

# Variations

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

A Bi-Weekly Message from Vestavia Hills Baptist Church

## The Shepherd's Pen

About ten years ago, Dr. Robert W. Mayer wrote in The World Research News an article with the intriguing title, "Can We Afford the Tomato Effect Much Longer?" In it he argued that some new thinking was required, sometimes even considering possibilities that on the face of things didn't make sense according to "the accepted wisdom." In science this has happened more than can be recounted here. Mayer said that

The tomato effect ... is derived from the history of the tomato in North America. By 1560, the tomato was becoming a staple of the continental European diet. However, it was shunned in America until the 1800s. Why? Because we knew it was poisonous. Everyone knew tomatoes belong to the nightshade family. The leaves and fruit of several plants in this family can cause death if ingested. The fact that Europeans were eating tomatoes without harm was not relevant. It simply did not make sense to eat poisonous food.

This is also true, deeply true of the life of the Spirit as well. A year ago, we began on Anniversary Sunday to ask, "Could we address our indebtedness and position ourselves to fast-forward the future?" A long conversation followed. And who could predict an uncertain economy, oil prices and all the rest? Could it work?

Some things in the spiritual life seem to be paradoxical. Jesus spoke them a lot: you die in order to live; whatever you give up for him comes back in multiples; love is more powerful than anything, even death or armies. You surrender your life in order to get it back. Give in order to receive. Receive



*free the future*

## You Are Invited!

All members of Vestavia Hills Baptist Church are invited to attend Bible Study and Worship on Sunday, May 4. On that morning we will:

- ◆ Recognize our 51st Anniversary as a community of faith
- ◆ Make our three-year commitments to the "Free the Future" Stewardship Campaign
- ◆ Celebrate our fellowship with a church-wide lunch following the morning worship service

The schedule for the morning is:  
8:45 a.m.—Bible Study for all ages  
10:00 a.m.—Worship Service  
11:15 a.m.—Lunch  
(There is no cost for the meal.)

Prior to May 4, you will receive a contact to confirm your participation. You will also receive a "Free the Future" commitment card in the mail.

**Mark your calendar now and plan to join your church family on Sunday, May 4.**

in order to be able to give. All around us are the most delightful contradictions of the Spirit.

As much as I have ever witnessed, the Lord is doing a great work in and among us these days. We are learning what God can do. This is not mostly about money but hearts. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 12:14, "Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because **what I want is not your possessions but you.**"

What has blessed us is the giving of time, talents, love, devotion, surrender, and prayers. Miracles of giving are about the giving of ourselves. I have been watching people grow before my eyes, like time-lapse photography of plants blossoming at rapid speed. That is the gift of this time. That only happens by giving ourselves. Not possessions, but us.

This journey has been a delight. Hope yours has. On May 4, we will come together and pledge our gifts. That day, we will make commitments together. This is the great truth—it is the bringing and giving of ourselves to this moment that will make the difference. That has already happened and is continuing to happen. **The rest is merely celebration.**

Be here on May 4. Our commitment cards will be given as part of the offering. We will not walk forward like we do on Pledge Day, but rather as part of our regular offering. No one will see what anyone else does except the Lord. It is only what we do together that will count. We will come with presence, prayer, love and mutual care and offer ourselves and our commitments to God. Then we will eat lunch. We won't announce the total until two weeks later. It will be enough to come and give thanks to God who wants everything we have and provides everything we could give. What a wonderful day we will have! **I want you to be part of it with us. For what God wants most of all is you and me...**



## SING & SHOUT RETURNS

*Celebrating cultural & musical diversity  
with some of Birmingham's best choirs!*

Sunday, April 27, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.

The Alys Stephens Center-Jemison Concert Hall

Tickets \$10 in advance /\$12 at the door

Tickets available at the Alys Stephens Center Box Office  
online at [www.singandshout.org](http://www.singandshout.org),  
or by calling 205-595-5959

Featuring choirs from Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Vestavia Hills Baptist Church, Sixth Avenue Baptist Church, Greater Emmanuel Temple Holiness Church and Vestavia Hills Methodist Church.

## Welcome New Members

*Alyssa Aldape  
S.U. Box 3663  
Birmingham, AL 35229*

*Barbara Davis  
3601 Wyngate Lane  
Birmingham, AL 35242*

*Jane Dickerson  
2451 Lancaster Circle  
Birmingham, AL 35243*

*Mona Fisher  
1011 Vestavia Manor Dr.  
Birmingham, AL 35216*

*Marlene Gaither  
355 Talon Dr.  
Birmingham, AL 35242*

*Greg Ruff  
1129-7 Gentry Drive  
Auburn, AL 36830*



## The Shepherd Memorial Concert May 4, 2008 7:00 p.m.

The Shepherd Scholarship Fund will remain viable through the proceeds of an annual gala concert. The 2008 Shepherd Memorial Concert will take place in the Jemison Concert Hall at the Alys Stephens Center, and features a festival choir made up of singers from Vestavia Hills Baptist Church, The Birmingham Concert Chorale, The Cahaba Chorale, The Baptist Church of the Covenant, The Mississippi University for Women, and Vestavia Hills High School. They will perform Mozart's *Requiem* in memory of Dr. Shepherd, accompanied by the Southeastern Chamber Orchestra. In addition, one of Dr. Shepherd's former students, Dawson Hull, will perform Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 1* as a tribute to his mentor and teacher. It is hoped that the annual gala concert becomes a singular and lasting memorial to an inspiring musician and brilliant performer.

*Ticket order forms may be picked up in the church office or they will be on the tables on Wednesday nights.*



## Congratulations

*Congratulations to Merryl and Jason Cooper on the birth of a son, Taylor Bane Cooper, on April 20. Proud grandparents are Pat Cooper and Crawford & Marlene Taylor.*

*Congratulations to David & Linda Whitt on the birth of a granddaughter, Hailey Brooke Whitt, on April 9th. Proud parents are Daniel & Crystal Whitt.*

## *Remember in Prayer...*

### Members in the Hospital

\***Merryl Cooper**—Brookwood, Room W236

### Members at Home

Maxine Ammons	Nancy Lochamy
Grace Barnes	Doris McWaters
Virginia Deaton	Marge Olive
Earl Donegan	Nora Ousley
Kathryn Eidson	Elizabeth Quinby
Jim & Martha Galyean	Martha Ray
Elaine Goodwyn	Judy Schlegel
Leta Holliman	Velma Smyth
Mary Lou Hughes	Arthur Weeks
Faye Knowles	Bob Wilson
Dorothy Lindsay	Jody Wilson
Elizabeth Lindsey	Richard Wilson
Sarah Little	Edith Wood
	Nettie Worrell

## *Christian Sympathy*

*Christian Sympathy is expressed to:*

- ♦ *Hack Sain and family in the death of his brother, James Murray Sain, of Hillsboro, T.N. on April 9th*
- ♦ *Ferry Pickett and family in the death of his aunt, Elizabeth Saggus, of Georgia, on April 10.*
- ♦ *Cindy Gaskins and Colleen Burroughs and families in the death of their aunt, Marguerite Walker, on April 6 in Tuscaloosa.*

### THANK YOU

Thanks for all the many prayers, cards, and phone calls over the past few months regarding my knee replacement surgery and for my brother, Jay. The doctors are calling Jay the Miracle Man because he came through a hopeless near-death situation. We had made funeral plans and then he turned around-and is now home recovering. This situation has taught me once again the power of prayer as well as how loving the people in this church are to our family.

With Much Love,  
Julie & Bob Roller

### Ministry Budget Offering

Budget Needs This Month	\$91,992
Budget Given This Month	\$80,577
Budget Needs This Year	\$490,627
Budget Given This Year	\$384,996

### Unified Missions Offering

2008 Goal	\$52,400
Given to Date	\$36,016

### Recipe Book

Make sure to submit your favorite recipes to be included in the VHBC Recipe Book.

- ♦ Use the cards available on the table outside the church office and place your recipe in the box OR
- ♦ e-mail Nancy with your recipe.

### ATTENTION: LADIES OF THE CHURCH

All ladies of the church are invited to go with us, former Women on Mission Weekend Group, on Sunday afternoon, April 27th. We will be hosting the Bethany Home Ladies for an Ice Cream Sundae get-together at the Bethany Home & then go to the Sing & Shout Celebration (they will be our guests). We need help with items for goodie bags for the LADIES, any type of make-up, perfume, body wash, anything along those lines that would be special and they would enjoy having. We will collect items up until Sunday morning April 27. To donate items and if you have any questions please contact Janice Fulks 915-9897 or Gilda Coker.

THANK YOU! WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP

### *Library News...*

In view of the appearance of Charles Shields at the Vestavia Hills Public Library on Thursday, April 24, 2008, our Vestavia Hills Baptist Library has obtained his two books: Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee and his latest book, I Am Scout. These, of course, are direct connections to the Mayor's Book Club, 2008, of discussions of Alabama's Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize winning book, To Kill A Mockingbird.

If you know of other titles to recommend for our Library, please notify Lynn Taylor, Librarian, who will try to obtain copies for us.

## Round Table

Tuesday, May 6

10:30 am—Refreshments and Book Review

Elizabeth Wells will give an overview of the book Courage and Hope: The Stories of Ten Baptist Women Missionaries including Alma Hunt and Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler. Plan to stay for lunch prepared by Sadra. Lunch is \$6.00. Call Donna in the church office for reservations, 979-5920.

### Quarterly Business Meeting

Wednesday, April 30

6:15—Fellowship Hall

WE Care

May 5—10:00 am

Fireside Room

**Week of April 24-30****Friday, April 25**

4:30 Youth —Summit Retreat

**Sunday, April 27**

8:30 SS Teachers Prayer Time

8:45 Bible Study

10:00 Worship Service

10:00 Prayers for “Free the Future”

11:00 Calling Team Training Lunch

5:00 Sing &amp; Shout

**Tuesday, April 29**

9:30 International Friends

**Wednesday, April 30**

6:30 Prayer Breakfast

10:30 Pastor’s Bible Study

4:30 Fellowship Supper-Library

5:00 Handbells

5:30 Nominating Committee

5:30 Music for PS 3’s-6th grade

6:00 Quarterly Business Mtg., YG

6:15 Mission Friends, GA’s, RA’s

7:00 Sanctuary Choir

**Week of May 1-7****Sunday, May 4**

8:30 SS Teachers Prayer Time

8:45 Bible Study

10:00 Worship Service

10:00 Prayers for “Free the Future”

11:00 Church-wide Lunch

6:00 YOSE

7:00 Shepherd Memorial Concert

**Monday, May 5**

10:00 We Care

4:00 4 to 8

**Tuesday, May 6**

9:30 International Friends

10:30 Round Table

6:00 CDC Spring Program

**Wednesday, May 7**

6:30 Prayer Breakfast

10:30 Pastor’s Bible Study

4:30 Fellowship Supper-Library

5:00 Handbells

5:30 Nominating Committee

5:30 Music for PS 3’s-6th grade

6:00 Prayer Service , YG

6:15 Mission Friends, GA’s, RA’s

7:00 Sanctuary Choir

**Volunteers in Service for the week of April 27****Deacons of the Week:** \*Jason Cooper, Gilda Coker**Counting Team:** Bob Bush, Mel Kukelhan**Sound Technology:** Lee Watford, Mike Wells**Shuttle Service Team:** Jeff Baker, Charlie Scott, Emory Gaskins**Flower Committee:** Becky Griffith, Sharon Hartzog**Library Committee:** Marilyn Tinnermon (27) Lynn Taylor (30)**Worship Care**

Babies Nancy Scruggs, Jackie Hughes

Creepers Michael Wilson, Melissa mcBrayer

Ones Ryan &amp; Tabitha Bradley

Twos Clark &amp; Robin Cameron

Threes Brent &amp; Lisa Warren

Fours/Fives Scott McGinnis, Elizabeth McCarty

Desk Bob Lochamy

**Volunteers in Service for the Week of May 4****Deacons of the Week:** \*Stuart Collier, Norfleete Day**Counting Team:** Ann Holt, Jason Dearing, Mike McCrory**Sound Technology:** Mike Wells, Allen Fulks**Shuttle Service Team:** Tim Franklin, Chuck Gillespie, Ed Whatley**Flower Committee:** Jennifer Carter, Jennifer Jaquess**Library Committee:** Rachel Fancher (4) Sybil Cox (7)**Worship Care**

Babies Nancy St. John, Amy Hamilton

Creepers Lisa Churchill, Jennifer Carter

Ones Libby Pittman, Margaret Winkler

Twos David &amp; Colleen Burroughs

Threes Steve &amp; Michelle Thackerson

Fours/Fives Laura Griffo, Jan Deagon

Desk Janice Fulks

**FELLOWSHIP SUPPER**

April 30 Ham, Potato Salad, Okra, Relish Tray, Rolls, Strawberry Cake

Volunteers—Sybil Cox, Hazel Turner, Bob Eskew, Mike Oatts

May 7 Lasagna, Tossed Salad, French Bread, Ice Cream Sandwiches

Volunteers—Bob Eskew, Liz Wells

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**OUR MINISTRY STAFF**

Gary A. Furr, Pastor

K. Dennis Anderson,  
Minister of Education/AdministrationNancy E. Akins,  
Minister to Preschool/Children

Mike McBrayer, Minister to Students

Terre Johnson, Minister of Music

Beth McGinnis, Organist

C. Otis Brooks, Pastor Emeritus

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at 10:00 a.m. on WVSU, 91.1 FM