

CONNECTIONS

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH APRIL 2026 VOL XVI: ISSUE 4 LBCPC.org



HE IS RISEN

Join us for Easter Services

April 5 | 8:45 & 11:00

Lakewood Baptist Church
4011 Lakewood Drive
Phenix City, AL 36867



A Message from Andrew Spires

LEAD PASTOR

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In thirty years of ministry, you come to notice trends within churches. The more I meet and discuss church life with other pastors and church personnel, the more I note many of the same issues within each church. One such recurrent issue within churches is 'sacred cows'. As we are walking through the book of Exodus on Sunday mornings, we will eventually come to Exodus 32, a section of Scripture where the Israelites grew tired of waiting on Moses and Yahweh, and built a golden calf and claimed this was their god who led them out of Egypt. This was a sad and sickening moment for the Exodus generation.

We've said throughout this study of Exodus that God had to get Egypt out of His people as much as He had to get the Israelites out of Egypt itself, and this was a clear example of this. As you remember, the Egyptians had a plethora of gods; usually, each deity represented authority over some portion of life or nature. These gods were represented as mixtures of animal and human forms, or as animals alone. One such god was Apis, who was the god of fertility and strength and was the living representative of the god Ptah, the creator god. As you might've guessed, Apis was always depicted as a calf or a bull. Archaeologists have found entire mummified cows buried in Egypt. Paintings and hieroglyphs of Apis adorn the walls of the Egyptian worship center of Memphis to Cairo. Apparently, this god became a 'sacred cow' to the Israelites as well.

Remember, the one true God, Yahweh, had revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush. He had revealed His awesome power and authority over nature and the so-called gods of Egypt in the plagues. God showed Himself as their guide in the pillar of cloud and fire. God had defeated and drowned the Egyptian army at the Red Sea. God had miraculously provided for the physical needs of His people, and God physically came down on top of Mt. Sinai, which placed a holy fear of God in His people. They knew Yahweh had brought them out of Egypt, and they knew Moses was God's man, mediator, and leader. However, idolatry is hard to root out of one's heart and all

the sins that accompany it.

Exodus 32:1-4; *"When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, 'Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.'* Aaron answered them, *'Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons, and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.'* So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, *"These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."* The 'sacred cow' made of gold received worship and praise that should only be directed to Yahweh.

How did Moses deal with this heinous sin? First, he fervently begged God not to destroy His people. Exodus 32:19-20; "When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned, and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. And he took the calf they had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water, and made the Israelites drink it." Moses took their false god and utterly destroyed it, though it was of great value, being made of pure gold, and then he made them 'own' their sin, literally ingesting the gold-laced idolatrous water. Later, he gathered the Levites to him, and 3,000 people who reveled in idolatry were killed for their sins. Afterwards, God sent an unknown plague on His own people as He had promised in His conditional covenant with them, which they had broken.

The worship of sacred cows didn't stop there for Israel. Much later, king Jeroboam, who was the first king of the divided northern kingdom of Israel, cast two golden calves and set up idolatrous altars of worship at Dan and Bethel. He repeated the same line, 1 Kings 12:28b; *"Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."* These altars and false gods stayed in Israel until they were conquered, and the calves were likely taken

as spoils of war. Obviously, these sacred cows were hard to destroy among God's people, and this is still true today.

Today, we don't have golden effigies anymore, but idolatry can still find root in the human heart. Idols can take many shapes and sizes, from wealth, success, intellectual achievement, physical appearance, fitness, sex, sports, talent, and ability to the greatest idol, which encompasses them all, the idol of self. Even within the church, we can elevate man-made things to idolatrous levels. Things such as traditions, preferences, styles, and buildings can grow insidiously to idolatrous levels. Every church has its sacred cows, which are declared off-limits, but God will not share worship with anyone or anything, much less a human creation or invention.

Let us guard our hearts against such things. Investigate your own heart and ask the Lord to reveal any areas that are being worshiped in your life other than God. Remember, He will have all of you or none of you! There are no off-limit areas! Remember that everything written in Scripture is there for us as an example and as a warning. Let us heed the example of Moses, who acted swiftly and decisively, and totally destroy any idolatrous ways within us so that God alone receives the praise, honor, glory, and worship He rightly deserves. God bless,
drew



LAKWOOD
YOUNG ADULTS

BIBLE STUDY

If you're age 18-30, single or married, we'd love for you to join us as we study Scripture faithfully and walk together in obedience to the Lord.

**SUNDAY NIGHTS-
BEGINNING APRIL 12**

6:00 PM



A Message from **Josh Elliott**

STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT PASTOR



Hey Church!

I am continually grateful for the opportunity to serve our students and partner with you in helping the next generation grow in their faith. God has been at work in our student ministry, and it has been encouraging to see students gathering around God's Word, building friendships centered on Christ, and learning what it means to follow Him in their everyday lives.

Scripture reminds us that the calling to make disciples belongs to the whole church. Jesus' words in Matthew 28:18–20 say, *"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

While our students are growing here at home, we are also preparing them to take part in that mission beyond the walls of our church.

As we look ahead, one of our goals is to provide opportunities for students to participate in missions. These experiences are incredibly valuable in helping young believers see God's work in the world and understand their role in the Great Commission. We are asking our church family to begin praying now that God would prepare hearts, open doors for ministry, and provide the resources needed for students to go and serve.

One practical way you can help is: if you have a project or job around your homeyard work, cleaning, small projects, or other tasks— that you need done. Would you consider allowing one of our students who is raising funds for missions to complete that job in exchange for a donation toward their mission trip? This provides students an opportunity to work toward their goal while also serving members of our church family.

Additionally, if the Lord places it on your heart to give directly toward our missions efforts, you may consider making a special donation to help sponsor a student who desires to go but may need financial assistance. Even small contributions can make a meaningful difference in helping a student participate in a life-shaping mission opportunity.

If you have a project you would like help with, would like to donate toward missions, or would like to sponsor a student, please feel free to reach out to me. I would love to talk with you and help connect these opportunities.

Thank you for loving and investing in our students. Your prayers, encouragement, and support truly make a difference as we seek to raise up young men and women who love Christ and are ready to serve Him wherever He calls.

In Christ,
Josh



A Message from the

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM



This month, in Children's Church, we are focusing on a powerful truth: God is always in control. In every moment, God is working and fulfilling His perfect plan. Our prayer is that each child learns this truth and begins to trust it in their everyday lives.

Our key verse this month reminds us of just how great our God is: "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is Yours." 1 Chronicles 29:11a.

Awana continues to be such a highlight of our week. We are so thankful for the time we get to spend together with your children. Mark your calendars for April 22 for Jesus Is My Hero Night, where kids are encouraged to come dressed in their favorite superhero attire. Then on May 13, we will gather for Family Night on the Front Lawn. This evening is filled with games and a special treat from the Icey Girl truck. As always, a parent or family member must stay with their child. We encourage you to bring the whole family and enjoy the time together.

We are also excited to share that our MERGE Camp spots are officially filled! This year, we will be taking 42 children and 10 chaperones. As we prepare for July 6-9, we ask that you join us in praying for meaningful spiritual moments for our students.

The theme this year is ECHO, with the key verse Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children." Each child is responsible for \$289, and we are so thankful to those who have already helped sponsor campers. Your generosity is truly making an impact. Beginning April 12, you'll also see our LEVEL UP MERGE envelopes in the sanctuary lobby. These donations help provide extra fun experiences like the Wet Willy Water Slide, Bazooka Ball, and Aqua Island. These things make camp even more memorable for our kids.

Looking ahead, Vacation Bible School is just around the corner, and planning is already underway. This year's theme is Illumination Station: Shining a Light on Who Jesus Really Is. We typically welcome 85-100 children. Whether you enjoy teaching, crafts, music, games, registration, decorating, or helping behind the scenes, there is a place for everyone to serve. Registration opens May 1 for children ages 2 through 5th grade. If you would like to volunteer, please reach out to our VBS leader, Brian Benton.

We also want to take a moment to say thank you to all of our incredible volunteers. Your time and energy poured into these children does not go unnoticed. You are helping plant seeds of faith that will last a lifetime we simply couldn't do this without you.

**Help us level up our
Kids Merge Camp!**

**Your generosity makes camp
unforgettable!**

**Grab an envelope, and help
us bring Bazooka Ball,
Wet Willy & Aqua Island to
camp.**

MEMBER'S MEETING

APRIL 19TH

6:00 PM

WMU Baptist Women

MISSIONS ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Fellowship Hall

April 26
6:00pm

SCOOP.
SERVE.
SEND.



Lakewood Happenings

April 2026

| SUN | MON | TUES | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT |
|--|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | 10:30am VK/WMU | | Good Friday Office Closed | |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Easter Lord's Supper | 10:30am Amen Choir | 6:00pm Alleluia Choir | | | 5:30pm Senior Game Night - BYOD | |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 3:30pm VBS D. Team Meeting 5:00pm Deacons Meet 5:00pm Women's Bible Study 6:00pm Young Adult B. Study | 10:30am Amen Choir 6:30pm Sister to Sister F/H | 6:00pm Alleluia Choir | 7:15pm Finance Team Meeting | | | 10:00am Feed the Homeless |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 5:00pm Women's bible study 6:00pm Member's Meeting 6:00pm Y.A B.study | 10:30am Amen Choir | 6:00pm Alleluia Choir | | 6:30pm JEG/BW Home of Julie Pelletier | | |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 5:00pm Women's bible study 6:00pm Ice Cream for Missions | 10:30am Amen Choir | 6:00pm Alleluia Choir | | | | |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

February Giving

| Week | Tithe | RRR | Missions | Other Des. | Totals |
|---------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 2/01/26 | \$18,969.05 | \$260.00 | \$1,830.22 | \$3,270.27 | \$24,329.54 |
| 2/08/26 | \$23,640.07 | \$320.00 | \$1,667.13 | \$1,232.00 | \$26,859.20 |
| 2/15/26 | \$16,358.00 | \$10,495.00 | \$1,677.97 | \$885.00 | \$29,415.97 |
| 2/22/26 | \$21,462.87 | \$2,070.00 | \$9,709.64 | \$4,462.14 | \$37,704.65 |

In Memory of:
Sandy Carter's Sister -in - law, Cathy
For Benevolence
From Mr. & Mrs. Linwood Spires

VK/WMU
Wednesday,
April 1
10:30am

In Honor of:
Sharon Vincent
For VBS
From Mr. & Mrs. Fred Van Horn

Sister to Sister
Monday,
April 13th
6:30pm
Fellowship Hall

Margaret Wilson
For Feed the Homeless
From Gail Brantley

JEG/BW
Thursday,
April 23rd
6:30pm
Home of Julie
Pelletier

Margaret Wilson
(My second Mom)
For Amen Choir
From Janet Turner

Senior Game

Night

Friday, April 10th

5:30pm

Fellowship Hall

B.Y.O.D.

"Bring your own dinner"

Dessert & Tea provided

- MINISTERIAL STAFF
- *ANDREW SPIRES*
- LEAD PASTOR
- ANDREW@LBCPC.ORG

OFFICE STAFF
Melissa Costello
FINANCIAL ASSISTANT
MELISSA@LBCPC.ORG

- *Charles Keown*
- WORSHIP & SENIOR
- ADULT PASTOR
- CHARLES@LBCPC.ORG

Carol Breault
OFFICE & PASTORAL
CARE ASSISTANT
CAROL@LBCPC.ORG

- *Josh Elliott*
- STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT
- PASTOR
- JOSHUA@LBCPC.ORG

Linda Keown
WORSHIP
ASSISTANT
LINDA@LBCPC.ORG

- *AMANDA OWENS*
- INTERIM VOLUNTEER
- CHILDREN'S LEADER

Jessica White
MEDIA ASSISTANT
JESSICA@LBCPC.ORG

Welcome
New Member
Bobby & Cecille Cooper
Dan & Tana Strain

Feed the Homeless
Saturday, April 18th
(Date has changed)
10:00am - FAC

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH
4011 LAKEWOOD DRIVE
PHENIX CITY, ALABAMA 36867
O: 334.298.6433
LBCPC.org
HOURS: M-TH 8:30AM-4:30PM
FRI 8:30AM-12PM

