

# FIRST Impressions

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A Publication of First Lutheran Church · Birmingham, AL

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[View our Church Calendar](#)



## Pastor's Pen

### The Testimony of Martyrdom

*"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm."*

- Ephesians 6:12-13

Something is different. The assassination of Charlie Kirk brought with it a soul-shaking chill that rippled throughout the whole globe. We saw this chill in the utter shock and confusion of people being forced to come to terms with the reality of political violence perpetrated against an

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## Local Events

**Through 10/25:** Birmingham Legion Soccer, Protective Stadium;  
[www.bhmlegion.com](http://www.bhmlegion.com)

**Through 11/30:** *Silver & Ceremony from Southern Asia, 1830-1930*,  
Birmingham Museum of Art; [www.artsmbma.org](http://www.artsmbma.org)

**Saturdays through 12/13:** The Market at Pepper Place; [www.pepperplacemarket.com](http://www.pepperplacemarket.com)

**10/2-4:** Greek Food Festival, Holy Trinity-Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Cathedral;  
[www.greekfestbirmingham.org](http://www.greekfestbirmingham.org)

**10/5:** Symphony Goes Wild, Birmingham Zoo; [www.alabamasymphony.org](http://www.alabamasymphony.org)

**10/23-26:** *Beetlejuice Jr.*, Virginia Samford Theatre; [www.virginiasamfordtheatre.org](http://www.virginiasamfordtheatre.org)

**10/24-25:** *Dueling Ninths*, Alys Stephens Center; [www.alabamasymphony.org](http://www.alabamasymphony.org)

**10/26:** Silent Film Classic *The Phantom of the Opera*, Alabama Theatre;  
[www.alabamatheatre.com](http://www.alabamatheatre.com)



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unexpected recipient. We saw it in the grief people shared at the loss of a son, husband, father, mentor, and inspiration. We see it still in the despair people carry, heavy in their souls, when they saw it was their neighbors, family, or friends that cheered such an act with malicious fervor. For those who didn't cheer, those who may not have agreed with Charlie Kirk or even liked him still felt the chill extended to them, bringing with it doubt and uncertainty. Overall, it would seem to me there was a time, a way things worked, before the assassination of Charlie and now there is a time, a way things work, after his assassination. Something is different.

For some, the chill faded and was quickly replaced by the heat of anger. Cries of justice, demands of accountability, and the steady refrain of, "No more," ring across the air. Rightfully so. For others, the chilled settled into a cold dread. A fear now resides with them whispering dangers for the future or even dangers for themselves. Who could blame those who feel this way? For others still, including myself, there is a torrent of the two fighting for supremacy. Some days bring with it the fires of wrath and a great desire to see the wicked crushed by the righteousness of God. I want to see an end to all this wanton evil and have the foolish preaching of "wise men" silenced under the truth of the Lord. Then tomorrow comes, and dread sits with me. A cold fear that questions, "How can we move forward with one another? How can forgiveness reign with those who do not value it but abuse it? How can I walk this uncertain path, especially with little footfalls that follow behind me?" Perhaps you share these questions or feelings. Perhaps you struggle with me. Perhaps you ask the same question I do:

*Who will save us from this body of death?*

The answer has always been and will always be the same. Jesus. Jesus is the only way forward through this and every tragedy. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus is the door and the vine. Jesus is the great I AM. Hear the words of our Lord, ***"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*** I encourage you, answer the question asked to Martha. For if you do believe this, then Charlie, who presently is away from his flesh, has not died eternally but lives with Christ even now. As do all who believe who were victims of perverse, brutal violence and death. Our Savior, who looks at death as if it was sleep, holds them. Life itself cares for them and comforts them.

But what of us who remain? What shall we do? Hear the Apostle Paul, ***"Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication."***

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*Stand. Firm.*

Hold the line, brothers and sisters in Christ. Now, more than ever in our lifetime, we must preach Christ crucified and hold to the truths and tenets given to us in His Holy Word. No more do we entertain false doctrine or give ear to false council. No more do we pervert or make excuses for God's Holy Word but instead proclaim it boldly and courageously. We are not ashamed of the hope that is within us for it is our foundation to endure all that evil has to throw at us.

You do not fight against flesh and blood but against the evil one and all principalities that come with it. Remember all heresy, perversion, and evil begins with the departure from God's Word founded on that age old question that started all this mess, "Did God really say?"

Just as Egypt refused to free Israel, the one we call the devil refuses to release those under his capture. So we continue to preach, pray, and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the sake of our neighbor. It is only Jesus who sets the captives free and heals the brokenhearted. Our faithfulness is not just for our own benefit but for the love we share for our friends, family, and neighbors across the whole globe. Let not the devil twist us into instruments of wrath but instead let us become as steel fortified against all lies and falsehood. We must be bastions of truth in an untruthful age, havens for the faithful, arks for those who travel in this flood.

It is not wrong to seek justice, brothers and sisters. In fact, it is necessary so that great wickedness in all its forms is restrained to protect each other. Just remember who we ultimately struggle against.

*"Jesus defeated death so that you can live." – Charlie Kirk [September 10, 2025]*

In Christ,

*Pastor Tommy*

## From the President

The long-range planning meeting that was scheduled for September 7 has been rescheduled for **October 4**. The meeting will begin at 9:00 AM in the fellowship hall and will end at 1:00 PM. During the meeting we will discuss the direction of the church for the next 3 to 5 years. We will discuss who our "community" is and develop plans to engage and serve this community.

**Everyone in the congregation is invited to attend and participate in the meeting.** Please come and participate in the discussion and planning.

Glen Thompson, Congregational President

## LWML News

### PSALM 20

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Lutheran Women in Mission here at First is now in one of our busiest seasons of the year.



This month we celebrate LWML Sunday on **October 5**. This year's theme is based on Christ's Ascension message found in Luke 24: 44-53 to "GO." Lutheran Women around the globe have joined hearts, hands, and voices to spread the message of repentance and forgiveness. After service that day, we will hold an LWML-sponsored luncheon as a thank you for all of your prayers and support.

As has been mentioned in previous articles, the following charities selected for 2025 are:

1. **One Collective:** Amanda Epperson, missionary to Zambia, sponsored by Tori Presley (**International**)
2. **Baer Christian Hospital Project, India**, sponsored by Pastor George Murdaugh (**International**)
3. **WorshipAnew: Lutheran Ministries Media (National)**
4. **Ronald McDonald House, Birmingham (Local)**

Detailed information will be available in a letter sent to members of First, as well as on the LWML Bulletin Board near the fellowship hall.

In order to successfully support these charities, the LWML will have a charitable bake sale/auction scheduled for November 23. We will place a sign-up sheet on our bulletin board. All are welcome to provide goods or bids.

We are humbly requesting monetary donations during our missions kick off beginning with LWML Sunday. Donation envelopes will be placed in letters mailed to members. Also, there are Mite Boxes located throughout the building to collect small change. Please feel free to pick one up and fill it.

As a fundraiser via our Mite Boxes, we will have a men vs. women challenge to fill these boxes. This friendly competition will run October 5 (LWML Sunday) through January 4. We will give out the empty boxes on LWML Sunday.

Please know all donations will be used to facilitate the work of the LWML. Donations are divided as follows; two thirds to selected charities and one third to the work of the Lutheran Women in Mission here at First. As a matter of fact, we completed one of this year's projects during the summer.

As always, we are grateful for your prayers and support as we continue our mission work.

Frances Burks Foy

President, First Lutheran Women in Mission

*2 Peter 3:18 - Growing in God's Grace*



## LWML Mite Box Challenge

**Who:** Men v. Women

**When:** October 5 - January 4

**What:** Fill up the LWML Mite Boxes that will be distributed on LWML Sunday (October 5) with small change and return them to church by January 4.

It's time to dig between your couch cushions, scour your car's console or glove box, turn your pockets inside-out and then ask yourselves,

**"Who will be crowned the mite-iest?"**



Join us in  
First Lutheran's  
Fellowship Hall for

# Fall Festival

**Saturday, October 25 from 4-6pm**  
Email [secretary@firstlutheranbham.org](mailto:secretary@firstlutheranbham.org)  
for more information and to sign up.

**WORSHIP**

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

"PUT ON THE  
**FULL**  
ARMOR  
OF GOD..."

- EPHESIANS 6:11 -



*Joy of  
the Lord*

## Bible Study Opportunities

- Sunday Mornings (in person at First Lutheran) - 9:00 a.m.
- 2nd & 4th Tuesdays - Ladies Bible Study (in person at First Lutheran) - 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday Evenings - Adult Catechesis and Potluck Dinner (in person at First Lutheran) - 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Evenings (via Zoom) - 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday Mornings (via Zoom) - 8:00 a.m.— **NOTE EARLIER TIME**



If you are interested in participating in one of the Zoom studies, please email Pastor George Murdaugh at [georgeearl@hotmail.com](mailto:georgeearl@hotmail.com).

## Man Up! Men's Ministry

**NOTE DATE CHANGE!** The October Man Up! gathering will take place the **THIRD Saturday in October (October 18)** 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 12** so we'll know how many to plan on for breakfast. Contact Glen Thompson with any questions.



## Casting Call for Video Volunteers

Do you love to tell a story and have 30 minutes or so to share your time? Then we need you! We are currently in the process of recording a new devotion series for Advent and Lent but could use more volunteers to read these devotions on camera.

The devotions will be on a computer screen for you to read while we record you. Yes, it is that easy. Just contact [JuneRWeir@gmail.com](mailto:JuneRWeir@gmail.com) to volunteer and pick your day and time to record.

And don't worry about being perfect -- our video editor can smooth out the glitches! This is a super opportunity to share your time and talents.



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

*Evening Prayer*

✝ ENTER IN SILENCE ✝

✝ WORSHIP PRAYERFULLY ✝

✝ DEPART IN PEACE ✝





## Stewardship

### Time, Talents and Treasures

#### TIME:

*“Then God commanded, “Let there be Light- and light appeared. God was pleased with what He saw. Then He separated the light from the darkness, and He named the Light, “Day” and the darkness He named, “Night.” Evening passed and morning came. That was the “First Day.” Genesis 1: 3*

We all have the same amount of time given to us by God. We cannot add even one second of time to our day. It has already been allotted to us by God.

#### TALENTS:

We all have talents given to us by God. We all have unique talents to use and share and glory our Lord. Here are just a few of the talents we can use to help our church grow and be active: greeter, nursery helper, evangelist, newsletter contributor and/or editor, council member, worship assistant, music assistant, media team member, Bible study teacher, maintenance, yard work, and other areas as needed.

*“So, we are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace God has given us.” Romans 12: 6*

#### TREASURES:

Ever wonder what it costs to keep the church doors open?

At a recent Council meeting, this topic was addressed. The amount to keep our doors open is roughly \$5,000 per week. Where does this money come from? It comes from OUR offerings. The Bible talks about tithing. The word, “tithe” means ten per cent. According to Webster’s New World College Dictionary, “tithe” is defined as one tenth of one’s annual income and is paid as a contribution to support a church or its clergy”. Wow! That is quite direct!

More direct is what the Bible says about giving.

*“And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause.” 2 Corinthians 9: 8*

Let’s make a prayerful initiative to give enough to our church to keep our doors open and help make a difference in our community. Our weekly offerings together can reach the \$5000 goal to maintain our mission. Praise God for all His blessings to us.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Phifer

Council Member at Large





## 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

#### WORSHIP/DEACONS

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 2025

### October 5

Pastor: Tommy Presley

Worship Asst: Robert Regulus

Communion Asst: Glen Thompson

Reader: Margot Addis

Greeters: Carol Lackey &

Teresa Murdaugh

Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris &

James McGraw

Music: Larry Donaldson

### October 19

Pastor: Tommy Presley

Worship Asst: Mike Halbrooks

Communion Asst: Henry Mosley

Reader: Henry Mosley

Greeters: Fran Foy & Beverly Halbrooks

Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris &

James McGraw

Music: Becky Schultz

### October 12

Pastor: Tommy Presley

Worship Asst: Anthony McGraw

Communion Asst: Stan Weir

Reader: Glen or Pat Thompson

Greeters: Eva Hill & Priscilla Williams

Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris &

James McGraw

Music: Larry Donaldson

### October 26

Pastor: Tommy Presley

Worship Asst: Glen Thompson

Communion Asst: Robert Regulus

Reader: Heather Lackey

Greeters: Kevin Kirwan & Carol Melton

Live Stream Asst: Shane Harris &

James McGraw

Music: Larry Donaldson



Our men's ministry, Man UP!, meets the last Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

All men are welcome!

