



WHAT COMES NEXT?

A few months ago the First Christian Church Board created a committee to discuss the transition of the church post COVID-19 concerns. This committee met every two weeks and discussed how the church will respond to this great change in our community. As pandemic concerns begin to wind down, we want to know when things will return to the way they were, but I believe that this next year will clarify God's vision for our church. Our discussions will decide the future of our ministry, our mission, and our message for years to come.

I can still remember the year that I left Seminary and traveled to North Carolina to serve my first church. I had already been the pastor of a church in Chaplin, Kentucky, but I was part time. First Christian Church in Chaplin was a very small congregation that helped me grow and taught some very important lessons. First Christian Church in Farmville was much larger and had been through some turmoil. I knew where I was moving, I was born fifteen minutes away, went to college in the area, and my father's family was from the town I would be serving, so I was not a stranger, but it would be different, new, and challenging, and I have to admit that I was terrified.

What if the church was not a good fit for me, what if the church was not a good fit for Patti. Was I ready for a full time pastorate, maybe I should start with an associate pastor's position? How would I balance family life with the life of a minister? Could we find some place to live so we could move out of AC Turnage's guest room? Is this where God wanted me to be?

All of these questions kept swirling through my mind the first few weeks I was there, until it happened. One Sunday I arrived at church, went into my office, got ready for the worship service and someone came in to ask the minister a question, and I realized, that was me. I was no longer in school, although I knew that I would continue to learn about my vocation, I was actively participating in the work of ministry, I was the spiritual leader of a congregation, I was the person that people came to for wisdom and advice. That was a lot to think about for a 24 year old (I think it would be a profound realization no matter how old you are.) but that day I began to understand the joy and the heartbreak that ministry can bring. I was a part of a community of faith, I was called to lead and I had to take up this challenge.

As we look ahead we need to remember that throughout this time we continued to engage in ministry. Our call to faith has not changed, or desire to reach out to the community with the good news of Christ has not changed, the only thing that can hinder us is if we choose not to trust in God and follow the path that has been laid out for all believers. As I spoke with several ministerial colleagues this week and told them about our meetings one remarked, "This must be God telling you something." They are right, this must be God telling us something; together let's live out this message and continue the ministry of First Christian Church. Amen.

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, April 15**, at Noon. Email to: publisher@fcc-hsv.org

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

HOUSE OF HOPE NEEDS OUR HELP

Christian Women Mission (CWM) hopes you will join us as we financially support House of Hope (Haiti) during April. Through Global Ministries, House of Hope provides a safe place and educational programs for at-risk children in the Port-au-Prince area with a completion rate of 95%. Haiti has been in political turmoil for years and has also been devastated by several hurricanes. Life expectancy average is 63 years and adult illiteracy is over 51%. House of Hope is making a difference and so can we through a donation. Checks can be made to FCC with House of Hope in the memo line. Sponsorship is \$360 per year per child; CWM would love to sponsor two children, as we did last year. Please help us achieve this goal.



WEEKLY PRAYER CONCERNS



Not Published Online

SEVERAL OPEN DATES FOR FOOD BASKETS

Sign up dates for **FOOD BASKETS** are 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, with checks made out to First Christian Church and Food Basket on the notation line, and go to our Community Outreach for distribution.

IN PERSON & ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES

We have resumed in-person worship services but you may still stream them live at 9:30 am on Sundays (or watch previous services anytime) on YouTube at: www.youtube.com/channel/UCzQCRY8Vfa-IDhuqUnUhCKw

You may also stream services live on Sundays at 9:30 am, watch previous services, videos for children, and special activities on our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/fcchsv/videos

Finally, stream services at 9:30 am on Sunday at: www.twitch.tv/fcchsv



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

First Christian Church
Birmingham, AL



THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET is in honor of the church staff by Margaret J. Vann

SEEKING DONATIONS FOR HOME # 27

We completed Home # 26 last year during the pandemic. We did not work many hours on the house but did contribute \$4,000 to its construction cost. Eight partner families moved into their new homes during the pandemic. Their experiences and how they live their lives have changed dramatically since moving. Their children can run and play outdoors after a long day inside because they now live in a safe neighborhood with adequate space for learning and working from their home. The knowledge that their home was built to code and standards promotes an environment of health and safety. We are making a difference. This new Habitat neighborhood will have 31 homes when completed.

We are changing lives one home at a time. Please help us with time, talent or treasure on Home # 27. Write your check to FCC with Habitat on the memo line if you would like to contribute. Bob Senn, Mr. Habitat for FCC

CHURCH OFFICE

The current Church Office hours continue as normal. Open Monday through Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm except closed from 12:30 - 1:30 pm for lunch. While the office had been minimally staffed with one person per day due to COVID precautions, staffing is now being increased to two persons assigned per day. The reduced staffing schedule is as follows. Mondays – Lynn and Rick. Tuesdays – Lynn, Paul, and Rick. Wednesdays – Laura and Matt. Thursdays - Paul and Rick. Fridays - Laura and Rick. The staff continues to work from home (Zoom meetings, email, phone calls, etc.) when they are not in the office and come in the office when their work cannot be done from home. As always, it is a good idea to call before coming to the office to see a particular person and make sure they are available (meetings, projects, errands, vacation, etc.).

Church members/office visitors should continue not using the North entrance of the church.

Office continued next column...

Office continued...

This entrance is temporarily for ECM staff and children only during the current healthcare crisis. Members/visitors are directed to use the separate Church Office entrance, signs are pointing the way, about 40 feet East of the North entrance. There is a doorbell to request entry/assistance.

SHOOK

By Martha Spong

Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

- Mark 16:8 (NIV)

Maybe you've been in that space, in that feeling, when you hear news so stunning it leaves you shook. It might be good news or bad news; whatever it is, you can't find words for it. You have to hope that those around you will know how you feel: that you love them no matter what, or that you want them to celebrate with you, or that you will be on Team Whatever Needs To Be Done.

In the pandemic, that kind of news has come to us from a distance. Rather than across a table, the person giving it is on a video or phone screen, and so we can't put a hand on theirs, or an arm around them, or wrap them in a hug. We can't help them or ourselves with the acts of presence we would ordinarily expect at the news of a birth or a death, a wedding or a divorce, a great new job or the loss of the work we loved.

Mark's Gospel leaves the ending open, puts us in that space, in that feeling, where what's happened has moved us to a silence accompanied only by our trembling. I'm glad these brave women who left home to follow Jesus had each other in that moment when the shock of grief became fear of the unknown. These three sisters in the struggle ran until they stopped, and one put her arms around the others and found the words: "I know we're shook, but maybe, maybe, this news is good."

Prayer: Gracious God, we ask for the strength to carry your good news even, especially, when we tremble. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING for the Election of Officers on **Sunday, May 2**, following 9:30 a.m. worship service.

FCC Nominees for 7/1/21-6/30/23

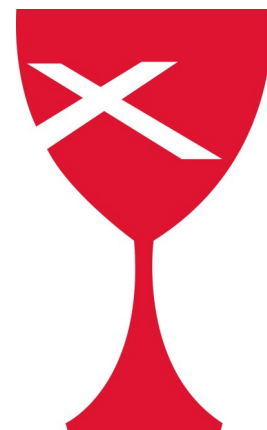
Position Agreed to serve

Moderator	Andy Herron
Moderator Elect	Pam Clasgens
Treasurer	Jon Ahlbin
Asst Treasurer	Roger Sameck (1year)
Financial Secretary	Dick Christiansen
Asst Financial Secretary	Don Coburn
Asst Financial Secretary	Terry Sullivan
Elder	Monty Love
Elder	Cameron Douglas
Elder	Lisa Fitzgerald
Elder	Margaret J. Vann
Elder	Roberta Shivers
Elder	Nancy Woodall
Elder	Sabrina Beckman
Elder	Lee Boles
Deacon	Frank Fitzgerald
Deacon	Carrie/Kyle Love
Deacon	Marilee Keim
Deacon	Diane Douglas
Deacon	Sharifa Love-Rutledge
Deacon	Beverly Cannon
Deacon	Chris Haury
Deacon	Susan Griffin
Convener	Mary Ann Anderson
Convener	Anita Wood
Convener	Nancy Waites
Convener	Phyllis Leonard
Trustee	Lee Boles
Trustee	Dick Christiansen
Trustee	Dale Thomas

Sanctuary Service Protocols

(Revised April 8)

- In person worship is at 9:30 a.m.
- Sunday school classes, the nursery, children/youth gatherings, coffee, and other hospitality services are currently suspended.
- While FCC and the State recommendations are good benchmarks, we invite all people to worship with us based on their comfort level. Virtual services are offered (facebook.com/fcchsv, twitch.tv/fcchsv, or First Christian Church Huntsville on Youtube) every Sunday.
- **Attendees, including children, will wear face coverings/masks inside the church and practice social distancing (6 feet apart for non-household members) for everyone's safety.**
- Attendance is limited (approximately 75) to the ability to social distance.
- Enter the church through the Bell Tower Garden/Narthex doors. The doors by the church office will be locked.
- Greeters will provide hand sanitizer to all who enter and provide masks for those who have not brought their own.
- No choir/congregational singing.
- Offerings may be placed in the brass plate when exiting the sanctuary or sent by mail.
- **Anyone with any symptoms will remain home and celebrate virtually for at least 14 days.**
- **Notify the church office immediately if you develop symptoms after attending a service**



CHURCH CALENDAR

The following are the known* church related activities.

April

- 12 9:30 am Esther Circle
10:30 am Conveners
- 14 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study
- 15 10 am Bible Study - The Walk
- 19 10:30 am Quilters
- 21 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study
- 22 10 am Bible Study - The Walk
- 26 10 am Bible Study - The Walk
- 28 9 am Breakfast Bunch
6:00 pm Men's Bible Study

May (Partial)

- 2 10:30 am Congregational Meeting
- 3 10:30 am Quilters
- 5 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study
- 6 10 am Bible Study - The Walk
- 9 Mother's Day
- 10 9:30 am Esther Circle
10:30 am Conveners
10:30 am Quilters
- 12 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study
- 13 10 am Bible Study - The Walk
- 17 10:30 am Quilters
- 19 6:00 pm Men's Bible Study
- 20 10 am Bible Study - The Walk

* Previously, activities were listed on the calendar based on Facility Requests submissions. Some meetings are now being conducted virtually, or in other ways, so the church office has no way of knowing that those meetings are occurring. Please contact the church office (256-881-0150 or publisher@fcc-hsv.org) if you would like your group or committee, including the point of contact, included on the calendar.