

# Variations

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

A Bi-Weekly Message from Vestavia Hills Baptist Church



## The Shepherd's Pen



**Friday, March 2, 6—9 pm and Saturday, March 3, 8:30 am- noon**

Several years ago, our staff led the church to create the "Key Leader Retreat," a Friday night-Saturday morning extended conversation to provide a time for our elected church leadership to come together to spend extended time thinking about crucial questions in the life of our church for its future. It became an event when we talked not so hurriedly about important issues—missions, worship, and ministry. We did deacon training sometimes, and because it involved all elected leaders, it potentially involved 10-15% of the entire church membership. We reasoned, if all the elected leaders are on board together, then it will help the entire church.



After our most recent Strategic Discernment Committee report, we adopted the following recommended strategy under "Congregational Life and Fellowship"

**Strategy: Establish the roundtable discussion meeting format as a regular means for committees and staff to both educate and seek input from the congregation on key issues. To the extent possible avoid meeting at times that compete with other church activities.**

Of course, it is challenging to find ANY time that we can come together and talk unhurriedly, eat together without rushing off, and consider important issues in a time that allows wider dialogue. It occurred to me that this event, which we have once per year, and which is one of the most meaningful ones our leadership has had in the past, could serve that purpose. Often, those of us who attended would say, "Wow, I wish the whole church could have been here for this." Well, why NOT?

So, we have opened this event to the whole church. It will be facilitated by staff and elected leaders, but its focus is for our entire congregation to come together and pray, talk, and consider important issues, not merely urgent ones. This will be our first try. We needed a new name. "Key Leader" was a name we borrowed from Associational life, and was so "1990s." We needed something that captured the spirit of what the Strategy hoped for. Since we don't even have any "round tables," the name **TIME AT THE TABLE** seemed to work.

In this first one, we are inviting the entire congregation to come. We will eat barbecue together Friday

## 2011 Highlights of Our Members' Giving and Serving

On Sunday, January 22, the Deacons received the year-end reports from the Finance Committee and the Missions Committee. The church received the reports at the Quarterly Business Meeting on Wednesday, January 25. Over the past 12 months, God has blessed the faithful and generous gifts of of members' time and money to the cause of Christ through our church. Below are a few highlights:

Gifts to the 2011 budget were \$1,514,304. These receipts were 104% of our budget of \$1,459,556. They were 0.5% more than we received in 2010. They were 2% more than pledges.

Gave over \$136,000 to special missions causes over and above the church budget. These causes included special missions offerings to support Baptist work at the local, state, North American, and Global levels. This includes \$50,264 given through the Unified Missions Offering (\$10,264 given through the Power of One emphasis.)

Gave support through the Caring Fund to over 40 families who had experienced temporary financial set-backs, through rent, utilities, & transportation assistance.

13%, or \$273,600, of total funds received by the church went to budgeted or non-budgeted missions causes.

Commissioned church members to work in volunteer missions, church development, disaster relief, and construction in Africa, the Czech Republic, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama.

Provided family enrichment experiences, medical clinics, & Bible studies for inner-city families through M-Power and the Lovelady Center.

Provided funds for hunger and disaster relief efforts through the Church of the Reconciler, the Alabama Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the International Mission Board, and the Birmingham Baptist Association.

Provided financial support for ministers in Mexico, India, Africa, and local Hispanic Ministries in the over-the mountain area.

*continued on next page*

## 2011 Highlights of Our Members' Giving and Serving

*continued from page 1*

Youth ministry performed ministry in Birmingham through the Lovelady Center, M-Power, area nursing homes, and tornado disaster relief in Pratt City.

Children and their families performed ministry through the Firehouse Shelter, Jessie's Place, and area nursing homes.

Ended the year with \$43,897 in the Capital Reserve Fund.

Ended the year with \$175,333 in the General Reserve Fund to use for 2012 expenditures. This includes transferring to the General Reserve Fund \$72,000 in pre-paid pledges for 2012 and \$100,000 from the year-end General Checking Account balance to be used as needed in 2012.

Received \$142,027 to the "Free the Future" Fund. Total "Free the Future" gifts are \$1,432,639 against pledges of \$1,725,894. We paid \$142,027 toward principal during 2011, leaving a principal balance of \$926,062.

night, and listen to a presentation led by myself, Dr. Mark Biddle of Baptist Theological Seminary of Richmond, VA and Dr. David May of Central Baptist Seminary in Kansas City. We will present the findings from a national study on "**Renewing the Role of Scripture in Baptist Churches,**" about the Bible and what strengthens its place in our churches. I think you will find this work, which we did with the able help of Penny Marler of Samford (and VHBC!) fascinating and rich in suggestions.

Then, **on Saturday, we will have breakout sessions in the areas of Missions, Stewardship, Discipleship, Membership and Outreach, and others.** We will be led through scriptural reflections together on how we might better fulfill our mission to learn, practice, live, pray and carry out the word of God in our corporate and personal lives. The sessions will repeat, so that everyone will have the opportunity to choose three to attend that are of particular interest. Relevant leaders to each area will sit in the room, listen, and focus on key questions from which to hear from our people. We will enjoy dinner Friday, then continental breakfast and lunch together before dismissing for the day. Our committees, staff, and deacons will be in attendance to be able better to understand together with our people ways that God may lead us. I pray that it will give us a sense of priorities for the coming years.

I am tremendously excited about this event. I would ask humbly that you put it on your calendar and plan to attend. Everyone is invited, included and welcome. We will have worship, meals, conversation and prayer together that I hope will help us as we continue to work together. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend!



*beginning soon!*

### Spring Season of Prayer for World Missions

- ◇ Seven meetings on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays
- ◇ Led by Mavis Hardy, missionary to Japan
- ◇ Each 1-hour meeting devoted to praying together for missions needs here and around the world
- ◇ Dates are—  
Feb. 14 & 28, Mar. 13 & 27  
Apr. 10 & 24, May 8\*

\*followed by Fellowship Luncheon

Bring a sandwich (except May 8) & stay for a short time of fellowship after the meeting. **Everyone is invited!**

### Women's Bible Study

Sign-up sheets are outside the Fellowship Hall

***James: Mercy Triumphs*** by Beth Moore

Beginning the week of February 26th

Sundays 4-5:30 PM\*

Mondays 9:30-11AM\*

Tuesdays 6:30-8 PM

Cost: \$15 (book will be provided)

**NOTE: Childcare now available for both Sunday and Monday groups. Please reserve your child's place; email [betsy@vhbc.com](mailto:betsy@vhbc.com).**

#### Communion

Join us for a short, meaningful Communion Service every Thursday at 5:40 PM in the Chapel.

#### Prayer Breakfast

Join us at 6:30 a.m. every Wednesday in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited, and you don't need to make a reservation.

#### "Get well" note

Please continue to remember our administrative assistant, Martha Neill, as she recuperates from hip replacement surgery. If you'd like to send a card, her address is 108 Black Walnut Lane, Trussville, AL 35173.

## Remember in Prayer...

\*Sarah Little—Brookwood, Room 268  
Virginia Paugh—Lakeshore, Room 213-B

### Members at Home

Sara Arendall	Charlotte Kyser
*Sam Baker	Tommie Liles
Grace Barnes	Elizabeth Lindsey
Lorri Blackwelder	Fred McCrory
Zelle Buckner	Lee & Nora Ousley
Gordon Burton	Valerie Paul
Irene Burton	Madie Phillips
Eugenia Calk	Beth Poe
Kathy Chandler	Warren Porter
Faye Churchill	Harry Puryear
Charles Goodson	Helen Rosenow
Virginia Deaton	*Carol Smith
Buell Eidson	Clay Smith
Martha Galyean	Velma Smyth
Will Gregory	Tootsie Strozier
Betty Higgins	June Turner
Emily Jones	Sue Virciglio
Virginia Kirby	Maxine Womble

\* Added this Variations

## Christian Sympathy

Christian Sympathy is expressed to:

- ◆ Mrs. Lisa Warren and family in the death of her father, Lt. Commander Stephen Gillis, retired U.S. Navy, on January 30.
- ◆ Mr. Gordon Burton and family in the death of his sister-in-law, Sara Burton, in Arizona.
- ◆ Janice Collier and family in the death of T.W. Collier on January 22.
- ◆ Family and friends of Bettye McGee, former member, in her death on January 19.
- ◆ William Poe and Jodi Poe in the death of William's sister, Ruby Davis, on January 18.

## Round Table

Tuesday, Feb. 7

10:30 a.m.—Fireside Room

We will talk about American heroine Eudora Welty. Guest Speaker will be Valerie Luessee

### Ministry Budget Offering

Budget Needs This Month	\$125,171
Budget Given This Month	111,588

### Free the Future Capital Fund

Pledges	\$1,725,894
Given to Date	1,433,409

## “To Be Blessed”

A Mom's Brunch Series led by Terri Byrd  
Saturdays, Feb 11; Mar 10; Apr 14  
9:30-11 in the Youth Lounge  
RSVP with Nancy on the Thursday before each Saturday.  
Childcare available by reservation.

*Explore the life-transforming gift of blessing ... what it can mean for your own life and how you can bless the lives of the people you are in relationship with. We will take a look at Biblical stories of blessing and how they can inspire us today.*

## “What Age?!”

A Parenting Workshop led by Kristie Chandler  
Wednesday night, Feb 8, 6-7 pm  
Children's Activity Room  
How do I decide what is the right time for my child to get a cell phone, have her ears pierced, go to a movie with a friend, ...? Join in this discussion!

## Sixers Mall Scavenger Hunt

Saturday, February 11

Meet at Vestavia Moe's at 4:30 pm and pick up at the *youth building* at church at 7:30 pm.

Please bring \$10 for dinner. We will eat at Moe's and then head to the Galleria to hunt for different things! After the mall, we will come to the church and play in the gym.

### Next Deacons Meeting

Sunday—February 12

5:00 p.m. - Adult Seminar Room

## A Senior Moment...

- **Dawson Memorial Baptist** is offering a meeting with a UAB physician for those with hypertension, **Feb. 7 at 6:30 PM.**
- **Emmet O'Neal Library** in Mtn. Brook will host a new support group for Family Caregivers of Aging Persons, led by Dr. Paul Roller. Wednesday, **Feb. 8, 6:30 PM.**
- **Natchez Spring Pilgrimage & Vicksburg.** Organized by Trinity United Methodist in Homewood, **April 3—5.** Contact: Amy Lewis, 897-1737.

Call 979-5920 or email [betsy@vhbc.com](mailto:betsy@vhbc.com) if you'd like the full info page for the Caregivers meeting or the Natchez trip emailed to you.

**Week of Feb. 2—8**

**Thursday, Feb. 2**

5:40 Communion

**Sunday, Feb. 5**

8:45 Bible Study

10:00 Worship Service

11:30 Christian Formation Comm.

2:00 Sr. Adult English Tea Party

5:00 Youth Super Bowl Party

**Monday, Feb. 6**

6:00 Financial Peace University

6:00 Girls' Basketball Game

**Tuesday, Feb. 7**

9:30 International Friends

10:30 Round Table

**Wednesday, Feb. 8**

6:30 Prayer Breakfast

10:30 Pastor's Bible Study

4:30 Fellowship Supper

5:00 Handbell Rehearsal

5:30 Music for PS 3's—6th Grade

5:45 Youth Group

5:45 Women's Bible Study

6:00 Prayer Service

6:00 Men's Chorus

6:00 Parenting Seminar

6:15 MF, GA & RA's

7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

**Week of Feb. 9—15**

**Thursday, Feb. 9**

5:40 Communion

7:30 Boys' Basketball Game

**Saturday, Feb. 11**

9:30 Mom's Brunch

4:30 Sixers Mall Scavenger Hunt

**Sunday, Feb. 12**

8:45 Bible Study

10:00 Worship Service/Dedication of Porte Cochère

2:00 Jennie Bodenhamer Bridal Tea

4:00 Youth Choir

5:00 Youth Activities

5:00 Deacons Meeting

**Monday, Feb. 13**

6:00 Financial Peace University

**Tuesday, Feb. 14**

9:30 International Friends

8:00 Girls' Basketball Game

**Wednesday, Feb. 15**

6:30 Prayer Breakfast

10:30 Pastor's Bible Study

4:30 Fellowship Supper

5:00 Handbell Rehearsal

5:30 Music for PS 3's—6th Grade

5:45 Youth Group

6:00 Prayer Service; Men's Chorus

6:15 MF, GA & RA's

7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

**Volunteers in Service for the Week of February 5**

**Deacons of the Week:** \*Linda Griggs, Becky Griffith

**Counting Team:** Ann Holt, Steve Thackerson

**Sound Technology:** Mike Wells, Allen Fulks

**Shuttle Service Team:** Andy Brindley, Steve White, Tommy Cherry

**Flower Committee:** Amy Hamilton & Marilyn Tinnermon

**Library Committee:** Rachel Fancher (5) Martha Eskew, Marilyn Tinnermon (8)

**Worship Care**

Babies	Sandra Bates, Nancy St. John
Creepers	Jennifer Carter, Janice Fulks
Toddlers	Michael & Dee Thomason
Twos	David & Beth Lang
Threes	Bridget Barnett, Melanie Medley
Fours & Fives	Kim Virciglio, Suzanne Walters
Kindergarten	Cathy Donze, Kathryn Stewart
Desk	Ryan & Meredith Hankins

**Volunteers in Service for the Week of February 12**

**Deacons of the Week:** \*Jane Helms, Dan Hartzog

**Counting Team:** Mike Craddock, Ryan Bradley

**Sound Technology:** Pete LeBerte, Mike Wells

**Shuttle Service Team:** David Bamberg, Bill Dupree, Himes Fernekes

**Flower Committee:** Susan Lebold

**Library Committee:** Marie Hooks (12)

**Worship Care**

Babies	Jane Helms, Elizabeth Studinka
Creepers	Matt & Carole Miller
Toddlers	Jodi Poe; one worker needed
Twos	Pat Cooper, Betsy Stockdale
Threes	David & Cathy Compner
Fours & Fives	Ashley Hattaway, Kathryn Stewart
Kindergarten	Steve & Becky White
Desk	Rob & Aimee Stone

**Fellowship Supper**

February 8

Poppypeed chicken, rice, green beans, cranberry salad, rolls, walnut cake, coffee/tea. Volunteers—Kaye Carlisle, Johnnie McCracken, Bob Eskew, Mindy Bodenhamer

February 15

Spaghetti, tossed salad, French bread, apple pie, lemonade/ coffee/tea  
Volunteers—Bob Eskew, Janice Fulks

**OUR MINISTRY STAFF**

Gary A. Furr, Pastor  
K. Dennis Anderson, Minister of Education/Administration  
Nancy 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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Worship Broadcast Live on Sundays  
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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