

CONNECTIONS

OCTOBER 2026

WELCOMING
FALL

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25 AT 4:00PM

FALL FESTIVE-ALL

COME ONE, COME ALL, TO THE FALL FESTIVE-ALL!

It's that time of year again! Please join us on Sunday, October 25 from 4:00-5:30 in our back parking lot for our Fall Fest! There will be food, music, performances, activities, and a costume contest, so you won't want to miss out.



We hope to see all of you in your best costumes on Sunday, October 25! And remember, this event is for everyone, so please bring your friends and join us for a fun-filled afternoon!

WHAT THE TECH?

The Latin phrase *Imago Dei* translates to “the image of God.” Based on Genesis 1:27, which states that God created humanity in God’s own image, we believe in our inherent interconnectedness to the Divine. This foundational truth means that all humans possess sacred worth, dignity, and a spiritual connection to the Creator. How do we maintain this core belief and value in an ever-changing digital age?

Technology moves at an alarming rate, altering how we love, think, gather, and care for one another. In a culture driven by algorithms, hyper-connectivity, and artificial intelligence, how do we remain meaningfully connected to one another and to God? Over the next four weeks, we will examine our digital habits, look at the systemic impacts of technology, and explore how we can reclaim these tools as instruments for liberation, presence, and justice. We hope you will join us for this important conversation.

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

10.4 | AUTHENTIC CONNECTION IN A DIGITAL AGE

JOHN 1:1-4, 14

10.11 | FINDING REST IN A DIGITAL AGE

DEUTERONOMY 5:12-14, MATTHEW 11:28-30

10.18 | HUMAN DIGNITY IN A DIGITAL AGE

GENESIS 1:27 & 31, 1 JOHN 3:16-18

10.25 | USING TECHNOLOGY FOR GOOD IN A DIGITAL AGE

LUKE 4:16-18, ROMANS 10:14-17

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a group of people, mostly women, seated at a table in a dimly lit room, likely a restaurant or event space. They appear to be engaged in conversation and dining. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent brown filter.

Wednesday Night **DINNER & PROGRAMMING**

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS ARE BACK in full swing! Join us for dinner at 5:15pm and programming at 6:15pm. You can sign up for dinners throughout the fall [HERE](#). As a reminder, reservations are due the Monday before by 12:00pm.

In addition to our ongoing group opportunities, we will wrap up our first round of small groups early this month and launch two new small groups for the remainder of October. Click [HERE](#) to read more about our small group options this fall.



PAST FWD

SMALL GROUP

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15 AFTER WORSHIP

Past Forward is a guided experience funded by the Alabama Humanities Alliance that invites us to examine the policies and systems of the past to better understand how they continue to shape access, opportunity, and belonging today.

Through an interactive experience, we'll explore how access to-or the lack of-opportunity has served as a historical marker, creating divisions between those we see as "them" and "us."

Join us after worship on Sunday, November 15 in the Large Dining Room for a respectful dialogue about why we are divided as human beings, how our shared history continues to affect us, and what it might look like to begin healing history. We will have lunch together, and then Mollie Erickson and Kathy Boswell will lead us in this activity. If you would like to register for lunch, click **HERE**. Together, we'll step into one another's shoes, discover the ways we are connected, and consider how understanding the past can help us move forward.

Thank



In September our stewardship campaign came to a culmination as the First Church family turned in our 2027 pledge cards. Our pledges are more than just numbers on paper – they are evidence of a generous life put into practice. They represent our collective desire to reimagine a world where everyone has enough and to find ways to grow our generosity in all that we say and do. Thank you for choosing to give generously as we continue to expand the love of First Church both within its walls and out into our community. If you have not yet made your pledge for 2027 click [HERE](#) to do so now

ALL SAINTS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1
IN THE LOFT AND SANCTUARY SERVICES

During both worship services on Sunday, November 1, we will remember our loved ones who passed away in the last year. This is a sacred time for us to gather with the "great crowd of witnesses" to be encouraged by their witness as we follow after their example in building God's kin-dom on earth. Please submit names and pictures of those you would like included in the service to Peg@firstchurchbhm.com by October 18.

WOMEN — AT THE — *TABLE*

THURSDAYS, OCTOBER 8, NOVEMBER 12, & DECEMBER 10
FROM 6:00PM – 8:00PM | IN THE LARGE DINING ROOM

Beginning in October, women and female-identifying persons are invited to gather once a month around the table for good food, building connection, and meaningful conversation. Hosted by Katie Gilbert and Laura Quick, each gathering will begin with a short fireside chat or panel to initiate meaningful conversation. That conversation will then be taken around the table where everyone gets to participate. Our current planned gatherings will take place on Thursdays, October 8, November 12, and December 10 from 6:00pm – 8:00pm in the Large Dining Room. We aren't gathering because anyone has all of the answers but to create a place where women of different ages, backgrounds, and experiences can tell the truth, listen well, ask better questions, and actually know one another.

Dinner reservations are \$12 each to cover the cost of food. All ages and stages are invited to join the conversation. You are welcome to attend one, two, or all three of the gatherings depending on your schedule.

Click **HERE** to sign up to join us. Please reach out to Katie@firstchurchbhm.com with any questions.



First Church 101 returns this fall through a series of four different Sunday morning sessions during the Sunday School hour. From 9:45am – 10:45am on Sundays, October 4, 11, 18, and 25 we will gather in the Parlor to learn more about the United Methodist Church and First Church in particular. We are excited about this opportunity to dive in and learn together. Click [**HERE**](#) to let us know you plan to attend. Here is the list of weeks and topics that will be covered:

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4
United Methodist Theology & Polity

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11
Ways To Get Engaged

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18
First Church Tour

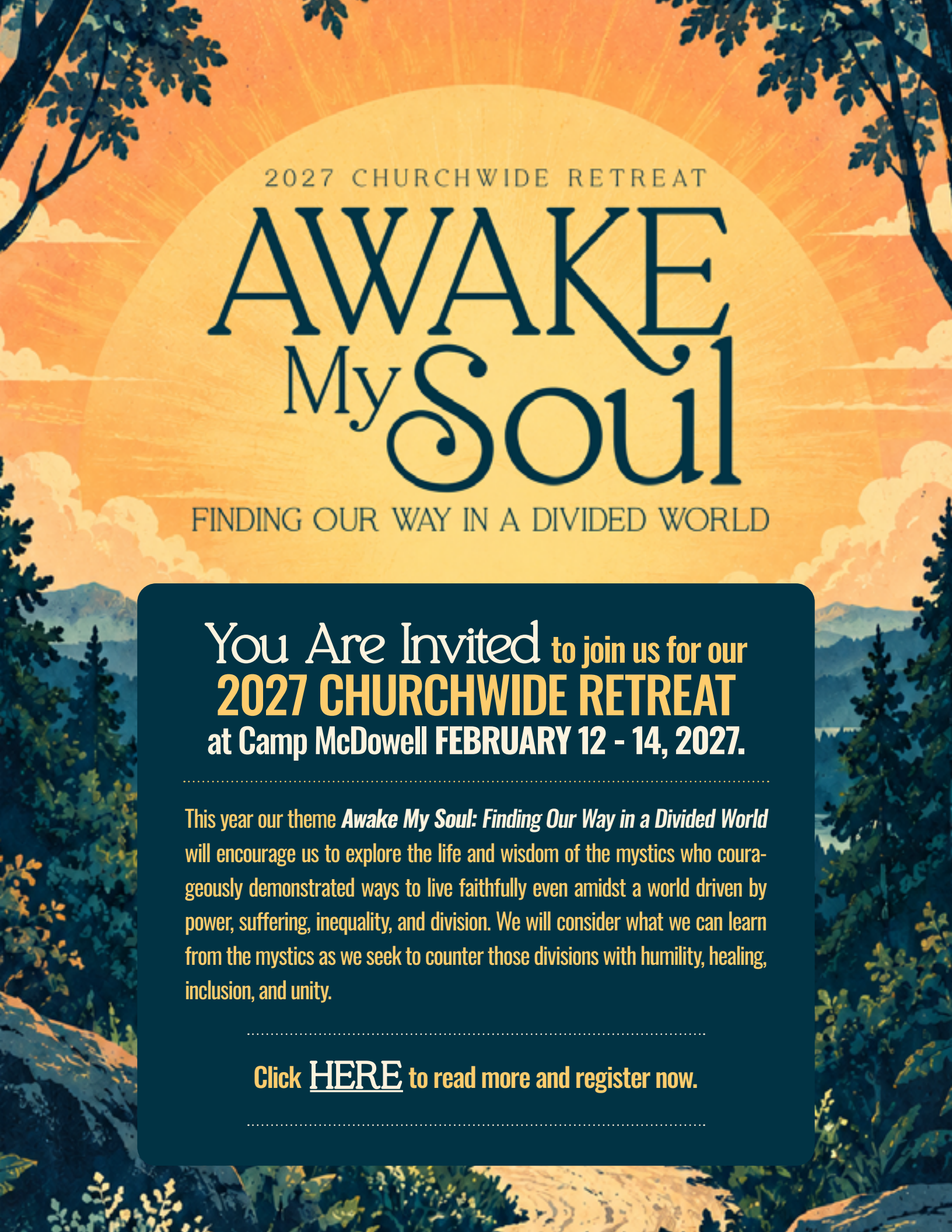
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25
Understanding First Church & Membership

Please click [**HERE**](#) to let us know you plan to attend.

While registration is not required, it will help us make sure we have enough snacks and coffee.

Joining SUNDAY

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8 we will host our next Joining Sunday in both the Loft and Sanctuary worship spaces. This is an opportunity to join the church alongside a group of people so that no one has to worry about standing up in front of the congregation alone. If you've been visiting with us at First Church and are interested in learning more about becoming a member (and have not yet attended a First Church 101 or cannot make the final Sunday in October), reach out to one of our pastors to see about meeting for lunch or coffee to talk more. If you are ready to join (and we hope you are!), please reach out to Katie Gilbert at Katie@firstchurchbhm.com.



2027 CHURCHWIDE RETREAT

AWAKE My Soul

FINDING OUR WAY IN A DIVIDED WORLD

You Are Invited to join us for our
2027 CHURCHWIDE RETREAT
at Camp McDowell FEBRUARY 12 - 14, 2027.

.....

This year our theme *Awake My Soul: Finding Our Way in a Divided World* will encourage us to explore the life and wisdom of the mystics who courageously demonstrated ways to live faithfully even amidst a world driven by power, suffering, inequality, and division. We will consider what we can learn from the mystics as we seek to counter those divisions with humility, healing, inclusion, and unity.

.....

Click [HERE](#) to read more and register now.

.....

Youth BOO Bash

Sunday, October 18, at 5:00pm – 6:30pm

Students in grades 6–12, grab a costume and bring a friend for our Halloween party on Sunday, October 18, from 5:00–6:30pm. We'll have dinner, play games—including hide-and-seek—and spend the evening hanging out together.

Go spooky, funny, clever, or completely last-minute with your costume. Everyone will vote for their favorite and the winner will take home a **TARGET GIFT CARD!**

Enter through the youth door on the 6th Ave side of the church.

Register [**HERE**](#) so we can plan for dinner.
We can't wait to see you there!



JUSTICE & MERCY GIVING BASKET

The Justice and Mercy Team is bringing back the Giving Basket Project! Our first collection will support our partners at Church of the Reconciler. If you are able, please donate new or lightly used adult coats. (Children's jackets are not needed for this collection.) Leave coats at the courtyard entrance to the Education Building, where you'll see the Giving Basket sign. Thank you for helping share warmth with our neighbors. If you have questions, contact Ashley at ashley@firstchurchbhm.com.

FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:45am

SUNDAY SCHOOL

11:00am

LOFT & SANCTUARY IN PERSON WORSHIP

11:00am

LIVE STREAM

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

FIRST CHURCH BIRMINGHAM STAFF

YOU MAY REACH OUR STAFF AT 205-254-3186 OR BY EMAIL

KEVIN THOMAS Senior Pastor	Kevin@firstchurchbhm.com
JONATHAN GOSS Pastor	Jonathan@firstchurchbhm.com
KATIE GILBERT Executive Pastor	Katie@firstchurchbhm.com
REA GREEN Associate Pastor	Rea@firstchurchbhm.com
ASHLEY HESS Minister of Youth and Justice	Ashley@firstchurchbhm.com
MORGAN ROBINSON Children's Minister	Morgan@firstchurchbhm.com
BLAKE HOBBS Design	Blake@firstchurchbhm.com
KATHERINE MULLEN Digital Media Specialist	Katherine@firstchurchbhm.com
RICHARD BYRD Organist	Richard@firstchurchbhm.com
PATRICK EVANS Minister of Music	Patrick@firstchurchbhm.com
ETHAN ASTERS Loft Worship Leader	Ethan@firstchurchbhm.com
PEG THOMPSON Office Administrator	Peg@firstchurchbhm.com
NAN CLAY Nursery Supervisor	Nan@firstchurchbhm.com
STEVE PITTS Business Administrator	Steve@firstchurchbhm.com
COTY SMITH Maintenance Supervisor	Coty@firstchurchbhm.com
BETSY PATE Wedding Director	Betsy@firstchurchbhm.com
CASSANDRA COPELAND Executive Director of Early Learning Center	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