

JULY 2021

# CONNECTIONS



**WE LOVE OUR  
CHILDREN**

# MY OOPS... GOD'S ART

CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP 2021

We can't wait for Arts Camp 2021 "My Oops...God's Art" that will take place Monday, July 19 through Friday, July 23 from 9:00am – 1:00pm each day. This will be an action-packed week filled with art, dancing, drumming, interactive Bible stories, games and FUN! It will be a time to share God's love and build community with each other as well as embrace God's grace in our lives. Our children will learn that when you think you've made an "oops" it can be turned into something beautiful! If you are interested in volunteering to help with Arts Camp, please fill out our online form [HERE](#). We can't wait to share all that we learned!

FIRST CHURCH CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

# SUMMER HANGOUTS

This summer we will be hosting hangouts for the many different age groups of our children. These hangouts will offer the opportunity for parents with children in the same age range to connect in a smaller group. Kids will enjoy playing outside while parents have a chance to socialize! Save the date below that fits the age range(s) for your family and be on the lookout for an invitation from the host. All parents will receive an Evite for a summer hangout with your church family.

## SUMMER BACKYARD HANGOUTS

**SUNDAY, JULY 11, 3:00PM**

| Elementary |

*Nicole LeMaitre (Homewood)*

**SUNDAY, JULY 18, 3:30PM**

| Older 4's – 6 years |

*Katie Reed (Bluff Park)*



THE BOOK OF DANIEL

# COURAGEOUS LIVING

The book of Daniel is best known for its stories around fiery furnaces and lions' dens. While we love to retell these stories, careful consideration of Daniel's context, genre, visions, and stories reveals a book that is teaching an exiled Jewish community how to faithfully live under foreign empires. Even in exile, God's faithfulness wins out. As one of the most apocalyptic books in the Old Testament, Daniel is rich with imagery and numerology that has led to many fanciful and erroneous interpretations. Join us in this series as we explore both the well-known parts of Daniel as well as some of

the stories you might not have heard before. In addition, we will consider the extended writings of the book that appear only in Greek and Latin versions of the text by taking a look at The Prayer of Azariah, Susanna and the Elders, and Bel and the Dragon. The book of Daniel offers hope even in the midst of difficult times and is still speaking to us today.

## 7.11 Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:19-30)

FROM THE APOCRYPHA, THE PRAYER OF AZARIAH AND THE SONG OF THE THREE JEWS VERSES 42-51

## 7.18 Writing on the Wall (Daniel 5:5-12)

FROM THE APOCRYPHA, SUSANNA VERSES 7-46

## 7.25 Lion's Den (Daniel 6:10-23)

FROM THE APOCRYPHA, BEL AND THE DRAGON VERSES 1-22; 31-42

## 8.1 Visions (Daniel 7:9-14, Daniel 9:1-27)

# COVID 19 PROTOCOL UPDATES

After consultation with our staff, musicians, lay leadership, and congregants, we recognize that the vast majority of the First Church community is fully vaccinated. Likewise, in our Birmingham community there has now been time for persons 12 years and older who wish to be fully vaccinated to do so. Therefore, we are happy to announce beginning Sunday, July 11, we will follow recommendations from the CDC that state persons who have been fully vaccinated and are beyond two weeks from their last vaccination may remove their masks while indoors. Those who have not been fully vaccinated are asked to remain masked for your safety. In addition, we know there are persons who are not able to be vaccinated at this time, such as children under 12 and persons who have had medical professionals advise against vaccination, as well as people who live with vulnerable persons who prefer to remain masked. We ask that if you fall into one of these categories you please continue to wear your mask for your health and the health of those you love. We will continue to provide masks if someone needs one. There will also no longer be reservations needed for worship nor nursery care. Our nursery will continue to offer care from fully vaccinated workers. Per recommendation from the CDC all nursery workers will continue to wear masks while offering care and all children over the age of 6 are asked to wear a mask for their health.

## JULY 4 WORSHIP

This year we will be offering a combined 4th of July worship experience that will be virtual. We recognize that many will be traveling this holiday after more than a year of vacations being postponed. Therefore, we are choosing to offer our community a virtual experience that can be accessed no matter where you located or what time is most convenient for you. The service will be streamed at 9:00am on Sunday, July 4 on Facebook and YouTube.

***There will be no in-person worship this Sunday.***

# EXCITING STAFF UPDATES

We are blessed at First Church to have a staff team that is deeply committed to the mission of our church, who loves working hard together, and truly enjoys being with one another! Because our church is growing, it is exciting to see our staff team grow and expand to meet our congregation's and community's needs! Your Staff Parish Relations Committee is thrilled to introduce and welcome our new staff!

## KATHERINE MULLEN | Minister of Community Engagement



She has been our part-time Loft Worship Leader and is now transitioning to our full-time Minister of Community Engagement. For more than 2 years Katherine has diligently worked to support First Church in her leadership of our Loft Band, offered church-wide music for retreats and combined worship services, and has run our Instagram platform. As she moves into a full-time role, she will continue as our Loft Band worship leader but will also add to her job description leading the FUN Team in planning church-wide events, helping to plan our annual church-wide retreat, running all social media accounts, and planning/nurturing our small group ministries throughout the year. Katherine brings a deep commitment to our mission, trust, creativity, and evidence of a strong work ethic with her into this new position. Her email is [Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com).

## CRISTIN DEDMON | Children's Minister



Cristin Dedmon will join the First Church staff on Sunday, August 1 as our new Children's Minister! Cristin is a lifelong United Methodist and has previously worked for the United Methodist Children's Home (Embrace Alabama Kids) as well as Trinity UMC in Homewood as a Children's Minister. Cristin's passion for helping children of ALL ages (that means ALL of us) know we are beloved by God and by our community was evident from the moment we met her. She is energetic, enthusiastic, fun, committed to our mission statement/priorities, and an excellent communicator. Cristin is married to Wil Dedmon and they have three beautiful children named Cate (6), Sam (3) and Ben (1). We believe she is a terrific addition to our First Church Staff! Be looking for updates on how we will welcome her and her family to our church family. Beginning on August 1 her email will be [Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com).

**IT IS TRULY AN EXCITING TIME TO BE A PART OF THE FIRST CHURCH FAMILY! WE BELIEVE THESE STAFF ADDITIONS WILL HELP US GROW TO EXPAND OUR MINISTRY TO ENVELOP MORE OF OUR MISSION TO BE AN OPEN PLACE FOR ALL!**

# STUDENT MINISTRY

## AT FIRST CHURCH

### HELP NEEDED

During Summer Serve Week (July 5-9) we are looking for adult volunteers to help us ensure we have an amazing week. Summer Serve is a week where our students will partner with local organizations learning how we can serve God with our head, heart, and hands.

We would love to invite you to serve as much as your schedule allows Monday - Friday.

- Transportation - help transport students from First Church to work site for the day
- Snacks - provide snacks for service team to enjoy throughout the day
- Lunch - provide lunch for service team once during the week

If you are interested in serving, please email [Tiffany@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Tiffany@firstchurchbhm.com) with what days you would like to serve and/or if you have any questions.

### SUMMER TRIPS

#### **SUMMER SERVE WEEK | JULY 5-9 8:00AM - 3:00PM**

Summer Serve is open to all upcoming 6th-graduating Seniors. We will spend the week serving our local community. Our focus for the week will be on serving and worshipping with our whole selves: serving and loving God with our head, heart and hands.

#### **BEACH WEEKEND | JULY 15-17**

We all need a break from our busy schedules, so we are heading to the beach for a weekend of fellowship, worship, and relaxing.

### STAY IN TOUCH

Keep up to date with all that we have going on and never miss out on all the fun things happening.

INSTAGRAM - [@FIRSTCHURCHBHM.YOUTH](https://www.instagram.com/firstchurchbhm.youth)  
FACEBOOK - [FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM - YOUTH GROUP](https://www.facebook.com/firstchurchbirmingham-youth-group)

# SAVE THE DATE

## SUNDAY, AUGUST 15

We are excited about our **FALL KICK-OFF** on **SUNDAY, AUGUST 15**. On this Sunday we will celebrate life fully resuming at First Church with all of our **Adult, Youth, and Children's** in-person Sunday School classes beginning at 9:45 am. During our Sunday School hour, we will have a special and fun event to celebrate our children and youth who are transitioning to a new class. We will also celebrate the start of the new school year during worship by blessing teachers, students, and their backpacks. We look forward to celebrating the ability



## GOD IS LOVE SHIRTS

We are currently selling another round of our God is Love t-shirts. This year we are offering a redesign which features a softer cotton blend shirt and a more neutral color. Shirts are \$25.00 each and are available in adult small through 4XL. All proceeds from the sale of shirts will go towards covering the costs associated with our participation in Pride this year and in years to come. Sizing availability will be first come first serve so don't hesitate to buy your shirts today. You can make your purchase [HERE](#) or by contacting Katie Gilbert at [Katie@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Katie@firstchurchbhm.com). You will receive an email with more details about t-shirt pick up after placing your order.

# NEW MEMBER PRAYERS FOR FIRST CHURCH

AS WE SEEK TO  
**AN OPEN PLACE FOR**  
MY PRAYER FOR FIRST CHURCH

Our prayer for First Church is that we will continue to grow through authenticity and showing God's love to us and others through justice and mercy. We pray that the Church universal will embrace these qualities and realize the power of strength and growth and love through action.

- David and Pam Ansardi

We are visible in the community as inclusive and welcoming to all, actively fighting for equality and justice.

- Charlie Despain Ray

Father God Creator,  
My prayer for First Church is that we continue on this beautiful journey of love and acceptance for all. That we find comfort in one another and continue to spread your love through being ourselves.

- Skye McCammon



# JULY CALENDAR

**JULY 4**  
~ 9:00am - Virtual Worship Only ~

**JULY 5**  
~ Office Closed ~  
8:00am - Youth Serve Week

**JULY 6**  
8:00am - Youth Serve Week

**JULY 7**  
8:00am - Youth Serve Week

**JULY 8**  
8:00am - Youth Serve Week

**JULY 9**  
8:00am - Youth Serve Week

**JULY 15**  
~ Youth Beach Weekend ~

**JULY 16**  
~ Youth Beach Weekend ~

**JULY 17**  
~ Youth Beach Weekend ~

**JULY 19**  
9:00am - Arts Camp

**JULY 20**  
9:00am - Arts Camp

**JULY 21**  
9:00am - Arts Camp

**JULY 22**  
9:00am - Arts Camp

**JULY 23**  
9:00am - Arts Camp

# WEEKLY CALENDAR

## SUNDAY

- 9:00am - Virtual Live Stream Service
- 10:00am - Elementary Sunday School (Zoom)
- 11:00am - Loft & Sanctuary In Person Worship
- 4:00pm - Youth Group

## TUESDAY

7:00pm - Converge Young Adults

## WEDNESDAY

6:30pm - Chancel Choir

# FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM STAFF

YOU MAY REACH OUR STAFF AT 205-254-3186 OR BY EMAIL

Senior Pastor: Stephanie York Arnold .....	Stephanie@firstchurchbhm.com
Pastor: Jonathan Goss .....	Jonathan@firstchurchbhm.com
Executive Pastor: Katie Gilbert .....	Katie@firstchurchbhm.com
Minister of Youth & Social Justice Engagement: Tiffany Dowdy .....	Tiffany@firstchurchbhm.com
Minister of Community Engagement: Katherine Mullen .....	Richard@firstchurchbhm.com
Organist: Richard Byrd .....	Blake@firstchurchbhm.com
Design: Blake Hobbs .....	Patrick@firstchurchbhm.com
Choir Director: Patrick Evans .....	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: Cassandra Copeland .....	ELC@firstchurchbhm.com



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

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