



Voice

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



May 2026

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**Valley Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
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Birmingham, Alabama
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**Office Hours: 8:00am-
12:00pm Monday-Friday**

**Dates of Interest:
May 2026**

- **May 2 - Valley Workday**
- **May 3 - Elders' Prayer Elders' Meeting**
- **May 10 - Mother's Day**
- **May 13 - Men's Lunch Disciples Women**
- **May 17 - Pentecost Offering**
- **May 18 - VOICE DEADLINE**
- **May 21 - BVM Dinner Paw Paw Patch**
- **May 24 - Day of Pentecost / Pentecost Offering**
- **May 25 - Memorial Day Office Closed**
- **May 27 - AAA Trip to Talladega College Museum La Amistad Slave Ship Murals**

A Word From the Pastor

One thing we all have in common is that we all face challenges and trials. There are things that happen in our lives that we have little to no control over, some temporary, others last a lifetime. An injury like the one I am dealing with now is temporary and I will get over it. The loss of a loved one, a spouse, parent or child is different as it is not something we get over, it is a lifetime sentence.

I thought about this as I lay in the hospital bed feeling bad for myself. I tried to tell myself that what I was dealing with was only a temporary setback, that it would be okay, that in the grand scheme of things, this was minor, but I was still asking, "Why me and why now?"

My plans for the Holy Week church services were now up in the air. My son and his family were coming in for a visit, and I would not be able to do the things we had planned. Even being able to play with my grandchildren was going to be a challenge.

When I woke from surgery and saw the cast-like wrapping on my hand, I knew I was in for an extended time of not being able to use my left hand. Brushing my teeth, shaving, bathing and tying my shoes will now be much more difficult. And I couldn't put any weight on any part of that hand nor could I get it wet.

Needless to say, I was not happy and even felt a little depressed. This moved to frustration as I started thinking all the things I could not do and would not be able to do for quite some time.

I am sharing this to say a couple of things. One is even though I am a trained and ordained pastor, I can and do have feelings of frustration, of why me, of wondering what good will come of this just like anyone else. And two, as independent as I "claim" to be, I still need others to come alongside me, to help me, to encourage me and to remind me that I am not alone. This is what my church family has done through the cards, the offers of assistance and the willingness to step in at a moment's notice. I have felt the love, the care, the support and the encouragement that has come through this body of believers and I am so very humbled and grateful.

I was also reminded of the incredible love of my Lord and His promise to never leave me nor forsake me, and this has given me confidence even as I deal with the frustration and questions that go along with my injury. I know that whatever my future holds, He will be with me just as He always has and He will see me through this just like in the past.

As I begin the process of recovery and rehabilitation I know there will be more moments of despair, of frustration and of doubt, but I also know my Lord is right beside me and through His mercy, grace and love will help me turn these into moments of strength, of confidence and of hope, a hope sealed through His life, death and resurrection.

Thank you Lord for being there, not just for me, but for all who call out to You, for all who are struggling with loss, with pain, with suffering, with hopelessness and despair. Thank you for coming alongside us, caring for us, strengthening us and for reminding us that no matter what we are going dealing with, something temporary like my injury or something that is permanently a part of the rest of our lives, You are with us, now and forevermore. Praise be to God.

Pastor Rick Malugani
Senior Minister
Valley Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

PASTOR RICK INTERVIEW

In the April 2026 edition of the *Birmingham Christian Family* magazine, there is an interview with Pastor Rick. Copies of the magazine are available at the church and at the following link: <https://birminghamchristian.com/qa-with-pastor-rick-malugani-valley-christian-church/>

Article courtesy of *Birmingham Christian Family* magazine



Trip to Sylacauga B.B. Comer Memorial Library and Imerys Gantt's Quarry and Observation Site

On Thursday, April 9th seven of us met at Valley Christian Church to depart for our trip to Sylacauga. It was about an hour drive; we went in two cars; met at the Library, took a short tour of the Library and got on a bus in front of the Library which was full of tourists that took us to Imerys Gantt's Quarry and Observation site. After returning to the library, we watched a film on the history and artistic importance of Sylacauga's marble. We had lunch at Booker's Restaurant a few blocks away, then stopped by "Blue Bell Creamery" for Ice Cream. The following is a brief description of our Tour in Sylacauga.

Sylacauga hosts a Magic of Marble Festival each April to showcase the beauty of the marble and the work of various sculptors.

Gantts Quarry, AL, a settlement built for men who mined marble from the quarry of the same name, is now a ghost town. Sylacauga is world renowned for its lustrous white marble. In its heyday in the 1930s, the mining town of Gantts Quarry, AL had more than 500 residents and was lined with small, wooden company houses for the miners. Some people even lived in railway boxcars converted into living space. The Talladega County settlement on the outskirts of Sylacauga was formed in the 19th century as a company town for workers who extracted Alabama's rare white marble from the quarry. It is named for Dr. Edward Gantt, who recorded his discovery of marble in 1820. Gantt was a physician who accompanied Gen. Andrew Jackson through the area in 1814. The marble deposit he discovered was about 32 miles long by 1.5 miles wide. It was more than 400 feet deep. The town once had a general store, a school, a hotel, two churches, several homes built by the mining company and even a nine-hole golf course. The ca.-1905 post office building was moved to the grounds of the B.B. Comer Museum in Sylacauga in 2011. The preserved building was listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage in 2023.

"It has been used in many famous buildings and works of art. Examples include Gutzon Borglum's bust of Abraham Lincoln in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capital Building," Browne said. "The ceiling of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, is made of Sylacauga marble because of its translucent properties."

Guiseppe Moretti, the sculptor who created the statue of Vulcan in Birmingham, quarried marble there in the 1920s to use in his sculptures. "He hauled a sample block of the gleaming white stone back to his studio in Birmingham and carved 'The Head of Christ,' a work that he carried with him to every place that he lived for the rest of his life," according to the [Encyclopedia of Alabama](#). The work is now on display at the Alabama Department of Archives and History in Montgomery.

Continued on the next page.

KIT AND CABOODLE MINISTRY UPDATE MARCH 2026

I am so incredibly proud to share what the Lord has accomplished through this ministry recently. During the month of March, we were able to provide 25 care bags to our neighbors experiencing homelessness across both Birmingham and Alabaster. Every bag represents a moment of connection and a tangible reminder that no one is forgotten. Seeing the impact of these supplies first-hand is a constant reminder of why we do what we do. I also want to extend a very special and heartfelt thank you to Mrs. Sharon Hill. Your recent donation to this ministry was a true blessing, and it is because of the generosity of supporters like you that we can continue reaching those in need. Thank you all for your continued prayers and support as we serve our community.

Thank you, Jackie Ivey.



DONATION BASKET MAY 2026

For May, we will not be collecting anything specific for the basket since we have the Pentecost Special Offering. However, if you would like to continue bringing items for

Three Hots and a Cot, the Outreach Department will gladly see that they receive your donations. They are requesting coffee, paper products, and of course, socks.

Thank you, Peggi Zinser



AAA MAY 2026

On Wednesday, May 27th, the AAA Valley Seniors will travel to the Talladega College Museum for a guided tour of the *La Amistad* Slave Ship murals. In 1839, *La Amistad*, a Spanish schooner, kidnapped a large group of Africans from Sierra Leone and took them to Cuba. The captives revolted, killed the captain and cook, took command of the ship and made the Spanish sailors who were left on the ship take them back to Africa; however, they took them North up the coast of the United States, instead of sailing South and back to Africa. The U.S. Navy intercepted *La Amistad* off the coast of Long Island, New York, and the case of these kidnapped people went to the Supreme Court, which began a turning point in the fight against slavery. The Supreme Court ruled in their favor, declaring them free. We will leave the church at 9:45 am, but please arrive at 9:30 am. The tour begins at 11:00 am and should last about 30 minutes. There are benches for those who want to sit. We will then go to the Stampede restaurant for lunch. The gas fee is \$10.00. Please let me know if you wish to ride the van or if you plan to drive.

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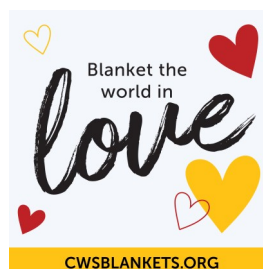
Imerys and Omya, Inc. operates plants in Sylacauga to create these products. The property is owned by Imerys, a company that makes "mineral-based specialty solutions". Imerys erected an observation platform in 2012 so people could look down into the water-filled quarry. Called Imerys Gantt's Quarry Observation Point, the platform is open during daylight hours.

Betty G. Dykes / 04/10/2026



VALLEY'S EASTER GARDEN

Instead of hosting an Easter egg hunt this year, Valley Christian Church decided to plant a garden for ourselves and our Cherokee Road neighbors. Back in February, 50 cherry tomato plants were started from a single packet of seeds, and by the week of Easter they were begging for more room to grow! On Good Friday we stuffed folded up flyers inside plastic eggs and left an egg at the base of each mailbox in the neighborhood. The flyers described Easter gardening traditions and invited children and their parents to come on Saturday, April 11th, and help with starting the garden. That day turned out to be a perfect day to be outside. Once the plants were set in the ground our minister Rick Malugani led in giving Thanks to the Lord, and we all enjoyed a picnic lunch. Our garden plot is under power lines, and it gets plenty of sunshine. If anyone passes by and wants to give the plants a drink, they will find a pitcher and a trash can full of water next to the garden. The plants should yield plenty of tomatoes for us to share with the neighborhood throughout the summer. Carolyn Nunnally



VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH BLANKET SUNDAY

As a congregation dedicated to being the hands and feet of Christ, we are excited to once again participate in Christian World Services Blanket Sunday. In the past we have received donations to purchase blankets during the two weeks around Mother's day. This year, we are moving it to the two weeks around Father's Day. We will receive donations for the blankets on Sunday, June 21 and June 28. Your ten dollar donation goes directly to Church World Services to purchase blankets that are distributed worldwide. In 2025, they were able to distribute 17,317 blankets to those in need in part because of your generosity. This is one more way we are making a positive impact not just in our community but in the world. So, mark your calendars and remember to bring your ten dollar donation and be a part of bringing a little warmth into the life of someone who is in need.

FORTY DAYS OF SCRIPTURE

A big thank you to everyone who participated in our Forty Days of Scripture. The intent was to think about passages of scripture that spoke to us as we moved through the season of Lent. Those passages that gave us strength, that reminded us of our Lord's love, that drew us closer to Him and His mercy, grace and forgiveness during this time of reflection and reexamination of our lives and our relationship with our Lord.

As the final wrap-up of this exercise, we will revisit these passages one more time.

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, may the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand and it gives light to all who are in the house, Matthew 5:14-15.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence and do not take away your Holy Spirit from me. Restore me to the joy of your salvation and uphold me by your generous Spirit. Psalm 51:10-12.

The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. Lamentations 3:25-26.

Now, therefore, says the Lord, turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning. So, rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness and He relents from doing harm. Joel 2:12-13.

This is the day the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24.

He has told you O Mortal, what is good and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8.

But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20.

Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites with a sad countenance for they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly I say to you they have their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that you do not appear to men to be fasting but to your Father who is in the secret place and your Father who sees you in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:16-18.

It is not the fast that I have chosen to lose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and that you bring into your house the poor who are cast out. When you see the naked that you cover him and not hide yourself for your own flesh. Isaiah 58:6-7.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16.

May God continue to bless and keep you. Pastor Rick

The WAY OF REVIVAL A MINISTRY RENEWAL INITIATIVE FOR TODAY'S CHURCH

Mark your calendars for we have scheduled a very interesting and timely seminar led by Rev. Dr. Cameron Douglas, retired pastor of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Cameron is a graduate of Anderson University where he earned his Master of Divinity degree. While at Anderson, he met his wife, Diane. They have two daughters and five grandchildren. Cameron taught high school before going into the ministry. His mother and father were both ordained ministers in the Christian Church. He came to Alabama-Northwest Florida serving First Christian in Decatur. Since retiring eight years ago, he has served 12 interims in 6 different churches. He has served on several regional boards and one term as moderator. He loves this region and has made his home here.

We are excited to welcome him to hear what he has to say about:

The Way of Revival A Ministry Renewal Initiative for Today's Church

Led by Rev. Dr. Cameron Douglas, retired Pastor
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Saturday, June 20, 2026
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Valley Christian Church
Birmingham, Alabama

What if renewal isn't something we wait for... but a path we walk?

Across congregations today, many are asking:

How do we move from maintenance to mission?

How do we renew spiritual vitality without losing our identity?

How do we prepare the way for what God is already doing among us?

"The Way of Revival" is a practical, Spirit-centered initiative designed to help churches rediscover purpose, deepen discipleship, and move forward with clarity and hope.

In This Workshop You Will:

Explore a clear, adaptable pathway toward congregational renewal

Gain tools for spiritual leadership and congregational engagement

Reflect on what revitalization can look like in your unique setting

Be encouraged, challenged, and equipped for the journey ahead

Practical sermons, congregational presentations, reflective study guides

Come ready to listen, reflect, and imagine what renewal might look like in your congregation.