



# The Journey

Volume XXX No. 11  
March 14, 2022  
www.fcc-hsv.org

## REGIONAL ASSEMBLY APRIL 22-24

This year I plan to attend the Regional Assembly for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama and Northwest Florida on April 22-24. The Regional Assembly is a biennial gathering of representatives from the congregations in our region that meet to share ideas, enjoy fellowship, and undertake the business of the region as a whole. The Assembly also provides opportunities for worship, workshops, youth and children's events, wonderful speakers, and other events that transform lives and encourage the work of ministry.

This year is also special because we were not able to have our Regional Assembly in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. First Christian Church in Meridian, Mississippi, the one church our Region has in Mississippi, has been waiting to host this event for four years. Our church is also allowed delegates for this Assembly, to vote on the business items, and I hope many of you will be able to come and participate in this event.

One of the ways we can support the work of the Alabama and Northwest Florida Region is to attend our assemblies and other programs that the region sponsors. As you know, the region is very supportive of its local churches, providing assistance in finding new ministers, working with churches to solve internal problems, giving leadership and structure to our youth events and summer camps, working with local and regional CWM and CMM ministries, just to name a few.

Did you also know that our Regional Minister, the Rev. Dr. John Mobley, represents us in the College of Regional Ministers and that we have representatives from our region that travel every year for General Board meetings that help guide the policies of our denomination in the United States and Canada? As a member of the Christian Church, you are encouraged to participate in these meetings and help shape the mission of the church.

Please pray for the success of the 2022 Regional Assembly and the safety of all who travel to Meridian. In the following weeks I will be sharing more information about our Regional Assembly, but feel free to go to [alnwfldisciples.org](http://alnwfldisciples.org), our regional website, for registration information, housing, and more about the worship, mission, and educational opportunities offered. I hope to see you in Meridian in April. Amen.



### CONGREGATION MEETING

Sunday, March 27, following the 9:30 am Worship Service. 2022 Budget update, election of Moderator & Moderator Elect, Rev. Allen's 2022 sabbatical, and Rev. West's 2023 sabbatical.

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, March 17**, at Noon. Email to: [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:publisher@fcc-hsv.org)

3209 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, Alabama 35802  
Telephone: 256-881-0150 **Leave a message.**

**CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
HISTORY AND THEOLOGY**



**SHORT TERM  
PRAYER CONCERNS**



Dear Friends,

Studying the history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has always been a wonderful way to learn about our denomination and our theology. It helps us to reconnect to the dreams of our founders but also prepares us to look to the future and our own vision for what our congregation and the Church can be. With this in mind, I will be teaching a History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including a discussion of our Theology and Practices. This course will be four to six sessions, depending on how fast we move through the curriculum. I will be using Denominational Materials, "A Handbook for Today's Disciples" by D. Duane Cummins, and "Disciples: Who We Are and What Holds us Together" by Michael Kinnamon and Jan Linn.

The class will be held on **Monday evenings at 6:00 pm beginning on March 21st** and should be about an hour. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at the church office. I look forward to seeing you.

Grace and Peace, Rev. Paul Allen

**CHURCH CALENDAR**

- Mar. 14 9:30 am Esther Circle  
10:30 am Quilters  
5 pm Conveners' Meeting
- Mar. 16 6 pm Men's Group  
7 pm Choir Rehearsal
- Mar. 17 10 am *John, Gospel of Light & Life*
- Mar. 21 10:30 am Quilters  
5:30 pm ECM Board Meeting  
6 pm Disciples History Class
- Mar. 23 6 pm Men's Group  
7 pm Choir Rehearsal
- Mar. 24 10 am *John, Gospel of Light & Life*
- Mar 27 **10:30 am Congregational Meeting**

**ATTENDANCE**

March 6 Worship Service: 52  
Small Groups (During the week & Sunday): 43

**Not Published Online**

We are temporarily publishing, as space allows, the prayer concerns that are normally listed in the Sunday bulletins. **Concerns are listed for one month unless we receive an update.** Long term prayer concerns are published monthly in the *Journey*. Send requests to publisher@fcc-hsv.org or call the church office at 256-881-0150 to leave a message. **Please notify the Pastors or the church office if you are going to the hospital and would like to be contacted**

**REGIONAL PRAYER REQUESTS**

Iglesia Cristiana-Nuevo Comienzo, Oxford AL



**THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET** is in memory of Scott Ball, brother of Matt Ball.

**IN PERSON & ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES**

We offer in-person worship services Sunday mornings at 9:30 or you may also stream them live at 9:30, or watch previous services anytime, on [facebook.com/fcchsv](https://facebook.com/fcchsv), [twitch.tv/fcchsv](https://twitch.tv/fcchsv), or [Youtube.com](https://Youtube.com).

### NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER (NCAC)

One of the Christian Women's Ministries' service projects for March is the Healthy Families program at the NCAC. Healthy Families is a parent support program for first-time parents living in Madison County. It offers family support and education services that begin in the last trimester of the pregnancy or before the baby is 1 month old and may continue until the child begins kindergarten.

Please consider a monetary donation to this program, marking your check "NCAC Healthy Families" in the memo line .

Thank you! Christian Women's Ministries

### RUMMAGE SALE UPDATE

Hello all!

I have received many questions about this year's rummage sale. As many of you know, the rummage sale is a huge ordeal that requires the volunteer efforts of many of our church members and staff. It is also important to note that I am pregnant and due on the week/weekend of the rummage sale's typically stated date. COVID is still taking a toll on the community as well. With these factors prayerfully considered, the Christian Education Committee and the staff had discussions about this event for the 2022 year and decided it is best to not hold the event. However, we still do encourage donation of items to charitable causes and wanted to share some resources to help make this easier for you! :)

[www.rocketcitymom.com/huntsville-thrift-stores-donation-centers/](http://www.rocketcitymom.com/huntsville-thrift-stores-donation-centers/) this link has a great list but here are a few hand picked locations!

#### A New Leash On Life Marketplace

707 Andrew Jackson Way NE, Huntsville, AL 35801

#### Downtown Rescue Mission Thrift Stores

(will also pick up items from your home; call 1-855-376-7283) 1407 A N. Memorial Parkway, Huntsville, AL 35801 Or 8006 Old Madison Pike, Ste 10, Madison, AL 35758

**Goodwill of Huntsville** 8501 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, AL 35802

Alyssa Burton,  
Youth Director

### CONGRATULATIONS 2021 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:

#### DICK CHRISTIANSEN

Each year, Burritt on the Mountain recognizes a volunteer who goes above and beyond to assist guests and staff. This year, we celebrate Dick Christiansen who has given 589 hours of his valued time sharing his skills and talents. For his dedication, he has earned the President's Volunteer Service Gold Medal Award. In 2020, Dick joined Burritt's volunteer team helping with our Adopt-A-Mile program. He has made a huge difference on the drive up the mountain on Monte Sano Blvd. keeping the roadway clean and picking up litter. His efforts make the drive so welcoming to Burritt and the mountain community. Dick also maintains 4 miles of hiking trails on Burritt's property by clearing deadfall and keeping the trails safe. He says "Walking the mountain is far more enjoyable than exercising at the gym!" We greatly appreciate Dick's efforts to help fulfill Burritt's mission to enhance lives in our community.

### LANDSCAPE TEAM AT WORK AND VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The beautiful weather let the landscape team get in some great work last week.

Duffy Boles manicured the Thomas and Martin Islands. They have never looked so good under my care. John Hall cleaned up the Courtyard and cleaned the fountain of a great Springtime look. Thanks Guys. Earlier, Dick Christiansen cleaned out the flat roof gutters so those leaves stopped falling into the Courtyard. He also maintains the Bell Tower front garden.

I put out a call for some helpers to reduce the amount of work I was putting into the landscaping and several members have responded. **I still have a few gardens to offload on some willing volunteers. Call me at \*\*\*\*\* or email at \*\*\*\*\* if you can help.**

Bob Senn, Landscaping Committee Head

The 2022 sign up chart for **FOOD BASKETS** is available. **You may call the office at 256-881-0150 or email [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto: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 our website [fcc-hsv.org/who-we-are/how-to-give/](http://fcc-hsv.org/who-we-are/how-to-give/)

## WHAT NOT TO SAY by John Edgerton

*Blessed is the one whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. For God wounds but also binds up; God injures, but those same hands also heal.* - Job 5:17-18 (NIV)

Oh, Eliphaz the Temanite, you really stuck your foot in it this time. In the beginning of the book of Job, a righteous person loses everything that mattered and winds up miserable. Now here comes Eliphaz—supposedly Job’s friend—saying there must be an explanation. “You must have done something wrong. If you confess, then God will give you back everything.”

Yikes.

Blaming the victim while also offering empty promises that the irreparable will be repaired? Eliphaz is dead wrong. God even says so.

Bad things do, in fact, happen to good people. There is no simple moral arithmetic that explains why some people get all the breaks and others have nothing but heartbreak. Living a moral life is not a divine insurance policy to fend off disaster. That’s not how fate and fortune work, I’m sorry to say. Don’t take my word for it, though. That is the whole argument of the book of Job.

Here is what God promises in the face of heartbreak and loss, here is the truth about God revealed in the book of Job: God listens to our heartbreak.

God heard every word that Job had to say. When Job fumed with anger, God was listening. When Job cried out in grief and despair, God was listening. When Job did his utmost to blaspheme against God, hurt God’s feelings and throw God’s promises right back in the divine countenance, God was listening.

God will listen when we are angry. When we scream in God’s face in pain and grief, God is wise enough and good enough not to offer explanations. Because grieving people don’t need answers. We need the comfort of knowing we aren’t alone, that someone is listening.

### Prayer

God, hear now these prayers of your people, as we lay our heartbreaks before you...

## THE GIFT OF TIME

Rev. Paul J. Allen IV

Sermon: Mar. 6, 2022

Scripture

Verses: Luke 13: 31-35

Whenever I talk to people lately it seems that one topic of conversation always comes up, the need for more time. Time is so precious that when we find out we have been given more it is a wonderful surprise. Have you ever awoken in the middle of the night thinking that it was time to get up and start your day until you look at the clock and realize you still have a few more hours to sleep? Often, in my house, this is the height of excitement.

Or perhaps you have begun a project for work or school and the basic structure of the project is done but you know a little more time would be helpful, and then your boss or your teacher gives you an extension to complete those finishing touches.

You may have had other experiences in which you have been blessed with a few more precious moments. An increase in time may not make a huge difference in our lives but it makes us feel better, even if just for a moment. More time means that we have a chance to get things done, sleep a little longer, experience a sense of freedom, or just enjoy peace and quiet.

In the scripture lesson for today Jesus talks about the importance of time. He knew that his crucifixion was near, but there were still things to do on earth, and Christ knew that there was still time for others to hear the good news.

The author of Luke awakens our interest in a time when he begins this passage saying that in that very hour some Pharisees came to see Jesus. Their message was so important that it could not wait for the next day; they had to see him immediately. After all, they carried the news that Herod wanted to kill Jesus.

It seems odd that Pharisees would come and warn Jesus of Herod’s plans. After all, many times in the New Testament we hear that the Pharisees were intent on silencing Jesus. Yet, it is also clear that many Pharisees believed in Jesus’ message

*Gift* continued page 5...

**Gift** continued from page 4...

and supported him. They wanted to change the current understanding of Judaism as well and wished to gain control of the temple from the Sadducees.

The Sadducees had also begun as a reforming priesthood, but through the years they had become pawns of the Roman government. By the time of Jesus, Rome appointed most of the temple priests and they used their power and influence to make their fortunes and support their political objectives. They were more concerned about making money and gaining power than the will of God or the good of the people.

Both the Pharisees and Jesus were fighting to bring a new understanding of the will of God to Jerusalem, yet Herod Antipas, the grandson of Herod the Great who tried to kill Jesus at his birth, was allied with the Sadducees. Perhaps that is why he wanted to kill Jesus, he was afraid of his growing power and influence.

Jesus does not seem to be concerned about Herod's plot to kill him; instead, he gives a warning. Herod cannot stop the work of God, no human power can. But, time is short and the third day is coming soon.

There are things that Jesus must do beforehand. He must arrive in Jerusalem, enter the city in glory, and prophesy of the destruction of the temple. These things are necessary not just to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah, but to ready his followers and the world for what was to come.

But then Jesus once again shows his humanity, through a lament for the sake of Jerusalem. Jerusalem, the killer of prophets, the city of God, the people who turn away from God time and time again only to be brought back to belief through sacrifice.

It must have truly hurt Jesus to be rejected by the very people he came to save. Can you imagine the pain he felt when he was almost stoned in his hometown? His anguish when he realized that the people of the holy city of Jerusalem and the world, would not only reject him but cry out for his death?

Jesus knew that his message would not be heard. He understood the necessity of the cross and even though he prayed that the burden would be taken away from him, he knew that his death would bring new life not just for his hometown, or Jerusalem, but for us all.

Therefore, this lament ends with hope. Jesus states that Jerusalem will not see him again until the time comes when all people say, Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Jesus knew that his death was not the end but the beginning. He showed the world the power of sacrifice; the majesty of giving one's very life for the sake of others, and the world has never been the same. Now there is hope for all people. God is with us and there is still time, for salvation is offered to all.

There is time to repent, to receive pardon for our sins, and to welcome the reign of God. This covenantal promise is continued from generation to generation. In essence, through the death of Jesus, we have been given what we value the most, time, time to believe, time to see, time to offer ourselves, and time to be faithful.

In a study conducted a few years ago, marketing professor Robert Cialdini directed a research team to go door to door in a San Diego suburb, placing hangers on doorknobs with messages about energy conservation. For some, the signs urged the homeowners to save energy to protect the environment; another said they should conserve energy for the benefit of future generations; a third pointed to the cost savings that would result from conserving energy, and the last stated that most of the homeowner's neighbors were taking steps to save energy every day.

At the end of the month, Cialdini and his team returned to the homes that received the door hangers, read their electric meters, and then compared them to homes that received no messages at all. They hoped to discover what kind of messaging affects people's behavior the most.

After comparing the energy usage from the houses with door hangers, what they found is that only one of the four groups of houses that received

**Gift** continued page 6...

**Gift** continued from page 5...

those hangers reduced their energy consumption as compared to the houses that didn't receive a door hanger at all.

The only door hanger that made a difference in people's behavior was the one that said "your neighbors are doing it." Cialdini summarized the most important conclusion in the study when he said, "People are looking at those around them, like them, in their particular environment, in their particular context, to decide what to do." In other words, people decide what's important by watching those around them.

I love that a major university study spent a huge amount of time to prove what any teenager can tell you--peer pressure is real. We are constantly comparing ourselves with those around us and this can be exhausting; but this should also tell us that how we live, what we do, and what we say matters.

Today is the second Sunday in Lent. We are on a journey through this special season in which we often find ourselves trying to live differently, to mark these 40 days with a certain behavior that can change our lives for the better. But Lent can also be an invitation to change our lives in meaningful ways that go beyond these 40 days.

Small shifts in behavior, small tweaks in our habits, can create big ripples in our lifestyles. For most of us, living out our faith is not the strongest habit in our lives. Sure, going to church, being a part of a Christian community, sounds good; but taking that identity into the world is not a habit for us. I think it could be.

In today's lesson Jesus does not just tell us that there is time to make changes he tells us it is time to transform ourselves and to become the people and the church that God wants us to be. We all have unique gifts, talents we can employ and time to share the good news, time to reach out to our neighbors, and time to share the love of Christ that we know so well.

So how will you spend your time in the next few weeks, how will you use this precious gift? How will you change yourself so others can see the gospel through you? Amen.

## **COVID-19 CHURCH PROTOCOLS** (Approved by the Board on March 10, 2022)

- **One in-person 9:30 a.m. service** is currently offered. Virtual services ([facebook.com/fcchsv](https://www.facebook.com/fcchsv), [twitch.tv/fcchsv](https://www.twitch.tv/fcchsv), or First Christian Church Huntsville on YouTube) are also offered every Sunday. While FCC and State recommendations are good benchmarks, we invite all people to worship with us based on their comfort level.
- **Enter the church through the Bell Tower Garden/Narthex doors.** The doors by the church office are locked.
- **Wearing face coverings/masks is optional**
- Hand sanitizer and masks are available at the Lobby Welcome Table along with prepackaged communion elements.
- The **nursery** is open for the 9:30 a.m. service and the 10:30 a.m. small group time.
- **The front section of the Sanctuary, on the pulpit side, is the least impacted area with our heating and cooling system and every other row of pews is roped off to allow individuals to practice social distancing so that they may worship at their level of comfort.**
- Offerings may be placed in the brass plate when exiting the sanctuary or sent by mail.
- **Small groups** (including Sunday school classes) will meet at **8:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.**
- Anyone with any symptoms will remain home and celebrate virtually for at least 14 days
- **Please notify the church office immediately if you develop symptoms after attending a service.**

