

MARCH 21, 2023

VHBC *Connections*

VOLUME 30 ISSUE 6



MORE ALIKE

TYLER JOHNSON WRITES
ABOUT CONNECTION

STORIES TO RECKON WITH

HIGHLIGHTS

WEEKLY SCHEDULE AT VHBC



8:45 AM SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

- Children's Sunday School meets in the Children's Building. Please sign your child in at the front reception desk.
- Find our Welcome Team in the main foyer if you need assistance looking for a class for you and your family.

10:00 AM WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

- Worship guides and hymn sheets are available at the sanctuary entrances.
- If you are unable to worship in person with us, please join us online or over the radio at 91.1 FM.
- Worship Care for babies through Kindergarten begins at 9:45 am.

5:00 PM YOUTH ON SUNDAY EVENING

- All youth meet in the Student Building to play games, listen to a devotion, and prepare for the upcoming week.

4:45 PM FELLOWSHIP SUPPER

- Meet us in the Fellowship Hall starting at 4:45 every Wednesday.
- Register online weekly at vhbc.com to reserve your meal!
- Adults/Youth \$6 per person
- Kids (K-6th) \$4 per person
- Preschoolers & College Students eat free!

4:45 PM HANDBELLS

5:30 PM CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

6:00 PM YOUTH ACTIVITIES

6:00 PM ADULT SESSIONS

6:15 PM CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

7:00 PM SANCTUARY CHOIR



A NOTE ON HOLY WEEK

Holy Week begins with Jesus' inaugural parade on Palm Sunday and takes us through the drama of his last week in Jerusalem. In many ways, this is the week that teaches us our rhythm for every week in God's kingdom. It's often called "passion week," because it's full of suffering. (*Passio* is Latin for "suffering.") This is one of the harder things to learn about following Jesus: his way to real life isn't easy. In the end, it'll get you killed.

The good news of the cross is that dying in Christ, we're raised to new life, a life that is stronger than death. As Martin Luther King Jr. taught us, unearned suffering is redemptive. Loving your enemies, giving to whoever asks, or turning the other cheek might get you killed, but it will also get you born again. And when we're born into God's life, we know a life that will never end. That's what Easter season is about.

Passages from Common Prayer:
A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals

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What a great turnout! Thanks so much to all who helped organize this wonderful event and those who participated!



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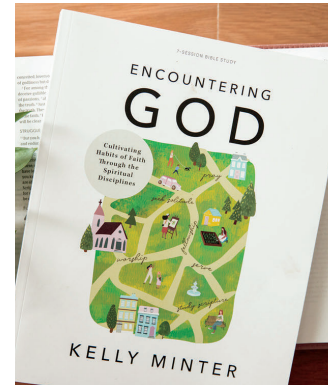
THROUGH

Lent

Ways to Connect during Lent

Women's Bible Study

Women are invited to join a 7-week study, *Encountering God* by Kelly Minter with opportunities to join on Sunday evenings at 6 pm or Tuesday mornings at 10 am.



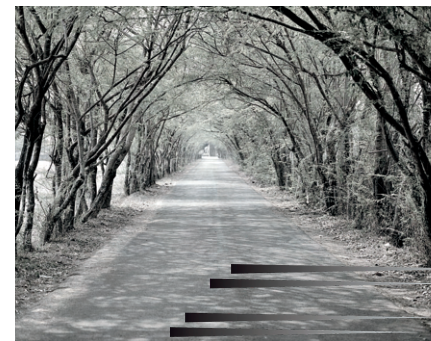
Adult Bible Study

Dennis Anderson will be leading a Wednesday morning Bible study, starting Wednesday, March 1st - **Seven Days that Changed the World: The Last Week in the Life of Christ.** Meetings will start at 10 am in the Fireside Room.



Bible Study for College Students

Journey Thru Lent, a student-centered gathering is an opportunity for our local college students to join us at VHBC for dinner and Bible study Wednesday in March. Alexis Johnson will be facilitating this great group of students at 6 pm in the Young Adult classroom (next to the library).



LENTEN SCHEDULE

-  *Ash Wednesday*
February 22, 2023 at 6 pm
-  *Palm Sunday*
April 2, 2023 at 10 am
-  *Maunder Thursday*
April 6, 2023 at 6 pm
-  *Good Friday*
April 7, 2023 at 11 am
-  *Easter*
April 9, 2023 at 10 am

Sign up at
vhbc.com/lent

LENTEN HYMN

Let all mortal flesh keep silence
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ, our God, to earth descending,
comes our homage to command.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human likeness,
in the body and the blood
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way
as the Light from Light, descending
from the realms of endless day,
comes the pow'rs of hell to vanquish
as the darkness clears away.

At his feet the six-winged seraph,
cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence
as with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, Lord Most High!"

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"
St. James the Less, first Bishop of Jerusalem

JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

Guest Preacher on March 26th

Rev. Dr. Tyshawn Gardner

Rev. Gardner currently serves as Associate Professor in the Biblical and Religious Studies Department and Director of the Pre-Ministerial Scholars Program at Samford University. Rev. Gardner also serves as an adjunct professor at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Louisville, KY. Rev. Gardner served as the Senior Pastor of Plum Grove Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama for 19 years (2003-2022), he also served as the President of the Tuscaloosa Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) from 2016-2019. He is married to Shonetay Gardner, and they have 4 children, Coretta (Corey), Tristan, Titus, and Tyson and 3 beautiful grandchildren.



Palm Sunday April 2

Families with children (kindergarten - sixth grade) are invited to *Walk with Jesus: A Palm Sunday experience* on April 2 from 8:45-9:45 am in the Children's Building. Children are invited to process into worship waving palm branches and sing. If you would like your child to participate, please have them meet in the Chapel at 9:45 am. At 4:30 pm, **William Carey University Chorale** will be performing in the Sanctuary. All are welcome to attend!

Maundy Thursday



Please join us for dinner and a special Maundy Thursday communion service on April 6th. Dinner will be served from 4:45-5:45 and the service will be held in the Sanctuary. The next day we will serve lunch at 11 am, followed by a Good Friday service at 12 pm in the Sanctuary.

& Good Friday



Easter

April 9

All are welcome to join us in our celebration of the risen Christ! Worship begins at 10 am and families are invited to bring flowers to decorate the cross on the lawn. We are also inviting those who have not celebrated believer's baptism to participate in our Easter Baptism Service.

MORE ALIKE THAN DIFFERENT

Connection in the Midst of Loneliness

by Tyler Johnson

My wife and I have very similar jobs, and at the same time, very different jobs. I am a pastor who ministers primarily to teenagers. My wife is a chaplain who ministers primarily to people in hospice care. It is very natural to come home at the end of the day and share stories of what we have seen and experienced, and as you can imagine working with teenagers and working with hospice patients are very different paths of ministry. Or so I thought.

In our sharing, a lot of the issues that those in nursing and long-term facilities face are very similar to the issues our teenagers face on a daily basis, though it may look wildly different on the surface. After multiple conversations that all ended with me being intrigued in the shared journeys of teenagers and those in long term care or nursing facilities, I looked to see if there was any data that backed up these anecdotal observations, and what I found may surprise you.

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Pew Research, Generation Z (GenZ) born between 1997-2012 is the first generation on record that has reported that less than half of them are happy, coming in at 45%. Compared to other generations like Millennials at 57%, GenX at 51% and Boomers at 70%.

On the surface, it appears that our senior adults are almost twice as happy as our teenagers. However, as a statistics professor of mine used to say “stats are one of the few types of subjective math, it’s all about how you spin it.”



While on the whole it appears like everything else, teenagers could not be more different than senior adults, until you look at one key factor, the percentage of those populations seeking mental health treatment. In a shocking number, at least compared to previous generations, 1 out of every 3 persons in GenZ has sought out mental health treatment. That number doesn’t even come close to any other population, except for one, which is senior adults in long term care or nursing facilities. The number of senior adults treated for mental health conditions in these populations are also at 1 in every 3.

Why is this? The driving factors appear to be so different. For GenZ issues like school shootings, student debt, domestic political turmoil, and a toxic social media landscape are all culprits leading to anxiousness and depression.

For Boomers, especially those in facilities, factors like caring for loved ones with terminal illness, insurance claims, declining health, and grief of watching peers enter the last moments of life are all to blame for anxiety and depression. While these factors are different, there is one that both of these populations share that is the call to action for this article, and that is isolation.



continued on next page

I have often said the pandemic didn't create new problems, it exacerbated and magnified old problems. Teenagers not allowed to be in school, and senior adults in facilities not allowed to have visitors didn't create the issue of loneliness, it magnified an already existing problem. Just because a teenager is scrolling on their phone does not mean that they are connected to others in meaningful ways, just in the same way as a senior adult watching a movie in the community room of their facility does not mean they are connected. The crux of the issue is that both of these populations are desperate for meaningful connection and community.

This is where we as the church are to step in to provide meaningful community to these populations that are obviously struggling so much.

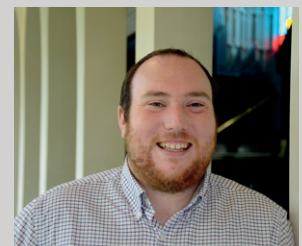
Generation Z (born between 1997-2012) is the first generation on record that has reported that less than half of them are happy.



I get it, teenagers can be intimidating, and so can senior adults, especially in foreign places like nursing homes and care facilities. Instead of walling ourselves off and being happy that these populations are getting treatment, what would it look like if we stepped boldly into those uncomfortable places to remind both of these populations that they are not only loved, but they are KNOWN, and not ALONE.

While the approaches to meaningful ministry to these populations may be different, it boils down to recognition that we are all made in God's image and while there is an open seat at God's table for everyone, sometimes we need to pick up that table and move it in order for everyone to have a seat. That is my prayer, that we are not only people who leave open seats, but pick up tables to bring community to all those who are crying out for the connection only God and God's people can provide.

Tyler



YOUTH & CHILDREN

@ VHBC

YOSE Schedule

- April 2nd: Game Night
- April 9th: Easter (No YOSE)
- April 16th: No YOSE
- April 23rd: YOSE Mission
- April 30th: YOSE Night Out (Youth Talent Show)

Special Events

for Youth

- Mission Madness, April 14-16, 2023 in Columbus, GA.
- Youth Week, April 16-22
- 7th-9th grade Beach Retreat, July 5-9, 2023

Sign up vhbc.com/youth

Palm Sunday

Families with children (kindergarten - sixth grade) are invited to Walk with Jesus: A Palm Sunday experience on April 2 from 8:45-9:45 am in the Children's Building. Children are invited to process into worship waving palm branches and sing. If you would like your child to participate, please have them meet in the Chapel at 9:45 am.

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 8 at 10 am
Church Lawn

Don't forget your basket!

VBS at
VHBC
2023



Join us for VBS June 12-15!
More info and registration on
vhbc.com!

WEDNESDAYS AT VHBC

Fellowship Supper

Meals are served in the Fellowship Hall from 4:45 - 5:45 pm and can be pre-ordered/paid online or in person on Wednesdays.

Pricing:

Adults \$6

Kids \$4

Preschool \$0

College \$0

Menu

3/22: Salsa Verde Chicken Casserole, Mexican street corn casserole, chips, salsa, & guacamole, dessert (kids: beef tacos, corn, dessert)

3/29: No dinner due to Spring Break Holiday

4/6: (Maundy Thursday) Lasagna rolls, roasted Italian veggies, garlic bread, dessert (kids: pizza & baked fries)

4/12: Poppy seed chicken casserole, jasmine rice, broccoli, roll, & dessert (kids: chicken fingers & fries)

Wednesday Sessions during Lent

▶ Lenten Sessions

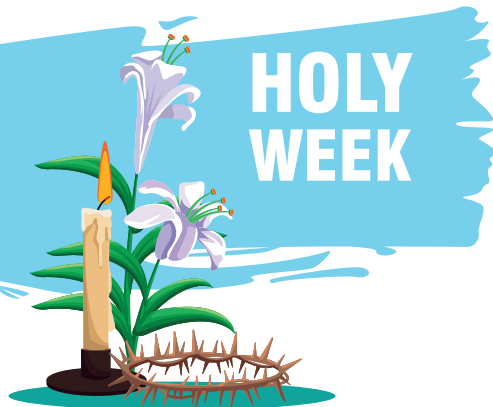
Continuing through March

Mission Anew in the Fellowship Hall with Pastor Eric Spivey. He is outlining our mission in God's kingdom throughout the month of March.

Freeing Jesus by Diana Butler Bass book study with Melissa McBrayer in the Wild Goose classroom.

Contemplative Prayer in the Chapel with George Van Kirk continues at 6 pm each Wednesday evening.

NO WEDNESDAY SESSIONS OR CHOIR PRACTICE ON MARCH 29TH & APRIL 5TH



Maundy Thursday in the Fellowship Hall for supper from 4:45 - 5:45 and a communion service the sanctuary following. The choir will practice at 7 pm following the service.

Good Friday in the Fellowship Hall for lunch at 11 am followed by the service at 12 pm.

NEWS & EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS AROUND THE CHURCH

CHILDREN'S RECEPTION DESK

MAR 26

LaRue Speights-Gillespie

APR 2

Becky Best

WORSHIP CARE (9:45 am until end of worship)

MAR 26

Jan Dulin, Kristie Chandler, Becky Atkinson, Trisha Balias, Dianne Horn, Laura Griffo

APR 2

Laura Tadlock, Sara Taylor, Libby Pittman, Emily Dorion, Dan Caldwell, Gay Caldwell



WORSHIP CARE HELP NEED FOR EASTER SUNDAY!

Please consider signing up to help us fill the roster of Worship Care teachers. Volunteers can serve once-a-month, once every-other-month, or every fifth Sunday. Serving in worship care is a great way to serve at VHBC and get to know our families with young children. Call or email Nancy to learn more and volunteer today!

WELCOME TEAM

MAR 26

Howard Finch
Brandi Brownell
Larry Brownell
Dan Caldwell
Cappy Blackwelder
Joe Perez
Lisa Speegle

APR 2

Sharon Hartzog
Howard Finch
Brandi Brownell
Larry Brownell
Dan Caldwell
Joe Perez
Lisa Speegle

TRANSPORTATION TEAM

MAR 26 William Dupree
Cris Speegle

APR 2 Tommy Cherry
Brad Farley

WORSHIP TECHNOLOGY TEAM

MAR 26 Greg Ruff, Hal David, Norfleete Day

APR 2 Hal David, Brent Warren, David Philpot



MOVIE MATINEE

Hosted by:
Senior Adult Ministry
TUESDAY, 3/28
2 PM

Register on vhbc.com

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & RENEWAL FOR NANCY AKINS

At our most recent business meeting, the church approved a leave benefit for Nancy Akins. It includes 20 days of leave to be used over the next 10 1/2 months.

The Personnel Committee worked with Nancy to identify and schedule a number of conference and retreat options that will enrich and enhance her ministry among us and provide time for personal renewal and refreshment.

A NOTE FROM NANCY

Last Wednesday night, March 15, the personnel committee brought forth a proposal in the business meeting (and you voted Yes) to grant me time spent in professional development and renewal. Your gracious gift is most appreciated and I look forward to meaningful opportunities of growth and learning. Using this gift wisely is important to me as I hope to lead our children's ministry team in further developing what our church can be for children and their families. With gratitude,
Nancy



SAVE THE DATE

SHEPHERD'S

Concert at VHBC

SUNDAY, APRIL 16TH



PRAYER

IN THE HOSPITAL

Roger Bates - UAB Neuro ICU 8504
Shirley Furr - UAB 9206

UPCOMING PROCEDURES

Elizabeth McCarty - March 7

ONGOING

TREATMENTS/RECOVERY

Brenda Ammons	Elizabeth McCarty
Linda Anderson	Gaynell Pinson
John Bell	Barbara Price
Mona Fisher	Dan Van Giessen
Robin Johnson	David Whitt

HOMEBOUND & WE CARE

Juanita Blackburn	Dot Lowe
Ann Bush	Al Lowery
Mary Creech	Mary Lysaght
Jane Deagon	Samson Mathangani
Franciska Dyck	Kitty Newell
Esther Evans	Margaret Northrup
Milton Fullman	Jerry & Lorelle
Al & Shirley Furr	Singleton
Pat Gillespie	Jean Spivey
Sandy Gillis	Alicia Stigler
Bob & Mavis Hardy	Hazel Turner
Ruford Hodges	Betty Vanstrum
Peggy Jones	Doris Wilson
Charlotte Kyser	

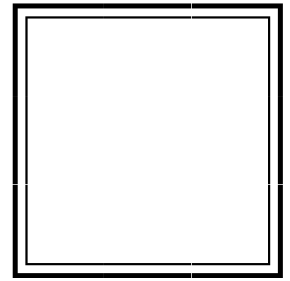
MISSIONARIES AROUND THE WORLD

Dianne & Shane McNary - Slovakia
Awon Shanglai - India
Marco & Omar Vallejo - Mexico
Richard Owiti Kogola, Paul Mbogo, Benson Mwangangi, & Josphat Thiori - Kenya
Chuck Tarter - Ireland
Kandy & Paul Huynh - Cambodia

**PLEASE SEND UPDATES
TO THE PRAYER LIST**

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TYLER JOHNSON, MINISTER TO STUDENTS

MIKE MCBRAYER, ADMINISTRATIVE PASTOR

DR. ERIC SPIVEY, SENIOR PASTOR

LAURA TADLOCK, MINISTRY ASSISTANT

MARTY WATTS, MINISTER OF MUSIC & WORSHIP



**ORDER EASTER FLOWERS TODAY!
CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE OR RESERVE
ONLINE FOR \$20/EACH.**



Holy Week Prayer Walk



Palm Sunday thru Easter all ages are invited to walk through the prayer garden of VHBC! Follow the signs to experience a time of prayer, reflection, and anticipation of Easter!