



# The Journey

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[www.fcc-hsv.org](http://www.fcc-hsv.org)

## "DEAR DISCIPLES" Rev. Terri Hord Owens, May 28, 2021

Hello, Disciples. I hope that your Pentecost celebrations in worship were full of revival and fresh fire, fresh wind, to carry us forward into these still uncertain and unprecedented times.

Even as we see hope and light before us after 15 months of pandemic, we needed to be reminded that God was sending us a special Helper, a gift, Jesus said, someone who would help us to remember all that Jesus had taught. I read this week in my Bible study in the book of Joshua, the third chapter, as the children of Israel are on the edge of the river Jordan, preparing to cross over into Canaan.

God speaks to Joshua and says, "Have the priest to carry the Ark of the Covenant before the people and tell the people to follow it, because you have not passed this way before." What God was saying was, "Follow me. I know that you haven't been here before, but I am with you, and if you will just follow me, we will make that journey into that land of hope and light."

On Pentecost Sunday, Jesus' followers had been through a season of disruption and trauma. The resurrection had happened but they still weren't sure quite what was next. We've been through 15 months of pandemic. We have adjusted, and adapted, and continued to do ministry despite trauma and pain and the loss of so much life. The devastation of so many parts of our economy. The violence that still continues to plague our country.

But we are now seeing a point where restrictions are being lifted. More of us are being vaccinated. We're asking the questions, "Can we be in the same room together, mask or no mask? In person on the parking lot? Hybrid worship? Still online? Lord, what shall we do?" I want to point you back to that edge of the river Jordan, where God says, "Follow me, because you've not been here before." God knows, church, that we have need of God's guidance. God also knows that we are so capable of bearing witness to God's limitless love.

I invite you to just stay with God. Continue to pray. Continue to spend time with the Holy. Continue to engage that sacred text so that you will immerse yourself in God's presence, remembering all that Jesus taught. Filled with that fresh fire and fresh power from on high, there are still a ways to go. There is still a new place to which we must travel as church, a new church, with the courage to imagine who we must be how we must serve, how we shall live in this new time and space.

I'm encouraged because I'm reminded that God knows that we have not passed this way before. So let's follow God. Let's stay with God. Let's be with God as we move forward into hope and light, filled and encouraged, emboldened and inspired by the very Spirit and presence of God. Let's go, church. We've not passed this way before, but God is with us, and we must simply follow where God leads. My prayer for you is that you will hear. You will listen. You will follow. God loves you, Disciples. God loves you, and so do I.

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, June 10**, 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.**



### SAVE THE DATE!

Vacation Bible School-In Person!  
July 19-23 (9:00-11:30 am)  
Ages 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

This year at VBS, we will explore five stories about Jesus from the Gospels of Luke and John. These stories reveal the generosity of God, the transforming power of Jesus' welcome, and offer a model for living and sharing God's hospitality. Children will be invited to see the ways Jesus welcomed and cared for all people and be challenged to welcome and share that same hospitality with everyone. Join us as we discover all are welcome at the table!

To register your child or to volunteer to help please contact Pastor Laura (256) 881-0150 or [laura@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:laura@fcc-hsv.org)

### WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY STARTS JUNE 10



Joshua - *Winning the Worry Battle*, by Barb Roose will be our study topic. The participant's workbook can be purchased either on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com) or [Cokesbury](https://www.cokesbury.com) websites for roughly \$12.00-ISBN 13:9781501813603

**When:** We will meet for 6 weeks on Thursday mornings from 10:00 until 11:30, beginning on June 10th and ending July 15th.

**Where:** The Family Services Room

Covid protocols will be followed as set out in church policy. If you are interested, please contact the office at 256-881-0150 or by email at [office@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:office@fcc-hsv.org)

### IN PERSON & ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday in-person worship services are at 9:30 a.m. but you may still stream them live at 9:30 a.m., or watch previous services anytime, on [facebook.com/fcchsv](https://www.facebook.com/fcchsv), [twitch.tv/fcchsv](https://www.twitch.tv/fcchsv), or search First Christian Church Huntsville on Youtube. See **New COVID-19 Protocols** on page 4.



### SHORT PRAYER CONCERNS



### 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](mailto: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

Oakmont Christian Church  
Saraland, AL

### 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](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, with checks made out to First Christian Church and Food Basket on the notation line, and go to our Community Outreach committee for local needs.



**Back by popular Demand!**  
**The First Christian Church Chancel Choir!**

Your voice is needed, so you are encouraged and welcomed to join us. Rehearsals resume June 9th from 7:00 - 7:40 P.M. (Masks are required.) Contact Lauren Wilson, Music Director, if interested.

More information coming soon!

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT FOR JUNE:  
 WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

The Community Outreach Committee's project for June is collecting financial donations for the Foster Care Unit of the Department of Human Resources (DHR).



There are over 400 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.



**THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET** is in memory of Reggie Anderson by Mary Anderson.

**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE**

May 23 - 82  
 May 30 - 69  
 June 6 - 83

**SUNDAY SMALL GROUP CLASSES**

**31 Flavors: Meets at 8:30 a.m.** A wide cross-section of people meets in the Garden Room. The class is currently viewing and discussing the Ray Vander Laan video series set in the Holy Land.

**New Testament: Meets at 8:30 am** in Family Services. A DVD program entitled *The New Testament* by lecturer Professor Bart Ehrman. It approaches the NT from a historical perspective, bracketing questions on belief and theological truth to acquire a historical rich grounding for our understanding of these foundational documents. Each class session stands alone and is led by Bob Senn. New members are encouraged and are welcome. Please enter FSA through the front Garden entrance.

**Growing Christians: Meets at 10:30 a.m.** downstairs in room 209. This diverse group is currently studying Prof. Luke Timothy Johnson's video series *The History of Christianity: From the Disciples to the Dawn of the Reformation*. This course covers the first 1,500 years of Christianity as it evolved from an obscure, persecuted sect of Judaism to the official religion of the Roman Empire to European Christendom.

**G.I.F.T. (Generations in Faith Together) Intergenerational Class: Meets at 10:30 a.m.** in Family Services. For June, July & August all children, youth & interested adults will gather for one intergenerational class. The class will be led by Pastor Laura and Alyssa Burton. Each week will be a different focus, so come join us when you can!  
 1st Sunday of Month - Scripture Study with Skit or Arts & Crafts.  
 2nd Sunday of Month - Bible Games.  
 3rd Sunday of Month - Hands-On Mission Projects.  
 4th Sunday of Month - Creative Prayer Stations.  
 5th Sunday of Month - Family Focus Seminar.



## NEW COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

(APPROVED MAY 22)

- **Fully vaccinated individuals may choose to attend with or without masks.**
- **Attendees who are not fully vaccinated, and children who are able, will continue to wear face coverings/masks inside the church until further notice.**
- There will be only **one 9:30 a.m. service** offered for the next 12 months. First Christian Church offers 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) every Sunday. While FCC and State recommendations are good benchmarks, we invite all people to worship with us based on their comfort level.
- Hand sanitizer and masks are available for those who have not brought their own.
- Prepackaged communion elements are available in the Narthex.
- The **nursery is open** for the 9:30 a.m. service and the 10:30 a.m. small group time.
- Attendance is limited (approximately 75) to the ability to social distance (6 feet apart for non-household members). Every other pew will be roped off for social distancing.
- **Members may vocalize** during the service, such as stating the Lord's Prayer, litanies, etc., sing the Doxology within the service.
- Offerings may be placed in the brass plate when exiting the sanctuary or sent by mail.
- Food, coffee, and other hospitality services remain suspended until further notice.
- **Small groups** (including Sunday school classes) are meeting in person at **8:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.**
- An **Intergenerational Small Group** class for children, youth, and any adults that wish to attend will meet at 10:30 a.m. beginning June 6 and continuing through August.
- 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.

## DON'T FORGET US by Martha Spong

*The Lord will fulfill God's purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands. - Psalm 138:8 (NRSV)*

I grew up Baptist, so my idea of prayer was your own words you strung together with a particular purpose in mind – whether to ask for something, or to ask forgiveness for something, or to ask for something for someone else, or to thank God for any or all of the above. Six years in Episcopal school exposed me to repeated forms of prayer, including confessions and petitions and praise, all sounding like poetry. Bits and phrases still live in my head half a century later. They are words to pray when I don't have my own words.

The psalms were written for that purpose, to put prayers into a form that a community or an individual might use, and they often end with a word of trust in God – that God hears, or God cares, or God will act. This closing verse of Psalm 138 is doing a lot of that work. It's saying, "There must be a reason why I'm here," and "God never stops loving," and, just in case, "Please, don't forget me."

We need these good prayers, in our words or in the psalmist's, for all the moments when we believe but also worry about what's happening around us, or how we fit into what God wants for the world. This past year plus raised those concerns and questions for me daily.

Is your idea of prayer the words in a book, or the words that stream from your heart to your mouth, or something else?

When you need words and don't have them, try these.

### Prayer

Holy God, we trust that you have a purpose for us, and you will never stop loving us. (Please, don't forget us.) Amen.

