

VHBC

Connections

APRIL 2, 2024 • ISSUE 1



Spring Serve Sunday

is back on April 21st!

**SHEPHERD CONCERT |
NIGHT OF PRAYER | MEAL TAKE-OUT |
ANXIETY WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS**



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Join us this Sunday for a special morning of music from our choir and Shepherd Scholars!

and more...



Just a few photos from our Easter weekend & one special welcome back to 428 for Sara Binet from our arrr-mazing youth group!





Spring Serve Sunday

Sunday, April 21, 2024

**Worship at 10 am, followed by
lunch at 11 am and service
projects at 11:30 am**

Here are a few questions to consider as we approach Spring Serve Sunday. Why do we have service days in the life of our congregation? Why is it important for Christians to serve one another and to serve our community?

As comedian Elyse Myers says, "Great Questions, I would love to tell you!"

One spring day Agnes sat in my office at The Baptist Church of Beaufort in South Carolina telling me the story of how the death of her daughter led her into grief ministry with hospice families. The next summer Agnes' ministry evolved into a passion for AIDS patients and their families after she journeyed on her first mission trip. That fall she joined a new spiritual formation group called Companions in Christ which met weekly to practice the spiritual disciplines together. Through Bible study, discipleship, and service I witnessed God transform and deepen Agnes' life.

There is a powerful link between service to others and discipleship which strengthens and deepens our faith in Jesus. Each element of faith and Christian practice are important, yet when we combine them, our faith grows exponentially.

I proved this point when I conducted my Doctor of Ministry project in 2009. After creating a spiritual growth assessment tool, I invited individuals into three separate community groups for 6 weeks. The first group did a discipleship class. A second group did various service projects. A third group did both. At the end, the combined group grew closer to one another and demonstrated more spiritual growth than the other two.

This should be no huge insight. It flows directly out of Jesus' two great commandments in Matthew 22: "[Jesus] said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Yet, how often do we separate service and discipleship. Bible study and prayer seem removed from serving a meal to the homeless or cutting the grass of a homebound person. In God's Kingdom, though, they are intertwined.



Last year we introduced Spring Serve Sunday. It's a Sunday in which we combine Bible study, worship, fellowship, and service. On this Sunday, we hope to engage our entire church in service in response to the grace and power of Easter. On this Sunday, there is a place for everyone – all ages and abilities - to serve in some form or fashion.

Below, you will find a Spring Serve Sunday registration link. Take time now to commit to service on this day. Attend Bible study and worship, come to lunch, and then serve either here at the church or the community. This is an easy way to develop our service muscles, to meet new people, and to discover new ministry opportunities in the community. I look forward to seeing you there.

*I'll see you on Sunday.
You are loved.*

- Eric

**[Sign up now for Spring Service Sunday at
vhbc.com/springserve](http://vhbc.com/springserve)**

On-site

- **Lovelady Ministry**
- **Child Development Spring Cleaning**
- **Teacher Appreciation Bags**
- **VHBC Grounds Cleaning**

Off-Site

- **Urban Ministries Garden Work**
- **Bethany Home Landscaping**
- **Singing with Sanctuary Choir at
Woodland Forest Baptist Church in
Tuscaloosa**
- **Yard Work for Senior Adult Homes**



*Easter season means
Spring Serve Sunday.
Mark your calendars now
for Sunday, April 21st.*

bulletin board



We Need 9!

Is VHBC fielding a new baseball team? Are we meeting for Wednesday prayer time at the 9th hole? No...we need a 9-person addition to our team. Who is this mysterious 9? It could include YOU! There are currently 9 slots available for someone to rock a baby, read to a toddler, build blocks with a preschooler, and make an impact on the future of our church. Our church, our children need 9 adults/youth to fill in on an every-other-month basis for WORSHIP CARE. Are you one of the 9? We hope you are! Please call or email Ms. Nancy to add your name to the team!

Brittni Scott Celebrates Five-Years at VHBC

Last month, Brittni Scott celebrated her fifth anniversary on staff at Vestavia Hills Baptist Church. Brittni is well known for the warm and friendly welcome that she extends to all who walk in our doors or call our offices. She has primary responsibilities for administrative support for Discipleship and Mission in addition to the critical task of producing our newsletter and social media posts. Brittni generously shares her gifts of organization, creativity, and problem solving. She willingly contributes to the full range of our church's ministries and is an invaluable resource to those with whom she works. Brittni's devotion to her work is as evident in our wonderful newsletter as it is in her care for the many details behind the scenes. Be sure to express your gratitude to Brittni in the days to come for being a part of our team.

Thank you Note

Thank you so much for your generous gift. A snowmobile accident was not in my plans, but what is? Life sometimes happens. I am now home in Chattanooga, TN at an inpatient rehab. Everyday I get stronger and so does my resolve to walk again. It might be one of the most painful experiences of my life but I am comforted by all of your prayers and encouragements. My heavens they were needed. I am doing very well in rehab and I will be going home soon. Once again, thank you all. There are no ways to describe how much you have helped me. God bless you all. I hope to be there with you soon.



- **Bethany Day**

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR SUSPICIOUS EMAILS

In recent weeks, many church members have been receiving scam emails that appear to be coming from VHBC staff. There are several red flags to watch out for when identifying a scam email. First, scrutinize the sender's email address carefully. Emails from church staff will either come from [name]@vhbc.com or noreply@shelbynextchms.com, not an address like officeofpastoreric@gmail.com. Depending on your device, clicking, or tapping on the sender's displayed name, such as "Dr. Eric Spivey," will reveal the actual email address that the message originated from. Additionally, church staff will NEVER request by email that a church member buy gift cards on their behalf. Grammatical errors, urgent demands, and offers that seem too good to be true are also indicators of potential scams. If you do receive a suspicious email that appears to come from a church staff member, please contact the Church Office.

Curriculum Collection

When you are finished with your study guides and teaching materials at the end of the quarter, please place them in the basket in the Fellowship Hall foyer or in the bin on Laura's desk in the church office. We will be sending them to an organization called Love Packages that shares used curriculum with other churches and organizations. This will be an ongoing collection at the end of each curriculum cycle. Thanks for your participation as we share this wonderful resource with others!

Name Tags in April

It's a wonderful feeling to be known and feel a part of community...where everyone knows your name! So, let's continue to grow together by getting to know one another! Pick up a name tag at the stations in the front and back foyers on Sunday mornings. Greet your pew neighbor by name or the 'new to you' face in the foyer or Bible study class! Let's wear our name tags and spring into the season with hospitality and fellowship!

Vote for Pastor Eric

Vestavia Hills Magazine has nominated our own Pastor Eric Spivey for Best Pastor in Vestavia Hills for their Best of the Best 2024! Head on over to their site at vestaviahillsmagazine.com and vote today!

New Wheels for our Children's Minister

Ms. Nancy got a new car! Be sure to honk at her if you see her driving around in her new Honda CRV!



Multi-Year Partnership Planned with



**AFRICA
EXCHANGE**

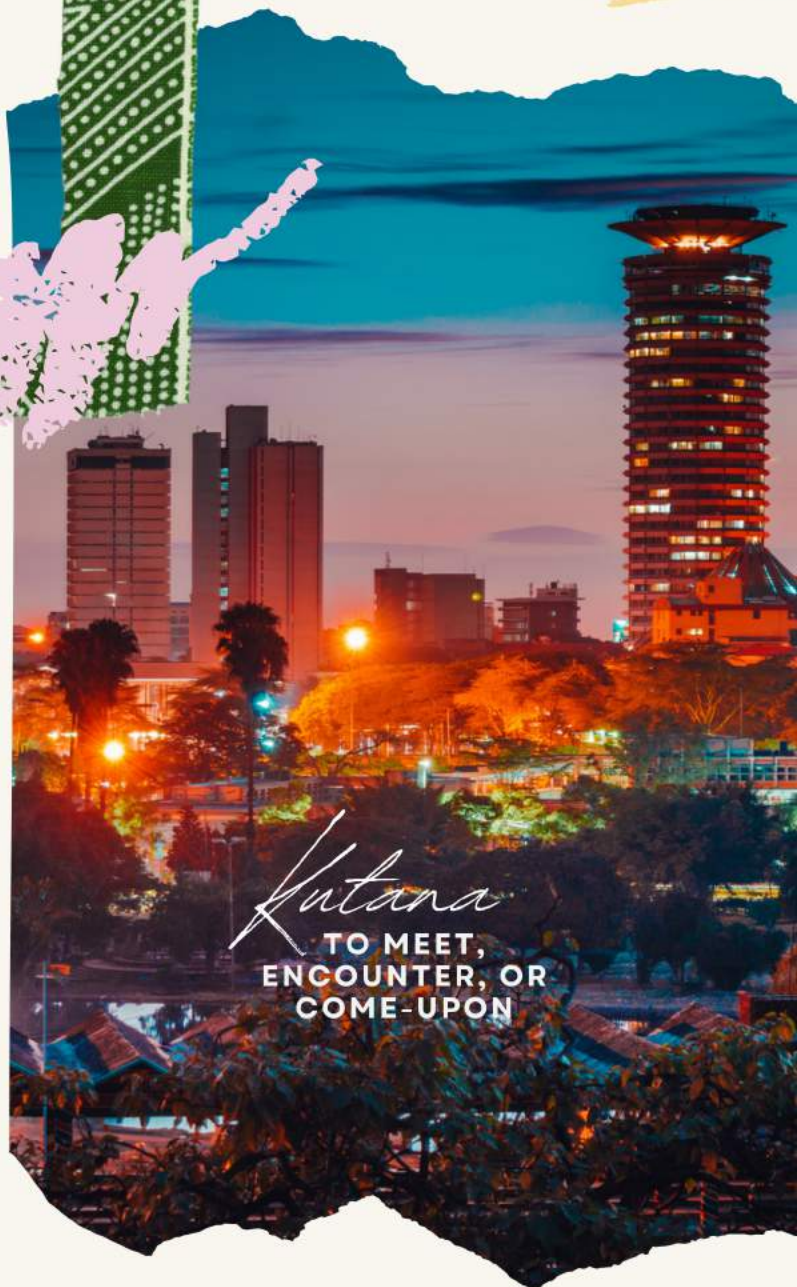
Through engagement with marginalized rural communities in Kenya, Africa Exchange pursues its mission to enhance local capacity, protect vulnerable children, provide cross-cultural learning, and preserve fragile environments.

VHBC has been partnering with Africa Exchange since 2021. We have supported their efforts in the poorest of Kenya's communities to work with local partners to address the many needs of at-risk children by building early childhood education centers. In addition to educational resources, these centers provide essential health care and nutrition services.

In 2024, we will enter into a new level of partnership with Africa Exchange which will include involvement in Africa Exchange's Kutana Kenya, a cross-cultural mission immersion experience involving small teams from multiple churches. Participants in Kutana Kenya will encounter and engage people, projects, and places of significance, all in the context of a developing nation grappling with multiple social and environmental challenges.

"Kutana" is a Swahili word meaning "to meet, encounter or come upon," and it communicates mutuality or reciprocity. Seeking mutual encounters is the guiding ethos of Africa Exchange. The goal of the Kutana program is to provide a context in which old assumptions are challenged based on new relationships with indigenous people, scholars, clergy, and cross-cultural workers. Our desire is that through the participation of multiple teams from VHBC over the next several years, our partnership with Africa Exchange will deepen and our members, our church, and our partners will be blessed.

This Wednesday, help the VHBC RAs support the work of Africa Exchange by giving a donation tomorrow night in the Fellowship Hall foyer - cash & pocket change gladly accepted.



What's your legacy?

I ask myself this question sometimes... do you?

I think about what mark I may leave on the world and how the people I encountered will remember me.

by Brent Warren



What I love about being a deacon in our church is getting to know someone on a deeper level and learning from those who have experienced much more than me. I want to know how to get the most out of this life and how their faith shaped their stories.

During my first term as deacon, Bobbye and Emmitt Weaver were among my deacon family assignments. Emmitt was the entertainment editor for the Birmingham News, and Bobbye was involved in theater and music, and an accomplished drummer. They had photos around the house taken with famous celebrities and trips they had made all over the world.

Boy did they tell some good stories! I had the opportunity to visit them on many occasions, often with my daughters. They were so warm and always showed interest in the girls. There was such a sweetness about the two of them together. They were kind to one another, and almost completed each other's sentences. It was so fun to listen to them reminisce and laugh together.

When Emmitt died a few years later, I watched with a very small group of distant relatives and friends as Emmitt received a military funeral. Emmitt left a legacy of a man who served his country, worked hard, lived life to the fullest, and loved Bobbye.

I think soon afterwards, Bobbye wanted to start coming to Wednesday night fellowship suppers. Even though she had three Buicks in her driveway, I was never sure if any of them ran. For a few years, she would drive one of them up to church every week. She loved a good bargain, Sadra's cooking, and mostly the fellowship with many of you reading this.

Eventually, either the car broke down, or she was getting nervous about driving at night, but she couldn't come to the church. She employed many of us to pick her up or bring her a hot plate by her house. It was during those visits I got to catch her up on the girls' activities, or sometimes I would bring my guitar and she would drum on a box, and we would sing together. She loved little dogs, and when I got Remi, we would go visit and he would do all his tricks for her.

Bobbye and Emmitt left a legacy far more valuable than the extremely generous donations they made to our church and other non-profit organizations. They loved God, each other, and unless you gave them a reason not to, everyone they met. I hope my legacy has a few of these adjectives like Bobbye and Emmitt's:

faithful, smart, spunky, generous, thrifty, friendly, positive, loving, caring, funny, cheerful, talented, interesting, always-learning, and just plain cool.

Through the generosity of Bobbye Weaver, our church has been blessed with a substantial estate gift. Like those before her, she loved her church and sought to invest in its future. We are grateful to have known Bobbye and Emmitt in our fellowship and we celebrate the lasting impact their generosity will have on the work of God through Vestavia Hills Baptist Church.



**The Music Ministry of
Vestavia Hills Baptist Church
presents**

Classical CONNECTIONS

for the annual Shepherd Memorial Concert. We have the opportunity at this special event to celebrate the legacy of our church's beloved organist, Betty Sue Shepherd, to recognize the contributions of our Shepherd Scholars who sing in our Sanctuary Choir, and to be reminded of the opportunity to direct financial gifts toward the scholarship fund bearing her name. This scholarship connects area college and university students with Vestavia Hills Baptist Church and the Music Ministry.

This special worship concert features our own Sanctuary Choir and a chamber orchestra comprising church members and community musicians. Making up the worship concert will be sacred musical selections that utilize familiar tunes from classical music repertoire by composers Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and others.

Shepherd Memorial Concert

**This Sunday, April 7th at 10 am
VHBC Sanctuary**



VBS

is coming this
Summer
at VHBC!

June 10-13, 2024
9 am - Noon

Children that have
completed kindergarten
through fifth grade
are welcome!

Free lunch for all in the
Fellowship Hall at noon!

Register online at
vhbc.com/vbs

Join us Thursday, June 13th
from 5 pm in the Fellowship
Hall for a fun meal together!



Wednesdays at VHBC

Prayer Breakfast at 7 am over Zoom

- Email brittni@vhbc.com or call the church office to be added to this prayer group

Midweek Spring Bible Study at 10 am in the Seminar Room, starting April 17th

- Over the next year, Dr. Eric Spivey will offer a series of Bible Orientation Classes designed to build adult Biblical confidence, invite individuals to discover God's Word, and initiate a life of Biblical study. This spring we will focus on the Bible as Scripture. Over 5 sessions, we will introduce the development, transmission, and interpretation of the Bible inviting us to trust the Bible as God's Living Word. Individuals of all ages and Biblical knowledge are invited to attend.

A Night of Prayer at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall

- Join Pastor Eric this Wednesday night, April 3rd as we spend time in intentional, guided prayer for those in our congregation and their families who are facing medical challenges.

A Night of Testimony at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall or Anxiety Workshop for Parents in the Children's Activity Room at 6 pm

- Next Wednesday



April

Take-Out
Available for Families
Order at vhbc.com

Wednesday Night Fellowship Supper

3rd: Amazing Apple Salad with roasted chicken; kids menu: chicken & waffles

10th: Hamburger steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, & biscuit; kids menu: chopped cheese slider & french fries

17th: Chef's veggie soup, ham & cheese slider, crackers; kids menu: ham & cheese slider & chips

24th: Stuffed spud (sweet or russet) with pulled pork, roasted broccoli, & crostini toast; kids menu: turkey meatball po-boy & veggie straws

Special Events at VHBC in April



Pancake Supper

Sunday, April 14th
5:30-7 pm

Join us in the Fellowship Hall for food and fellowship to support The Amelia Center. Pay at the door - \$7 for adults, \$5 for children, families 5+ \$25.

Equipping our Children

Wednesday, April 10th & Sunday, April 14th
6 pm in the Children's Activity Room

Join Becky Milstead, LPC as she leads a workshop to help parents learn about some of the reasons for anxiety in healthy development of children/teens and learn some tips on how to guide them in their journey, as well as opening up communication about anxiety in your family and to recognize the signs that professional help may be needed.
Registration required for Sunday workshop only.





Quarterly Business Meeting

Wednesday, April 17th
6 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Connections Luncheon

Sunday, April 28th
11:15 am in the Fellowship Hall

Visitors and new members alike are invited to join our ministers and new member committee for a special connections luncheon to learn more about VHBC.



SAM Spring Luncheon

Friday, May 10th at 11:30 am
Fellowship Hall

Make plans to attend and enjoy Footprint on the Sky: Voices from Chandler Mountain with storyteller Dolores Hydock and a delicious lunch from Ann. \$10 at the door. Sign up at vhbc.com to register for this event.



VHBC

Connections



Ministry Staff

Nancy Akins	Minister to Preschool & Children
Sara Binet	Interim Student Coordinator
Mike McBrayer	Administrative Pastor
Dr. Eric Spivey	Senior Pastor
Laura Tadlock	Senior Adult & Adult Ministries Coordinator
Marty Watts	Minister of Music & Worship

Upcoming on April 24th

- Sunset Vespers at 6 pm on the front lawn
- Secrets in the Sauce with Adam Casey
- Butterfly Gardening with Mindy Bodenhamer

Check vhbc.com/events for more information and how to sign up!