

VHBC Connections



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CONTENTS

3

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

4

CHRISTMAS EVE

5

PASTOR'S ARTICLE

7

VHBC KIDS

8

COVID RESPONSE
UPDATES

9

PRAYER LIST

10

STAY CONNECTED

**IN
TUNE**

with VHBC

Thanks so much for listening this year! More episodes are coming in 2021!

“In Tune with VHBC” is a weekly podcast about music and worship at Vestavia Hills Baptist Church. Episodes will explore hymns we sing in worship and feature interviews with participants in Music Ministry ensembles.





HOLIDAY *schedule* & UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 23-25 VHBC Offices closed for Christmas holidays

Dec 24 Christmas Eve Services [see pg. 4 for more info]

Dec 27 & Jan 3 No Sunday School

Dec 31-Jan 1 VHBC Offices Closed [Finance office open on Dec 31]

Please remember that in-person services have been suspended until further notice. For more information about VHBC's COVID response, please see page 8.



Spend Christmas Eve



WITH VHBC

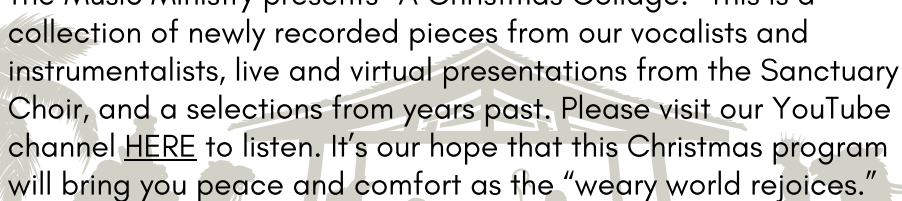
Come See the Baby

Families may come to the church between **noon and 4 pm** on Christmas Eve. The manger scene will be set up on the lawn outside the church offices for children to enjoy and photos to be taken. There will not be a program presented, but there will be take-home supplies for families, including glowsticks, candy canes, a nativity wreath, and a short Christmas Eve family devotional.

Candlelight Service

This will be live-streamed at 8PM available on YouTube, Facebook, and the church website. The service will remain online to be available for later viewing. **There will be no in-person attendance.** Communion supplies will be available in the church foyer on Monday and Tuesday, December 21 & 22, and on a pick-up table under the porte-cochère on Christmas Eve between noon and 4 pm.

Christmas Collage from VHBC



The Music Ministry presents "A Christmas Collage." This is a collection of newly recorded pieces from our vocalists and instrumentalists, live and virtual presentations from the Sanctuary Choir, and a selections from years past. Please visit our YouTube channel [HERE](#) to listen. It's our hope that this Christmas program will bring you peace and comfort as the "weary world rejoices."

SHEPHERD'S ENCOURAGER

DR. GARY FURR

As we enter Christmas week, I saw a report that the Kilauea volcano on the main island of Hawaii erupted for the first time in more than two years.

The island of Hawaii is now on red alert and residents are told to stay home. We are near the final week of 2020. I was hoping we could avoid a volcano. Nearly every other kind of stressful event has hit us.

It's been a tough year for all. There is a lot of suffering and sadness in the world. And in our congregation, we have had a tough year, too. The names of those who have died are names who have been a part of our lives for many years. We've been away from a church filled with worshipers now for nine full months. Not long ago, I looked at some information from February and thought, "Was that this year or last year?"

The truth is, nothing is going to change dramatically simply because the calendar goes forward one day to a new year. It's a psychic relief, I suppose, to "turn the page." However, permit me to "count some blessings."

- Our church members have continued, holding one another up in prayer and ministering to one another through calls, notes, and acts of caring.
- Our generosity has continued uninterrupted. It is a miracle to me how faithfully our people have contributed to keeping our church vital and strong.
- Our teachers and leaders in the children's' area have carried on the work of teaching the Bible to our children online and with creative ministries to keep in touch. Nancy Akins has been as always, extraordinary in making certain that learning about Jesus is a joy.



Counting Blessings





- Our youth have stayed connected. Tyler has worked hard to minister and care for each one.
- Marty and our musicians have continued to implement creative ways to stay in tune by training for the day when the glorious songs of faith will resonate in our space once more.
- We have had visitors both online and in-person to come to our church.
- The unfortunate event of the pandemic has birthed the great ministry of streaming live video into our homes week by week. The equipment, training, and setup were all paid by faithful gifts in a single week of appeal. This will be an ongoing and permanent ministry.
- You have a staff that loves you and works hard every single day with two goals: take care of the facilities and ministries that we all invest in together and continue to nurture our people and their fellowship to keep us going.

I count our blessings more deeply than these, however. The spirit of devotion and commitment to the cause of Christ is, I would venture, stronger than ever. I am grateful for each one of you. I wrote a song this past year based on the Apostle Paul's "thanksgiving" at the beginning of his letters. I am posting it [here](#) and invite you to hear it. The chorus says,

***I thank God when I think of you
You are a gift to me
Of faithfulness and hope and love
and generosity***



Thank you, church family, for all that you have done to support ministries, our classes, and missions. Without you, none of it would happen. It's been a difficult year. But it has been a good year, too.

In these last few weeks, thank you for your financial stewardship. Many give during this season, and we appreciate every commitment. As we come to our online communion and other activities, from me and our staff and our families, have a Merry Christmas. We will all aim to have a Happy New year. Together.

Gary Furr

A stylized graphic featuring a bright orange sun partially obscured by pink and red mountain peaks, with a dark grey shadow beneath the mountains.

vhbc kids

THIS FALL

VHBC Kids' Sunday school meetings will continue on Zoom. Check out the times & leaders for each group below!

sunday school

9AM

- Kindergarten with Gilda Coker and James Carr
- 3rd Grade Class with Nancy Akins
- 4th/5th Grade Class with Liz David and Jenny Henry
- Sixers with Lucas Dorion and Mindy Bodenhamer

9:30AM

- 1st/2nd Grades with Sandra Bates and Gay Caldwell

**No Sunday school on
December 27th & Jan 3rd!**

Covid-19 Response Committee Update

Due to the extremely high incidence of COVID transmission and with hospitals stretched thin, we are suspending on-site services and meetings at the church beginning next Monday, December 21. We grieve having to take this action and the resulting loss of in-person involvement at our meaningful Christmas services. Our staff is making plans to adjust those services and, though we will not be under one roof, we will still celebrate this season together.

1. The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be a live-streamed service at 8 PM available on YouTube, Facebook, and the church website. The service will remain online to be available for later viewing. There will be no in-person attendance. Communion supplies will be available in the church foyer on Monday and Tuesday, December 21 & 22, and a pick-up table under the porte-cochère on Christmas Eve between noon and 4 pm.
2. Come See the Baby will be presented in a new way. Families may come to the church between noon and 4 pm on Christmas Eve. The manger scene will be set up on the lawn outside the church offices for children to enjoy and photos to be taken. There will not be a program presented, but there will be take home supplies for families, including glowsticks, candy canes, a nativity wreath, and a short Christmas Eve family devotional.
3. Indoor meetings, including those of church committees, Sunday School classes, and the Youth Group are suspended for the immediate future.
4. **The COVID Response Team continues to review our circumstances and offer guidance to the staff and church leadership as they oversee the ministries of our church amidst the ongoing pandemic. Join us in ongoing prayer for our church, for those who have suffered as a result of COVID-19, and for the many health care workers providing care in this taxing season.**

COVID Response Team

Roger Bates, Chair
Mindy Bodenhamer
Leigh Collier

David Compher
Jennifer Jaquess
Dan McMurray

Laura Tadlock
Mike McBrayer
Gary Furr

Prayer List

MEMBERS AT HOME

Maxine Ammons

Harper Bates

Luke Binet

Clint Brooks

Sam & Libby Brown

Zelle Buckner

Carolyn Cain

Mike Chandler

Geri Dodson

Paul Edfeldt

Esther Evans

Milton Fullman

Jim & Natalie Garland

Mavis Hardy

Richard Horn

Ruford Hodges

Charlotte Kyser

Al Lowery

Samson Mathangani

Sarah Moreland

Leon Nix

Margaret Northrup

June Ousley

Gaynell Pinson

Alicia Stigler

Hazel Turner

Stan & Sue Virciglio

Margaret Walker

Bobbye Weaver

Doris Wilson

IN CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

David Philpot & family in the death of his father, Jim Philpot on Wednesday, December 15th.

The family of Betty Wallis in her passing on December 20th.



VHBC GIVING

December Offering: **\$170,712.87**

December Needs: **\$133,952.00**

YTD Budget Offering: **\$1,621,179.39**

YTD Budget Needs: **\$1,707,888.00**



STAY CONNECTED

Visit yhbc.com and click the stay connected button to find updates for our [prayer list](#), online worship schedule, our new **podcast**, [ShelbyNext giving](#), family resources, and more! Click the underlined words to follow each link.

