

AN ADVENTURE AWAITS

REV. SHERRI REYNOLDS

MISSION & VISION FOR 2025

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

Sermon Notes: Thursday, January 16, and Sunday, January 19

I have heard that following Jesus is not only about the destination, but also about the journey. Don't get me wrong, heaven will be great, but the path to get there is great too. This is the great adventure will God. This adventure is filled with heroes, perils, miracles, and challenges; but it is always filled with God's presence. As followers of Jesus, we know how the adventure will end, but it is exciting to stop and enjoy the journey along the way too.

The Exodus Story of Moses and the Israelites is a great adventure from Scripture. The crossing of the Red Sea particularly reflects all the elements of an adventure (Exodus 14:15-25). Pharaoh has decided to allow the Israelites to go free, but then changes his mind. Pharaoh sends his army after them. This leaves the Israelites stuck between a powerful army on one side and a sea on the other, there appears to be no escape. God provides a way for them to escape, and he guides them with a cloudlike pillar of his presence. They escaped, but the adventure doesn't end there. The story continues past the Red Sea to a journey of the land which was promised to their ancestors.

Reflect on your journey. How many times have you found yourself between an enemy and an obstacle, without a way out? How many times has God unexpectedly provided a way for you, which you did not expect? Pause and give thanks for all the ways God has led you on your adventure of faith.

Adventuring with you,
Rev. Sherri

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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

ACOLYTES

January 19: Sara Kate, Jake, & Carter Thornberg
January 26: Clementine and Rhett Hilburn

Thursday Worship Security

January 16: Mark Condra
January 23:

Tech Team Schedule

January 19

Celebration: Sheila Freeman, Rob Reynolds, Brad Barnes
Traditions: Davis Varner, Neil Mullin, Sheila Freeman

January 26

Celebration: Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller, Carmen McKiven
Traditions: Neil Mullin, Sheila Freeman, Brad Barnes

AN ADVENTURE AWAITS

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| AN ADVENTURE AWAITS | JANUARY 19 | SHARING CHRIST | JANUARY 26 |
| MAKING DISCIPLES | FEBRUARY 2 | SERVING PEOPLE | FEBRUARY 9 |
| GIVING HOPE | FEBRUARY 16 | THE RESULT OF A GRAND ADVENTURE | FEBRUARY 23 |

FIRST UMC GADSDEN

REV. SHERRI 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, Room 208

January 22– Chicken Fingers, Mac-n-Cheese
\$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.

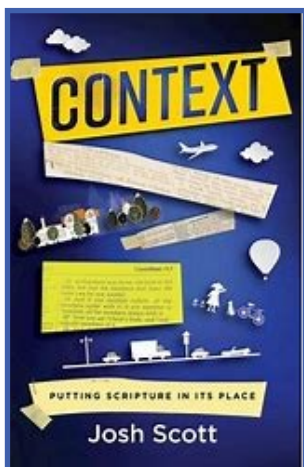
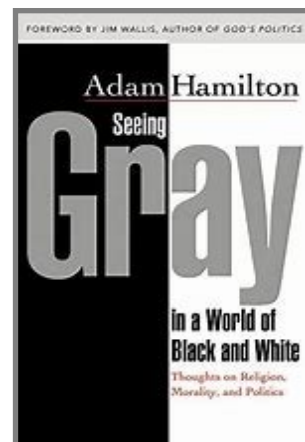
Contact Todd Rains, Mark Condra, Mark Casey, or any of the Men at the Well for more information.

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.

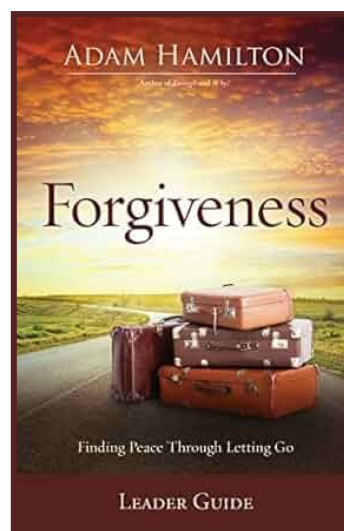
Living Waters Room 116

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

Thank you to those that have already purchased a cake. All orders are due by Tuesday, January 21st. You can visit our information table and place your order or you may order online at www.fumcgadsden.org/elc. The ELC will be closed Monday, January 20th in observance of MLK day. We will reopen normal hours on Tuesday, January 21st. Our January Lunchbox Revolt is Wednesday, January 22nd and we will be having Burger King. We look forward to a great Christmas reveal for 4K's show and tell this month.

—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 22– Chicken Fingers, Mac-n-Cheese
\$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 IN THE U.S. & ALL OVER THE WORLD

Update: Wildfires in California On January 7, strong Santa Ana winds in Los Angeles caused wildfires to spread rapidly in multiple communities. Thousands of homes and businesses have been destroyed, as well as multiple local United Methodist Churches. Preliminary assessments of the damage is underway. UMCOR has awarded two solidarity grants to the California-Pacific Annual Conference to undergird their immediate relief efforts. This includes evacuee support like food and essential supplies as well as support for volunteer efforts and other relief activities.

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.

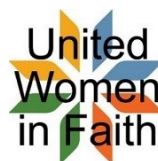
The NAC Disaster Response Warehouse, located in Decatur, AL, is staffed by volunteers, and receives donations of disaster relief supplies based on UMCOR Standards.

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.

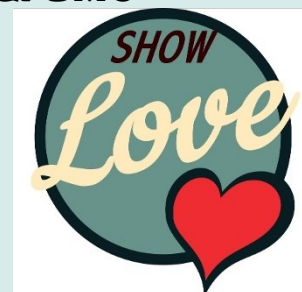
United Women in Faith

The LuVerna Waid Circle starts 2025 off with our meeting on Sunday, January 19th at 3:00 pm in Room 208 (Pathfinders/Seekers classroom). Come join us as we organize and enjoy fellowship with one another discussing our path for the New Year! We need your input to decide when and where we have meetings. We also need to decide on a Bible Study and projects. Drinks will be provided, so we need you to bring snacks to share. Hope we see everyone this coming Sunday!!!

Susan Copeland, Circle Leader



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

February open dates are 2/5 and 2/19

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!**

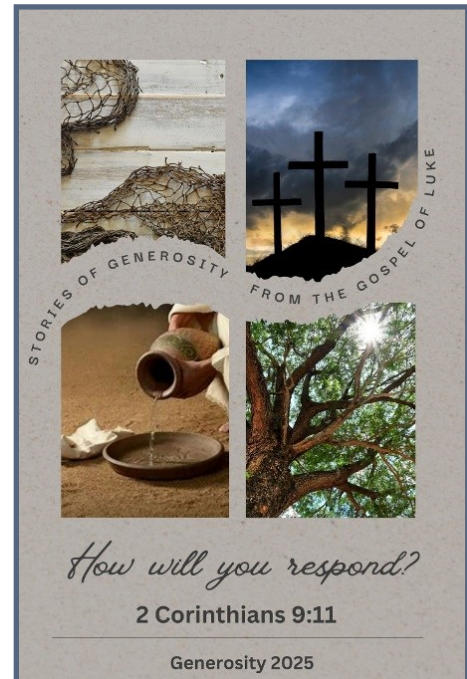
A Letter of Gratitude

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**

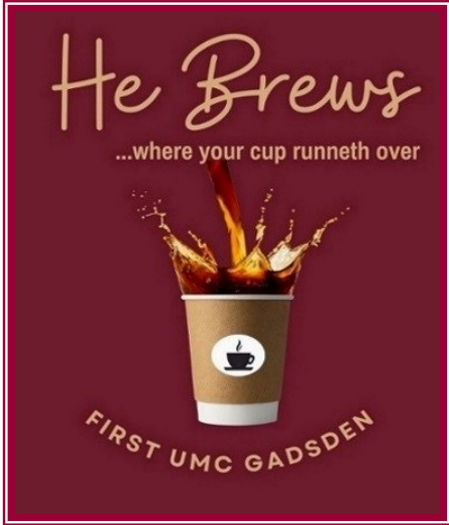
Mail your tithe or gift: 115 S. 5th Street, Gadsden, AL 35901



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.



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MIKE & PAM DAWSON



Mike grew up in Gadsden and graduated from Gadsden High. He attended Marion Military Institute in Marion, AL, and the University of Alabama, where his focus was History and English. His primary work during his life has been in sales, and he has been in the real estate business since 1980. In 1988, he started his own business, Dawson Realty Company, and still works there about half of each day as he heads toward retirement. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing and doing yard work and also “takes care of a lot of personal properties.” Pam grew up in Gadsden and graduated from Southside High. She studied Accounting at Gadsden State, then went to work as a Title Clerk at John Thomas Ford. She has also worked as the Bookkeeper at the Gadsden Country Club and, in 2013, retired from the job of Executive Director of the Boys and Girls Club of Gadsden/Etowah County. Her interests include playing Mahjong and Bunco, reading, and decorating for all holidays. Mike and Pam have 2 children: Tyler Dawson (wife Sheila), who lives in Lilburn, GA, and is a Graphic Designer; and Molly Beth Dawson, who is the Director of Therapy at Northside Health and Rehab in North Gadsden. They also have 2 grandchildren.



January 19- February 23 An Adventure Awaits 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 dventure of following Jesus and how that relates to us not only as individuals, but as First United Methodist Church of Gadsden.

Join Rev. Sherri for the Adventure! Worship, Thursdays or Sundays!

Mid-Central District Lay Speaking Class

Feb. 1, 2025 Basic Class - Tony Campbell

Deadline to Register - January 27, 2025

Leading Worship-Carol Gullatt

Greetings to all who are interested. I am Barbara Russell chair-person of the Mid-Central District of Lay Servant Ministries of the North Alabama Conference United Methodist Church.

Please register with me by phone 334-863-1142 or email barbrussell@tds.net. I will be in contact with you within 24 hrs. If you register for a class and cannot attend, please notify me as I plan the food by the number attending. Cost is \$40.00 for the classes and each person is responsible for ordering their own book. You can order your book from the Upper Room 1-800-972-0433 or upper-room.org/store.

The \$40.00 includes breakfast, lunch, and a snack on Saturday. Registration begins at 7:30 am. Class begins at 8:00 am with a break mid-morning and lunch at noon. The class will end at 3:00 pm.

The classes will be held at Centre 1st United Methodist Church. Address is 341 West Main Street, Centre, AL 35960. Everyone will receive a certificate for taking the class. If you have any questions, please contact me. I look forward to seeing you.

Barbara Russell
Chairperson of Lay Servants Ministry
Mid-Central District
334-863-1142 or barbrussell@tds.net

First UMC Gadsden Calendar for Jan 19-Jan 25, 2025

January 19, 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
3:00 pm-LuVerna Waid Circle, Room 208

January 20, 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
5:00 pm-Trustees Meeting, Parlor

January 21, Tuesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm- ELC
5:00 pm-Yoga, Gym
6:00 pm-Board of Stewards, Gathering Room
6:00 pm-8:00 pm-Basketball practice, Gym

January 22, Wednesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm, ELC
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 23, Thursday

9:00 am-1:00 pm, ELC
9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym
5:30 pm-Thursday Worship, Sanctuary
6:00 pm-8:00 pm-Basketball practice, Gym

January 24, Friday

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

UPCOMING DATES

1/20 5:00 pm-Trustees Meeting

1/21 6:00 pm-Board of Stewards Meeting

*The flowers on the altar today are in memory of
Audrey Ford Owen
and in celebration of her 100th Birthday on
January 16, given by the Owen Family.*

WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS

January 12, 2025
Pam and Mike Dawson

*The ELC Annual King Cake Fundraiser is here! King
Cake orders are 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

Week of January 12, 2025

In Person Total-*158 On Line Total-700
Worship Total-858 Thursday service *9
Celebration *66/340 Traditions *83/360
Adult Sunday School *36/2 Children *4
Middle School *1 Senior High *1
Children Wed/Sun *35 Nursery Wed/Sun *5
Middle Wed/Sun *8 Senior Hi Wed/Sun *7

Year 2025

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| General Offering Budget | \$12,400.00 |
| General Offering Received | \$12,353.00 |
| YTD General Offering Budget | \$24,800.00 |
| YTD General Offering Rec'd | \$28,823.00 |

End of Year Offering 2024

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| YTD General Offering Budget | \$592,800.00 |
| YTD General Offering Rec'd | \$685,732.00 |

Honorariums & Memorials

Benevolence In memory of Glen Pierson, given by Sonya Nesbitt.

Birthdays

Jan 19 Janie Gray, William Edwards
Jan 20 Sharon Morris
Jan 21 Harrison Blount
Jan 22 Ragan Godfrey, Nathan Whitt
Jan 23 Dr. Steve Frederick, Amy Kelley
Jan 24 Greg Carroll, Riley Epperson
Jan 25 Dr. Richard Caldwell, Carla
Watson, Laura Bone

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

—Susan Swann



Immediate Prayer

Concerns

Mary Tom Hale Carla Watson
Dr. Pat Herrera (Juanita
Hammons' son-in-law)
Family of James Musick

Continued Prayer

Concerns

Bill Leach
Amy Epperson

