

OCTOBER 2021

CONNECTIONS



CELEBRATING FALL
TOGETHER

FALL FESTIVE-ALL

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10 FROM 4:00PM-6:00PM

WE CAN'T WAIT TO CELEBRATE FALL WITH LOTS OF FUN AT OUR FALL FESTIVE-ALL. WE WILL GATHER IN THE FIRST CHURCH PARKING LOT ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10 FROM 4:00PM -6:00PM TO ENJOY AN EVENING PLAYING GAMES, EATING YUMMY FOOD, TAKING PICTURES AT OUR PHOTO BOOTH, COOKING SMORES, AND VISITING WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY. YOU CAN WIN PRIZES PLAYING BINGO AND PARTICIPATING IN CIRCLE ONE'S CAKE WALK. IN ADDITION, WE WILL HOST A DUNKING BOOTH AND PIE IN THE FACE FUNDRAISER FOR OUR COMMUNITY PARTNER, **ONE PLACE**, THAT PROVIDES SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT. YOU CAN PURCHASE \$5 TICKETS WITH CASH OR CARD AT THE EVENT TO DUNK A PASTOR OR PIE A STAFF MEMBER IN THE FACE! (OF COURSE DONATIONS ARE WELCOME.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO HOST A BOOTH OR COMPETE IN THE CHILI COOKOFF COMPETITION. GET WITH YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS, DINNER GROUP, OR SMALL GROUP AND DREAM UP AN IDEA. YOUR BOOTH CAN FEATURE GAMES OR ACTIVITIES, CRAFTS, OR HAVE SOMETHING FOR PEOPLE TO TAKE AWAY WITH THEM!

SIGN UP FOR ONE OR BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING [HERE](#)

CHILI COOK-OFF COMPETITION

BRING YOUR BEST RECIPE AND RECEIVE ONE OF OUR COVETED AWARDS!

BOOTH SIGN-UP

GET CREATIVE AND JOIN IN ON THE FUN!

WITH FOOD, LINE DANCING, DUNK TANKS, AND INFLATABLES, THERE WILL BE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE! SO WHETHER YOU HOST A BOOTH, JOIN THE CHILI COMPETITION OR JUST COME TO HAVE SOME FUN...DON'T MISS OUT ON THE FALL FESTIVE-ALL! NEED MORE INFO? CONTACT KATHERINE MULLEN AT [KATHERINE@FIRSTCHURCHBHM.COM](mailto:katherine@firstchurchbhm.com).

The FAITH WE SING

WHEN A PROPHET SINGS OF JUSTICE

"So has the church, in liturgy and song, through faith and hope through centuries of wrong, borne witness to the truth in every tongue, Alleluia!" Fred Pratt Green, When in Our Music God is Glorified.

What we sing and how we sing shapes and informs our understanding of God, God's people, and our response to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Singing of justice gives us the courage and the vision to live out these commitments. During this sermon series, we will learn more about the words we sing, how they inform our call to seek justice, and how we might act upon this call in our world.

October 3 | **WORLD COMMUNION: SONGS OF THE GLOBAL CHURCH**

Psalm 98, 1 Corinthians 12:14-26

When we sing with Christians from varied global cultures, and humbly receive their gifts of song, we stand in solidarity with oppressed peoples, celebrate liberation, and learn different understandings of God and God's people from non-North American points of view.

October 10 | **SONGS OF THE POOR & POWERLESS**

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15

The biblical witness again and again calls for the community to lift up the lowly, to practice economic justice, and tear down walls of division. How do we sing a prophetic song that encourages our response to that call?

October 17 | **SONGS OF LIVING WATERS**

Psalm 46, Revelation 21:1-4

There are images of rivers running through the city in scripture - of living water that never runs dry. How do we sing of hope and restoration for all of God's creation?



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

On **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3** we will celebrate World Communion Sunday. This is a time when Christians across the globe come together at the table to remember who we are, to whom we belong, and our call to love our neighbors as ourselves. At the table we re-member ourselves and others. We re-member we are One and not divided. We share our resources for life together. We acknowledge our need and our connection.

While we will worship in-person in the Loft and Sanctuary services at 11:00am this year, you will be given your communion elements as you leave your worship space in the courtyard. This is a way to symbolically share in the body of Christ as we move into the world - as well as a safer way to partake of the elements during a global pandemic. We will also stream our World Communion virtual worship at 9:00am on Facebook and YouTube and invite you to have your elements present.



DRIVE-THRU BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

OCTOBER 3 AT 3:00PM - 4:00PM

On Sunday, October 3, from 3:00pm-4:00pm we will offer a drive thru Blessing of the Animals in honor of the Feast Day of Saint Francis of Assisi. We invite you to bring your pets and drive thru the parking lot where your pet will be offered the opportunity to be blessed by our clergy. We look forward to seeing you and all of your furry friends.

Kids are invited to come to the playground (near the back parking lot) at 2:30pm to make puppy treats, cat toys, and more. We will share these with our friends who drive through. If you do not have a beloved pet, please bring your favorite stuffed animal for a special blessing.



Abundance of GRATITUDE

After focusing on the multitude of gifts we have been given in creation and by being in relationship with our community, I hope that our eyes and hearts are more open to all for which we have to be deeply grateful. With the posture of gratitude throughout our lives, we feel called to respond with generosity. Thank you for the generous way you are supporting the people, the vision, the ministry, and the mission of First Church by turning in your 2022 pledge cards. Your gift truly matters at First Church so if you have not yet filled out your 2022 pledge card we ask that you to do so by clicking [HERE](#). We are deeply grateful for the generosity of this church family.



ADVENT BOXES

Following the success of COTR's Advent Boxes last year we are partnering again this year to offer you a 2021 Advent Box. Each box will cost \$25 and include seasonal greenery as well as:

ADVENT WREATH PLATE

ADVENT CANDLES

(3 BLUE AND 1 EACH WHITE & PINK)

OIL BLEND

WATERCOLOR NOTECARDS

(WATERCOLORS OF FIRST CHURCH BY CALEB CLARK-SET OF 5)

RECYCLED ORNAMENT

As a reminder all proceeds from the Advent Boxes directly benefit the ministry of Community on the Rise which seeks to empower persons experiencing homelessness through education, housing, employment, and healing. You must complete your order [HERE](#) by Monday, November 1. After placing your order, you will receive further instructions about picking up your custom Advent Box at Community on the Rise November 22-24. If you would like to customize, "build your box", add any extra quantities, or add any Community on the Rise recycled gift items for the holidays, email Avery: avery@communityontherise.com.

PILGRIMAGE

Join us this fall as we journey to some of the sacred places that hold the memories of our torn past, reminding us we that still have far to travel. During each leg of the pilgrimage, we will take a deeper look at what happened during the Civil Rights Movement as well as what is happening in our world today. We hope you will join us on our journey to remember, learn, and be transformed.

We will spend the majority of the day at each location. Cost covers entrance fees for each location but does not cover lunch. For more information, email Tiffany Dowdy at Tiffany@firstchurchbhm.com

SELMA

When: Saturday, November 6 at 9:00am

What: Footprints to Freedom Tour:

A guided tour of The National Voting Rights Museum and Institute, the Slavery and Civil War Museum, Brown Chapel A.M.E Church, and a walk across the historic Edmund Pettus Bridge

Cost: Adults \$35 - Children/Youth \$15

Deadline To Register: October 29

Click [HERE](#) to register.

MONTGOMERY

When: Saturday, December 4 at 9:00am

What: Equal Justice Initiative Museum and Memorial

Cost: No cost, however, registration is required to receive tickets for entrance

Deadline To Register: November 26

Click [HERE](#) to register.



ALL SAINTS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7

THIS YEAR WE WILL BE CELEBRATING ALL SAINTS WITH BOTH VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES. IN EACH WORSHIP EXPERIENCE WE WILL CALL BY NAME THOSE WHO HAVE DIED IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS AS WE CELEBRATE THEIR CONTINUAL LOVE AND PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES. WHILE WE WILL CALL THE NAMES OF ALL CHURCH MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED, WE ALSO INVITE YOU TO SHARE OTHERS WHO YOU LOVE WHO MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF FIRST CHURCH BUT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE INCLUDED IN THE SERVICE. IF YOU HAVE A LOVED ONE WHO PASSED AWAY IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, WE INVITE YOU TO SEND IN THEIR NAMES AND A PICTURE TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS YEAR'S CELEBRATION OF ALL OUR BELOVED SAINTS. PLEASE SEND THESE NAMES AND PICTURES TO PEG THOMPSON AT PEG@FIRSTCHURCHBHM.COM BY TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26.

CHURCH-WIDE RETREAT

FEBRUARY 11-13TH, 2022 AT LAKE GUNTERVILLE STATE PARK

You don't want to miss First Church's retreat! Our annual retreat is one of the most significant times to build community and make connections...not to mention grow spiritually. This year's theme is Manna and Mercy. Throughout the weekend we will journey through the whole Bible – from Genesis to Revelation – using Daniel Erlander's book *Manna and Mercy* as our guide. This will offer us a way to read the Bible as life-giving as we:

- **Learn how context shapes the meaning of Scripture**
- **Read the Bible through the lens of Jesus' life, teaching, death, and resurrection**
- **Learn that we value inclusivity and social justice not in spite of the Bible but because of it**
- **Be challenged to live in a way that brings life to ourselves, our families, and to the whole world**
- **Live into our identities as God's children created in love, by love, and for love**

Over the years Manna and Mercy has become the theological foundation of our mission statement and six priorities at First Church. We encourage everyone to experience a Manna and Mercy retreat at least once...preferably more than once!

In addition to meaningful content, the retreat will also offer plenty of free time to get to know our church family better while enjoying all that the park has to offer. Recreational options include golfing, fishing, kayaking, canoeing, hiking, playgrounds, basketball courts, and plenty of space to relax while enjoying beautiful scenery.

This retreat is for the entire family. Childcare and children's recreational options will be available for kids from preschool through elementary. Youth, though included in the learning sessions, will have opportunities to gather together as well during the weekend.

The cost for the weekend is \$175 for a single registration, \$300 for a couple registration, and \$350 for a family of four (\$25 for each additional family member beyond that). A \$50 deposit is due upon registration. Chalets are available to families or groups of 4 or more people at an additional 20% cost. Scholarships are also available. Register now by clicking [HERE](#). To request a scholarship or find out more information, please contact Katherine Mullen at Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com.



~ VIRTUAL ~

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 6:30PM – 7:30PM

Grab the people and pets who share your home for a fun night of games. A Neighbors Ice Cream Shop gift card is on the line as we get silly with our friends. If you are more interested, email Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com and she'll send the link to the game that week.

BABY RAVE

SATURDAY OCTOBER 23 AT 10:00AM
in the First Church Courtyard

What's a Baby Rave? Think of a kindermusik class with more glow sticks and spooky Halloween songs. Think of your kids singing and dancing and yelling and jumping and running and wiggling and moving their beautiful bodies with music. Think of tambourines and shaker eggs and scarves and more! Kids 3 months and older are invited to this musical experience. Our PreK friends will probably have the most fun as the songs will be geared to their age group - but all are invited. Parents and Caregivers will interact with their kids and other adults as our kids have a blast.

CITY KIDS

Family Picnic

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23 AT 11:30AM
in the First Church Courtyard

Pack a picnic (or pick one up on your way) and we will meet together to eat, throw a frisbee, and run around. It will be very casual so please bring a friend!

The Baby Rave will end just in time for families to join the fun.

PROJECT
12.25

We know that the Christmas season can be a financially challenging time for many people. Over the past several years Project 12/25 has supported First Church families in need with children's toys, clothing, and/or groceries. Taking care of those within our congregation who need additional support is one part of Project 12/25. This year we will also have the opportunity to support and uplift our wider community through our community partner Magic City Acceptance Center.

If you are a family in need of additional support this holiday season, please email Tiffany Dowdy at Tiffany@first-churchbhm.com to begin the discussion.

If you are interested in supporting a family or the Magic City Acceptance Center, please be on the lookout for additional details during the month of November.

STUDENT MINISTRY

AT FIRST CHURCH

On Sundays this month our student ministry will be following the series "Rad" which leads us through a study of the book of James. We will look at four ways Jesus invites us to live a radical life, living according to his revolutionary example of love. These ideas might seem simple but when we choose to **listen more than we speak, refuse to play favorites, watch our words, and fight for peace**, we'll see how radical Jesus' teachings really are.

IMPORTANT DATES

STUDENT MINISTRY GATHERING

October 3 & 17, 4:00pm -6:00pm in the Large Dining Room

OCTOBER 10TH 4:00PM - 6:00PM

Fall Festive-ALL - Join us for an awesome night of fun and games. We will have a blow-up obstacle course for students to race each other, their siblings, or even their adults. We will have a chili competition, a booth for youth to play games as well as free food.

OCTOBER 24 4:00PM - 6:00PM

'90s Night - Join us for a RAD night!

Put on your best '90s attire and get ready to win some sweet '90s prizes.

STAY IN TOUCH:

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

NEWSLETTER - Email Tiffany@firstchurchbhm.com to join

REMIND - (text reminders) Text: [@fcbhmadult](https://www.facebook.com/fcbhmadult) To: 81010

INSTAGRAM - [@firstchurchbhm.youth](https://www.instagram.com/firstchurchbhm.youth)

FACEBOOK - First Church Birmingham - Student Ministry



FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM ANNUAL

CHARGE CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7 AT 12:30PM

Every year we gather as a community of faith to celebrate all that we have accomplished in the past year, nominate and approve new lay leadership, as well as ratify parts of our annual operating budget. On Sunday, November 7 our District Superintendent, Rick Owen, will join us in worship for our All Saints Service in the Sanctuary and then, following worship, we will hold our annual Charge Conference in the Sanctuary at 12:30pm. All are welcome to attend.



UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

We know a lot has changed in the last year and a half – many of you have moved, changed jobs, phone numbers, email addresses, etc. If you or your family have made any changes to your contact information in the past year, please take a moment to let us know. You may do so by contacting our Office Administrator Peg Thompson at Peg@firstchurchbhm.com.

NEW MEMBER PRAYERS FOR FIRST CHURCH

AS WE SEEK TO BE AN **OPEN PLACE** FOR **ALL**

MY PRAYER FOR FIRST CHURCH IS:

As a church family, we go where God leads us, regardless of how difficult the road may be.

- Bernie Hardy



GIFTS RECEIVED BY THE CHURCH

To the Memorial Fund

In Memory of Davey Williams

From Neko Grimm-Williams

In Memory of George Bruce Williams

From Valerie Tomaselli

From Anne Hartline

From RHIAA Team

From Diana Moroney

To the Music Fund

In Memory of George Bruce Williams

From Christine Cody

OCTOBER CALENDAR

October 2

9:00am - Birmingham Pilgrimage

October 11

6:00pm - Executive Council

October 3

11:00am - World Communion
3:00pm - Blessing Of The Animals

October 20

6:00pm - Trustees
6:30pm - Virtual Family Game Night

October 10

4:00pm - Fall Festive-ALL

October 23

10:00am - Baby Rave
11:30am - City Kids Family Picnic

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY

9:00am: Virtual Live Stream Service

9:30: City Kids Virtual Sunday School

9:45am: Virtual Sunday School

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 Children: Cristin Dedmon	Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com
Minister of Community Engagement: Katherine Mullen	Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com
Organist: Richard Byrd	Richard@firstchurchbhm.com
Design: Blake Hobbs	Blake@firstchurchbhm.com
Choir Director: Patrick Evans	Patrick@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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