

APRIL 2022

# CONNECTIONS

LIVING IN  
**LIFE & HOPE**

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER OPPORTUNITIES

MARCH 27 – APRIL 10  
**WALK THE LABYRINTH**

APRIL 15  
**GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE**  
12:00pm in the Sanctuary

APRIL 10  
**PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP**  
11:00am in the Sanctuary & Loft

APRIL 17  
**CITYKIDS BUTTERFLY RELEASE**  
9:45am in the Courtyard

APRIL 14  
**MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE**  
6:00pm in the Sanctuary

APRIL 17  
**EASTER SERVICES**  
11:00am in the Sanctuary & Loft

L E N T E N   S E R M O N   S E R I E S

## GOOD ENOUGH

EMBRACING THE IMPERFECTIONS OF LIFE & FAITH

This Lenten season join us as we journey through a new series called “Good Enough: Embracing the Imperfections of Life and Faith.” Using the lectionary Scriptures and Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie’s new devotional book *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*, We will affirm a faith in which we are blessed, regardless, and learn to lean into our “good enough” lives. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

APRIL 3

**WE ARE FRAGILE**  
PSALM 126, JOHN 12: 1-8

APRIL 10 - PALM SUNDAY

**YOU ARE A GROUP PROJECT**  
PSALM 118, LUKE 19: 28-40

APRIL 17 - EASTER SUNDAY

**A GOOD GARDENER**  
PSALM 114, JOHN 20:1-18

# Walking THE LABYRINTH

DURING LENT

From **March 27 - April 10** during Lent you are invited to come walk a labyrinth in our Large Dining Room. This is a long held spiritual practice that is contemplative and grounding. Our labyrinth will be set up to provide you with space and time to pray. You are invited to walk the labyrinth anytime during office hours.

Click **[HERE](#)** for more information about the ancient and sacred practice of meditation.



# MAUNDY THURSDAY

APRIL 14, 6:00PM

**Join us at 6:00pm in the Sanctuary for a time of reflection upon Jesus' last night with his closest friends. We will spend time considering what it means to be blessed and to offer blessing to others, especially when they don't deserve it. Communion will be offered for all and (weather permitting) we will end in the Courtyard just as Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.**

*Please note that a nursery will be available during the service.*



# GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 15, 12:00PM IN THE SANCTUARY

You are invited to join us for a Tenebrae service on Good Friday, April 15 at 12:00pm in the Sanctuary as we commemorate the crucifixion and death of Jesus. The word Tenebrae is Latin for "darkness" or "shadows" and describes a service that offers prolonged meditation on the suffering of Christ. Through music, dramatic readings, and the play between light and dark we will remember what it must have felt like in those moments when Christ's death darkened the world. We invite you to join us as we remember the grief and loss of Good Friday.

# EASTER FLOWERS

Hydrangeas are available for Easter Sunday in the Sanctuary. They will come in a variety of colors in 8 inch pots for \$27.50 each and may be placed in honor or in memory of loved ones this Easter. After the service, you are invited to take them home to enjoy! Click [HERE](#) to place your order before April 10. There are a limited number available to us this year.



# EASTER FLOWER CROSS

If you plan to attend worship services on Easter Sunday, April 17, don't forget to bring flowers to put on our Easter Cross. Flowers can be from your home or garden (or even the grocery store!). This is a great tradition that we look forward to continuing this year as we celebrate Easter together.



SATURDAY, APRIL 9 AT 4:00PM | THE PRESIDENT'S LAWN, BSC CAMPUS

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION



# Celebration FOR GINGER GAMBILL

Ms. Ginger has cared for the babies, toddlers, and kids of First Church for over two decades. Raising her own two boys here and also pacing the hallways rocking all of our babies. We will gather to celebrate all she means to us on Sunday, April 24 from 9:00am-10:00am in the Large Dining Room. If you have a picture of your kid(s) with Ginger, please email them to [cristin@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:cristin@firstchurchbhm.com) for a special gift. Click [HERE](#) to make a love gift as a thank you or write "Love Gift Ginger Gambill" in the memo line of your check. If you'd like to share a note of best wishes on her next adventure, click [HERE](#). Join us for coffee, juice, pastries, and hugs as we thank her for helping thousands of kids feel God's great love for them.



**YOU ARE INVITED** to join us on The Journey, a First Church retreat for men (or any who identify as masculine). Gather with friends, some you haven't even met yet, as we study Methodism Founder John Wesley's teachings about God's Grace- "the undeserved, unmerited, and loving action of God in human existence through the ever-present Holy Spirit." This retreat will bring together travelers of all ages and stages of life to connect, grow, and learn about God's love for ALL of us. (Please note these dates have been rescheduled from earlier dates published.)

What: **The Journey Men's Retreat**

Where: **Camp McDowell** (near Jasper, AL)

When: **Friday, May 6 @ 7:00pm – Saturday, May 7 @ 3:30pm**

Cost: **\$118**

Click [HERE](#) to register now.



**Arts Camp is BACK** and this year we are getting wacky!

All are invited to join us for Wacky Wonders beginning  
**MONDAY, JUNE 27 THROUGH THURSDAY, JUNE 30.**

.....

Kids will explore our funny, beautiful, and, sometimes, odd creation! Learning about our Creator who dreams big and encourages us to dream big, too. Getting to know our Savior who surprised (and continues to surprise) the world. Connecting with our Sustainer who shows us ways to use our whole selves – the weird and the wonderful—to serve the world.

To make this happen we'll need the whole church to volunteer! Even if you can share only an hour the week of the event or prior to the event to help us prepare, we would be so grateful!

CLICK [HERE](#) TO SIGN UP YOUR CHILD TO ATTEND.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER.

Reach out to Cristin at [Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com) if you have any questions!

STORIES FROM

150  
YEARS



**MORE THAN JUST A BUILDING  
THE SACRED SPACE THAT IS FIRST CHURCH**

ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY WAYNE HESTER IN *CENTURY OF WORSHIP, 1872-1972*

.....

The dust from the bustling, new, industrial city had barely time to settle on the exquisite High Gothic First Methodist Church at the corner of Fourth Avenue North and Nineteenth Street... In the fall of 1891 the stone structure at Sixth Avenue North and 19th Street was completed at a cost of \$160,000.

.....

Click **[HERE](#)** to read the full story.



# FIRST CHURCH **CLEAN-UP DAY**

SATURDAY, APRIL 9 | 9:00AM – 12:00PM

As renovations begin to wrap up for our youth room and as we prepare for Easter Sunday, you are invited to join us for a clean-up day around our property. Much like we have in the past, we will have dumpsters available to help us clear out our space as we make room for new and exciting opportunities. Make plans to join us from 9:00am – 12:00pm on Saturday, April 9 as we work to make our space look better than ever! Please feel free to come and stay as long as you are able – even if it is only one hour.

**Rise**  <sup>®</sup>  
**AGAINST HUNGER**  
AT VESTAVIA HILLS UMC | APRIL 24-26, 2022

Our friends at Vestavia Hills UMC have invited us to join them for their Rise Against Hunger meal packaging event April 24-26. Using an assembly line process, Rise Against Hunger offers the opportunity to package nutrient-rich meals in the form of dry goods which are then sent around the world to alleviate hunger. There are plenty of time slots available for you to sign up. We are encouraging First Church folks to sign up for Sunday, April 24 from 3:00pm 5:00pm. This is a family friendly event as there is something for every age! Registration is required and we invite you to wear your favorite First Church t-shirt. Click [HERE](#) to sign up now.

# CITY KIDS UPDATES

## 4th/5th Grade Crossover Night w/ Student Ministry

MAY 22 AT 4:00PM

4th/5th Grade Students are invited to join the Student Ministry for a night of games of epic mess. You can find more details in the weekly emails or on social media.

## CityKids Kickball Game & Campy Crafts at Camp Sumatanga

MAY 14 AT 10:00AM PRIOR TO THE CHURCH-WIDE PICNIC

Meet at the Lake at Camp Sumatanga for donuts, coffee, juice boxes, and a fun game of kickball. We'll also practice some fun camp songs while we make campy crafts! We'll then welcome our whole church to the fun.

## Sumatanga Day Camp

JULY 11-15 | 7:30AM-4:30PM

Sign up for the bus to/from camp [HERE](#)

You will also find more information about registering for camp at that link. Cristin is the Dean for the week and is building a fun week of outdoor adventures and growing closer to God.

# YOUTH MINISTRY

## AT FIRST CHURCH

We are a loving, fun, and inclusive ministry for all 6th - 12th graders to explore faith while being their authentic selves. If you enjoy games, road trips, serving others, learning about social justice, and discovering who God called to you be in this world, then you should come hang out.

For more information or to be added to our youth ministry emails, contact our interim youth minister, Laure FitzSimmons at [youth@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:youth@firstchurchbhm.com)

## Save the Dates for our Youth Summer Events:

**June 9-10**

Braves Game & Six Flags Trip ( Cost: \$150 )

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION

**July 22 - 25**

Youth Beach Trip ( Cost: \$250 )

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION

# NEW MEMBER PRAYERS FOR FIRST CHURCH

AS WE SEEK TO BE

## AN OPEN PLACE FOR ALL

MY PRAYER FOR FIRST CHURCH IS:

*I pray that First Church continues the work of Love and Inclusion.  
I pray that First Church continues to offer space to those with Questions and Doubts.*

- Ben Shepard

*In a world that can be dark and depressing my prayer is that  
First Church can be a light and hope for all people.*

- Ashley Hess

*My prayer is that First Church continues to be a safe and welcoming place for all.*

- Shea Hess



## OUR CALENDAR

### SUNDAY

9:00am: Virtual Live Stream Service

9:45am: Sunday School

11:00am: Loft & Sanctuary In Person Worship

4:00pm: Student Ministry

### TUESDAY

7:00pm: Converge Young Adults

### WEDNESDAY

6:30pm: Chancel Choir

Click [HERE](#) to view our monthly calendar.

# 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 Children: Cristin Dedmon .....	Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com
Minister of Community Engagement: Katherine Mullen .....	Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com
Interim Minister of Youth: Laure FitzSimons .....	Youth@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**

518 North 19th Street • Birmingham AL 35203  
205-254-3186 • [www.firstchurchbhm.com](http://www.firstchurchbhm.com)