



FOCUS

MAY 2022 - MMXXII ISSUE V

735 RIDGE LAKE BOULEVARD | MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38120

Be Happy!

Jim Fleming, Interim Senior Pastor

“So all these curses shall come on you and pursue you and overtake you... because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and a glad heart, for the abundance of all things” (Deuteronomy 28:45, 47).

“Be happy!” This command, uttered in drill-sargeant tone, was a constant refrain in the Fleming home of my growing up years. In a family of seven, Ellen (my Mom), used it as a key weapon in her arsenal against childish yammerin’ and complaining. When the velocity of grumbling overtook the pace of peace, it was her way to shut down the power source for crankiness.

Fifty years later, we still use the expression in our home. But it is accompanied by a twinkle in the eyes that says, “I know the secret.” The secret is that this command implies something profound: Happiness is a choice. Our culture finds this idea foreign. It whines, “Everyone knows happiness is the product of desirable circumstances. It is not something chosen, it is something given when things turn out the way you want.” The truth is this: To utter a command to be happy, which is an appeal to another’s will, is to affirm the power to make a powerful choice irrespective of circumstances.

In Deuteronomy 28:47, Israel is betrayed as an outsider to this secret. Despite circumstances that could



be summarized as the “abundance of all things,” their service to God was a dull lifeless thing, drudgery masquerading as devotion. They thought, “God wants service, so we’ll give Him service,” but they took no pleasure in the God whom they professed to serve.

The result was the loss of the “abundance of all things.” Their loss gives us a window into the heart of God. The service of dutiful drones means nothing to Him. He is looking for “be happy” servants. These are the ones who can’t believe their good fortune—they revel in the great honor bestowed upon them to serve at the pleasure of their Creator!

These servants have a twinkle in their eyes because they know the secret. God has given them an “abundance of all things.” They have

been given “everything pertaining to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3); God’s grace will supply them with “an abundance for every good deed” (2 Corinthians 9:8); all who are in Him “possess...all things” (2 Corinthians 6:10). They recognize that in the realm of what truly matters and what is truly valuable, they have been given everything.

For every man who is rich in Christ, there is nothing that blocks his pathway to joy except his own decision to choose it. Here is our opportunity to give to the God who has **given us everything** something that gives Him pleasure. We don’t **have** to serve God, we get to. In Christ, we have every reason to simply choose to serve Him with joy.

PREACHING SCHEDULE

MAY 1 **Jim Fleming**

MAY 22 **Ron Man**

JUN 12 **Jim Fleming (VBS)**

MAY 8 **Taylor Park**

MAY 29 **Andrew Beach**

JUN 19 **Jim Fleming (new series)**

MAY 15 **David Stevens**

JUN 5 **Jim Fleming (Pentecost)**

JUN 26 **Jim Fleming (new series)**

CHURCH-WIDE

STAFF

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



John and Clarice Main
1668 Autumn Ave
Memphis, TN 38112

Discover First Evan

TO BE RESCHEDULED FROM MAY 4

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.



National Day of Prayer

National Day of Prayer

**"Exalt the Lord,
Who Has Established Us"**

Thursday, May 5, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Sanctuary or via livestream

There will be in-person prayer in the Sanctuary or you can join us via [livestream](https://www.livestream.com). Join us to pray for these spheres of influence in our country: government, military, media, business, education, church, and family. For a prayer guide, visit www.first-evan.org/prayer#ndop.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

*Please make plans to attend
this important meeting!*

Sunday, May 22, 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary
Childcare available for
nursery-5th grade.

On the agenda will be the normal, annual election of Elders, Deacons, and Global Missions Team members who will begin serving in July. In addition, we will be voting on the 2022-23 church ministry and missions budgets and selecting a Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Congregation for the coming fiscal year. Copies of the budget summary, Session, and Deacon annual reports and financial reports are available at all entrances to the Sanctuary. A more detailed version of the 2022-23 proposed budget is available online at www.firstevan.org/budget.

Our Pastoral Search Committee and Transition Committee will both be giving reports and sharing some of the findings gleaned from the assessment and evaluation process we undertook during the fall and early winter. *Proxy vote forms are available through the church office. Reminder, you must be a member to vote.*

Council Nominees 2022-23

www.firstevan.org/council-nominees

DEACON NOMINEES

Brian Brock
Steve Cloud
Chris Dease
Chuck Downs
Ben Duffy*
Bill Granger
Phil Sistrunk
Rob Westmoreland*

SITTING ELDER NOMINEES

Steve Atkins
Steve Boyd
John Reid Curlin*
Buzz Fly
Buddy Jones
Pat Person
Andy Pierce*
Kevin Weaver*

* Returning for a second consecutive term.

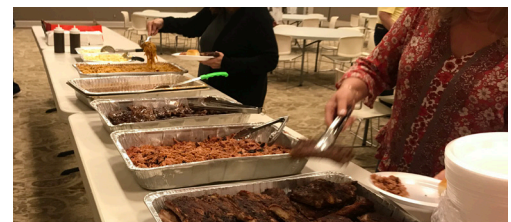
WELCOME TO THE TEAM



Adrian Lewis
Maintenance Staff

We are excited to have Adrian join our Maintenance staff. Adrian Lewis II is 26 years old and was born and raised in East Memphis, TN. He considers himself a family man, entrepreneur, and handyman with a curious mindset to learn new things. He is a proud dad of his two children, Adrian Lewis III (2) and Brae'Lynn Wood (6). Adrian attended graduated from Germantown in 2014. He loves cars and has a dream of one day opening a car dealership with the family's name. He loves helping others in need and is always willing to lend a helping hand. Introduce yourself to Adrian when you see him around campus!

Blessed by the Scott Family



For Administrative Appreciation Day, Gerald Scott and family smoked some delicious BBQ and ribs for the staff.

FEC KIDS

5th Grade Bible Breakfast

Sunday, May 15

9:30-10:30 a.m., C209

Parents are invited to attend. Look for an invitation in the mail.



VBS "Monumental - Celebrating God's Greatness"

REGISTER NOW!
FREE EVENT!

9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

For rising K-5th grade

Go off-road for a Monumental adventure through the colorful canyons and sunbaked trails of the southwest. By exploring God's greatness, kids will form a rock-solid faith for the road ahead. Invite your friends and neighbors to join in the fun! Register to participate or volunteer at www.firstevan.org/vbs.



VBS CALENDAR

VBS Work Night

Thursday, May 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
(no childcare, but kids are welcome to help)

VBS Work Days

Tuesday, May 31 & Wednesday, June 1
9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (childcare available)

VBS Volunteer Training

Thursday, June 2
6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

VBS Sunday

Sunday, June 12, 10:45 a.m., Sanctuary



Child Dedication

Sunday, June 19 (Father's Day)

10:45 a.m., Sanctuary

If you are interested in dedicating your child, please sign up by Sunday, June 5 at www.firstevan.org/childdedication.



"Discipleship in the Home" Parenting Session

On April 22 parents joined us for dinner to hear David and Kathleen Kizer and Jen and Andy Pierce speak on Discipleship in the Home. Their encouragement to build loving relationships in Christ was wonderful.

A LOOK AT MAY



MAY 1 God Encouraged Joshua (Joshua 1)

MAY 8 God Stopped the Jordan River (Joshua 3-4)

MAY 15 The Bible Helps Us Live for God (2 Timothy 3)

MAY 22 God Defeated Jericho (Joshua 2;6)

MAY 29 God Gave the People Land (Joshua 23-24)

Memory Verse:
But Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
Psalm 119:105

Big Picture Question:
What is the Bible?
The Bible is God's Word. It is true and tells us what is true about God and ourselves.



Spring Family Fellowship

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!"
(Psalm 118:24)

STUDENTS



SPAGHETTI LUNCH & AUCTION



This past month, Student Ministries hosted our Spaghetti Lunch and Auction, a fundraiser for our Mission Trip to Birmingham. At the lunch, guests ate some delicious spaghetti and got to bid on cakes and artwork made by our students that are attending our Mission Trip. We raised over \$2,000 for our students. Thank you to everyone who attended this event and donated to our students. We are so grateful for the generosity we received, and we look forward to what God is going to do in and through our students in Birmingham this summer!

BIRMINGHAM

MISSION TRIP 2022



IRL Weekend

At the beginning of April, Student Ministries had our IRL Weekend. This is always one of our favorite events we are able to put on! Over the weekend, we talked about how God grows us in four specific areas: circumstances, the community around us, prayer, and scripture. Middle School had a great time playing Survivor games, while High School was able to enjoy hiking. The highlight of the weekend was our bonfire Saturday night, where we encouraged students to share how God was working in and through their lives, and it was incredibly encouraging to hear from so many. We had a great weekend being together, and we can't wait for next year!

IMPACT SUMMER

- June 1 - Summer Midweek Kickoff
- June 8 - Bonfire night @ the Hickeys
- June 12-17 - Birmingham Missions Trip
- June 22 - Splash Party @ the Beach's house
- June 29 - Disc Golf/Ultimate Night @ Sea Isle Park
- July 6 - Slip 'n slide Kickball @ FEC (combined MS/HS)
- July 13 - Day trip - Nature Trek (Shelby Forest)
- July 20 - Backwards Night @ FEC ~ \$25
- July 27 - World Record Night @ FEC
- August 3 - Day trip- Nashville Shores ~ \$40

COMMON GROUND SUMMER

- June 1 - Summer Midweek Kickoff
- June 8 - Paintball @ Battlefront ~ \$25
- June 12-17 - Birmingham Missions Trip
- June 22 - Disc Golf @ Johnson Road Park
- June 29 - Day Trip - Nashville ~\$35
- July 6 - Slip n' Slide Kickball @ FEC (Combined MS/HS)
- July 13 - Cookout @ the Rawlinson's
- July 20 - Bob Ross Night with Brian Brock
- July 27 - Day Trip - Little Rock ~\$30
- August 3 - Ultimate Night @ First Evan

YOUNG ADULTS MEN

WOMEN



Finals Coffee House

Sunday and Monday, May 1 and 2
8:00 p.m.–midnight, Recreation Center
All college students are invited to enjoy a safe and comfortable space, with free food and coffee, to study for exams. If interested in volunteering, contact Kassie Sanborn at ksanborn@firstevan.org or [click here to sign up](#).

Young Adults Beach Trip

Monday–Friday, May 9–13
Gulf Shores, AL | Cost: \$175
We have a few spots left. Contact Kassie at ksanborn@firstevan.org.



Men's Fish Fry

Tuesday, May 24
6:00–8:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall
Speaker:
Dr. Andy Pierce
Cost: \$7/person
or \$50/table

Join us for an evening of fish, food, and fellowship with guest speaker Dr. Andy Pierce. He is a Doctor of Internal Medicine with Methodist Hospitals of Memphis, Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and Regional Medical Center. Purchase tickets in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays or contact [John Dawson](mailto:John.Dawson@firstevan.org), 682-8452, Jack Pepper, 833-0721, or email men@firstevan.org.



Garden Gathering

Wednesdays, June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
10:00–11:30 a.m.
Ladies, join us Wednesdays in June as we enjoy the beauty of God's creation. Each week we will visit a different host garden. There will be a devotional, a talk on gardening, and a time to stroll through the hostess garden. Limit is 15 people. Sign up at www.firstevan.org/gardengathering.

Summer Girls' Night Out

SAVE THE DATES:
Thursday, June 16 – Game Night
Thursday, July 14 – Charcuterie Boards
Ladies, mark your calendars for a time of fun and fellowship this summer. More details to come at www.firstevan.org/womensspecialevents.

CARE

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Senior Home Bible Study & Mini Worship Services

This ministry involves many of our elders and other leaders in the church conducting a Bible study or mini worship service in a retirement home, assisted living, or nursing home. This is truly an outreach ministry as the gospel is being proclaimed in these homes throughout the Memphis area. All the residents are welcome to attend regardless of their spiritual background, and those looking into Christianity are most certainly welcome. Usually each facility will have one 20–30 minute Bible study or service per week. You do not need to have previous experience and is for both men and women. If you'd like more information about this ministry please contact Larry Fitzgerald at larryfitz35@gmail.com or 212-6758.

ACT II Widows Fellowship

Tuesday, May 2, 11:00 a.m.
1943 Old Lake Pike
Memphis, TN 38119
Bring your favorite sandwich. Drinks, sides, and dessert will be available. Our speaker will be Donna Touliatos, speaking on "A Good Old Age." For more information, please contact Cathy Graham at cathygraham@icloud.com, 685-1028, or 299-1426 (cell).

Please note that we will take a break for the summer months and resume in September 2022.



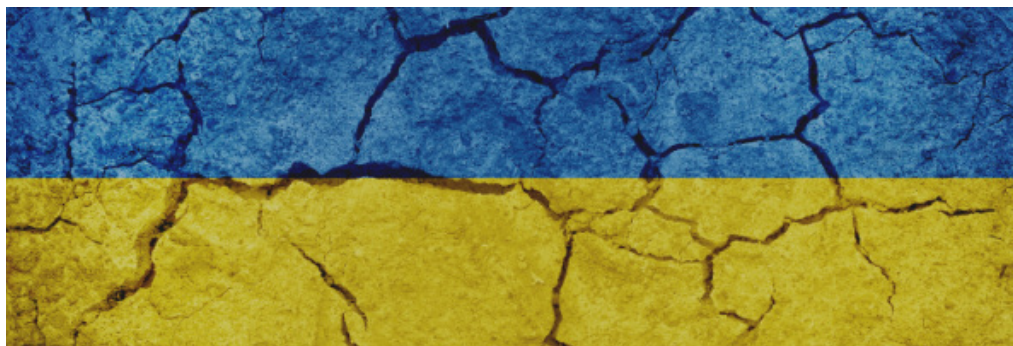
Mentoring Moms

On Tuesday, April 26, women heard Kellye Stelling share how she learned to trust God's goodness and heart during different seasons of her life.

SAVE THE DATE:

Tuesday, June 21, 7:00 p.m.
Val Gosney with Stephanie Chester will speak on mentoring relationships.

GLOBAL MISSIONS



Disaster Strikes! What is First Evan doing for Ukraine?

What?

When one part of the Body of Christ is hurting, the entire Body hurts! Tragedy struck Ukraine. The Body of Christ has been mobilized to 1) show the love of Jesus by providing physical assistance, and 2) show the love of Jesus by telling people WHY we do what we do.

Why?

We and our ministry partners have received eternity from God. We are His. And we are His forever! Because this eternity is a gift to us, we are COMPELLED to reach out to others to share this eternity with them.

Who/Where?

Our ministry partners, all a part of this world-wide Body of Christ, are: In-Life (Czech Republic and Slovakia); Evangelical School of Theology (Poland); Way of Joy (Romania); Eclesia Church/Dan Onu (Romania and Moldova); Richard Wurmbrand Christian School (Romania); David & Katya Bute/Novo (Ukraine).

How Much?

To date, over \$35,000 has been raised by First Evaners giving through the International Disaster Fund (www.firstevan.org/disaster). Most of these funds have already been sent to these ministry partners above. More will be sent as the funds are available.

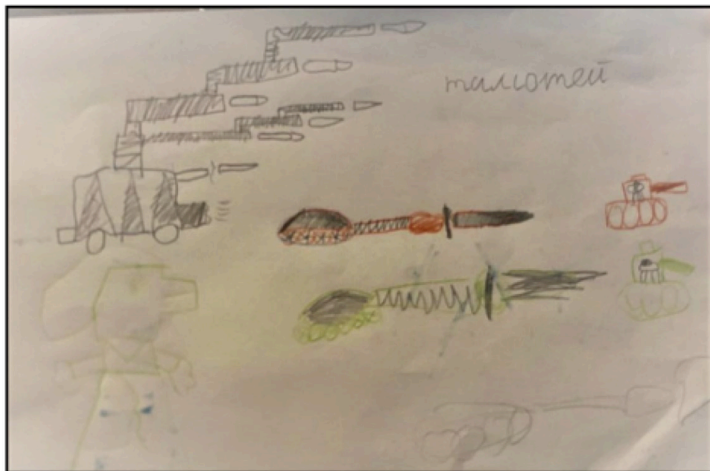
What Else?

But First Evan does so much more than provide dollars to help in this crisis. First Evan is filled with people who PRAY! David & Katya, living in Ukraine, praise God for the “dome of protection” over their city. They attribute this “protection” to the prayers of many, including First Evan.

Finally...

Jeri Little, long-time missionary, *shared a picture that one young child drew* while with one of our ministry partners in Moldova. Tanks and missiles. Innocence has been lost.

Let's continue to pray that the war would end, but until then, pray that the Body of Christ would reach out in love by caring for people's physical needs as they share the eternal hope of salvation.



MEMPHIS MINISTRIES



Meet Memphis 2022

Meet Memphis was an exciting and productive day for over 100 First Evan attendees to engage with nine of our Memphis Ministry Partners across the city! On Saturday, April 2, block parties were thrown, garden beds were raised, repairs were made, offices were organized and furnished, relationships were built, vision was cast for engaging our city, and we shared the gospel with our neighbors. The goal of Meet Memphis is to cultivate a symbiotic mindset toward our city and neighbors – that we can grow in relationship with each other and in the Lord through mutual benefit. Thank you to all who volunteered, planned, coordinated, served, and worked so hard to make this a wonderful day! If you'd like to connect with one of our Memphis Ministry Partners, please visit our website at www.firstevan.org/meetmemphis to find a list of opportunities, or email Andrew Beach at abeach@firstevan.org.

WORSHIP

Holy Week 2022

We're so grateful to the Lord for all He did through our Holy Week services. Our faith was strengthened as we meditated on Jesus' instructions for prayer on Palm Sunday, the meaning of His death on Good Friday, and the joyful news on Resurrection Sunday. Thank you for inviting your friends—we had so many visitors that we ran out of gift bags (ordering more for next year!). A huge thanks to the hundreds who participated in various ways to make Holy Week special. Jesus is worthy of our worship! Here's some of the feedback we received...

PALM SUNDAY

The Palm Sunday service was incredible. You and your team wove thousands of details into a powerful, Christ-glorifying presentation and I just want to say, "Thank you!" I was especially amazed at the connections made between the petitions and each song choice. Those deep reminders and truth bombs just kept coming. I'll be saving the program to reflect on with our family worship times. From the balcony I had a unique birds-eye view and could only turn my thanks and praise to God as I witnessed our entire church moved to rise to their feet without any prompting.

Absolutely magnificent! Thank you to Ken and all who played, sang, and read.

Fantastic 75 minutes of musical excellence.

Thanks to you, choir and orchestra for a great and moving celebration of Jesus!

Great job on Palm Sunday worship! Riding on a bus with hoard of high school students and had the Sunday off. Great opportunity to watch on YouTube!

I did not think I could worship just as much as when I sing in the choir programs, but today I did!!! Thank you, dear choir for lifting our hearts before God's throne and allowing us to catch a glimpse of that "celestial music." Thank you for your hours of preparation. It brought glory to the One you were singing for and about. Those 10,000 years, and more, will certainly be wonderful...singing just as when we first begun!

Palm Sunday was glorious!!!! You all worshipped our Wise, Gracious Father God and His Son our Savior and Lord, Jesus, with all your hearts, minds, souls and strength! The Bible readings, music and singing put me in a Heavenly realm. By the time Rachel finished the first stanza of "This Blood" I HAD to get up on to My Feet and praise My God and Lord! Thank you all. You are in my prayers constantly.

I really appreciated the fresh approach concentrating on The Lord's Prayer and the catechism. May the Lord bless you all for your ministry this beautiful season.



GOOD FRIDAY

God was honored and the congregation was edified and moved to worship. I know I was!

The service was so well prepared, and I enjoyed hearing from each of you. Thank you for a worshipful evening!

What a beautiful service full of meaning. The hymns especially ministered to me.

My family and I were out of town for the Good Friday service but watched it online. We loved hearing from a variety of voices expound on the last words of Christ the day He was crucified. We were drawn deeper into Good Friday as each person shared. Thank you for helping our family engage in Holy Week this year through this service. So excited about where the Lord is leading our church in this season.

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

Oh my, blessings upon blessings! It was a glorious day in the house of the Lord, praising our Risen Lord. I felt like I was in the heavenly choir! What a day of rejoicing that will be. Thank you and all the choir for leading us. I saw a row of teenagers praising God. They could hardly be still. That brought tears and more praises to our Lord. I believe the orchestra was made up of First Evaners?!?! Awesome!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Communion Family First Sunday Shepherdology 6:00-7:45 p.m., E125/126 Finals Coffee House 8:00 p.m.-midnight, Gym Men's Retreat	2 ACT II Widows Fellowship Outing 11:00 a.m., Offsite Finals Coffee House 8:00 p.m.-midnight, Gym	3 Canvas Art Class 6:00 p.m., E144	4 Last Student Midweek	5 National Day of Prayer 12:00-1:00 p.m., Sanctuary	6	7
8 Mother's Day Child Dedication	9 Council Meeting 6:15 p.m., Fellowship Hall	10	11 Young Adults Beach Trip Gulf Shores, AL	12	13	14
15 5th Grade Bible Breakfast 9:30 a.m., C209	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Congregational Meeting 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary	23	24 Men's Fish Fry 6:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall	25	26 VBS Work Night 6:30 p.m., First Evan	27	28 OFFICES CLOSED
29	30 OFFICES CLOSED MEMORIAL DAY	31 VBS Work Day 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. First Evan	<h1>MAY 2022</h1>			