

*The Crack in the Sidewalk is
a Place for the Plant to Grow*
Rev. Sherri Reynolds



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

Sermon Notes: Thursday, May 9 & Sunday, May 12, 2024

Have you ever noticed the resiliency of a plant? A sprout can take hold in the least likely of places, eventually flourishing in a place that no one would expect. Take for example a crack in the sidewalk. Typically, it doesn't take long for a seed to find its way into a sidewalk crack and start to grow. We may have even seen saplings destroy manmade barriers of concrete and asphalt to flourish in inhospitable environments. It may take some time, but a sidewalk is no match for the root system or trunk of a growing oak tree.

The scripture for Mother's Day showcases the resiliency of Christ-followers in the most inhospitable environment. Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail. There they find themselves in the inner most cell, in chains. While imprisoned, they sing songs at midnight praising God. With a miracle from God, they are freed and use the occasion to witness to the jailer. This leads to the jailer and his family believing in Jesus and being baptized. (Acts 16:16-34). The obstacle of jail becomes a place for Paul and Silas to minister and a space for the message of Jesus to flourish. Thus, echoing the sentiments of Paul, which we later find in his letter to Rome, "All things work together for Good, for those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose." Whatever "crack" or obstacles that you find yourself in today, may God's grace and peace be with you as you grow in His love despite those present circumstances. In God's Grace, Rev. Sherri

Join with UMCOR —Our Friends in Missions

Donate items or fill a tornado bucket. See page 5 for details.

In response to recent tornadoes in central Alabama and central Georgia and flooding in California, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) approved early relief grants to meet immediate needs in three annual conferences.

On Jan. 12, multiple tornadoes slammed the southeastern United States, killing at least seven and destroying numerous communities. Assessing needs in hard-hit Selma, Alabama, a leadership team from the Alabama-West Florida Conference noted that approximately 600 households were affected by more than a dozen tornadoes. "It would not surprise me," said the Rev. Chris Ackerman, conference disaster response coordinator, "if the total number of houses affected is over 1,000." "From the moment the warning was activated in Dallas County," recalled the Rev. Diane Everette, Church Street United Methodist Church, Selma, "our UMC connection stayed in touch with me to ensure that I was personally safe as well as our church members. While Thursday was, perhaps, one of the most terrifying days of my life, I was never alone, thanks to my brothers and sisters in Christ in this conference. It will be a long road ahead for Selma, but our conference disaster response team will walk with us every step of the way."

All GFUMC donations will be sent to the NAC Disaster Relief Warehouse in Decatur!

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Worship Opportunities

5:30 pm Thursday Worship

Sunday Mornings: Celebration 9 am*

Traditions 11 am*

***In Person (Sanctuary) and Online**

www.fumcgadsden.org/media
on Facebook Live: @FUMCGadsden

ACOLYTES

May 12: Anna Kate Casey

May 19: Sara Kate and Jake Thornburg

Tech Team Schedule

May 12

Celebration: Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Carmen McKiven

Traditions: Neil Mullin, Brad Barnes

May 19

Celebration: Eric Wright, Bill Haller, Sheila Freeman

Traditions: Wayne Payton, Neil Mullin, Sheila Freeman

Sunday SCHOOL

Classes for All Ages!

**Children's Sunday School Rooms 108 and 104
Youth Sunday School Room 211**

**New Young Adult Sunday School Room 209
Pathfinder/Seekers Room 208
Living Water Room 116**

(Nursery provided for Children under 3)

**Wednesday Mornings Bible Study with Rev. Sherri
April 17 was the last class for Spring.
Watch for more information, coming soon!**

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. The study is "100 Day Bible Study-The Torah". Temporarily meeting at "Union Jack" Café. Contact Todd Rains, Mark Condra, Mark Casey, or any of the Men at the Well for more information.

**Wednesday
Fellowship Dinner**

**Come to the Church
Picnic on May 15**

Adult Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesdays

Will Resume in August.

**We hope you enjoy the summer! Please be sure to check out
the summer activities for children and youth!**

Take the Spiritual Gifts Inventory @ Spiritual Gifts UMC.org

Every child of God is filled with [the power of the Holy Spirit](#), specially gifted to play a unique and valued role in the body of Christ. No one is without gift or purpose.

Spiritual gifts are not our talents or skills. They are the grace of God at work within us, empowering us to match our deep passions with the world's deep need. The gifts are given to individuals, but they are given to build and strengthen community and to meet the needs of those around us.

Begin the journey. Discover your gifts. Talk about your gifts with others. Strive together to understand your gifts and how you can use them to serve God, neighbor, and world. You have been gifted. You have been given a purpose.



ELC News

We had a great End of Year program and parties. 4K Graduation and Reception were sweet and special. Not a dry eye in the house. The ELC officially closed until Tuesday, June 11th, when we will open for our Summer 2024 session. Thank you to all that participated in the roses sale benefitting the Sara Rabun Johnson Scholarship Fund. Totals will be announced soon.

—Helene

STUDENT MINISTRY

Youth Ministry News

“The Chosen Bible Study”
May 5 Sheila Freeman
May 12 Susan Swann
May 19 Barbara Condra
May 26 Sheila Freeman



Youth Group Meets

Wednesdays at 6 pm each week!

Youth Counselor
Carmen McKiven

Wednesday Fellowship Dinner
Come to the Church Picnic
on May 15 @ the Kiwanis Pavilion.

Children's Ministry

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

Wednesdays at 6 pm, Small Groups for Children

May 12-2nd Grade Bibles

May 19-Confirmation Sunday

THIS SUMMER, JOIN US FOR

GFUMC's

Vacation Bible School

JUNE 3-6

KNIGHTS OF NORTH CASTLE

COKEBURY'S VBS

REGISTER ONLINE

A QR code linking to the registration page.

A scroll with the text: "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power." Ephesians 6:10

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GADSDEN
115 S. 5th St. Gadsden, AL 35901

SARA RABUN JOHNSON
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Mother's Day Roses Sale

With your donation of \$20 or more, a rose is placed on the altar on Mother's Day, in honor or in memory of your loved one.

All donations provide direct support for ELC families whose children would not otherwise be able to afford the program.



MAKE YOUR DONATION PAYABLE TO GFUMC AND MARK IT "SRJ SCHOLARSHIP FUND".

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS TO THE FUND MAY BE GIVEN THROUGOUT THE YEAR.

Thank you for your donations!



ELC 4K Class of 2024

Mission Focus

Tornado Bucket

Help the GFUMC Mission Team fill Tornado Buckets and collect needed items. Tornado Buckets are located at the entrances, if you would like to take a bucket to fill with the requested items. If you would prefer to donate any of the items below, there is also a Red Bucket for donations of individual items. All of the Tornado Buckets and additional items will be delivered to the NACUMC Disaster Relief Warehouse in Decatur! Thank you for your support of missions. -First UMC Gadsden Mission Team

1 Standard Size Claw Hammer

1 each: Shirt pocket notebook, permanent marker, pencil and sharpeners. (Place in a small Ziploc bag.) For "To Do" lists and marking packing boxes.

1 Flashlight with batteries

12 Black Trash Bags, 30-45 Gallon recommended (bundled) *for trash removal*

1 Roll of Toilet Paper in a Ziploc Bag

1 Pr. Leather Palm/Cloth back or All Leather Work Gloves

1 50 count #8 Nails

10 White 13 Gallon Kitchen Trash Bags with Draw Strings (bundled)

1 Cellophane packing Tape

10 One-Gallon Ziploc Bags (bundled) (For jewelry, and valuables)

1 Box Cutter

1 Liquid Hand Sanitizer 4 oz –12 oz

1 Insect Repellant Spray Bottle/Can, Wipes or Combination

1 Pr. Safety Glasses. *For hammering tarps, wood strips on roof*

6 Clear Large Plastic Bags, 40-55 Gallon recommended (bundled)

3 Tampons or Pads in a small Ziploc Bag

-Add all items on the above list to the bucket. Secure the lid, if any of the items aren't available just label the top of the bucket "Needs... (the missing item(s)) and the warehouse will add the item(s).

Please return filled buckets to the church by Sunday, May 19. Additional donations of loose items may be placed in the Red Buckets in the Foyers.

United Women in Faith

May Luncheon

Monday, May 13 at 12:00 noon.

Speaker is Benny McNair, who will share with us "Jewels of the Bible". Please phone or text your lunch reservation by noon on Sunday, May 12, to Olivia Kendrick at 205-454-4375

Salad Supper, LuVerna Waid Circle, Tuesday, May 21, 5:30 pm, Jana Downs' Home, 105 Carolwood Cove, Gadsden, AL 35901

Remember to order your Boston Butt early. You can order online or there is an order form on page 6, all proceeds go to UWF Missions.

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

May open dates are 5/1 and 5/15

9:00 am to 11:00 am

516 Broad Street Gadsden

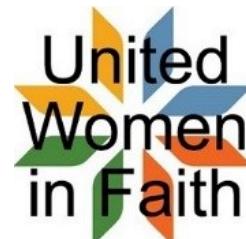
Find out more about mission and service opportunities @ www.fumcgadsden.org/serve

Phone: 256-543-8200

Email:

fumc@fumcgadsden.org

#gfumcreconnect2023



Clients Served March 2024

Ladle of Love 474
Clothes Closet 216

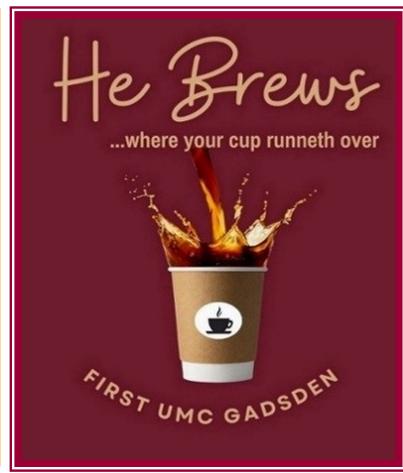
**Thanks to our
Volunteers!**



Please join us for HeBrews
Coffee Café between the regular
Sunday morning worship
services, from 10 am to 11 am.
We can't wait to see you there!!!



*The Inviting Ministries Team
wishes to say a special "Thank
You" to Sheri and Paul DeJong
for their service on the team and
for being our fourth Sunday
coffee baristas! Many thanks
and a fond farewell!!*



United Women in Faith Boston Butts Sale Benefiting Local Missions \$40 Each

Featuring Boston Butts from Robertson's Barbecue (Tuscaloosa, AL)



Place your order by June 10. Prepayment is required.

All order must be picked up* between 3 pm and 6 pm on

Wednesday, June 19th

at First UMC Gadsden's Portico entrance facing 6th Street.

(*Orders not picked up will be donated to Ladle of Love.)



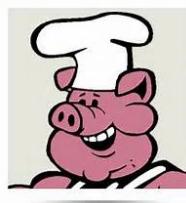
Name _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Number of Boston Butt's _____ X 40.00 = Order Total _____

Note: Order Early—Quantities are Limited!

Turn forms in to the church office and place in the UWF Box.





Do You Know?

Is a weekly interview column by Anna Mullin & Inviting Ministries to help our church family get to know one another. Anna may be calling you soon, so we can get to know you too!

MARTHA CROWE



Martha grew up in a small community west of Birmingham. She walked to Church for Sunday School and Worship. At age 13, she professed her faith in Christ at a Youth Revival. Her teen years revolved around activities in the Church Youth Group. She studied accounting while raising three children: Ray, Christopher and Kim, and is blessed with four grandchildren and four great grandchildren (with another due in November). Martha worked in banking while in Alabama, then moved to Georgia, where she worked as VP of Membership and Special Events for the Cartersville Chamber of Commerce. She later served as the Director of the Cave Spring Downtown Development Authority

and was the creator of "Cave Spring Bacon Fest," a fundraiser for the town, which continues to be an annual event. She encourages BUY LOCAL. Martha likes to fish, both fresh and salt water, and loves her dog Belle and all the "fur babies" in the family. She is an avid reader and stays close to friends old and new. She is married to Ronald Crowe of Alexander City, who loves to cook for UMC events. She is also the mother of Ray Macon, who sings in our choir.

Sermon Series for June: #wearefirst



It is hard to believe that I have been appointed to First United Methodist Church for almost a year now. During this past year, I have grown to know you and love you, as the church. The unique qualities that you bring as a congregation enrich my life, one another's lives, and Gadsden. It is my joy to serve you.

During the month of June, First United Methodist Church embarks on a sermon series to celebrate the strength and beauty of the congregation: #wearefirst. Join us each Sunday as we examine the gifts of our diversity, our generosity, the theology of all empowered for ministry and our roots in tradition which come together to be First United Methodist Church of Gadsden. In addition to this series, there will be a themed logo showcasing our beautiful steeple, which will be available on coffee mugs, t-shirts, and yard signs. For the course of the series, you can celebrate and share your photos of all things FUMC with #wearefirst on your social media accounts. This will be a season of celebrating what makes us First United Methodist Church. — Rev. Sherri

Volunteer Opportunity

A big part of our in-person Sunday morning worship experience is having greeters & ushers welcome guests into the space. This job is an essential part of making sure we provide a safe and welcoming environment for everyone who comes into our church. If you would like to help please call the church office—**256-543-8200**.



Instagram

Follow us on Facebook
and Instagram.



Update Your Contact Information

Please help us update the membership records in the church office with your current mailing address, phone number, email address and birthdays for all family members. Updates may be sent to susan@fumcgadsden.org or call Susan in the church office @ 256-543-8200. 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>

First Family,

Each day, I am overwhelmed by God's abundant blessings, especially the blessings at First United Methodist Church. Several months ago, I challenged the leadership to add three simple prayers for the church each day: reaching 200 in average worship attendance, financial provision, and blessings and direction for student ministry. I have seen the work of God in these areas, especially in the area financial provision.

Over the past month, we have received two substantial grants, and the giving has exceeded expenses and budget. To top it all, I celebrate a 2024 Alleluia Offering of \$31,571.00. The money from this offering will fund the 2024 Confirmation Retreat, allow enhancements in worship, and fund new ministry. This offering exceeded last year's gift and is the second largest Alleluia offering received.

Thank you for your generosity and being an instrument through which, God is blessing the ministry of First United Methodist Church. Your giving is an answer to the prayers lifted daily on your behalf and on behalf of this church. I especially thank you for going above and beyond in the Alleluia Offering. As your you are a part of God's abundant blessings in my life and our church.

In Gratitude,

Rev. Sherri Reynolds
Rev. Sherri Reynolds

Bob Blount
Bob Blount



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 FirstUMC-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

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

May 12 Sunday
9:00 am-Celebration Worship, Sanctuary
10:00-am Sunday School for all ages;
 HeBrews Coffee, Chestnut Street Foyer
11:00 am-Traditions Worship, Sanctuary

May 13 Monday
 ELC Closed
 9:00 am-10:00 am- Exercise Group, Gym
 10:30 am-UWF Executive Board Meeting, Room 208
 12:00 pm-UWF Luncheon, Gathering Room
 2:00 pm-4:00 pm-Pickleball, Gym



Immediate Prayer Concerns
 Leigh Carroll Eileen Graham John Floyd
 Judy Collins (Tripp Collins' mother)
 Pam James (Jan Humphrey's sister)



Continued Prayer Concerns

Martha Bullock Marian Ford Amy Epperson Brent Styles
 Asher Mae Collins Johnny Gunnels (Gail McNair's brother)
 Chris Gunnels (Gail McNair's nephew)

Birthdays
May 12 George Hightower,
 Jeanne Leach
May 13 Dr. Bill Haller, Jr.,
 Paul DeJong, Connor Rice
May 14 Lynne Frederick,
 Alta Whitfield, Greysen Robinson
May 15 Ann Martin,
 Catheryne Freeman,
 Matthew Skelton, Margaret Walton
May 16 Bonnie Yarnell,
 Michael Hayes
May 17 Asher English

Week of May 5, 2024
 In Person Total-*182 Worship Total-496
 Online-314 Thursday Worship-*5
 Celebration Service-*71/160
 Traditional Service-*106/154 *in person
 Sunday School Adult-*35 Children *8 Youth *0
 Nursery *1 Bible Study Groups-*15
 Wed/Sun-Children*38 Wed/Sun-Youth *12
 Senior Hi Brunch *33 Confirmation *12
 General Offering Budget \$11,400.00
 General Offering Received \$13,055.00
 YTD General Offering Budget \$205,200.00
 YTD General Offering Rec'd \$226,779.00

Calendar for May 12-May 19, 2024

May 14 Tuesday
 5:00 pm-6:00 pm-Yoga, Gym
May 15 Wednesday
 5:00 pm-7:00 pm-Church Picnic, Kiwanis Pavilion,
 Noccalula Falls
May 16 Thursday
 9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym
 10:00 am-Striplin School Kindergarten Graduation
5:30 pm Thursday Worship, Sanctuary

May 17 Friday
 11:00 am-12:00 pm-Ladle of Love

Mark Your Calendars

Sunday, May 12
Mother's Day, 2nd Grade Bibles
Monday, May 13
UWF Luncheon, 12 noon
Wednesday, May 15
5 pm, Church Picnic
Kiwanis Pavilion, Noccalula Falls
Sunday, May 19
Confirmation Sunday

June Sermon Series
#wearefirst

Honorariums & Memorials
General Budget Fund

In memory of George Varner, given by
 Frances Thrower & William Michael
 Thrower.

Important Deadlines
Information for the weekly newsletter is due each Tuesday by noon.

All Meetings, Events and Activities must be scheduled in advance with the church secretary, Susan Swann, by email or phone, susan@fumcgadsden.org or 256.543.8200.