



SpecialConnections

Special Connections is a ministry to people of all abilities. Our desire is to see society and the Body of Christ show equal concern for people with disabilities and their families as is shown for others.

Our focus is ministering, in word and deed, both to and alongside people touched by disability. We seek to enable people with disabilities and their families to hear the gospel of God's grace, fully participate in the Body of Christ, and fully contribute in their churches and communities.

Learn more about the Briarwood Special Connections Ministry by scanning the QR below, emailing mjohnson@briarwood.org, or by going to briarwood.org/specialconnections.



Briarwood
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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SPECIAL CONNECTIONS MINISTRY

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me” Matthew 25:35*

In Matthew chapter 25, Jesus emphasizes the importance of meeting the needs of others— especially those with great need—because in serving them, we are ultimately serving Jesus Himself. The Special Connections Ministry here at Briarwood aims to do just that: to meet the varying needs of participants and their families through discipleship and evangelism for the glory of God.

A Caring Heart:

One couple, Glenn and Jenny Ward, started volunteering with the Special Connections Ministry because of their medical expertise. Since Glenn is a retired surgeon and Jenny is a retired nurse, they thought their great medical experience would help them minister to people with advanced needs. As they got involved, they quickly learned that no medical experience was needed; only a caring heart.

“I really play a small role. I just try to be available for them and tell them that I care. That’s the most important thing,” says Glenn Ward. That’s all it takes. No medical degree, teaching certification, or hands-on experience is required. The only requirement is a heart that’s willing to listen and care for another soul that is made in the image of God.

Jenny Ward tells us, “There’s some days when they don’t feel like doing much, and we all have days like that.” They’re not so different from the rest of us; we all have needs, they just need extra support in meeting those needs.

Serving the Whole Family:

Special Connections volunteers make it possible for the families of people with Special Needs to attend church events when they otherwise wouldn’t be able to. By relieving family members and caregivers of their responsibilities for a few hours, we minister to them too—and they are grateful for the help.

Moms of our participants take advantage of our Respite Care during Women’s Ministry Events so that they can benefit from the opportunity to worship with other women while knowing their children will be well taken care of.

What it looks like to Volunteer:

Volunteering with Special Connections can look like an array of different tasks from assisting during the Sunday School lesson to playing board games at a pizza party. All of them are equally important! Our staff and volunteers will guide you in what to do and equip you to help participants most effectively. As long as you are willing to learn and care for people, the rest will come with experience.

All volunteers must be members of Briarwood for at least one year and will be asked to complete a Ministry Safe training and a background check. Please reach out to Michael Johnson at mjohnson@briarwood.org if you are interested in volunteering.

For more information, visit briarwood.org/specialconnections.

FEATURED EVENTS

MidWeek at Briarwood — Church Wide | September 3 – November 12 *

Join us for dinner, classes and activities for the entire family each Wednesday evening in the Fellowship Hall. Dinner begins at 5:15 p.m. and classes and activities start at 6:30 p.m. Find additional class information and register for dinners at briarwood.org/midweek.

BTS Fall Semester — Birmingham Theological Seminary | September 2

Birmingham Theological Seminary is offering a wide array of classes this fall. If you desire to fulfill God's calling in your life with accessible and affordable seminary options through a quality reformed theological education, you're going to love BTS. To view the class schedule and apply for admissions, go to bts.education.

* Nursery is available for select events upon reservation at briarwood.org/nursery.
Stay up-to-date with upcoming events on the Briarwood App.

IN THE BRIARWOOD BOOKSTORE

The Sing! Hymnal

by Keith and Kristyn Getty | Hymnal

The Sing! Hymnal blends music, poetry, and hymns that beautifully bring Christian theology to life. With each verse, rich lyrics echo the timeless truths of Scripture and proclaim the unchanging message of salvation. For centuries, Christians have used these treasured resources in private and corporate worship, and *The Sing! Hymnal* now presents the profound beauty of hymnody to the next generation. The hymnal hosts a collection of timeless classic and contemporary hymns, created to deepen worship and foster unity among God's people through the power of song. It features liturgical readings, psalms paired with popular hymns, and useful indexes. This resource is perfect for church services and group gatherings, as well as private and family worship. Price: \$19.99 (currently in stock)

Sing! How Worship Transforms Your Life, Family, and Church

by Keith and Kristyn Getty | Adult Book

We all share in the unique privilege and responsibility of singing. Singing together as the Church transforms our lives, our families, our churches, and our witness. In this book by popular Christian artists Keith and Kristyn Getty, five key aims are presented to help us experience this singing: 1) to discover why we sing and the overwhelming joy and holy privilege that comes with singing; 2) to consider how singing impacts our hearts and minds and all of our lives; 3) to cultivate a culture of family singing in our daily home life; 4) to equip our churches for wholeheartedly singing to the Lord and one another as an expression of unity; and 5) to inspire us to see congregational singing as a radical witness to the world. God intends for this compelling vision of His people singing—a people joyfully joining together in song with brothers and sisters around the world and around His heavenly throne—to include you. Price: \$5.00

Featured books are available in the Bookstore or online at briarwood.org/bookstore.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Women's Fall Studies — Beginning September 2. Women, pick from classes meeting Monday–Thursday. See class topics and information at briarwood.org/women.

Youth Wednesday Nights — Beginning September 3. Students gather for dinner at 5:30 p.m. at The Barn. Raiders (7th–8th graders) meet 6:30–8:00 p.m. BYG (9th–12th graders) meet 7:00–8:30 p.m. For information, contact Kristin Smith at k.smith@briarwood.org.

Children Wednesday Nights — Beginning September 3 at 6:30 p.m. Children K4–3rd grade will meet in the Children's Auditorium for CONNECT and 4th–6th grade in the Church Gym for IGNITE. Contact Jake Stallings at 205-776-5305.

GriefShare MidWeek Class — Beginning September 3. Wednesdays from 6:30–8:00 p.m. in W203. Begin your journey from mourning to joy. Join our 12-week program designed to offer comfort and encouragement. Call 205-776-5227 to sign up.

Children's Choirs — Beginning September 7. Our Children's Choirs (preschool and elementary age children) meet Sunday evenings during the worship hour at 6:15 p.m. For more information, please contact Shanna Phillips at 205-222-1062.

Youth Sunday Night D-Groups — Beginning September 7 from 6:00–7:30 p.m. at The Barn. All 7th – 12th graders are invited to come for discipleship groups with their peers. For information, contact Kristin Smith at k.smith@briarwood.org.

Men's Fall Studies — Beginning September 8. Mondays at 6:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, Tuesdays at 11:45 a.m. at Cajun Seafood House, Thursdays at 7:00 a.m. and Fridays at 6:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. See additional information at briarwood.org/men.

YBL Fall Breakfast — Friday, September 12 from 6:30 to 7:45 a.m. at the Vestavia Country Club. Come hear from one of Alabama's top entrepreneurs, Shegun Otulana. Tickets are \$30, tables for 8/\$240. Register at ybl.org/events.

Trailblazer's Lunch — Sunday, September 14 at 12:15 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Fellowship together and hear from U.S. Congressman Gary Palmer. Register online at briarwood.org/trailblazers or email sjohnston@briarwood.org.

Children's Passport Night — Friday, September 19 from 6:00–8:30 p.m. K4–6th graders, come and learn about a foreign country through food and fun! Register online at briarwood.org/children. The Children's Ministry needs ministry safe volunteers to help with crowd control. Email Emily Baker if interested at ebaker@briarwood.org.

WBL Faith & Work Luncheon — Wednesday, September 24. Join Women Business Leaders for their annual Faith & Work Luncheon featuring speaker, Joanna Meyer of the Denver Institute for Faith & Work. Register online at wblbirmingham.org.

BIO Campus Ministry Director – Full-time position available to provide leadership in reaching international students and scholars at UAB for the purpose of evangelism and discipleship. Send inquiries and resumes to cnorfleet@briarwood.org.

Job Openings: Full-time & Part-time Staff — There are a number of ministry positions open. See all employment and job openings at briarwood.org/employment.

WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

Sunday, August 31 — Briarwood Prayer Focus

Father, we pray for our Sunday School teachers, those teaching in our adult, youth, and children classes. We ask You to fill them with Your steadfast love and keep them faithful to Your Word.

Monday, September 1 — Birmingham Prayer Focus

Pray for the Life on Wheels ministry as they use mobile units in Birmingham, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa to provide ultrasounds, save babies, and share the Gospel. For more information or to get involved, visit lifeonwheelsalabama.com.

Tuesday, September 2 — Missions Prayer Focus

Pray for Sav-a-Life Ministries as they celebrate 45 years of ministry to women in unplanned and crisis pregnancies and the hope of Christ that is shared with each one. We celebrate and honor Sav-a-Life founder, Mr. Wales Goebel and his wife Jean, as they celebrate 75 years of marriage this week! The flag of Birmingham and Sav-a-Life will be featured in the Worship Center this Sunday.

Wednesday, September 3 — Global Ministry Partners

Pray for Saad and Maral with Cru in Iraq, Richard and Louise Verreynne with World Thrust in South Africa, Theodore and Becky with Mission to the World in South Asia, and Jordi and Bern Vilahur with Greater Europe Mission in Spain.

Thursday, September 4 — National Ministry Partners

John and Penny Freeman with Harvest USA in Pennsylvania, Debbie Friley with Navigators in Florida, Tom and Linda Fritz with Cru in Georgia, and Chris and Kristin Gadsden with Cru in Missouri.

Friday, September 5 — Briarwood Officers and Staff

Pray for our elders Mark Hess, Jim Carlson, David Harris; deacons Hans Sitarz, John Royal, Tate West; and Mobilization Pastor Max Bunn and his wife Kathleen.

Saturday, September 6 — Church Family

Pray for our hospitalized members Ken Bailey, Hugh Brindley, Gene Cole, Gene Head Sr., Ashok Mujumdar, Brittney Thompson, and Wendy Handley.

Our love and sympathy to Barbara Matthews and Martha Dobnikar on the death of their husband and father, member Bill Matthews, on August 26.

...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6

...not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:25

...addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart... Ephesians 5:19

Receive each day's prayer as a notification through the Briarwood App. In your Briarwood App settings, enable "Weekly Prayer Guide" notifications.

Briarwood Presbyterian Church
2200 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, AL 35243-2923



THIS LORD'S DAY

Sunday Morning Worship Services:

Ephesians: The One Body of Christ

“A Dwelling Place for God”

Ephesians 2:11–22

Dr. Scott Redd, Pastor

Sunday Evening Worship:

“Repent, Rejoice, Restored”

Psalm 51

Rev. Jay Shaw, Family Pastor

Watch our live-stream on ROKU, Apple TV, Facebook, YouTube or briarwood.org.

Catch up with previous sermons and series on the Briarwood App.