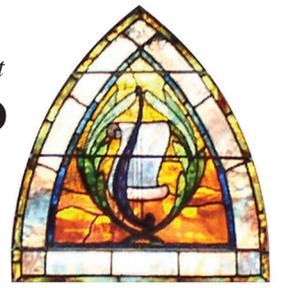


Adventurer

Lent

OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT • BIRMINGHAM, AL



Vol. 50, No. 8

First Sunday in Lent

Week of February 22, 2026



News & Events

Lenten Preachers this Week: Ashley Null, Ronald Sterling, David Gaston, and Kate Gaston

Ashley Null, Anglican Bishop of North Africa, will preach Monday and Tuesday, February 23 and 24, at 12:05 p.m. Ronald Sterling, Lecturer in Pastoral Studies and Spiritual Formation at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama, will be our noonday preacher on Wednesday, February 25. David Gaston, a physician in Nashville, Tennessee, will preach Thursday, February 26. Kate Gaston, a writer and Women's Ministry Director at City Church of East Nashville in Nashville, Tennessee, will be our noonday preacher on Friday, February 27. See page 2 for details.

Lenten Lunches Are in Full Swing

Lenten Lunches are served from 12:15-1:00 p.m. every weekday of Lent except Good Friday. Enjoy your favorite hot entrées, including lasagna, chicken tetrazzini, meatloaf, chicken and cornbread dressing, and chicken enchilada casserole. Count on the Advent's signature pimento cheese, chicken salad, bing cherry salad, classic tomato aspic, and homemade desserts daily. All proceeds will benefit Restoration Academy, Marathan Academy, and Lovelady Center.



A Word from the Dean

"Love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8). That's a lovely sentiment, as Peter writes to the Christian community, but do we believe this? Is a multitude some but not all?

If so, what's in and what's out, who's in and who's out?

I'm writing mere days from the most wonderful time of the year, Lent at the Advent. On Ash Wednesday we'll have myriad services with Holy Communion, the Imposition of Ashes, and the ethereal *Miserere mei, Deus* (Psalm 51) sung by the choir at 6:00 p.m. I secretly, now publicly, wish I had the chops to be one of the leads. We will be invited to enter a time of "self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word" (BCP, p.265).

What a great invitation, but I grapple, perhaps too much, worrying about balance. Mindful of sin's perpetual ability to lead us to misplace our focus, miss the

mark (hamartia), I freeze not wanting to wrongly focus on what I can do instead of what God has done.

I know I cannot save myself; it is a gift of God, in faith and not by works, that no one may boast (Ephesians 2). But what is the role and place of the invitation to action? From none other than Jesus, a tiny sampling: "And he said to all, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me'" (Luke 9:23). In Matthew 6 Jesus says not if, but when we fast, when we give, when we pray.

This said, I invite you, along with me, to engage with Lent this season. I regularly downplay (belittle?) taking something on or giving something up, but if you're so moved, great, and I might try it too. But in the beginning, the middle, and the end, enjoy your freedom, enter in, glorify God, meditate on and rejoice that the love and grace of God, given and revealed in the sacrificial cross of God, covers more than a multitude; it covers all our sins.

- Craig

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

- 1 Peter 2:24

This Sunday:

February 22, 2026

7:30 a.m. Holy Communion

Preacher: Canon Young

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion

In the Nave. Preacher: Canon Young

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion

In the Refectory. Preacher: Will Fagan

11:00 a.m. Holy Communion

Preacher: Will Fagan

We will livestream the 9:00 a.m. Nave service and the 11:00 a.m. service.

Visit AdventBirmingham.org/Live, Facebook Live, or YouTube to access our stream.

Adult Education (10:15-10:50 a.m.):

The Dean's Class (Refectory) – *Augustine's Influence on the English Reformation* – Ashley Null

The Inquirers' Class (Diocesan Conference Room) – *The Gospel* – Craig Smalley

A Christian Response to Evil (Lower School Library) – *Theological Explanations of Evil* – Dennis Sansom

Faith and Family (Assembly Hall) – *Raising Families: Our Adoption Story* – Din and Ross Blankenship

Children's & Youth Education:

Our 3s and 4s classes meet at 9:00 a.m. Kindergarten through 3rd grade start the 9:00 service in church before leaving during the children's dismissal for Children's Church. 4th grade through 6th grade and Jr. and Sr. High youth have classes between the 9:00 and 11:00 services. See Sunday's worship bulletin for locations.

The Nursery opens for our Infants, Toddlers, and 2s classes at 8:45 a.m. The Nursery is open for ages 6 weeks-5 years during the 11:00 service.



GET INVOLVED! SEE WHAT'S GOING ON!



worship

Lenten Preaching Series

The preaching service runs from 12:05-12:30 p.m. each weekday of Lent except Good Friday. Join us in-person as much as you are able, but when you can't we hope you will join us for the livestream (AdventBirmingham.org/Live, Facebook Live, and YouTube) or listen later on our audio pages (AdventBirmingham.org/Audio). You can also subscribe to our podcast and have the sermons delivered directly to your digital device; the podcast is available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts. Visit AdventBirmingham.org/Lent to see the full preacher schedule.

Lenten Preachers this Week

Ashley Null to Preach Monday and Tuesday

Ashley Null was elected and consecrated as the second Bishop of North Africa in the Anglican Province of Alexandria in 2025. Born in Birmingham, Alabama, he has served as a theologian as well as in parish ministry, including a term as Canon Theologian for the Episcopal Diocese of Western Kansas.

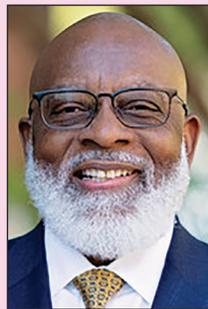
An old friend of the Advent, Bishop Null is an internationally renowned scholar of Thomas Cranmer and the English Reformation. He is the author of *Thomas Cranmer's Doctrine of Repentance: Renewing the Power to Love*, and has published innumerable articles about the English Reformation. He also works as a sports chaplain, counseling Olympic and other elite athletes.



Ronald Sterling Is the Lenten Preacher Wednesday

Ronald Sterling serves as Lecturer in Pastoral Studies and Spiritual Formation at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama. He is also Beeson's Director of Student Services, giving special attention to matters of student retention and racial reconciliation.

An ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal denomination for more than 20 years, Dr. Sterling is Pastor of Saint John AME Church in Birmingham. He also has provided chaplaincy services to the UAB Health System as a PRN Chaplain. He is married to Kim, and they have three children and eight grandchildren.



David Gaston to Preach Thursday

David Gaston is a physician in Nashville, Tennessee. Holding both M.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, he is an academic physician trained in infectious diseases and clinical microbiology who directs the Molecular Infectious Disease Laboratory at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center. He also serves as an Elder at the City Church of East Nashville.



Dr. Gaston grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, attending the Cathedral Church of the Advent, where Gil Kracke was his Youth Director. He and his wife Kate (our preacher on February 27) were married at the Advent, and their daughter Addie was baptized here by Craig Smalley.

Kate Gaston in the Pulpit Friday

Kate Gaston is a Writer and Women's Ministry Director at the City Church of East Nashville in Nashville, Tennessee. An Alabama native, she was homeschooled before completing her undergraduate degree at Bryan College and attending graduate school at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She worked as a PA in a trauma and burn ICU for eight years before ping-ponging across the nation for her husband David's medical training. (David Gaston is our preacher on February 26.)



Ms. Gaston enjoys homeschooling her daughter, writing, and oil painting. You can read her writing on the Rabbit Room Substack.



spiritual growth & fellowship

Lenten Preacher Event

St. Mary's Guild to Hear Kate Gaston February 26

St. Mary's Guild members (women in their 20s and 30s) are invited to hear Lenten preacher Kate Gaston on Thursday, February 26, 9:30-11:00 a.m. in the church Living Room. A writer and the Women's Ministry Director at City Church of East Nashville (see story above), Kate had this to say about this time together:

"God is not twiddling his thumbs, waiting for you to finally get your act together before he is able to use you for his purpose. He loves the woman you are right now, sweatpants and all."

Shaped by her reflections on Psalm 16:6, "The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places..." Kate will facilitate a conversation about grace, vocation, creativity, and the quiet, often overlooked work God is doing in the middle of our ordinary days.

Nursery is available by reservation when you register through your Realm account or at AdventBirmingham.org/Women. Kate will preach in our Lenten series on Friday, February 27, at 12:05 p.m.



education

Lenten Preacher Event

Ashley Null to Speak at Beeson February 23

Ashley Null, Anglican Bishop of North Africa (see story above), will deliver Beeson Divinity School's Reformation Anglican Lecture on Monday, February 23, 5:00 p.m. in Hodges Chapel. Bishop Null will speak on the significance of St. Augustine for the English Reformation and the Anglican Christian tradition.



education

Inquirers' Class Series

Series Begins this Sunday

Are you trying to decide whether to make the Advent your church home? The Inquirers' Class will help you make that decision. It's a seven-week series that will give you an idea of what the Advent believes and why. Our spring session will begin this Sunday, February 22, 10:15-10:50 a.m. in the Diocesan Conference Room (entrance near the middle of the garden). Questions? Contact Fontaine Pope (205-443-8562, Fontaine@CathedralAdvent.com).



servicing & outreach

World Mission

Souper Bowl Soup Sale a Success – Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who supported the Women's Ministry's Souper Bowl Soup Sale on February 8! Whether you brought soup, bought soup, or prayed for us, your support enabled us to make a generous donation towards our Youth Ministry's mission trip to Japan. Please pray for our students as they prepare and serve the week of spring break.

Local Outreach

Join the Gumbo Gala Team

For years the Advent has entered the competition at the Gumbo Gala, benefiting Episcopal Place. This year, it will be held Saturday, April 18, noon-4:00 p.m. at Cahaba Brewing. Contact Canon Young (Adam@CathedralAdvent.com) if you would like to help set up, cook, serve, or participate in this fun community event.

World Mission

Doctors Sought for Medical Mission to South Sudan

Lift Up the Vulnerable (LUV) is a new mission partner of the Advent. They work to prevent human trafficking and the oppression of children and women in war zones. Each year, they bring a small, specialized medical team through the border of Kenya to provide patient care and to train nursing students in South Sudan. They are asking the Advent if we have any family medicine doctors or pediatricians willing to share their time and resources. The team is going August 1-11 this summer. Contact Canon Young (Adam@CathedralAdvent.com) if interested.

Advent House: Intercessory prayer is on-going through the Advent House Prayer Ministry. To schedule a prayer session at Advent House (2317 Arlington Avenue South, 35205), call Kathy Logue at 205-410-4622.



worship

Choral Evensong

Acclaimed Conductor to Lead the Cathedral Choir March 5

Guest conductor Walden Moore will lead the Cathedral Choir in a special service of Choral Evensong on Thursday, March 5, 5:30 p.m. in the Nave. For 40 years, Mr. Moore served as Organist and Choirmaster of Trinity Church on the Green in New Haven Connecticut, where he led the Choir of Men and Boys, one of the oldest such choirs in the Anglican Choral Tradition in the United States, and founded the Choir of Men and Girls.

A sung version of the Evening Prayer service, Evensong is drawn almost entirely from the Bible. Dean Smalley will be the officiant for the service, which will be livestreamed on AdventBirmingham.org/Live.

Lectionary

Sunday, February 22

Psalm 32 • Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Romans 5:12-19 • Matthew 4:1-11



making music

Refectory Service Band

Band Seeks Singers

We are building our team of volunteer singers for the Refectory Service Band. If you enjoy singing, can match pitch, and are looking for a place to serve monthly, please contact Lowana at Lowana@CathedralAdvent.com.



spiritual growth & fellowship



St. Alice Guild gathered at the home of Shirley Anne Stringfellow on February 2 for a delicious lunch, terrific fellowship, and to hear Darlene Pinter, Louise Farris, Louise Wright, and Hallie Rawls share insights and impressions from the Advent's recent Footsteps of Paul trip to Greece. Contact Margaret Aderholt (205-582-8882) for information about St. Alice Guild.

diocesan staff

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Glenda S. Curry, Bishop of Alabama

advent staff

The Very Rev. R. Craig Smalley, Dean and Rector
 The Rev. Canon Thomas P. Murray, Vice Dean
 The Rev. Canon James "Jay" W. Gardner, III, Canon Pastor

The Rev. Canon Dr. Dean L. Pinter, Canon Theologian
 The Rev. Canon Adam A. Young, Canon Missioner
 The Rev. William J. Fagan, Director of Parish Life and Evangelism
 The Very Rev. Dr. Paul F.M. Zahl, Dean Emeritus

transitions:

Birth: Frances Miriam Sutherland, daughter of Sally and Braydon, on February 11
Baptism: Elizabeth Harrison Love, daughter of Anne Townsend and Tyler, on February 8
Marriage: Elise Louise Doss and Gabriel Elkins Goncalves, on February 7
Death: Andrew Burton DeAtkine, on January 31

memorials:

Gifts Were Given In Memory Of:

Hugh Browning Thornton, Jr.: (Endowment Fund) by Charles and Catherine McLemore; Margaret Trippe; Temple and Lucy Tutwiler; Sallie and Bill Pradat; Peggy and Ed Goodwin; Mrs. Douglas Ey; Joe Sandner, III; Mr. and Mrs. Miller Gorrie; Jim and Alison Gorrie; Joan and Stan Starnes; Julie Goyer; Mr. and Mrs. David Hassinger; Mr. and Mrs. William W. Goodrich; Allyn Thames
Ann Johnston: (Endowment Fund) by Kristina Jacob



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calendar:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Feb 22 Regular worship schedule Youth at Fun City - 7001 Crestwood Blvd. - 4:00 p.m.	23 Lenten Preaching: Ashley Null - 12:05 p.m.	24 Lenten Preaching: Ashley Null - 12:05 p.m.	25 Lenten Preaching: Ronald Sterling - 12:05 p.m.	26 Kate Gaston Talk with St. Mary's Guild - Living Room - 9:30 a.m. Lenten Preaching: David Gaston - 12:05 p.m.	27 Lenten Preaching: Kate Gaston - 12:05 p.m.	28
Mar 1 Regular worship schedule	2 Lenten Preaching: Curt Benham - 12:05 p.m.	3 Lenten Preaching: Curt Benham - 12:05 p.m.	4 Lenten Preaching: Kristen Deede Johnson - 12:05 p.m.	5 Lenten Preaching: Trygve Johnson - 12:05 p.m. Choral Evensong - Nave - 5:30 p.m.	6 Lenten Preaching: Trygve Johnson - 12:05 p.m.	7

Monday-Friday: Lenten Lunches – Refectory/Clingman Commons, 12:15 p.m.

Monday-Friday: AA – Coe Conference Room, noon

Pastoral Notice: If you are going into the hospital, have need of prayer or counsel, or have a family member unable to attend church, please call the Pastoral Care Office at 205-226-3500.