

# CONNECTIONS

APRIL 2025



**CELEBRATING  
NEW LIFE**



# Everything [in] between

In this series we will follow the Narrative Lectionary which uses the Gospel of Luke to guide us through the Lenten season. We will journey through familiar stories like the Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha, the Lost Sheep, Zacchaeus, and more, considering how Jesus' ministry was rooted in relationships that disrupted the established social, political, and religious divides of his time. Jesus intentionally highlighted the cultural and political polarities of his time to emphasize the radical, inclusive, and surprising love of God. And when we study these stories in their context, we see how they mirror many of the divides we still experience today.

This series is an invitation to navigate the polarities in our lives with more faith, intention, and openness to be transformed. We invite you to look beyond black and white binaries and easy answers. We encourage you to notice the dichotomies that define our lives, but also to imagine where God might be meeting us beyond the categories we create. This series is for all those who are living in a divided world but seeking more peace. It is for all those who are seeking a spiritual life that engages with complexity instead of avoiding it. And so, this Lent, we're trusting that God shows up in shades of gray, rainbow hues, and everywhere in between.

## APRIL 6 **Righteousness & Mercy**

LUKE 19:1-10

## APRIL 13 **Shouting & Silence**

LUKE 19:29-40

*WORSHIP WILL BEGIN IN THE COURTYARD*

## APRIL 20 **Grief & Hope**

LUKE 24:1-12



FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM'S

# HOLY WEEK

S C H E D U L E

APRIL 13

**PALM SUNDAY**

11:00AM | THE LOFT & SANCTUARY

APRIL 17

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**

6:15PM | THE LOFT

APRIL 18

**GOOD FRIDAY**

12:00PM | SANCTUARY

APRIL 20

**EASTER SUNDAY**

11:00AM | THE LOFT & SANCTUARY



# MAUNDY THURSDAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 17 AT 6:15PM IN THE LOFT



You are invited to join us for dinner at 5:15pm in the Large Dining Room before the Maundy Thursday worship service. This dinner will take the place of our normal Wednesday night meal for the week. Following dinner, you are invited to join us for worship and communion in the Loft at 6:15pm. Please click [HERE](#) to make reservations for dinner (as a reminder reservations are due on Monday, April 14 at 12:00pm). You do not have to attend dinner to come to worship. We hope you will plan on joining us for this special evening



# GOOD FRIDAY

FRIDAY, APRIL 18 AT 12:00PM IN THE SANCTUARY

You are invited to join us for a Tenebrae service on Good Friday, April 18 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.





**SATURDAY, APRIL 12**

**3:00PM - 4:30PM | SPRING PARK IN HOMEWOOD**

We're excited to invite you and your family to our church-wide Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 12 from 3:00 to 4:30 PM at Spring Park in Homewood. Bring your baskets and get ready for a fun-filled afternoon. We'll have face painting, cotton candy, and a few exciting field games—plenty of activities for kids and the young at heart. And, of course, there will be hundreds of eggs hidden throughout the park!

This is a great opportunity to celebrate the joy of Easter together as a church family, so invite your friends and neighbors to join the fun. We can't wait to see you there!

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please reach out to Ashley at [Ashley@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Ashley@firstchurchbhm.com).

# EASTER HYDRANGEAS

White hydrangeas are available for Easter Sunday in the Sanctuary. They will come in 8 inch pots for \$28 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 (or even plant in your yard)! Click [HERE](#) to place your order before Sunday, April 13. There are a limited number available to us this year.



# Easter

## AT FIRST CHURCH

First Church will celebrate Easter Sunday morning with worship at 11:00am in both the Loft and Sanctuary. If you plan to attend, don't forget to bring flowers to add to our Easter Cross. Flowers can be from your home or garden (or even the grocery store!). As a reminder we have moved our flower cross to the front of our Sanctuary building along 19th Street so that it can serve as a reminder of resurrection to everyone who passes by our building. This is a great tradition that we look forward to continuing as we celebrate Easter together.



# Wednesday Night **DINNER & PROGRAMMING**

We have so enjoyed our Wednesday Night Dinners this spring! We will run Wednesday Night Dinner and Programming through April 9. Click [HERE](#) to see our list of small groups. Please note that the following week we will share a meal on Thursday, April 17 followed by Maundy Thursday worship in the Loft. As a reminder, dinners begin at 5:15pm with adult programming to follow at 6:15pm. The nursery opens at 5:30pm and children's programming will begin at 6:00pm. You can find the menu and register for dinners, including Maundy Thursday, [HERE](#).



## **PANAMA** **LUNCH AND SILENT AUCTION**

SUNDAY, APRIL 6 FOLLOWING WORSHIP

You are invited to the Panama Lunch and Silent Auction on Sunday, April 6. The Silent Auction will be open from 9:00am to 12:30pm in the Large Dining Room, followed by a delicious, authentic Panamanian lunch served after worship. The event will conclude with a live auction for several high-value items. All proceeds will directly benefit the team and our trip to Panama from June 28 – July 6. To help cover the cost of the meal, we kindly request a donation of \$15 per adult and \$10 per child (with a \$50 family cap for four or more). Click [HERE](#) to make a reservation.

# Easter PANCAKE BREAKFAST

PANAMA FUNDRAISER

**SUNDAY, APRIL 20**

IN THE LARGE DINING ROOM 9:00AM – 10:30AM



Come early on Easter Sunday and enjoy a pancake breakfast prepared by the Panama Learn and Serve Team before Sunday School and Easter worship. Breakfast will be donation based and all funds will go towards the Panama Team's travel and work in Panama this summer.



The Journey, a First Church retreat for men (or any who identify as masculine), will take place at Camp McDowell (105 Delong Road, Nauvoo, AL 35578) on April 25-27, 2025. Gather with friends, some you haven't even met yet, as we study Jesus' celebrations of joy! Check-in will open on Friday, April 25, at 5:30pm and dinner is from 6:30-7:30pm. The weekend will end on Sunday morning at 11:00am. Click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#) to read more information about the retreat and to find the link to register. The cost of the retreat is \$229 per person (double occupancy) with all meals included. If you have dietary restrictions or roommate preferences please note them on the form. **Deadline to register is Monday, April 14.**



# ROAD TRIP



## CITY KIDS ARTS CAMP 2025

Arts Camp 2025, “Road Trip, On the Go With God” will take place Monday, July 14 through Thursday, July 17. Join us for a fun-filled adventure on the open road, where travelers will embark on thrilling journeys to exciting destinations. Led by our Navigator, kids will discover that God is always with them. Through engaging stories, travelers will explore timeless tales of faith from both the Old and New Testaments. Get ready for twists, turns, and excitement as they face new challenges and find strength in God's presence on this unforgettable trip!

We are excited to offer Arts Camp at a rate of \$50 per camper which includes lunch and a morning snack. An extended care option will be available for \$40 per camper and will run until 4:00pm each day (with an afternoon snack included). Registration is now open and available by clicking [HERE](#).



**JUNE 2 - JUNE 5 | 9:00AM - 4:00PM EACH DAY**

We are once again 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!) and will focus on exploring God's creation in the woods, creeks, and fields. Fresh Air Family's Director and Lead Instructor will be helping to lead our camp.

The cost for the week is \$125 per camper which includes all materials and snacks. Registration is now open and we have limited capacity. Priority will be given to First Church members and regular visitors. Click [HERE](#) to sign up now.

# FAMILY HIKE

AT RED MOUNTAIN PARK

**LET'S WALK TOGETHER!** Join us on Saturday, May 3, at 10:00am for a refreshing morning in nature as we come together for a Family Hike at Red Mountain Park. This is a wonderful chance to step away from the busyness of life, breathe in the fresh air, and enjoy the beauty of God's creation with family and friends. We'll meet at Eureka Mines Trail, where we'll take a scenic hike suitable for all ages. Click [HERE](#) to register now.

# CITY KIDS

**SAVE THE DATE**

## END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR PARTY & PARENTS' NIGHT OUT!

Mark your calendars for Friday, May 23, from 5:30pm to 8:30pm, as we celebrate the end of the school year with a night full of fun! Kids (ages 6 months – 5th grade) will enjoy inflatables, games, food, and exciting activities, while parents get a well-deserved night out.

The cost is \$30 per child and space is limited so don't wait to sign up! Click [HERE](#) to sign up now.





# **CELEBRATING CONFIRMATION**

**SUNDAY, MAY 4**

Join us during morning worship on Sunday, May 4, as we celebrate Confirmation Sunday, a special milestone in the faith journey of our confirmands. This is a meaningful time when young members of our church publicly affirm their faith and commitment to following Christ. As a church family, we have the opportunity to surround them with love, encouragement, and support as they claim their faith as their own. We look forward to sharing this special day with you!



## **PRIDE PLANNING TEAM RECRUITMENT**

**EVERY JUNE FIRST CHURCH MARCHES IN THE BIRMINGHAM PRIDE PARADE. WE ALSO HOST A VENDOR BOOTH AT PRIDEFEST! THESE ACTIVITIES ARE OPEN TO ALL AGES AND ARE ALWAYS SO MUCH FUN.**

**THESE EVENTS INVOLVE A GOOD BIT OF DREAMING AND PLANNING. WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO IT WITHOUT YOU. WE ARE CURRENTLY RECRUITING A PRIDE PLANNING TEAM FOR 2025 WHICH WILL HELP OUR STAFF IDEATE AND FACILITATE ALL PRIDE-RELATED ACTIVITIES THIS SUMMER. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BEING A PART OF THE PRIDE PLANNING TEAM, PLEASE EMAIL [KATHERINE@FIRSTCHURCHBHM.COM](mailto:katherine@firstchurchbhm.com).**



# Getting To **KNOW US** *Dinner*

**THURSDAY, MAY 1 AT 6:00PM**

If you've been visiting with us at First Church in recent weeks or months you are invited to join us for our next Getting to Know Us Dinner on Thursday, January 30 at 6:00pm in the Large Dining Room. This is an opportunity to enjoy a meal around the table and spend time helping us get to know more about you as well as learning more about First Church. Childcare will be available with a reservation. Click [HERE](#) to register now.



## **FIRST CHURCH 101**

*SUNDAY, MAY 4 FOLLOWING WORSHIP*

On Sunday, May 4 we will host First Church 101 after worship. A light lunch will be offered before we move into our time of learning and conversation. During our time together we will share more about United Methodist theology, polity, and Social Principles as well as what membership means at First Church and ways to find deeper connection and community. Childcare will be available with a reservation.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER NOW.





**NEW**

# NAME TAG ORDER

As First Church prepares to welcome a new Senior Pastor this summer, we encourage everyone to make sure to have and regularly wear a name tag as a sign of our hospitality both to one another as well as to those who are stepping onto our campus for the first time. Name tags are \$10 each which covers the costs of printing and shipping. All orders are due by **TUESDAY, APRIL 15.**

Click **HERE** to order yours now.

# AYLWIN FELLOWSHIP

Aylwin Fellowship is a monthly women's luncheon group that enjoys food, fellowship, and a variety of programs. We meet the first Wednesday of the month from September through May and lunch costs \$20 for the month. For more information, please contact Jenny Shaw (205) 515-6400.

# FIRST CHURCH ONLINE DIRECTORY

Did you know that our online database offers us an online directory? Everyone who is a regular part of the First Church family has access to this online directory. You can find it at any time by visiting our website, clicking on the “Resources” tab and scrolling down to the tab labeled “directory.” You will need a username and password to enter the database. If you do not have this information (or cannot remember it from before), please reach out to Katie Gilbert at [Katie@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Katie@firstchurchbhm.com).

## PRAYER TEAM INVITATION

In Philippians 4:6-7 we are given powerful words about prayer, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God.” At First Church, we believe in the supporting love of prayer. One of the commitments we make to one another is that we will pray for our church family. If you would like to support your church family through the ministry of prayer, you are invited to sign up for the weekly prayer team email. You can do so by emailing Jonathan Goss at [Jonathan@firstchurchbhm.com](mailto:Jonathan@firstchurchbhm.com).





# UPDATE YOUR **CONTACT INFORMATION**

We know a lot can change over time. 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](mailto:Peg@firstchurchbhm.com).

## FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM **SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

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

Interim Pastor: Clauzell Williams .....	Clauzell@firstchurchbhm.com
Pastor: Jonathan Goss .....	Jonathan@firstchurchbhm.com
Executive Pastor: Katie Gilbert .....	Katie@firstchurchbhm.com
Minister of Community Engagement: Katherine Mullen .....	Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com
Minister of Families & Youth: Ashley Hess .....	Ashley@firstchurchbhm.com
Organist: Richard Byrd .....	Richard@firstchurchbhm.com
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Executive Director of Early Learning Center: Cassandra Copeland .....	ELC@firstchurchbhm.com
Nursery Coordinator: Natalie Bogart-Pierre .....	Natalie@firstchurchbhm.com



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

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