

FIRST Impressions

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A Publication of First Lutheran Church • Birmingham, AL

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First Lutheran Church

2507 Highland Avenue
Birmingham, AL 35205
205.933.0380

www.firstlutheranbham.org

[View our Church Calendar](#)



Get to Know Pastor Tommy Presley

We want to give a big warm First Lutheran welcome to our new pastor, Rev. Tommy Presley, and his family! They have officially arrived in Birmingham and are settling into their new home and new city.

Pastor Tommy was born on June 25th and was raised in Huntsville, Alabama. He was baptized and confirmed at Grace Lutheran Church in Huntsville. He attended Concordia University Wisconsin for his undergraduate degree and went on to graduate from Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne with

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Local Events

Through 8/11: *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, 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

8/1-4: *Legally Blonde, The Musical*, Virginia Samford Theatre; www.virginiasamfordtheatre.org

8/2: Art on the Rocks, Birmingham Museum of Art; www.artsbma.org

8/17: CahaBAZAAR Night Market, Cahaba Brewing Company; www.cahababrewing.com

8/19-25: 26th Annual Sidewalk Film Festival, various downtown venues; www.sidewalkfest.com

8/31: *Purple Madness - Tribute to Prince*, Iron City; www.ironcitybham.com



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a master's in divinity. Pastor Tommy was ordained in his hometown in 2017 and has faithfully served since.

While attending seminary, he met his wife while evangelizing. They began to date in 2017, then married shortly after in 2018. Pastor Tommy and Tori had their first child in late 2019, their second in 2022, and are blessed to welcome a third into the world in 2024. They also share two dogs and a cat.

During his free time, Pastor enjoys spending time with his family, watching Alabama football, being outdoors and playing video and board games with friends. He also always looks forward to learning and enjoying more hobbies.



The Presley Family



Service of Installation for

Rev. Thomas Presley, Pastor

First Lutheran Church
2507 Highland Avenue South
Birmingham Alabama 35205

Sunday August 11, 2024
2:30 pm

Reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall.

*Clergy are invited to vest with red stole
and participate.*

From the President

This summer has been a very busy time for the church. Usually there are fewer meetings and events when people are out of town, but this year isn't typical.

We welcome Pastor Presley, Tori, Maximus, and Katarina to First Lutheran. Pastor Presley and Tori have been in Birmingham since July 10 but had significant problems receiving their furnishings and personal possessions. We pray that this is well behind them and that they can begin to relax and settle in.

Elections were held at the end of June with installation of the new officers and deacons on July 8. The new Board of Directors consist of Glen Thompson, President; Henry Mosley, Vice-President; Wendy Harris, Secretary; Francis Robinson, Treasurer; Carol Lackey and Lynn Phifer, Members-at-Large. Twelve deacons were also elected and are: Charles Craig, Stan Weir, Anthony McGraw, Michael Halbrooks, Lorenza Robinson, Andy Sullivan, Glen Thompson, Robert Regulus, Shane Harris, Henry Mosley, and Nelson Sharit.

The Church Council met on July 14 and has begun planning for the next two years. The Council understands that it will take some time for Pastor Presley to get established and be ready to work with the Council, but in the meantime the Council is assessing areas where we need to pay more attention or areas where people need more assistance and the Council will be recruiting people to help. Our new Members-at-Large are identifying ministry opportunities which they are interested in and they are developing ways to work with that interest.

The Council is also considering ways to get every member engaged in Bible study. Currently Bible studies are offered on Sunday morning at 9:00 AM in the fellowship hall, on Wednesday evening at 6:30 PM and Saturday morning at 9:00 AM as an online Zoom meeting, and at 8:00 AM on the last Saturday of each month at the Man Up meeting. With these opportunities, roughly one-third of the congregation participates. It is evident that we still need to expand topics and opportunities for people to be in the Word and in fellowship with other believers.

The renovation of the fellowship hall ceiling should be completed in early August. We are looking forward to having it completed before Pastor Presley's installation on August 11, or August 18 if the work is not completed in early August. Updates will be provided each Sunday and through email if they are needed.

In Christ's service,

Glen Thompson
Congregational President

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

Evening Prayer

✠ ENTER IN SILENCE ✠

✠ WORSHIP PRAYERFULLY ✠

✠ DEPART IN PEACE ✠



Man Up! Men's Ministry

Saturday, August 31

The July Man Up! gathering will take place **Saturday, August 31 at 8:30 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 August 25 so we'll know how many to plan for breakfast. Contact Glen Thompson with any questions.



WORSHIP

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

Deacons' Corner

Love Makes the Difference

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12

God's love for us is unbounded, and He has commanded us to love one another. Our Lord is the very essence of love. His very nature is love and to love us, we are his, his creation. God's love for us has no limits and his giving his life for us was his way of loving us. His love is free to everyone for their salvation, of course it depends upon one's willingness to believe in Him and receive it. In fact, the very nature of God is to love us, and He has loved us freely before he got our attention and even without a response from us.

We might ask the question, why is it so difficult for some of us to accept the love of God? Could it be by the way in which we use the word "love" without considering its true meaning? Today, we use the word "love" ever so lightly that much of its power is obscured. The Greeks had three categories describing three distinct relationships all translated as love. The first describes love as the love we experience in kinship. The second describes love as conditional based upon personal attraction or personal benefit and thirdly the word love is described as that which is unconditional love. A love given to us that is totally unrelated to deserving it or earning it in some way. It is self-sacrificing love, totally committed to the one who is loved.

However, abiding in God's love makes a difference in each of our lives. It makes a difference in our speech toward one another. It makes a difference in all our relationships with one another not only in speech but every facet of our life and being. In loving one another, we discover what love is and what it is to be loved. Yet, there are no guidelines for love. Love of those who share our humanity can often point us to the truth of who we are.

In His Service,
Charles Craig
Chairman, Board of Deacons

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.



Stewardship: Time, Talents, Treasures

Stewardship is the act of managing or caring for something. It is often spelled with the "S" looking like a dollar sign. Stewardship often refers to managing money.

Tithe is a word derived from the Latin word, "Teogatha", meaning tenth. Tithe is one-tenth of something, either given or taken. It is often used in reference to a church offering.

I grew up in a traditional German family as a Missouri Synod Lutheran. We tithed! My mother had a paper box in the shape of a church on the kitchen counter. One-tenth of any money went into that box. All bills were paid by check including a weekly check for church. My sister and I would have chores to do around the house. Although we were not paid to do our assigned chores, once in a while we were given a one-dollar bill. We knew ten cents of every dollar had to go to church. It was a standard! As a child, I thought this was great because I got ninety cents from every dollar received, either as an allowance or as a gift. This is how we would ensure that the church received part of our "treasure". (Mark 12:17).

We are all blessed with a talent or special ability. This is a God-given gift. We are to give back to God. (1 Chronicles 29:14). We use these talents at church. Maybe we are good at speaking, maybe we have an ear for music and perfect pitch when singing, maybe we have the gift of encouraging others. This gift is often not recognized by the person possessing it, but rather is told to that person after an act of encouragement is witnessed. As children, my brother on trombone, my sister on clarinet, and I on flute would play for church functions, offering praises to God. (1 Corinthians 12: 4-11).

Time is something we all have. Our days and nights belong to all. The same 24 hours is given to everyone (Genesis 1:5). There are many ways to offer our time to God. We can lead a Bible study, in person or on-line. We can give a talk at church. We can do maintenance work on church property or prepare a meal in the church kitchen. Every form of our time, talents and treasures are gifts from God. It really is not difficult to give one-tenth back to God, as it is already His. Such is a tithe. May we prayerfully consider giving of our stewardship gifts, time, talents, and tithing.

PRAYER:

Our dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for all our blessings. We ask Your guidance to show us how to be good stewards of all the gifts You have given us. In Your Son's Holy Name, AMEN.

Lynn Phifer
Council Member-at-Large

LWML News

Painting the Planet Purple with Servanthood
1942-2024 -- 82 YEARS of GOD



WELCOME

to Pastor Tommy Presley and his family! LWML looks forward to working alongside Pastor and Tori in their ministry at First Lutheran and in the mission field beyond.

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

Sheree McGraw, President
First Lutheran LWML

Coming Attractions

Movie Night on the Lawn - POSTPONED

Our movie night on the front lawn set for August has been postponed until October. Stay tuned for a date, time, and additional details!



If you have a DVD player or projector that we may use for the event, please email June Weir at junerweir@gmail.com.

Family Game Night is Almost Here!

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

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



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



8/6: Anthony McGraw

8/7: Boni Hoover

8/9: L'Tanya Sims

8/10: Austin Stallworth

8/12: Nelson Sharit

8/12: Ernest Washington III

8/13: Dot Claunch

8/20: Tori Presley

8/24: Evelyn Veal

8/27: Kevin Kirwan

8/14: Henry & Haelim Allen

8/14: Tom & Carol Lackey

8/30: George & Teresa Murdaugh

Worship Team...August 2024

August 4

Pastor: Kurtis Schultz

Worship Asst: Henry Mosley

Reader: Kris Nuss

Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris &
James McGraw

Music: Larry Donaldson

August 18

Pastor: Tommy Presley

Worship Asst: Mike Halbrooks

Reader: Sheree McGraw

Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris &
James McGraw

Music: Larry Donaldson

August 11

Pastor: Eric Johnson

Worship Asst: Glen Thompson

Reader: James McGraw

Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris &
James McGraw

Music: Becky Schultz

August 25

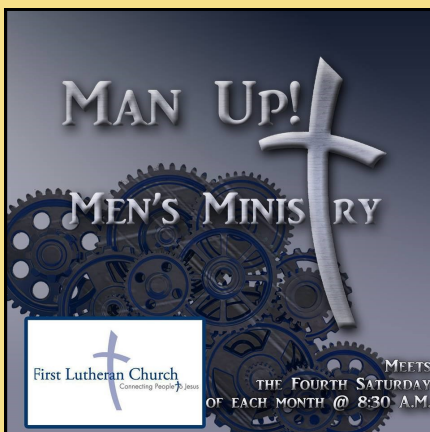
Pastor: Tommy Presley

Worship Asst: Robert Regulus

Reader: Carol Lackey

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.**

