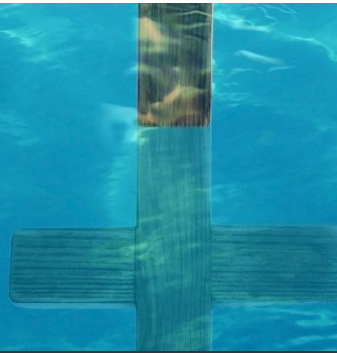


Can You Still See It?

Rev. Sherri Reynolds



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

Sermon Notes: Thursday, January 9, and Sunday, January 12

I was baptized on June 28, 1987, at Mountain Springs United Methodist Church by Rev. L.V. Watson. I remember the day well. I was a young teen, and I had just returned from a week at Camp Sumatanga. It was there that I had a powerful experience of Jesus' love. From that experience, I felt the need to make a deeper commitment to God and the church. I talked to my pastor and was baptized and became a member of the congregation on the next Sunday. Do you remember your baptism? Even if your baptism occurred before you had memories, you can still remember your baptism and give thanks.

This Sunday is Baptism of the Lord Sunday, a time when we remember Jesus' baptism and our own (Matthew 3:13-17). Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. As he emerged from the waters, a voice from heaven proclaimed, "You are my child, and I am pleased with you." I wonder how many times during his life that Jesus remembered that day and drew strength from it. Like Jesus, we can continue to remember and draw strength from our baptism, remembering that we are beloved and marked as a child of God.

In Christ,
Rev. Sherri

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- Page 2**-Sunday School Classes; Small Groups
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- Page 5**-ELC News; Student Ministries; Youth Calendar of Activities; Children's Ministry
- Page 6**-GFUMC Missions News; Clothes Closet; Ladle of Love; United Women in Faith News
- Page 7**- Generosity 2025; Ways to Give; Online Giving; Venmo
- Page 8**- HeBrews; Pickleball; Do You Know?
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- Page 10**-Calendar; Prayer Concerns; Memorials; Birthdays; Weekly Reports; Save the Dates

Worship Opportunities

Thursday: Worship, 5:30 pm

Sunday Morning:

Celebration, 9 am

Traditions, 11 am

**In-Person and Livestream or On Demand*



ACOLYTES

January 12: Luke Barnes

January 19: Sara Kate, Jake, & Carter Thornberg

Thursday Worship Security

January 9: Mark Casey

January 16: Mark Condra

Tech Team Schedule

January 12

Celebration: Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller, Brad Barnes

Traditions: Mark Condra, Wayne Payton, Sheila Freeman

January 19

Celebration: Sheila Freeman, Rob Reynolds, Brad Barnes

Traditions: Davis Varner, Neil Mullin, Sheila Freeman

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, Room 208

January 12- Breakfast for Dinner
\$7 Youth & Adults \$3 Children 11 & Under
Dinner is served beginning at 5:15 PM

Wednesday Morning Bible Study @ 11 am, Gathering Room

"The Chosen" w/ Rev. Sherri Reynolds

Adult Small Groups @ Wonderful Wednesdays, 6 pm

Rev. Sherri, "The Chosen", Room 208

Harriet Murray, "Destinations", Room 110



Sunday School for All Ages

- ♥ Children's Sunday School -Room 104 & 108
4 years through 5th Grade
- Youth Sunday School -Room 211 w/ Becca
6th Grade through 12th Grade
- ♦ Transitions (New Adult) -Room 209
- Pathfinders/Seekers -Room 208
- ☒ Living Water/Martin Fellowship -Room 116
- ★ Nursery Available for Children 3 and under

"Men at the Well" Thursday Mornings, 7:00 am

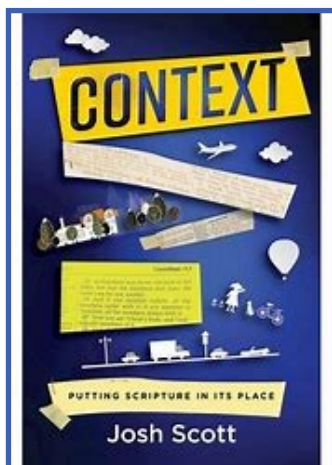
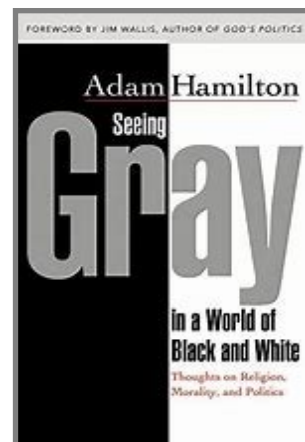
You are invited to join the weekly Bible study with the "Men at the Well" at the 278 Restaurant. Contact Todd Rains, Mark Condra, Mark Casey, or any of the Men at the Well for more information.

Adventure into Sunday School with New Adult Studies for the New Year!

Transitions 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.

He writes, "I don't expect you to agree with everything I've written. I expect that in the future even I won't agree with everything I've written here. The point is not to get you to agree with me, but to encourage you to think about what you believe.



Pathfinders/Seekers

Room 208

Join us. Everyone welcome!

Context looks at verses we know by heart but may not know the people, places, and times that give them meaning. Josh Scott delves into these well-known Scripture verses, exploring their true meanings by examining them in their original biblical context.

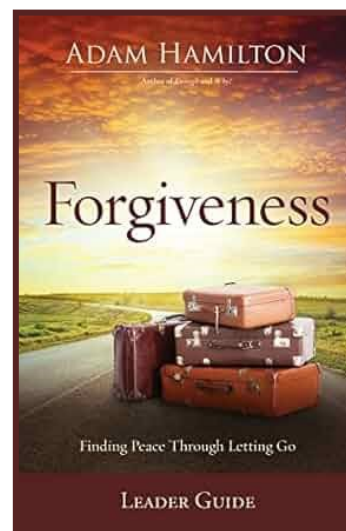
Living Waters Room 116

A new study will begin our new study January 12th on the book *Forgiveness - Finding Peace Through Letting Go* by Adam Hamilton. The book is available on Amazon for \$9.99 (newer version with suitcases.)

Forgiveness Sessions:

- 1) The Divine Answer
- 2) For Better, For Worse
- 3) Seventy Times Seven
- 4) The Dreamcoat

The Epilogue





The Friends of the ELC Present

AUTHENTIC LOUISIANA KING CAKES

From Randazzo's Bakery

FUNDRAISER BENEFITTING THE EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Small Traditional \$25
Small Filled* \$30

Medium Traditional \$30
Medium Filled* \$35

*Cream Cheese, Apple, or Strawberry

Deadline to order: Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Pay through PayPal or Make checks payable to "Friends of the ELC".

Final order count and money is due January 21, 2025.

Cakes will be available for pickup at First UMC Gadsden on February 1, 2025.

Authentic Louisiana King Cakes Order Form

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Type of Cake	Quantity	Price	Total
Traditional			
Small Traditional		\$ 25.00	
Medium Traditional		\$ 30.00	
Small Filled—Select Filling			
Cream Cheese		\$ 30.00	
Apple		\$ 30.00	
Strawberry		\$ 30.00	
Medium Filled—Select Filling			
Cream Cheese		\$ 35.00	
Apple		\$ 35.00	
Strawberry		\$ 35.00	
Total Quantity and Total Amount Due			

ELC News

The ELC is back in swing. It was awesome to see all our smiling students return and hear about their Christmas break adventures. Our King Cake Sale is underway. Be sure to visit our information table and place your order or you may order online at www.fumcgadsden.org/elc. Orders and payment are due Tuesday, January 21st.

—Helene Haller



Youth Wednesdays, 6 pm

Senior High, Rm 211
Middle, Rm 209

Youth Sundays, 10 am

Youth Sundays w/ Becca
Sunday mornings, Room 211

Wonderful Wednesday Fellowship Dinner, 5:15 pm, Gathering Room

Wednesday, January 12– Breakfast for Dinner

\$7 Youth & Adults \$3 Children 11 & Under

Activities and Small Groups for All Ages begin at 6 pm.

Children's Ministry

GFUMC children
january & february

January Unit



I can do all things through
Christ who gives me strength.
Philippians 4:13

February Unit



In your hands are strength and
power to exalt and give
strength to all.
1 Chronicles 29:12



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

Sunday School
10:00am

Wonderful
Wednesday's
6:00pm



January Mission Focus

UMCOR: ALLEVIATING SUFFERING ALL OVER THE WORLD

Originally founded in 1940 in response to displaced and vulnerable populations in the wake of World War II, the **United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)** is a ministry of The United Methodist Church through the General Board of Global Ministries. "Our goal is to assist the most vulnerable people affected by crisis or chronic need without regard to their race, religion or status. We believe all people have God-given worth and dignity."

As the humanitarian relief and development arm of The United Methodist Church, the **United Methodist Committee on Relief – UMCOR** – assists United Methodists and churches to become involved globally in direct ministry to persons in need. UMCOR comes alongside those who suffer from natural or human-caused disasters – famine, hurricane, war, flood, fire or other events—to alleviate suffering and serve as a source of help and hope for the vulnerable. UMCOR provides relief, response and long-term recovery grants when events overwhelm a community's ability to recover on their own. UMCOR provides technical support and training for partners to address emerging and ongoing issues related to disaster relief, recovery, and long-term health and development. Additionally, UMCOR supports migrants through legal and humanitarian support, as well as through global advocacy.

- **Pray:** UMCOR's work is undergirded by the power of prayer – both in the hours after a disaster strikes and through recovery.
- **Donate:** Gadsden First UMC is receiving donations for UMCOR during the month of January.
- **Volunteer:** U.S. volunteer efforts are arranged through annual conferences; reach out to your conference disaster relief coordinator to learn more.

The NAC Disaster Response Warehouse, located in Decatur, AL, is staffed by volunteers, and receives donations of disaster relief supplies based on UMCOR Standards.

During the month of January, the GFUMC Missions Team will be collecting items for UMCOR that will be donated through the NAC Disaster Response Warehouse. Go to the app or pick up a list of needed items in the Chestnut Foyer. Donations may be placed in the Red Buckets at our entrances.

United Women in Faith

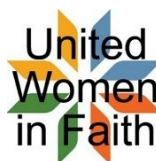
Join us for the next UWF Luncheon on Monday, January 13, 2025 at 12:00 noon. The speaker is Chico Sullivan from "Maranatha Alabama".

She coordinates free monthly events for adults with intellectual and developmental disorders.

Contact Olivia Kendrick by noon on January 10 for a lunch reservation. Call or text 205-454-4375.

—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

January open date is 1/15

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

#gfumcreconnect2024

Ladle of Love
Clothes Closet

December

LOL	298
Clothes Closet	403

Thanks to our
Volunteers!

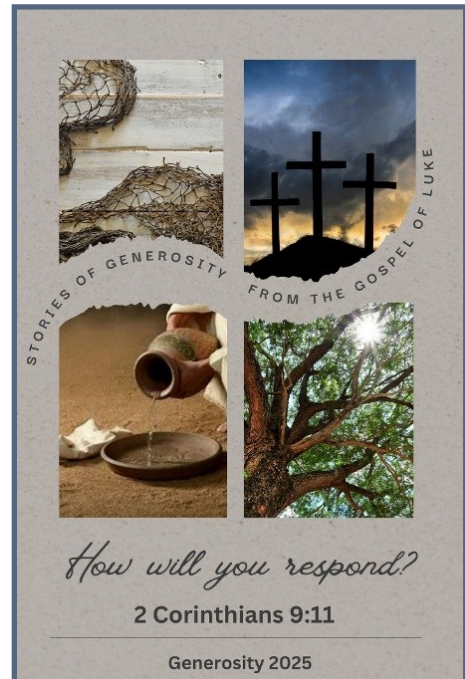
A Letter of Gratitude

I am thankful for your commitment and discipleship lived out through First United Methodist Church of Gadsden in 2024. The generosity emphasis, “How will you Respond?” resulted in 68 commitments returned for \$461,596 pledged to our 2025 budget, representing an increase in the number making a commitment and an increase in the amount over last year. We closed the 2024 General Fund with receipts exceeding the budget by more than \$90,000. We also saw an increase of 11 in attendance or 6.8% over the year before. There are incredible folks who were willing to step up to lead for the coming year. First United Methodist Church celebrated 13 professions of faith and 9 baptisms last year. This is data worth recognizing! While this is the year in metrics, it is also lives changed and lives growing deeper in relationship with Jesus.

I am not sure what 2025 will bring, but I know that God will be with us. My prayer is that we continue to be a congregation that is changing lives, because we share Jesus, make disciples, serve people, and offer hope.

In gratitude,
Rev. Sherri Reynolds
Rev. Sherri

Generosity 2025



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

Text to Give: 256-344-8464

Venmo **@FirstUMCGadsden**

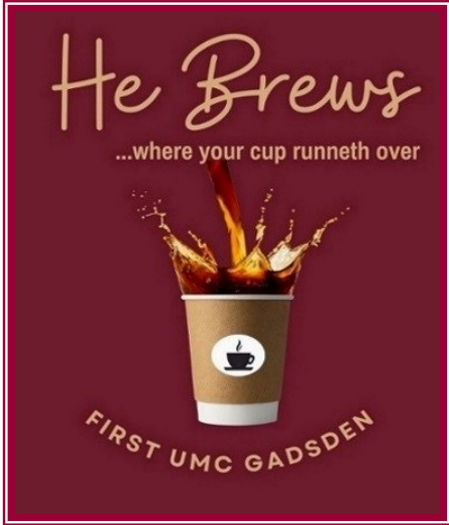
Mail your tithe or gift: 115 S. 5th Street, Gadsden, AL 35901



Secure Online Giving



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



HeBrews Coffee Café
 10 am, Chestnut Street Foyer
Pickleball resumes on Monday, January 6.

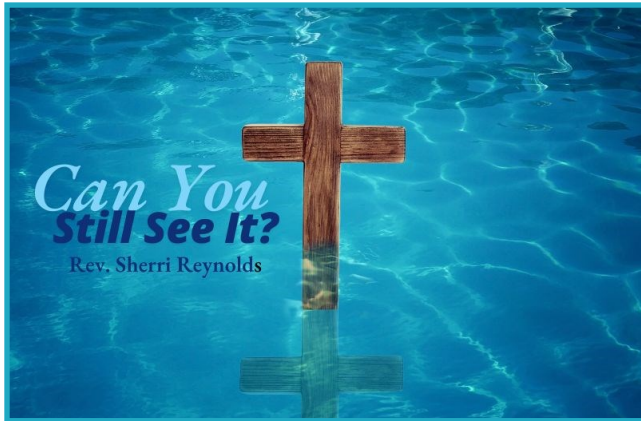


DO
 YOU
 KNOW
 US?

JACKIE & CONNIE BRECHIN



Jackie was born in East Orange, NJ, and grew up in Birmingham, AL. He graduated from Shades Valley High in Homewood, then received a B.S. in Science at Auburn University, followed by a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. For 2 years he was a Vocation Rehabilitation Counselor, then was transferred to Gadsden as a U.S. Probation Officer, doing background investigations for Federal Court. He retired in 1999 after 24 years working for the Federal Court System. After that, he worked for Freeman Land and Development for 5 years, then Humana Insurance for 12 years. For the past 7 years, he has been an independent insurance agent and is still working, mostly in Phoenix City, AL. His hobbies are photography and "growing lots of orchids." Connie grew up in Albertville and graduated from Albertville High. She received both an undergraduate degree in Fashion Merchandising and a Master's degree in Rehabilitation from Auburn, where she and Jackie met. She has worked in State Vocational Rehabilitation since 1973 and has been a supervisor there for 30 years. Their children are: Lauren Cain (Nathan), who lives in Athens, AL, and is a stay-at-home mother; and Allison Bacon, who lives in Homewood and works in Human Resources for Altec, which builds bucket trucks.



**Worship in the New Year!
Remember Your Baptism**

All Worship Services this Week!

Thursday Worship: 5:30 pm

Celebration: 9:00 am

Traditions: 11 am

January 19- February 23

Adventure Sermon Series

Our journey of faith is a great adventure. With Moses as our guide, we will spend a season of looking at the great adventure of following Jesus and how that relates to us not only as individuals, but as First United Methodist Church of Gadsden.



First UMC Gadsden Calendar for Jan 12-Jan 18, 2025

January 12, Sunday

9:00 am-Celebration Worship, Sanctuary
10:00 am-Sunday School classes for all ages
10:00 am- HeBrews Coffee
11:00 am-Traditions Worship, Sanctuary

January 13, Monday

9:00 am-1:00 pm- ELC
9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym
2:00 to 4:00 pm- Pickleball, Gym

January 14, Tuesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm- ELC
9:00 am-11:00 am-Clothes Closet workday
5:00 pm-Yoga, Gym

January 15, Wednesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm, ELC
9:00 am-11:00 am-Clothes Closet open
11:00 am-Bible Study-Pastor Sherri, Room 208
5:15 pm-Fellowship Dinner, Gathering Room
6:00 pm-Small Groups for Adults, Rooms 110 & 208
Children, Room 108
Middle Group, Room 209
Youth Group, Room 211
Choir Practice, Choir Room

January 16, Thursday

9:00 am-1:00 pm, ELC
9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym
5:30 pm-Thursday Worship, Sanctuary

January 17, Friday

11:00 am-12:00 pm- Ladle of Love
Office closes at 12:00 pm



The ELC Annual King Cake Fundraiser is here! King Cake orders will be due by January 21, 2025.

Orders may be placed online at www.fumcgadsden.org/elc or paper forms are available in the Chestnut Foyer and may be turned in at the receptionist desk. Order early to get your King Cake! —Helene



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



January 2, 2025

Parents: Dante & Emma

Grandfather: Jay Johnson

Greatgrandparents: Phillip & Leslie Johnson

Given by GFUMC Children's Ministry & Early Learning Center

Immediate Prayer Concerns

Mary Tom Hale Carla Watson
Family of Noel Turner

Continued Prayer Concerns

Bill Leach
Amy Epperson



Birthdays

Jan 13 Craig Marble, Heather New, Bay Brown, Sylvia Harbin
Jan 14 Alexis McCollum
Jan 15 Joan Bigelow, Ralph Whitfield
Jan 16 Dr. Bill Haller
Jan 17 Stephen Kirk, Mary Claire Owen, Jessica Harbin
Jan 18 Frank Dressman, Jan Andrew, Lindsay Winters



Week of January 5, 2025

In Person Total-*136 On Line Total-654
Worship Total-790 Thursday service *9
Celebration *55/293 Traditions *72/361
Adult Sunday School *32 Children *1
Middle School *1 Senior High *2
Children Wed/Sun *1 Nursery Wed/Sun *2
Middle Wed/Sun *1 Senior Hi Wed/Sun *7

Year 2024

General Offering Budget	\$12,400.00
General Offering Received	\$16,470.00
YTD General Offering Budget	\$12,400.00
YTD General Offering Rec'd	\$16,470.00

End of Year Offering 2024

General Offering Budget	
	\$11,400.00
General Offering Received	
12/29/24	\$11,077.00
12/31/24	\$7,975.00
YTD General Offering Budget	\$592,800.00
YTD General Offering Rec'd	\$685,732.00

Thank you for your gifts. Please read the letter from Rev. Sherri on page 7 of this week's newsletter.