

# THE WITNESS OF Love

Matthew 13:31-35

Rev. Sherri Reynolds

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

## Sermon Notes: Thursday, May 15 and Sunday, May 18

If someone had never met you and knew little about you, would they know you were a Christian? How could someone else tell if you were a follower of Jesus? They might know you are a Christian because of the stickers on your card or the t-shirt you wear. Some might know because you attend church and carry a Bible. People may consider you a Christian by the scripture you can quote or your ability to carry on a theological conversation. Jesus said to his disciples that they would be known as his followers by how they loved one another (John 13:31-35). With Jesus' words, does this mean that love is our witness?

You have likely heard the expression, "If you were arrested for your faith in Jesus and brought to trial, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" If this were the case, I hope that many of us would be convicted based on how we loved.

In the love of Christ,  
Sherri

The North Alabama Conference is offering free workshops for church leadership and development. Anyone interested can attend. This is a great opportunity to enhance your leadership skills and serve your church. See below for more information. Please contact Rev. Sherri ([sherri@gadsgdenfumc.org](mailto:sherri@gadsgdenfumc.org)) if you have questions or would like to learn more about transportation to the event.

—Rev. Sherri



Annual Conference 2025 will kick off with an opportunity for your church leaders to participate in [Learn and Lead workshops](#). The Learn and Lead Workshops are free and open to *all North Alabama United Methodists*, not just Annual Conference attendees. We encourage multiple members from each congregation to participate so your congregation can collectively benefit from the wealth of knowledge shared.

See page 8 for a detailed list of classes and the link to register for lunch!

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## Worship Opportunities

**Thursday: Worship, 5:30 pm**

**Sunday Morning: Celebration, 9 am**  
**Traditions, 11 am**

\*In-Person and Livestream or On Demand  
[www.fumcgadsgden.org/media](http://www.fumcgadsgden.org/media)

## ACOLYTES

May 18: Luke Barnes  
 May 25: Volunteer

## Tech Team Schedule

**May 18**

**Celebration:** Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller, Brad Barnes  
**Traditions:** Davis Varner, Wayne Payton, Sheila Freeman

**May 25**

**Celebration:** Sheila Freeman, Rob Reynolds  
**Traditions:** Wayne Payton, Neil Mullin, Sheila Freeman



## **Save the Date: Gift to Gadsden 2025**

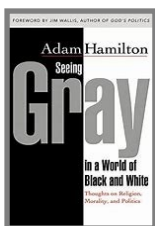
### **July 28-31**

**Wonderful Wednesday will resume in August!**

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study @ 11 am will resume in August**

**Adult Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesdays, 6 pm will resume in August!**

## **Sunday School: New Adult Series**

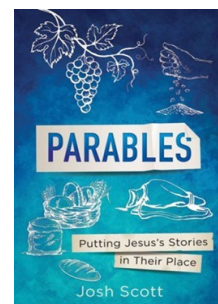


### **Transitions 10 am, Room 209**

This study encourages thinking persons of faith to model for the rest of the country a richer, more thoughtful conversation on the political, moral, and religious issues that divide us. Hamilton rejects the easy assumptions and sloppy analysis of black and white thinking, seeking instead the truth that resides on all sides of the issues, and offering a faithful and compassionate way forward.

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

Parables by Josh Scott. When Jesus taught in parables, he was doing more than telling simple morality tales. His stories were grounded in the world in which he lived and his vision of the Kingdom of God. This book explores six parables that give us a window into Jesus's message and movement, and, once they are heard in their own context, ask what they might mean for us today. Parables include: the New Wine and Wineskins, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, the Wedding Party, the Workers in the Vineyard, and the Wicked Tenants.



### **Living Water 10 am, Room 116**

The Living Water Class is doing a unique study for the next several weeks. We are looking at events, teachings, miracles, parables found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Since these three gospels are very similar in many incidences special books have been written that compare these similar stories. So you may have a story in one, or two or all three Gospels. We are examining these events to see what we can learn from them.

### **"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



The ELC students and faculty had a great last week to the Spring 2025 semester. The End of Year Program, Parties along with 4K Graduation and Reception went off without a hitch and everyone had a great time. The ELC summer session will start Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Until then, all ELC faculty will be getting some much needed R & R.

—Helene Haller



## Youth Group

Summer Schedule

Room 211

Sunday School

10 am, Room 211

## Breakfast

## Fundraiser

to support the Youth Summer Trip to the Ark. Breakfast items will be for sale in the Chestnut Foyer. 10 am to 11 am June 1

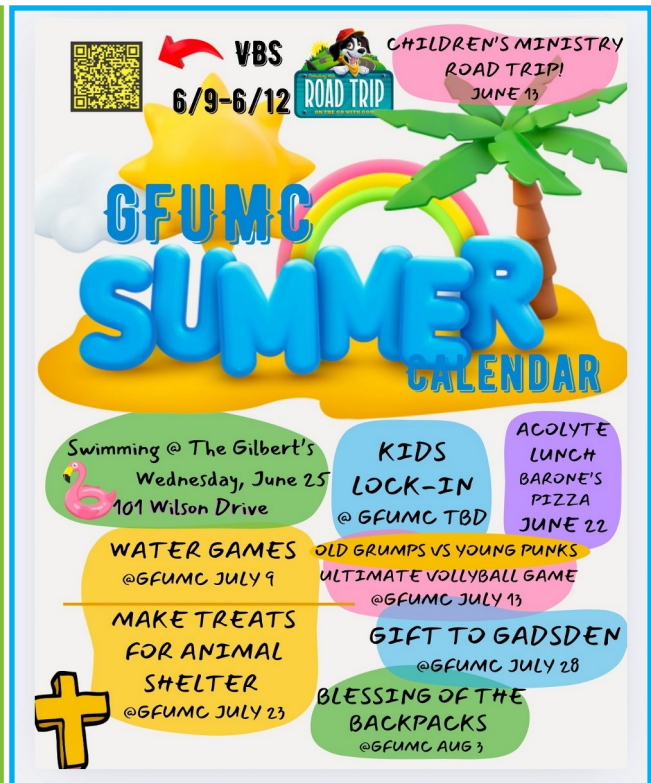
**Wonderful Wednesday will resume in August!**

# Children's Ministry

Wonderful Wednesday Children's Small Groups and Activities will resume in August

Watch for all the Summer Activities and Special Events!

Sunday Mornings: Children's Church during worship, Sunday school @ 10 am





## May Mission Focus



### W. E. Striplin Elementary –Our Adopted School

On Monday, May 5, First UMC Gadsden Mission Team hosted the annual Teacher and Staff Appreciation Luncheon with box lunches from Chicken Salad Chick for Teachers, Staff and Administrators at Striplin Elementary School! In addition, Teacher of the Month and Teacher of the Year certificates and gift cards were awarded.

—The Mission Team



## 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**

**5/7 and 5/21**

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](mailto:fumc@fumcgadsden.org)

**#gfumcreconnect2024**

### United Women in Faith

**UWF Boston Butt and Ham Sale:** Orders must be completed and paid for by June 1. Pickup date at First UMC Gadsden is June 11. To order online go to [www.fumcgadsden.org/women](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/women) or complete an order form in the Chestnut Foyer. Checks should be made payable to UWF (United Women in Faith).

**Summer Suppers:** Watch for dates and time and location for a monthly get together for fellowship in June, July, and August.

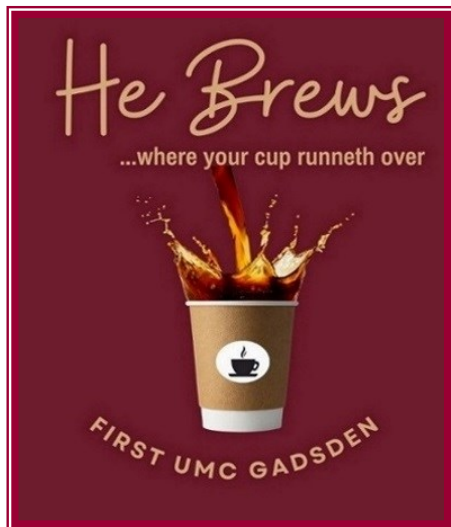


### Ladle of Love Clothes Closet

March

LOL	400
Clothes Closet	326

Thanks to our Volunteers!



Follow us on  
Facebook and Instagram.



**HeBrews Coffee Café 10 am, Chestnut Street Foyer**  
**We Can't Wait to See You There!**



# Do You Know?

## BETTY CHAMBOREDON



Betty grew up in Pittsburgh, PA, and graduated from Sacred Heart High School. She attended the Community College of Allegheny County and Pennsylvania State University (Penn State). Prior to Covid, she owned a business that sold crafts, collectibles, and antiques. Her daughter, Alecia, had mental and physical handicaps, so Betty stayed at home to care for her until Alecia passed away at the age of 43. Drawing upon her personal experiences as a caregiver, Betty has also served as a Teacher's Aide in programs for the handicapped. She also has a son named Eugene, who is known as "Geno." He has degrees in Automotive and High Performance Automotive from Northwestern University and has worked in Construction at the Pittsburgh Zoo. He is currently employed by the University of Pittsburgh. Betty comes to us from Christ Central Church. Her interests include crafts, cooking, going to flea markets and garage sales, and enjoying animals.





HELP US GET TO THE ARK!

## JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST!

The youth will be providing biscuits, sausage, and breakfast goodies to raise money for our trip to The Ark Encounter in June. We will be in the Chestnut St. foyer!

MAY 11, 2025 10 A.M.- 11 A.M.

JUNE 1, 2025 10 A.M. - 11 A.M.

For any questions, reach out to  
Becca Echols.  
256-295-6176



The LORD your God is with you **wherever you go.**  
Joshua 1:9  
*Cokesbury Kids*

**ROAD TRIP**  
ON THE GO WITH GOD

First United Methodist Church of Gadsden  
June 9-June 12  
ages 3k-5th

Register **HERE** for VBS



**Road Trip: On The Road With God!**  
GFUMC VBS 2025

This past Easter, we invited you to tithe the week of Holy Week, above and beyond your general fund offering. I am pleased to share that you responded with deep generosity. As of the writing of this letter, so far \$28,792.00 has been given as part of the 2025 Alleluia Offering. Thank you for your ongoing generosity and support. Your giving has enabled us to fund ongoing organ maintenance, activities for our students this summer, and new media ministries.

As always, I am overwhelmed by the level of generosity within the congregation. What you are doing through First United Methodist Church of Gadsden is changing lives in the name of Jesus.

Thanks be to God!

*Rev. Sherri Reynolds*

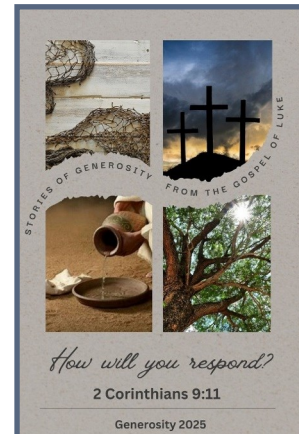
Rev. Sherri Reynolds



## Generosity 2025 “How will you Respond?”

*You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us*  
2 Corinthians 9:11

The 2025 “Estimate of Giving” Card can be filled out at any time during the year online @ [www.fumcgadsden.org/give](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/give)



**First UMC Gadsden**  
**is a registered charity and can receive**  
**donations through Venmo:**

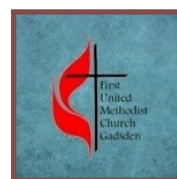
**@FirstUMCGadsden**

(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

## Learn and Lead Workshops —Free & Open to Everyone

*The North Alabama Conference is offering free workshops for church leadership and development. Anyone interested can attend. This is a great opportunity to enhance your leadership skills and serve your church. See below for more information. Please contact Rev. Sherri ([sherri@gadsdenfumc.org](mailto:sherri@gadsdenfumc.org)) if you have questions or would like to learn more about transportation to the event.*

—Rev. Sherri



Annual Conference 2025 will kick off with an opportunity for your church leaders to participate in **Learn and Lead workshops**. The Learn and Lead Workshops are free and open to *all North Alabama United Methodists*, not just Annual Conference attendees. We encourage multiple members from each congregation to participate so your congregation can collectively benefit from the wealth of knowledge shared.



On Thursday, May 29, there will be **three** different sessions featuring a rotation of engaging workshops offering practical ministry ideas. You will be able to choose from different topics that will help grow and strengthen ministry in your church's context.

**Learn and Lead workshops are free to attend.** You are encouraged to join others for lunch onsite. **Purchase your meal ticket (\$16) IN ADVANCE ONLY @ NAC online reservations by May 19.**

**[Participants in the Children's and Youth Ministry track will eat free but an advance online reservation is required!]**

### Workshops:

- *How to Reach your Zip Code: Missional Strategies for the Neighborhood* led by Suzanne Katschke
- *Re-Imagining Your Church Facility as An Asset and Source of Revenue* led by Rickey Letson (Missional Business Services)
- *Value Propositions for your Community* led by Meghan Hatcher (CYMT Innovation Lab)
- *Building a Culture of Discipleship-Driven Giving* led by Brandon Harris (Generis)
- *Intergenerational Ministry: All Generations Matter* led by Martin Quick
- *Small Group Ministry* led by Chris Wilterdink (Discipleship Ministries)
- *Embodied and Movement Prayer* led by Sarah Smoot
- *Solidarity with the Sojourners: Understanding the US Immigration and our Call to Respond* led by Adlene Kufarimai, Paulette West, and Kevin Thomas

**And more...**

**New this Year: Track just for Children's and Youth Ministry leaders and volunteers**

- *Connecting & Connection within Children and Youth Ministry* led by Amanda Vernon
- *Milestones: Working with Parents and Children on Learning Milestones* led by Eleanor Christianson

**Also, all participants in the Children and Youth Ministry track are invited to connect over a FREE lunch! Please RSVP through the registration QR code above.**



Come hear The Jax State A Cappella Choir next Tuesday, May 20 at 7:00 pm at First United Methodist Church of Gadsden. —JT Harrell

**JAX STATE** | DAVID L. WALTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC  
JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

# A Cappella Choir

## WESTERN EUROPE TOUR PREVIEW CONCERTS

ELIEZER YANSON JR., DIRECTOR



*Apr. 29, 2025*  
7:00 PM  
Sacred Heart of Jesus  
Catholic Church  
1301 Golden Springs Road  
Anniston, Alabama

*May 20, 2025*  
7:00 PM  
First United  
Methodist Church  
115 S 5th Street  
Gadsden, Alabama

*May 21, 2025*  
6:30 PM  
Golden Springs  
Baptist Church  
3 Robertson Road  
Anniston, Alabama

The Netherlands



Belgium



# First UMC Gadsden May 18-May 24, 2025

## May 18, Sunday

9:00 am-Celebration Worship, Sanctuary  
10:00 am- HeBrews Coffee  
11:00 am-Traditions Worship, Sanctuary  
12:00 pm-VBS Workday

## May 19, Monday

9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym  
**10:00 am-Striplin Kindergarten Graduation**  
2:00 to 4:00 pm- Pickleball, Gym

## May 20, Tuesday

5:00 pm-Yoga, Gym  
**7:00 pm-JSU Choir Concert, Sanctuary**

## May 21, Wednesday

6:00 pm-Choir Practice

## May 22, Thursday

9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym  
**5:30 pm-Thursday Worship service**

## May 23, Friday

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

**Save the Dates:** Monday-Thursday, June 9-12, 9 am to 11:30 am-Road Trip VBS

Monday-Thursday, July 28-31-Gift to Gadsden

*We can't wait to see you there!*

## UWF Boston Butt and Ham Sale:

Orders must be completed and paid for by June 1. Pickup date at First UMC Gadsden is June 11. To order online go to [www.fumcgadsden.org/women](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/women) or complete an order form in the Chestnut Foyer. Checks should be made payable to UWF (United Women in Faith) and left in the church office.



Watch for exciting news about group messaging and communications within the First UMC-Gadsden Church App

Available in the App Store or Google Play Store for iPhone & Android. Download the App today.



*The rose on the altar is in honor of the birth of*



*Garnet Taylor Freeman  
May 8, 2025*

*Parents: Michael & Sydney Freeman*

*Grandparents: Sheila Freeman*

*Tim & Cynthia Freeman*

*Given by GFUMC Children's Ministry & Early Learning Center*

*The rose on the altar is in honor of the birth of*



*Charles Perdue McCoy  
April 30, 2025*

*Parents: Richard & Katie McCoy*

*Sibling: Richie McCoy*

*Grandparents: Dick & Dee McCoy*

*Given by GFUMC Children's Ministry & Early Learning Center*

**WELCOME**  
**NEW MEMBERS**

*Maitland  
Adams*

## Birthdays

**May 19** Amy Epperson

**May 20** Rose Schmuck,  
Martha Gray, Holt Page

**May 21** Sara Echols

**May 23** Dallas Moran, Owen White

**May 24** J.T. Harrell

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

—Susan Swann



## Attendance Week of May 11, 2025

In Person Total-182 On Line Total-442  
Worship Total-624  
Celebration \*82/254 Traditions \*90/188  
Adult Sunday School \*36 Children SS \*5  
Middle School & Senior Hi SS \*4 UWF \*18  
Bible Study Groups \*8 Children Wed/Sun \*42  
Middle & Sen Hi Wed/Sun \*14  
Nursery Wed/Sun \*3 Church Picnic \*104

## Year 2025 Week of May 11, 2025

General Offering Budget	\$12,400.00
General Offering Received	9,335.00
YTD Gen. Offering Budget	235,600.00
YTD Gen. Offering Rec'd	246,876.00

## Immediate Prayer Concerns

Ricky Couvillion-  
(Joey Couvillion's brother)  
Nadine Shipp (Gail Spotnitz' mother)  
Gary Atkins Mary Tom Hale  
Trish Harrell Belinda Tackaberry  
Grayson Phillips-(Parents Leigh & Dathan Phillips)

## Continued Prayer Concerns

Dottie Rogers Martha Bullock  
Amy Epperson  
Bob Walden-  
(Olivia Kendrick's father)  
Emily Carroll (Adam Carroll's wife)