



Voice

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



Valley Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
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Email: office@vccbhm.org
Website: www.vccbhm.org
Office Hours: 8am-12pm
Monday through Friday

Winter Worship Schedule

Sunday, Mar 20

10:30 a.m.

Sunday, Mar 27

10:30 a.m.

Sunday, Apr 3

10:30 a.m.

Sunday, Apr 10

10:30 a.m.

Dates of Interest:

- Mar 16 AAA Event - American Village in Montevallo
- Mar 17 - St Patrick's Day
- Mar 18 - 19 Men's Retreat - Rolling Hills
- Mar 19 - Lauren Lambert's Baby Shower
- Mar 20 - Holy Week Devotionals Deadline
- Mar 20 - Spring Begins
- Mar 20 - Board Meeting
- Mar 28 - Voice Deadline

From the Pastor's Desk

Coffee and a Story

It's with deep bittersweetness that I share my intent to step down as Valley's minister effective May 15, with May 1 as my final Sunday preaching and leading worship. I'm fully committed to serving Valley to the best of my abilities until then, including aiding the upcoming transition however I can.

I first want to recognize that this news may be a surprise or even a shock to you, and to apologize if it indeed is. I only arrived at this decision after much intense prayer and discernment, and while there is so much that I love dearly about church ministry, I'm at total peace with my choice.

I was—and am—very proud of what we said we wanted to do together: to strive for excellence in our worship of God and envision together a new chapter of Valley's life. We have kept each other safe from hospitalization due to covid while marking two milestones together: the congregation's 70th anniversary, and the sanctuary's 60th anniversary. Each of these has been a true blessing to me.

And yet, I know that I cannot be the minister who guides you in a new chapter. Disagreements among people whom we love are inevitable and can be a sign of health. However, disagreements around the role and appearance Valley expects of its minister—especially unwritten, unofficial expectations—have led to me trying to be your minister from a place of fear and anxiety rather than security and boldness in Christ. I've attempted to address this in therapy and spiritual direction, and I have realized that if I'm to fully restore myself, I must step away from church ministry for the foreseeable future.

Our incoming interim regional minister is a familiar face, Rev. Dale Braxton. I know that Valley will be in safe hands with him, and I pray that these needs will be fully, openly, and lovingly addressed before Valley calls its next settled minister. I'll always wish the best for Valley, and part of that wish means honoring your new interim and settled ministers by adhering to our shared code of ministerial ethics that expects a departing minister to step back fully and allow their successors a free hand.

We still have much to do together between now and May 1, most importantly celebrating the Resurrection of the Lord on Easter Sunday, April 17. I pray that the life-giving spirit in which Jesus of Nazareth resurrected will continue to shepherd us, first together and then separately as our paths diverge. May God continue to guide and bless Valley Christian Church.

Christ's and yours,
Pastor Eric

March 15 2022

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Life in the Valley

Prayers, Joys and Concerns

- Please pray for the Ukrainian people and all the people who have helped and supported them during this invasion of their country.
- Sarah Draper announced that we will be accepting Week of Compassion donations for the Ukraine. Please mark your check "Ukraine" and the donation will be passed to them.
- Rev. Troy Tatum, formerly of First Christian Church Birmingham has been diagnosed with ALS. Please pray for Rev. Tatum and his family as they face this crisis.
- Jean Thrasher has a joy that Midge Hoke will be coming to visit for a while. We are always glad to see Midge.
- We have another joy that Ted Stuckenschneider has been named "Super Lawyer" by B Metro Magazine. There were only 4 lawyers named for this honor.
- Please pray for our beloved Choir Director, Mary Ellen Caughran as she has shingles and has been quarantined.
- Please pray for our beloved member, Judy Sellers, who had a car accident and the car was totaled. However, Judy escaped with only bruises and sore muscles, for which we are very grateful. It was also Judy and Clarence's 50th wedding anniversary recently. We send our best wishes and many happy returns to this lovely couple.
- John Gregory would like to thank everyone for attending his birthday party recently. It was a wonderful time of fellowship with family and friends.
- Please pray for a blessed outcome for our beloved Choir member, Jan Watts as she has surgery on her hands.
- Margaret Cox would like everyone to please pray for Sherry O'Kelly's family (her long time good friend) who passed last year. Her husband, Tim and her children are in need of your prayers.



March AAA Event It's Tulip Time!

On Wednesday, March 16, 2022, we will travel to Montevallo for the American Village's Tulip Festival. There is a \$5.00 entrance fee. Veterans are free and \$2.00 for each tulip that you pick, bulb included. We will meet at the church at 10:00am and then caravan to Montevallo, arriving at 11:00am. There is a movie that we can watch on the American Revolution in the theater and there will be several presentations by historical character interpreters. We are not sure which ones at this point but maybe the Continental

Army marching through the tulips. At 12:00pm we will go to the Main Street Tavern for lunch at 12:30pm. Please contact Marilyn if you are interest in going and if you can drive by Friday, March 11th. Wear comfortable shoes and bring gardening gloves for picking the tulips.

April 3rd GBM Pantry Items

For April we have chosen Canned Vegetables (beans, peas, corn, etc.) You can bring any one item or as many of each item as you want. We will announce each month's item at the end of the previous month. We try to bring the items the first Sunday of each month. If you are worshipping by Zoom, just drop them off at the church any time. - Outreach Department



Dedication of the Community Walking Trail

The Evangelism and Fellowship Departments are planning the dedication of the Community Walking Trail after church on Palm Sunday, April 10th at the entrance to the trail in the upper parking lot. We will mark off a couple of parking spaces for this event and have several chairs available to sit in. We are looking for donations to buy a dogwood tree to be placed at the entrance. If you want to donate please call/see Peggi Zinser. We are also looking for other plants for planting around the trail, such as ferns, Lenten roses and any other plants that you might have to beautify the trail. Join us for a scavenger hunt and wild flower toss on the trail and refreshments on the circle.

Cross Words

Holy Week Devotional Booklet

If you are writing a devotional for this year's Holy Week devotional booklet, please remember the deadline for submission is Sunday, March 20. They may be sent to the office or given to Lola Kiser. The booklets will be available at the church on Sunday, April 3 and will be mailed to shut-ins, out of town people and those unable to pick them up. The first devotional is for Palm Sunday, April 10. We hope you enjoy the booklet and use it in your daily devotions.

