

From Our Pastor

Practicing Hospitality

More Americans google “church” around Easter than at any other time, and more people come to church on Easter Sunday than on any other day. Easter is Christianity’s oldest and most important holiday, during which Christians celebrate Jesus’ Resurrection three days after he was crucified. Ash Wednesday, the day that marks the beginning of Lent is a time of repentance, renewal, and new life, we all need that. It’s important to acknowledge that many of the people coming to church on Easter, are not regular churchgoers, but embarrassing them defeats the point. This is why hospitality is so important for a thriving church.

Intentionally reaching out to people can change a person’s perspective on church and at the same time bring an abundance of joy into the fellowship. Practicing hospitality can be the best and the easiest thing a church can ever do. Hospitality is an area that can be easily overlooked but God’s Holy Word reminds us to stay vigilant. “Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality” (Romans 12:13).

What does hospitality look like? It looks like a friendly smile and a warm greeting on Sunday morning. It looks like a hearty handshake or a comforting arm around someone’s shoulder. It looks like a friend who is there when you are in need. It looks like an eager attitude to help a visitor find their Sunday school class. It looks like a welcoming atmosphere where people feel at home in worship. It looks like Christ shining through you as you reach out to others.

For Christians, living a life of hospitality is inseparable from living a life of grace. Hospitality offers protection, provision, and respect to strangers while at the same time it sustains and strengthens the moral bonds of those who worship together. If we are to live as a church on fire for the Lord, then we will practice hospitality as Peter has instructed, “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1 Peter 4:9). Hospitality is doing more than people expect while maintaining a cheerful attitude. Jesus is our example. When crowds came to Jesus, he would welcome them. Then speak to them about the kingdom of heaven and heal those who needed healing. When visitors come to worship with us, we have a unique opportunity to share the Good News with them. Then offer them the healing that only Jesus can bring into their lives. As we partner with God to bring hope and health to His people, hospitality becomes part of our way of life.

May God continue to bless you and your family during the month of March, and together let’s start practicing hospitality.

**In Christ’s arms,
Brother Matt**



Dear Church Family,

Sunday, February 12th was an important day in the life of our church. 238 members of our congregation came together and voted overwhelmingly to begin the disaffiliation process. Our separation from the United Methodist Church will not be official until it is approved by the Annual Conference at the called session on May 7th.

In the meantime, let us all pray that our church can move forward in loving unity, as each of us offers gracious understanding to one another no matter how we voted. We are a family, brothers and sisters together, and though we have differences, our Lord can bind us together in love and help us focus on the true mission of the Church—to make disciples. Please join me in earnest prayer for loving unity within our church family. Let Paul’s counsel to the Colossians guide us as we converse with one another: “Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

May God grant us the grace to move forward in love and become an even stronger redemptive fellowship.

**In Christ’s arms,
Brother Matt**



Thank you for providing beautiful altar flowers:

March 5—Communion
 March 12—Jeanelle Andrews
 March 19—Blu & Ashley Gilliland
 March 26—Bruce & Charlotte Barber



TRAILS TEMPLE
MINISTRY

TRAILS TEMPLE MINISTRY

is looking for a volunteer(s) to organize walks for the group. If you are interested please notify the church office. Thank you to Carl Bledsoe who got this ministry "up and moving"!



**SAVE
THE
DATE!**
 Tyler Bridal
 Tea
 Sunday,
 April 30th

SUNDAYS:

- Sunday Worship 8:00 A.M. (CHAPEL)
- Sunday School 9:00 A.M.
- Sunday Worship 10:00 A.M. (Sanctuary and Wesley Hall)

WEDNESDAYS:

- Wednesday Morning Bible Study in Wesley Hall at 9:30 a.m.
- Wednesday Night meal 5:15—6 P.M. (FLC)
- Children and Youth After School 3 P.M.
- Choir Practice 6 P.M. (Chapel)
- Brother Matt's PHASE 2 Discipleship Class at 6 P.M. (Library)
- Verse by Verse Bible Study 6:15 P.M. (Cornerstone Classroom)



Our nursery (located on the first floor in the Education Building) is available for all services. **Warning! Being genuinely loved by Mrs. Becky and Ms. Barbara may be habit forming:)**

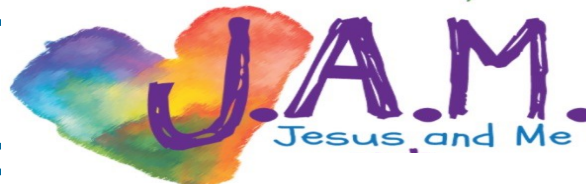
Join us for Sunday School each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. for fellowship and to study God's Word. *There's a class for all ages!!!* If you need help deciding on a class—we can help!



Calling all 2023 High School Seniors!!! May, graduation, and Senior Sunday will be here before we know it! If you would like your graduating senior to be recognized and celebrated by the student ministry, or know of a graduating senior who is part of our church family and should be recognized, **let Jamie know at jamie@firstwetumpka.com. DEADLINE APRIL 2.**



Join the Prayer Shawl Ministry on Fridays from 10 a.m. until 12 noon upstairs in the Education Building. You can learn a new craft, bring your crafting projects with you, or just come for the sweet fellowship.



Spring has sprung! Lots of activities coming up in our children's ministry. First off, we have our **St. Patti's Day party on Wed, March 15 during our after-school ministry.** The kids will enjoy sweets and a lesson on the Trinity using a 3 leaf clover. As always, if your kids are too young to attend our regular after-school ministry, we would love for them to join us for this party. Just let me know so we'll have plenty of goodies!

Our next big event is our Easter Egg Hunt on Sun, April 2 immediately following the late service. Come join us and invite your friends, neighbors, and friends of friends! (You get the picture!) We will have lots of eggs (and candy) for the kids so spread the word. Volunteers needed. Please see me or Jamie if you would like to help with this fun community outreach.



SAVE THE DATE! VBS is Sun, June 4-6 in the evening. Be sure to mark your calendar so your kids and their friends can be a part of it! If you would like to serve, please see me. We have a spot for you behind the scenes or front and center. You get to choose!

This month our kids are learning all about forgiveness. Our kids will learn about the woman anointing Jesus' feet, Zacchaeus, the story of the unmerciful servant, and the story of the lost son. Our memory verse comes from Colossians 3:13. *"Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you."* Colossians 3:13. For little ones, they can learn the very last sentence.

I feel so blessed to have your kids be such a special part of my life. Thank you for sharing them with me!

**Much love,
Ms. Michelle**



Random. Chaotic. Circumstantial. These descriptions could be the way many might describe their current prayer life and spiritual practices. Because of this truth combined with research showing many lifelong patterns and habits develop during the ages we have the joy and privilege of ministering to, as a student ministry we seek out, teach, and try to help them implement meaningful practices and rhythms that will help continually transform them into the likeness of Christ during these formative years. As part of that effort, during Lent we will focus on Fuller Youth Institute's "Sticky Faith Every Day" series. We are excited to see how it engages both our students and their families and helps them reimagine and re-engage spiritual practices as a way to notice God more every day, long beyond the season of Lent (and hopefully for a lifetime)!



May, graduation, and Senior Sunday will also be here before we know it! If you would like your graduating senior to be recognized and celebrated by the student ministry, or know of a graduating senior who is part of our church family and should

be recognized, let me, Jamie, know at jamie@firstwetumpka.com by **April 2, 2023**.

If you are a 7th-12th grader or know a student who is, we'd love for you, or them, to join in all the exciting things coming up and be a part of our student ministry family!

For all the other exciting, weekly, community building things happening this month as we continue to seek God's wisdom and move forward in His will together (like **our weekly family conversation guides and daily devotions to help continue faith building conversations at home**), check out our page on the church's website, and/or contact me through the email above if you have any questions! Please make sure you are on our text and e-mail list for all updates and access to other helpful tips, tools, and resources for growing a relationship with God personally and as a family!

In Him, Jamie



We Are The Church

From historical files: “Methodism in Wetumpka can be traced back as early as Alabama’s 1819 statehood. Circuit riders served local congregations as early as 1820. Our Wetumpka Methodist family was organized in 1837 and a building completed at our current location in 1854. There have been periods of hardship as well as eras of prosperity and growth.” Through the years, our beautiful, historically significant main building and others facilities have undergone renovations and expansions. Yet, let’s be clear people, **we are the church!** The cloud of witnesses who came before us built a church family on a solid foundation of Jesus Christ. A foundation for a future in which our church family would “always enter to worship and depart to serve.”

Indeed, generations of our church family have accepted a rich heritage of following Jesus, committed to be his hands and feet to serve the “least of these.” . . . through the best and worst of times. Certainly we are now living in a time of volatile divisive challenges, uncertainties, and turmoil in our society and our Methodist denomination. While there are issues on which we disagree with each other, praise the Lord, nothing has waned the enthusiastic momentum of our specific church family for serving Christ. Through worship, discipleship, fellowship, and service, we have welcomed the Holy Spirit to ignite a fire for Jesus and to empower us to submit our time, talents, and treasure to participate in Kingdom work. Together, we continue to grow our numbers, our spirits, and our community impact. . . all to the glory of God. Let’s keep doing it!

Through the good stewardship of all the resources entrusted to us, individually and collectively, we continue to experience how effective, proven ministries are expanding and new ministries are emerging to meet needs of our church family and our community. To support our ministries financially, our treasurer provided a grateful, encouraging report to conclude 2022 and as we begin 2023. We finished the 2022 year strong with general fund collections up 1.926% - to exceed the prior year giving by \$11,166.31 and our total general fund expenses were within the parameters of the approved 2022 operating budget. Through February 19, 2023, our general fund collections are down a slight 2.66% compared to the same time frame last year. We are indeed appreciative and blessed to have a congregation that faithfully responds to God’s call to give their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness for Kingdom work. Thank you, Church!

Yes, friends, **we are the church.** . . . committed to following Jesus and loving one another as Jesus first loved us. May we continue to carry forward our inherited legacy to “always enter to worship and depart to serve.”

**Doing Kingdom work with you,
Your Stewardship Team
Dennis, Sonya, Andrea, Matt & Margie**



Senior Adult Ministry

The February 14th Valentine luncheon was a great success with beautiful decorations, wonderful soup and the best grilled cheese in the world. (my great granddaughter says so). This day was a great day due to all of the volunteers and everyone who attended. Thanks to all.

Game day was Thursday, February the 16th. Due to looming bad weather it was a slow but great day. If you missed this one **put March the 16th on your calendar for our next game day. We will gather in Wesley Hall.**

Tuesday, March the 14th we will take a bus trip for lunch. Hopefully to an Irish pub in hopes of seeing the little Green Man with his pot of gold and beautiful rainbow. You must sign up for this trip. Bus will only hold 15 people and I would like to make reservations at the restaurant if possible so call me to hold your spot. It might be possible to have two busses if needed.

Looking forward to our April luncheon, it will be a spring program. **Our John Scott is coming from Mobile to present this program on edible flowers.** You will not want to miss this special day we may even eat some flowers.

Looking to May we will have a Derby day. This will be loads of fun and everyone that would like, please wear your special decorated Derby hats. We will have judges and prizes! Let's get ready and start getting those hats ready for Derby day!!!

Well that is it for now but Keenagers are on a roll so don't get left behind.

Luke 15:10

Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

**Always Believe,
Gloria (334-312-1764)**



Serving our community...

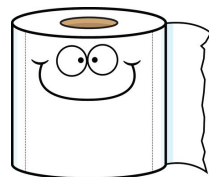
Adullam House Ministries

Website: <https://adullamhouse.org/>

Phone: (334) 514-3070



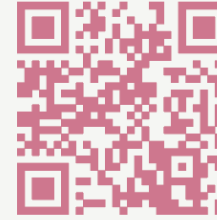
Adullam House is a safe haven for the children of incarcerated parents. Volunteers undertake raising, supporting, and instructing the children in God's Word. For some it's a short-term rescue. For others it will be a brand-new permanent home. Many arrive scarred by poverty, pain, neglect and abuse. They've seen and experienced things no child should; innocent babies living in conditions that are hard to imagine. At Adullam House, their future is forever changed. Here, they can simply be kids. They find a safe, loving environment that meets their physical, educational, emotional, and spiritual needs and learn a new way of life until their families are able to once again care for them. Adullam House began as a calling on the lives of Pete and Angie Spackman. The Lord brought them from Great Britain to follow His vision for the forgotten children of society just outside Wetumpka, Alabama, 20 miles from the capital city of Montgomery. They started working with prisoners and soon found themselves fully consumed with giving their children a new start. Through God's grace and provision, the ministry has stayed debt-free and continues to operate with no government funding. Believing "it is better to build children than it is to repair grown-ups", Adullam House has hit a tender spot in the life of WellSpring. For more information or to direct prayers specifically, please visit their website listed above.



**Thank you for helping us collect
empty toilet tissue paper rolls
and paper towel rolls for our
VBS craft projects!**



ATTENTION WETUMPKA AREA FAMILIES



JOIN US FOR EASTER

APR. 2 EASTER EGG HUNT • 11 AM

APR. 6 TENEBRAE SERVICE • 6 PM

APR. 7 WETUMPKA CROSS WALK • 11 AM

APR. 9 EASTER MORNING • 6:15, 8, & 10 AM

Online and On-Campus

WWW.WETUMPKAFIRST.COM/EASTER

First United Methodist Wetumpka • 306 W. Tuskeena St., Wetumpka, AL 36092

  @wetumpkafirst • (334) 567-7865 • secretary@firstwetumpka.com

READING THE BIBLE THROUGH: March

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Num. 16-18	Ps. 26	Luke 4
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Num. 19-21	Prov. 26	Luke 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Num. 22-23	Ps. 27	Luke 6
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Num. 24-26	Prov. 27	Luke 7
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Reflect on God as Redeemer		
<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Num. 27-29	Ps. 28	Luke 8
<input type="checkbox"/> 7 Num. 30-33	Prov. 28	Luke 9
<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Num. 34-36	Ps. 29	Luke 10
<input type="checkbox"/> 9 Deut. 1-2	Prov. 29	Luke 11
<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Deut. 3-4	Ps. 30	Luke 12
<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Deut. 5-6	Prov. 30	Luke 13
<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Reflect on God as Helper		
<input type="checkbox"/> 13 Deut. 7-8	Ps. 31	Luke 14
<input type="checkbox"/> 14 Deut. 9-10	Prov. 31	Luke 15
<input type="checkbox"/> 15 Deut. 11-12	Ps. 32	Luke 16
<input type="checkbox"/> 16 Deut. 13-14	Eccl. 1:1-11	Luke 17
<input type="checkbox"/> 17 Deut. 15-16	Ps. 33	Luke 18
<input type="checkbox"/> 18 Deut. 17-18	Eccl. 1:12-18	Luke 19
<input type="checkbox"/> 19 Reflect on God as Peace		
<input type="checkbox"/> 20 Deut. 19-20	Ps. 34	Luke 20
<input type="checkbox"/> 21 Deut. 21-22	Eccl. 2:1-17	Luke 21
<input type="checkbox"/> 22 Deut. 23-24	Ps. 35	Luke 22
<input type="checkbox"/> 23 Deut. 25-26	Eccl. 2:18-26	Luke 23
<input type="checkbox"/> 24 Deut. 27-28	Ps. 26	Luke 24
<input type="checkbox"/> 25 Deut. 29-30	Eccl. 3:1-8	John 1
<input type="checkbox"/> 26 Reflect on God as Messiah		
<input type="checkbox"/> 27 Deut. 31-32	Ps. 37	John 2
<input type="checkbox"/> 28 Deut. 33-34	Eccl. 3:9-22	John 3
<input type="checkbox"/> 29 Joshua 1-2	Ps. 38	John 4
<input type="checkbox"/> 30 Joshua 3-4	Eccl. 4:1-6	John 5
<input type="checkbox"/> 31 Joshua 5-6	Ps. 29	John 6



03/03	Blu	Gilliand	03/19	Pat	Ward
03/05	Joshua	Rider	03/19	Cindy	Langley
03/07	Jonah	Flores	03/21	Monica	Foster
03/10	Ashtin	Arant	03/22	Alice	Barnhart
03/14	Susan	Barner	03/22	Man	Hunt
03/16	Oliver	Smith	03/22	Eddy	Brantley
03/18	Harley	Rider	03/23	Alan	Roberts
03/18	Andy	Scarborough	03/26	Mardre	Williams
03/19	Ella	Gilliand	03/30	Drew	Glass
03/19	Emma	Gilliand			



03/06	John & Jeannie Scott
03/08	Bill & Barbara J Watts
03/14	Felix & Judy Dudley
03/16	Bruce & Charlotte Barber

If you are a member of FUMC and your birthday or anniversary is not listed, please notify the church office so that we can celebrate with you.



FIRST NEWS

Phone: 334-567-7865

Email: secretary@firstwetumpka.com

Website: www.wetumpkafirst.com

March 2023



IN THIS ISSUE:

- From our Pastor
- Our Children, Youth and Senior Adults
- Birthdays & Anniversaries
- News from our Stewardship Team
- Reading the Bible Through Scriptures
- Fresh Start Support Group
- Pictures, pictures, pictures!



Do you have:

- A new email address?
- A new mailing address?
- A new phone/cell phone number?

Please update any changes with the church office.

Support Group

Fresh Start meets at 6 p.m. each MONDAY in Wesley Hall.

Children's activities are provided! If you know someone who is struggling, please let them know that the Fresh Start

Recovery Group is here for them. For more information please contact Paul Henderson at 334-201-5428.



Connect with us any time on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and our website at @WetumpkaFirst and www.WetumpkaFirst.com