

Calendar of Events

- 12/2 Kids Min Breakfast with Santa 9am—12 pm
- 12/3 Christmas Parade on Green Street 5 pm
- 12/3 Lanier Chamber Singers Concert 3 pm Sanctuary
- 12/5 Mexican Train Dominoes 1 pm Exercise Room
- 12/5 Grief Support Group 3 pm S-29
- 12/6 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 12/6 Adult Gala 11 am Reception Hall
- 12/6 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner
- 12/7 Caregiver Support Group 2 pm Connect Café
- 12/7 Centering Prayer 3 pm S-52
- 12/8 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 12/10 Kids Min Christmas Musical in Modern Worship
- 12/10 Student Ministries Grinchy Games 5 pm
- 12/13 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 12/13 Gadabouts 11 am Reception Hall
- 12/13 Family Christmas Movie Night 6 pm Great Room
- 12/13 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner
- 12/14 Caregiver Support Group 2 pm Connect Café
- 12/14 Centering Prayer 3 pm S-52
- 12/15 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 12/17 Festival Christmas Concerts 4 and 6:30 pm Sanctuary
- 12/19 Mexican Train Dominoes 1 pm Exercise Room
- 12/19 Grief Support Group 3 pm S-29
- 12/20 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 12/20 No Gadabouts
- 12/20 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner
- 12/21 Caregiver Support Group 2 pm Connect Café
- 12/21 Longest Night Service 6 pm Chapel
- 12/22 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 12/24 Christmas Eve—11 am, 3 pm, 5 pm, and 7 pm

Church office closed 12/25—12/29

- 12/31 New Year’s Eve - 1 worship service at 11 Sanctuary

Lanier Chamber Singers  
December 3 at 3 pm  
Sanctuary  
Tickets are \$15  
in advance at the church or  
lanierchambersingers.org  
and \$20 at the door.



Gainesville First

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2780 Thompson Bridge Road

Gainesville, GA 30506

gfumc.com 770.536.2341

Return Service Requested

Generations

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A Little Bit More....

“Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn’t before! What if Christmas, he thought, doesn’t come from a store. What if Christmas... perhaps... means a little bit more!”

Published in 1957, Theodore Geisel’s book *The Grinch* has become a holiday favorite along with *Charlie Brown’s Christmas* and *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*. As with all good stories, there is deeper meaning beyond the fun narrative and colorful images.

In Geisel’s telling, we never know exactly why the Grinch is so mean. We can only guess at the unhappiness and pain beneath his gruff exterior. What we experience is his healing as he learns that the good cheer of Christmas is not contained in the gifts or the decorations but comes from something “more.” In the book, the singing celebration of the Whos even in the face of their material loss is evidence of the “more” as is the Grinch’s acceptance into the community when he returns all that he has taken. It is a story of the redeeming power of love through secular, Christmas colored lenses.

For Christians, we know that there is even more to the “more.” It is this “more” that we will explore in the Advent season as we look at biblical texts that reveal God’s love for us through the story of the incarnation and God’s gift in Jesus. We hope you will join us in person or online for worship and other events during this season.



Grace and Peace,  
~Rev. Carolyn Clifton

Advent and Christmas Sermon Series:

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|--------------|---|
| December 3   | The Meaning of Christmas: Beyond the Presents<br>Luke 2:8-14; Matthew 1:21, 2:1-2   |
| December 10  | When Our Hearts Grow Cold<br>Matthew 24:12; Proverbs 4:23; Ephesians 4:17-19        |
| December 17  | The Joy of Giving (Christmas Sweater Sunday!)<br>TBD                                |
| December 24  | The Transforming Power of Love<br>Matthew 22:37-40; 1 John 4:7-12; 1 Cor. 13:4-8    |
| December 31* | Keeping Christmas in Our Hearts<br>Psalm 119:11; Matthew 6:19-21; Philippians 4:4-9 |

\*one service at 11 am in the Sanctuary and online on New Year’s Eve



11 am Family Worship - Sanctuary with candlelight\*†  
3 pm Blended Worship - Sanctuary with candlelight & communion  
5 pm Traditional Worship - Sanctuary with candlelight\*†  
5 pm Modern Worship - Great Room with candlelight\*  
7 pm Traditional Worship - Sanctuary with candlelight & communion  
\*Childcare will be provided for pre-k and younger at 11 am and 5 pm.  
†Worship will be livestreamed from the sanctuary at 11 am and 5 pm.

### ADULT CHRISTMAS GALA

Wednesday, December 6

11 am - 1 pm in the Reception Hall

\$10 ~ Reservations Required ~

Don't be left looking in on the fun! You are invited to come experience our Christmas Celebration in Whoville. Carol Cain, Artistic Director and emcee for the Azalea Storytelling Festival, will share stories of Christmas to warm our hearts, and Chefs Michael and Robin Collinson will provide food to delight our bellies. Menu: mixed green salad, chicken piccata with lemon caper sauce served over pasta, green beans, red velvet cake. Seating is limited. Please reserve your place by contacting Mildred Smith at 770-536-2341 or msmith@gfumc.com.

### The Longest Night Worship Service

Thursday, December 21

6 pm in the Chapel

Advent and Christmas can be overwhelming when we are faced with illness, grief or loneliness. Such challenges can make it difficult to share in holiday cheer. Yet part of the wonder of Christmas is that God chooses to be present with us in our suffering. Join us in the chapel for this time of quiet, reflective worship with scripture reading, candlelight and communion as we seek God's peace and light in the darkness.

# Gadabouts

Join old friends and make new ones on Wednesdays at 11 am when we gather around the table in the Reception Hall for an entertaining or informational program. A catered lunch following the program is just \$5. Newcomers and friends are always welcome!

### December 6

Come enjoy a Christmas celebration with other adults of the church! Carol Cain will share stories of the holiday before we feast and enjoy good cheer. *Reservations are required.* More details available in the advertisement to the left. Invite a friend!

### ADULT CHRISTMAS GALA

### December 13

Each year the Gadabouts assemble candles for the Christmas Eve candlelight services. When our work is done, fellow Gadabout and pianist Jean Kuehn will share a brief history of the piano and lead us in some Christmas carol games and singing. Menu: Chili, garden salad, baked potatoes with toppings and cookies.

### Christmas Service Project and Music

*Gadabouts will resume Wednesday, January 10, 2023*

### Advent Bible Study

Wednesdays, Nov 29—Dec 20

6 pm\* in the Reception Hall

In this 4 week study, Rev. Sandy Skinner will guide discussion based on Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's work exploring the biblical texts of the Christmas story that invite conversations connecting the Old and New Testament as well as the role of women in 1st century Jewish culture. All are welcome to join this short study as we prepare our hearts for Christmas. \*Note: There is no midweek supper. Childcare is available November 29 and December 6.

### Family Christmas Movie Night

Wednesday, December 13

6—7:30 pm

Great Room

"No matter how different a Who may appear, he will always be welcomed with holiday cheer." All are invited to come see *The Grinch* and enjoy tasty treats like hot chocolate, popcorn, and baked goods.

### Christmas Festival Concerts

Sunday, December 17

4 and 6:30 pm

Sanctuary

The Chancel Choir and Festival Orchestra will present their annual offering of uplifting sacred and secular holiday music the entire family will enjoy. Admission to the concerts is free. Invite a friend to join you for this beloved Christmas event.

### Financial Report

Annual Budget for 2023	\$ 3,140,000
YTD Given as of 11/19/2023	\$ 2,358,985
November Giving Goal	\$ 212,608
November Amount Given as of 11/19	\$ 224,066

**Generosity Campaign Update:** As of November 15, we have received 179 pledge cards for a total of \$1,198,816 towards our estimated proposed budget of \$2.9 million. If you would like to make a pledge, please turn in your estimated giving card, call the church office or go online to [gfumc.com/give](http://gfumc.com/give). Our budget is always greater than the amount pledged, but knowing your intentions helps the church to plan how we will respond to God's call in 2024.

*We are grateful for your faithful support of the mission and ministry of the church. If you have financial questions, please contact Mark Klein or Jessica McKee in the church office.*

### Membership Care

**In Memoriam:**

Dick Palmer	Dottie Peppel	Betty Thrash
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**In Sympathy:**

Beckie Smith on the death of her brother  
Laura Youngblood on the death of her mother

**Recent Hospitalizations:**

Janie Barker	Ruth Bruner	Jerry Butler
Chris Dardaman	Betty Edwards	Renee Propes
Dorrie Pyne	Kelly Randall	Sandra Scarborough
Lainey Smithson		

### After Hours and Holiday Emergency Contact:

If you need a pastor, call the church at 770-536-2341. Press 5 and leave your name and number. A pastor will return your call shortly.