

FIRST Impressions

What's INSIDE

A Publication of First Lutheran Church • Birmingham, AL

- 1 Pastor's Pen
- 1 Church Calendar Link
- 1 Local Events
- 2 Evening Prayer
- 3 Serve & Celebrate Ministry
- 4 Worship Ministry
- 5 LWML News
- 6 Christ Care Ministry
- 7 Hurricane Ida Relief
- 8 Adult Bible Study
- 8 Joy of the Lord
- 8 Online Giving Update
- 9 Birthdays & Anniversaries
- 9 January Worship Team



First Lutheran Church
2507 Highland Avenue
Birmingham, AL 35205
205.933.0380

www.firstlutheranbham.org

[View our Church Calendar](#)



Click Here

Pastor's Pen Don't Be Afraid, Children

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." 2 Cor. 5:17

It can be frightening to stand at the beginning of a new year and ponder what the future holds, especially if we think we enter it alone. We who have been made children of God in the waters of baptism can take comfort that we are "in Christ".

The expression "in Christ" appears some 200 times in the New Testament. To be "in Christ" describes many aspects of the Christian life. For a believer to know that he is "in Christ" brings confidence, joy, and eternal hope.

Continued on page 2

Local Events

Saturday Mornings: The Market at Pepper Place; www.pepperplacemarket.com

Through 1/2: Beyond Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience, BJCC; www.vangoghbirmingham.com

Through 1/17: Glow Wild, Birmingham Zoo; www.birminghamzoo.com

1/14-15: Tchaikovsky's *5th Symphony*, Alys Stephens Center; www.alabamasymphony.org

1/5-16: BrickFair LEGO Expo, BJCC; www.brickfair.com

1/20-23: Birmingham Boat Show, BJCC; www.birminghamboatshow.com

1/20-29: Birmingham Restaurant Week Winter Edition, various local restaurants; www.bhamrestaurantweek.com

1/20 -2/6: Dolly Parton's *9 to 5 The Musical*, Virginia Samford Theatre; www.virginiagamfordtheatre.org



(cont'd from p. 1)

The Bible says "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. FOR IF WE HAVE BECOME UNITED WITH HIM IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH, CERTAINLY WE SHALL BE ALSO IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION" (Romans 6:35).

In Galatians 3:27 we read: "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." Baptism is more than a ritual or a ceremony. Baptism is not a mere tradition of men. Baptism is a clear teaching of God in His Word. In baptism God is at work, bringing us into the family of God. Through baptism God miraculously unites us with Christ. Baptism is part of God's ongoing creating, and recreating, power that He used to create the whole world. In baptism we become "in Christ," and "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV).

The joy and power of baptism is crucial to the correct understanding of the New Testament and the strengthening of the Christian life. Through baptism we are miraculously connected to Christ and all His power for life. Through baptism Christ unites us to Himself, to His cross and resurrection, the only foundation and strength for all Christians. Through baptism God promises us power to overcome Satan, strength for a daily life of joy, and the blessed certainty of the final resurrection "in Christ," unto life eternal.

Have no fear baptized child of God! Your past, present, and future are in the hands of our loving and gracious Father.

Prayer: Powerful and loving God, thank you for enabling us to celebrate, as your baptized Children in Christ, a life without fear. Amen

In His Peace,
Pastor Schultz

Worship with us Sundays at
10:15 a.m. in person
or via
Facebook or YouTube.



Called to Serve and Celebrate Ministry



Blessings to You All,
Lorenza Robinson
Called to Serve & Celebrate Ministry

Worship Ministry With Faith and Hope

“My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, that she may be made well and live.” – Mark 5:23

There may yet be hope for us if we have faith and believe the promises and the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What a statement to make. There is always hope for us regardless to our problems or circumstances that we are constantly faced with day to day as well as through out our lives. There is no day that some place in this world that someone is not affected by situations that can and may cause us to lose the faith and hope that we have placed in someone. It could be a family member or perhaps a friend or neighbor. We also tend to lose faith and hope when we are faced with earthly calamities, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, or family situations such as sickness and death which are all parts of our lives.

Of course, some of us are so independent that we tell God that He is no longer needed, that we can take it from here, just get me where I want to be, until we are faced with trials and tribulations of this life that become overbearing and we have no alternative but to humble ourselves before God. We then call upon the Lord for help in faith and hope, where there is always compassion, mercy, forgiveness, and hope. As told by the apostle Mark, who writes of the situations of Jairus the synagogue ruler and his faith, whose daughter was near death, and the faith and hope of the woman who had been hemorrhaging for many years. We should never lose our faith and hope for we have a compassionate Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord, who has promised to care for us in all our needs. He not only cares for our earthly needs, He has promised to care for our heavenly needs as well. Of course, if we would only believe His promises, have faith in the Word He speaks through the Gospel, then there is hope!

In His Peace,
Charles Craig
Worship Ministry Chair



LWML News

Painting the Planet Purple with Servanthood

1942 -2022 -- 80 YEARS of GOD'S GRACE

2022 – New Year, New Beginnings, More Changes

The last two years have reminded us that change happens whether we want it or not. Sometimes, we do not have any input as to how some of these changes come about, but we have learned how to use change to be of service to others. We have become creative and innovative in how to hold gatherings, thanks to the virtual and online world.

This New Year download the **LWML App** to your smartphone or tablet (if you haven't). The App and **LWML website** provide daily devotions, inspiring podcasts, enriching Bible studies from the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly*, a Bible, LWML news, and connections with other LWML sisters via Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These LWML resources can provide help for a new beginning, for the new year, to adapt to a changing world.

Let us always be thankful for an unchanging God in an ever-changing world.

Save the Date:

2022 Gulf States District Retreat

January 28-30, 2022

Donna Snow will be leading us through her Bible study, *The Wellspring of life*, based on Psalm 42: 1-2.

Where? TownePlace Suites by Marriott / Downtown OWA, Foley, AL

Time to Sparkle – Zechariah 9:16

April 22-24, 2022

The LWML ladies of the Mountain Lakes Zone will be hosting the 39th Biennial LWML Gulf States District Convention

Where? Holiday Inn-Research Park, Huntsville, AL

Today and always, we are surrounded by **HIS** grace and mercy.
Serve the LORD with gladness.

Sheree McGraw, President
First Lutheran Church LWML



Christ Care Ministry The Full Life

“For one day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in You! (Psalm 84:10-12)

Life is desirable only as we live in the sunshine of God’s grace streaming into His courts. Apart from His presence, worries and anxieties depress us and remove the joy of living. God, however, pours out His blessings and He holds us safely above the troubles of this world. Therefore, we can be hopeful and confident even in the worst of life’s situations. In His presence, even a life of only one more day is a full life.

God promises us salvation forever—a promise that makes us unafraid of eternity and lets us rest in peace every day. He not only gave the promise, He accomplished it through the death and resurrection of His Son, in whom we now have the promise of eternal life. And He not only accomplished that, He put it in our hearts by His Spirit. Even in the darkest night of suffering and anguish, *salvation is ours*.

How could I long to live a thousand days anywhere else but in the courts of the Lord? Only there is my emptiness and loneliness removed. Only there are His promises for strength for the coming night. Only there is the keeper and lover of my soul.

No matter what happens today, tomorrow or throughout this New Year, or any time in my life for that matter, the end is an eternity in God’s heavenly court, a thousand eons in His glory. In Christ, I am already living a life that has no end. With that vision, I close my eyes and sleep.

Prayer

O God, You are my God. Your mercies are new every hour, and Your love and grace send blessings into my life from day to day. I am Your child, redeemed through the blood of Your Son, brought to faith by the power of Your Spirit. Hold my heart in your loving hand. Amen.

A blessed New Year to you all,

Pastor Tom

Christ Care Ministry

*Paraphrased from Visitation - Resources for the Care of Souls -
Edited by Arthur A. Just and Scot A. Kinnaman © 2008 CPH.

Hurricane Ida Relief Opportunities

If you wish to donate to Hurricane Ida relief efforts, here are three trusted places to support with your time and/or money.

The Southern District - LCMS

<http://southernlcms.org/disaster-response/>



Donations for disaster relief may be made online or by mailing a check to the Southern District office. One-hundred percent of your gift will go directly to the recovery of those affected by Ida. Please give as you are able in order to help the district help those directly impacted by Ida.

Donations by check may be mailed to the Southern District office:

100 Mission Drive
Slidell, LA 70460

Please write "Disaster Relief" on the memo line.

The Southern District Volunteer Effort

Pastor Ed Brashier, Director of Shepherd's Heart Disaster Response Ministry, is The Southern District - LCMS Disaster Response Coordinator. The Hurricane Ida response team will be using the NEW LCMS Volunteer Registration program. Go to <https://www.lcms-lert.org/> and create a profile, then "Fan" the Southern District. For safety's sake, this program requires a background check for all volunteers. This is an "extra mile" measure to protect the homeowners, congregations, and volunteers from those who might be there for the wrong reasons.

Feeding Ministry

The Village Church - Lutheran in Lacombe, LA provides an ongoing feeding to communities affected by natural disasters. Their small team all of whom have been affected by Ida willing, help others. Just two days after Ida hit, they served 600 meals of Jambalaya, did the same in the days following, and will continue to do so in the coming weeks. Contact Walter Organ at waltorgan@gmail.com for information on how to support them.

Sunday Morning Bible Study is Back!

Sunday morning bible study has resumed! Join us in the fellowship hall at 9:00 a.m. for an hour of study, discussion, and prayer.

Joy of the Lord

HAVE hope
TRY new things
BE active
SEE the good
SAY “I Love You,” more
CHALLENGE yourself
CHOOSE to be happy
EAT better
ENJOY today
FORGIVE more readily
READ more often
BECOME your best you

Change in Mobile Giving

GivePlus is becoming Vanco Mobile!
A brief message from GivePlus:

“To inform your members about all the great features and updates in Vanco Mobile, we will email your members who now use GivePlus with details about the Vanco Mobile app. Our message is simply to notify your members that GivePlus Mobile will not be supported or functional after January 31, 2022, as your church moves to the improved Vanco Mobile app. Only church members who use the GivePlus Mobile app will be contacted.”

GIVEPLUS⁺
YOUR CHURCH GIVING APP



FIRST LUTHERAN STAFF

INTERIM PASTOR
Rev. Kurtis Schultz

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION
Rev. Kurtis Schultz

MINISTRY COORDINATORS:

CHRIST CARE

Rev. Tom Lackey

OUTREACH & INREACH

Vacant

SERVE & CELEBRATE

Lorenza Robinson

FACILITIES & PROPERTIES

Stan Weir

WORSHIP

Charles Craig

FIRST IMPRESSIONS EDITOR

Heather Lackey



MAN UP! Meets the 4th Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m. All men are welcome to join us for a time of fellowship, prayer, and devotion.

Contact Lorenza Robinson for information on how MAN UP! is meeting during the pandemic.

Birthdays & Anniversaries



1/5: Terry Lepp
1/5: Elaine Tabb
1/7: Jeremy Regulus
1/12: Frances Foy
1/14: Tommy Lampella
1/16: Kristal Walton
1/22: Margaret Bowens
1/22: Stan Weir
1/23: Curtis Harris
1/27: Charles Craig
1/27: LaShanda Crenshaw

No January Anniversaries on Record

Worship Team....January 2022

January 2

Pastor: Kurtis Schultz
Worship Assistant: Glen Thompson
Reader: Robby Trione
Live Stream :
Shane Harris & Jay McGraw
Music: Larry Donaldson

January 23

Pastor: George Murdaugh
Worship Assistant: Charles Craig
Reader: Heather Lackey
Live Stream Assistants:
Shane Harris & Jay McGraw
Music: Larry Donaldson

January 9

Pastor: Tom Noon
Worship Assistant: Robert Regulus
Reader: Pat or Glen Thompson
Live Stream Assistants:
Shane Harris & Jay McGraw
Music: Larry Donaldson

January 30

Pastor: Tom Lackey
Worship Assistant: Henry Mosley
Reader: Mike Halbrooks
Live Stream Assistants:
Shane Harris & Jay McGraw
Music: Larry Donaldson

January 16

Pastor: Tom Lackey
Worship Assistant: Anthony McGraw
Reader: Henry Mosley
Live Stream Assistants:
Shane Harris & Jay McGraw
Music: Becky Schultz

