



God Is...  
Pastor Sam Hayes

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

### Sermon Notes: 3.26.23 "God Is..."

When I was growing up, we used to have to memorize Bible verses for Vacation Bible School. The teacher would hand out little cards. One might get John 3:16, or Psalm 23:1... I always wanted to get a verse which comes from the gospel lesson for this Sunday. I wanted John 11: 35. Why? It was the shortest verse to memorize! "Jesus wept."

It was only later that I began to ask questions about the wonderful fact that Jesus wept. What was going on *before* Jesus wept? Well, his close friend (maybe best friend) Lazarus had died. He had been told few days earlier that Lazarus was sick, and he had waited a couple of days before heading that way. Why did Jesus wait?

Lazarus' sisters each came out to meet Jesus. Martha (the practical sister) wanted to fuss at Jesus a bit for arriving too late to save her brother. "If you had been here earlier, my brother wouldn't have died!" she said. And Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" Well...Martha? Do you believe? Or I could say, "Sam. Do you believe?"

Then along comes Mary (the tender-hearted sister). She says the same thing. "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." But Mary needed to cry it out - not to have a theological discussion. So, in John 11: 35, we simply read, "Jesus wept." Which leads us to more questions...

Why did Jesus weep? Did Jesus weep because Lazarus was dead? That seems unlikely, because Jesus was going to raise him from the dead. Some say his grief was over the sinful condition of humanity that results in death. Maybe. Some say his grief was because of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees who were gathered there - not to mourn, but to spy on Jesus. Maybe. As for me, I think Jesus wept because he *sympathized* with Mary and Martha. To sympathize means to "feel with." I think Jesus was feeling Mary and Martha's grief along with them.

So what? That's always a good question. Jesus was the fullness of the Godhead in human form (Col. 2: 9), and so to know something about Jesus is to know something about God. God knows our hurt, our grief, and our pain. Jesus was sovereign in this setting, even over death. God is God (and we are not). Even though the sisters were angry with Jesus, Jesus was still trustworthy. That means God is good, and we can trust God...even when things look bleak. Jesus had the last word(s). "Lazarus, come forth!" This reminds us that in the end, God wins!

Turns out our gospel passage for Sunday (John 11: 1-45) is not primarily about Jesus' friendship with Lazarus, Mary and Martha. Nor is it primarily about the fact that Jesus' disciples are always missing the point - or any of the other interesting details we read. This is a story that tells us some things about Who God is... See you Sunday, Pastor Sam

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### Worship Opportunities

Thursday Worship: 5:30 pm, Sanctuary

### Sunday Mornings:

Celebration 9 am\* Traditions 11 am\*

\*In Person (Sanctuary) and Online  
[www.fumcgadsden.org/media](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/media) or  
 on Facebook Live: @FUMCGadsden

### ACOLYTES

March 26: Quinn Darden & Sara Kate Thornburg

April 2: Silas Hosey & Marit Norris

### Tech Team Schedule

(Please arrive 45 minutes before the service.)

March 26

Celebration: Will Brookshire, Bill Haller, Brad Barnes

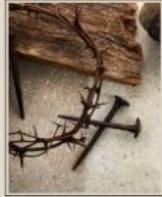
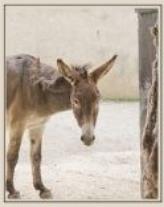
Traditions: Mark Condra, Tammy Hayes

April 2

Celebration: Eric Wright, Carmen McKiven, Jacob McKiven

Traditions: Mark Condra, Brad Barnes

*Palm Sunday, April 2      Easter Sunday, April 9*  
*9 am & 10:55 am*



## Holy Week

O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?



*Worship @ 12:05 pm, Monday-Friday, April 3-7  
followed by lunch @ 12:30 pm, \$5 per person*

First UMC Gadsden 115 S. 5th Street

### Holy Week Schedule

12:05 pm  
Monday 4/3  
Tammy Jackson  
Anniston First UMC  
Tuesday 4/4  
Ken Casey  
First UMC Gadsden  
Wednesday 4/5  
Laura Satterfield  
Mtn Lakes District Sec.  
& Ministry Candidate  
Thursday 4/6  
Belinda Rives  
Discovery UMC  
Friday 4/7  
Davis Johnson  
Southside UMC  
*Followed by Lunch \$5*

**HOSANNA!**  
*Palm Sunday*

April 2  
9:00 am and 10:55 am

Maundy  
*Thursday*

"Do this in Memory of Me"

6:00 pm, April 6

9:00 am  
&  
10:55 am

*Easter*  
Sunday,  
April 9

**We Want to See You @  
Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Meal**

**March 29: No Meal—Enjoy your Spring Break!**

**See you on April 5**

**Out of Town on the  
Weekend?**

**Come to Thursday Worship!**

**5:30 to 6:00 pm each week**

**In the Sanctuary**

**Wednesday Mornings, 11 am**

**Bible Study with Pastor Sam**

**Room 208, In Person Bible Study, A Study of the Book of Romans**

**Facebook Live @ 6 pm or on demand-via the FUMC APP or website**

**Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesday, 6 pm**

- ◆ Will not meet on Wednesday, March 29 due to Spring Break.
- ◆ See you on April 5.

**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.

*Something Happens Here* by Stephen P. West will be the topic for Lent.

Contact Todd Rains, Mark Condra, Mark Casey, or any of the Men at the Well for more information.

**There's a Place for you  
in Sunday School!**

- Living Waters Sunday School Class, **Room 112**, In person and online. Contact a member of the class for the link to join online! *Luke-Jesus and The Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws* by Adam Hamilton
- Martin Fellowship Class, International Bible Studies, **Room 116**
- Muti-Age Sunday School, with Eric Wright and Harriet Murray, **Room 208**
- Pathfinders and Seekers Classes are currently meeting with the Multi-Age Sunday School Class, **Room 208** *He Chose the Nails* by Max Lucado



**Sign Up to Receive Emails from the Church**

Sign up to receive emails from the church including the **Weekly News, Devotionals, Ministry and Mission Notes, and Sermon Notes**.

Go to: <http://www.fumcgadsden.org/sign-up-to-receive-emails>

Need Help: Contact Sheila Freeman @ 256-490-5018

## ELC News

Registration continues with tours and sign-ups but we are close to 100% occupancy for the 2023-2024 school year. We enjoyed our Papa John's pizza for our March lunchbox revolt. The ELC will be closed for Spring Break March 27<sup>th</sup> through March 30<sup>th</sup>. Our annual Easter parties and egg hunts will be Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Timing details have been posted on our Facebook page. Starting Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, the ELC will host its annual Mother's Day Roses Sale to support the Sara Rabun Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund.

—Helene Haller

# STUDENT MINISTRY

## Youth Ministry News

Wonderful Wednesdays are back!  
Dinner at 5:15, please make a reservation!

**Sunday School is back for Youth! Room 210  
10 am on Sunday mornings.**

**Don't miss our Wednesday night series for Lent!**

**On Wednesday, March 22, the youth will stuff  
Easter eggs for the children's Easter egg Hunt.**

**Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Dinner— March 29-No Meal**

**See you on April 5! Enjoy your Spring Break!**

# Children's Ministry

**Children's Church, Sundays during Celebration and Traditions Worship  
Wonderful Wednesday Children's Group, Every Wednesday at 6 pm**



## April Mission Focus

### Donations for the Charlsie House (formerly The Love Center)

Donation buckets will be at the entrances to the sanctuary and the Chestnut Foyer!

Hygiene Products: shampoo, conditioner, soap (bar& body wash) hair brushes, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes  
Feminine Products-tampons, pads  
Razors  
Liquid Detergent  
Clorox  
Hand Soap  
Sink Dishwashing Liquid  
White towels & wash cloths  
White Dish towels  
Clorox Cleaners  
Floor Cleaners-Fabuloso/Pinesol

Windex  
White Twin Sheet Sets  
White Twin Blankets  
Underwear of all Sizes-Female and Male  
Sports Bras  
Diapers  
Food: milk, meat, eggs, bread, cereal, canned food, condiments  
Over the Counter Medications:  
Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Tylenol, Aleve, Band Aids, Tums, nausea medicine, Melatonin, teeth glue-Fixodent

**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.

*There are five teams that serve at the Ladle of Love. Teams 1, 2,*

*3 & 4 serve one Friday per month, and team 5 serves on fifth Fridays. Subs are also needed to serve occasionally. If you are interested in finding our more or serving on a team contact the church office.*

### Clothes Closet

#### Workdays

1st & 3rd Tuesdays

#### Open to Public

1st & 3rd Wednesdays

April dates are  
4/5 and 4/19

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)*



Sign up @ <http://fumcgadsden.org/workday>

### Clothes Closet News

We need clothes! It's time to clean out closets and bring your spring and summer clothes to the church. If you are unable to get



them to the church, call the church office and leave a message. The "Men at the Well" will set up a time to pick them up for you.

*Thank you for remembering your Clothes Closet.*

#### Clients Served

	Jan	Feb
Ladle of Love	383	378

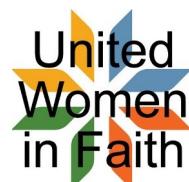
Clothes Closet	216	181
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**Thanks to our volunteers!**

### United Women in Faith

#### Bake Sale Sunday, April 2

We are going to have casseroles, cakes, pies and more for everyone to buy for Easter. They will be available in the Chestnut Street Lobby between the worship services until gone! All proceeds go to missions. All ladies need to bring 3 items to sell. **See page 7 for details**

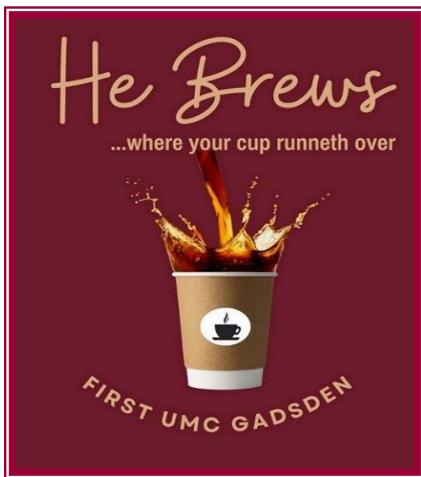


Phone: 256-543-8200  
Email: [fumc@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:fumc@fumcgadsden.org)

#gfumcreconnect2023

April Luncheon is Monday, April 17. —Barbara Bennett, President

# Inviting Ministries



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

## FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GADSDEN Generosity 2023

**Strength for today, bright hope for tomorrow!**

Your church needs more than just your financial giving in 2023...we need everyone to be "engaged" with church. We all promised to support our church with our PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, SERVICE, and WITNESS. In other words, we all promised to be plugged into every part of the church and to do it faithfully.



As of 2.26.23  
62 Estimate of Giving  
Cards received for a  
total of \$346,684.00.

*Please pray about your contributions to your church for 2023, complete an Estimate of Giving Card for 2023, and return it to the church office as quickly as you can, so that our Finance Team can finish up the 2023 budget. It's not too late to complete your card. —The Generosity Team*



### Generosity: Ways to Give

[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

# Giving



The UMW  
Bake Sale  
is Back!

*Calling all  
Bakers and Buyers*

# BAKE SALE

8:30 AM TO 12:30 PM

Sunday, April 2  
Chestnut St Lobby

for  
Missions

# & SILENT AUCTION

Some of our most Treasured Classic Old Time Homemade  
Baked Goods will be available at our Silent Auction Table  
for you to bid on!

Open Your Hearts  
Open Your Pocket Books  
for UMW Missions

# Calendar for March 26-April 1, 2023

## Mar 26 Sunday

9:00 am Celebration Service, Sanctuary  
10:00 am Sunday School, HeBrews Coffee Shop  
11:00 am Traditions Service, Sanctuary

## Mar 27 Monday

ELC closed for Spring Break  
9:00 am-10:00 am Exercise Group, Gym  
**Mar 28 Tuesday**  
ELC closed  
5:00-6:00 pm Yoga, Gym

## Mar 29 Wednesday

ELC closed  
11:00 am Bible Study, Pastor Sam, Room 208  
No Wednesday Night Meal  
No Children or Youth Activities  
No Adult Bible Study  
No Choir Practice

## March 30 Thursday

ELC closed  
9:00 am-10:00 am Exercise Group, Gym  
**5:30 pm Thursday Worship, Sanctuary**  
**March 31 Friday**

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

## Honorariums & Memorials

### General Budget Fund

In memory of Don Hiltz, given by Julia Knox.  
In memory of Don Hiltz, given by Mr. & Mrs.  
Mandell Tillman.

### Howell Erwin Fund

In memory of Don Hiltz, given by  
Mr & Mrs. George Varner.

### UMCOR

In memory of Don Hiltz, given by Dotty Ivey.

### Immediate Prayer Concerns

Dawn Rains Jane Herb  
Heather Lincoln (Phillip & Leslie Johnson's daughter)

### Continued Prayer Concerns

Rodney Thompson Mike McEwen  
June Longshore Martha Bullock Mary Tom Hale  
Chris Gunnells  
(Gail McNair's nephew)



## Birthdays

**Mar 26** James Kelley, Jay Dial  
**Mar 27** Caroline Calhoun, Beth Kelley, David Ross, Keegan Powell  
**Mar 28** Cathy Lowe, Caroline Knowles  
**Mar 29** Romy Megois  
**Mar 31** Jennifer Smith  
**Apr 1** Barbara Sheffield

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



## Week of March 16, 2023

In Person Total \*141 Online 332  
Worship Total 473 Thursday Worship \*7  
Celebration \*59/146 Traditions \*85/186  
Adult Sunday School \*35/1 Children \*4  
Bible Study Groups \*30/36  
Children \*35 Youth \*16 Nursery \*2  
Total Small Groups \*168/37  
\*In Person

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Proposed Offering Budget \$12,777.00  
General Offering Received \$11,418.00  
YTD General Offering Budget \$153,324.00  
YTD General Offering Rec'd \$140,606.00

## Save the Date:

**April 2** Palm Sunday, Children Singing in both services  
**April 3-7** Holy Week Noon Day Services, 12:05-12:30 pm  
Lunch 12:35-1:00 pm  
**April 6** Maundy Thursday Service, 6:00 pm  
**April 8** Easter Egg Hunt 11:00 am  
**April 9** Easter Sunday 9:00am & 10:55 am

## **Order an Easter Lily by Monday, 4/3/23**

*Lilies will be placed on the altar, in honor or memory of a loved one, for Easter Sunday Worship in both services.*

Cost: \$23.00       In Honor of       In Memory of

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

