

# Variations

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

a biweekly publication of Vestavia Hills Baptist Church

Volume 24, No. 6 March 14, 2017



## Lent



### Lenten Worship & Lunch Series Continues

Our Lenten Tuesday Worship & Lunch series continues with messages on Jesus interacting with people on the level of their specific need - fear, forgiveness, economic anxiety, broken families. Join us at 12 Noon on Tuesdays for **The Journey to Wholeness: Jesus and the Suffering World**. Each inspirational message is followed by lunch in the Fellowship Hall. Menus range from a full, hot meal to soup/salad/sandwich, with dessert. Cost is just \$3, payable at the door after the speaker concludes. No reservation needed.

March 21, Greg Powell, "Jesus and Economic Anxiety"

April 4, Rod Marshall, "Jesus and the Broken Family"  
**NOTE: week of spring break is not scheduled (March 28).**

Sunday, April 9

Palm Sunday

Thursday, April 13

Maundy Thursday Communion Service, 6:00 p.m.

Friday, April 14

Good Friday Tennebrae Service, 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 16

Easter Day, Bible study 8:45 a.m., Worship at 10:00 a.m.

You are invited to decorate the cross outside the front entrance with cut flowers on Easter morning.



Seed Camp in Perry County will be July 9-13. Information meeting this Sunday! Details on page 2.



*The Shepherd's e-Ncourager* — Dr. Gary A. Furr



### Mike McBrayer's Fifteenth Anniversary Celebration This Sunday

I have been so fortunate to not only have good staff, but great staff, in my time here at VHBC. Two of our six ministers were with me for the fortieth anniversary, and four of our five were here for the fiftieth. That stability, leadership and tenure have been decisive in our growth and continued strength. Celebrations are frequent here for the people who help our church do its work week by week. A church is the entire congregation as led by God, but God's staff help a church do it well.

This coming Sunday, we will celebrate Mike and Melissa McBrayer and their family as we observe Mike's fifteenth anniversary among us. In 2002, Mike and

Melissa came just as we were entering new facilities—the Preschool and Children's Building was brand new, as were the Youth addition and many other features. Luke was two years old Maggie would come along after their arrival.

In that fifteen years Mike built a strong and vibrant Student ministry among us, and part of the fruit of that work is born out in the many lives engaged in full-time ministry and active Christian laity who passed through his area and now work as teachers, doctors, and in church leadership where they are. The last three years, Mike has transitioned to the Missions and Discipleship areas and has brought energy, new ideas and focus to those areas as well. We have been blessed to be part of both phases of his ministry, and we look forward to marking this significant occasion on Sunday.

*continued inside*

Like all of our staff, we gain their families near and far as part of our circle, and the McBrayers, beginning with Melissa and the children, are so much a part of our congregational life. I thank God for them and for Mike, and I anticipate the opportunity to say a small thank you to them together at the end of the service Sunday morning.

### *A Church for This Time*

Many years ago, President John F. Kennedy uttered the famous words, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." Missing in the political conversation of our time is a simple question, "What can we all do to help?" We argue and blame and accuse one another on issue after issue, but the simple questions matter the most. "How can we best foster health and well-being among our citizens? What is my responsibility to make our nation better? How can we insure the highest and best education for our children possible? How can we manage our fiscal and other resources as caring stewards? How can we insure that our common life is fair to all and not a contest for privilege? How can I be a better neighbor to all

around me? What can be done to bring out the best in us all and not the worst?"

All of these questions have implications politically, but politics does not give the full answer to these questions. It is easy to degenerate into "they" in controversial moments. What "they" did or didn't do, what "they" owe me or what "they" expect.

"We" is the most important word of our time. How do we rebuild a sense of shared obligation and responsibility to one another and our principles? How do we find ways to sacrifice for the good of all? How do we honor one another through more listening and less talking? How can we be peacemakers in the storms of unreconciled people?

We have a great opportunity to be a church for this time. If ever we were needed to live out the teachings and way of Jesus it is now. Society will always be in conflict with itself because it cannot achieve what only God can do. But Christians can and must be those who shine a light into their world. Maybe now more than ever.

Gary

## Wednesday Sessions Continue

Communion is offered on Wednesday nights at 6:00 during Lent; now that the foyer construction is complete, this session will take place in the Chapel. Or, join Pastor Gary Furr and guest teacher Fisher Humphreys in the Fellowship Hall as they share and invite your questions on **Four Momentous Beliefs:** Creation, Vocation (March 15), Salvation (March 22), and Consummation (April 5).



July 9-13 we will return to Perry County, Alabama to lead **Seed Camp** at Judson College in Marion. Last year, we joined with Baptist Church of the Covenant to take a team of 50 adults, children and youth. Our team provides a full day camp experience Monday-

Thursday with a wide range of programming including Bible study, visual and performing arts, science, creative writing, recreation, engineering and more. There are a variety of needs on our camp staff, so if you have any interest, join us at the Seed Camp information meeting on Sunday, March 19 in the Seminar Room at 11 a.m.

In honor of our 60th anniversary we will be creating a Memory Wall outside of the fellowship hall. The Memory Wall will be a display of cards that you, our congregation, will create displaying special memories you have while being a member at VHBC. We will be distributing the cards in Sunday school and will also have some available throughout the church beginning March 19th with an example of a memory card that has already been made. We cannot wait to see the Memory Wall come together for this special 60th Anniversary celebration.

Melissa McMurray & Marsha Baker

## Mike McBrayer Celebrates Fifteenth Anniversary

This Sunday, we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary for Mike McBrayer as a member of our ministerial team. After many years of ministry as our Student Minister, Mike transitioned very smoothly and effectively to become our Minister of Discipleship and Missions four years ago. His heart for missions, his dedication to building a strong spiritual foundation, and his love for and commitment to God and our church permeate everything he does.

Mike has established a solid foundation for our many discipleship ministries. He has built the largest and most effective team of lay leaders our Sunday School has ever had. Through his encouragement and inspiration, we have seen increased participation of our members in every facet of our ministry.

*continued on page 3*

**EGG HUNT.** Save the date!  
Saturday, Apr. 15 at 10 on the front lawn. Don't be 'chicken'... come out and have a fun time with friends, games, and live animals to pet!



## Our Church Family: Prayer Concerns and more

### Members in the Hospital

### Members at Home

Becky Atkinson	Harvey Oliver
Bruce Atkinson	Nora Ousley
Sam Brown	William Poe
Zelle Buckner	Jo Powell
Sybil Cox	*Barbara Price
Louise Cunningham	Ellen Smith
Virginia Deaton	*Major Speights
Agnes Fuchs	Jim Stigler
Freida Gammill	Tootsie Strozier
Helen Gammill	Sue Virciglio
Bettie Godfrey	Lynn Walker
Laura Griffo	Margaret Walker
Sarah Page Harvey	Betty Wallis
Nicole Hutcheson	Daniel Walters
Charlotte Kyser	*Linda Whitt
Al Lowery	Maxine Womble
Wes Nastiuik	*John Wood

\*added this *Variations*

### Congratulations to:

Rachel and Jason Adair on the birth of a son, Jason Dean Adair, on March 7. Sisters are Kiley and Bella Adair. Proud grandmother is Cappy Blackwelder.

### McBrayer, continued

We have enjoyed watching his family grow up in our church. We are indeed blessed to have Mike, Melissa, Luke, and Maggie in our church and in our community. Join us this week in celebrating his ministry and expressing appreciation to him and the entire McBrayer family.

Our Worship Care ministry needs volunteers. We have openings in Preschool One (4<sup>th</sup> week of Even months), Preschool 2-3 (4<sup>th</sup> week of Even months), and we need more volunteers on our list of subs who might fill in as needed. Please contact Nancy Akins to volunteer. Thank you!

### Christian Sympathy to:

Whit Fancher and family in the death of his aunt, Helen Trione Callaway; and in the death of his uncle, Allen "Prude" Fancher, on March 1.

Mary Ann Goodson in the death of her sister-in-law, Billie Whitfield, on March 1 in Florence, Mississippi. Billie was also the aunt of Ed Whitfield.

Bruce Burson and family in the death of his father, Bruce Burson, Sr., on March 13 in Prattville.

### Thank You

My husband, Wally, would have made an effort to thank each of you for your kindnesses to him while he was in the hospital. Unfortunately, he did not get to do that. I am thankful that Wally came to know and love you in such a short time and that you loved him back. He offered himself to the work of this church and he loved his involvement here. On behalf of myself, the Buckner and Churchill families, I would like to thank you, our church family, for your abundant gifts of time, hospital visits, texts, cards, house sitting, meals, and most of all your love and prayers during Wally's illness and death. I am grateful.

Sheryl Churchill Buckner

### Easter Flowers

We invite you to adorn the sanctuary with beautiful hydrangea and calla lilies for Easter in honor or memory of someone. Price for each plant is \$20. Contact Martha Neill at martha@vhbc.com or 979-5920 to reserve a plant.

### Ministry Budget Offering

Budget Needs This Year	\$357,474
Budget Given This Year	\$342,195

### Unified Missions Offering

Goal	\$34,000
Given to Date	\$3,414

### Permanent Endowment Fund

Given To Date	\$195,379
---------------	-----------



Please volunteer to serve in Vacation Bible School June 12-15. Theme: **HERO CENTRAL**. *Where will YOUR "super powers" best be used?* Find enlistment cards and turn in your name with your top 3 choices of where to serve. VBS is open to Grades 1-5 for the public, also PS 4 and Kindergarten for VHBC children, and child care for workers' children Babies-age 3. Our 6<sup>th</sup> Graders will be with Andy.



Prayer for Global Missions  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays

Continuing March 28 thru May 9

Learn and pray with us at 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel, and bring your lunch for a time of fellowship afterward. Coffee, tea and water are provided.

## Fellowship Supper

### March 22

Sweet and sour chicken, rice, broccoli, rolls, dessert

### Volunteers

Pat Cooper,  
Rosemary Bamberg,  
Allen & Janice Fulks

### March 29

No supper or activities  
(spring break)



**Week of March 16-22**

**Thursday, March 16**

- 6:30 Young Adult Bible Study (Cox)
- 9:00 Weekenders Backpack Delivery

**Friday-Saturday, March 17-18**

Youth Sexuality Seminar

**Sunday, March 19**

- 8:45 Bible Study
- 10:00 Worship Service
- 11:00 Seed Camp information mtg.
- 5:00 YOSE—Youth

**Monday, March 20**

- 8:00 Church of the Reconciler
- 10:00 Lovelady Center Bible Study
- 4:00 428—Youth

**Tuesday, March 21**

- 9:30 International Friends
- 12:00 Lenten Worship & Lunch

**Wednesday, March 22**

- 6:30 Prayer Breakfast
- 10:30 Pastor's Bible Study
- 4:30 Supper line open
- 5:30 Music for PS3-Grade 6
- 6:00 Wednesday Sessions—Adults
- 6:00 Wednesday Retreat—Youth
- 6:15 Mission Friends, G.A., R.A.s
- 7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

**Week of March 23-29**

**Thursday, March 23**

- 6:30 Young Adult Bible Study

**Sunday, March 26**

- 8:45 Bible Study
- 10:00 Worship Service
- 11:00 Missions Committee

**Monday, March 27**

- 10:00 Lovelady Center Bible Study

**Wednesday, March 29**

*No activities during spring break.*



*We invite you to bring fresh flowers to decorate the cross outside the front entrance on Easter morning.*

*Special reminder: Wednesday night activities will not meet on March 29 (spring break) or April 12 (Holy week).*

**Volunteers in Service for the Week of March 19**

**Deacons of the Week:** Bob Bradley <sup>SUN.</sup>, Sheryl Buckner <sup>WED.</sup>

**Counting Team:** David Compher, Kevin Jaquess

**Flower Committee:** Jane Mahaffey & Nancy Welch

**Shuttle Service:** Jeff Baker, Dave Bamberg

**Sound Technology:** Hal David, Dan McMurray

**Worship Care**

- |                 |                                 |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Babies          | Robin Cameron, Melissa McMurray |
| Ones            | Alexa Brooks, Emily Key         |
| Preschool 2-3   | Jeff & Monica Graveline         |
| Preschool 4     | Tommy & Erin Yeager             |
| Kindergarten    | Ed & Leigh Whatley              |
| Preschool Desk  | Katherine Worley                |
| Children's Desk | Carol Smith                     |

**Volunteers in Service for the Week of March 26**

**Deacons of the Week:** Ginny Bugg <sup>SUN.</sup>, Dan Caldwell <sup>WED.</sup>

**Counting Team:** Katherine Bear, Steve Thackerson

**Flower Committee:** Marsha Baker & Sara Taylor

**Shuttle Service:** Bob Bush, Tommy Cherry, Mike Craddock

**Sound Technology:** Norfleete Day, Pete LeBerte

**Worship Care**

- |                 |                                  |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Babies          | Meredith Hankins, Billie Lochamy |
| Ones            | Jason & Merryl Cooper            |
| Preschool 2-3   | Brandon & Ashley Bates           |
| Preschool 4     | Jennifer Carter, Lisa Warren     |
| Kindergarten    | Catherine Blackmon, Lisa Speegle |
| Preschool Desk  | LaRue Speights                   |
| Children's Desk | Betty Wallis                     |

Variations is published biweekly by  
 VESTAVIA HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH  
 2600 Vestavia Drive, Birmingham, AL 35216

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Permit No. 1894  
 Birmingham, AL

**YOUR MINISTRY STAFF**

Gary A. Furr, Pastor	Andy Farmer, Minister to Students
K. Dennis Anderson, Administrative Pastor	Terre Johnson, Minister of Music
Nancy Akins, Minister to Preschool/Children	Mike McBrayer, Minister of Discipleship and Missions
	Beth McGinnis, Organist

**Inside this issue**

- √ *Seed Camp information meeting 3/19*
- √ *Lenten schedule continues*
- √ *Staff anniversary*
- √ *Easter flowers*

*The next issue of Variations will be dated March 28, 2017. Please request space by Friday, March 24. Thank you.*