A Word From Our Pastor...

"Behold, I will do a new thing."

As we begin this New Year, I challenge you to expand your paradigm, to think outside the lines. Consider believing that God is going to do a new thing in your life this year. When God wants to do something new in your life, you will find that you begin to desire that new thing. It could be something you have never done before and all of a sudden you want to do it. In fact, you can't wait to get started. I hope each of you will embrace the possibilities of what God can do through you, for His glory, in 2025.

I would also encourage you to seek and understand the calling that God has placed on your life. To understand your giftedness and to strive to serve the Lord in that area. One of my favorite quotes is by Dr. Albert Schweitzer, "I do not know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve." When God is doing something new in your life, you will notice that some doors close. This is a clear sign that God wants you to walk through another door that he has opened for you. When we make ourselves available to God, he opens doors to serve him. Then as you walk through that door, ask God to lead you to the new thing he is doing in your life.

When God wants to do a new thing in your life, he will also point you in a particular direction. As you follow God's lead, you will discover that your life is moving on a new and exciting path. Moving in step with God gives you the opportunity to grow closer to him. As we serve God and others, we not only grow closer to God, we grow closer to the ones we serve. God will bring new relationships into your life that will be instrumental in doing what he has called you to do.

When God wants to do a new thing in your life, God will raise your level of commitment to him and his kingdom's work. Commitment is your promise to do something, followed by the resolve to see it to completion. The great Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti relates this story from his childhood. "When I was a boy, my father, a baker, introduced me to the wonders of song. He urged me to work very hard to develop my voice. Arrigo Pola, a professional tenor in my hometown of Modena, Italy, took me as a pupil. I also enrolled in a teacher's college. On graduating, I asked my father, 'Shall I be a teacher or a singer?' 'Luciano,' my father replied, 'if you try to sit on two chairs, you will fall between them. For life, you must choose one chair.' I chose one. It took seven years of study and frustration before I made my first professional appearance. It took another seven to reach the Metropolitan Opera. And now I think whether it's laying bricks, writing a book—whatever we choose—we should give ourselves to it. Commitment, that's the key. Choose one chair."

Our challenge this year at First Methodist Church Wetumpka is Mission Alive in 2025. How do we accomplish this together? 1.) Recommitment your life to Christ, 2.) Recommit your life to the Church, and 3.) Make a difference in someone's life every day this year. If we all work together serving the Lord, he will do a new thing in our lives in 2025.

May God continue to bless you and your family in the month of January.

In Christ's arms, Brother Matt



Wednesday, January 15!

Our Wednesday activities resume with bus pickup, children and youth activities, a delicious meal and adult bible study!

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Brother Matt will begin a new bible study, "The Gospel of John".

John's Gospel offers readers a new language—of being born anew, of living water, of wind and spirit, of the "I am"—that enhances how we understand the divine, how we experience the world, and how we participate in the mystery of faith.

This book considers the Gospel of John in its entirety, moving through the Gospel and exploring the prologue, the wedding at Cana, the Samaritan woman at the well and the woman caught in adultery, the healing of the man at the pool and the man born blind, foot washing, Mary Magdalene and Doubting Thomas, and the Lamb of God.

Please let the church office know if you want a study guide asap.

Study guides will be handed out at the first meeting. Class meets in the Cornerstone room at 6 p.m. each Wednesday beginning January 15th!



Thank you for providing beautiful altar flowers:

January 5—Communion

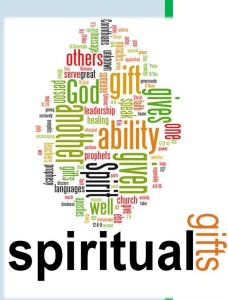
January 12—Jonny McCune

January 19—John & Scarlotte Holmes

January 26—Debbie Callahan

What are my spiritual gifts, and how do I understand and use them?

The Bible speaks of "spiritual gifts," as ways in which God has uniquely made you for his grand purposes. And when you come to know your gifts better, you draw closer to God as you exercise and grow those gifts.



Not sure what your spiritual gifts are? Brother Matt has a guide that can help. Ask for a copy today! 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



Senior Sunday Announcement:

Attention Graduating High School
Seniors of the Class of 2025. May and
graduation will be here before we know
it. If you, or you know of a graduating
high school senior, please have them
contact Jamie at

jamie@wetumpkafirst.com so they can participate and be celebrated in our Senior Sunday celebration.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS APRIL 6.

OUR WEEK AT A GLANCE...

SUNDAY:

Early Worship 8 a.m. (Chapel) Sunday School 9 a.m. (Ed Bldg) Late Church 10 a.m. (Sanctuary)

MONDAY.

Fresh Start Recovery Meets from 6—8 p.m. in the Family Life Center

WEDNESDAY: (Beginning January 15)

- Bus pick up after school
- The Bridge (children and youth activities)
- Delicious meal (5:15—6 p.m.)
- Adult Bible study 6 p.m.
- Choir Practice 6 p.m. in Chapel

THURSDAY:

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 7 a.m. at Burger King

FRIDAY:

Prayer Shawl meets from 10 a.m.— 12 noon upstairs in Education Bldg

<u>Keenagers</u> meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month. (Watch for details)

<u>SIS</u> (Sisters In Service) meets 4th Monday monthly at 1 p.m. in Wesley Hall

Happy New Year!

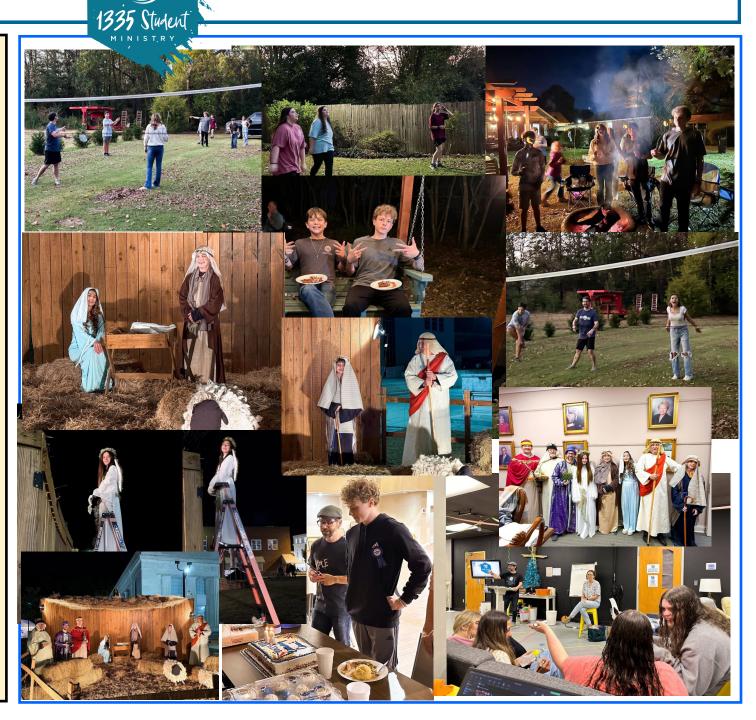
God did so many amazing things in and through the hearts and lives of our student ministry family last year, and we can't wait to see what He has in store this year as we continue to prayerfully, intentionally, and joyfully live life together on and off our campus with hearts centered on His truth, love, grace, and light! We also want to thank you so, so much for all your continued prayers and support (God is honoring them all the time!). Please keep praying for us to shine His loving light to all we are around throughout the end of Christmas break, as we continue meeting and start back Wednesday night hangouts on the 15th, and as we attend an amazing winter Camp at Blue Lake this month too! We are truly blessed to be a part of such an amazing church family!

This Month's Series: Beneath the Surface

Who do you think you are? You might define your identity around your skills, abilities, and giftings. Those are great ways to start our journey, but they don't quite reach the center. In the same way that an oceanographer heads into the depths to reveal the ocean's mysteries, we'll need to prepare to dive deep to discover who we are and who we are becoming. Through exploration and discussion of Jesus' personal experiences, habits, and relationships in Scripture, we'll find how God helps us understand our identities. We'll see how God helps us discover who we're becoming and how God's words help us discover who we are. We'll also learn how the right relationships help us discover how to grow and how Jesus helps us discover purpose.

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



Happy New Year! I have always loved this time of year. The start of a new year is the chance for a fresh start, and I am excited to see what 2025 holds for the children's ministry here at First Methodist Church Wetumpka.

The children's ministry had an amazing December celebrating Jesus' birthday! We enjoyed Christmas on the Coosa and had a very happy birthday party for Jesus! As we begin 2025, I look forward to making more memories together as a church family. Please mark your calendars as The Bridge will resume on January 15th.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who volunteers and are here for our kids. Without all of you this program would not function. I cannot begin to express how thankful I am for all of your hard work with the children's ministry. Your dedication continues to make a difference!

VOLUNTEERS

If you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer with the children's ministry and make a difference in the lives of the children here at First Methodist Church Wetumpka, please come and see me and we will find a way for you to become involved!

Blessings, Mrs. Ashley





It's finally going to be a new year, a new month with many opportunities to do God's work. Welcome to January 2025!

Our "Come to the Manger" luncheon was an excellent gathering of Christian friends and family. In First Methodist Church Wetumpka we are all brothers and sisters. A wonderful time was had by all. The food was delicious, Kathy played the piano beautifully, the shepherds paid honor to baby Jesus by coming to the manger and singing, it was so good. We also had carolers leading the singing of the group. It was all a joy to hear. Baby Jesus in the manger was very special to us. Santa was also at the manger worshipping Jesus, handing out candy and doing a small talk about if there was no baby Jesus there could be no Santa. You surely missed a blessing if you were not at this lunch.

Keenagers, planning day for the year will be Tuesday, January 14, 2025. Let's all gather at 9:30 a.m. in Wesley Hall. Please be there to give your input and suggestions for the coming year. We make menus for the whole year and we will volunteer to make or bring something each time if you want to. We also make plans for places to go out and eat and explore. We really need ideas so come with your list of what you think would be good. This is a really important time for us so the year goes smoothly. Please man or woman come join us as we need you. We will need cooks, runners, decorators, builders, poster makers, and just about anything else under the sun to make Keenagers a successful event for everyone. The year 2024 was a great one! Let's make 2025 even better!!!

A BIG thank you to everyone who helped last year; this could not have happened without each of you. Thank you again.

"Today you could be standing next to someone who is trying their best not to fall apart, so whatever you do today, do it with kindness in your heart".

Always Believe, Gloria (334/312-1764)



Celebrating Advent season at First Methodist...









FROM OUR STAFF:

We had 2 beautiful little faces to join us in our December staff meeting. Little Emorett and Charlie visited with us! They both were perfect and got lots of hugs and kisses. Sam and Susan Legvold treated us to a delicious breakfast as Sam ends his duties as Staff Parish Relations Chairperson this year. Sam—we appreciate all of your guidance for the past 3 years!





Thank You . . . Thank You . . . Thank You . . . Thank You . . .

On behalf of those served through all the significant ministries of First Methodist Church Wetumpka, we thank you for your faithful support! Your generous gifts make possible our amazing array of ministries. Thank you for responding to the Holy Spirit to give, as you are able. Your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness make a significant difference within our congregation, in our community, and across the world, all to the glory of God! Together, we are living our mission to Worship Passionately - Love Extravagantly - and Witness Boldly. Together, we continue to welcome the Holy Spirit to ignite our fire to make our mission even more fervently alive in 2025.

In February, we will provide a summary of the written financial estimates of 2025 giving. Your financial giving is a covenant between you and God. While written estimates of giving facilitate planning, we fully trust God to work through our church family to fund critical areas of our ministries. Throughout the year, we encourage you to please contact Sonya Arnold, Financial Secretary, regarding your confidential financial giving to FMC Wetumpka. Again, **thank you** for your generous giving spirit. We rejoice to serve Jesus alongside each of you!

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



7 Ways Christians Can Grow in their Faith in the New Year

1. Spend more time with God

"After dismissing the crowds, he went up to the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening, he was there alone" (Matthew 14:23).

2. Connect to a church

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

3. Serve regularly

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10).

4. Read the Bible

"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

5. Share the Gospel

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

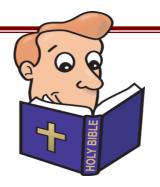
6. Focus on spiritual growth

"Therefore, let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God" (Hebrews 6:1).

7. Give generously

"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God" (1 Corinthians 9:11).

(To read the full article, search 7 Resolutions to Grow Your Faith in the New Year by Pamela Palmer, December 19, 2023)



See page 8 for a daily bible reading schedule for 2025.
We are excited to begin a new yearly Bible reading plan this month from Dr. David Jeremiah.

Tips for Reading the Bible Daily

- **1.** Start reading the Bible today -- there is no better time, and there's no reason to wait.
- **2.** Set aside a specific time each day. Set your schedule and then stick to it. Mornings are great, but feel free to use any time that works consistently for you.
- **3**. Read the Bible for the sake of learning, not simply to accomplish your next reading. Say a short prayer to God before you begin, asking the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and understanding, then be refreshed by the words you read!

READING THE BIBLE THROUGH: January

- 1 Genesis 1 4
- 2 Genesis 5 8 3 Genesis 9 – 12
- 4 Genesis 13 17
- 5 Genesis 18 20
- 6 Genesis 21 23
- 7 Genesis 24 25
- 8 Genesis 26 28
- 9 Genesis 29 31
- 10 Genesis 32 35
- 11 Genesis 36 38
- 12 Genesis 39 41
- 13 Genesis 42 43
- 14 Genesis 44 46
- 15 Genesis 47 50
- 16 Exodus 1 4
- 17 Exodus 5 7
- 18 Exodus 8 10
- 19 Exodus 11 13
- 20 Exodus 14 16
- 21 Exodus 17 20
- 22 Exodus 21 23
- 23 Exodus 24 27
- 24 Exodus 28 30
- 25 Exodus 31 34
- 26 Exodus 35 37
- 27 Exodus 38 40
- 28 Leviticus 1 4
- 29 Leviticus 5 7
- 30 Leviticus 8 10
- 31 Leviticus 11 13

Fresh Start meets at 6 p.m. each

MONDAY in the FLC. Children's activities

struggling, please let them know that the Fresh Start Recovery Group is here for them. For more information

are provided! If you know someone who is

contact Paul Henderson at 334-201-5428.

Support Group

We are excited to begin a new yearly Bible reading plan this month from Dr. David Jeremiah.

Be sure to check out tips for reading the Bible daily in this newsletter.

ERESH START

RECOVERY





Jimmy & Kristy Graham 01/29 John & Scarlotte Holmes

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.



01/01	Max	Goll
01/05	Bill	Kolendar
01/06	Evon	Blake
01/07	Janie	Flores
01/08	Jerry	Barnhart
01/09	Doretta	Strength
01/10	Trip	Weldon
01/10	Lynn	Warren
01/12	John	Mann
01/12	Donna	Strickland
01/21	Cathy	Gieseler
01/28	Sara	Kirby
01/28	Billy	Bonner
01/30	Tommy	Head





FIRST NEWS

306 W. Tuskeena Street Wetumpka, AL 36092 Phone: 334-567-7865

Email: secretary@firstwetumpka.com Website: www.wetumpkafirst.com

JANUARY 2025

IN THIS ISSUE:

- From our Pastor
- Our Children, Youth and Senior Adults
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- Reading the Bible Through Scriptures
- Fresh Start Support Group
- **Serving Our Community**
- Pictures, pictures, pictures!



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