

Variations

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

a biweekly publication of Vestavia Hills Baptist Church

Volume 23, No. 16 September 6, 2016



Fall Stewardship Emphasis

Season of Pledging Begins Sunday, September 18

Sunday, September 18th, we begin our season of pledging. This is an important time when we as a church are beginning together with, "What can we give?" As each of us, individually and collectively, prays about our stewardship of financial resources and the ministry of our church, please know that your participation is important.

We begin together by pledging as a church what we plan to give. Then we build our budget from the commitments our members make. This process enables us to meet all of our financial obligations.

Pledge cards will be available in the pew racks in the sanctuary this Sunday. Also, every family will receive in the mail a personalized pledge card. Our children and youth will also receive commitment cards designed especially for them.

From Sunday, September 18th, through October 16th, you may turn in your pledge in any of the following ways:

- Pledge electronically by clicking on this confidential, secure email address of Lynn Stewart, our Financial Secretary: lynn@vhbc.com
- Obtain a pledge card in worship and mail it to the church office.
- Place your pledge card in the offering plate during the worship service.
- Drop off your pledge card at the church office.
- Mail your pledge card to the church office before October 14.
- Place your pledge card in the little model at the front entrance.

Pray now about your stewardship commitment for this next year.

Wear a Nametag This Month



There are so many names to remember here at VHBC and new names joining us all the time. Let's learn a few new names in September. Find a nametag as you enter the church or in your Sunday School class and wear it with pride. Don't forget to write your name on it.



The Shepherd's e-Ncourager — Dr. Gary A. Furr

Approaching Sixty: Differences That Bind Us



As our congregation prepares to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary, I will offer some thoughts along the way to next May, about the past, the present and the future. Today I remember this one from 1993 when I first came.

I don't have to have my way, but let me have my say.
When I first came to VHBC, the church had come through a conflict over worship and various other

questions, intact but not without some pain. To welcome the next hired hand coming in to run the ranch, Charlie Goodson and the search committee went to great lengths to try and understand what had happened and how they could help the next shepherd. And so they had many conversations with the church and asked, "Who are we?" and compiled an identity statement. It was fair, pretty accurate, and helpful. In the middle of that identity statement are these words:

**Being a congregation of diverse,
independent thinkers, we recognize that**

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we will have differing opinions on various issues. Differences in opinion are not only respected, but they serve as further evidence that our commonality is in Christ and not each other.

I have often thought about that statement, not simply about this congregation, but about the world we live in together. Think about American politics at present, in which speaking our minds only seems to tear our national fabric a little further.

"Bearing together" is a miracle. We usually define "diversity" as being visible—racial differences, class, etc. But the truth is, diversity is bigger than that. It is easy to "stereotype" others with a glance at how they're dressed, their accent, their self-descriptions. But is there a human being alive without surprises inside?

I took those sentences seriously. I find them not to be a description of our success but a defining aspiration. We are most like Jesus when difference doesn't scare us away from one another, when what holds us—the love of God—surpasses anything else. "Staying together" is radical in these

times of fragmentation. Hanging in there, staying with it, staying invested—it's a challenge, whether in politics, church, family or life. Bearing with one another, declaring that these ties that bind us are a blessing and not handcuffs, is indeed only explicable by the mystery of God among us all.

Name Tags and Pastor's Welcome Class During September!

This month, we will be emphasizing welcome and connection together. Name tags will be available on Sundays and Wednesdays to make it easy to call each other's names. It's not embarrassing to forget a name, only to fail to speak!

Along those same lines, I will be offering a three-week "About Us" class in the Adult Seminar Room across from the library on September 11, 18 and 25. All visitors or recent members who are interested are welcome to come and learn more about our church and ask your questions!



Our commonality is in Christ.



Better Together: How to Make a Good Marriage Great.

Come laugh and learn with your spouse as we hear from marriage enrichment facilitators Heather Casey and George Parker as part of a four-week series at Wednesday Sessions now through September 21 in the Seminar Room at 6:10 p.m..

Wait. Waiting is not something most of us enjoy doing, yet God's work exhorts believers repeatedly to "wait on the Lord". Why must we wait, and what are we to do while we wait? Now through September 28, LaRue Speights leads a five-week study exploring these questions and more.

Pastor's Bible Study

Pastor's Bible Study returns on **Wednesday mornings, 10:30-11:30, starting September 7.**

Open to all ages, no prior knowledge of the Bible required, and no one is called on in class. Join us in the Adult Seminar Room across from the Library. Coffee is provided.

Finding God's Peace in an Angry World. *September 7, 14, 21*

We'll study the biblical understanding of anger and how to cope with it in an increasingly conflicted world. Where does it come from? How do I manage it in my relationships, in the world, and in the church?

After that: **Thinking About God: Answers for Seekers.** *September 28-December 14*



Anniversary Retreat!

We are celebrating our 60th anniversary year with a church-wide overnight getaway on January 14-15 at Shocco Springs Retreat Center. Wonderful guest facilitators will lead sessions for adults, youth and school-aged children as a part of what is sure to be an event that will strengthen our fellowship and refresh our spirits.

We encourage you to register without delay. Reserve your or your family's spot with a \$50 deposit. Mark checks "anniversary retreat."

Retreat Fees

Adults and Youth: \$50
Adult (private room): \$90
Children (K-6th grade): \$20

Our Church Family: Prayer Concerns and more

Members in the Hospital

- *Becky Griffith, Brookdale Pl. (rehab), Rm. 126
- *Steve Thackerson, Grandview

Members at Home

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Becky Atkinson | *Curt Newell |
| Bruce Atkinson | Harvey Oliver |
| Lawrence Bear | Nora Ousley |
| Zelle Buckner | *Jerry Pittman |
| Jenna Cassese | *Judy Pittman |
| Von Caufield | William Poe |
| Sybil Cox | Jo Powell |
| Virginia Deaton | Bob Sanders |
| *Janice Fleming | Jim Stigler |
| Agnes Fuchs | Tootsie Strozier |
| Freida Gammill | Lynn Walker |
| Helen Gammill | Margaret Walker |
| Charlotte Kyser | Linda Whitt |
| Al Lowery | Maxine Womble |
| Sandra McMurray (no visitors) | Nancy Womble |
| Wes Nastiuk | Kay Worley |
- *added this *Variations*

Thank You

The Shelton family wishes to thank the many friends who were so helpful during John's illness. The phone calls, the cards, the food and the visits were very helpful and appreciated.

The Shelton family

Thank you – thank you – thank you
There are not words to adequately express my deep appreciation to my church family for the outpouring of love and attention shown to me following my recent accident. The mountain of cards, the phone calls, the expressions of concern and the visits from precious church members is second to none. You are the best! I thank God that 22 years ago he led me to VHBC. You have demonstrated to me the very best of what Jesus teaches is a true neighbor and friend. May God's richest blessings be yours always.

☺♥U Becky Griffith

Christian Sympathy to:

Maggie Shelton and family in the death of her husband, John, on August 29.

Carolyn Cain and family in the death of her daughter, Cathy Mawhinney, on September 1.

Congratulations to:

Heather and Brian Irvin on the birth of a daughter, Alexandria Jean Irvin, on August 29. Proud grandparents are Allen and Janice Fulks and proud great-grandmother is Betty Wallis.

Called Business Meeting Wednesday, Sept. 14 5:45 PM - Fellowship Hall

Agenda:

Nominating Committee

Recommendation that Paul Byrd fill the remaining one-year term on the Deacons for Alynn LeBerte.

Personnel Committee

Recommendation for church endorsement of Andy Farmer to enter the non-resident D-Min program at Baylor University.



The Armor of God

Sign up now for fall study by Priscilla Shirer. You may attend on:

- ◆ Sunday afternoons (starting 9/11) at 3:30—5 PM, facilitated by Jennifer Jaquess
- ◆ Monday mornings (starting 9/12) at 9:30—11:00 AM, facilitated by Merryll Cooper
- ◆ Tuesday evenings (starting 9/13) at 6:30—8 PM, facilitated by Kim Virciglio

Sign up by session day in your classroom on Sunday mornings, in the Fellowship Hall foyer, or on the church website. **Child Care** is available for preschoolers on Monday mornings only. Indicate names and ages when signing up.

Fall Season of Prayer for Global Missions meets on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays starting Sept. 13. You are invited to attend any or all of these times of prayer led by Mavis Hardy, retired missionary to Japan. Bring a sandwich and stay for a time of fellowship afterward. Coffee & tea are provided.

Fellowship Supper

September 14

Baked chicken, creamed potatoes, green beans, apple ring, lemon cake

Volunteers

Sue Edfeldt, Allen Fulks, Rosemary Bamberg, Mindy Bodenhamer

You can

September 21

Meatloaf, mac and cheese, steamed cabbage, sliced tomatoes, cobbler

Volunteers

Bob & Martha Eskew, JoAnne Delohery, Allen & Janice Fulks

now make
OR
cancel
supper
reservations
on our
website!

Watch Your Personal Items

Over the last several months, we have had personal items taken on Sunday mornings during Sunday School and worship. Let's all be reminded to be vigilant about taking care of our personal belongings while at church.

Ministry Budget Offering

Budget Needs This Year \$1,195,881
Budget Given This Year \$1,094,274

Unified Missions Offering

2016 Goal \$40,000
Given To Date \$18,368

Week of September 8-14

Thursday, September 8
 6:30 Young Adult Bible Study (Cox)
Friday, September 9
 RA Zoo Snooze
Sunday, September 11
 8:45 Bible Study
 10:00 Worship Service
 11:00 IME Information Meeting,
Adult Seminar Room
 3:30 Women's Bible Study
 5:00 YOSE—Youth
Monday, September 12
 9:30 Women's Bible Study
 10:00 We Care Committee
 10:30 Lovelady Center Bible Study
Tuesday, September 13
 9:00 Library Training
 9:30 International Friends
 11:30 Prayer for Global Missions
 6:30 Women's Bible Study
Wednesday, September 14
 6:30 Prayer Breakfast
 10:30 Pastor's Bible Study
 4:30 Supper line open
 4:30 Communion
 5:45 60th Anniversary Committee
 5:45 Endowment Committee
 5:45 Called Business Meeting
 5:30 Music for PS3-Grade 6
 6:00 4th-6th Grade RAs to
 Firehouse Shelter
 6:00 Wednesday Retreat—Youth
 6:00 Adult Sessions
 6:15 Mission Friends, G.A., R.A.s
 7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Week of September 15-21

Thursday, September 15
 6:30 Young Adult Bible Study (Cox)
Sunday, September 18
 8:45 Bible Study
 10:00 Worship Service—*Bible pre-
 sentation to First Graders*
 3:30 Women's Bible Study
 5:00 YOSE—Youth
 5:00 Deacons Meeting
Monday, September 19
 8:00 Church of the Reconciler
 9:30 Women's Bible Study
 10:30 Lovelady Center Bible Study
 4:00 428—Youth
Tuesday, September 20
 9:30 International Friends
 6:30 Women's Bible Study
Wednesday, September 21
 6:30 Prayer Breakfast
 9:00 Food Bank packing day
 4:30 Supper line open
 4:30 Communion
 5:30 Music for PS3-Grade 6
 5:30 Budget Planning Committee
 6:00 Wednesday Retreat—Youth
 6:00 Adult Sessions
 6:15 Mission Friends, G.A., R.A.s
 7:00 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Volunteers in Service for the Week of September 11

Deacons of the Week: Jan Deagon ^{SUN.}, Norfleete Day ^{WED.}
Counting Team: Alynn LeBerte, Jerry Pittman
Flower Committee: Gay Caldwell & Jerrie Elliott
Shuttle Service: Craig Youngblood, Bob Bush, Ryan Riley
Sound Technology: Mike Wells, Dan McMurray

Worship Care

Babies Sharon Hartzog, Jane Helms
 Ones Kevin Jaquess, **NEED 1 WORKER**
 PS 2-3 Jeff & Monica Graveline
 PS 4 Ann Bush, Adam Pouncey
 Kindergarten Jan Deagon, Emily Farmer
 Desk Liz Philpot

Volunteers in Service for the Week of September 18

Deacons of the Week: Becky Griffith ^{SUN.}, Tony Giles ^{WED.}
Counting Team: Taylor Burton, Steve White
Flower Committee: Marsha Baker
Shuttle Service: Bob Bush, Mack Freeman, Mike Craddock
Sound Technology: Hal David, Pete LeBerte

Worship Care

Babies Robin Cameron, Melissa McMurray
 Ones Alexa Brooks, Gilda Coker
 PS 2-3 Todd & Rachel Jordan
 PS 4 Tommy & Erin Yeager
 Kindergarten Ed & Leigh Whatley
 Desk Katherine Worley

Variations is published biweekly by
 VESTAVIA HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH
 2600 Vestavia Drive, Birmingham, AL 35216

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YOUR MINISTRY STAFF

Gary A. Furr, Pastor
 K. Dennis Anderson, Administrative Pastor
 Nancy Akins, Minister to Preschool/Children
 Andy Farmer, Minister to Students
 Terre Johnson, Minister of Music
 Mike McBrayer, Minister of Discipleship and Missions
 Beth McGinnis, Organist

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The next issue of Variations will be dated September 20, 2016. Please request space by Friday, September 16. Thank you.