

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
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www.firstlutheranbham.org

[View our Church Calendar](#)



Pastor's Pen Work & Weariness

School is in full swing and with it comes the dreaded busyness of the year. Children are now back in the swing of mimicking the adult life, eight hours of work, then come home and work more, then find time to fit in extra curriculars, and also maintain some level of family and social life. For the parents, you do the same thing with even less time. For grandparents, you try and take care of your kids and grandkids, assuring them that they are not going insane and they can accomplish the tasks set before them. If I could sum this part of year up in a word it would be: chaos. Now, I know what you are thinking. Pastor is going to tell me go to church,

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Local Events

10/3-5: 51st Annual Birmingham Greek Festival, Holy Trinity-Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Cathedral, www.bhamgreekfestival.net

10/3-6: Antiques at the Gardens, Birmingham Botanical Gardens; www.bbgardens.org

10/4-6: Race Weekend at Talladega, Talladega Superspeedway; www.talladegasuperspeedway.com

10/12-27 (Saturdays & Sundays only): Hoots & Howls: Daytime Halloween Event, Birmingham Zoo; www.birminghamzoo.com

10/18: ASO presents *Back to the 80's*, BJCC Concert Hall; www.alabamasymphony.org

10/24-27: Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (Youth Edition), Virginia Samford Theatre; www.virginiasamfordtheatre.org

10/27: 1925 Silent Film Classic *The Phantom of the Opera*, Alabama Theatre; www.alabamatheatre.com

10/30: ASO presents *Inspired by Alabama*, a concert with pianist Brian Raphael Nabors featuring works inspired by Alabama history, Alys Stephens Center; www.alabamasymphony.org



(cont'd from p. 1)

and how important it is, and why I should be doing it. Yes. I am. But give me a few moments of your precious time to explain why and maybe convince you to move church things out of the “to do” column into the “get to” column.

Chaos is a breeding ground for sin. When you are overworked, stressed, and busy, sin has ample opportunities to take hold and make life worse so that you become even more overworked, stressed, and busy. Our temperaments are terrible, our minds are rushed, our emotions are out of our control and this leads to us sinning against our God and hurting others. Sometimes in the chaos, others sin against us. Just as we are prone to much sin when we are drowning, others are prone to it as well. As sins begin to pile up, the weight we feel starts to crush us and lock us into a cycle of sins upon sins. You may suffer in silence, but I know you suffer. You know you suffer. You know others suffer. The question becomes what do we do about it? Who will save us from these unspoken, often ignored wounds? Where do we go?

Church. We go to church.

Our Lord Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, **“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”** We go to where Christ says to go. We go to Him. There in His holy house, He offers us His Word and His Sacraments for our rest and benefit. He says to us, “Come, hear that you are forgiven, hear that your neighbor is forgiven, taste and see that this forgiveness is *for you* in My body and My blood. Come, be strengthened by your brothers and sisters in the congregation. Come, learn from Me and take My yoke upon you, see I am gentle and lowly in heart. My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” In the Divine Service we witness holy things. Those holy things are given to you for your benefit so that the chaos of the world does not drown you. Again, listen to the words of our Lord from Mark 2:27, **“And he said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.’”** We go to church not because of some pharisaical law to do so, but because the Lord has promised His rest and His gifts there. So if you find yourself overwhelmed, if your children are overwhelmed, come and see Jesus. His yoke is easy, His burden light, *His gifts free*.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Tommy

CONTACT
information



Need to reach Pastor Tommy?

Email t.presley@firstlutheranbham.org or call the church at 205.933.0380 and when prompted to “select from the following menu,” press 5.

This will connect you directly to him at any time.

From the President

Each year in the fall the Church Council discusses plans for the next 12 months. Our goal is that every member is connected to a healthy Christian community where they can grow in faith and that every Christian is equipped to share the Gospel in word and deed. This year we will be emphasizing our involvement in the Word, our involvement with each other, and our involvement in the community outside the church walls. The major goal this year is to get everyone involved in a regular Bible study group. The church currently offers Bible study on Sunday morning, Wednesday evening, Saturday morning, and at each meeting of the Man Up group. If you cannot make one of these opportunities, please talk to me and let's discuss your particular need. There may be other people with your same need and we may be able to develop another opportunity.

The Council also encourages everyone to be involved in the ministry of the church by either serving on a board, a committee, or/and in a service organization like LWML or Man Up. Both LWML and Man Up meet monthly. Come participate in the activities of each and enjoy the Christian fellowship. There are also many other ways to serve the Lord through the church (Altar Guild, collection processing, live stream broadcast, Trustees Committee, Fellowship Committee, newsletter). If you have a particular talent and need help finding a way to use it, talk to me and I will help you find a way to apply your talents.

Through the year the church will be doing things to get us out into the community or getting the community to engage with us. These will be out reaching events such as movie night, game night, caroling at Christmas, craft events, etc. Please come and support these events and get to know our neighbors and let them meet Jesus through you by hearing your one-of-a-kind story.

October is the Synod's designated month for showing appreciation, in an intentional way, to those who serve us through their faithfulness, dedication, and skill. These dear workers bless us in a multitude of ways as they preach, teach, and care for God's people in body and soul. Please take the time through word and deed sometime in October to thank each of the pastors that God has given us this past year.

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 ✝



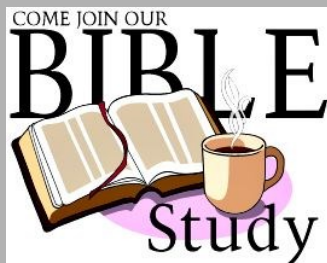
Man Up! Men's Ministry

Saturday, October 26

The October Man Up! gathering will take place **Saturday, October 26 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 October 20 so we'll know how many to plan on for breakfast. Contact Glen Thompson with any questions.



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 Honey & Gifts of Treasure

"Hello, Honey." What a sweet greeting from a loved one!

I recently read an article on the healing power of honey by Cal Orey titled "Discover the Latest Buzz about Honey." This article focuses on honey as an ancient "nectar of the gods" and today it is a 21st century miracle. Honey may heal insomnia, cough, headaches, ease tension, and relieve heartburn. The article even credits honey with fighting wrinkles. Now that might be a reason to try it! There are different types of honey and each works on a different health issue. Some honeys are known to halt the growth of some cancer cells, some increase the number of healthy antioxidants in your body. While others fight skin infections and aid digestion. Mayo Clinic researchers say that honey is helping in cardiovascular disease, cough, gastrointestinal disease, neurological disease and wound care.

In the Old Testament, we are told about the people of Israel eating manna. "The people of Israel called the food manna. It was like a small white seed, and tasted like thin cakes made with honey" (Exodus 16:31). The Israelites were warned not to offer honey as a sacrifice. "None of the grain offerings which you present to the Lord may be made with yeast; you must never use yeast or honey in food offered to the Lord" (Leviticus 2:11).

Honey represents a gift of treasures in our Stewardship study. And sharing our gifts with others is an important issue in our faith. We are not to hoard our gifts; not food, not time, not talents, not treasures. Just look around our church and see what an outstanding job Lorenza and the "Man Up" group of men have done recently to improve our church's structure.

Many gifts of talent and time were shared. And "treasures" (church money) were saved. Thank you all! And are these men looking for praise? NO! They are very humble about the work they have done.

Lynn Phifer

Council Member-at-Large

**WORSHIP**

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

LWML News

Painting the Planet Purple with Servanthood

1942-2024 -- 82 YEARS of GOD



September TO REMEMBER

Lutheran Women in Mission's Giving Day: SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Nationwide, LWML raised \$36,098 for its 2023-2025 Mission Goal Grants. With 2023-2025 LWML Mission Goal: \$2,350,000, these donations assisted in paying off in full 17 of the 31 grant proposals. Thank you for giving generously to others as He gives to us.

Ready to Serve . . . LUKE 1:28

LWML Sunday: October 20

This year's Lutheran Women in Mission Sunday theme is "Ready to Serve" based on Luke 1:38. As redeemed children of God, Lutheran Women in Mission give thanks for the opportunity to serve others as we have been served, to proclaim that Jesus is our Lord and that He came for all nations, and to respond with our mite offerings to support God's mission. Our example has been the widow and her mites. The offering she made was observed by our Lord leading Him to share that her copper coins, her mites, were *"everything she had, all she had to live on"* (Mark 12:43). May our mite offerings be blessed for our Lord's kingdom.

First Lutheran Women in Mission Projects:

- International — Lutheran World Relief (Support where needed in Africa)
- National — St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
- Local — Grace House Ministries

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her (Luke 1:38).

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

Sheree McGraw, President
First Lutheran LWML

Community-Wide Food Drive

WAIT, WAIT! It's too early for Christmas.

Let's get straight to the point. I am writing this article in mid-September, and there are Christmas decorations on the shelves already! You know who your culprits are—Hobby Lobby and Michaels! Why should we skip some of the best fall celebrations, like Halloween, the Reformation, All Saints Day, Thanksgiving and best of all—the IRON BOWL GAME?



Let's slow this roll down a bit and be thankful for all God's gifts to us. Our church is holding a community-wide food drive for families in need. Bring your gratitude to reality. Bring your bountiful blessings to First Lutheran Church on Monday, Nov. 11th and enjoy movie night with free popcorn and bottled water. If you can't make it to movie night, items may be dropped off whenever the building is open, look for the basket in the Fellowship Hall.

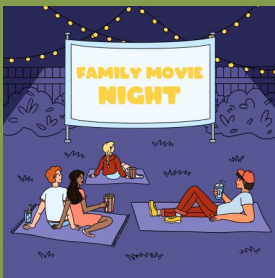
If you have a problem deciding what to bring, here is a list of requested items. His blessing abounds!

FOOD DRIVE MOST-NEEDED ITEMS:

We encourage donations to be HEALTHY, LOW-FAT, LOW-SODIUM, AND LOW-SUGAR non-perishable products. - Canned Meat (Chicken, Tuna, Salmon, etc.) - Canned Vegetables (Low/No Sodium Preferred) - Canned Fruit (or Applesauce) - Canned OR Boxed Meals (Chef Boyardee, Beef Stew, etc.) - Boxed Mac & Cheese - Potato Flakes - Peanut Butter (and Other Nut Butter) - Canned OR Dried Beans, Peas, Lentils, etc. - Pasta, Rice, Quinoa (or Other Healthy Carbs) - Breakfast Cereals, Oatmeal, Grits (and Other Breakfast Foods) - 100% Fruit Juice (Canned, Plastic Bottles, or Boxes) - Shelf-Stable Milk (Dairy or Non-Dairy Alternatives such as Oat, Almond, Coconut, etc.) - AND... other healthy non-perishable products!

PLEASE AVOID Sodas, candy, junk food, alcoholic beverages, homemade items, open/used items, items in a glass container, or perishable products. Expired products are not acceptable.

No time to shop? Donations of \$1 will provide 8 meals.



Movie Night on the Lawn

Bring a blanket or a bag chair and a friend or two and join us for a movie on the front lawn, complete with free popcorn and drinks!

Date: Monday, November 11

Time: 5:30 pm

Place: First Lutheran front lawn

Admission: A donation to our community-wide food drive (see above article)

Vote for your favorite family-friendly movie to watch at secretary@firstlutheranbham.org. Winner to be announced November 1st. If the weather does not cooperate, meet us inside in the Fellowship Hall, where the show will go on!



FIRST LUTHERAN STAFF

PASTOR

Rev. Tommy Presley

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Rev. Kurtis Schultz

MINISTRY COORDINATORS:

CHRIST CARE

Rev. Tom Lackey

SERVE & CELEBRATE

Lorenza Robinson

FACILITIES & PROPERTIES

Stan Weir

DEACONS / WORSHIP

Charles Craig

DIGITAL MEDIA

June Weir

FIRST IMPRESSIONS EDITOR

Heather Lackey

Birthdays & Anniversaries



10/5: Judy Drews
10/9: Wendy Harris
10/9: Tim Shiflett
10/10: Robert Regulus
10/12: Jennie Kilbourne
10/16: Elise Robinson
10/22: Ernestine Craig
10/22: Torrey Crenshaw
10/23: Cynthia Brown
10/26: Becky Schultz
10/29: Judy Brown

10/4: Lorenza & Frances Robinson

Worship Team...October 2024

October 6

Pastor: Tommy Presley
 Worship Asst: Robert Regulus
 Reader: Mike Halbrooks
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Larry Donaldson

October 20

Pastor: Tommy Presley
 Worship Asst: Charles Craig
 Reader: Frances Robinson
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Becky Schultz

October 13

Pastor: Tommy Presley
 Worship Asst: Anthony McGraw
 Reader: Robert Regulus
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Larry Donaldson

October 27

Pastor: Tommy Presley
 Worship Asst: Henry Mosley
 Reader: Wendy Harris
 Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris & James McGraw
 Music: Larry Donaldson



Our men's ministry, ManUP!,
 meets the last Saturday of
 the month at 8:30 a.m. in the
 Fellowship Hall. All men are
 welcome!

