

VARIATIONS

JANUARY 7, 2020
VOLUME 27, ISSUE 1

*Bi-Weekly Newsletter of
Vestavia Hills Baptist Church*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Article

2nd Sunday Pancakes

Winter Daytreat

Moms' Retreat



*more info
on back*

THE SHEPHERD'S ENCOURAGER

by Pastor Gary Furr

There are plenty of horror stories about bad evangelism—much of it emanates from a faulty understanding of what the gospel is in the first place. The American church in general and evangelical Christianity, in particular, has suffered from an overabundance of zeal and a short supply of wisdom and maturity. Many of the strategies that are sometimes used in communicating our faith are too shaped by a need for success, winning an argument or trying to entertain, or frightening or tricking “consumers” enough into buying the gospel like a product.

We seem to be seeing a retreat from the church in our culture presently. What is happening? The culture is changing for certain, but all of the problems aren't “out there.” It is also in part a presumption on the churches too long in a place of entitled advantage in American life without recognizing that our nation is always changing. Every hundred years or so there is an entirely new batch of people on the planet and the task of presenting the gospel to them faithfully constantly requires our best efforts.

We also encounter this most deeply in our circles of friends, families, coworkers, and acquaintances. All of us carry a burden for those we love whose lives are out of control, disconnected or disinterested in the things that matter deeply to us. How to reach them without alienating them unnecessarily?

The worst answer to this problem is an alliance with the toxic mix of politics and a need for domination in the culture. It is a temptation to which too many have succumbed. An equally bad answer is to abandon the world around us to ruin and hide away in our circles of mutual comfort. So what is the way forward?

During Epiphany season and leading up to Lent, I will be preaching on Jesus' example of reaching people. It has always struck me as odd how much time preachers spend on Paul and Old Testament texts but not the life of Jesus. His example and relationships have much to teach us about addressing the spiritual hunger of the world. Why not learn from him?

continued on page 3

LISTEN ON SUNDAYS • 91.1FM OR VHBC.COM

VHBC PRAYER LIST

Members in the Hospital

Iva Jewel Tucker STVHS, Rm. 701
 Marie Gwathney UAB

Members at Home

Maxine Ammons	Al Lowery
Don Baker	Barbara Price
Gerry Bragdon	LuAnn Smith
Sam & Libby Brown	Ron Smith
Zelle Buckner	Leon Nix
Milligan Burroughs	Margaret Northrup
Bob Bush	Grace Oliver
Carolyn Cain	Nora Ousley
Louise Cunningham	Gaynell Pinson
Jimmy Daviston	William Poe
Geri Dodson	Lorelle Singleton
Esther Evans	Faye Spear
LaWayne Fleming	Alicia Stigler
Milton Fullman	Hazel Turner
George Griffith	Sue Virciglio
Ardath Grizzell	Margaret Walker
Ruford Hodges	Betty Wallis
Charlotte Kyser	Bobbye Weaver
Betty Longshore	Doris Wilson

Thank you

We want to say thank you to our dear church family for your many acts of kindness and expressions of sympathy in our time of sorrow in the death of our daughter and sister.

Peggy Jones, Rachel & Tim Turner



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO:

Marty Watts & family in the death of his grandmother, Mary Watts, on January 2nd in Georgia. Visitation will on Thursday, Jan. 9th followed by her service on Jan. 10th.

VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE • SUNDAYS & WEDNESDAYS

WEEK OF JANUARY 12

Deacons: Mike Steppe, Betsy Stockdale
Sunday Wednesday

Counting Team: Taylor Burton, Steve White
Flower Committee: Becky White, Emily White
Shuttle Service: Hal David, Craig Youngblood
Sound Technology: Hal David, Norfleete Day
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, JANUARY 8

Menu: Lasagna, tossed salad, French bread, apple pie

Volunteers: Merryl Cooper, Jerolyn Phillips



WEEK OF JANUARY 19

Deacons: Dale Tadlock, Dan Van Giessen
Sunday Wednesday

Counting Team: David McPherson, Fred Olive
Flower Committee: Sarah Moreland, Carolyn Slappey
Shuttle Service: John Wood, David Bamberg
Sound Technology: Pete LeBerte, Dan McMurray
Worship Care
 Babies: Melissa McMurray, Sara McFarland
 Preschool 1-2: Alexis Johnson
 PS 3: Brian & Heather Irvin
 4s/K: Tommy & Erin Yeager
 Preschool Desk: Jennifer Cox
 Children's Desk: Jerri Pare'

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15

Menu: Baked chicken, rice, English peas, rolls & cornbread, assorted desserts

Volunteers: Judy Schlegel, JoAnne Delohery, Rosemary Bamberg, Mindy Bodenhamer

Pastor's article continued from cover

As a part of this emphasis, I want to share many resources I have curated through the years that might help you in the journey to becoming the gospel others might read. Last Sunday I mentioned a list of twenty suggestions for giving personal testimony. I send these out to those who are about to become deacons to help them in the task of a starting placer sharing. But it occurred to me that looking at these in advance, rather than merely in retrospect (for example, "where I see God working now in my life" or "a scripture passage that speaks to me,") might provide some interesting clues to paying attention to the work of God in our lives. This list is certainly not exhaustive, but hopefully it will be helpful to you. It is posted on our website at www.vhbc.com/pastor

On Wednesday morning, the **Pastor's Wednesday Bible Study resumes at 10:30 am.** I will begin with a class entitled, "Discovering Your Spiritual Type." We will look at the work of Corinne Ware and others in the light of Scriptures about the church and the work of the Holy Spirit in building a community of believers that develop harmony and cooperation for the sake of the gospel. Each of us has a part to play in doing the work of God's church. It is open to anyone and no prerequisite knowledge of the Bible or theology is necessary. Bring a Bible and yourself! You'll meet a welcoming group of new friends.

Finally, on two Wednesday nights, January 15 and 22 at 6:00 pm, I will be teaching a Bible-centered study entitled "Reaching People Who Are Out of Reach." Where do we start? How do we connect to people disinterested, turned off from the church, and antagonistic? How does our church begin to address the next generation with the genuine gospel of Jesus and not merely live on the accomplishments of past generations without losing its integrity? I hope that you'll join us as we resume our Wednesday fellowship supper and sessions!

Gary

**HELP NEEDED
WORSHIP CARE
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR OUR
PRESCHOOL 1, 2, & 3 CLASSES**



Please contact Nancy to be added to the rotation!
Thanks so much!

MINISTRY BUDGET OFFERING

Budget Needed 2019	1,762,085.00
Budget Given 2019	1,752,929.54

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT VHBC?

Wednesday, January 8

- 6:30am Prayer Breakfast
- 10:30am Pastor's Bible Study
- 4:30pm Fellowship Supper
- 5:00pm Handbells
- 5:30pm Children's Choirs
- 6:00pm Wednesday Sessions
- 6:00pm Mission Friends, GA
- 6:00pm Youth - WNL
- 6:15pm RAs to Firehouse Shelter
- 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice

Sunday, January 12

- 8:30am 2nd Sunday Pancakes!
- 8:45am Sunday School Bible Study
- 9:30am Orchestra Practice
- 10:00am Worship Service - Communion
- 5:00pm Deacons' Meeting
- 5:00pm YOSE
- 5:00pm Women's Bible Study

Monday, January 13

- 9:30am Women's Bible Study
- 10:00am Lovelady Ministry

Tuesday, January 14

- 9:30am International Friends
- 6:30pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, January 15

- 6:30am Prayer Breakfast
- 10:30am Pastor's Bible Study
- 4:30pm Fellowship Supper
- 5:00pm Handbells
- 5:30pm Children's Choirs
- 6:00pm Wednesday Sessions
- 6:00pm Mission Friends, GA, RAs
- 6:00pm Youth - WNL
- 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir Practice

Friday, January 17

- 4:30pm Youth departing for WYS

Sunday, January 19

- 8:45am Sunday School Bible Study
- 10:00am Worship Service
- 2:00pm Youth return from WYS
- 5:00pm YOSE

Monday, January 20

- 7:00am Church of the Reconciler
- 9:30am Women's Bible Study
- 10:00am Lovelady Ministry
- 4:00pm Youth - 428

Tuesday, January 21

- 9:30am International Friends
- 6:30pm Women's Bible Study



**February 7-8, 2020
Columbiana, AL**

Join us at our 2020 Moms' retreat as we explore ways to respond to change and discover best practices for living life with our family and friends.

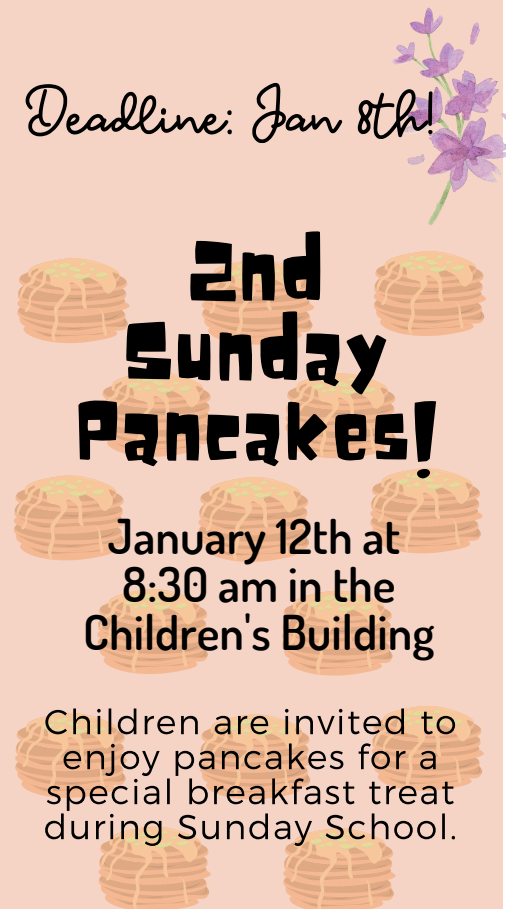
Registration available online at vhbc.com!

Deadline: Jan 8th!

**2nd
Sunday
Pancakes!**

**January 12th at
8:30 am in the
Children's Building**

Children are invited to enjoy pancakes for a special breakfast treat during Sunday School.

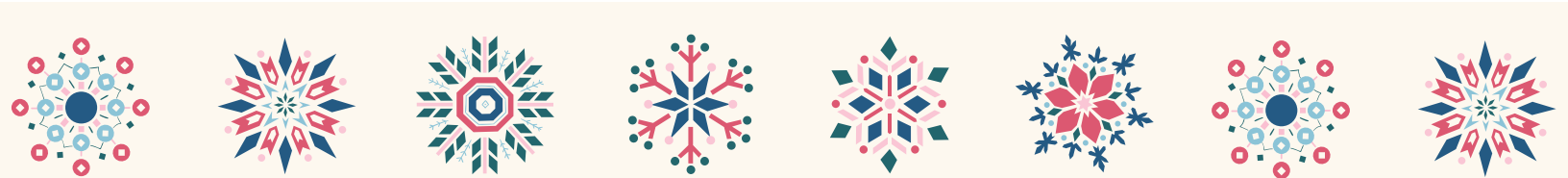


VARIATIONS IS PUBLISHED BIWEEKLY BY
VESTAVIA HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH
2600 VESTAVIA DRIVE
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35216

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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

YOUR MINISTRY STAFF
GARY A. FURR, PASTOR
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



winter daytreat 01.26.20

On Sunday, January 26, our church family will gather together for worship, fellowship, excursions, and activities that will serve to unite us as one body.

Register now at vhbc.com.

\$20 for adults & youth; \$10 for college and youth; no charge for 6th grade & younger.

daytreat schedule

- 8:30 Breakfast & fellowship
- 10:00 Worship
- 11:05 Lunch
- 11:50 Optional Outings
- 2:30 Onsite Activities
- 5:00 Dinner
- 5:45 Small Groups
- 6:20 Fellowship

