



FOCUS

JANUARY 2022 - MMXXII ISSUE I

735 RIDGE LAKE BOULEVARD | MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

What's More Amazing Than a Leopard in Plaid? Jim Fleming, Interim Senior Pastor

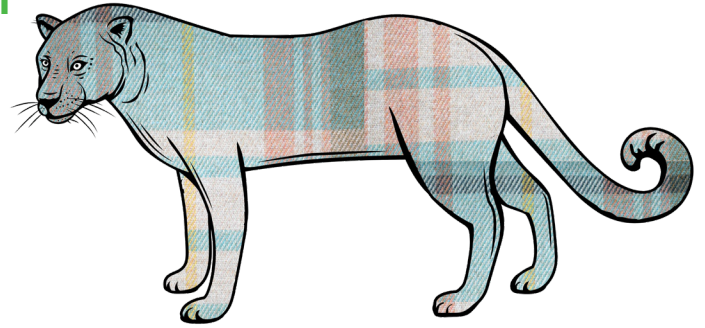
*"Your iniquities have turned these away,
And your sins have withheld good from you"* (Jer. 5:25).

*"Can the Ethiopian change his skin
Or the leopard his spots?
Then you also can do good
Who are accustomed to doing evil"* (Jer. 13:23).

When the serpent engaged Eve in a little friendly chit-chat, he was already an expert in the ways of sin and temptation. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve were both rookies and Satan's prime targets. You would expect this veteran tempter to resort to his most reliable strategies to move them from innocence to rebellion. Sure enough, it's a classic. He whispers, "To sin would be to seize what is good. God is holding out on you—take the good He denies you!"

In the days of the prophet Jeremiah, the lie from Eden has lost none of its persuasive power. Those who believed the lie experienced first-hand the impoverishing consequences of sin and were quick to blame God. But here in Jeremiah 5:25 is the great irony! The lie from Eden states, "To sin is to seize what is good." The truth from Jeremiah is that sin only pushes what is good beyond reach. A man defies God to grasp what he wants only to find himself worse off than before. He has his own appetite, not God, to blame.

A little later (13:23), when Jeremiah starts talking about leopards and Ethiopians, it only gets worse. Wrongdoing infects the very core of a man's being. It is second nature



to him, so much so that departing from sin is as likely to happen as a leopard learning how to be a chameleon or an Ethiopian looking Swedish. It ain't gonna' happen!

Houston, we have a problem! Short of receiving a whole new nature, we are addicted to sin. And sin, despite its attempts to beguile us into believing otherwise, does us no good. We are addicts, addicted to our own harm.

Against this backdrop, 2 Corinthians 5:17 is incredibly, unbelievably, INDESCRIBABLY, good news: *Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come* (2 Cor. 5:17). Our God is a God who can change something that runs much deeper than outward appearance. When a man is "in Christ," his old self, the one addicted to his own harm, is extinguished. A new man is birthed in his place, a man with a pre-disposition and hunger to do things God's way. When that man is satisfying his hunger, the key in the door of divine blessing clicks. The man in Christ is far more amazing than a leopard in plaid. God puts every good thing within grasp of all who have come to Him in Christ.

Elder Word of Encouragement The Session

This time of year seems to be filled with numerous writings about "Year in Review" and "Best of" anything and everything. This article will not go into as much detail as some of these reports, but there are several selected Elder "highlights" from this past year which hopefully will be encouraging

1) Keeping the main thing the main thing

Transition can create a lot of challenges which range from reacting to issues to waiting for solutions to come down the road. Our Session Elders have remained focused upon advancing the mission and vision of First Evan, working closely with Jim and Taylor to ensure that we are moving forward. Session Elders have continued to provide leadership to their designated Strategic Initiatives and Ministry assignments.

2) Willingness to go over and above

Every single member of the Session is facing the challenges of work, family, ministry, and other multiple demands on time. Yet, each time there has been a need for Session involvement there has always been a quick "yes" to respond to the need. Many Elders have taken

on assignments as members of the Transition Council, volunteering to lead Sunday morning prayer time, and dedicating six hours of training on the Making Disciples curriculum which Pastor Jim offered to make available to Session Elders. Many more will be involved in the upcoming 15-week Shepherdology sessions beginning in January.

3) Maintaining a shepherd's heart

Being a Session Elder does involve responsibility and activities. However, care for the congregation remains at the forefront of our biblical role. Transition can certainly bring about questions, concerns, and some degree of anxiousness. Our shepherds' hearts remain attentive to the individual needs of our congregation. Prayer, listening, serving, and caring for our congregation continues to be an integral part of the ministry of every single Session Elder.

CHURCH-WIDE



Midweek at First Evan

Wednesdays, January 12–April 27
(No meeting on March 16)

Don't limit your connection with First Evan to Sunday only! Join us for Midweek to enrich your spiritual walk and deepen your relationships with others in our fellowship.

There's something for everyone on Wednesday nights. It starts with dinner at 5:00 p.m., then we have activities for all ages: www.firstevan.org/midweek.

Attending or volunteering and need childcare?

www.firstevan.org/midweek-childcare

(For ages 2 and under. Subject to availability.)

ELDER DEACON NOMINATIONS

Please begin praying about upcoming nominations for the offices of elder and deacon. Because leadership is so vital, our Lord Himself prompts and places men in areas of service within our fellowship. True elders and deacons will be found already doing the work. It is our task to discern who those individuals may be. Please give prayerful consideration to any nominations you would like to make. A biblical description of the kind of men we should identify is available on the First Evan [website](http://www.firstevan.org). The [nomination forms](#) will be available the first three Sundays in January on tables outside the Sanctuary. **The submission of nominations is limited to First Evan members and due Sunday, January 23.** Visit www.firstevan.org/nominations.



Invite a Friend Sunday

Sunday, January 30

10:45 a.m., Sanctuary

On January 30, Pastor Jim will bring sermon number seven in the *Journey* series based on the Book of Numbers. This will also be another "Invite a Friend" Sunday where the message lends itself to a clear gospel presentation and an opportunity for people to respond. Praise God that someone prayed to receive Jesus at our last Invite a Friend Sunday. Interestingly, this person was here simply because someone from First Evan brought a friend who needed to hear the Gospel.

This illustrates the power of a gospel partnership in which those who are attending, the one who is preaching, and the Holy Spirit work together. On January 30, you can unleash the power of this partnership to help someone you know come to Christ.

Here is how you can start preparing now. Ask the Lord who among those in your circle of friends and acquaintances He wants you to invite. Start praying for this person, for God to start drawing them to Himself. Then reach out and encourage them to come to a worship service, preferably one earlier in January. Finally, make sure to bring them with you on January 30.

Pastor Jim is amped up about Journey sermon seven: "We often quote John 3:16 when we share the gospel, and rightly so. But when we understand a specific event from the Book of Numbers that Jesus linked to John 3:16, what He did on the cross comes alive in a way that is gripping. Prepare to be stunned by the truth!"

So who do you know who could benefit from seeing what Jesus did for him or her on the cross? Start working now to help them come to Jesus. Imagine what God might do among us when we care enough about those in our circle to pray for them and bring them with us to church.

Closing In on a Milestone Don't Miss Your Moment

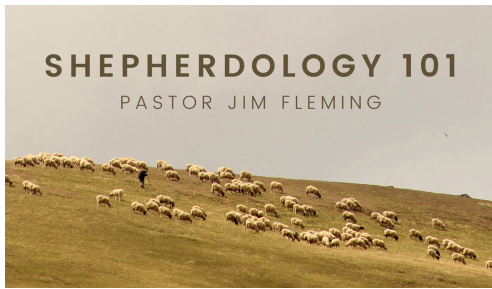


The First Evan Transition council is making great progress. This team of 40+ dedicated men and women have been hard at work reaching out to those who call or have called First Evan home. They are currently well past the 50% mark of interviews completed.

We want to make sure everyone who would like to be interviewed has the opportunity to do so. If you have not gotten a call from an interviewer yet, that may be due to a couple of things: 1) The interviewer has not gotten to your name on their list yet. Or 2) The interviewer may not have been able to contact you due to incorrect information in our database. No matter the reason, we do want to hear from you. If you would like to be interviewed and haven't been contacted yet, please contact Jacki Stieferman (jstieferman@firstevan.org). You can also reach them by calling the church office, 682-8452 and they will be happy to help you and connect you with your interviewer so an interview may be arranged.

If you know someone who hasn't been contacted, please pass this information on to them. We don't want anyone left out who would like the opportunity to be interviewed. God is doing something good among us through this process and we are excited to watch Him work among our body here at First Evan.

CHURCH-WIDE (CONTINUED)



"Shepherdology 101" led by Pastor Jim Fleming

Wednesdays, January 12–April 27 (No meeting March 16)

6:15–8:00 p.m., E125/126 OR

Sundays, January 16–May 1 (No meeting March 13)

6:00–7:45 p.m., E125/126

"Shepherdology 101" is open to men who want to be difference makers in the lives of others and to women who want to partner well with their shepherds/husbands.

Regardless of whether you are an experienced shepherd or someone who is exploring what shepherds do for the first time, this class will help you learn how to produce a flourishing flock.

Women's Track: This class is also open to women (some joint sessions, some break-out sessions led by Rochelle Fleming). In addition to receiving the resources men receive, women will be given a workbook that is just for women who want to be difference makers in the lives of others.

Please register by January 5 at www.firstevan.org/shepherdology.



Sunshine Stockings for Seniors

Thank you to everyone who filled a stocking! We were blown away by your generosity, and your thoughtful gifts and treats blessed the recipients.

CROSS-GENERATIONAL INVESTMENTS

*further up
and
further in*

Further Up and Further In Sundays, January 30–February 20 (4 weeks), 9:30–10:30 a.m., Gym

Join us to connect cross-generationally and prepare as a church for the teachings of Pastor Jim in his "Makers of Disciple Makers" sermon series. Contact Jake Ferwerda at jferwerda@firstevan.org.



Discover First Evan

Sunday, January 30
4:00–6:00 p.m., Chapel

This class is offered to those interested in learning more about First Evan or desiring membership. Attending the class in no way obligates you to join, but it is the first step toward membership. Questions can be directed to Jacki Stieferman at jstieferman@firstevan.org. Register at www.firstevan.org/dfe.

Thanksgiving Offering Collected for our Missionaries for Christmas

THANK YOU for your generosity toward our missionaries as we collected \$12,555. These funds were divided among our 29 missionary family. They were all blessed by 54 different donors from First Evan. Thank you for your blessing as these families continue to be a blessing among the people to whom they minister!

WORSHIP

Worship Choir Rehearsals

Wednesdays, 6:15–8:00 p.m., Sanctuary
Come be a part of this intergenerational group that loves to lift praises to the Lord in song and to support the congregation in its worship. We will also prepare for our Palm Sunday service with symphony orchestra: www.firstevan.org/sundays.



Student Band & Ensemble

Wednesdays, January 5–May 4
5:30–6:15 p.m., E202

Open to all students who wish to grow their musical talent for worship leadership: www.firstevan.org/student-music.

PRAYER

First Evan Prayer Focus

Sundays, 5:00–5:30 p.m. via Zoom
Please join us as we pray for First Evan and how the Lord may lead us into the future. [Click here to join the meeting](#).
Meeting ID: 863 8809 4094
Passcode: 758395

Men's Prayer Breakfast

Mondays, 6:30–8:00 a.m., E234
Join us for a time of prayer and breakfast. Contact Hickman Ewing at wewingii@comcast.net.

Women's Tuesday Prayer Time

Weekly, 10:00–11:30 a.m., D106
Come join your hearts and voices to pray for all concerns.
Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting
Resumes weekly on January 12
6:15–8:00 p.m., D114

A prayer guide is provided each week to assist in praying for our church, ministries, sick, bereaved, country, missionaries, and military. For more information, contact Chuck Downs at cadowns@bellsouth.net.

GLOBAL MISSIONS

EQUIPPING



Global Missions Focus – Begins in February

This year, instead of a singular Missions Conference, First Evan will have a **Global Missions Focus (GMF)** that will be the highlight of three consecutive weeks in February and March. We are inviting our National Ministry Partners to come and share with us and even teach us how they “make disciples of all nations” in their context. Many of our National Partners live and work in very challenging environments and there is much that we can learn from them. During these days, we will also meet virtually with all of our missionaries for mutual encouragement and blessing.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE PARTNERS	WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 23 Midweek Meal 5:00–6:00 p.m. Interviews with Missionaries & Nationals 6:15–8:00 p.m.	FRIDAY FEBRUARY 25 GMF Kickoff Meal 5:00–6:15 p.m. GMF Service 6:30–8:00 p.m. KMC Kickoff 6:30–8:00 p.m.	SATURDAY FEBRUARY 26 National Partner Panel Discussions 9:00–11:00 a.m.	SUNDAY FEBRUARY 27 SS Class 9:30–10:30 a.m. KMC—Travel to Europe 9:30–10:30 a.m. Worship: Central Europe 10:45 a.m.–noon
	WEDNESDAY MARCH 2 Midweek Meal 5:00–6:00 p.m. Interviews with Missionaries & Nationals 6:15–8:00 p.m.		SATURDAY MARCH 5 National Partner Panel Discussions 9:00–11:00 a.m.	SUNDAY MARCH 6 SS Class 9:30–10:30 a.m. KMC—Travel to India 9:30–10:30 a.m. Worship: South Asia 10:45 a.m.–noon
	WEDNESDAY MARCH 9 Midweek Meal 5:00–6:00 p.m. Interviews with Missionaries & Nationals 6:15–8:00 p.m.		SATURDAY MARCH 12 National Partner Panel Discussions 9:00–11:00 a.m.	SUNDAY MARCH 13 SS Class 9:30–10:30 a.m. KMC—Travel to Mexico 9:30–10:30 a.m. Worship: Mexico/Middle East/USA 10:45 a.m.–noon GMF Luncheon 12:00 p.m.

Together with the All-Church functions, it is planned to have a number of smaller gatherings which would occur in people’s homes, going out to eat, having coffee at your local coffee shop, and other informal gatherings.

Further, throughout the three-weekend Global Missions Focus, Zoom “Meet & Greets” will be scheduled so that Sunday School classes, financial/prayer supporters, and interested others could talk directly with our missionaries (and national partners) who are not in attendance.

Global Missions Team Recommendations

The Global Missions Team is seeking recommendations for new members to serve a three-year term. They must be committed members of First Evan with a deep interest in missions and have sufficient time and concern for worldwide missions to make a meaningful commitment to the GMT. First Evan members may send recommendations to missions@firstevan.org or speak to any current GMT member.



MomentumYes Video Series led by Zoe Bozeman

Wednesdays, January 12–March 9
6:15–8:00 p.m., A121/122

MomentumYes is a free video-based series for small groups which teaches, inspires, and equips everyday people to rethink God’s mission. It is designed to actively engage believers in taking the next steps in God’s mission. We will also hear from our missionaries and national partners on how they are involved in God’s mission. Register today at www.firstevan.org/momentумыes.

MEMPHIS MINISTRIES



Life Choices: Bottles For Life

Each January, Life Choices invites churches and individuals to participate in their Bottles For Life campaign to raise awareness and funds for the sanctity of life. Pick up and return bottles to the Fellowship Hall filled with change, cash, or check. This is a great opportunity to get involved with Life Choices and help empower women to choose and cherish life!

Meet Memphis

SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, April 2, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Save the date for our annual Meet Memphis work day coming up in April! We will be on site at different locations with our ministry partners. Stay tuned for more details.

WOMEN



A Colorful Day "Connected in Community"

Saturday, February 5

9:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m. | Cost: \$15*

*additional cost for some sessions

Registration begins Sunday, January 9

Come join us for a special day filled with learning, creativity, and encouragement. You will have the opportunity to sign up for two electives taught by fellow women of First Evan with lunch to follow. This day provides a wonderful opportunity to invite neighbors, friends, and loved ones to experience the community we have at our church. Childcare (five and under) is provided, but registration is required: www.firstevan.org/colorful.



Heart to Heart Women's Bible Study "Better" written by Jen Wilkin

January 11/12–March 8/9

Tuesdays, 9:30–11:30 a.m., Chapel

Wednesdays, 6:15–8:00 p.m., F-Hall

Purchase book from your favorite retailer

Join us for a nine-session, verse-by-verse study of the Book of Hebrews. Through stories of Old Testament heroes and practices, the author of Hebrews demonstrates how the new covenant is superior to the old and how Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of every promise. Learn how to place your hope and faith in Christ alone. Register online at www.firstevan.org/h2h.



Mentoring Moms

Tuesday, January 25, 7:00 p.m.

At the home of Kathleen Kizer

9617 Colthurst Cv., Germantown, TN

All young moms and moms-to-be are invited to hear from Kari Armstrong as she seeks to encourage moms to live under grace instead of guilt.

Precept Bible Study "Ezekiel Part 2: When My Sanctuary Is In Their Midst Forever"

Tuesdays, January 11–March 1

6:00–8:00 p.m. via Zoom

The watchman speaks hope from the Lord. God will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick. Workbook purchased online, cost: \$15.75. For more info and to register, contact Sara Butler at 901-491-0101 or sarabutler6@gmail.com.

MEN

Men's Bible Study 1 and 2 Thessalonians

Led by Buddy Jones

Mondays, February 7–April 25

6:30–8:00 p.m., E135

Wednesdays, February 9–April 27

6:30–7:30 a.m., Zoom

We will study the apostle Paul's two letters to the church at Thessalonica in which Paul, in light of Jesus' certain return, encouraged the believers to continue to live godly, productive lives in the midst of difficult circumstances. The format includes a weekly study assignment, small group discussion, and lecture. To register, [click here](#). Contact Buddy Jones at buddyjones0@gmail.com.

CARE

He Cares

Thursday, January 27

9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m., Recreation Center

This is a special ministry designed to meet the needs of our seniors desiring more fellowship. This ministry was started over 10 years ago by Beverly Frazier. He Cares meets on the last Thursday of each month except for December. "Dear Ones" usually arrive between 10:00 a.m. and stay until around 2:00 p.m. The day consists of fellowship, prayer time, arts and crafts, a special chapel service with communion, lunch, and special music. Every "Dear One" is assigned at least one caregiver that stays with them throughout the day. This is also a ministry for the caregivers of the "Dear Ones" who can have a day to run errands, shop, or just take a nap. For more information about this ministry please contact Rhonda Finfrock at 683-0757 or rhonda@finfrock.comcast.net.

ACT II Widows Fellowship

Monday, February 7

10:00 a.m., Chapel

A group for widows that meet the first Monday of each month in the Chapel for prayer and fellowship, unless we have an outing. Our outreach is with our new widows in their first year of widowhood. For more information about this ministry please contact Cathy Graham at cathygraham@icloud.com or 685-1028 or 299-1426 (cell).

Abounding in Christ Together in the Second Season—"God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things, at all times, you may abound in every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:8

Men's Retreat

SAVE THE DATE:

Friday–Sunday, April 29–May 1
Mammoth Spring, AR

STUDENTS



A Very Classy Christmas

For our final Midweek of the semester, High School and Middle School dressed in their classiest dress for “A Very Classy Christmas.” We played games and had a white elephant gift exchange. We will take a two week break, and resume Midweek on January 5.

Student Ministries Midweek

Wednesdays, January 5–May 4
Impact (6th–8th grade), E226
Common Ground (9th–12th grade), E202
6:15–8:00 p.m.

Midweek is a place for students to meet together and have the opportunity to grow in their relationship with Jesus, their friends, and their adult small group leaders. Each week we will meet to connect with one another through food, worship, teaching, and small group time.

We are going to begin in a series called, “Let’s Talk About It.” The main focus of this series is to engage students in active discussion about topics in their daily lives with biblical perspective. For the first two weeks, we will be discussing technology.

Student Ministries Lockout

Friday, February 18
Middle and High School will have a night full of fun activities. Be on the lookout for more information. This is a great opportunity to bring friends!



Student Ministries Mission Trip June 12–17, Birmingham, AL

Student Ministries is partnering with YouthWorks for a 1-week mission trip. Students will work on various projects from manual labor to working with local youth in community programs. This is an incredible opportunity for our students to engage with and serve others.

YOUNG ADULTS



Finals Coffee House

Thank you to everyone who attended and volunteered! We had a blast and cannot wait for next Spring!

FEC Kids' Christmas 2021



FEC Kids' Midweek

Wednesdays, January 12–April 27 (No meeting March 16)
6:15–8:00 p.m., C-Wing



Our weekly Midweek program builds on our Sunday morning lesson and looks at what it means to live for Christ, mostly by learning and applying the spiritual disciplines. We also have scripture memory and game time. Drop-ins welcome. Sign up at www.firstevan.org/feckids-midweek. Childcare is available for kids of Midweek participants/volunteers ages two and under. Register at www.firstevan.org/midweek-childcare.



Family First Sundays

The First Sunday of Each Month
Beginning January 2

Starting in January, every first Sunday of the month will be Family First Sundays—where our **K-3rd graders** will join us for family-friendly worship in the Sanctuary! Inviting our children to corporate worship once a month will help them to become familiar with corporate worship, will mix the generations, and will allow them the opportunity to partake in (if ready) and/or observe the ordinance of Communion. We are excited about this opportunity for our children to continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior!

Parents, please remember to pick your K-3rd graders up after Sunday School on the First Sundays starting in January.

KMC 2022: "He's Got the Whole World In His Hands!"
Beginning this February!



Mark your calendars for our KMC kick-off party Friday night, February 25.

Then, ages 4–5th grade are invited to join us in room C210 during worship hour as we explore a different country every week for three Sundays in a row!

February 27: Travel to Europe
March 6: Travel to India
March 13: Travel to Mexico

JANUARY 2022

SATURDAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Communion 2 Students Worship Together Weekend 9:30 a.m., E226 Family First Sunday 10:45 a.m., Sanctuary	3	4	Student Band & Ensemble Resumes 5 5:30-6:15 p.m., E202 Midweek Students Resume 6:15-8:00 p.m.	6	7	8 Church Offices Closed For New Year's Day
Baptism 9	10 Council Meeting 6:15 p.m., Fellowship Hall	H2H Women's Bible Study Begins 11 9:30-11:30 a.m., F-Hall	Midweek Fellowship Meal 12 5:00-6:00 p.m., F-Hall Midweek Activities Resume 6:15-8:00 p.m.	13	14	15 Louis Carter Memorial 12:00-2:00 p.m. visitation 2:00 p.m. service
16 Shepherdology 101 Begins 6:00-7:45 p.m., E125/126	17 Church Offices Closed For MLK Day	H2H Women's Bible Study 18 9:30-11:30 a.m., F-Hall	Midweek Fellowship Meal 19 5:00-6:00 p.m., F-Hall Midweek Activities 6:15-8:00 p.m.	20	21	22
23 Shepherdology 101 6:00-7:45 p.m., E125/126	24	H2H Women's Bible Study 25 9:30-11:30 a.m., F-Hall	Midweek Fellowship Meal 26 5:00-6:00 p.m., F-Hall Midweek Activities 6:15-8:00 p.m.	He Cares 27 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Recreation Center	28	29
Further Up & Further In 30 9:30 a.m., Gym Shep 101 6:00 p.m.	31	Mentoring Moms 7:00 p.m. Kathleen Kizer's Home				