



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

**Sermon Notes: Thursday, December 12 and Sunday, December 15, 2024**

In the *United Methodist Hymnal* on page 249, you will find *There's A Song in the Air*. This hymn begins with those words, "There's a song in the air!" and the last verse proclaims, "we rejoice in the light, and we echo the song." This week at First United Methodist Church, there is a song in the air, and we echo the song. It is a time of musical delight and hearing the story of our faith through music. Thursday Night Worship in the chapel will bring the history of your favorite hymns. Celebration Worship will be in the chapel at 9am with "Christmas Unplugged," a time of jamming and caroling. Traditions worship will highlight our sanctuary choir and musicians with the songs of the season. All of these are great worship opportunities, which you will not want to miss.

What song are you singing this Advent? Psalm 149:1 reminds us, "Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise the assembly of the faithful!" This week, may we praise the Lord with song. May the familiar lyrics become a prayer for us all.

Happy Advent!  
Rev. Sherri

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**Worship Opportunities**

**Thursdays: 5:30 pm Sunday Mornings: Celebration 9 am\* Traditions 11 am\***

**\*In-Person and Livestream or On Demand**

[www.fumcgadsden.org/media](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/media)

**Adult Studies for Advent**

**"Prepare the Way for the Lord"**

Living Waters/Martin Fellowship, Room 116

**"On the Way to Bethlehem"**

Transitions, Room 209

**"God Came Near"**

Pathfinders/Seekers Room 208

**ACOLYTES**

December 15: Sara Kate, Jake, & Carter Thornburg  
December 22: Volunteer

**Thursday Worship Security**

**December 12** Paid Security (Meet in Chapel)  
**December 19** Mark Condra

**Tech Team Schedule**

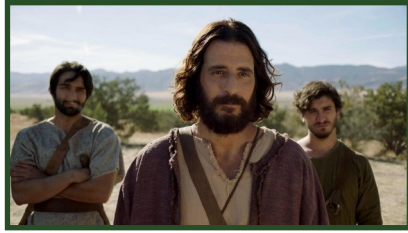
**December 15**

**Celebration:** No Tech Team-Christmas Unplugged, Chapel  
**Traditions:** Davis Varner, Wayne Payton, Sheila Freeman

**December 22**

**Celebration:** Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller, Carmen McKiven  
**Traditions:** Mark Condra, Wayne Payton, Rob Reynolds

## The Chosen Season 2 Bible Study



Rev. Sherri will be leading a Bible Study of Season 2 of the Chosen starting January 8. Each week will focus on a particular episode, reviewing the corresponding scriptures while engaging both with thought provoking questions. The class will be offered at 11am and 6pm on Wednesdays in room 208. The class will last until April 9 (with the night session skipping March 26 for spring break.)

## Wednesday Fellowship

**Wednesday night meal will return January 8, 2025.**

**Wednesday Morning Bible Study @ 11 am, Gathering Room**

**w/ Rev. Sherri Reynolds**

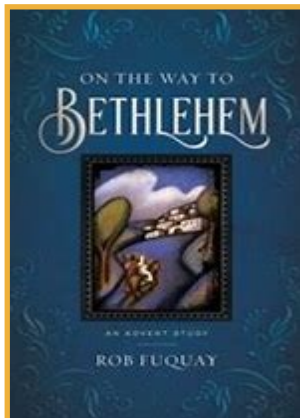
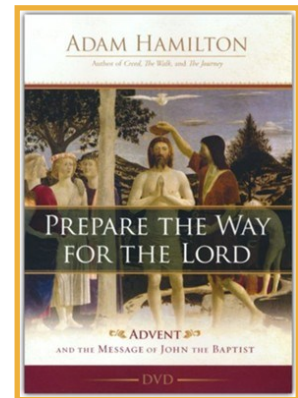
**Adult Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesdays**

**Will resume on January 8, 2025.**

## Adult Studies on Sunday Mornings

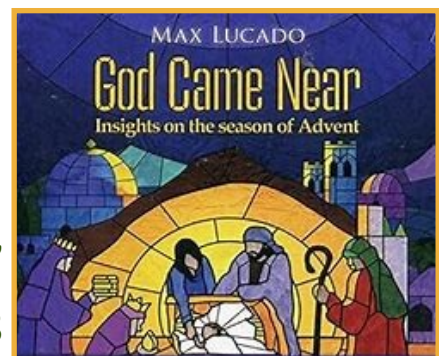
### “Prepare the Way for the Lord”

Living Waters/Martin Fellowship, Room 116



### “On the Way to Bethlehem”

Transitions, Room 209



### “God Came Near”

Pathfinders/Seekers, Room 208

## “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

We shared so much joy this last week. First we sang for the ladies of UWF. Then on Tuesday evening, we sang for the Delta Kappa Gamma ladies at the Christmas meeting at our church. We finished our week by performing for family and friends on Thursday in the church sanctuary and enjoyed class Christmas parties.

—Helene Haller



### Upcoming Events for Youth

Christmas Eve Live Nativity, 5 pm December 24  
Ice Skating- December 29 (Chattanooga or Gadsden)

**Youth Wednesdays, 6 pm**  
Senior High, Rm 211/Middle, Rm 209

**Youth Sundays, 10 am**

Youth Sundays w/ Becca  
Sunday mornings, Room 211  
Middle School and Senior High

### Wednesday Fellowship

Wednesday night meal will return January 8, 2025.

# Children's Ministry

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

## ACOLYTES, LET'S GO BOWLING!



MEET AT THE ALLEY IN  
THE GADSDEN MALL ON  
DECEMBER 15 @ 2:00

### GFUMC KIDS DECEMBER CALENDAR

# 20 24

NOV 27 COMMUNITY  
THANKSGIVING 10-12

SANTA BRUNCH 10:00 AM DEC 08

DEC 15 ACOLYTE PARTY 4-6 PM

KID'S CHRISTMAS PARTY DEC 18

DEC 22 Christmas program 5:00  
Happy Birthday, Jesus party

Rehearsal:  
Wed. 12/18  
5:30 pm

*Let's  
Celebrate!*

## Children's Christmas Musical

December 22nd @ 5pm, Sanctuary

Join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!  
Happy Birthday, Jesus party to follow in the gym upstairs!



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [WWW.FUMCGADSDEN.ORG/CHILDREN](http://WWW.FUMCGADSDEN.ORG/CHILDREN)



## December Mission Focus

### The Angel Tree

The Angel Tree is located in the Sanctuary. You can select an angel from the tree with a child's name and wish list to purchase gifts for this Christmas.



- Select an Angel from the Angel Tree and sign the Angel and Angel Tree List with your name & the Angel Tag #.
- Take the wish list tag only and leave the Angel on the tree.
- Angel Tree Gifts, clearly marked with the Angel # and unwrapped, must be returned to the church no later than Wednesday, December 11 at noon.

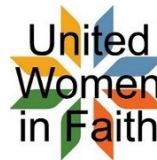


Embrace Kids (formerly the United Methodist Children's Home) Since 1890, we've stood in the gap for the most vulnerable of children. More than 130 years later, our commitment has only strengthened. We provide homes, healing and hope to children coming from families in crisis, no longer able to live with families due to possible neglect, abuse or abandonment.

While children are our first priority, we also work with families to address harmful behavior, giving them a second chance at restoration and a glimpse of God's unconditional love. As a result, we're often able to help both children and families thrive despite the arduous challenges they face.

### United Women in Faith

The Christmas Boutique is open each Sunday morning during Advent, December 15 and December 22. We will be in the Chestnut Foyer between the 9:00 am and 11:00 am worship services. (see page 7)



**The LuVerna Waid Circle- We are getting close...** Our Christmas party will be at the home of Jill Vincent on Tuesday, December 17th at 5:30 pm. The address is 2104 Harbor Lane, Southside 35907. Bring your favorite hors d'vours to share, a dirty Santa gift and your World Thank Offering. The church bus will be taking all that want a ride. The pick up spot is the Winn Dixie parking lot near Rainbow Drive. The bus will leave at 5:15 pm. Don't be late! Others will meet us at Jill's. Come and enjoy this Christmas season with fun and fellowship with friends. Susan Copeland

**Save the Date: Our next UWF Luncheon is Jan. 13, 2025 at 12:00 noon.**

## 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**

**December open dates are**

**12/4 and 12/18**

**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**

**#gfumcreconnect2024**

**Ladle of Love  
Clothes Closet  
October**

**LOL 379**

**Clothes Closet 315**

**November**

**LOL 404**

**Clothes Closet 310**

**Thanks to our  
Volunteers!**

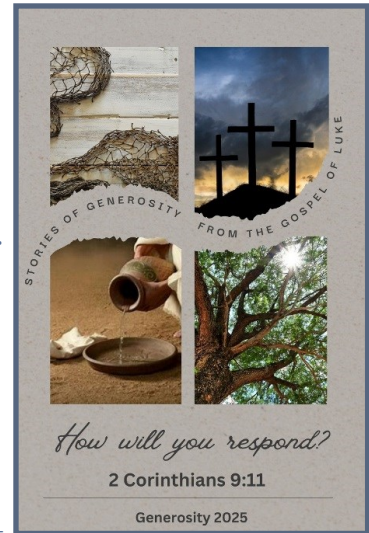
## Stories of Generosity from Luke

One of my continuing prayers over the past year has been for God's financial provision for First United Methodist Church. I am so thankful for that prayer being answered and people like you who helped answer it. As of December 1, 64 commitments were made for Generosity 2025 for a total of \$455,396 toward our general budget fund. We are continuing to receive cards, so it is not too late to participate in your commitment for the coming year. You may return your card through the offering plate, at the church office, or online ([www.fumcgadsden.org/give](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/give)). If you need more information or a printed card, contact the church office. Your estimate helps us plan for our 2025 budget. Please know that the estimate of giving cards are not legally binding and are kept confidentially within the church office.

Also, remember that our financial staff is here to assist you with end of year giving. If you need an update on your 2024 giving you can contact the church office. Someone will be in the office in the morning on December 27 and 30, if you have money to be turned in and credited for 2024. The office will be closed on the 31<sup>st</sup>, but if your contribution is postmarked on the 31<sup>st</sup> or given online/venmo on the 31<sup>st</sup> then you will receive credit for 2024. The financial staff can also direct you for assistance with stock gifts or IRA distributions.

In gratitude, Rev. Sherri

*Rev. Sherri Reynolds*



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

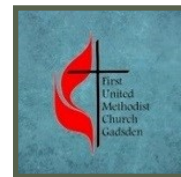
**@FirstUMCGadsden**

(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

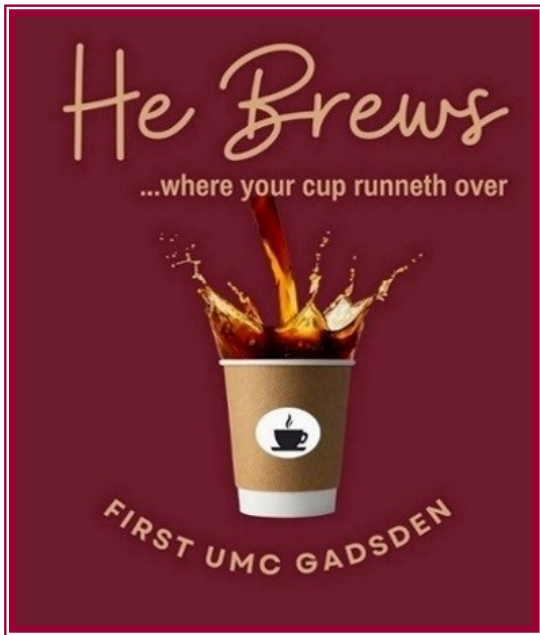


## Secure Online Giving



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





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!!!*



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## PATSY BLANKENSHIP



Patsy grew up in East Gadsden and attended Gadsden High School. When she was 18 years old, she developed an interest in Rodeo and took part in barrel-racing competitions for many years. After high school, she attended Gadsden State Community College and received an Associate degree in Chemistry. Patsy is the granddaughter of Dr. Alfred Carraway, who was the “company doctor” at Dwight Cotton Mill in Alabama City for many years. She has a caring nature and took care of both her mother and her godmother, Mary Jo Gramlin Cleveland, till the end of their lives. Patsy’s son, Henry Charles Koehler, Jr., lives in New Brockton, AL, and is the father of Patsy’s three teenage granddaughters—Cheyenne, Heidi, and Evie.



## UWF Christmas Boutique for Missions

We want to add something new for you to the Christmas Boutique! We will have Christmas cookies and goodies to brighten up your Christmas. Come & support our United Women in Faith Missions for the next two Sundays.



## Grief Support Group @ Gadsden First UMC

**Tuesdays @ 11 am Room 119 Facilitator: Julia Lopez**

Coping with grief and loss can indeed be incredibly challenging. A grief support group offers a safe, welcoming environment for individuals to connect with others who understand their experiences. In this 10-week small group, you'll have the opportunity to explore new ways to cope with grief, gain valuable insights into the stages of grief, and discover helpful resources. Together, participants will share their journeys and support one another, fostering a sense of community. By joining this small group, you'll gain new friends, practical tools, and a deeper understanding of your feelings, making the difficult path of

grief a bit more manageable. If you're considering joining, remember that you don't have to navigate this journey alone—support is here for you.

Our facilitator is Julia Lopez. Originally from Merrill, Wisconsin, Julia is a member of First UMC Gadsden and is retired after working 33 years as a Registered Nurse. Julia has been certified in Grief Support and has experience with leading grief support groups in a variety of different settings.

You may sign up for the class by contacting the church office @ 256-543-8200 or on the sign up form on the Church App or the church website @ [www.fumcgadsden.org/journey-groups](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/journey-groups).

**#wearefirst**

- Diverse
- Investing
- Empowered
- Rooted

Share your pictures of all things **FIRST** with #wearefirst on Social Media!

[www.fumcgadsden.org](http://www.fumcgadsden.org)

## More T-shirts are in Stock!

“We Are First” T-shirts are available in a variety of sizes in the Chestnut Foyer. The cost is \$15. Please make your check payable to FUMC Gadsden and turn it in to the church office. Thank you!



CELEBRATION WORSHIP

# Christmas Unplugged

Join us as we sing our familiar & favorite Christmas carols!

15 December 2024  
9 am  
In the Chapel

Following worship,  
enjoy Cookies & Hot Cocoa @ Hebrews

Traditions Worship

# The Songs of Christmas

FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH CHANCEL CHOIR  
WITH STRING ENSEMBLE

DECEMBER 15, 2024

11 AM | SANCTUARY

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
115 S. 5TH STREET  
GADSDEN, AL 35901

# Songs of the Season

A Sermon Series for Advent and Christmas

- Nov. 24 - "A Mother's Song"
- Dec. 1 - Lessons of the Chrismons
- Dec. 8 - "A Father's Song"
- Dec. 15 - *Special Music in both Services*
- Dec. 22 - "A Long-Awaited Song"
- Dec. 24 - "The Angels' Song"

## Ways to Serve

### Thursday Worship Security

Volunteers are needed to serve at Thursday worship from 5:15 pm to 6:15 pm. This includes assistance with opening and locking the building and being present for the worship service. Contact the church office.

### Advent and Christmas

If you are willing to serve Communion or light candles for Advent and Christmas worship in Celebration or Traditions, please contact the church office.

Thursday  
WORSHIP

A SERVICE OF PRAYER AND WORD  
5:30 pm to 6:00 pm In the Sanctuary  
First United Methodist Church of Gadsden







*Songs of the Season*  
Rev. Sherri Reynolds

**Thursday Worship**  
5:30 pm

Thursday, December 5  
"A Father's Song"

Thursday, December 12  
Hymns of Christmas  
*Meet in the Chapel*

Thursday, December 19  
"A Long Awaited Song"

Thursday, December 26  
No Thursday Worship

**Celebration**  
9 am

Sunday, December 1  
"Lessons of the Chrismons"

Sunday, December 8  
"A Father's Song"

Sunday, December 15  
Christmas Unplugged  
*Meet in the Chapel*

Sunday, December 22  
"A Long Awaited Song"

**Traditions**  
11 am

Sunday, December 1  
"Lessons of the Chrismons"

Sunday, December 8  
"A Father's Song"

Sunday, December 15  
Chancel Choir & Orchestra  
Songs of the Season

Sunday, December 22  
"A Long Awaited Song"

*Evening Worship, Sunday, December 22*  
*Children's Christmas Musical –Everyone Welcome*

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*Tuesday, December 24*  
*Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship, 4 pm & 6 pm*  
*"The Angels' Song"*

*Live Nativity presented by the GFUMC Youth, 5 pm*

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*Sunday, December 29*  
*One United Worship Service, 10 am*



**Order a Poinsettia to be placed in the Advent and Christmas Worship Services**

Cost: \$25 each      \_\_\_\_\_ of Poinsettias      \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Paid

\_\_\_\_\_ December 15      \_\_\_\_\_ December 22      \_\_\_\_\_ December 24

(Select Date: Poinsettias will be placed in both Services)

\_\_\_\_\_ in Honor of      \_\_\_\_\_ in memory of

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_



## First UMC Gadsden Calendar for Dec 15-21, 2024

### December 15, Sunday

9:00 am-Celebration Worship, Chapel  
**Enjoy Cookies and Cocoa @ HeBrews**  
 10:00 am-HeBrews Coffee, Chestnut Street Foyer  
 10:00 am-Sunday School for all ages  
**UWF Christmas Boutique, Chestnut Street Lobby**  
 11:00 am-Traditions Worship, Sanctuary  
 12:00-2:00 pm-Children's Play Practice

### December 16, Monday

**ELC closed until January 6, 2025**  
 9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym  
 2:00 pm-4:00 pm-Pickleball, Gym

### December 17, Tuesday

9:00 am-11:00 am-Clothes Closet workday  
 11:00 am-Grief Support Group, Rm 119  
 5:00 pm-Yoga, Gym

### December 18, Wednesday

9:00 am-11:00 am-Clothes Closet open  
 No Wednesday Morning Bible Study  
Wednesday night meal and other activities  
 will return on January 8, 2025

### December 19, Thursday

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

### December 20, Friday- 11:00 am Ladle of Love

*Christmas bulletin covers are given today to  
 the Glory of God and in loving memory of  
 Charlie Nell and Robert G. Johnson  
 by their family.*

*Enjoy Cookies, Cocoa, & Coffee between the worship  
 services @ HeBrews at 10 am. There will be special  
 music in both worship Services.*

**Celebration Worship: Christmas Unplugged is in the  
 Chapel @ 9 am.**

**Traditions: "The Songs of Christmas" presented by the  
 Chancel Choir and String Ensemble @ 11 am**

### Immediate Prayer Concerns

Bill Leach                      Mary Tom Hale

### Continued Prayer Concerns

Asher Mae Collins    Amy Epperson  
 Ada Blount (Bob & Trish Blount's granddaughter)  
 Shep Vincent (Jill Vincent's grandson)



### **Honorariums & Memorials**

#### General Budget

In memory of Glen Pierson, given by Mike & Sheila Witherspoon.

### **Birthdays**

**Dec 15** Helene Haller, Danna Dean  
**Dec 16** Cindy Norris, Kaci Pritchard,  
 Jennifer Hester Grant  
**Dec 17** Leone Norris, Lenora Arnold,  
 Genevieve Corley, Josie Durham  
**Dec 18** Delores Abney,  
 Mary Ann McElroy, Brandy Berry,  
 Dylan Skipper **Dec 19** Grover Kitchens,  
 Nancy Beane, Jesse Norris,  
 Drew McNair **Dec 20** Laura Condra,  
 Cheryl Midgley, Sara Kate Thornburg  
**Dec 21** Robert Branch, Mikeal Martin,  
 Matt Ross; Davis Varner

### **Week of December 8, 2024**

In Person Total-\*153    Worship Total-649  
 Online-496    Thursday Worship-\*14  
 Celebration Service-\*63/222    \*in person  
 Traditions Service-\*76/274    UWF \*0  
 Bible Study \*25    Sunday School Adult-\*29/1  
 Children SS- \*17    Sr Hi & Middle SS- \*8  
 Wed/Sun-Children\*31    Wed/Sun-Nursery \*5  
 Wed/Sun-Sr.Hi \*8 & Middle Youth \*10

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General Offering Budget	\$11,400.00
General Offering Received	\$20,626.00
YTD General Offering Budget	\$558,600.00
YTD General Offering Rec'd	\$628,064.00

### **Important Deadlines**

**Deadline for newsletters  
 Dec 22 & 30 is by noon on  
 Monday, Dec 16.**

***All requests for spoken  
 announcements for Sunday  
 mornings must be turned in by  
 Thursday @ noon, in writing to Susan  
 Swann***

***All Meetings, Events and Activities  
 must be scheduled in advance with  
 the church secretary, by email  
 susan@fumcgadsden.org  
 or call the church office.***