generosity.*