

AUGUST 2023

CONNECTIONS

A close-up photograph of hands writing on a notebook. One hand holds a black pen with 'STABILO' and '4006381344142' printed on it. Another hand holds a yellow pencil. A tray of colorful highlighters (pink, orange, blue, green, yellow) is visible in the background. The notebook page has some text in Vietnamese, including 'ai beo' and 'Đan hàng'.

BACK TO
SCHOOL

BACK TO SCHOOL SUNDAY

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Join us for worship on **SUNDAY, AUGUST 13** in either the Loft or the Sanctuary to experience a time of prayer and blessing in preparation for the new school year. All those headed back to school (students, teachers, school personnel, and others) are invited to bring their backpacks, badges, or lunchboxes to place along the altar for a time of blessing.



Also, in worship on **Sunday, August 13** in both the Loft and the Sanctuary, we will present Bibles to our rising 3rd graders (in addition to our newer friends in 4th and 5th grade) as we celebrate this milestone in their growth. Send Cristin Dedmon an email at Cristin@firstchurchbhm.com if your student has not yet received a Bible from First Church and they are in one of these upper elementary grades.

3RD GRADE BIBLE PRESENTATION



SUNDAY, AUGUST 13
4:00-6:00PM | IN THE PARKING LOT

AS WE PREPARE FOR A BRAND NEW SCHOOL YEAR, WE ARE EXCITED TO INVITE EVERYONE TO BOUNCE BACK TO CHURCH WITH OUR BOUNCE BACK BASH! JOIN YOUR CHURCH FRIENDS AND FAMILY FOR AN EVENING OF FUN. WE'LL HAVE TONS OF INFLATABLES, DINNER, AND TREATS.

ALL IN

FULLY ENGAGED DISCIPLES

Jesus made clear that discipleship would cost his followers many things — their time, resources, reputations, and, quite possibly, their very lives. What is the cost of being ALL IN as a disciple today? What does it mean to grow in our discipleship and why is that so vitally important to First Church and the Beloved Community? In this series we will explore what true discipleship means and challenge every person in our congregation to a greater commitment to their faith through a greater engagement with the mission and ministry of First Church.

8.13 | ANSWERING THE CALL

MATTHEW 4:18-22, LUKE 9:57-62, ROMANS 12:1-5

8.20 | USING YOUR TALENTS

MATTHEW 25:14-30, ROMANS 12:6-13, 1 PETER 4:7-11

8.27 | MAKING THE COMMITMENT

MARK 6:7-13, LUKE 9:1-2, ROMANS 12:14-21

Wednesday Night **DINNER** & **PROGRAMMING**

Wednesday Night Dinners are BACK! In January of this year, we started Wednesday Night Dinners, followed by programming, and they were a huge success. This Fall, dinner will begin at 5:00pm with programming to follow at 6:00pm. Our first dinner on August 16 will be free of charge! But we still need a headcount for meals, so you're invited to click [HERE](#) to register for dinner that night. You can find the menu for the rest of the Fall and register for more dinners [HERE](#).

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As we move into another round of small groups, we invite you to find a group that fits your interests. Click [HERE](#) to read more detailed information about our offerings this Fall as well as to register to participate.

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BAO **BINGO**

AUGUST 7 | 7:00PM - 9:00PM

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF BINGO AT BIRMINGHAM AIDS OUTREACH ON AUGUST 7! THE DOORS OPEN AT 6:00PM AND THE GAME WILL LAST FROM 7:00PM-9:00PM. SEATS ARE LIMITED AND EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO COME AND FELLOWSHIP TOGETHER - FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO PLAY, IT COSTS \$25 AT THE DOOR. FIRST CHURCH WILL BE SPONSORING A COUPLE OF GAMES AND OUR SMALL GROUP, OPEN TABLE, WILL BE SPONSORING A GAME AS WELL. CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER AND [HERE](#) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BAO.

T W E N T Y - T W E N T Y T H R E E

S **WALK** **SIDE**

F I L M F E S T I V A L

EACH YEAR FIRST CHURCH PARTNERS WITH SIDEWALK FILM FESTIVAL TO SCREEN MOVIES IN OUR LOFT WORSHIP SPACE. THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE OUR LOVE AND HOSPITALITY WITH THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO COME TO THE FESTIVAL OVER THE COURSE OF THE WEEKEND. ONE OF THE WAYS WE DO THIS IS BY PROVIDING CONCESSIONS FOR PURCHASE (JUST LIKE VISITING ANY OF THE OTHER VENUES WHO HOST AROUND TOWN!).

THE SIDEWALK FILM FESTIVAL WILL BE **AUGUST 26-27 AND VOLUNTEER SHIFTS ARE ONE HOUR AND A HALF IN LENGTH. CLICK [HERE](#) TO SIGN UP FOR A SHIFT AS WE SHARE OUR FIRST CHURCH HOSPITALITY WITH ALL WHO COME THROUGH OUR DOORS. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT [KATIE@FIRSTCHURCHBHM.COM](mailto:katie@firstchurchbhm.com).**

PANAMA **LEARN AND SERVE**

THANK YOU & INVITATION

I write you on behalf of the Panama Learn & Serve Team to say, "Thank you!" We give thanks to each of you for your support through prayers and your generous donations for the Panama Learn & Serve Team. This year the team raised over \$15,000.00 to go towards our trip, construction cost, and paying local staffers while in the country. Your generosity helped build the thirty-third home of its kind in Cieneguita. Teams like ours have partnered over the years with United Methodist Missionary, Rhett Thompson to work in this community of the indigenous Ngäbe tribe of Panama. This kind of work holds a special place in our faith community as we were one of the churches to help fund and work on the first home built in Cieneguita.

We could not have done this trip without you all. We are eternally grateful to each and every one who helped make this trip possible. On Sunday, August 13 at 9:45am, you are invited to attend our Learn & Serve Team presentation in the Loft as we share stories and lessons learned while in Panama. It will be a wonderful day of celebration and remembering. Coffee and snacks will be provided. We hope to see you there.

- Jonathan Goss and The Learn & Serve Team

Save the Date

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2024

TWENTY TWENTY FOUR CHURCH-WIDE RETREAT

Save the date for our church-wide retreat
February 9-11. This year's theme is
PARADOX: WHEN LOSS IS GAIN.
There will be activities for children, youth,
and adults . . . including Karaoke!
Go ahead and mark your calendars now.

EXPLORING OUR FUTURE

During July, Executive Council held our final Listening Session. Following that church-wide time of discussion, they spent time prayerfully considering all they had learned this year and reached a unanimous decision to remain United Methodist. We plan to continue to work together in the United Methodist Church for full inclusion of ALL people.

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Click [HERE](#) to hear messages from Executive Council Chairperson, Jennifer Waters and Senior Pastor, Stephanie York Arnold.

FIRST CHURCH
CHOIR
INVITATION

THE FIRST CHURCH CHOIR RESUMES REHEARSALS ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, WITH A SATURDAY MORNING RETREAT ON AUGUST 26. NOW IS THE CHANCE FOR YOU TO SAY "YES" TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO MAY HAVE BEEN PRODDING YOU TO JOIN FOR AWHILE. WE SING A WIDE RANGE OF MUSIC, AND WHILE WE HAVE MANY VERY STRONG SINGERS WHO READ MUSIC WELL, THE CHOIR IS OPEN TO INTERESTED SINGERS OF ALL RANGES OF EXPERIENCE. YOU ARE WELCOME TO COME REHEARSE WITH US AND SEE IF IT MIGHT BE THE RIGHT SMALL GROUP FOR YOU.

**IF YOU HAVE INTEREST OR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT
MINISTER OF MUSIC PATRICK EVANS
AT PATRICK@FIRSTCHURCHBHM.COM**

CITY KIDS UPDATES

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROGRAMMING

6:00PM – 7:15PM | CITY KIDS WING

This August we'll focus on the Sweet and Spicy Proverbs for our Kindergarten – 5th grade friends. While exploring these texts, we'll practice our cooking skills.

MOMS' NIGHT OUT

AUGUST 24 | 7:00PM AT SOHO SOCIAL
(IN HOMEWOOD)

Moms and Mom-Figures are invited to a kid-free night to enjoy dinner and friends.



READY... AIM...
NERF
OUT

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2 AT 5:30PM

Rising 6th graders through 12th graders are invited to a HUGE nerf battle on Wednesday, August 2. The event will kick off at 5:30pm in the Large Dining Room at the church. Students are encouraged to bring a friend for the opportunity to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Dinner and dessert will be provided.

To reserve your spot email Ashley Hess at Ashley@firstchurchbhm.com

YOUTH MINISTRY

AT FIRST CHURCH

STUDENTS MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US
FOR A FUN HOUR OF SUNDAY SCHOOL ON AUGUST 6TH
AS WE START A NEW SERIES "GOING PLACES."



OUR CALENDAR

WEDNESDAYS

- 5:00pm: Dinner
- 5:30pm: Nursery Open
- 6:00pm: Small Group Programming
- 6:30pm: Choir

SUNDAYS

- 9:00am: Virtual Live Stream Service
- 9:45am: Sunday School
- 11:00am: Loft & Sanctuary In Person Worship

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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