



Voice

A PUBLICATION OF VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ) Birmingham, Alabama

July 27 2021

From the Pastor's Desk

Coffee and a Story

When you read this, I will be on a week of vacation to move my family into our new house in Hoover after renting in Cahaba Heights for our first year here with all of you. This is a big step for us in putting down roots in the Birmingham area, and Carrie, Sadie, and I are excited to call it home.

We have lots on tap after I return at the start of August. I hope you and any four-legged companions you may care for can make it to our Blessing of the Pets service the morning of Saturday, August 7! The event will open at 10:00 with both human- and pet-friendly refreshments, followed by a dog obedience tutorial presented by pet trainer Vicki Shay (sorry, cat owners—we just assume by this point that cats aren't interested in obedience :). I will also be on hand to offer blessings for each pet, as well as for any pets who may have passed over the Rainbow Bridge .

Then, in September, stay tuned for both the resumption of adult education classes before worship—a project Lola Kiser and I have spent weeks collaborating on—as well as a special worship series to commemorate our sanctuary's 60th anniversary after its completion in 1961. We have a great deal of historical material in the church archives on the construction of our Gothic revival sanctuary, and I hope to put much of it on display to enjoy as part of the anniversary.

As we look to events like these in our near future, I am keeping close tabs on the progression of the delta variant of COVID-19 across Alabama, and I would ask your continued patience and flexibility as we keep adapting on how best to live during the pandemic. Please know that I am in conversation with medical experts in the congregation (like the one I'm married to!) as well as our lay leadership on how we can best address our current public health circumstances.

Finally, I am delighted to share with you the home stretch of sermons for our summer worship series on the "minor" prophets of the Bible, beginning with a personal favorite of mine, Habakkuk, and continuing all the way through Malachi:

- August 1: "Habakkuk," Habakkuk 1:1-2:1
- August 8: "Zephaniah," Zephaniah 3:9-20
- August 15 "Haggai," Haggai 2:1-5
- August 22: "Zechariah," Zechariah 8:1-8
- August 29: "Malachi," Malachi 3:4-15

I look forward to seeing you on Sunday to finish unpacking this series together.

Christ's and yours,
Pastor Eric

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Office Hours: 8am-12pm
Monday through Friday

Summer Worship Schedule

Sunday, August 1
10:30 a.m.

Sunday, August 8
10:30 a.m.

Sunday, August 15
10:30 a.m.

Sunday, August 22
10:30 a.m.

Dates of Interest:

- July 28th—AAA Trip to the Kymulga Grist Mill /Covered Bridge in Childersburg
- August 7th—Blessing of the Pets in the Fellowship Hall
- August 20th and 21st—
Congregational transformation Event at First Christian Birmingham.
- August 25th—AAA Trip to Bankhead House in Jasper

Life in the Valley

Prayers, Joys and Concerns

- Sarah Draper's pain is a result of arthritis, tendonitis, and calcium deposits, and while she is unable to take anti-inflammatories for the pain, her doctors have prescribed her some physical therapy that she hopes will address the pain. We are grateful that she has some answers at last, and especially grateful that the answers won't involve surgery.
- Carol Speed continues to recover well, but is experiencing fluid buildup around her lungs that is contributing to her fatigue, so she has had an outpatient procedure to drain that fluid. Pastor Eric asked her if his being tired means he also has fluid in his lungs although we suspect being a toddler dad is the real reason.
- Katelyn Clark's significant other Jon Richardson continues to recover well from brain surgery to remove a tumor. and he should be moved from the ICU to a regular hospital room soon. Pastor Eric personally is committing himself to not saying "well, it's not brain surgery!" to him since at least someone else in his life is probably going to say that at some point.
- Mary Dodson, one of our homebound persons, is being moved to the Fair Haven facility after she suffered a fracture. Pastor Eric has not yet visited Fair Haven and knows each facility has had different COVID-19 rules, so after he returns from vacation he will introduce himself to their staff and inquire about visits there.
- Hal Clark is still recovering from his fall. Hal has improved physically, but always walks with a cane or walker now. A home health nurse and bath aide visit twice a week, and that's very helpful.
- Thanks so much to Jean Thrasher for cleaning out the front flower beds near the sanctuary entrance. They look lovely Jean!
- Please pray for Effie King's two sons, Dan and Larry— Dan has early Alzheimers and Larry is recovering from a pair of strokes.
- Please pray for our former interim minister Edd Spencer and his wife Mary Pat as Edd is recovering well from surgery. He asks to pass on his thanks to everyone for their prayers and support.

School Opens Soon!

Sunday School that is! Beginning in September we will offer a different adult Sunday School class each month on varying topics of interest. Each class is a month long, and you can choose to attend as many as you wish. Registration for these classes will be on Sunday, August 15, Sunday, August 22 and Sunday, August 29. For all the topics will be:

September—A Study of Micah 6:8
October—Mountains and Valleys
November—Forgiveness
December—Preparing for Christmas

Pastor Eric Atcheson will lead these classes. The adult Sunday School class led by John Gregory on Zoom at 6:30pm on Tuesday will continue. You are welcome to participate in both these adult programs.



Chloe Speed

Blessing of the Pets

The Evangelism Department's next community event will be Saturday August 7th from 10:00AM to 12:00PM in the Fellowship Hall. Scarves with the St. Francis medallions sown on them have been made by Carolyn Nunnally for both large and small dogs and cats. Refreshments and treats will be provided for the pets and their humans. At 11:00 we will have a dog obedience trainer, with her dog Fred, giving tips on training and showing off a few tricks.

There will be a Rainbow Bridge for pets that have crossed over and a table will be set up for those pets that are not able to attend. Please feel free to bring a picture of your pet for the photo table. Pastor Eric will begin the Blessing of the Pets at 11:30. Please come and enjoy meeting our neighbors and all the furry families.

Listening Conference August 2, 2021 10am – 8 pm

The VCC Board, Pastor Eric Atcheson, Regional Minister John Mobley, and the Pastoral Relations Committee feel that this is a good time for a Listening Conference to poll the members about the ministry of the congregation. The Conference, with Regional Staff, will be on August 2 at Valley, in the library, with 15-minute sessions for 2-4 people. Members are urged to sign the schedule at the church office or on Sunday at worship on the 1st of August. You may also call Marilyn to sign up.

Zoom meetings are planned at 10:00am and at 2:00pm In Zoom Valley Meeting Room 1. Others may be arranged if needed. Members are urged to come to the church to participate.

Three questions will be posed during each session:

1. On the topic of the ministry of the congregation, with Pastor Eric Atcheson as minister, are you fully committed to doing your part to make it strong and effective?
2. What does our pastor need to understand about Valley Christian Church – its needs, background, and expectations in order to help the congregation better become an instrument of God's grace?
3. What needs to be changed/improved in order to gain your full support?

A congregational meeting will be held at the church on Wednesday, August 4th at 6:00pm, since the choir meets at 6:30pm. John Mobley will share a review of the sessions. No names will be recorded during the sessions and in the review.