

Calendar of Events
Church office closed 12/25—12/29

- 1/1 Office closed
- 1/2 Mexican Train Dominoes 1pm Exercise Room
- 1/2 Grief Support Group 3 pm S-29
- 1/3 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/3 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner
- 1/4 Prayer Quilt Ministry at 10am in S-51
- 1/4 Prayer Shawl Ministry at 1:30 pm in Bride’s Room
- 1/4 Caregiver Support Group 2 pm Connect Café
- 1/5 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/9 Beyond Words Book Club—Gainesville Library 4 pm
- 1/10 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/10 Gadabouts 11 am Reception Hall
- 1/10 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner
- 1/11 Caregiver Support Group 2 pm Connect Café
- 1/12 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/15 Office closed
- 1/16 Mexican Train Dominoes 1pm Exercise Room
- 1/16 Grief Support Group 3 pm S-29
- 1/17 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/17 Gadabouts 11 am Reception Hall
- 1/17 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner
- 1/18 Caregiver Support Group 2 pm Connect Café
- 1/19 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/24 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/24 Gadabouts 11 am Reception Hall
- 1/24 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner
- 1/25 Caregiver Support Group 2 pm Connect Café
- 1/26 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/30 Mexican Train Dominoes 1pm Exercise Room
- 1/30 Grief Support Group 3 pm S-29
- 1/31 Active Adult Exercise 10 am Exercise Room
- 1/31 Gadabouts 11 am Reception Hall
- 1/31 Bridge 3 pm Exercise Room with partner

Active Adult Exercise

Start the New Year with a commitment to your physical health! Cardiovascular conditioning, strength training, flexibility, and balance are all part of active adult exercise. Join Angie and Stephanie on Wednesdays, Fridays or both at 10 am in the exercise room! There is a small instructor fee for the classes.

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Return Service Requested

Generations
GFUMC's Active Adult Newsletter • January 2024 - Issue 1

To Begin Again

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Author, Nobel laureate, and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel wrote in *Messengers of God* “When God created man, God gave him a secret—and that secret was not how to begin, but how to begin again.” To begin again is a powerful way to frame our reading of Genesis and the whole biblical tradition as we see that these are not so much stories of beginnings, but of new beginnings as individuals, families, even whole communities and nations seek a path forward often after setbacks or difficulties. Adam and Eve begin again outside the Garden of Eden. Noah plants a vineyard a week after the flood. Abraham and Sarah begin a new family life with Isaac after decades of infertility. Joseph creates a new life in Egypt after his brothers sell him into slavery and is able to save his family from famine. Moses responds to God’s call and returns to Egypt to lead the Israelites to new life in the promised land.

In the New Testament, Mary and Joseph begin a life they never anticipated after angels surprise them with news of great joy. The disciples begin again when they are called to follow Jesus and again after the risen Christ appears to them in the Upper Room. Saul begins again after his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus.

We, too, find ourselves in situations where we have the opportunity, or the challenge, to begin again. Often times to begin again we must leave behind old hurts, former expectations, messages of shame or feelings of guilt. We must receive the forgiveness offered to us in Christ and extend that forgiveness to others. In January, our sermon series will encourage us to reflect on how we might start fresh in 2024 and no matter where we are in life begin again. You are invited to join this journey of beginning again.

Grace and peace,
~Rev. Carolyn Clifton



Sermon Series: A Clean Slate

January 7	... Comes Through Forgiveness	Jn 5:1-10
January 14	... Lets Us Forgive one Another	Mt 6:14-15; 18:21-22
January 21	... Is Life Beyond Guilt and Shame	Ps 103:12; Rom 8:1
January 28	Trusting God When the Future is Unclear	Gn 15:1-6



2024 Winter Study Opportunities

More information at gfumc.com/disciple or contact Rev. Sandy Skinner or Joanna Cauller in the church office.

Monday Scripture Study Mondays at 12 pm in the Lakeside Conference room and via Zoom. Led by the associate pastors this group delves into the scripture text for the upcoming Sunday sermon.

Men’s Bible Study and Biscuits! Tuesdays at 7 am in the Reception Hall and via Zoom. Rev. Jamey Prickett guides discussion on scripture and its relevance in today’s world plus fellowship around the table.

Luke: Gut Level Compassion Tuesdays at 10 am in S-01. Facilitated by Sheri Duke, this study will use materials by Lisa Harper to look at the humanity of Jesus as shared in the Gospel of Luke.

Ruth: Loss, Love & Legacy Tuesdays at 10 am in S-06 and via Zoom. Ellen Wren will guide this study by Kelly Minter of Ruth’s journey of unbearable loss, redeeming love, and divine legacy.

Beyond Words Book Club 2nd Tuesdays at 4 pm at the Main Library in Gainesville. Ric Jacobsen leads conversation on a book each month. January: The Ride of Her Life by Elizabeth Letts.

Faith Fundamentals: The Christian Calendar Wednesdays at 6 pm in S-49 and via Zoom. Rev. Sandy Skinner will offer an in depth look at the seasons of the church and the symbols used in our worship spaces.

From the Inside Out Wednesdays at 6 pm in S-01. Kay Walker will lead this study on spiritual formation for those seeking to be active participants in their relationship with God.

Ladies Morning Group Thursdays at 8:30 am in the Lakeside Conference Room. Led by Carol Terrell, this women’s group will study the Book of Luke as they explore scripture and share life together.

Faith Café Thursdays at 10 am at Panera Bread Company. Led by Nancy Evans and Pam Katz, this women’s group will study The God of the Way by Kathie Lee Gifford and Rabbi Jason Sobel that offers wisdom from the Jewish tradition to our reading of scripture.

Beginning February 21:

Lenten Prayer Study: “Prayer, Does It Make Any Difference?” Wednesdays at 6 pm in S-49. Led by Rev. Sandy Skinner this group will discuss materials by Philip Yancy on prayer.



Resumes January 10 at 5 pm!
Register online or call the office.
Menu is the same as Gadabouts.



Gadabouts meets most Wednesdays at 11 am in the Reception Hall for an entertaining or informational program. A hot, catered lunch following the program is \$5. Newcomers and guests are always welcome!

January 10

Introducing the Labyrinth

Rev. Carolyn Clifton will offer an introduction to the labyrinth including its history and its use as a form of walking meditation. *The labyrinth will not be available for walking at this event.*
Menu: Chicken divan served over wild rice, broccoli, lemon cake.



January 17

Monasteries of Meteora

GFUMC member and retired pilot Ron Stowe will take us on a pictorial trip to the most unique monastery complex in the world and share with us the evolution of Christianity and the development of the monastic lifestyle.
Menu: Green salad, vegetable beef soup, cornbread, bread pudding.



January 24

US Poet Laureates

GFUMC member and English teacher Nancy Story returns to share more of her love of poetry. She will discuss the role of a US Poet Laureate and share some of their work with us.
Menu: Pork BBQ sandwich, baked beans, tater tots, brownies.



January 31



Straight Line. Four corners. Window Pane. Which Bingo game is your favorite? Join us for some fun rounds with friendly competition and simple prizes. Menu: Caesar salad, lasagna with meat sauce, garlic bread, lemon meringue pie.

The Labyrinth – Walking a Sacred Path Class
Coming during Lent!



The season of Lent invites us to focus on a spiritual discipline as we turn our hearts towards God and prepare to celebrate Easter. This class will offer the opportunity to learn the history of the labyrinth and the contemplative practice of walking meditation. Different from a maze, a labyrinth is a single path that leads to a center. It has turns, but there are no dead ends or the danger of getting lost. Each class will include discussion and the opportunity to walk a 7-circuit indoor labyrinth. It will meet for 5 weeks from February 18-March 21. Class size is limited and registration is required. You can choose from one of these options: Sunday 5:30 – 6:30pm; Monday 10am – 11am; Wednesday 6 -7pm; Thursday 3 – 4 pm in the Adult Lobby. Contact Rev. Carolyn Clifton for more information.

Care and Support Offerings

If you are facing challenges in 2024, you do not have to meet them alone. GFUMC offers a variety of caring ministries to support you. **Stephen Ministers** are ready to listen, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support in a confidential, one on one relationship. For more information contact Stephen Leader Barb Mistarz at 770-540-1541.

Grief Support Group meets 1, 3, and 5th Tuesdays at 3 pm in S-29 under the guidance of Dr. Doug and BJ Jensen to share the journey of grief with others who have lost a loved one.

Caregivers Support Group meets every Thursday at 2 pm in the Connect Café with 2 facilitators from Brenau for anyone caring for an aging parent or spouse to share mutual concerns and resources. Contact Rev. Carolyn Clifton for more information.

Financial Report

Annual Budget for 2023	\$ 3,140,000
YTD Given as of 11/30	\$ 2,480,429
December Giving Goal	\$ 393,056
December Amount Given as of 12/17	\$ 213,595

Generosity Campaign Update: As of December 14, we have received a total of \$1,667,966 towards our 2024 budget of \$2.9 million. This amount is an increase over our 2023 pledged amount. Thank you for sharing your intentions so that the church can plan how we will respond to God’s call in 2024. *If you have financial questions, please contact Mark Klein or Jessica McKee in the church office.*

Membership Care

In Memoriam:		
Beverly Boland	Jim Butts	Nan Crevistan
Dee Head	Jackie Jones	Hetty Krucke

In Sympathy:
Jason Boland on the death of his grandmother
Wynelle Butts on the death of her husband
Mark Crevistan on the death of his wife
Lola Jones on the death of her mother
Hans Krucke on the death of his wife
Mike Smith on the death of his brother

Recent Hospitalizations:		
Emory Brackman	Betty Edwards	Jim Huey
Vince Kiesel	Luann Washington	