

# VARIATIONS

MARCH 3, 2020  
VOLUME 27, ISSUE 5

*Bi-Weekly Newsletter of  
Vestavia Hills Baptist Church*

## THE SHEPHERD'S ENCOURAGER

## *Lessons of a Health Crisis*

*by Pastor Gary Furr*

How are Christians to respond in the face of a possible pandemic? The book of James chapter 5 can help us. The Coronavirus threat is causing anxiety with questions looming about how our schools, places of work, and worship will be impacted. There are genuine concerns, realistic things we should do, and preparations to be made. See our staff statement on page 3.

But also note in James --- **it is the community that is the healing channel.** The elders are summoned to pray AND anoint the person with oil. I understand this to mean use BOTH prayer and medical treatment, which anointing was in that day. One thing is clear: they *touched* the person who was ill.

We literally *lose touch* with people who are sick. Sometimes individuals must be isolated because of contagious disease, but their need for human contact remains. One of the killing dimensions of illness beyond the disease itself is that it spiritually, emotionally, and physically isolates us from others. The loneliness and rejection many feel contribute to their crisis and the struggle to return to health. One of the healing antidotes we have to give is our presence with one another. To those isolated by illness, the Christian community is called to minister and extend care.

Finally, the Church ought to be about the ministry of healing. Of course, there is an embarrassed silence about all of this. The secularization of medicine has forever removed the healing ministry of the church to the periphery. We are somewhat ashamed of the whole sorry mess. It reappears in churches that place practical and science-based healthcare below a kind of magical, premodern understanding of prayer. These distortions fail to take seriously that suffering and illness are part of the present reality of this world, and there is not always a demon in every bush.

Why not both? All truth is God's. We need doctors, researchers, scientists, and sensible healthcare. We need the caring love of Christian fellowship. This is tested in times of crisis and stress. But by trusting in these two tried and true realities, we are anchored in any storm. There is always a crisis of one kind or another on the horizon threatening some kind of destructive damage to humanity. Faith is not believing irrationally. It means keeping calm and carrying on with wisdom and understanding. In this way, we will find the way through.

### **COVID-19 FACTS** from [uab.edu](http://uab.edu)

**symptoms:** fever, runny nose, dry cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches

**transmission:** spread from person to person through sneezing or coughing

**prevention:** wash hands for 20 seconds, cover coughs, stay home if ill, etc.

Pay attention to good guidelines. Do not forget those who are suffering. Use common sense. Do what can be done to help. Keep your little world clean. Take care of yourself. Pray for those affected. There is plenty to do that is within our power.





# VHBC PRAYER LIST

## Members in the Hospital

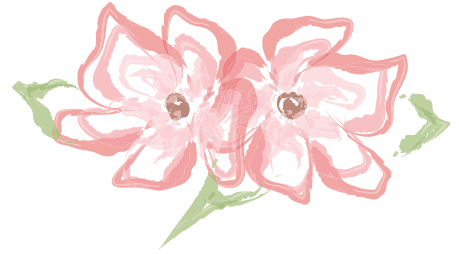
Sam Brown Lakeshore, Rm. 139

## Members at Home

Maxine Ammons	Grace Oliver
Libby Brown	Lynn Owens
Zelle Buckner	Gaynell Pinson
Bob Bush	William Poe
Carolyn Cain	Carolyn Slappey
Louise Cunningham	Ron Smith
Geri Dodson	Allison St. John
Esther Evans	Crawford Taylor
Milton Fullman	Hazel Turner
George Griffith	Sue Virciglio
Ardath Grizzell	Margaret Walker
Ruford Hodges	Betty Wallis
Charlotte Kyser	Bobbie Weaver
Betty Longshore	Doris Wilson
Al Lowery	
<b>Grayson Moran</b>	
<b>Cherri Morriss</b>	
Leon Nix	
Margaret Northrup	

## Christian Sympathy

The family of Iva Jewel Tucker in her death on February 24th.



## CONGRATULATIONS

Brian & Jessica LeBerte in the birth of a son, Miles Vincent LeBerte on February 27th. Proud big sister is Catalina. Miles is grandson of Pete & Alynn LeBerte and great-grandson of Rudy McMurray.

## VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE • SUNDAYS & WEDNESDAYS

### WEEK OF MARCH 8

**Deacons:** Dan Hartzog, Matt Hutcheson  
Sunday Wednesday

**Counting Team:** Alynn LeBerte, Jerry Pittman

**Flower Committee:** Kristie Chandler

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

**Sound Technology:** Dan McMurray, Dale Tadlock

#### Worship Care

Babies: Millie Ehrett, Sharon Hartzog

Preschool 1-2: Courtney Pittman, Kevin Jaquess

PS 3: Todd & Rachel Jordan

4s/K: Adam & Melissa Pouncey

Preschool Desk: Liz Philpot

Children's Desk: Lottie St. John

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

**Menu:** Roast beef, potatoes au gratin, broccoli, cornbread & rolls

**Volunteers:** Sue Edfeldt, Ann Knight, Pat Cooper, Ann Steppe



### WEEK OF MARCH 15

**Deacons:** Kevin Jaquess, Rachel Jordan  
Sunday Wednesday

**Counting Team:** Taylor Burton, Steve White

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

**Shuttle Service:** Hal David, Bill Dupree

**Sound Technology:** Dan McMurray, Pete LeBerte

#### Worship Care

Babies: Melissa McMurray, Sara McFarland

Preschool 1-2: Alexis Johnson

PS 3: Brian & Heather Irvin

4s/K: Tommy & Erin Yeager

Preschool Desk: Brenda Ammons

Children's Desk: Jerri Pare'

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

**Menu:** Spaghetti, tossed salad, French bread, chocolate eclairs

**Volunteers:** Judy Schlegel, JoAnne Delohery, Lisa Speegle, Mindy Bodenhamer

# Lenten Series begins: The Callings That Find Us

**March 4 Speaker: Dr. Cecelia Walker, 6pm**  
 Rev. Cecelia Walker is Director of Pastoral Care for Brookwood Baptist Health and Director of Clinical Pastoral Education for the Baptist Health System in Birmingham, AL. She also has a compelling story of God's grace and calling.

**March 11 Speaker: Charlie Lucas, 6pm**  
 Charlie is a renowned contemporary sculptor and painter. His work has appeared at the New Orleans Museum of Art, Birmingham Museum of Art, Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, and many other venues.



spring forward!

Don't forget to turn your clocks FORWARD an hour, starting on Sunday, March 8th!



Service Project  
 Saturday, March 7  
 8:30-12:30

**More info at [vhbc.com](http://vhbc.com)**

Please email Nancy at [nancy@vhbc.com](mailto:nancy@vhbc.com) if you plan to participate!

## PROMOTION OF SAFETY & WELL BEING AT VHBC

The Vestavia Hills Baptist Church staff continues to monitor the situation surrounding Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Our immediate response is one of prayerful consideration for all those who have already been impacted by the virus and those who are providing care. While we don't anticipate any major changes to regular church operations, the staff will be taking steps to promote the safety and well-being of our congregation and those affiliated with our church. Hand sanitizers will be more readily available around the church campus and information about handwashing practices that help prevent illnesses will be posted.

Should the situation dictate in the coming weeks and months, the staff is prepared to make adjustments to church practices such as communion, passing the peace, fellowship meals, etc. to promote community health. **WE ALSO REMIND ANYONE WHO IS SICK TO STAY HOME AND RECOVER.**



## 2nd Sunday Pancakes

March 8 at 8:30 am  
 Children's Building

## Partners in ministry at VHBC

Help carry out the ministry of VHBC by offering your gifts alongside fellow members. Find your first place of service or connect with a new ministry. Join a teaching or mission team. Share your talent for music or hospitality. Minister among our youth or children.

<http://www.vhbc.com/partners-in-ministry-2020>

## Prayer for Missions



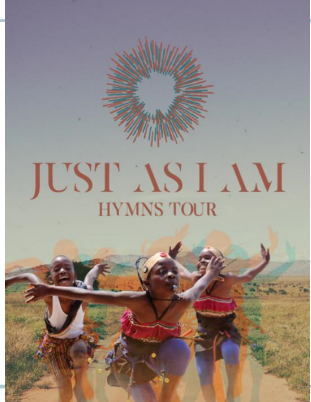
March 10 & 24  
 11:30 am  
 Chapel



Bring your lunch and stay for fellowship afterward!

many thanks

Thank you so much for hosting me this week. It was a joy to see you and to give you a quick update. We look forward to hosting your team this summer. We are thankful for our long-term partnership and look forward to the future. **Blessings, Dianne McNary**



## African Children's Choir at VHBC

Sunday, March 15, 2020  
 5 pm



Don't miss out on this uniquely immersive worship experience through song, dance and video story-telling!

## Service Opportunities at VHBC

### Food Bank Packing

Tuesday, March 10 from 9-11:30 am

### Church of the Reconciler

Monday, March 16 from 8-10 am

## MINISTRY BUDGET OFFERING

Budget Needed Feb 2020	<b>\$133,952.00</b>
Budget Given Feb 2020	<b>\$130,307.46</b>

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**YOUR MINISTRY STAFF**  
GARY A. FURR, PASTOR  
NANCY AKINS, MINISTER TO PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN  
TYLER JOHNSON, MINISTER TO STUDENTS  
MIKE MCBRAYER, ADMINISTRATIVE PASTOR  
ELISE PITTMAN, MINISTRY ASSISTANT  
MARTY WATTS, MINISTER OF MUSIC & WORSHIP

*Do you have any news to add to  
our bi-weekly newsletter?*

Email Brittini at [brittini@vhbc.com](mailto:brittini@vhbc.com)

*Next issue: March 17th!*



**WHAT'S HAPPENING AT VHBC?**

- Wednesday, March 4**  
6:30 am Prayer Breakfast  
10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study  
4:30pm Fellowship Supper  
5:00pm Handbell Practice  
5:30pm Children's Choir Practice  
6:00pm Wednesday Sessions  
6:00pm Youth Activities  
6:15pm Mission Friends, GA, RAs  
7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice  
7:00pm Trustees Meeting
- Saturday, March 7**  
8:30am Bundles of Hope Service
- Sunday, March 8**  
8:30am 2nd Sunday Pancakes  
8:45am Sunday Bible Study  
10:00am Worship Service  
5:00pm Deacons' Meeting  
5:00pm Women's Bible Study  
5:00pm YOSE
- Monday, March 9**  
9:30am Women's Bible Study  
10:00am Lovelady Ministry
- Tuesday, March 10**  
9:30am International Friends  
11:30am Prayer for Missions  
6:30pm Women's Bible Study
- Wednesday, March 11**  
6:30am Prayer Breakfast  
10:30am Pastor's Bible Study  
4:30pm Fellowship Supper  
5:00pm Handbell Practice  
5:30pm Children's Choir Practice  
6:00pm Wednesday Sessions  
6:00pm Youth Activities  
6:15pm Mission Friends, GA, RAs  
6:15pm RAs to Firehouse Shelter  
7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice
- Friday, March 13**  
6:00pm Youth - MESH Weekend
- Sunday, March 15**  
8:45am Sunday Bible Study  
9:30am Orchestra  
10:00am Worship Service  
11:00am Personnel Committee Meet
- 5:00pm African Children's Choir
- Monday, March 16**  
8:00am Church of the Reconciler  
9:30am Women's Bible Study  
10:00am Lovelady Ministry
- Tuesday, March 17**  
9:30am International Friends

**Senior Adult Trip**  
**Savannah, GA, Jekyll Island,**  
**& Beaufort, SC**  
**May 18-22, 2020**

**\$549 per person**  
**double occupancy**  
**add \$179 for single**

**1/2 amount due at registration**  
**Balance due by March 11**

**Contact Martha in the church office**  
**([martha@vhbc.com](mailto:martha@vhbc.com)) to register.**



**Vacation Bible School**  
**at vestavia hills baptist**  
**june 1-4, 2020**  
**completed kindergarten through**  
**completed 5th grade**  
Register NOW at [www.vhbc.com](http://www.vhbc.com)!



We return to Perry County, AL July 12-16 to lead Seed Camp at Judson College in Marion, AL. Our team begins that Sunday and provides a full day camp experience Monday-Thursday with a wide range of programming including Bible study, visual and performing arts, and more. **Please see [vhbc.com](http://vhbc.com) to register!**