

MAY 2023

CONNECTIONS



CELEBRATING OUR
INNER CHILD

MAY SERMON SERIES

WAKE UP CHILD

In our study of *The Four Fold Way* by Angeles Arrien, we learned that we can recognize disconnection from our innermost ways of being when we have lost our ability to laugh and play. In this series we invite you to let your inner child come back to life as we study the ways we can incorporate storytelling, singing, dancing, play, laughter, and love into our lives of faith so that we can live authentically. Click [HERE](#) to read more.

SUNDAY, MAY 14
STORYTELLING

Exodus 3:1-6, Psalm 78:1-8, Matthew 13:34-35

SUNDAY, MAY 21
SINGING

Exodus 15:1-11, 2 Chronicles 20:15-21, Psalm 96:1-6, Ephesians 5:15-19

SUNDAY, MAY 28
DANCING

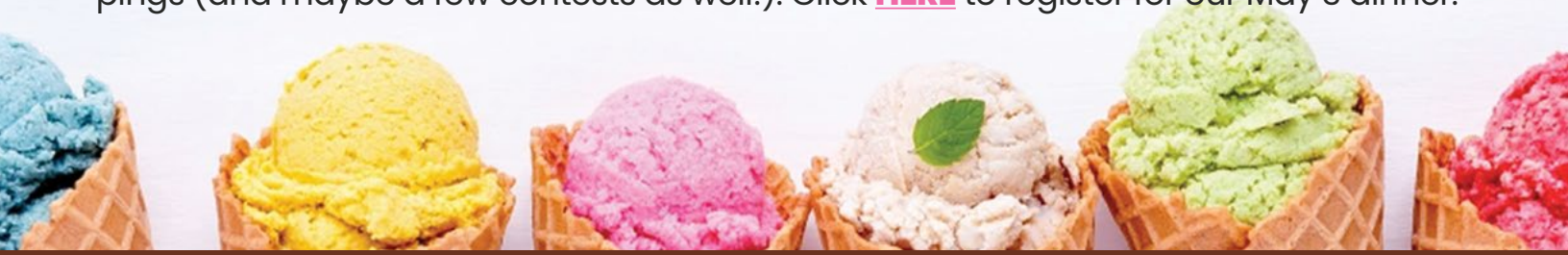
Exodus 15:20-21, 2 Samuel 6:14-22, Psalm 149, Jeremiah 31:12-13

Please note there will only be one worship service on this Sunday which will be held in the Loft.

ICE CREAM *SOCIAL*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

Bring your sweet tooth and enjoy an ice cream sundae bar following our meal together on Wednesday, May 3 which will be our final Wednesday Night gathering for the spring. We will have a variety of flavors to choose from as well as your favorite sundae toppings (and maybe a few contests as well!). Click [HERE](#) to register for our May 3 dinner.



**FIRST
CHURCH**

101

SUNDAY, MAY 7, FOLLOWING WORSHIP

If you are new to the First Church family or are seeking to learn more about the United Methodist Church, you are invited to join us for First Church 101 on Sunday, May 7 following worship. We will have a light lunch and then move upstairs to learn more about United Methodist theology, structure, and Social Principles as well as more about opportunities at First Church, who we are, and what membership means. Childcare is available with a reservation.

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



THURSDAY, MAY 11

It's baseball season and the Birmingham Barons are back at Regions Field! Come enjoy hot dogs, drinks, good baseball, and great fellowship with your church family on Thursday, May 11. We will gather outside the field starting at 6:30pm to pass out tickets, which will give you plenty of time to find your seats and grab concessions before the game begins at 7:05pm. Tickets are \$10 each and we only have 40 available for purchase.

CLICK [**HERE**](#) TO PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS.

SERVE DAY

Join us **Saturday, May 20 from 9:00am - 12:00pm** as we partner with Black Warrior Riverkeeper to make a difference in our city. First Church will have the opportunity to help clean trash from in and around the river. This event is open to all ages.

If you are interested in serving please contact Ashley Hess at Ashley@firstchurchbhm.com.



CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

JOIN US ON **SUNDAY, MAY 14, AT 11:00AM**
IN THE SANCTUARY AS WE CELEBRATE THE
CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2023!

This will be a time to celebrate this important
step in the faith journey of our youth.



SENIOR SUNDAY

CONGRATULATIONS SENIORS! You are almost done! Before your Senior year comes to a close, please join us for worship in the Loft or Sanctuary on **SUNDAY, MAY 14** as we want to recognize you, pray over you, and celebrate your future. Lunch will be served after the worship service in the Large Dining Room for graduates and their families.

GIVING BASKET PROJECT

You are invited to donate supplies for Church of the Reconciler which is a diverse downtown Birmingham church made up of people who are seeking to alleviate poverty and build a true sense of community that transcends economic and other social barriers. They are a United Methodist mission church supported by the North Alabama Conference as well as other partner churches and organizations. Please consider donating the following items and leaving them in the baskets outside each worship space:

8-OZ HOT CUPS (*PAPER PREFERRED*)
BULK GROUND COFFEE
BULK SUGAR (*NOT INDIVIDUAL PACKETS*)
BULK CREAMER
STIR STICKS



Join us for a Pride meeting after our ice cream social on **WEDNESDAY, MAY 3**. We will discuss all of the upcoming opportunities to volunteer for Pride as well as brainstorm decorations for our float! You're invited to join us for dinner and ice cream and then join us upstairs in the Loft lounge as we ideate for the upcoming Pride celebrations. If you have any questions, email katherine@firstchurchbhm.com.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17 AT 6:00PM

JUSTICE & MERCY TEAM MEETING

Calling all who are interested in or who are currently serving with the Justice and Mercy team. You are invited to a meeting on Wednesday, May 17 at 6:00pm where Ashley will highlight all of our ministry partners and the impact the Justice and Mercy Team can have in these areas. The meeting will take place in the SALT classroom on the basement floor of the Education Building. Feel free to bring your own dinner and eat during the meeting.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER FOR THE MEETING.



SATURDAY, JUNE 3 AT 6:30PM

You are invited to dine under the stars in downtown Birmingham on Saturday, June 3. Dinner Under the Stars is a beautiful evening with great food, live music, and a good time. This will be the last fundraiser for the Panama Learn & Serve Team. Dinner will take place in the courtyard of First Church at 6:30pm. There will be a delicious three-course meal with hors d'oeuvres and mocktails. Ticket prices are \$65 per person. Click [HERE](#) to buy your ticket now so that you don't miss out on this special evening.



MATTHEW VINES

& THE BIBLICAL CASE

FOR LGBTQ INCLUSION

SUNDAY, JUNE 4 AT 4:00PM IN THE SANCTUARY

Often people say Scripture does not support full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ persons within the Christian faith but what if we have been reading the Bible wrong? Come listen to Matthew Vines, author of *God and The Gay Christian* and founder of [The Reformation Project](#), share through careful textual exploration about what the Bible does – and does not – say about same-sex relationships. Come discover that we can hold both orthodox faith and inclusion of ALL persons together through the loving lens of our Christian faith. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

EXPLORING OUR FUTURE

During April's Executive Council meeting we spent time discussing the latest rulings from Judicial Council as well as the social media attention our church has received recently. Click [HERE](#) to read more about our time together.

AUGUST 4-6 AT FIRST CHURCH

MANNA & MERCY



Manna and Mercy is the theological foundation for our mission statement and six priorities at First Church. During this weekend retreat held in the Loft, we will journey through the whole Bible – from Genesis to Revelation – using Daniel Erlander's book *Manna and Mercy* as our guide. Click [HERE](#) to learn more and register now.

CITY KIDS UPDATES

MAY 6 AT 10:00AM ENCHANTED FAIRY GARDEN MORNING

AT OAK MOUNTAIN STATE PARK
(MEET AT THE INTERPRETIVE CENTER)

Explore the trails and add a fairy home if you choose.

MAY 7 FROM 12:30PM - 4:00PM THE BRIDGE GATHERING

immediately following worship, join us for pizza and Skates280!

MAY 18 AT 7:00PM MOMS NIGHT OUT

End of School Dinner - more details to come in weekly emails

MAY 21 FROM 4:00PM - 6:00PM SUMMER BACKYARD BASH at The Dedmons' Home

Bring the whole family for a casual dinner and outside play as we kick off summer.

FIRST CHURCH'S OUTDOOR CAMP



JUNE 12 - JUNE 15 | 9:00AM - 4:00PM

RISING 1ST -5TH GRADE

This year we are partnering with Fresh Air Family's Gross Out Camp for four days of outdoor fun. The camp will take place in Trussville at Holy Cross Episcopal Church (right beside the Cahaba River!). We have a curriculum that will focus on exploring God's creation in the woods, creeks, and fields. We are lucky that Fresh Air Family's Director and Lead Instructor will be helping to lead our camp so the content will be great.

- There will be an option to meet at First Church to transport campers to/from Camp each day (8:30am and 4:30pm).
- Cost will be \$100/camper and will include all materials and snacks.
- Registration is open now and we have limited capacity. We will give priority to First Church Members and Frequent Visitors.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER NOW.



MONDAY, JULY 10 - THURSDAY, JULY 13
9:00AM-1:00PM, EXTENDED CARE OPTION TO 4:00PM
RISING 4K-5TH GRADE

**ARTS CAMP IS BACK! WE WILL EXPLORE
THIS MANNA & MERCY THEMED CURRICULUM
THROUGH CRAFTS, IMPROV, SONG, DANCE, AND MORE.**

- **WE ARE EXCITED TO OFFER ARTS CAMP AT A RATE OF \$25/CAMPER WHICH INCLUDES LUNCH AND A MORNING SNACK.**
- **AN EXTENDED CARE OPTION WILL BE AVAILABLE THAT WILL RUN TO 4:00PM AND WILL COST \$35/CAMPER. AN AFTERNOON SNACK WILL BE PROVIDED.**

CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER NOW.

YOUTH MINISTRY

A T F I R S T C H U R C H

VESTAVIA BOWL

SUNDAY, MAY 21 FOLLOWING WORSHIP

GRADES 6TH - 12TH ARE INVITED TO JOIN IN A FUN AFTERNOON OF BOWLING ON SUNDAY, MAY 21. MEET IN THE LARGE DINING ROOM AFTER WORSHIP AND WE WILL TRAVEL TO MELLOW MUSHROOM FOR LUNCH. THE COST OF THIS EVENT IS \$20.00! CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER YOUR STUDENT NOW.

SPRING VALLEY BEACH

THURSDAY, JUNE 1

DO YOU LIKE HAVING FUN IN THE SUN? WELL THIS YOUTH EVENT IS FOR YOU! GRADES 6TH - 12TH ARE INVITED TO JOIN IN A THRILLING DAY OF WATERSLIDES AND BELLY FLOPS AT SPRING VALLEY BEACH WATER PARK ON JUNE 1. THE COST OF THE EVENT IS \$35.00. CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER YOUR STUDENT NOW.

ATLANTA TRIP

(BRAVES AND SIX FLAGS) - JUNE 6-7

REGISTRATION FOR THE ATLANTA BRAVES BASEBALL GAME AND SIX FLAGS OVERNIGHT TRIP IS NOW OPEN. THE COST FOR THIS EVENT IS \$100. CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER YOUR STUDENT.

SAVE THE DATES

FOR THE REST OF OUR SUMMER YOUTH EVENTS:

YOUTH SERVE WEEK - MONDAY, JUNE 19 - THURSDAY, JUNE 22

YAK THE CREEK - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28

SUMMER BEACH TRIP - FRIDAY, JULY 21 - MONDAY, JULY 24

F I R S T C H U R C H

GARDEN CLUB

W E D N E S D A Y , M A Y 1 7 A T 1 1 : 3 0 A M

You are invited to join us in the Small Dining Room for lunch and a program entitled Looking for Light, presented by John Alford, our own choir member and photographer extraordinaire. He will be talking about how crucial light is to photography and how bad light can ruin even the perfect scene.

John is a retired Special Education Teacher in the Birmingham City Schools and has regularly photographed activities at First Church. His work can be seen on his Facebook Page and that of the Alabama the Beautiful Facebook Group.

The cost for lunch is \$10 and reservations should be made by Friday, May 12 with PJ Hester by call/text (205-261-9491) or email (pjcardenhester@aol.com).

CONGRATULATIONS TO FIRST CHURCH'S COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

GEORGIA ARNOLD was awarded the Living Church Fund college scholarship for the 2023/2024 school year. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about Georgia and her plans for the upcoming year.



AS WE SEEK TO BE
AN OPEN PLACE FOR ALL

MY PRAYER FOR FIRST CHURCH IS:

To continue being God's hands and feet on this earth, fearlessly lead us as a community into our next chapters, love every single human that passes through our doors, let us all worship as our authentic, unafraid, beautiful selves.

- Joanna Hardy-West and Dave West

That as individuals and as a church we are open to the light and love of God and that we give our light and love to one another. There no such thing as an outsider as all are welcome to the church.

- Lennie Lankford

To find peace in the church community, to find a path forward in Christian growth by learning and being part of First Church.

- Susan and Jerry Workman

I pray the church continues to make people feel welcomed, valued, and noticed as I have felt these things since day 1.

- Kate Workman





UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

We know a lot has changed over the last year - 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.

OUR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

9:00am: Virtual Live Stream Service

9:45am: Sunday School

11:00am: Loft & Sanctuary In Person Worship

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
Minister of Youth & Justice: Ashley Hess	Ashley@firstchurchbhm.com
Organist: Richard Byrd	Richard@firstchurchbhm.com
Design: Blake Hobbs	Blake@firstchurchbhm.com
Minister of Music: 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
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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