

# Lydia

THURSDAY, MAY 7 & SUNDAY, MAY 10 | ACTS 16:11-15  
 REV. SHERRI REYNOLDS | FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF GADSDEN

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

### Sermon Notes: May 7 & May 10, 2026

Did you know that the first recorded convert in Europe was a woman? Did you also know that this woman was a leader and established the first Christian community in Europe? This is Lydia. Lydia was a Gentile follower of God, who practiced Judaism. She was converted by Paul, and she converted her household with the entire household being baptized. (Acts 16:11-15) She was a leader in business and faith. Lydia provides us an example for being a follower of Jesus.

Her story helps us to remember that a journey of discipleship is not "one size fits all." She was a businesswoman, a Gentile convert to Judaism, an evangelist, a gracious host, and unlike most of the early church leaders that we read about in Acts. She reminds us that our story is our own and unlike others. We bring our whole selves to following Christ and we are uniquely called and equipped to follow. I am so thankful for the example of Lydia, and all the unique men and women like her, who paved a path for us.

In Gratitude for Christ's Witnesses, 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 @ [www.fumcgadsden.org/media](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/media)

<p><b>ACOLYTES</b>                  May 10: Clementine &amp; Rhett Hilburn                  May 17: Volunteer</p>
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**Please Note:**  
 New Date for church picnic!  
**May 13, 2026**

*The Church Picnic has been rescheduled due to the risk of severe weather on 5.6.26.*

### Tech Team Schedule

- May 10  
**Celebration:** Mark Condra, Bill Haller, Carmen McKiven  
**Traditions:** Davis Varner, Neil Mullin, Brad Barnes
- May 17  
**Celebration:** Sheila Freeman, Bill Haller, Carmen McKiven  
**Traditions:** Sheila Freeman, Rob Reynolds

# Summer Devotional Suggestions

***“You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart.” – Jeremiah 29:13***

*As our regular Wednesday morning Bible Study and Wednesday Night Small Groups take a break for the summer months, we encourage you to continue nurturing your walk with the Lord in simple, meaningful ways. Whether you are at home or traveling, these ideas are meant to help you stay connected to God at your own pace.*

## **1. Spend Time in Scripture**

Choose a simple focus for the summer, such as the Psalms or the parables of Jesus. Read a short passage each day or week, asking: What does this teach me about God? How can I respond?

## **2. Take Your Devotional Time Outdoors**

Use the beauty of summer as a reminder of God’s presence. Sit on a porch, walk in a park, or pause during your day to reflect on His creation and give thanks.

## **3. Keep It Simple and Consistent**

Set aside a few quiet moments each day or a longer time once or twice a week. Even a brief time in prayer and Scripture can be deeply meaningful.

## **4. Pray with Intention**

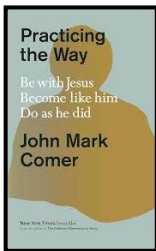
Use this season to focus on prayer. Pray for your family, your church, and specific needs in our community. Consider keeping a short list to guide your prayers.

## **5. Practice Gratitude**

Each day, take a moment to thank God for specific blessings. Writing them down in a journal can help you see His faithfulness over time.

*Wednesday morning Bible study and Wonderful Wednesday Small Groups resume in August.*

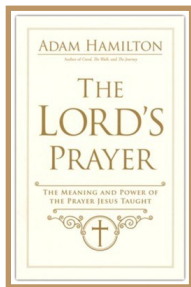
## **Transitions 10 am, Room 209**



***The Adventure Continues! Room 209! You are Invited!***

**Practicing the Way** by John Mark Comer—The disciples spent 3 years being apprentices to Jesus. They watched His every move and hung on every word. They were with Him 24/7. As a result, they, over time, became more and more like Him and began to do many of the things He did. With the Spirit’s help, with John Mark Comer as our guide, and with each other as encouragers, we too can learn to walk in Jesus’ steps.

***Join Rev. Dawson Harmon for this new small group study! Everyone is welcome!***



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

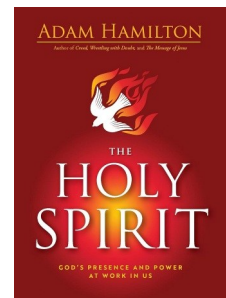
**The Lord’s Prayer** *The Meaning & Power of the Prayer* by Adam Hamilton

Most Christians know the Lord's Prayer by heart. We pray it often, at different times and in different settings. We remember it as the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. But do we really understand and appreciate the meaning and power of its words, what we ask of God each time we pray it?

## **Living Waters 10 am, Room 116 Rev. Ken Casey**

**The Holy Spirit-God’s Presence and Power at Work in Us** by Adam Hamilton

Explore what Scripture teaches about God's Spirit—from the Hebrew Bible through Jesus' promises in the Gospels, the powerful Pentecost experience in Acts, and the rich teachings found in the New Testament letters. This accessible study helps believers understand and experience the Holy Spirit's presence and power in their daily walk with Christ.



## **“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 loved showering our moms, aunts, grandmoms and other special ladies this past Tuesday with Donuts for Divas. Wednesday, May 13th is our Annual End of Year Program at 9:30 am with Class Parties to follow. We will also host 4K graduation and showering them with love at a reception afterwards. All are welcome.

*Thank you to everyone who participated in our annual Roses Sale benefitting the Sara Rabun Johnson Scholarship Fund. Current proceeds total \$9,910 for this year's Rose Sale. These funds will truly bless some deserving students and families.*  
—Helene



## Youth

Sunday School  
10 am, Room 211

## Wonderful Wednesday

Youth Group, 6:00 pm  
Room 211 & Gym

*"Let's Build a Solid Foundation!"*

Matthew 7:24

Wednesday Night Activities will resume in August

# Children's Ministry

SPRING 2026

GFUMC CHILDREN'S CALENDAR

**FEBRUARY**

- 14 PARENT'S NIGHT OUT 6:00PM
- 18 Ash Wednesday

**MARCH**

- 21 EASTER EGG HUNT
- 27 FUN! 456 LATE-NIGHTER
- 29 PALM SUNDAY

**April**

- 5 EASTER Sunday
- 22 POTATOES AND BINGO

**May**

- 6 Church Picnic

GFUMC CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

## Wonderful Wednesday

Join us for the Annual Church Picnic on Wednesday, May 13 @ 5 pm!

Sunday Mornings  
Children's Church during worship,

9 am & 11 am

Sunday school @ 10 am

Need more info?

[katharine@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:katharine@fumcgadsden.org)

Rescheduled!

First UMC Gadsden

**PICNIC AT THE PARK**

FELLOWSHIP & FUN!

13 ~~X~~ May | 5 p.m.

Kwanis Pavilion & Nocakula Falls Park  
1500 Nocakula Rd, Gadsden, AL 35904

- Grilled Hamburgers & Hotdogs & Sides
- Games and Activities

## May Mission Focus

### Striplin Elementary School—Our Adopted School

During the month of May, First UMC Gadsden will focus its mission efforts on supporting Striplin Elementary School. On April 23, the mission team hosted the final A/B Honor Roll Party of the 2025–2026 school year, celebrating an impressive 193 students.

On May 5, teachers and faculty were honored with a Teacher Appreciation Lunch, featuring box lunches from Chicken Salad Chick. In addition, the Teachers of the Month and the Teacher of the Year for the 2025–2026 school year received certificates and gift cards in recognition of their outstanding dedication.

We are grateful for the continued support of our church family, which makes these meaningful opportunities possible. Together, we celebrate and encourage these educators who work so faithfully to serve the children of our community. *See page 5 for photos from the Teacher Appreciation Lunch.*



### Announcing First UMC Gadsden's Bed Build for "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" October 17, 2026

Church family, we have an exciting opportunity to serve our community! First UMC Gadsden is hosting a Community Bed Build in partnership with Sleep in Heavenly Peace.

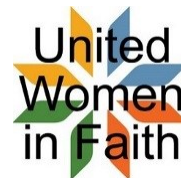
Our goal is to build 100 beds and raise \$25,000 so that no child in our town sleeps on the floor.

You can help by sponsoring a bed (\$250), making a donation of any amount, volunteering on Build Day, or praying for the families we serve. There are tasks for all ages to participate in the Bed Build! Build Day is Saturday, October 17, right here at our church. Let's come together and make a difference — one bed at a time!

### United Women in Faith

May 11-UWF Luncheon at 12:00 noon.

Speaker will be Sarah Meehan, Habitat for Humanity and ReStore. Call or text your lunch reservation to Carla Watson at 256-393-9664.



Olivia Kendrick, President

Susan Copeland, 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.

*Volunteers are needed to serve on Ladle of Love Teams. Contact the church office for more information on how you can serve.*

**Clothes Closet Workdays** are Tuesdays before open days from 9:00-11:00 am.

Open to Public

1st & 3rd Wednesdays

**May open dates are**

**5/6 and 5/20**

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)

### Ladle of Love Clothes Closet

March 2026

LOL 408

Clothes Closet 359

April 2026

LOL 400

Clothes Closet 225

Thanks to our Volunteers!

May 5, 2019



# Striplin Teacher Appreciation Luncheon



DO YOU KNOW?


**KEITH SOUTHERS**



Keith grew up in East Gadsden and graduated from Litchfield High School. He attended the Machine Tool Technology program at Gadsden State Community College on a sponsorship from Gadsden Tool, Inc. He then went to work for Gadsden Tool as a machinist and has worked there for 37 years.

His work has included jobs such as machining parts involved in the making of tires for Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company; making electrodes for Anniston Army Depot; and making fiberglass rings for turbines in power plants. His normal schedule involves working six days a week, but he makes time for Wednesday night activities at our church and attending our "Celebration: Praise!" service on Sundays.

*He Brews*  
...where your cup runneth over



FIRST UMC GADSDEN

*Inviting Ministries*



**Welcomes You!**  
First United Methodist Church of Gadsden

HeBrews Coffee Café, Chestnut Foyer, Sundays, 10 am  
We look forward to seeing you on Sunday Morning!

Follow us on  
Facebook and Instagram.



**Mondays  
2-4 pm**

**Pickleball**  
COME AND PLAY!  
SPORTS / FRIENDS / MONDAYS @ FIRST

First UMC Gym | 115 S. 5th Street  
2nd Floor | Gadsden, AL 35901

ENTER AT THE CHESTNUT ST FOYER OFFICE DOOR  
First United Methodist Church of Gadsden

## Greeters & Ushers for Worship

Sunday, May 10

Celebration: Steve & Kelley Roach

Traditions: Mandell & Judy Tillman; John & Margie Freeman

Sunday, May 17

Celebration: Kirk & Jeanne Mabeus

Traditions: Leslie and Phillip Johnson; Lori Varner; Gail McNair; Grover Kitchens



*If you would like to serve as an Greeter/Usher, please contact Susan Swann in the church office, email: [susan@fumcgadsden.org](mailto:susan@fumcgadsden.org) or phone: 256.543.8200.*

# JOIN US THIS SUMMER AT GFUMC!

[WWW.FUMCGADSDEN.ORG/CHILDREN](http://WWW.FUMCGADSDEN.ORG/CHILDREN)

256-543-8200

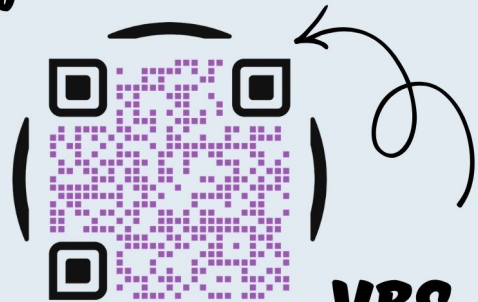
**I CAN  
DO ALL  
THINGS  
THROUGH HIM  
WHO STRENGTHENS ME.**

PHILIPPIANS 4:13, NRSV



**FIND US ON FACEBOOK!**

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/GFUMCCHILDRENSMINISTRY](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/GFUMCCHILDRENSMINISTRY)



**VBS  
JUNE 8-11**

**AGES 3K-5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
COMPLETED**



**Safe Sanctuary Training  
12:15 pm  
Sunday, May 17  
Lunch Provided**

At First United Methodist Church of Gadsden, we are committed to providing a safe, caring

environment for all children, youth, and vulnerable adults in our ministry. To protect those in our care, as well as those who serve, all volunteers must follow our Safe Sanctuary guidelines:

- Be an active participant in the church for at least 6 months
- Be at least 5 years older than the age group they serve
- Follow the two unrelated adult rule
- Complete and pass a background check before serving
- Complete FUMCG's Safe Sanctuary Training (Annual training is required.)

These practices help ensure a safe and trusted space where children, youth, and vulnerable adults can grow in faith. Thank you for helping us protect and strengthen our ministry.

\*The complete FUMCG Safe Sanctuary Policy is available in the church office.



## Prepare to be part of an UMCOR Early Response Team!

**Register now for an ERT Training near you.**

What is an Early Response Team (ERT)?

ERTs offer a Christian witness and provide practical aid during the initial days following a disaster, helping people to be safe, sanitary, and secure until insurance and other help arrive. This ERT program consists of specialized training from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), including topics like disaster types, safety procedures, and how to offer emotional and spiritual care.

The work of an ERT includes tasks such as listening to survivors, tarping roofs, removing damaged belongings, cleaning out flood-damaged homes, debris removal, and other activities that help prevent further damage and make homes habitable.

- ◆ ERTs are not first responders or recovery/rebuild teams. They focus on providing a caring Christian presence and support during the early stages of a disaster.
- ◆ ERTs respond to invitations from disaster response coordinators and work within established protocols to ensure effective and coordinated assistance.
- ◆ ERTs are often self-sufficient, meaning they bring their own supplies and support, though they may coordinate with local resources as needed.
- ◆ ERTs emphasize teamwork, safety, and a positive attitude, recognizing that people are more important than the tasks at hand.

The cost of the training is \$30 and covers lunch, snacks and training materials. Bring something to write with and take notes.

There will be a hands-on portion of the class where participants do some tarp training and ladder safety training.

Please wear comfortable clothes and appropriate footwear for the hands-on part of the class. Everyone will be required to complete a background check application, which UMCOR will pay for.

May 9th is at Arab UMC from 8-4. Please register on <https://www.umcna.org/>  
The Mid Central District will pay for the first 30 registrants.





## Alleluia Offering 2026

*With deep gratitude, we announce that the 2026 Alleluia Offering is \$42,790.* That is a record-breaking amount for First United Methodist Church. Thank you for your ongoing generosity and support. Your gifts fully funded all the designated areas for Alleluia 2026 and will allow the support of vital ministries to be expanded.



*"...The old has gone,  
the new has come!"*  
2 Corinthians 5:17b

**If you have not contributed, but desire to do so, we are still receiving gifts.** You may return your Alleluia Offering during worship (designate "Alleluia Offering"), by mail, or through secure e-giving or Venmo (Visit [www.fumcgadsden.org/give](http://www.fumcgadsden.org/give) for details).

This year's Alleluia Offering will fund needed lighting upgrades for the sanctuary, including steeple, and lamp post lights; invest in Children and Youth Ministry Spaces; and support technology (computer) upgrades for the church staff.

In Christ,  
*Rev. Sherri Reynolds, Senior Pastor*




### "Building A Solid Foundation" 2026 Generosity Emphasis

*Information and Estimate of Giving Cards are available in the Chestnut Foyer or Online. Thank you for your Generosity.*

**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](https://www.venmo.com/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

**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.)

Download our Church App  
 Search First UMC-Gadsden  
 In the App Store for Android or iPhone.



# First UMC Gadsden May 10-May 16, 2026

## May 10, Sunday

**9:00 am-Celebration Worship**

10:00 am-10:45 am- HeBrews Coffee; Sunday School

**11:00 am-Traditions**

## May 11, Monday

9:00 am-1:00 pm-ELC; 9:00 am-10:00 am ExerciseGym

10:30 am-UWF Executive Board meeting

12:00 pm-UWF Luncheon, Gathering Room

2:00 pm-4:00 pm-Pickle Ball, Gym

## May 12, Tuesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm-ELC; 2:00 pm-Pickle Ball, Gym; 5:00 pm, Yoga, Gym

## May 13, Wednesday

9:00 am-1:00 pm-ELC

9:30 am-4K Graduation, Sanctuary

**5:00 pm-7:00 pm, Church Picnic (new date)**

## May 14, Thursday

9:00 am-1:00 pm-ELC

9:00 am-10:00 am-Exercise Group, Gym

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

## May 15, Friday

11:00 am to 12:00 am -Ladle of Love



*The pastor and congregation extend Christian sympathy to  
Laura Condra in the death of her brother,  
Marcus Kennedy Houston, Jr. on May 4, 2026.*



SARA RABUN JOHNSON  
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

## *Mother's Day Roses Sale*

*Thank you for your  
donations.*



*Thank you to everyone who  
participated in our annual Roses  
Sale benefitting the Sara Rabun  
Johnson Scholarship Fund.  
Current proceeds total \$9,910 for  
this year's drive. These funds will  
truly bless some deserving  
students and families.*



The Early Learning Center  
First United Methodist  
Church of Gadsden

### Immediate Prayer Concerns

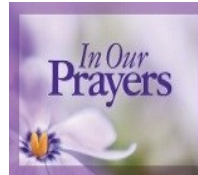
Family of Marcus Kennedy Houston, Jr.

### Continued Prayer Concerns

Evelyn Pierson Nancy Smith

Amy Epperson (daughter of Gene & Danna Dean)

James Dial (infant son of Jay & Taylor)



### Save the Dates

**May 13, 9:30 am**, ELC 4K

Graduation, Sanctuary

**May 17**, Senior High Graduation

Recognition Sunday, both worship

services. *There will be a brunch for*

*graduates and their families*

*in the Gathering Room, between*

*the worship services.*

**May 18, 10 am**, Striplin

Kindergarten Graduation, Sanctuary

### Birthdays

**May 11** Anita Waid

**May 12** George Hightower,

Jeanne Clare Leach

**May 13** Dr. Bill Haller, Jr.,

Paul DeJong

**May 14** Lynne Frederick,

Alta Whitfield, Greysen Robinson

**May 15** Catheryne Freeman,

Margaret Walton

**May 16** Bonnie Yarnell



### Attendance Week of May 3, 2026

In Person Total \*189 On Line Total 305

Thursday \*12 Celebration \*60/133

Traditions \*117/172 Worship Total 494

Adult SS\*39 Children's SS \*7 Youth SS\*2

Bible Study \*29 Children Sun/Wed \*35

Youth Sun/Wed \*11 Nursery Sun/Wed \*10

### Year 2026 Week of May 3, 2026

General Offering Budget \$ 13,040.00

General Offering Received \$ 25,445.79

YTD Gen. Offering Budget \$234,720.00

YTD Gen. Offering Rec'd \$275,904.00



**May 3,  
2026**

**Matthew & Amanda Herman  
William Herman**