

TOGETHER @DAWSON

FALL 2018

Social Media
Madness?

10 TIPS
{4 Parents
w/ Teens}

**CRAZY 4-KIDS
CONNECTION!**

ARE WE
PART OF

**God's
Story?**

Chapel Choir
Mission Tour
ST. LOUIS

A NOTE FROM PASTOR DAVID





LIFE'S BETTER TOGETHER

There's a Life Group for you!

dawsonchurch.org/lifegroups



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SCENES OF SUMMER

(Top to Bottom) Bryan Howard baptizes Grayson Holbert at DSM Breakaway; Learning to play percussion instruments at DMA Summer Music Camp; Linda Atchison shares GOD'S TRUE STORY at Hispanic VBS.

ON THE COVER: Addison Gowing making friends from Kids Connection at KidLife. Photo credit: Lindsay Woods

Can you believe it?

The summer has so quickly faded and the new school year has already arrived. In the coming weeks, many of our students, administrators, and teachers will start back to school. Many mothers and fathers will be busy checking off “back to school” supply lists. The summer luxury of sleeping late for students will be replaced with the sound of an alarm clock going off a bit too early.

We all have to admit that the first day of school is a time of excitement mixed with a tinge of anxiety. Do you remember walking into the school cafeteria on the first day of school wondering where you would sit and who you would sit by? Just like children we all long to belong and to find our place.

My prayer is that you have found your place in the Dawson Family of Faith. While a front door into the life of our church is found in attending one of our four worship services on Sunday morning, many of the relationships that are forged and formed are discovered in our Life Groups.

We have a variety of groups taught by gifted and committed teachers. At Dawson, these groups are one of the primary vehicles of growth, care, service, and outreach. If you haven't found your place in our church yet, we would love to help you find a group where you can connect to others and connect to God.

On that first day of school one of the exciting and often daunting tasks is meeting new friends. Especially if you are new to the school and community you find yourself repeating certain introductory lines of your personal story. Telling your story builds bridges to people.

As Christians, we are called to tell not only our story but also *The Story*. This fall as we head back to school, we will be praying for and intentionally training so that we, as a Family of Faith, can feel more comfortable and prepared to tell the greatest story of all. This story is the story of the gospel and includes four primary chapters: 1. Creation; 2. Fall; 3. Rescue; and 4. Restoration.

I have found in my own life that this simple outline can be a helpful guide when engaging people in gospel-centered conversations. Every person frames his or her own life around these four aspects of the gospel story. Many of the most natural conversations that we have center around the questions: “Where are you from?”; “What are some of the challenges that you've faced?”; “What have you turned to for hope?”; and “What are you looking forward to in the future?”



These four questions that often intersect our daily conversations are really echoes and invitations to share elements of the greatest story ever told—the gospel story. This fall, you will begin to hear some ways that our church is already busy sharing this story and how you can begin to look for and pray for opportunities to share it also.

As we start this school year, it is an exciting time to be a part of God's work of redemption in our community and beyond. I pray that you have found your place in this Family of Faith.

Blessings,
Pastor David



MY LIFE GROUP STORY

When Ben and I moved to the Birmingham area in late 2011, we quickly began searching for a church home. We joined another church in the area and visited life groups, but we never found a group that made us feel connected to the heart of the church. We attended regularly, but there wasn't a desire to grow and serve as part of the church.

Three years later we moved to another area of Birmingham and ultimately found Dawson. From the first time we visited we felt at home. At the time, I was pregnant with our son James, now three. We quickly joined the church and wanted to get involved in a Life Group. On our first Sunday as “official” Dawson members we visited the Flowers/Black Class. Undoubtedly the Lord led us to this class because there were several couples from my hometown of Florence, and Ben has been a patient of Dr. Black's since we moved to Birmingham. As soon-to-be first-time parents, we were excited to be among families who were also expecting and due within weeks of when we were (our class has a bit of a reputation for always having at least one pregnant couple!).

Almost four years later, the impact that being part of a Life Group has had on us continues to bless, change, and grow our family in our relationship with Christ. As our friendships continue to grow with one another, it has been such a joy to see the friendships of our children grow as well. These are the friends that our son goes to Day School with, whose birthday parties he attends, and who we meet for play dates. The Blacks and the Flowers have ministered to us in ways that have helped us not only grow in our faith, but also learn to understand and defend our faith in a time where it is being attacked almost constantly. We know that we are prayed for and loved by a close-knit group of believers, and



the fact that we live hours from our immediate family makes this all the more vital.

The life-long connections we've made as part of a Life Group have encouraged us to get involved in many other areas of the church; from serving with the Preschool Ministry during KidLife and on Wednesday nights to weekday Bible Studies that Ben and I both attend.

If you are considering joining a Life Group, let me encourage you to take the next step and get involved. The impact it will have on your family, both spiritually and socially, will be felt for years to come.



Annie is married to Ben and lives in the Greystone area with their son James, age 3. Currently a stay at home mom, she has worked in the past as an Interior Designer in Birmingham and Savannah, Georgia.

For more information on getting connected with a Life Group, please visit dawsonchurch.org/LifeGroups or attend **Starting Point**, on Sunday, September 16, at 9:40 a.m.

Thoughts on Prayer

“If you aren't hungry for God, you are full of yourself.”
- Mark Batterson

“In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.”
- John Bunyan

“I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer.”
- Martin Luther

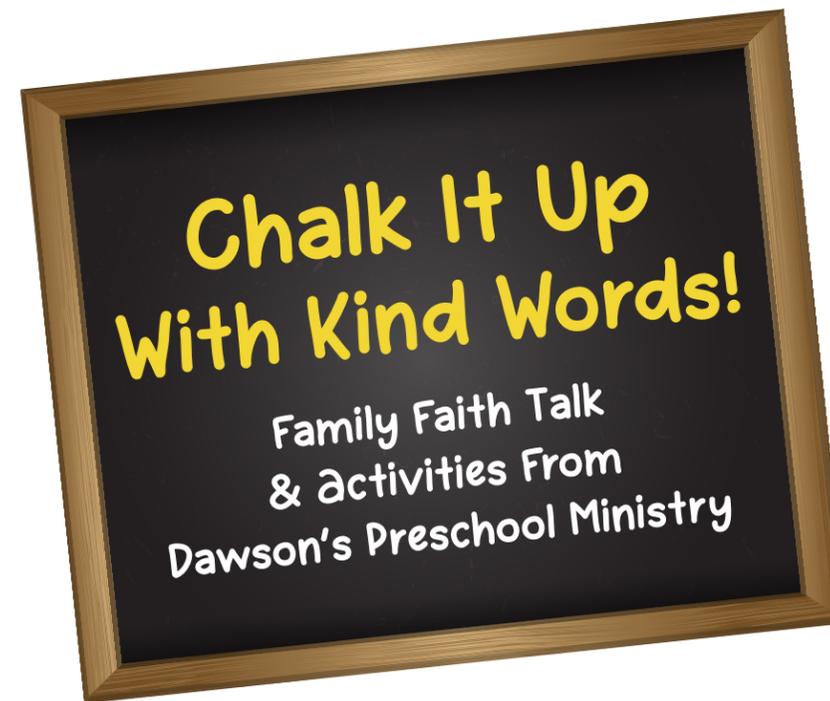
“He who kneels the most, stands the best.”
- Dwight L. Moody

“A day without morning and evening prayers and personal intercessions is actually a day without meaning or importance.”
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Collide

Collide is Dawson's interactive mid-week experience for 1st-5th graders that creatively links kids to faith through discipleship, music, missions, and more! The new year kicks off on Wednesday, August 22.

Wednesday Nights at Collide
Collide Choir and Tribes - 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.



*"Encourage one another and build each other up."
1 Thessalonians 5:11*

Family Faith Talk

Read the Bible: Gather your family together, open your Bible, and read 1 Thessalonians 5:11, "Encourage one another and build each other up."

Talk about God's Word: What does it mean to encourage one another and build each other up? Remind children of some of the simple Bible truths they have learned at church and home:
"God wants us to love one another"
"Be kind to one another"
"Tell everyone about Jesus"

God wants us to use kind words when we speak to others. We need to think before we speak and be careful not to hurt anyone's feelings. We can compliment others. We can cheer them on. We can tell them what we like about them. And, we can tell them that Jesus loves them!

Let each family member take turns standing up. Help all other family members say something kind and helpful to him or her.

Pray to God: Dear God, thank you for my family, friends, and neighbors. Please help me use kind words to thank and encourage others. Help me use my words to tell people that they are special because You made and love them. Amen.

Use CHALK to obey God's Word (1 Thessalonians 5:11) through meaningful family time.

Family Encouragement Chalk Board: Place a chalkboard and chalk in a place in your home where everyone will see it. Have an adult write a kind message or Bible verse on the board. Encourage family members to write or draw on the board as well.

Bible Verse Chalk Art: Let children make cards or wall hangings for friends and family by dipping chalk in water and drawing on construction paper. Help younger preschoolers get started by writing a message or scripture on the paper for them to decorate.

Neighborhood Chalk Walk: As you walk through your neighborhood, stop at each driveway. Say a prayer to thank God for the people who live there and ask God to help them know and love Him. Use sidewalk chalk to write a simple message for those neighbors: Jesus loves you, Our family prayed for you, Let your light shine, etc. Children who cannot write will enjoy drawing near the message.



Preschool Music & Missions is designed to provide engaging activities for preschoolers that instill a love for worshipping God and serving others in Jesus' name through Bible lessons, music, and missions education on Wednesday nights at 6:00 p.m.

MEALS, MAYHEM & MOTHERING

TIPS FOR FAMILIES ON THE GO

In The Cosby Show episode entitled, “Same Time Next Year”, Dr. Huxtable enters the living room where his wife is preparing a legal brief and exclaims, “Fresh squeezed orange juice for my lady to celebrate the Most Important Day of the Year!” and together they link arms and exclaim, “The First Day of School....We have survived another summer and now everyone must go!”

While the first day of school is a significant day for any parent, our feelings regarding sending our angels back to school are different – some feel jubilant while others feel overwhelmed logistically or are filled with angst. First off, all mothers are working mothers; however, as a working mom who also happens to receive a paycheck, my approach to Back-To-School is two-fold 1. Jesus said, “Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:42) and 2. My goal as a parent is to work myself out of a job. With these two goals in mind, here are some practical approaches for our household of 3 boys in 3 different schools in 3 different growth seasons (really, I’m fine; the Fitbit relaxation button helps me).

MEALS

BREAKFAST Once all 3 started school, my husband Chris and I quickly began to feel like short-order cooks awaiting three individual orders for breakfast. Consequently, we created a fixed weekday menu – every Monday we have muffins, Tuesday – sausage biscuits, etc. If a child wants something different, they can speak to the chef for Saturday’s breakfast. Case closed.

LUNCH School lunch inspiration found on Pinterest has crushed my feeling of success as a parent. I succumbed. I bought bento boxes for each of my Angels. I chopped, diced, and prepped and then begged, pleaded, and badgered to see if my nutritional and presentation efforts were treasured. They were not. Reality bites. My goal has shifted to survival. I purchase as many grab-and-go items as possible to ensure the Angels can assist in lunch prep and have enough food to sustain their brains.

DINNER In my late 20s, I discovered I was a foodie and enjoyed cooking. Next to Anne Graham-Lotz, Ina Garten, “The Barefoot Contessa,” is my superhero. In my 30s, I



discovered I had boys who were not foodies. The neighbor’s children love my food, but alas, I digress. Ideally, on the weekend, I make a 5-6 day menu for the following week. From the menu, I prep a grocery list of ingredients to purchase, noting where the recipe comes from, if needed. Depending on my mood I will use “Grocery IQ” app or good old-fashioned paper. Here’s a couple of menu variations with which I’ve experimented:

1. ROTATING THEME

- Monday–sandwich night
- Tuesday–sheet pan dinner
- Wednesday–To Go/Drive Thru because we’re headed to church!!! (Wednesday night church rocks, people!!)
- Thursday–meat and veggies
- Friday–Mystery Menu (a.k.a. clean out fridge)
- Saturday–Foodie Fun; not planned until Friday afternoon or Saturday

2. LEFTOVER QUEEN

- Two nights–Cook Like Crazy
- Wednesday–To Go/Drive Thru because we’re still going to church because there is music, missions, Bible study - sometimes I just need to be quiet and I read in the library. Don’t judge.
- Two nights–Leftovers from Cook Like Crazy nights

EATING OUT VERSUS COOKING My husband teaches Crown Financial Ministries Bible study AND Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University AND we are both accountants, so this is easy. We eat at home as much as possible. However, I do love the occasional trip to Trader Joe’s for affordable, prepared meals to serve in an extracurricular time crunch.

MAYHEM

EXTRACURRICULAR When the kids were in preschool, I looked forward to when they were in school so I would have more “time.” I was naïve, for as the Angels age they have more energy and more activities. When they were young, the day quieted around 3:00 p.m.; but now, 3:00 p.m. is the starting bell for Part 2 of the day. We are trying to be intentional about activities to make them parent-manageable. I recently spoke with a wonderful mom who gently and logically led her 6th grader to the conclusion that his latest desired activity would not fit his schedule or his parents’. While I admire this mom’s gentle spirit, I confess the words, “You know that would be fabulous if you were an only child, but NOPE. Won’t work for our family,” have been decried more than once in our household.

MORNINGS God has blessed us with two early risers and one whom God intends to set a perpetual alarm clock. If you can start an X-Box, you can be trained to set an alarm. I love natural consequences, and as the Angels age, there are many more opportunities to let life do some hard teaching. One of my Angels routinely leaves the house without breakfast. SCANDAL! It pains me, but he must live with that choice. More than once I have left a tardy Angel at home because it was time to go and he was not ready (the second “bus” leaves when I leave for work so said Angel can be checked in unexcused at that time). Not so long ago, one of my Angels went to church WITHOUT SHOES. Let life teach. My goal is to be out of full-time, hands-on mothering after high school graduation.

CLOTHES Here, too, my husband has offered wise counsel to let life do the teaching. We do not purchase back to school clothes. After a couple of weeks of school, we ask each Angel if there is something they would like to purchase for school apparel, and then we take them shopping, individually. This brief conversation with each Angel has saved me the frustration of purchasing the “appropriate” clothing they will never wear. One Angel insisted it was pajama day, I gently reminded him that PJ Day was the following week, but the Angel insisted. He was the only child that day in pajamas. If they want to wear colors or patterns that don’t match it is ok! My job is to raise spiritual leaders and help them succeed, not mold them into my ideal.

“NOT SO LONG AGO, ONE OF MY ANGELS WENT TO CHURCH WITHOUT SHOES.”



MOTHERING

MARY MORNINGS Angel 2’s birth continued a life season of tremendous stress for our family. Balm for my weary soul was discovered when I learned how to study Scripture with only a notebook and the Bible. I hate mornings, just ask my college roommates. Therefore, I forced myself when Angel 2 was a few months old to change my routine to get up earlier and spend time meeting Jesus at the well (The Samaritan Woman changed my LIFE); and friends, I’ve never been the same. I am a better mother and a better person when my day quietly begins at the feet of Jesus, just like Mary. Practically that means I set my alarm for 5:01 a.m., snooze once, prepare hot tea and sit with my Savior from 5:30-6:15. My highly supportive husband makes this time possible by prepping the day’s breakfast.

IDENTITY Another balm for the weary soul came from a physician friend who actually wrote me a prescription for four consecutive hours weekly, during business hours, for personal time. Personal time, she explained, is not at the grocery store without children or sitting at the coffee shop ordering clothes for the kiddos. Personal time is doing something I enjoy doing. Again, my husband has been a great supporter of me enjoying friends and hobbies outside of work and our children. Nancy-time has not always been easy; we have prioritized budgeting for babysitters during some seasons. Now that the boys are older, four consecutive hours are easier to find but more difficult to schedule. Consequently, Nancy-time is marked on the calendar the same as work and church obligations.

Above all, please remember grace. Our house is rarely completely tidy, voices are raised not infrequently, and there are always more dishes and more laundry than can be addressed in one day. Start with the Lord, give Him your day, and get those kids out the door!



Nancy Hartin is married to Chris, mom of 3 sons, Business Department Career Strategist/Adjunct Instructor of Accounting at Birmingham-Southern College, Bible study teacher, and co-teacher of DYP.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS FOR PARENTS

Social media is great for sharing photos, events, and updates from your life, but it can also be overwhelming for kids who may get in over their heads. Parents, use these tips to help your children navigate the ups and downs on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and more.

- 1 INVESTIGATE THE LOCATION SETTINGS.**
If you don't want your children to "check in" to a location, make sure those settings are turned off.


- 2 DIVE INTO THE PRIVACY SETTINGS.**
Find out whether your child's account is set to public or private, and adjust accordingly. Note that on Facebook, this can also be changed for individual posts.


- 3 DON'T LIST TOO MANY PERSONAL DETAILS.**
Your kid may like their job at the ice cream shop, but they don't have to tell every acquaintance that they work there.


- 4 SET A GOOD EXAMPLE.**
Show your kids that there's life outside of your phone. Remind them to "be with the people who are here."


- 5 BALANCE SCREEN TIME WITH MORE PRODUCTIVE THINGS.**
How about some face-to-face conversation with friends instead of endless comments on Instagram posts?


- 6 SHOW THE BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA.**
If friends and family members live too far away to visit often, social media is a good way to keep in touch. Don't shy away from those positive aspects of connectivity.

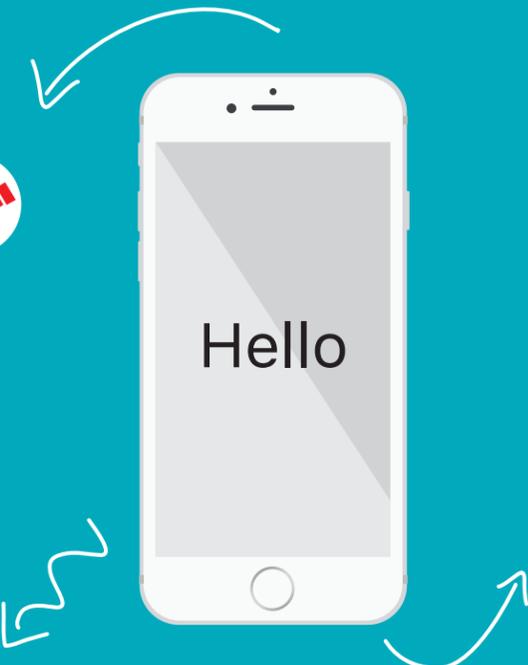

- 7 BE AWARE OF SEARCH ENGINE SHARING.**
On Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, you can turn off the option that allows those networks to share your content with search engines.


- 8 LIMIT TAGGING.**
If necessary, change the settings that allow others to tag you in a photo or post. They can be limited so that you may review and approve them before they are posted to your timeline.


- 9 REMIND YOUR KIDS THAT THE INTERNET IS FOREVER.**
What goes online = your permanent record.


- 10 BE CAREFUL WHO YOU TRUST.**
Just because you only snapped a photo to one friend doesn't mean he or she didn't share that photo with others. You can't make people return screenshots.





FOLLOW DAWSON ON SOCIAL MEDIA



I REMEMBER WHEN...

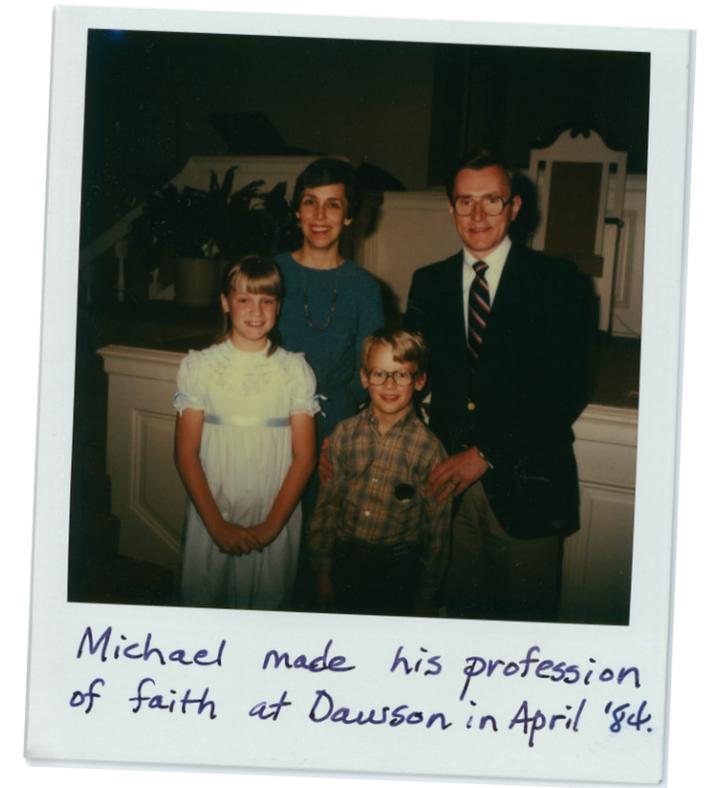
First grade Bible Sunday is always a special time at Dawson. While the cover of the Bible has changed over time, what is inside—God's Word—has not. In our world that changes daily if not moment by moment, there is something very special about the consistency of God's Word that spans generations.

First grade Bible Sunday is also a time where I remember the day I received my Bible from Dawson. My Bible had a blue hardcover with my full name, Michael Thomas Lytle, etched in gold on the front. I can remember standing at the front of the Sanctuary with my other classmates holding my Bible and looking at my name on the cover. It was the first book I had received that wasn't a "kids" book. My Bible was the same as my parents', my sister's, and my grandparents'. I remember our pastor, Dr. Arendall, talking just to us first graders about our Bibles and the gift they were from God. After the service, my parents took my picture at the front of the Sanctuary holding my Bible.

With the benefit of hindsight after (more than) a few years, I recognize that event was a graduation of sorts. That as our children learn to read around first grade, Dawson wants to be sure that every child has their own Bible to read as well. I am grateful that Dawson has taught for generations that our Bibles are to be a constant companion. Children are encouraged to bring their own Bible to every event to read, learn, make notes, and underline so that they feel God's Word is personal to each of them.



Michael Lytle in First Grade



2018 is a special year to me as our second son, Luke Thomas Lytle, will receive his Bible just as his older brother Kaleb did, and just as I did. Our family is just one of the many examples of the legacy of faith at Dawson. That investment in children, year by year, decade by decade, generation by generation, makes a difference for the Kingdom of God. Dawson puts the spotlight on our 6-year-olds each year to say, "you matter and we are going to invest in you." Taking time out of our normal service to emphasize First Grade Bible Sunday requires the commitment of our entire church family. My life was changed, and our older son's life was changed as a result of that commitment – I say thank you. As Luke receives his Bible, I say thank you in advance for your faithfulness in investing in our children, and I look forward to seeing how God rewards that investment in Luke and his first grade classmates.



Michael Lytle is married to Karmin, father of 2 sons. He is the Managing Director at Highland Associates, active in Dawson's Music & Worship Ministry, and serves as the Chairman of Deacons this year.

First Grade Bible Sunday Is August 26. All first graders and their families are invited to a special brunch during the 9:40 a.m. service followed by a special recognition of our first graders in the 11:00 a.m. worship service. To make sure that your child and family are registered for this day, please sign up at dawsonkids.org by Friday, August 17.



KIDS CONNECTION

by Alice Elmore

For more than six years, Kids Connection has been filling gaps in the lives and closets of thousands of Birmingham-area families. Parents and caregivers can visit the shop on Green Springs Avenue every three months, selecting clothes, shoes, books, and toys for each child in the family, all at no cost to them.

With this schedule in mind, the Kids Connection shop is back-to-school ready by July each year, offering racks of school uniforms, bags of school supplies, and an array of new shoes to families who visit.

School Supplies

Unless you have kids, you might not be aware of how mind-boggling (and lengthy) school supply lists have become. For a parent already struggling to pay utilities and rent, the price to start the school year—multiplied by several children—can be overwhelming.

Kids Connection volunteers create a basic school supply list from items requested by local school systems. During KidLife, children bring these supplies as a mission offering. Throughout the year, individuals and groups bring markers, crayons, paper, scissors, and glue to the donation door at Kids Connection. This year, more than 200 bags were assembled by the Lytle Life Group class from Dawson.

Uniforms

Until recently, many children in the Birmingham area have been required to wear uniforms to school. In almost all cases, those children quickly outgrew them. Even with

the convenience that came with school uniforms, they were still an expense that many families struggled to cover. Throughout the school year, Kids Connection shoppers were always greeted by racks of crisp white shirts, blue shirts, khaki pants, and navy pants—all items needed when wearing a required student uniform.

Weeks before those racks are filled, several things take place. Retail co-coordinator Jeannie Rice determines how many of each size and item are needed. She communicates this to Laura Hunter, who orders hundreds of shirts and pants in sizes for children ranging in age from 4 to 18. Once they arrive, volunteers unload and unwrap each item (each one in a plastic sleeve!), placing all the shirts and pants on hangers. In 2017, nearly 800 uniforms left the Kids Connection shop.

New Shoes

The shoe display at Kids Connection is usually filled with donated pairs in a wide range of sizes. But starting the school year with a new pair of shoes is a great feeling that ministry volunteers want to give every child whose family visits the shop. Every six months, parents and caregivers shopping at Kids Connection can select a new pair of shoes for each child in their home.

Volunteer Glenda Thompson works year round to make sure each shopper finds the size needed by every child in the family. She watches for clearance sales online and in stores, selecting shoes in more than 50 different sizes, shopping smart and almost always hitting her goal of \$10 per pair. Each month, Glenda checks the shop's shoe inventory, aiming to keep at least 15 pairs in each size. In 2017, she

purchased more than 1,400 pairs of shoes for the ministry. Glenda also seeks out deals on undergarments and socks in bulk—two other new (rather than donated) items Kids Connection provides regularly. These, along with the shoes, are stored in her basement until it's time for them to go to the shop for sorting. She loves serving Kids Connection in this unique way, and as a result, has enjoyed some interesting conversations with curious delivery people as they bring so many boxes to her home.

While day-to-day operations at Kids Connection are funded by one percent of Dawson's operating budget, new shoes, undergarments, and socks are purchased with generous donations earmarked specifically for Kids Connection. It's a joy for the volunteers to witness each week how such generosity can change a family's outlook and circumstances.

How Can You Help?

Everything at Kids Connection is volunteer-driven. If you have a couple of hours each week to give, you could have a direct impact on the life of a family by donating that time to Kids Connection. There are a variety of tasks and schedules to select from each week.

In addition to serving, you can also donate needed items at Kids Connection on Mondays, Wednesdays, and the second Saturday of each month, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. You can also bring items to the Kids Connection van in Dawson's North parking lot on Wednesdays during evening activities. The ministry provides these gently used items for children from birth through high school:

- Clothes
- Shoes
- Coats, hats, and gloves
- Books, toys, and sports equipment
- Baby blankets and crib-size and twin-size sheets
- Diaper bags
- Backpacks
- Strollers



Alice Elmore has served Kids Connection since its start by writing, designing, and handling social media. She and her husband Greg have two daughters, Molly and Charlotte.



Serving Foster Families

Since Kids Connection opened its doors in 2012, serving foster families has been a goal of the ministry, but finding these families has proven to be difficult. In 2017, a focused effort was made to seek out foster families and let them know of the resources that Kids Connection could offer them.

On November 11, 2017, Kids Connection held its first Foster Family Day, serving 12 foster families with a total of 42 children. Between January and June of 2018, Kids Connection has served 26 additional foster families with a total of 112 children. Currently, two Foster Family Days are planned for each quarter. Foster families can make appointments on other days also, but these special days are dedicated to them. Fostering is a ministry that Dawson supports and encourages—Kids Connection is just one of the ways the church does that.

The next Foster Family Day is scheduled for Saturday, August 11. If you can help these families as they select clothing, shoes, and accessories for their children, please contact Kids Connection by emailing kidsconnectionAL@gmail.com.

Follow Kids Connection on Facebook: facebook.com/kidsconnectionAL.



MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS

by Kimberly Cook

DAWSON
CHAPEL CHOIR
MAKES BEAUTIFUL
MUSIC ON MISSION



My son Will and I were able to serve together this year for the 2018 Dawson Chapel Choir Mission Tour in St. Louis, Missouri. While my suitcase has been unpacked for several weeks now, there are many memories of this experience that I hope to never put away. As a start, here are a few of the statistics:

- 89 students
- 38 sponsors
- 3 buses
- 7 puppeteers
- 250 gifts for nursing center residents
- 13 jazz band musicians
- 1 swimming pool baptism
- 1 parade
- 127 bags of trash picked up after the parade
- 381 t-shirts washed
- 24 performances
- 12 service venues
- 1080 service hours
- 20 travel hours to and from St. Louis

These numbers don't even begin to tell the story. During the trip, our schedule was jam-packed and everywhere we went people were overwhelmed by the size, appetite, energy, and enthusiasm of our group. One evening, we took over the main dining room of a local Mexican restaurant. At the end of what I am sure was a harrowing experience for the wait staff, our students asked if they could sing a blessing over them. The wait staff gathered in the center of the student circle to listen to the blessing. A local citizen told us later that previously the owner of the restaurant had discouraged his staff from attending church, saying it was all useless nonsense. She told us that, as a result of their experience serving and being served by our students, he had changed his mind.

Bible Belt church-goers may remember singing in such a choir in their youth, touring the United States on buses, wearing matching outfits of the period – long dresses with flutter sleeves for the girls and broad-collared silk-screened shirts for the boys. In the 70s, this experience typically involved singing at multiple churches and in public spaces,



with a little sight-seeing thrown in for good measure. Since that time, not only has church culture changed, but a number of generational shifts have left youth choir behind.

This year's tour theme was "Be Unto Your Name," taken from a favorite choir anthem that encourages the faithful to give honor to God's name alone. Every aspect of this year's tour was designed to point students to orient their lives by their relationship to Christ and encourage them to channel their energies into serving and sharing their faith. Student leaders wrote the group's mission statement: "As a response to God's call to show the love of Christ to everyone, including each other, Chapel Choir is going to St. Louis to be a part of the work God is already doing there through ministry, music, and service." In short, the students saw their mission was to join God's work already in progress in St. Louis by partnering with local organizations to show God's love to parts of that community that might feel forgotten.

What are the images I will remember from this trip? I remember watching a female student standing on scaffolding to attach sheet rock with screws to form the ceiling of Net Community Church's first sanctuary, in Staunton, Illinois. "You don't know what an encouragement it has been to have you here," the part-time minister and full-time police officer told us. He and his wife are church planters, ministering to a rural Illinois farming community that struggles with a culture plagued by rampant drug and alcohol abuse. I watched students mow grass and trim weeds in empty, abandoned lots picking up trash and shards of broken wine bottles until their t-shirts were dark with sweat. I saw students wrestle with overgrown shrubs that previously provided shady places for drug deals and human trafficking, but now could be a pleasant place for the community to gather. At the end of the work day, community organizers from Mission St. Louis were visibly moved as they listened to our students sing a final blessing over the redeemed lot and the neighbors living nearby.

I watched a student from our jazz band show a child how to blow into the mouthpiece of a saxophone. As the child carefully held the instrument in his hands and placed his fingers on the keys, he blew into the mouthpiece and the

instrument produced a sound. The boy had never touched a saxophone before. Our students supported a Community Jam celebration sponsored by the Christian Action Center (CAC), a non-profit operating Christian after-school programs in East St. Louis. The CAC is located next to an urban park, formerly called the Killing Field due to the drugs and gang-related violence which had been common there. On the day of the Jam, it was a place where children could play in safety while their parents talked to neighbors.

In one of the public choir performances, I watched a student sharing God's Story with a homeless man in Kiener Plaza and one of our sponsors praying with a man who made his living playing a make-shift guitar and spent his nights sheltered in the doorway of closed businesses. I watched students chatting with children so their mothers could enjoy a meal at the Gateway 180 women's shelter. The small un-air-conditioned room was sweltering, but I watched our students help the toddlers eat their barbeque, watermelon and fast-melting ice cream with sprinkles. While the women and children ate, the students sang, smiled, and talked to children and mothers.



In ways large and small, I watched this group of students plant seeds of love and kindness wherever they went—whether it was interacting with a cafeteria worker or talking with nursing center residents. I watched all of these events unfold as a chaperone for Dawson Chapel Choir Mission Tour and none of these things will I soon forget.



Kimberly Cook is married to Greg, mom of 3 (all Chapel Choir alumni), Councilor for the City of Vestavia Hills, Unit Commissioner for the Boy Scouts of America, director/teacher in Dawson Student Ministry, and Chapel Choir Sponsor.

Chapel Choir is open to any high school student in grades 9 through 12 (no audition required). Rehearsals are each Sunday of the school year at 5:00 p.m. on the 3rd floor of the North Building.



Weekly Schedule

2018–2019

Sunday Mornings

- 8:25 a.m. Bible Study Life Groups
Worship, Sanctuary
- 9:40 a.m. Bible Study Life Groups
Worship, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
Hispanic Worship, Chapel



live.dawsonchurch.org

Wednesday Evenings

- 4:45 p.m. Supper (Reservations are not required.)
Fellowship Hall
Adults: \$5, Children and Students: \$4
Preschoolers eat free.
- 6:00 p.m. Preschool Music & Missions
1st Floor East (Ages 2–3)
Lower Level Arendall (Ages 4-Kindergarten)
- 6:00 p.m. Collide (Grades 1–5)
Chapel & Arendall
- 6:00 p.m. Middle School (Grades 6–8)
The Loft-Arendall
- 6:00 p.m. High School (Grades 9–12)
Dye Groups: In home & 9th Grade Room
- 6:00 p.m. RENEW Bible Study (Adults)
Social Hall
- 6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Studies
2nd Floor North & 3rd Floor West
- 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
Choir Room
- 6:00 p.m. Hispanic Bible Study
3rd Floor East



More Than Just Music? Dawson Music Academy Makes Lasting Impact

As the elevator opens on the third floor of the North Building, you hear the sounds of music. A violin to the right. A piano to the left. Before you know what to make of it, three young moms carrying toddlers emerge from the stairs and head into a classroom for Kindermusik. As you walk on, you see a table full of resources connecting music to faith. Parents line the hall waiting for their children, and the young ones listen to their bigger siblings who are in lessons. These are only a small portion of almost 300 students who take private and group music lessons at Dawson's award-winning music school—Dawson Music Academy.

For the hundreds of students who join us each week, stories of success, perseverance, faith, and encouragement abound. If you listen closely, you'll hear some of these stories:

- **Ministry of Relationships:** A middle school guitar student changed schools and struggled with making new friends. His guitar instructor encouraged him during the transition and helped build his confidence. His musical skills opened the door for him to participate in the local middle school band, which provided a way for him to connect and make new friends.
- **Confidence in Christ:** One of our piano students encountered some challenging social situations at school. Several of her classmates were teasing her, and she was struggling with her identity. After talking with her instructor during her lessons, she began to realize that God created her to be unique. She realized that it was okay that she was different from her friends at school because that's how God created her to be.

- **Power of Prayer:** Recently, one of our young students asked his guitar instructor for prayer. His mom was struggling with drug addiction and had been hospitalized for an overdose. The student wanted to pray for Jesus' love to bring her peace. The week after the student and instructor joined in prayer, God miraculously answered. Our commitment to Christian instructors continues to allow Christ's love to impact students as they experience the Gospel coming alive in their lives.
- **Foundations in Worship:** Three student bands, involving a total of seventeen students, discovered the difference between performing for an audience and leading worship. As students met each week, they spent time in prayer, shared Scripture with each other, and used their musical talents to worship God through our new venture, Ignite Bands.
- **Connection to Dawson Ministries:** A high school viola student lives an hour away from Dawson but she chooses to take lessons here because of her instructor. She also joined the Dawson Orchestra to participate in special programs and regularly attends rehearsals. We are grateful for the opportunity to minister to her family through music, worship, and relationships.

As the new school year begins this fall, these stories will continue to be told throughout the halls of the Dawson Music Academy. In everything we do, we seek to point each student back to the creative Creator who loves them and gave His life for them. And that is something worth making music about.

Fall Semester Begins August 12
dawsonmusicacademy.org

A young boy with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue hoodie and plaid shorts, is running barefoot on a wooden boardwalk. The boardwalk is made of weathered wooden planks and is flanked by green grass and trees. In the background, other people can be seen walking on the boardwalk. The scene is set in a park-like environment with tall trees and dappled sunlight.

A ~~Foster~~ Parent's Story

by Rebecca Tucker

People sometimes ask us why we decided to do foster care. I'd like to say that my husband and I experienced a divine calling (and possibly we did), but it certainly didn't occur in the way you would imagine. We didn't know any current foster parents, and neither of us had any deep conviction that we were meant to be foster parents ourselves. The idea happened as we were walking in our neighborhood as we often do on summer evenings. Although we live extremely close to cities with great public school systems, our neighborhood is not zoned for any of those schools so there are not a lot of families with kids in our neighborhood. What we do have in our neighborhood are a lot of very large houses with only two people living in them. Lots of empty bedrooms. And so, as we were walking and talking one evening about how we might be more involved in something whether it be our community, Dawson, etc., we started talking about those empty bedrooms. We had one. My parents occasionally visited and slept in it, but otherwise, it was never used.

At the beginning of our marriage, we had thoughts of having our own child in that room but for various reasons that never happened. We wondered that evening, could we use that bedroom for a foster child? And much more importantly at that point – could we be foster parents?

We attended an introductory meeting hosted by a local agency, and after the orientation, we decided to attend the required classes and become certified as foster parents. After some stops and starts, about six rounds of interviews and providing every piece of personal information you could possibly imagine to the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and to our agency, we were licensed as foster parents in the state of Alabama in January of 2014. Although we were concerned about where we were zoned for school, we asked for a school-aged child, knowing that our work schedules and other activities did not really lend themselves to having a baby or toddler (not to mention the fact that changing diapers wasn't high on our list!). In May of 2014, just after school let out, we got a call on a Friday afternoon that literally changed our lives.

DHR had taken custody of a 7-year-old boy, and he needed a place to go immediately. We talked for about two minutes – which was about as long as we were given – and decided that this must be the child our extra bedroom was made for. We set off to the Bessemer DHR office to pick him up, only to find out that the DHR worker had taken him to our house on the other side of Jefferson County. We headed home while they headed to Bessemer. You'd think today coordination would not be that difficult, but it was. After driving back and forth across the county on a Friday afternoon at rush hour, we were a bit worried about whether this drama was an indicator of things to come. We finally connected, and just like that, we were parents to a quiet, red-headed 7-year-old. Except that we weren't, exactly, his parents. He was a scared little boy in a strange house, and he cried himself to sleep that first night.

“He was a scared little boy in a strange house, and he cried himself to sleep that first night.”

As a foster parent (and a very new one), the resulting feeling is one of helplessness. Unless you have been through the same experience, you can't imagine what a child experiences when he is plucked from his parents and placed the same day in a home with people he doesn't know (who might be good...or might be bad) but are at the very least very different from his birth family. If there are comforting words, we didn't find them. But we tucked him into bed and promised him he was safe and that we'd have fun. We told him that his family loved him and was working to get him back as soon as they could (all things we were told by the people from DHR).

The next few days were filled with practicalities. And although DHR and our agency did provide some support, foster parents pull a lot of the weight when it comes to setting up childcare (we had a list of places to call), finding clothes (he showed up with a small bag plus a garbage bag of random clothes, some that fit and some that didn't, and two pairs of shoes, size 2 and size 4), and locating a pediatrician that accepts Medicaid (we were required to have a checkup within a month). To say it all worked out is an understatement – because it did, in ways we really couldn't imagine. First, the next week was KidLife at Dawson, and the Rec Center had an extra space in After KidLife Camp, giving us a reprieve from finding immediate childcare. Second, a friend with a child just a bit bigger had two crates of clothes that she generously gave us. And third, all Children's Hospital Pediatric locations take Medicaid. Eventually, we landed in Day Camp at the YMCA who generously accepted DHR childcare payments and was only a couple of miles from my office. He attended Day Camp for the next four summers. Yes, four.

They tell you the average placement is 6 to 9 months. Our foster son lived with us for nearly 3 1/2 years. He was our kid. (He is still 'our' kid, even though he doesn't live with us anymore.) Needless to say, we learned a lot through the process of fostering: about the foster care system and the courts, about working with birth parents, about Pokémon and Minecraft and Science Olympiad, and a million things in between.

Unfortunately, we learned that the system really is overwhelmed. We had countless DHR workers. Some were very good, some seemed disinterested, but all were overworked. They are asked to do too much with too few resources. As a foster parent, you should be prepared to find

your own resources or to be very patient with DHR—and to go to the top when it really matters. As an example, we were extremely fortunate to find through our agency a couple of families who served as respite caregivers for our foster son. We took him on most all of our family vacations, but when we traveled for work or occasionally needed a getaway, he was able to stay with them. They loved him like their own—and he loved them too. Having a consistent respite resource was truly a lifesaver for us and him.

Another thing we learned was that the system is very forgiving of birth families. Our case went before the judge every 3 to 4 months. Every time, his mom had not quite met the court's requirement to move to unsupervised visits, but she always promised she would by the next time. We never made it to those unsupervised visits with mom, but DHR and the court never took punitive action (which amounted to filing papers for termination of rights) until our foster son had been in our custody for 3 years, which is an unusually long time. During those years, we developed a good relationship with his mom (which we have even today), and we did everything in our power to encourage her to complete the court's requirements but to no avail. Although we weren't sure it made sense at the time, our foster son was able to maintain a close relationship with his mom, and in the end, that was a good thing.

We also learned how important a church community can be for a kid. If you were raised in church, and you raise your kids in church, you might take it for granted (I certainly did), but for a kid who has never been in that environment, to have not only friends his own age, but adults who know him, love him, and are interested in him was a game changer. Sunday School teachers, our personal friends, KidLife workers, camp counselors (and maybe the unfortunate few who had him in children's choir, which he really did not care for but was forced to attend!) made such a difference in his life. He was always so proud when one of them spoke to him in the hallway of the Arendall Building or in the Sanctuary. He definitely felt like he belonged, and if we can say that about every foster kid who comes to Dawson, I think we can count that a success.

Maybe the most difficult thing we learned was that saying goodbye is hard, and in the foster care world, it's fast. It would've been hard after 6 months, or a year, or even two, but after three years, we had really morphed into a family and saying goodbye now was excruciating. We had our routines and traditions, and we were

“He definitely felt like he belonged, and if we can say that about every foster kid who comes to Dawson, I think we can count that a success.”



accustomed to being a unit of three. But when it ends, it ends. We knew he would be reunited with his dad who he had been visiting over the three months prior to leaving our home. But on the final day, we went to court, stood before the judge for about five minutes, talked to his dad and the DHR worker for another ten, and that was it. We dropped him off at school, his dad picked him up. That was the worst day of our foster care experience, by far.

Fortunately, we keep in touch with him and with Dad and are able to see him fairly regularly. Our house is pretty quiet. The most important thing we learned is that God is faithful, NOT that He makes things easy—combining the two is tempting. But in every case, whenever we needed something, God always provided. The school situation worked out, and the small elementary school where we were zoned had great teachers who loved our foster son. He was admitted to the gifted program and thrived. He made good friends. I was able to scale back on work-related travel to spend more time at home, and we found incredible families to help when we both had to be out of town. Although

we live in an unincorporated area of the county, Vestavia allowed us to play sports on their teams—and he fell in love with baseball and benefited from great coaches. When we couldn't get him to a practice, or KidLife, or other activities because of work, our church friends stepped up.

We are often asked if we will do it again. That's a hard question for us to answer right now for multiple reasons and especially since his leaving our home has been so recent. But now having been foster parents, we can say without a doubt that fostering is an incredible experience and an opportunity to see lives changed for the better – for both foster parent and foster child.



Rebecca Tucker is married to Richard, is Director of Customer Service and Contracts for EBSCO, and is a fourth grade investor for dawson kids.



Orphan Care Ministry Volunteer Meeting

Sunday, August 19

5:00 p.m., Room 257 North

TIPS Certification Class

10-Week Required Course For All Potential Foster, Adoptive, and Respite Families

Begins September 4

6:00 p.m., 254 North

Pre-register at dawsonchurch.org/TIPS

Childcare will be available upon request.

For more information, please visit dawsonchurch.org/OrphanCare.

DAWSON WELCOMES NEW COLLEGE MINISTER

It's almost that time of year again—where the temperature starts to drop (hopefully), high school and college football comes back on the scene, and students are back in school. And for us here at Dawson, it means it's time for us to kick off our College Ministry!

My name is Blake Jenkins, and I am the new Minister to College Students at Dawson. My wife Becca and I are beyond thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this family of faith.

I am originally from a small town on Sand Mountain in northeast Alabama, but I have lived the majority of my life in the greater Birmingham area. I was saved and baptized at the age of 11 and benefitted greatly from the investment of many men and women as I grew up in the church. I went to high school at Jefferson County International Baccalaureate at Shades Valley before going to Tuscaloosa to attend the University of Alabama. It was in the summer after my first year at the University that I met my wife Becca while working for Student Life Camps. She was raised in Sumter, South Carolina, and was attending Clemson University at the time. We dated long-distance for 10 months before getting engaged and then got married 10 months after that.

We started our marriage in Tuscaloosa where Becca started her career as a teacher while I began serving in the ministry as an Associate College Minister at Calvary Baptist Church overseeing our college life groups. Shortly after this, I started my master's program at Beeson at Samford University. And though I racked up a lot of miles commuting from Tuscaloosa to Birmingham, I wouldn't trade that season for anything.

Upon graduation from Beeson, I was called to be the Young Adult Pastor at Ingleside Baptist Church



in Macon, Georgia, working with college students and young adults from all walks of life in Middle Georgia. It was while we were in Macon that we had our son, Thomas, and got our equally active golden retriever, Leeroy. We were privileged to serve there for two and a half years before accepting the call to come and serve at Dawson.

Speaking with our church leaders throughout the interview process, it was evident that we have many opportunities to impact the college campuses in the Birmingham area for Jesus. Given our geographic location, ample resources, and the strong bond that the love of Christ gives our church family, Dawson is poised to make a difference in the lives of the students in a significant way!

I look forward to partnering with many of you to reach and disciple college-aged students in our community. I believe that this can happen most effectively when college students are engaging with God, each other, the wider church, and the world around them. This means that we will be creating

new opportunities for them while encouraging them to participate in already established ministries and programming in our church.

There is definitely a lot that we are going to be getting off the ground here at the start of the new church year, but our big three goals for the next year we will be:

- Laying the ground work to launch a week-night worship service designed purposefully for college students.
- Developing week-night Life Group options for our students.
- Establishing an intern and associate program for undergraduate and graduate students.

I'm incredibly excited about helping to build on the foundation laid by Andy Cartee and many others while expanding new areas of opportunity for our college students. If you are interested in learning more about our plans for the future or would like to hear about specific ways that you can be involved, please contact me at bjenkins@dawsonchurch.org.

LOCAL UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT NUMBERS:

Samford:	5,471
UAB:	19,535
BSC:	1,294
Jeff State:	8,943

FOOTBALL HOME OPENERS:

Samford vs. Shorter

Thursday, August 30 6:30 p.m.

UAB vs. Savannah State

Thursday, August 30 7:00 p.m.

  @dawsoncollegeministry



GO LOVE TELL: BIRMINGHAM THE LEARNING CENTER

THE REALITY

Will I fail again? I don't read well. What if I am not smart enough? All too often these overwhelming fears are visible on the faces of the students that come to The Learning Center for the first time. The signs are obvious: eyes focused on the ground, head hanging low, shoulders slumped over, and a shuffling walk that communicates, "I'm not worth anything" to anyone who cares to notice. For many adult students, their lives are shaped by ongoing discouragement, disappointment, and defeat. Their backgrounds are full of difficult circumstances, dysfunctional support, and desperate situations. All have one thing in common—a shared life experience of hopelessness.

Then things begin to change. A slight smile. A trusting hand shake. A confident step forward. Slowly at first, then with increasing momentum, students discover new opportunities, develop positive relationships, and find hope for the first time at The Learning Center.

THE FACTS

Studies have shown that education affects every aspect of an individual's life and communities as a whole. A community's health, crime rate, job advancement, and poverty level are all impacted by its citizens' education levels. The National Center for Adult Literacy reports there are 92,980 functionally illiterate adults in and around the Birmingham area. In Jefferson County, 13% of adults are functionally illiterate, reading below a sixth-grade level and 12% never graduated from high school. The Learning Center was created to bridge the gap between functional illiteracy and literacy, offer quality GED preparation classes, and prepare workers to be successful in the job force. These tasks are completed through four programs: Adult Basic Education program, The Literacy Academy, GED program, and Ready to Work.

THE SOLUTION

The Learning Center is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to transforming lives and building a community of hope for

future generations. In a joint effort between M-Power Ministries and the Dawson Family of Faith, our mission is to break the cycle of generational poverty by empowering adults through education. Our vision is to see students become self-sufficient and experience a better quality of life for themselves and their families. Our programs are individualized to ensure that each student receives what he or she needs to be successful.

“I give thanks to God for His work and grace in my life. I've already passed some sections and I am going to get my GED!”

Student, The Learning Center

THE DIFFERENCE

Our desire at The Learning Center is that every person who walks through the doors will find hope as they experience God's amazing love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. The Learning Center provides a strong foundation of faith as students interact with instructors, tutors, and mentors that are committed to serving the spiritual and academic needs of the community. Every day they strive to make a positive impact in the lives of others by living out Colossians 3:23: Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.

Instructors at The Learning Center take a personal interest in their students. With each volunteer who signs up to work at The Learning Center, we are able to make our program even more individualized and tailored to a student's needs. Our unique mentoring program sets us apart from other education organizations by providing our GED students with consistent



1-on-1 relationships. Students receive spiritual, academic, and emotional guidance as well as a friend to offer wise counsel as they move through their education, career, and family decisions.

THE RESULTS

Ryann Mitchell, Program Manager at The Learning Center says, "Our ultimate goal is to reach people for Jesus Christ. We want students to understand His love for them and come to know Him as Lord and Savior. The Learning Center is a place where this goal can be accomplished through Bible Study, Mentoring relationships, or even through the consistent, loving support and Christ-like attitude our volunteers demonstrate every day. In every way possible, we simply want to share Christ's love with the students."

Fall 2018:

- Enrolled Students: 25
- Anticipated GED Certificates Earned by the end of 2018: 5

One student has had ongoing difficulties with child support due to unemployment and was afraid a jail sentence was in his future because of back-pay owed. The Learning Center was able to connect him to a legal non-profit in town who helped him sort out payments and arrange future payments based on his current income. As a result, that student stayed out of prison and was able to support his family and continue his education. Lives are being changed every day here, and the word *hopelessness* is now becoming a thing of the past.



The Learning Center is located at 20 Green Springs Highway in Birmingham, Alabama. Classes are on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. To volunteer with The Learning Center, please contact Ryann Mitchell at (205) 983-7320 or rmitchell@bhamlearning.org.

LITERACY INFO

There are more than 92,000 illiterate adults in Central Alabama.

County	Functionally Illiterate Adults	Functionally Illiterate Adults (%)
Blount	5,811	14%
Jefferson	64,901	13%
Shelby	6,215	12%
St. Clair	8,419	7%
Walker	7,632	14%
Total	92,980	

- 75% of unemployed adults have reading or writing difficulties.
- 75% of all food stamp recipients perform in the two lowest levels of literacy.
- 24% of patients with low literacy skills do not know how to take medication four times a day.
- According to the AMA, individuals with low health literacy incur medical expenses up to four times greater than patients with adequate literacy skills.
- Children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational levels of their parents, especially the mother.
- Adults with lower literacy skills are less likely to read to their children. Children who have not already developed basic literacy practices when they enter school are three to four times more likely to drop out of school.
- Parents who improve their education, obtaining a GED or high school diploma, have children who show improvement in school and are more likely to stay in school.
- Low literacy skills have a direct impact on crime, recidivism, poverty, teenage pregnancy and substance abuse.
- 85% of all juvenile offenders have reading problems.
- 7 to 10 prisoners perform in the lowest two literacy levels.
- The greatest barrier to economic development and growth is the absence of a literate workforce.
- More than 60% of front line workers in goods-producing industries have difficulty applying information from text to a required task.
- The U.S. military spends (on average) \$70 million annually for basic skills remediation for new recruits.

Sources: National Center for Adult Literacy, ProLiteracy Worldwide, U.S. Department of Labor, National Institute for Literacy, National Bureau of Economics, American Medical Association, U.S. Census, National Assessment of Adult Literacy

Ask Alice



RECEPTIONIST ALICE HARRIS CELEBRATES 25 YEARS AT DAWSON

Alice Harris is the face of Dawson. She will tell you she's not, that she just loves people and helping them, but everyone at Dawson knows that she is a true representative of someone who does the Lord's work.

It's not often that you find someone who has stayed in a job for 25 years, but even at age 84, Alice truly enjoys coming to work every day. "I get up, and I look forward to getting dressed to come here," she said. And she loves being busy and doing something that makes a difference. "When I go home at night," she said, "I know I have done my day's work." Alice is very active in general. She has a large social circle and enjoys staying busy with her friends and family.

Alice and her late husband Wendell were longtime members of Dawson before his career transferred them to Texas. When they eventually moved back to Alabama, Alice was very happy to be offered the position of receptionist at Dawson in 1993. She says it's important to be friendly to people on the phone, as she is the first voice they will hear, and patience is required.

She has seen the staff grow and change in her time here, and enjoys the pleasant atmosphere. "I love all the people I work with," she said. Some of her favorite times are when the whole staff gets together, such as the quarterly All Staff Breakfast or the staff Christmas party.

Having been the receptionist for 25 years, as well as a devoted church member, Alice knows almost everyone at Dawson and loves interacting with people who call or stop by the desk. "I've been right here on this desk and seen a lot of changes," she said. "I have really good memories." Her favorite days are busy Wednesdays, when she gets to talk to lots of people who call or come to Dawson for evening activities. She especially loves seeing the children. She has been known to pass out suckers to little ones who visit the desk!

Alice is an active member of the Senior Adults Ministry and also participates in Stephen Ministry. "When I think about it," she said, "it doesn't even seem like I've been here 25 years."

Thank you, Alice, for 25 years of devoted service to Dawson! You are loved!



Octopus Dogs

Serves 6

Ingredients

6 hot dogs
6 hot dog buns
Chili (canned or homemade)

1. Starting about 1 inch from the end of a hot dog, start a slit in the hot dog that goes vertically to the other end.
2. Turn a quarter turn and make another slit. Keep making slits until you have eight "legs" for the hot dog.
3. Boil and the hot dog will look like an octopus. Serve with head up and legs spread out over an opened hot dog bun that has chili on it.

From the kitchen of Laura Pickens

Amazing Taco Casserole

Serves 8

Ingredients

7-ounce bag of Nacho Cheese Doritos, crushed
1 pound ground beef
1 (1-ounce) packet taco seasoning
1 (8-ounce) package shredded Cheddar cheese
Shredded lettuce
Sliced tomatoes

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Brown ground beef & drain. Mix in taco seasoning as directed.
2. Layer ingredients in 9-x-13-inch dish as listed: crushed chips, meat, 2/3 of cheese, lettuce, tomatoes. Top with remaining cheese. Bake for 15 minutes.

From the kitchen of Amy Miller

Yummy Crock Pot Chicken

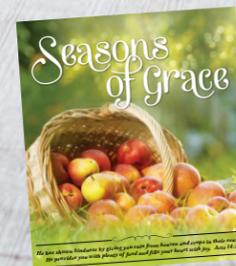
Serves 6

Ingredients

4 to 6 boneless chicken breasts
8 ounces cream cheese
1 (10.75-ounce) can cream of mushroom soup
1 cup water or chicken broth
1 package dry Italian dressing mix
1 stick butter
Cooked pasta or rice

1. Put all ingredients except the pasta/rice into a crockpot and cook on low heat for 8 hours, or medium heat for 4 to 5 hours.
2. Stir before serving. Chicken will be tender and the sauce looks like you worked on it all day.
3. Serve over cooked pasta or cooked rice.

From the kitchen of Dana Langford



Quick Family Recipes

These recipes can be found in our Seasons of Grace cookbook which is available for purchase (\$20) at the Church Office & the Arendall Welcome Center.

DSM DAWSONSTUDENTMINISTRY



AUGUST 24-26

dawsonchurch.org/students

Invited

Come to the Table

A WOMEN'S RETREAT

September 28 & 29
Camp Dawson

Register by September 16

dawsonchurch.org/invited



Father/Son Retreat

2018 • Camp Dawson

October 12-13

Register at:
dawsonchurch.org/FatherSon

Handmade for Him

Exodus 31:3-5

FELLOWSHIP & FUN FOR WOMEN

September 25 & November 6

dawsonchurch.org/handmade



THE STORY

When we know God's story of beautiful redemption, it changes everything: who we are, what we want, and how we live. The Story makes the beauty of God's love known to everyone, everywhere.

Fall 2018 Training Dates

Sundays
303 West, 6:00 p.m.
 August 19
 August 26
 September 16
 September 30
 October 14
 November 11

Wednesdays
303 West, 6:00 p.m.
 August 22
 August 29
 September 5
 September 12
 September 19
 September 26



Dawson Memorial Baptist Church
1114 Oxmoor Road
Birmingham, AL 35209
(205) 871-7324
dawsonchurch.org

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Birmingham, AL

A top-down view of a wooden desk with a Bible, a coffee cup, and a notebook.

Weekday Studies

Adult Bible Studies Begin
August 22 • 6:00 p.m.

dawsonchurch.org/WeekdayStudies