

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 Bible Study Opportunities
- 3 President's Letter
- 5 Evening Prayer
- 5 Joy of the Lord
- 6 Called to Serve Ministry
- 6 Man UP! Ministry
- 7 Deacon's Corner
- 8 LWML News
- 9 Christ Care Ministry
- 9 Voters Meeting / Potluck
- 10 Coming Attractions
- 11 Birthdays & Anniversaries
- 11 Worship Team



First Lutheran Church

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www.firstlutheranbham.org

[View our Church Calendar](#)



Pastor's Pen On Forgiveness and Love

"Therefore I tell you, her sins which are many, are forgiven, because she has loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little." - Luke 7:47

Does it surprise you that Jesus relates our ability to love to the amount we have been forgiven? Many think that a person can learn to love: that somehow we can set our wills to love and it would just happen, like learning algebra or physics. But Jesus makes it very clear that our receiving forgiveness has a great deal to do with our loving others.

What would you have thought had you seen the woman in the story making

Continued on page 2

Local Events

Through 6/11: Birmingham Stallions Football, Protective Life Stadium; www.theufl.com/teams/birmingham

Through 6/30: Disney & Cameron Mackintosh's *Mary Poppins*, Red Mountain Theatre; www.redmountaintheatre.org

Through 8/18: *Heroes and Villains: The Art of the Disney Costume*, Birmingham Museum of Art; www.artsbma.org

6/8: Zoo Brews, Birmingham Zoo; www.birminghamzoo.com

6/13-30: *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang: The Musical*, Virginia Samford Theatre; www.virginiasamfordtheatre.org

6/15: Festa Italiana, Sloss Furnaces; www.festaitalianabham.com

6/20: Major League Baseball at Rickwood - Giants vs. Cardinals, Rickwood Field; www.mlb.com/events/rickwood



(cont'd from p. 1)

such a public display of affection for Jesus? Why did she do such a thing? Why would an “especially wicked sinner” (Amplified Version) be drawn to Jesus who was so pure and holy? One might think that such a person would run away from righteousness and purity. Perhaps she recognized in Jesus One who would not judge her or reject her. What she needed was not rejection, but forgiveness and healing. It seems that by just being in His presence she received exactly what she needed. It is no wonder that she began to weep and affectionately anoint his feet with perfume. She has been set free from all the hurt and destruction of her past. She had an opportunity for a new beginning. She could realistically hope for a better life ahead. She no longer felt condemned to a life of sin, shame, and despair. In that light it is understandable that she “made a scene” and disregarded what others would think of her. She was grateful for the forgiveness Jesus had brought her and for His making it possible for her to love someone beside herself.

This story gives new insight into how we can grow in our love for others. It is not simply a matter of making some persistent effort on our part. It is not simply by sweet words or good deeds. It is by confessing our sins and acknowledging our need for forgiveness that we are opened to the ability to love others. It seems that so many of us are afraid to admit who we are. We posture and pretend to be somebody other than who we are – a sinner in need of God’s forgiveness and healing. It is when we acknowledge our need that we draw close to Jesus and, in experiencing His incredible love for us, our own capacity to love Him and others is increased.

Prayer: Lord help me to admit my need of You and to freely receive Your forgiveness that I might express my love to You unashamedly and then be a better channel of Your love to those around me. Amen

In His Peace,
Pastor Schultz

Bible Study Opportunities

- **Sunday Mornings** (in person at First Lutheran) - 9:00 a.m.
- **Wednesday Evenings** (via Zoom) - 6:30 p.m.
- **Saturday Mornings** (via Zoom) - 9:00 a.m.

If you are interested in participating in one of the Zoom studies, please email Pastor George Murdaugh at georgeearl@hotmail.com.



From the President

In June, the Voters will elect a new board of directors for the next two years. I have been privileged to serve with the current board, but I have also been privileged to work with other members of the Church Council who serve in appointed or in self-directed positions. I am always hesitant to recognize people individually in the church since I have been amazed by all the things that people do and I don't instantly recognize them all. There are many humble servants in our midsts that are doing good things prepared for them to do and I feel they want no other recognition other than to glorify God. I thank you for your humble service. On the other hand, as a church leader I need to keep people informed of the needs of the church and let them know of potential areas that God may place on their heart to jump in and help expand or maintain the ministry. Many things would not happen if people were not involved. Below is a list of functions with the contact (leader) person. Please see this person to volunteer to help - (this is my direct contact to you to be moved by God to plug in and participate in the joy of giving and returning thanks to God for all his blessings he has given us). I first want to thank our ministry team – Pastor Schultz, Pastor Lackey, Pastor Murdaugh, Pastor Noon, and Pastor Ramsey- for offering the Word of God every week either in sermons, Bible studies, visitations, insights in meetings, or individual counseling. Ya'll have been an underappreciated resource to the congregation.

Next, I want to thank the Council members other than the elected Board members:

1. Trustees – Stan Weir, Head Trustee – The day-to-day upkeep of a 75-year-old building is an ongoing process. I believe that Stan Weir and Larry Donaldson have developed a mystic connection with this building and can feel its aches, pains, and moods.
2. Fellowship – Lorenza Robinson – Thank you for all special events, the potluck dinners, and the pancake breakfasts.
3. Broadcast ministry – June Weir- Starting with a smartphone livestreaming on Facebook to a full production studio with 4K cameras and weekly distribution through YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, the broadcast ministry has grown. June has recruited Ginger Reeves, Larry Donaldson, Stan Weir, Shane Harris, Wendy Harris, and Jay McGraw as her content and broadcast crew but is still looking for additional help so that the ministry can continue to grow.

In addition to the Council there are organizations that operate independently within the church to meet certain needs. I am very appreciative for the work these groups do and know that each one would accept additional help.

(cont'd on p. 4)

(cont'd from p. 3)

1. Altar Guild – Terry Lepp, Carol Lackey, and Pat Thompson. These people prepare and clean up communion each week, change the paraments as needed, and keep oil in the candles. See Terry if you would like to help these ladies. Also, Terry is responsible for coordinating decorating the church for Christmas and Easter and for keeping the church season bulletin board up to date.
2. Lutheran's Women's Missionary League (LWML) – Sheree McGraw, President – The LWML sponsors various charitable fund raisers throughout the year and is a focus group for women's ministry in the church. See Shree for meeting dates.
3. Newsletter – Heather Lackey, Editor – Monthly, Heather shows great patience and persistence as she molds the production of the newsletter. I am sure she would accept help in the development, production, and editing of the newsletter.
4. Man Up – After being dormant for 3 years, the men's fellowship group is meeting at 8:00 AM on the 4th Saturday of each month. All men are encouraged to attend. Breakfast is served. Contact Glen Thompson for information.
5. Landscaping and gardening – A special thank you to Carol and James Melton and Becky and Kurtis Schultz for the landscaping done around the church.

Finally, there are operational areas in the church that currently need help. Please volunteer to help these functions if you have the talent.

1. Financial operations – See Frances Robinson our treasurer. Assistance is needed counting collections, making bank deposits, recording giving, and stewardship development.
2. Office operations – See Pastor Schultz for details.

Please forgive any oversights in recognizing someone. I do appreciate everything that is being done and know that we have much more that we could do (library, evangelism, community involvement). If there is something that you want to do and a group does not exist, please see me and let's discuss. If you want to be part of one of the existing active groups, see that group's leader about joining.

In God's service,

Glen Thompson
Congregational President and Chairman of the Call Committee

**Join us on the Second Sunday
of the month at 5:00PM for**

Evening Prayer

✠ ENTER IN SILENCE ✠

✠ WORSHIP PRAYERFULLY ✠

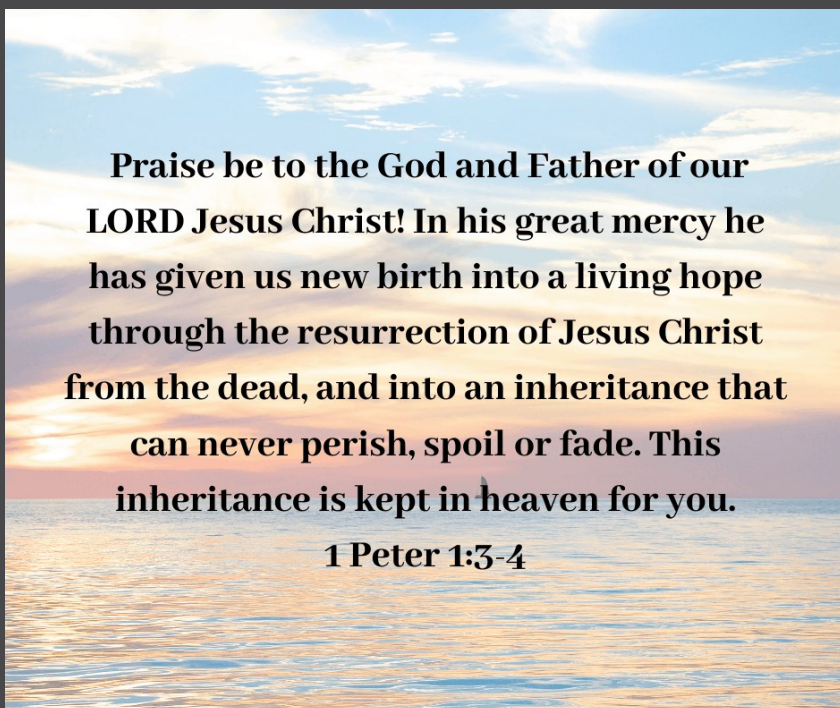
✠ DEPART IN PEACE ✠



*Joy of the
Lord*

Praise be to the God and Father of our
LORD Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he
has given us new birth into a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead, and into an inheritance that
can never perish, spoil or fade. This
inheritance is kept in heaven for you.

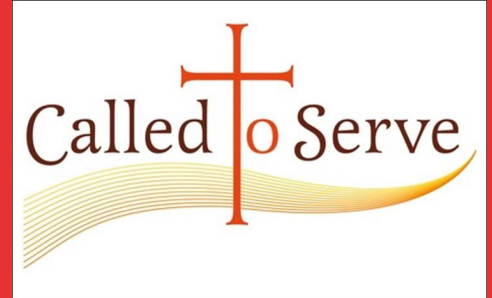
1 Peter 1:3-4



Called to Serve and Celebrate Ministry

A pastor of a city church became acquainted with one of his parishioners. During the pastor's conversation with this parishioner, he discovered that the man owned a considerable amount of property and that he had no will. The pastor told the parishioner that he wasn't so much concerned as to where he left his money, but he should have a will. The parishioner was not married, nor did he have any known relatives. Two years later, at age 67, the parishioner was in an automobile accident and died from the injuries he sustained. The pastor was given a copy of this man's will during the probate and in the will it stated that he had left one-half of his estate to his parish. The estate was valued at more than 2 million dollars. This city church, struggling to maintain its programs and buildings, received over one million dollars because the pastor had encouraged his parishioner to consider making out a will. Christians, even of modest means, realize that the worth of the possessions they've accumulated during their earthly lives can do no greater good after death than to assist in the work of the Lord and to continue to give glory to his name.

Lorenza Robinson
Called to Serve & Celebrate Ministry



Man Up! Men's Ministry

Saturday, June 29

The next Man Up! gathering will take place **Saturday, June 29 at 8:00 a.m.** at the church. All men are invited and encouraged to attend. We'll begin with a prepared breakfast, followed by a short Bible study and a work project. A sign-up sheet will be posted on one of the bulletin boards. Please sign up by June 23 so we'll know how many to plan for breakfast. Contact Glen Thompson with any questions.



Deacons' Corner

Reluctant Servants with God-Given Talents

Exodus 3:2 - 4:17

Our Lord has given each of us an opportunity to be present at His table to glorify Him at the heavenly banquet. Of course, there will be multitudes from every nation to serve Him in some capacity. As we are born, He has given each of us talents. He has given some more talents than others, some to serve at critical moments, some for organizations, some for His Gospel, some keeping order. Our Lord has given talents for every aspect that involves our existence, yet those of us who seemly have fewer or less exciting talents or no less loved by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In our Lord's kingdom, it will not matter what our earthly talents were. It will be our services to the Lord in His Kingdom.

However, in our world and society today, we have in Churches many that are well equipped with God-given talent as well as acquired talents to serve in any capacity but are reluctant for reasons unknown. Whatever the reason might be, we have a God who is standing with us encouraging us with all the tools and capacity to function well above what we think is possible. Remember Moses as our Lord spoke to him. Moses uses excuses time and time again, but God makes a way to use Moses and He will do the same for you and me. Our Lord has given each of us many talents to be used if we would only have faith and trust Him to use them. God will support and strengthen the good work He has begun in us if we cling to His Word, and abide in His goodness, and faithfully use the gifts we have received. If we use the things entrusted to us for God and His purpose, we will be blessed here and in heaven.

In His Service,
Charles Craig
Chairman, Board of Deacons

LWML News**Painting the Planet Purple with Servanthood***1942-2024 -- 82 YEARS of GOD***THE FIVE Rs of REFLECTION and CLINGING CLOSER to GOD****REJOICE**

- Write about what you are grateful or thankful for.
- Consider using this space as a gratitude or joy list.

RELEASE

- Which negative thoughts keep you awake at night and cause you to become stuck in the gloomy depths of pessimistic thinking?
- Do you feel shame over a past sin or decision that hangs over you like a cloud?
- What do you need to let go of that you cannot change?
- What hurts are you hanging on to?
- Write a prayer leaving all these things in the capable hands of **GOD**.

REFRAME

- What thoughts do you have about yourself, others, and **GOD** that need to change?
- Are there any challenges or circumstances you need to see differently?
- What thoughts can you ask **GOD** to help you change?
- How do you talk about and see yourself? Think about how **GOD** sees you. What would **HE** say to you?

REMEMBER

- What do you want to remember about **GOD'S** name, characteristic, or action?
- What is something new you learned from today?
- Spend time throughout the day remembering you are **GOD'S** child.

REST

- What promise can you rest in today?
- What are some ways you can rest in the place of **GOD'S** presence?

CPH.ORG/REST

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

Sheree McGraw, President
First Lutheran LWML

WORSHIP

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

Christ Care Ministry Be Careful

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2)

To put it as plainly as I can: Care of the mind is care of the soul and body. What we think, what we say, what we decide to do second by second will affect our lives in more ways than we can imagine. Habits of thought translate into habits of language and deeds. You know that. But who among us (bombarded as we are with advertisements, false-to-dangerous allurements, gossip, millions of opinions, scandals, lies, and images of grotesque violence) does not need reminding that WE are the caretakers of the mind God gave us? Your neighbor may love you, but he or she is not the caretaker of your mind. You are. We cannot be too careful about what we read, what we listen to, and to whom we listen. Whether it's an entertainer, a broadcaster, a journalist, a television commentator, a politician, or a minister in-or-out of a pulpit, we cannot be too careful. The mind is too precious; and need I say, God gave us only one mind. Not two, like two kidneys, but one. So ... BE CAREFUL.

The mind can be extraordinarily deceitful. It can convince its “owner” to overlook, explain away, distort, even to embrace imposters and criminals and their lies believing them to be just and best for the common good. (Think of the tens of millions of people in Germany who did that in the '30s and '40s.) BE CAREFUL. If we're not good stewards of our minds, of what will we be good stewards?

Stay in God's Peace,
Pastor Tom

From the commentaries of Rev. Dr. Norman Henry McCrummen III and used with his permission.

Voters Meeting / Potluck Lunch Sunday, June 30

Meet and eat, y'all! Bring a dish to share and plan to stay after the worship service on June 30 for our 5th Sunday potluck, along with a voters meeting to elect church officers for the 2024-26 term.



Coming Attractions

Movie Night on the Lawn

Join our movie night on Saturday, August 10 at 6 pm on the front lawn, weather permitting.

Please let us know what movie(s) you want to see, keeping in mind this event is open to the neighborhood and will entertain all ages.

If you have a DVD player or projector that we may use for the event, please let June Weir know. **Send your recommendations for family-friendly movies to junerweir@gmail.com**

Family Game Night is Back!

Let's play BINGO! Please save the date Tuesday, September 10 at 6 pm. This fun night is open for members and neighbors of all ages.

We need your help to make this happen - any small prizes that you want to donate would be appreciated. Watch the newsletter and our website for more details.



Happy Ordination Anniversary!

Congratulations to Pastor Kurtis Schultz who will celebrate 45 years in pastoral ministry on June 3 and to Pastor Tom Lackey who will celebrate 15 years in ministry on June 7! We're thankful for their service to our congregation and pray God continues to bless them.



FIRST LUTHERAN STAFF

INTERIM PASTOR

Rev. Kurtis Schultz

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Rev. Kurtis Schultz

MINISTRY COORDINATORS:

CHRIST CARE

Rev. Tom Lackey

SERVE & CELEBRATE

Lorenza Robinson

FACILITIES & PROPERTIES

Stan Weir

WORSHIP/DEACONS

Charles Craig

DIGITAL MEDIA

June Weir

FIRST IMPRESSIONS EDITOR

Heather Lackey

Birthdays & Anniversaries



6/3: Frances Robinson
6/15: Henry Mosley
6/21: June Weir
6/29: Rhonda Graham
6/30: Sean Golden



6/17: Shane & Wendy Harris
6/27: Kurtis & Becky Schultz
6/28: Anthony & Sheree McGraw

Worship Team...June 2024

June 2

Pastor: George Murdaugh
 Worship Asst: Mike Halbrooks
 Reader: Charles Craig
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Larry Donaldson

June 9

Pastor: Tom Noon
 Worship Asst: Anthony McGraw
 Reader: Glen or Pat Thompson
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Becky Schultz

June 16

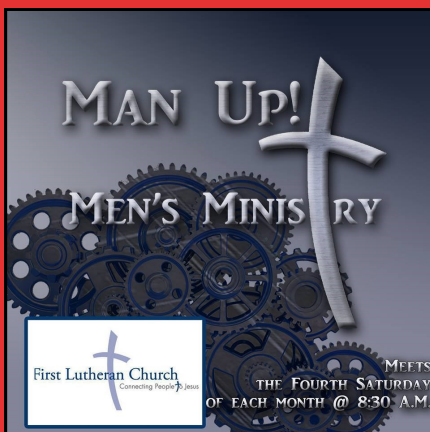
Pastor: Tom Lackey
 Worship Asst: Charles Craig
 Reader: Heather Lackey
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Larry Donaldson

June 23

Pastor: Tony Ramsey
 Worship Asst: Henry Mosley
 Reader: Henry Mosley
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Larry Donaldson

June 30

Pastor: Tony Ramsey
 Worship Asst: Glen Thompson
 Reader: Mike Halbrooks
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Larry Donaldson



ManUP! Our men's ministry is back in action!
The group meets on the last Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

