

A Word From Our Pastor...

The Light of the World

As we bring the year 2024 to a close, I have some good news and some bad news: You are eternal. Your spirit will live forever. You have a free will and you can choose where you will spend eternity. Daniel reminds us, “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake; some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:2-3). Here in Daniel, we have a depiction of the resurrection for both the righteous and the wicked. Although the eternal fate of each will be quite different, “God will repay each person according to what they have done” (Romans 2:6). As Malachi reminds us, the *Day of the Lord* will be both great and dreadful.

In his book, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, Ted Engstrom writes, “I was cleaning out a desk drawer when I found a flashlight I hadn’t used in over a year. I flipped the switch but was not surprised when it gave no light. I unscrewed it and shook it to get the batteries out, but they would not budge. Finally, after some effort, they came loose. What a mess! Battery acid had corroded the entire inside of the flashlight. The batteries were new when I had put them in, and I had stored them in a safe, warm place. But there was one problem. Those batteries were not made to be warm and comfortable. They were designed to be turned on—to be used.”

This month as we focus on Jesus, the light of the world, we should be reminded that we were created to be turned on, to let our light shine. Jesus said, “In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” God shows us how we can shine like the brightness of the heavens, like stars and lead many to righteousness. When we share the light of Christ with others, we can be brightly shining stars—radiantly beautiful in God’s sight.

One way to let your light shine is to show compassion to others. Jesus expressed deep compassion for all people. You can let your light shine, as you practice humility. Christians are called to be humble in all things, knowing that it is only through the grace of God that we live and move and have our being. Generosity is another way to let your shine light. Christians are called to be generous with our time, resources, and love. Yet another way to let your light shine is through forgiveness. Jesus taught that we should forgive others as we have been forgiven. There are many other ways to let our light shine before others.

During the month of December, find ways to let your light shine, as you share the light of Jesus. May God continue to bless you and your family as you shine like brightly shining stars.

In Christ's arms, Brother Matt



Celebrating Christmas...



Sunday, December 8
ONE SERVICE ONLY
10 A.M.

***Come and join us in worship
led by our very talented
Chancel Choir as we celebrate
the birth of our Savior
through song.***



***Join us at 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve
for our annual Christmas Eve
Candlelight Communion Worship.
Bring your family and invite your friends
to this special worship service.***

DECEMBER

Thank you for providing beautiful altar flowers:

December 1—Communion

December 8—Jerry & Alice Barnhart

December 15—Matt & Tammy Albritton

December 22—Ray & Judi Daniels

December 29—Ashley Cousins

Thank you for supporting our Bake Sale on Sunday, November 24

From the Finance Committee:

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU to everyone who baked, wrapped, purchased goodies and in any way supported our Methodist United Appeal Fundraiser on Nov. 24! We have met our annual requirement for our state sales tax exemption and we are able to support the Elmore County Food Pantry and the Pastors' Discretionary Fund that provides assistance to needy families in our community. Some donations are still coming in, but together we raised over \$3,000.



Welcome new baby!

Ryan & Ashley Smith
welcomed their new addition on Nov. 23.
Emorett Matthew Smith, weighed 7 lbs.
15 ozs and is 21 inches in length.
Congratulations Smith Family!!!



2025 ALTAR FLOWER CALENDAR

Thank you for providing fresh flowers
each Sunday that add so much beauty to
our Sanctuary and our worship services.

Dates on the calendar are on a first-come
basis, so choose your special date soon!

Call or email the church office
to choose your dates:

334/567-7865

secretary@firstwetumpka.com



Church Office Holiday Hours:

Closed: Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Closed: New Year's Eve & New Year's Day

Angel Tree

CHRISTMAS ALIVE PROGRAM

Our Angel Tree full of Christmas wishes
will be in Wesley Hall **beginning Sunday,
Dec. 1st.** Feel free to choose one or as many
angels as you'd like to make wishes come true!

We ask that you **bring your wrapped gifts
to the church NO LATER THAN Sunday,
December 15th.** Be sure to include your
angel gift tag with your gift!

**THANK YOU for your generosity in
supporting this Christmas ministry!**



A Christmas Blessing for You

May Jesus, our Savior,
Who was born on Christmas Day,
Bless you at this season
In a very special way.
May the beauty and the promise
Of that silent, holy night
Fill your heart with peace and happiness
And make your new year bright!

Helen Steiner Rice

Merry Christmas from your Church Family!



Advent is here, and it's almost Christmas time too! Glory to God in the highest! Because we are so incredibly blessed by God in so many ways, we will continue our attitude of gratitude habit-building practices this month (like naming things we are thankful for and hanging them on our student ministry tree every time we meet) alongside using those blessings to be a blessing and God's love and light to others inside and outside of our church family (one example being volunteering with A Downtown Dickens Christmas)! We'll also spend time making lifelong memories together at our Mystery Dinner Christmas party, Christmas on the Coosa family parade party with the children's ministry, and as we cheer each other on at one another's upcoming events. Life is SO MUCH BETTER lived together as a community unified by God's love and grace!

This Month's Series: Grateful

This Christmas, what are you grateful for? Your favorite Christmas memories might involve snowball fights, presents, or time with the people you love, but feeling grateful and expressing gratitude are two different things. When we really think about it, there's so much we can be thankful for — even when things don't work exactly how we planned. God has given us so much, and the birth of Jesus is not only a great way to focus on all of the gifts we've received this year but to say thank you too! In this series, we'll look at and discuss together four classic Christmas stories to see what they can teach us about gratitude as we celebrate Jesus' birth. As we do, we'll be reminded **to be thankful for each other, what God has done, God's promises, and to be thankful even when it's not easy.**

For all the other exciting weekly hangouts and community-building events happening this month, check out our page on the church's website, and/or contact me at jamie@wetumpkafirst.com 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





Welcome to the Fall Festival...

Have you ever stopped to listen to a group of carolers and then joined them to go spread some more Christmas cheer with others? Music is such a big part of Christmas, but it's not the main reason we celebrate. It's easy to get distracted with all the lights, presents, and traditions that sometimes we forget it's not about the things we do, but who we do it for and why we do it.

That's why this December, we're singing loudly as we jam out to our Christmas Playlist to celebrate Jesus, God's greatest gift! The best gift God has ever given was Jesus. Because of Jesus, it's possible for us to have a relationship with God that will last forever. As we get in the mix this Christmas season, let's take time to remember the reason we celebrate in the first place: Jesus, the greatest gift the world has ever known.

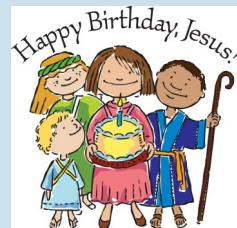
Memory Verse:

"[Mary] is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That's because he will save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:21

This month, we are going to kick off the season with our annual visit to **Zoo Lights on December 8th**. On **December 14**, we will celebrate **Christmas on the Coosa** together with hot cocoa and cookies while enjoying the fireworks. Then, on **December 18th**, we will celebrate **Jesus' Birthday during The Bridge!** So, many opportunities are coming up to grow as a church family.

Blessings, Mrs. Ashley



Senior Adult Ministry

Hello Keenagers! On November 13, we toured the Troy University campus in Troy. The art museum was interesting but to me the soldier exhibit won the day. Of course lunch was enjoyed by all.

Christmas can be stressful because we tend to make it so. If we are truly putting Jesus Christ first we can enjoy the holidays much more. Let's all try to slow down and enjoy this Christmas season.



December 10th will be our Christmas Luncheon in the Family Life Center at 11:45 am. Remember all are invited to our festivities, road trips, etc. Our theme is *Come to the Manger*. Please come and enjoy this celebration with us. We will have great food and entertainment that everyone will enjoy. We may have a special surprise for you so do not miss this Come to the Manger and celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior.

Keenagers/Sr. Adults - We have something going on each second Tuesday of every month. Please mark a big K starting now on your calendars that are on your walls and your phones for each second Tuesday.

Everyone that is interested in Keenagers/Senior Adults do not forget that on Tuesday, January 14th we will have our planning meeting. We will plan our road trips, places to eat, and luncheons here at the church and decorations. Please come if you are able because we need lots of people to help us decide where we want to go, what we want to do, and what we want to eat period. When we divide up what each one will be responsible for in the coming year—the more people we have the better year we will have!

“So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.” Luke 2: 16

Always Believe, Gloria (334/312-1764)



Soldier Exhibit





MISSION ALIVE IN 2025

You are a valuable member of our Church Family. By working together as servants of Jesus Christ, we make a significant difference in our world. Our vision is to grow spiritually, grow numerically, and make a greater impact in our community. When a person joins our faithful family, one question is asked: Will you support First Methodist Church Wetumpka with your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness? Then, guided by the Holy Spirit, each person supports our church as they are able. God uses all of us to make disciples of Jesus Christ. God pours His grace upon us and makes us an awesome, Christ-centered fellowship. Church, this is us!

Our mission statement unites us: **Worship Passionately - Love Extravagantly - Witness Boldly.** These words describe who we are and how we want to be known. Our amazing array of ministries make these words come alive within our congregation, in our community, and across the world, all to the glory of God. Together, we seek “to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only.” (James 1:22)

In one of Charles Wesley’s great hymns, he asks the question, “And are we yet alive, and see each other’s face?” As Christians, “God...made us alive together with Christ.” (Ephesians 2) It is our togetherness with Christ Jesus and each other, that energizes our collective mission. Our theme for the coming year is **Mission Alive in 2025.** Together, we can continue to make a difference in our world. Recently, during Celebration Sunday, we consecrated our 2025 estimates of financial giving. As good stewards of all our resources, we asked God to make our church a Body of Christ that pleases Him. Within a sound financial position, we celebrated all that God has already done through us and we asked “what more we can do to His honor and glory?”

Sincere and deep thanks to all who have turned in your confidential card to estimate your financial giving, as you are able, in the coming year. If you have not turned in a card, it is not too late. You may complete the attached form, then mail or bring it to our church office. Church, let’s welcome the Holy Spirit to ignite our fire to make our mission fervently alive in 2035.

*Serving Jesus with you,
Your Stewardship Team*
Matt
Dennis
Andrea
Sonya
Margie

MISSION  ALIVE
IN 2025

For your convenience, if you would like to send your declaration of giving card virtually, please **scan the QR code** below with your smartphone or visit our website (www.wetumpkafirst.com/give).



MISSION  ALIVE
IN 2025

306 W. Tuskeena St., Wetumpka, AL 36092
334-567-7865 • www.wetumpkafirst.com

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Preferred Phone: _____
Email: _____
Signature(s): _____

2025 Declaration of Financial Giving

Estimate of Giving:

My/our estimated annual giving is \$ _____
to be given:

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ Annually

Please send information or contact me/us about:

- ☐ Online recurring gifts
- ☐ Giving appreciated assets
- ☐ Giving through estate planning

*(This estimate of giving may be revised or canceled
at any time at my/our request.)*

*May the Lord work through my/our prayerful giving to activate our church family Mission Alive in 2025:
Worship passionately - Love extravagantly - Witness boldly*

Serving in our Community...

*Thank you to
everyone who
contributed to
our Coat Drive!
We filled these
containers several
times over because
of your generosity!
Your warm items
are a blessing
to those
who are in need
of them!*



Our Local Christmas Mission this year...



Each Christmas we pick a special local mission project. This year is IVY'S CLOSET located in Deatsville (Slapout Community) that helps provide clothing and supplies to foster families. If you feel led to support this local mission project please make your donations payable to the church and mark the memo line: Ivy's Closet. THANK YOU!

READING THE BIBLE THROUGH: December

□ 1 Hosea 7-8	Ps. 137	Luke 24
□ 2 Hosea 9-10	Prov. 20	Matthew 1
□ 3 Reflect on God as Giver		
□ 4 Hosea 11-12	Ps. 128	Matt. 2
□ 5 Hosea 13:-14	Prov. 21	Matt. 3
□ 6 Joel Psalm 139	Matt. 4	
□ 7 Amos 1-3	Prov. 22	Matt. 5
□ 8 Amos 4-5	Ps. 140	Matt. 6
□ 9 Amos 6-7	Prov. 23	Matt. 7-8
□ 10 Reflect on God as King of Kings		
□ 11 Amos 8-9	Ps. 141	Matt. 9
□ 12 Obadiah	Prov. 24	Matt. 10
□ 13 Jonah 1-2	Ps. 142	Matt. 11
□ 14 Jonah 3-4	Prov. 25	Matt. 12
□ 15 Micah 1-3	Ps. 143	Matt. 13
□ 16 Micah 4-5	Prov. 26	Matt. 14
□ 17 Reflect on God as Savior		
□ 18 Micah 6-7	Ps. 144	Matt. 15
□ 19 Nahum	Prov. 27	Matt. 16
□ 20 Habakkuk	Ps. 145	Matt. 17
□ 21 Zephaniah	Prov. 28	Matt. 18
□ 22 Haggai	Ps. 146	Matt. 19
□ 23 Zech. 1-3	Prov. 29	Matt. 20
□ 24 Reflect on God as Emmanuel		
□ 25 Zech. 4-6	Ps. 147	Matt. 21
□ 26 Zech. 7-8	Prov. 30	Matt. 22
□ 27 Zech. 9-10	Ps. 148	Matt. 23
□ 28 Zech. 11-12	Prov. 31:1-9	Matt. 24-25
□ 29 Zech. 13-14	Ps. 149	Matt. 25-26
□ 30 Malachi 1-2	Prov. 31:10-31	Matt. 26-27
□ 31 Malachi 3-4	Ps. 150	Matt. 28

Support Group

Fresh Start meets at 6 p.m. each **MONDAY** in the FLC. 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 contact Paul Henderson at 334-201-5428.**



12/01	Julie	Lawrence	12/22	Ed	Tatum
12/02	Sharon	Riordan	12/23	Janice	Cash
12/03	David	Tindal	12/23	Matt	Albritton
12/04	Mary	Weldon	12/28	Hughett	Williams
12/06	Deborah	Jenkins	12/28	Gloria	Johnston
12/16	Baker	Callahan	12/30	Barbara	Watts
12/18	Debbie	Callahan	12/31	Mac	Patchel
12/18	Ashley	Smith			



12/2	Tim & Julie Lawrence
12/5	Glen & Janice Gingras
12/17	Shelton & Linda Prine
12/18	J.D. & Pat Hobbie
12/19	David & Susan Barnes
12/20	Ryan & Ashley Smith
12/28	Ashley & Blu Gilliland
12/28	Earl & Trish Singleton

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



FIRST NEWS

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Wetumpka, AL 36092
Phone: 334-567-7865
Email: secretary@firstwetumpka.com
Website: www.wetumpkafirst.com

DECEMBER 2024



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*Look inside for
Special Christmas Celebrations...*



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