

SAM

SEASONED ADULT MINISTRY
SERVING THE GREAT

I AM

NOVEMBER 2024

Who am I, that the Lord of all the earth would care to know my name?
Would care to feel my hurt?
Who am I, that the bright and morning star
Would choose to light the way
For my ever-wandering heart?

Who am I, that the eyes that see my sin
would look on me with love
And watch me rise again?
Who am I, that the voice that calmed the sea
would call out through the rain
And calm the storm in me?

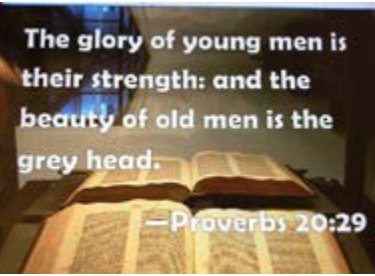
Not because of who I am
But because of what you've done
Not because of what I've done
But because of who you are.

I am a flower quickly fading
Here today and gone tomorrow
A wave tossed in the ocean
A vapor in the wind
Still you hear me when I'm calling
Lord, you catch me when I'm falling
And you've told me who I am
I AM YOURS.

I AM YOURS!

Imagine with me, if you will, you're in The Beginning, in the Garden of Eden, before sin entered.

Now, fast forward. You are raised up to the New Jerusalem, the streets of Gold, and Jesus is face-to-face with you. He has made everything beautiful in His time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. Ecclesiastes 3:11



The word is BEAUTIFUL and our time is now. Wake up! You are in the "in-between time." Where's the beauty? It has everything to do with our life's experiences and what wisdom we have acquired in every moment we've spent in the presence of our God.

When I stand on a golf course, I see well-manicured greens, all types of stunning trees and flowers, and the friends I'm with; I feel the warm sun and amazing breeze with that little white ball rolling around in my hand; I smell and taste the sweet scents of fresh air and breath it in; I hear silence / peace with an occasional crack on someone's ball or someone shout "fore" in the distance. I'm drawn into His presence.

When I sang Who Am I? on October 7 at our SAM Monday Service, yes tears came to my eyes, and not just mine ... I looked over the crowd and I was inspired by your faces and the love in your eyes ... my heart felt God's presence in that room.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not." Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hair styles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. 1 Peter 3:3-4 (NIV)

There are times when circumstances are such that it is hard to sense God's beauty in any form. All you have to do is look up to the sky! Search your heart. Have a little talk with Jesus. And, in every beautiful "aha" moment in His presence ...

*Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing
Praises and majesty, PRAISE TO THE KING!
I sing for joy at the work of Your hands
Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.*

Bob

Seasoned Adult Minister: Bob Smith
SAM Assistant: Debbie Arrington
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SAM News Assoc. Editor: June Mathews
Newsletter Design: Stephanie Entrup

This newsletter is prepared and emailed monthly by and for 55+ adults of First Baptist Church Trussville, Alabama. Suggested information to be included in an upcoming SAM newsletter may be emailed to sam.news@fbctrussville.org. Printed copies will be available at the church Welcome Center and Events Center.

SAM CHRISTMAS BANQUET

Sunday, December 8 • 4:00PM • Worship Center

5:00PM Dinner • Gym

SPECIAL GUESTS: Gold City Quartet

Begin this special season with these friends from Gadsden, Alabama and be blessed by their hearts for Jesus and the best Christian gospel music around!



• HOW TO BE •

SAM with KEN LASS **SATIONAL!**

It is a few minutes before six a.m. on the second Thursday of the month. I arrive at the church and park in the lot below the Fellowship Hall. Up the stairs, and head toward the gym, where a table stands containing stacks of blank ID stickers. I grab a black Magic Marker and write "Ken" in large letters, peel off the backing, and stick the label on my jacket chest.

I enter the gym, which is humming with the buzz of conversation and laughter. Just inside the door is a wicker basket containing a pile of paper money, mostly fives and tens with a few twenties mixed in. The donation basket. You don't have to put anything in it, but most of the guys do. I drop my contribution in, and survey the room, looking for familiar friends and Sunday School classmates. It doesn't take long to find them.

There are hundreds of us here. A diverse mixture of age groups. SAMmers like me, middle agers wearing their work attire, young dads who have brought their sons, teenagers who drove their own cars and stopped in on their way to school. It's the 6:11 men's bible study, named after a bible verse, but also indicating the start time of the event. Most of us are sleepy because of the early hour. So, of course, the running joke is that we've got to find a new bible verse in the eighth or ninth chapter to rename the event.

We have come to listen to Pastor Buddy lead us in bible study. We've come to fellowship with our brothers in

Christ. We've also come to eat. I suspect, for many, eating is the main reason they come. Can't blame them. The breakfast layout is pretty awesome. Around the top of the hour, the kitchen doors swing open, and a small army of bleary-eyed, apron-wearing guys begin spreading out the feast. These dedicated cooks got here in the middle of the night to start frying, grilling and mixing. For this alone, they should be rewarded with a special place in heaven. There's no telling how many precious souls they have lured with their scrambled eggs, bacon, tater tots, biscuits, sausage, gravy and fruit. Pastor leads us in a prayer of thanks, we line up and attack the buffet. Despite the large turnout, there is still food left over, and Buddy encourages us to take a box home.

The lesson is from the book of the prophet Joel. As always, it is centered around the theme of men taking up their biblical responsibility to be leaders and servants. Depending on God to provide and protect, being faithful in prayer, setting a spiritual example as husbands, fathers and grandfathers. There is a short video featuring a dynamic preacher who expounds on the scripture. It is exactly the message we need to hear. We end with prayer, and by seven o'clock we are dismissed to the rest of our lives.

We leave the gym and head to our cars smiling and upbeat. The day is off to a great start. It's up to us to take it from here.





LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS ...

Sunday, November 3, 2:00AM

It's Fall; set your clocks back one hour

Are you praying for a family member, a friend, a co-worker, or a neighbor? We invite you to come and pray with others. Oh, the power of prayer. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Matt. 18:20

FIRST MONDAY PRAYER

November 4 • 10:00 AM • Room D139

Email prayer requests to

Sam.prayer@fbctrussville.org

FIRST MONDAY EVENT

Monday, November 4 • 11:00AM

In the Chapel

GUEST: Dr. Gary Hollingsworth



FIRST THURSDAY

PRAYING for their ONE

November 7 • Room D139

Men @ 6:30 AM • Ladies @ 12:00 noon

Share the first name of your "ONE" and any information you wish by email: pray41@fbctrussville.org



JOYFUL HEARTS REHEARSALS

Every 1st & 3rd Thursdays • 10:30AM

Fellowship Hall

If you're 55 and up, you are invited!

SAM VOCAL BAND REHEARSALS

(Men's Southern Gospel Group)

Wednesdays • 4:30 PM • Room D139



SAM LADIES ENSEMBLE REHEARSALS

First & Third Thursdays • 9:00AM • D139



VOTE ... VOTE ... VOTE

Tuesday, November 5, ELECTION DAY

VETERAN'S DAY

Monday, November 11

Thank a Veteran today!

MEN'S 6:11

Thursday, November 14

6:11 AM • In the Gym

For men and boys of all ages.

Come hungry and bring a friend!

EDIBLE EDUCATION

Thursday, October 10 • 11:30AM • FH

Special Guest: Jennifer Conn

Discover how to fill your cart – and your life – with vibrant, nutrient-dense, anti-inflammatory foods that hold the power to protect you from a range of inflammatory diseases, including dementia, cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

Must register to eat. \$6

Please register [HERE](#)

FBCT THANKSGIVING FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Wednesday, November 20 • 4:30-6PM

THANKSGIVING DAY

Thursday, November 28

*In happy moments, praise God.
In difficult moments, seek God.
In quiet moments, worship God.
In painful moments, trust God.
In every moment, THANK God.
Rick Warren*



WHEN I WAS A KID

Can you guess who this lovely little lady is? She was born in Helena, Alabama.

Find out on the last page of the email or website version of this Newsletter.



RON BURKETT CAPTURES GOD'S BEAUTIFUL CREATIONS

Ron Burkett serves FBCT on many occasions with his photo and video prowess, for which we are all grateful. We share with you a few shots he made this year in his search for his "best ever" shot!

Due to cloud cover, we here in Trussville didn't see much of the total eclipse on April 8. But Ron Burkett did. Ron and Suzi travelled with friends to Waco, Texas where he captured the mystery and treasure of the 2024 Eclipse.

Ron says he was just lucky to capture aurora borealis on Friday May 10 ... the Northern Lights ... in the skies right here in Trussville. Also in May, he landed a rare opportunity to make the Alabama Photographers' Annual Pilgrimage to capture up-close Alabama's much-loved Cahaba Lilies in the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge, 45 miles southwest of Birmingham.



Totality during the total solar eclipse. Waco, Texas, April 8, 2024.



COMING IN 2025



LOOKING AHEAD

A North Carolina Christmas

December 2-5, 2024

Biltmore Estate • The Cove • Billy Graham Library

POSTPONED UNTIL NEXT CHRISTMAS 2025

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW

Bellevue Singing Christmas Tree

Thursday, December 12

Elvis Experience Tour at Graceland

Friday, December 13

As of November 1 RESERVATIONS ARE CLOSED,
But you may call SAM office to be placed on waiting list.

OUT & ABOUT

Our own John Patterson was featured in the Cahaba Sun October 2024 issue. The story is titled "A driving spirit in the community," "John Patterson reflects on his love of Trussville," written by Blair Moore. If you missed it, read the article at cahabasun.com.



SAM YEAR IN REVIEW 2024



YES, IT ALL MATTERS TO GOD

We serve a Risen Savior, "a shepherd who considered one little wandering sheep important enough to go after; a father who considered one prodigal son important enough to watch for and throw a party for upon his return; a coming King who takes personally every act of kindness you do as a personal response to Him and who will reward you for it or rebuke you for your lack of care before the hosts of heaven." (Author unknown)

We have learned vital life lessons this year from the guest pastors and speakers we have been blessed to have come to FBCT. One of these was Dr. David Geldmacher, speaking to us on August 18. In his discussion of Alzheimer's Dementia, he emphasized that no matter how "well," or not, we've lived, and whether we are 55 or 95 years old, it is vital for us Seasoned Adults to keep moving, physically and mentally, to continue to try new things and to expand our interests and experiences. This year our SAM Ministry has been chalk full of opportunities for just that!

God continues to bless our church and our SAM ministry. Over 305 days from January 1 to the end of October, we have had 24 new seasoned adults join our church, which makes our total active SAMers approximately 1,014 (our rolls also carry an additional 700 or so who are inactive ... perhaps those have moved, passed on, etc.).

Every single person matters to God. Every act of service, every song we sing, and every time we lend a hand or encourage another, matters. We are beyond blessed with our newest ministry, our Homebound Care Ministry led by James Long, working with Chris Chambers, Jamie Chappell and a large team of many of you who have been so faithful to minister to our precious 90+ homebound members. We just celebrated the Homebound Ministry's one year anniversary.

The more I serve Him, the sweeter He grows,

Bob

"The God who created, names and numbers the stars in the Heavens, also numbers the hairs of my head. He pays attention to very big things and to very small ones. What matters to me matters to Him, and that changes my life."

Elisabeth Elliot



FBCT'S OLDEST MEMBER CELEBRATES 99th BIRTHDAY

On September 15, we had a wonderful birthday celebration for Ida Lee Joiner, our church's oldest member, at 99 years and counting! Joining in the celebration were Jane Beasley, Homebound Team Member; Cindy Carroll, long-time friend of Ida Lee; Tim Alvis, Deacon assigned to Ida Lee, and his wife, Gleeda; Carolyn Harris, neighbor to Ida Lee; Lee Chase and his wife, Yvette, neighbors; Ida Lee's niece, Joyce Lawler; and James Long, Minister of Homebound Care.

Ida Lee and her husband, Vernon, joined First Baptist on October 15, 2006. He passed away on September 17, 2022. She has one niece in our area, a son and two grandsons who live in California. Nearest other family members are nieces in Georgia. In a real sense, her closest family is her church family. Ida Lee is well cared for by some of her neighbors who are members of First Baptist, through the ministry of her Deacon and his wife, and through our Homebound Care Ministry.

The "Amazing Grace" blanket was donated to our WMU to use at their discretion. Ida Lee was chosen to be the honored recipient on the very special occasion of her 99th birthday. Following Ida Lee's lead, the group participated in concluding the big party by singing "Amazing Grace" and several other hymns. At the beginning and at the end of this momentous occasion, prayers were offered expressing gratitude to God for His amazing grace in granting Ida Lee with such an abundant and long life here and His promise of eternal life someday with Him in Heaven.



WE WILL REMEMBER

Click [HERE](#) to watch "We Will Remember" by Tommy Walker

"...and we will SHOUT, our God is good."

Our Joyful Hearts choir, SAM Vocal Band, and Hearts in Harmony have an inspiration all year. We are grateful to each and every one, and indeed for Kim Searcy, who has assisted in a mighty way all year with this SAM music program. The SVB has performed numerous times over this last year at home and away. Hearts in Harmony has done a wonderful job in their first year. Thank you to the entire choir, along with these two groups for singing all year especially at our Seasoned Adult Day (see article in June SAM newsletter) and those who braved our 2nd Annual Choir Tour in Memphis and area in September (see article in October SAM newsletter). Your music is a blessing to many!





THANK YOU, LORD, FOR ALL THIS AND SO MUCH MORE...

By Debra Roberts

Wow, what an amazing, wonderful year of so many blessings. Music ministers to me and we have had the best this year with hymn singing at the chapel in Tannehill, The Mark Trammel Quartet, Karen Peck and New River at Oasis, the Joyful Hearts choir tour, all male singing benefit for Discovery Club, and Gold City coming for Christmas.

We have had some great messages all year in our first Monday Services. Getting to know our people in the 'when I was a kid' articles in the SAM Newsletter each month is so interesting. And still there was:

- James Spann
- Mystery trip to Auburn
- Atlanta Braves game
- Big Oak Birthday picnic
- Cruise-in
- "Beautiful" the Carole King Musical
- And so much more!

LOOKING BACK WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

By Denny Rogers and Jack Sittre

We would like to say "Thank You" to the men who faithfully prayed for their "Lost One" every First Thursday of the month in 2024.

"Thank You" for agreeing together in prayer, standing by faith on Matthew 18:19. This powerful promise declares: "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven."

As we launch out in 2025, we would love for you to join us in praying for our "One" every first Thursday morning at 6:30AM, Room D139.

By June Mathews and Judy Bryant

We thank our fabulous group of communicators who have worked tirelessly through our SAM Ministry pages on the FBCT website, Facebook, E-mail and our monthly Newsletter to be sure our Seasoned Adults are kept connected and abreast of what's happening. We are also grateful to all who attended our first SAM Writer's workshop held in February. We appreciate so much Jennifer Rash, President and Editor-in-Chief of TAB Media Group, for serving as our speaker.

THERE'S MORE...

SEE MORE NEWS IN THE ELECTRONIC VERSIONS (EMAIL AND CHURCH WEBSITE) OF THIS NEWSLETTER. CHECK IT OUT AT www.fbctrussville.org, ON THE SAM MINISTRY PAGE.

Not receiving our SAM newsletters? How do you prefer to receive our newsletters each month? By email and/or paper copy mailed to you? If you haven't already or you need to update your preference, please contact Debbie Arrington in the SAM Office at 205-228-1006 or email at debbie@fbctrussville.org. Everyone for whom we have an up-to-date email address will receive the newsletters by email; however, if you prefer to have a paper copy mailed to you each month, let Debbie know. We will be happy to mail one to you!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU LORD

Throughout 2024, we SAMers have heard God's Word taught on a variety of subjects; the key word has been KNOW.

- The **Apologetics** study in what was called the **KNOW WEEKEND**, March 2 & 3, featuring Dr. Jamie Dew, President of New Orleans Baptist Seminary.
- On **Seasoned Adult Day Sunday**, May 5, visiting retired Director of Evangelism for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, Dr. Sammy Gilbreath, encouraged us to **"Live Like You Are Dying."** On "Ending Well," he offered suggestions for **KNOWING** how to do just that.
- In our **First Monday Services**, from the beginning of 2024 with Dr. Bob Pitman to our October session with Dr. Robert Smith, we learned that we must KNOW Jesus. We are looking forward to one more First Monday Service. On November 4 our own Dr. Gary Hollingsworth will be bringing the message.

March 4: Dr. Bob Pitman **June 2:** Dr. Don Wilton
April 1: Dr. Johnny Fain **July 1:** Dr. Jay Wolfe
May 6: Dr. Gary Fisher **October 7:** Dr. Robert Smith

On April 1 our own Dr. Johnny Fain challenged us to make a list of our problems / concerns; take it to the Father in prayer, giving thanks for each one. Remember, **it's a simple matter to God.** God's got it all; God sees the big picture, and God holds the future. So, no coasting! There is more to **know**; deeper things of God.

Dr. Gary Fisher, previously Pastor at First Baptist Pinson; currently Pastor at So. Roebuck Baptist Church, on May 6 said, **"I want to see Jesus."** He said, if you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus! A purely academic interest in God is flawed. **The true knowledge of God always leads us to the foot of Jesus.**

Our guest Pastor on Sunday, June 2, was Dr. Don Wilton. With his smooth and gentle accent, he shared with us snippets of his life as friend and pastor to Dr. Billy Graham. Dr. Wilton said that the single most important subject that an evangelist, a witness, and a friend should talk about is to tell about Jesus. The second most important: Not just the fact that we share Jesus, but that, indeed, we KNOW Jesus. **We must know that we know that we know!**

The Absurdity of our God was the message of Dr. Robert Smith on October 7.

Dr. Smith taught a lesson we will never forget, basically from Genesis 22:1-14, but then every point he made came straight from scripture. What a brilliant mind!

Our God is a God of absurdity, said Smith. Faith in our "absurd" God brings life through Jesus Christ, the son of God, who was raised by the spirit of God from the dead, and who gives us power to do the work of God.

He challenged us to not let God get "normal", sensible, tamed, etc. in our hearts and minds. We need to watch that we do not let our God become our unbiblical Santa Clause, divine vending machine, or our security guard. God of absurdity = redemptively ridiculous; God is the unfigure-utable God (Isaiah 55:8-9, "your ways are not my ways") (Romans 11:34 Who has known the mind of God or who has been His counselor.) Who's couch has God laid on??, Smith asked.

Our incredible God and His absurd methods specializes in what seems impossible. **We don't have to know the how, as long as we know the Who.**

It seems absurd that He would take the life of His own son.

It seems absurd that anyone could bear a child at 90 years of age.

It seems absurd that Abraham could "reason" that God was able to raise Isaac up from the sacrifice.

God did it: He set all this up way before Adam was ever born; He allowed it; it was no accident (Acts 2:23-24); and Because He Lives we can face tomorrow; because we **KNOW** He holds the future.

All of our excitement ought not be reserved for the football game! Shout to the Lord. Holy Holy Holy

"For me, one of the highlights of our SAM Ministry this year has been the First Monday Events. I enjoyed the sermons from so many guest Pastors, especially Dr. Robert Smith." Anita Aaron

ENCOURAGING WORDS FOR THOSE WITH ALZHEIMER'S AND OTHER DEMENTIAS

By Susan Hornsby

One SAM event that I was especially pleased with was on August 18 when we were able to schedule UAB's Dr. David Geldmacher to speak to us on the facts and research on Alzheimer's and other dementias. He teaches, treats patients and leads cutting edge research on this growing group of patients. As a nurse and after visiting a successful respite program on the other side of town, I could quickly see the many benefits of physical, cognitive, social and even spiritual stimulation for these individuals in a group setting.

The care givers of this group are all in need of a few hours of respite from their 24/7 responsibilities with the ones they love- time for a dentist or doctor appointment, hair appointment, grocery run, or just coffee with a friend. Dr. Geldmacher did a beautiful job of explaining what happens physically to the patient with this diagnosis and what kinds of activities they need to help their brain stay as active as possible.

There were approximately 400 people from our church and community attending this lecture, demonstrating the huge need and interest in this topic. I am grateful for a church that allows us to bring in speakers like Dr. Geldmacher.

PD FIGHT CLUB

By Julie Rousseau

Never in a million years would I have dreamed that I am doing what I am doing today. BOXING! Those who have known me for a long time know that softball was my game. I played for over 32 years. And that was only because I was a decent pitcher (i.e., I could not hit well and I could not run!). But boxing? Never even thought about that! However, life has a funny way of changing the direction you are heading. And that is definitely the case for me.

Fourteen years ago, I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. With the help of a terrific medical team and the support of my awesome brother, I have done very well over these 14 years and I would like to keep it that way. So, in an effort to keep doing as well as I possibly can, I have started taking boxing lessons. This is the story of PD Fight Club and the journey I have embarked upon there.

Martin Juarez is a retired professional, two-time Golden Glove winning boxer who has a passion for people with Parkinson's. His desire is to help those with PD improve coordination, focus, balance, and stability through boxing. The program is very intense. Coach Martin likes to say that this is "physical therapy on steroids". It is difficult at times, but I love every minute of it! And I can already feel a difference after just a couple of sessions. The things that I struggle with on a daily basis are slowly becoming easier for me to do. That means so much to me. Coach Martin and his staff are excellent teachers, encouraging us every step of the way.

Working side by side with others is so encouraging. It really is so much fun!!! Coach Martin is showing me the finer points of the speed bag. I would like to encourage anyone who has PD or knows someone who does to think about boxing as a workout, no matter what stage your PD may be. It is a great way to stay active and improve quality of life. And the relationships made along the way are priceless! From the coaches to the other boxers, this becomes family.

One of my favorite things about the program is that we all get a boxing nickname...so allow me to introduce myself.....

I am Julie "ROCKY" Rousseau and boxing is my new game!





SERVING ... WHY DOES IT MATTER ... BECAUSE EVERY ONE OF GOD'S CHILDREN MATTER TO GOD

"Working for the Lord ain't easy, but it sure is rewarding!"

By Jack Sittre.

Here are just a few things we GET TO DO and have done this year in the SAM Ministry.

Working with the Serving You ministries; Jimmie Hale Mission; and the CLCC.

Serving our Trussville Schools when called upon, particularly at the end of summer just before school starts back helping with cleaning, painting, and clearing the grounds. We work with the Men of Acts here at FBCT to serve our members in times of need (building ramps, etc.).

These services are provided by men and women alike. If you would like to make yourself available for any of these, check out our Missions page on the FBCT website, or call the Missions Office. They would be proud to sign you up!



IT'S MUSIC TO GOD'S EARS

By Lynne Long

If you like the mellow sound that only a men's choir can deliver, you like to hear beautifully trained voices sing praises to the Lord, and you want to help a wonderful ministry for kids, then you were in the right place for the Men of Distinction/Warblers Club/SAM Vocal Band Gospel Concert on Sunday, April 21 here at FBCT. Indeed, approximately 1,000 did attend and contributions for the Discovery Clubs topped \$10,500.

The event was a fundraiser for the Discovery Clubs in our area. These clubs are an after-school program for elementary age children that teaches them about Jesus through fun activities and games. Money raised from the event helps provide the resources the Birmingham Metro Baptist Association needs to continue to provide this vital ministry.

Our own SVB men's chorus kicked off the show with some traditional crowd pleasers including "Washed in the Blood", and "Meeting in the Air". Their enthusiasm was contagious and a fitting warm up for the evening. The Warblers, under the direction of Bob Parker took the stage next. Their harmonies were flawless, with a well-chosen variety of songs... "Amazing Grace", "Down in the Valley", and "Proud To Be Called an American". Then, the Men of Distinction, directed by Vedric Shelby truly blessed us with their amazing voices singing "Lord Let Me Be Your Instrument", "God is Great", and "Magnify the Lord."

And for the finale- and oh, what a finale it was- the two troupes combined to sing "We're the Men," (adding a little humor to the mix), "In This Very Room", and "Undivided." For me personally, this last song held the most meaning. When I was a young girl growing up in Roebuck, you wouldn't have seen these two groups performing together. We were divided to say the least. Hearing these men on the same stage with one spirit singing to the Lord was so moving and inspiring. It brought tears to my eyes to know that we live in a world that has learned so much, and I thank God for it.

SAM SUMMER MISSION OPPORTUNITY

By Debra Roberts

In June, SAM volunteers assisted with VBS in Union Springs, Alabama. There were about 20 children who learned that God's truth never changes. They did Bible study, missions, music and memorized Romans 12:2, And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.



SAM MONTHLY LUNCHEONS CONTINUE WITH EXCELLENCE

Our monthly luncheons have been outstanding once again this year. Our favorite chef, Mrs. Georgia, fed us well and faithfully. We cannot thank her and her team enough.

Remember in April when Donna McGuffie (2018 Ms. Senior Universe) sang for us, particularly the music of Patsy Cline. She took us back to the 50's and 60's and closed with a most beautiful rendition of Etta James' At Last. Our own Nina Orr opened the luncheon with a devotion reminding us that we are commanded in God's Word to love one another just as He has loved us. We cannot do "one another" alone! AMEN!



HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW AND I KNOW HE WATCHES "WE"

In September, we welcomed Allison Speer back to FBCT for our Monthly Luncheon. She opened with the song we all know and love, We Shall Behold Him. That would have been enough, but ... then there was her accompanist James Rainey. Outstanding talent on the keyboard, all by memory ... we saw no sheet music! Rainey could play anything and play it well.

There were no dry eyes in the crowd when Speer sang Light of that City for our own Charles Vinson (a favorite song of the family). You could have heard a pin drop when Speer presented her rendition of His Eye is on the Sparrow, a well-loved song sung by Ethyl Waters in Billy Graham's Crusades over the years.

The program ended with Bob Smith joining Speer to sing her favorite song Because He Lives. That's what it's all about!

A reliable source told this writer that Speer has signed to return to FBCT in August 2025. Be sure and put this on your calendars. You won't regret it!



SAM MEN'S GOLF: WINNER WINNER STEAK DINNER

Thirty-two SAMers, in two teams ... Team Strong and Team Courage ... donned their new SAM logo, blue and green golf shirts and took to the beautiful Robert Trent Jones Grand National course on Sunday through Tuesday, September 22 – 24 in Opelika, Alabama. In a Ryder Cup style tournament, they played a total of 45 holes over those days, playing a scramble, a one-on-one match and a par 3 contest.

"There were no holes-in-one or anything like that, but it was just a real good time," said Jack Sittre, even though his team lost! They had the best opportunity to get to know more of the guys who attend FBCT. Joe Estes returned from Tennessee to join in the fun.

No green jackets were awarded, but this writer heard something about a couple of red jackets!??? The winning team was awarded a steak dinner at Big Mike's Steakhouse, while the losers got pork chops. However, that wasn't a bad thing according to Lloyd Wint. "Those were the best pork chops I have ever had!"

The golfers heard a devotion from Dr. Steve Hale, staff evangelist for FBC Woodstock, Georgia, who spoke about how the world is changing and how we Christians must address those changes. Read about Dr. Hale and his two-volume book set "Awakening: Now or Never" at www.stevemaleministries.com.

The 2024 teams invite all SAM men to sign up early for next year's tournament!



THEY HAD US AT "JEREMIAH"

By Richard Bailey

You may find it funny, but Judy and I had never heard of the Celebrators Conference, but once we saw that Dr. David Jeremiah was the keynote speaker, it was a done deal! That is not to shortchange the rest of the lineup featuring Phil Waldrep, Tim and Demi-Leigh Tebow, and the musical talent of Charles Billingsley, Gaither Vocal Band, and other artists. The Celebrators Conference this year, October 14-17 in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, was an inspirational week!

Judy and I may have been a tad anxious going on this trip, being new to the group. Honestly, it was more me than her since she has the personality of never meeting a stranger, whereas I am the nerd with a limited social time clock. If there were any real concerns, they quickly evaporated the first day. As we settled into our rooms and prepared for dinner and the evening activities, the group paused to return thanks. We were reminded that SAM is made up of individuals who come from different places and have unique personalities, but we have something that binds us together. Yes, we are individuals, but we are a family with a common purpose. That is to serve God and to serve others. By coincidence or providence, that theme was echoed throughout the conference.

How Can I Pray for You?

Early in the conference, Phil Waldrep taught the power and importance of prayer in our lives and others. Prayer not only calls for the power of the Holy Spirit to intervene in other's lives but also reminds them of their worth and value as people and that they are loved. It also empowers us to see others as God sees them. It changes our hearts.

The Importance of Being a Role Model

Who was not moved by the testimony and words of Tim and Demi-Lee Tebow? The impact of role models on their lives pushed them to focus on what is important and to ignore the temporary. Thus preparing them to be bold in fighting Human Trafficking and Exploitation. What terrible and heroic stories they shared with us!

Are We There Yet?

I could write all night on the themes that Dr. Jeremiah taught and never do them justice. If you listen to him regularly, you were not disappointed with his discussion on the millennium and the ultimate justice that will be given to the great deceiver, Lucifer. Also, the promise that one day, our bodies will no longer be subject to the ravages of sin, and longevity will be permanently restored. He encouraged us not to be defined by our age and to live out God's plan to the very end. While there are many signs, everything happens in His time!

Music to Our Ears

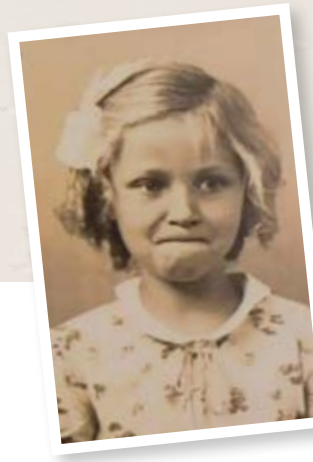
The conference was made complete by the incredible times of worship. The musical themes intertwined with the sermons. Stripes of blood wash away our sins . . . Hope in Jesus Christ, Who can stop the Lord Almighty? . . . Walking the Golden Streets . . . The Hard Work is Over When the Heart Quits Beating. Of course, we went completely Old School the second night with the Gaither Vocal Band.

When we were not at the conference, there was plenty to do and eat at the lodge and time spent seeing the local sites. It was a good time and inspirational. I hope to see you there next year!



WHEN I WAS A KID...

ANN LEE



In what city and state were you born?

Helena, Alabama

How long have you been attending FBCT?

25 years

When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I always wanted to be a cowgirl. My Grannie used to play this game with me when I was a little girl. Sometimes, I think I can still hear her calling me to eat, hitting a pan with a big metal spoon. We pretended that our farm mule, Ole Billie, was a black stallion. I rode him all the time, all over the farm land.

What did you actually become when you grew up?

I was always in the administrative field, a little different from riding a mule.

Tell us about your family:

My mother passed away when I was six and I lived with my maternal grandparents (Grannie and Papa) until I was 9 years old. My oldest sister, Jean, got married and she and her husband took me from Helena, Alabama to Birmingham and they raised me until I got married. I had three siblings, one brother and 2 sisters. I married my High School sweetheart, Bobby Tucker. Bobby joined the Air Force and we left Birmingham. We both went to Lake Highlands Baptist Church on 5th Avenue and 82nd Street. It was a very pretty rock church and we had some beautiful times there. We even had a small traveling choir, IN which Bobby and I both participated. So many fond memories.

What is your favorite television show?

Sports Center

What is your favorite food?

Pork Chops

Other than the Bible, do you have a favorite book?

A Woman of Substance by Barbara Taylor Bradford

Who or what has impacted your faith journey?

Mrs. Cross in Selma, Alabama. She was the Sunday School teacher of the young married couples. She not only taught us what God would do, but she lived it herself. A wonderful example to follow.

What is your favorite Bible verse:

Romans 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

What ministries (at FBCT and elsewhere) are you involved in?

Home Bound Ministry, Seasoned Adult Ministry: Joyful Hearts Choir; Mission Activities of WMU; and Sunday School

In 25 words or less, tell us what you are passionate about.

The Lord, my family, my friends, and, Oh Yes, Alabama Football. Roll Tide!!!

Is there anything else you want people to know about you?

I love Thanksgiving at Grandmom's House. I was encouraged to share a bit more of my life experience below.

My husband's Air Force career took us many places, most unfamiliar to us. Our first assignment was to Hamilton Air Force Base, California. Becky, our first child and I flew to California to join Bob when she was 2 months old. I went to their Personnel Office and was interviewed and told I had to have a physical before I could go to work on base, well that was the end of that job. I was pregnant and at that time they did not hire you if you were pregnant. My, how times have changed. We were in California until October of 1957.

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From California we were sent to Craig Air Force Base in Selma, Alabama. How great was that, approximately 100 miles from home. Our second child, Danny was born in 1958. Jennifer, our third and last, was born in June of 1965 and then we left Selma in Fall of 1965 for a 3-year assignment to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa when Jennifer was 4 months old. I had the opportunity to work in the 313th Air Division. In this job I had the privilege of seeing a lot of things which were not pretty but all a part of the Vietnam conflict. We were on our way to the USA....Only the Statue of Liberty could match the beauty of the Golden Gate Bridge at sunset from the skies to an American returning to their homeland. I know now how our returning soldiers must feel.

We left Okinawa headed for an assignment at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware. There I had several jobs, but the most interesting and people-oriented position was in the Wing Commander's office. In this position the Wing Commander became the Inspector General for the Base. He wore so many hats and had so many tasks and problems to handle. I was at the top of the ladder in the secretarial field in that office and no hopes of ever changing career fields, I decided to make a move to a larger arena.

So after contacting the Pentagon Personnel Office, I was hired and worked for some very decorated individuals; General Pete Dawkins, a Heisman Trophy Winner, Rhodes Scholar and some said the future Army Chief of Staff. But, a surprise to many, he submitted his retirement papers. He and his wife asked me to travel with them in their civilian life as their administrative assistant. However, his generous offer was preempted by an opportunity to travel with the peace negotiating teams to Geneva, Switzerland under the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These trips lasted two to three months in Geneva and then back home for a few weeks and then back to Geneva. These were peace negotiations with the US and Russia. This was probably one of my favorite jobs with the Joint Staff. The weeks were extremely busy but our weekends were free to travel to some beautiful areas. For example, you could catch the cogwheel train in Geneva and ski the Matterhorn Glacier in a matter of a few hours. Just beautiful scenes.



I also worked for General John Shalikashvili on the Army Staff. General Shally, as he was called at the Pentagon, was the first and as of 2023, the only, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff not born in the United States. General Shalikashvili followed General Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs from 1993-1997.

General Colin L. Powell became the 12th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1989, the highest military position in the Department of Defense. He became special to me since I was on his watch while he was the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. General Powell became more special to me when I learned his wife, Alma Vivian Johnson, was from Birmingham, Alabama. So they both would answer to "Y'all" like the rest of us from Alabama. Being so far away from home made you feel so good to talk to or know of someone from your hometown. Please do not think any of us had a cocktail acquaintance with General Powell, absolutely not. It was boss and employees!!! There were a lot of official functions attended and he was always like a gentle giant to us, but to his soldiers he was always known as a real warrior.

There are certain things you just know. I knew he and his staff really emphasized education, and I had very few college credits at that time. So, I decided that I would continue attending some night classes, when I could afford them and when my job would permit. In 1989, I received my Bachelor of Arts Degree and received my Masters of Science and Administration in May 1993. I was 56 when I was awarded my Masters....I do not recommend that way.

Not sure if my education helped me in my progressions on the ladder of success, but, I am sure, it did not hurt. I started as a GS-2, working my way up the ladder and retired as a GS-15, Chief, Resources and Acquisition Management Office, J8, Joint Staff.

During his tenure as the Chairman, General Powell led the United States armed forces in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm to liberate Kuwait. These Operations involved the largest buildup of U.S. military forces since the Vietnam War. He served in that post until his retirement on 30 September 1993. During his tenure as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, we knew that we were being represented by a real warrior.

There was a homecoming parade, celebrating the Gulf War Victory in Washington, DC led by General Norman Schwarzkopf Jr. the Commander of the Desert Storm forces. You would have had to be there to understand the feeling of seeing all those troops. We owe our blood-free streets to those many thousands who kept us safe.

It is to warriors like Generals Powell and Schwarzkopf and all the troops they commanded that we say thanks. I always considered it my privilege to work on the Joint Staff.

General Powell retired in 1993 and died at the age of 84 from complications due to COVID-19.