



The Journey

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A NEW YEAR, A NEW VISION

The New Year often brings the need for change and so we create New Year's resolutions, promises we make to ourselves that will lead to improvements in our lives. These resolutions can be beneficial when we stick to them. However, they are often broken. Research shows that as many as 50 percent of adults in the United States make New Year's resolutions, but fewer than 10 percent actually keep them for more than a few months. How often have you made a promise to yourself that you did not keep?

This year I decided to start exercising more. I wanted to walk 10,000 steps a day, for me that is over an hour of walking, and try to add in some light weight training. Of course, when I made that decision, I did not know I was going to get sick in the New Year. So far, I have done more coughing and wheezing than steps.

Promises are important to keep, to ourselves, to others and especially to God. We are reminded often in the scriptures of the covenantal promises God made to humankind and that God always keeps these promises. We are also reminded of how often we fail to keep our part of the bargain. Old Testament stories and New Testament parables are filled with examples of those who turn from the will of God, but they are also filled with stories of redemption. It is amazing that God never turns away from us, no matter how angry, fearful, or disinterested we become. Our Creator is always there dusting us off, welcoming us back, and celebrating our successes.

During the season after Epiphany, we celebrate the manifestation of God to the world and study the early life of Jesus, but this season is also a reminder of our own journey with Christ, how our decision to follow Jesus has changed our lives and caused us to grow and develop into the people God wants us to be. This is not just something we do as individuals; it is a community exercise. Our congregation takes the time to reestablish our priorities, set goals, seek out what God wants us to be and what we are called to do in our community and world.

In order to put this trust and this mission into action we need to accept our call to ministry and develop ways to meet our goals. We must ask ourselves, how do we witness to others and make them welcome in our congregation? Are we emulating Christ in our work and searching for God's vision for our congregation? Are we allowing the Holy Spirit to enter, challenge, and transform us?

It is only by contemplating these questions and searching for answers that we can fulfill our mission and become the church God wants us to be. Last year was transformative for our congregation and this year promises to be the same, yet we always experience the blessings of God and the hope of new life for our church, ourselves, and the world. Now we must continue our journey of faith working together and spreading the love of Christ.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

The *Journey* is published on the first and third Monday of the month.

The **deadline** for *Journey* submissions is **9:00 a.m. Thursday, February 1**. Email to: publisher@fcc-hsv.org

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CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S MINISTRIES (CWM)

BLANKET MONTH 2024

CWM's January service in supporting Church World Service Blanket program tells people in crisis: "You're not alone. Someone cares."



The program sends blankets to people in need all round the world. Ukraine has a special need this year. What do you do if you are cold? At home you reach for a blanket or turn up the heat.

What if you didn't have an extra blanket or no blanket at all? What if you didn't have a home because of conflict, a natural disaster, tornado, hurricane, earthquake, or flood?

Church World Service Blanket program provides blankets to those without blankets all over the world. CWM invites FCC to join us in giving blankets during the month of January. The cost of a blanket is \$10. Make your check out to FCC and mark for blankets. As one person put it, "it's about loving our neighbors on this small, interconnected planet, just as Jesus commanded".

Only \$10 per blanket warms someone, furnishes a carry-all, as well as offers protection and shelter. For more information cwsblankets.org.

Margaret J. Vann,
CWM Blanket Chair

THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET is given in memory of Henry Waites by Nancy Waites and in honor of Jordan Green's birthday by Rick & Kay Shrout.

ATTENDANCE

Jan. 7: Worship Service: 81
Small Groups (During week & Sunday): 67
Jan. 14: Worship Service: 82
Small Groups (During week & Sunday): 22

REGIONAL PRAYER REQUESTS

Village Christian Church, Auburn, AL
Primera Iglesia, Birmingham, AL
Edward Point Christian Church, Century, F

2023 GIVING STATEMENTS

Your 2023 Giving Statements are available in the Church Office during the week and on Sundays in the Narthex **through January 29th**. (This saves on postage.)

Please contact the church office, 256-881-0150 or office@fcc-hsv.org, if you cannot make it to church to pick up your statement. **We will send your statement by email or postal mail depending on your preference.**

Thank you for your generosity,
FCC Office

JANUARY COMMUNITY OUTREACH


PROJECT: WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

The Community Outreach Committee's project for January is collecting financial donations for the Foster Care Unit of DHR (Department of Human Resources) to purchase gift cards to Walmart and other places as requested by DHR. There are over 430 children in foster care in Madison County and funding is not adequate to cover all their needs. These children are in care through no fault of their own; they have been abused and neglected by those who should have protected them. Community Outreach, with your help, would like to ensure that the Foster Care Unit has funds on hand to use throughout the year to help our children who are suffering physically, mentally, and emotionally. A check can be made to FCC with "CO/DHR" in the memo line. Thank you for caring about the vulnerable children in our community.

Community Outreach (CO) is asking for regular donations of hygiene products such as: sanitary pads, tampons, and/or period underwear (period-proof underwear is a relatively new period product that looks and feels like regular underwear.). The donations will support girls at three schools - Huntsville Junior High School, McNair School, Morris School- who do not have funds to purchase these products. A donation site is located in the church Narthex. Please consider helping with this needed project. Margaret J. Vann



Community Outreach and Christian Women's Ministries are seeking donations, **during the month of February**, for the Community Free Dental Clinic. Their funding comes from individuals, local businesses, grants and churches. The mission is accomplished with the help of licensed volunteer dentists and fourth year dental students from UAB. The typical patient has broken, painful teeth. Life threatening infections possibly happen without much needed extractions. Emergency dental care is not available in local Emergency Rooms. Please consider supporting this clinic which exists to serve those most vulnerable in our community.



The 2024 sign up chart for **FOOD BASKETS** is available. You may call the office at 256-881-0150 or email publisher@fcc-hsv.org to select a Sunday to remember or honor a friend, loved one, anniversary, birthday, or other special occasion. Donations are \$25.00 and go to Community Outreach. Make checks payable to First Christian Church and Food Basket on the notation line. You may also make your payment through PayPal and designate Food Basket through this QR code linked to our website.

