

MARCH 2020

CONNECTIONS

JOURNEYING THROUGH

LENT

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE PSALMS

THE PSALMS ARE FULL OF RICH IMAGERY, METAPHOR, AND OTHER POETIC DEVICES – IN PRAYERS TO GOD AND IN PRAISE OF GOD, BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNAL – WHICH EXPRESS THE HUMAN EXPERIENCES AND UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE PSALMISTS WHO CREATED THEM. THE OVERALL THEME IS ONE OF GOD’S GREATNESS AS CREATOR AND RULER OF THE EARTH AND ALL THAT IS IN IT, AND GOD’S GREAT MERCY IN THE FACE OF HUMAN BROKENNESS AND SIN. DURING THE SEASON OF LENT, WE WILL EXAMINE SEVERAL DIFFERENT TYPES OF PSALMS AND WILL HOLD THE WORDS OF THE PSALMISTS ON OUR LIPS AS WE WORSHIP TOGETHER.

– 3.1.20 –

PENITENTIAL PSALMS

– 3.8.20 –

PSALMS OF THANKSGIVING & PRAISE*

– 3.15.20 –

PSALMS OF THANKSGIVING & PRAISE

– 3.22.20 –

SONGS OF ASCENTS

– 3.29.20 –

PSALMS OF LAMENT

* THE SANCTUARY WILL OFFER BENJAMIN BRITTEN’S TWO-PERSON CANTICLE ABRAHAM AND ISAAC.

HOLY WEEK

AT FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM

PALM SUNDAY

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 8:30AM BEGINNINGS, 11:00AM LOFT & SANCTUARY

MAUNDY THURSDAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 6:30PM IN THE SANCTUARY

GOOD FRIDAY

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 12:00PM IN THE SANCTUARY

EASTER SUNDAY

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 8:30AM BEGINNINGS, 11:00AM LOFT & SANCTUARY

Organ Rededication Concert

IN HONOR OF MARY ANN BATES

- Featuring Dr. Fred Teardo -

SUNDAY, MARCH 8, AT 3:00PM IN THE SANCTUARY
RECEPTION IN THE LARGE DINING ROOM TO FOLLOW

Thanks to many generous donors in 2019, we were able to have our 2000 Casavant organ restored to its pristine playing condition. The bulk of the work, which was completed by Morris Organ Curators of Atlanta from June through November, did not greatly affect the way the organ sounds but was essential for it to continue to play for years to come. The most audible work included the return of the Echo Division (the room of pipes in the back of the church) and the zimbelstern.

In celebration of this restoration, we are hosting a rededication concert given in honor of Mary Ann Bates, who has served in many positions in the North Alabama Conference, the Southeast Jurisdiction, and at Lake Junaluska. Mary Ann has two degrees in music and has served as a high school, civic, and church choral director, singer, teacher, organist, and pianist in Hartselle, Decatur, and Tuscaloosa, as well as supporting her husband, Ralph, in his life of ministry and service.

Dr. Fred Teardo, Director of Music and Organist at the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham and Instructor of Organ at Samford University, is our guest organist for the concert. Dr. Teardo received the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Yale School of Music, where he was Chapel Organist, and his Bachelor of Music degree with Highest Honors from the Eastman School of Music. Dr. Teardo has performed extensively across the United States and has appeared on Pipedreams. Please join us as we celebrate the gift of beautiful music and the restoration of our Casavant organ.

BRITTEN'S ABRAHAM & ISAAC

IN THE SANCTUARY

On Sunday, March 8 in the Sanctuary service, Patrick Evans and Cathy Shelton, with guest artist Augustine Mercante, will present a staged production of Benjamin Britten's two-person canticle Abraham and Isaac. The text comes from one of the medieval Chester Mystery Plays. In medieval England, workers' guilds would publicly perform plays based on biblical stories in order to teach the masses the important stories of faith - the Creation, Noah's Flood, the Last Judgement, and others. Benjamin Britten, the greatest English composer of opera of the 20th Century, composed this Abraham and Isaac canticle in 1952 for the English opera group. In this service, we will examine the role of sacrifice and obedience in light of a terrifying biblical story.



Easter EGG HUNT

You are invited to join us, **Sunday, April 5 from 3:00pm until 5:00pm** at **Birmingham Southern College** for our annual Easter Egg Hunt! Bring your Easter baskets, lawn chairs, and a blanket, and First Church will provide the eggs, inflatables, treats, and more! You won't want to miss this fun-filled event for children of all ages! For more information, contact Linda Thorne at Linda@firstchurchbhm.com.

LEARNING SESSIONS *BEFORE GENERAL CONFERENCE*

In an effort to keep everyone as informed as we can ahead of General Conference May 5-15, we will offer post worship learning sessions once a month. These will be opportunities to learn about proposed plans in broad strokes, to be updated on specific ways to participate in the #ResistHarm movement, and to ask questions. Above all else, these sessions will also offer us the opportunity to pray together for our global United Methodist Church. The monthly meetings will cover similar information each time so that you can pick the meeting that best suits your schedule. Of course, you are welcome to come to multiple meetings if you prefer. See below for the schedule of meetings:

MARCH 22 - FOLLOWING WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

APRIL 26 - FOLLOWING WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

WHAT'S AHEAD FOR THE FUTURE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH?

UNITED METHODISTS ARE INVITED TO COME TOGETHER TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROTOCOL PLAN AND POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE UMC. TOM BERLIN, LEAD PASTOR OF FLORIS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN HERNDON, VIRGINIA, WHO SERVED ON THE COMMISSION ON A WAY FORWARD AS WELL AS SERVING AS A MEMBER OF THE TEAM THAT DRAFTED THE PROTOCOL OF RECONCILIATION AND GRACE THROUGH SEPARATION, WILL BE SPEAKING AT TRINITY UMC IN HOMEWOOD ON MARCH 17 AT 6:30PM. HE WILL BE THERE TO HELP BRING GREATER UNDERSTANDING TO THE CURRENT CONTEXT OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROTOCOL PLAN, AND OFFER US HOPE AS WE MOVE FORWARD WITH VISION AND ENERGY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT REV. STEPHANIE YORK ARNOLD AT STEPHANIE@FIRSTCHURCHBHM.COM.

MARCH 17, 6:30PM AT TRINITY HOMEWOOD

THE **RESIST HARM** MOVEMENT

MARCH = **LAMENT**



“The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, ‘Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.’ And he went out and wept bitterly.”

LUKE 22:61-62 (NRSV)



Many United Methodists recognize the ways that our *Book of Discipline* currently demands we betray the inclusive welcome modeled by Jesus Christ by putting limitations upon the ministry and love of LGBTQ persons. During this Lenten season you are invited to spend time in prayer as we lament together this harm and pray for healing and wholeness. One further way you are invited to resist the harm done by the Traditional Plan is to use the “ **I Lament** ” filter on your social media profile picture. This filter will help to raise awareness and visibility as we seek to create an inclusive United Methodist Church.

APRIL 24 - 26

DISCOVERY WEEKEND 2020



CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP 2020

The time is here to mark your calendars, register campers, and sign-up to volunteer for our annual Arts Camp!

WHAT IS CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP?

Arts Camp is an action-packed week of music, movement, and visual arts enhanced with interactive Bible stories to help campers learn about the diverse nature of God's kingdom. Lunch will be served daily.

WHEN IS CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP?

June 15 -19| Monday – Thursday 8:45am – 1:00pm | Friday 8:45am – 7:00 pm

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP?

Children who have completed Kindergarten - 4th grade.

WHERE IS CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP?

First United Methodist Church, 518 19th St N, Birmingham, AL, 35203

HOW MUCH DOES CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP COST?

\$40.00 per Camper | Scholarships available

REGISTER ONLINE

All Campers – space is limited Register under the coming up tab on the First Church Website

NEW TO CAMP

All youth and adults volunteers are asked to register online and let us know where you prefer to serve! You will also have the opportunity to purchase a camp t-shirt. Register under the coming up tab on our website.

If you would like to make a monetary donation please visit our online giving page and select the "City Kids Arts Camp Donation" fund or mark "Arts Camp donation" in the memo line of your check.

It takes over 100 volunteers to facilitate this week-long camp and we need your help. Please consider donating your time to help make Arts Camp 2020 a great success! For more information, contact Linda Thorne at Linda@firstchurchbhm.com.

**MAKE
YOUR
MARK**

CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP 2020

NEW MEMBER PRAYERS FOR FIRST CHURCH

AS WE SEEK TO BE

AN OPEN PLACE FOR ALL

MY PRAYER FOR FIRST CHURCH IS:

To be a place where individuals can participate in a community that is loving, authentic, and welcoming. I pray that members can be vulnerable with one another as we share the joys and pains of life.

- Meagan Williams

I pray that First Church continues to be a bright light shining for all of the oppressed and unwelcomed souls in Birmingham.

- Angela and Nathan Waites

To continue to be a pillar of strength and safety for all people in our community. We commit ourselves to this ongoing work and accept the challenge of stepping outside our comfort zones as we seek to advocate and love the oppressed in need of the unconditional love of Christ.

- Jeremiah and Mia Toole



FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM'S

ON CALL SCHEDULE

In an effort to make sure we are providing everyone in our congregation with the pastoral care needed, particularly in crisis situations, we want you to be aware of our on-call schedule going forward. If you have a pastoral care need Monday - Thursday, you can call the church office or email any of our pastors and we will respond promptly. However, if you have a pastoral care need Friday - Sunday, below is the on-call schedule for the month. You can reach the person by email, cell phone, or by clicking the "pastor on-call" option on the church phone.

MARCH 6 - 8 | RG WILSON-LYONS

MARCH 13 - 15 | EMILY NELMS CHASTAIN

MARCH 20 - 22 | STEPHANIE ARNOLD

MARCH 27 - 29 | JONATHAN GOSS



MARCH CALENDAR

March 7

9:00am - Create & Celebrate
Women's Retreat

March 18

11:30am - Garden Club

March 8

12:00pm - Children's Council
3:00pm - Organ Recital & Reception

March 22

12:00pm - General Conference
Learning Sessions

March 9

6:00pm - Executive Council

March 24

6:00pm - Trustees

WEEKLY CALENDAR

TUESDAYS:

6:30pm - Young Adult Small Group

WEDNESDAYS:

1:00pm - Prayer Shawl Knitters

5:30pm - Youth Bible Study

6:30pm - Chancel Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAYS:

~ Church Office Closed ~

6:45am - Men's Prayer Breakfast

SUNDAYS:

8:30am - Communion Service

9:45am - Sunday School

11:00am - The Loft & Sanctuary Services

5:15pm - Youth Bible Study

FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM STAFF

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Senior Pastor: Stephanie York Arnold | Stephanie@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Pastor: R.G. Wilson-Lyons | RG@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Minister of Invitation: Katie Gilbert | Katie@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Minister of Youth & Young Adults: Jonathan Goss | Jonathan@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Minister of Children & Church Events: Linda Underwood Thorne | Linda@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Minster to the Grieving: Herb Williamson | Herb@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Deacon in Residence: Emily Nelms Chastain | Emily@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Organist: Cathy Shelton | Cathy@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Design: Blake Hobbs | Blake@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Choir Director: Patrick Evans | Patrick@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Loft Worship Leader: Katherine Mullen | Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Office Administrator: Peg Thompson | Peg@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Business Administrator: Steve Pitts | Steve@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Maintenance Supervisor: Ron Dates | Ron@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Nursery Director: Ginger Gambill | Ginger@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Wedding Director: Betsy Pate | Betsy@firstchurchbhm.com |
| Executive Director of Early Learning Center: Robin Pate | ELC@firstchurchbhm.com |



an OPEN place for ALL to WORSHIP, GROW, and SERVE

518 North 19th Street • Birmingham AL 35203
205-254-3186 • www.firstchurchbhm.com