



The Journey

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LEARNING TO PRAY

I still remember, when I was a child, when my father taught me how to pray. As the son of two ministers going to church was just a natural part of my life, it is something we did every Sunday and often times during the week. I also went to Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and Church Camp and I am sure there were lessons on prayer at these events, but the lesson I remember most clearly came from the dinner table.

When my family sat down to eat we would pray before every meal. We had a small table in the back of the kitchen where we would have our family meals, we would only eat in the dining room if we had company over. When the food was ready we sat down, my father would ask us to bow our heads and we would pray. I can remember as a child being impatient, I was hungry and ready to eat, and while my father did not pray long, it seemed to take a long time to me.

Then the day came when my father asked me to pray for the food. This was a big responsibility and I remember feeling anxious and scared. Would my prayer be right? Would I mess up in some way? Would my parents be mad at me? Would God be mad at me? My father could see I was uncomfortable so he said, "I will pray tonight, but tomorrow we will pray together." That night he taught me a simple grace, "God is great, God is good, let us thank him for our food. By his hands we all are fed. Thank you Lord for daily bread. Amen." I would bet that many of you know this prayer, or at least a version of this prayer.

I still remember it to this day, in fact, I taught my children this prayer and sometimes we use it when we pray for meals. It is simple, direct, and has the elements a prayer of thanksgiving needs. Who are we praying for, God who is great and good. Giving thanks for the gifts we have been given and recognizing it is God who provides them. There is even a final element asking for a specific need, our daily bread. There are many different types of prayer, asking for healing and comfort, prayers of petition, intercession, giving thanks, and praise just to name a few and it is important to understand that God does not need our prayers to be overly embellished or flowery. One of the best lessons on prayer I ever heard, gave me a simple, one word prayer that I used daily, "Help."

We do not need to be anxious about praying, rather our prayers should be a simple and honest conversation with God. Even if we ramble, even if they do not make sense, even if we do not know what to say, God is listening and God will respond, sometimes in ways we do not expect. God wants us to pray, God wants to hear from us, and then God calls us to respond in the world making the love of Christ a reality for others. Thanks be to God for the gift of prayer, Amen.

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, June 17**, at Noon. Email to: 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 5th 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

**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 honor of Mary Ann Anderson by Esther Circle.



**SHORT TERM
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 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

Mt. Calvary Missionary Christian Church
Tuskegee, 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 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.

Dear Christian friends,

Thank you seems so inadequate to say after all you've done for us. Your calls, cards, and visits (before COVID) kept our spirits up and our faith strong. God has heard our prayers and I am blessed to tell you that I am now in remission.

I couldn't have done it without your prayers and encouragement. There are still some challenges ahead for me, but I know with your support I can face the future with God beside me.

In Christian love, Gail and Tom Killough

Your Blessings Bless Others

Women of FCC, have you taken the time to practice the Spiritual Discipline of keeping a Blessing Box in a prominent place in your home, office, or both where you can drop a coin or coins in to acknowledge a blessing, small or large? Could you pause in a busy day to be grateful for God's daily blessings: a sunny day, a safe journey, a good meeting, a baby's smile, a call or message from a friend, an unsolicited "I love you," meeting a deadline, a gentle rain? Collections will be gathered in the spring of 2022 continuing a long tradition of the Christian Women's Fellowship since the 1880's in supporting the mission of the whole church and specifically supporting women's ministries. Blessing boxes provided by CWM are available now in the Narthex of FCC or from your Circle leader. All women are invited to participate.

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 pervious services anytime, on facebook.com/fcchsv, twitch.tv/fcchsv, or search First Christian Church Huntsville on Youtube. See **New COVID-19 Protocols** on page 5.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE SUNDAY, JUNE 13

Service: 80

Small Groups: 17

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.



CWM ANNUAL REPORT

Christian Women's Ministries has completed its 2020-21 program year, continuing our focus on study, service, and fellowship. We are planning for next year and look forward to expanding our objectives and our membership.

The following summarizes FCC's 2020-21 donations to our monthly projects, which serve the church, community, region, and world. Thanks to our CWM leaders and to the congregation for its generous support of our ministries.

- \$737 Hope Place
- \$696 Neaves Davis Center for Children
- \$420 WellHouse (AL/NWFL CWM project)
- \$210 Bread for the World (AL/NWFL CWM project)
- \$285 Christmas Charities plus individual gift donations
- \$760 Church World Service Blankets+ Program
- Valentine cards to 25 FCC college students, shut-ins, and military
- \$1,000 Community Free Dental Clinic*
- \$660 Disciples Mission Fund from Blessing Boxes
- \$635 National Children's Advocacy Center
- \$1,110 Global Ministries Child Sponsorship Program
- \$1,375 Grateful Life Community Church*

* Joint project with Community Outreach

All FCC women and friends are invited to participate in our study circles, Quilters and Crafters, and Prayer Shawl Ministry. If you would like more information, please contact Mary Ann Anderson .

HELP FOR PRAYER

By Bob Thompson

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. - Romans 8:26 (NRSV)

“Pastor, would you pray the doctor hits the bull’s eye with my injection?” Of course I will.

“I don’t really know what to pray for; I’m so confused.” Let’s talk to God together anyway.

Myths about prayer seem to abound and rebound. One myth is that the Rev’s prayers have more effect. Another is that God needs explicit instructions from us in prayer. If we don’t know say the right thing, how will God know what to do?

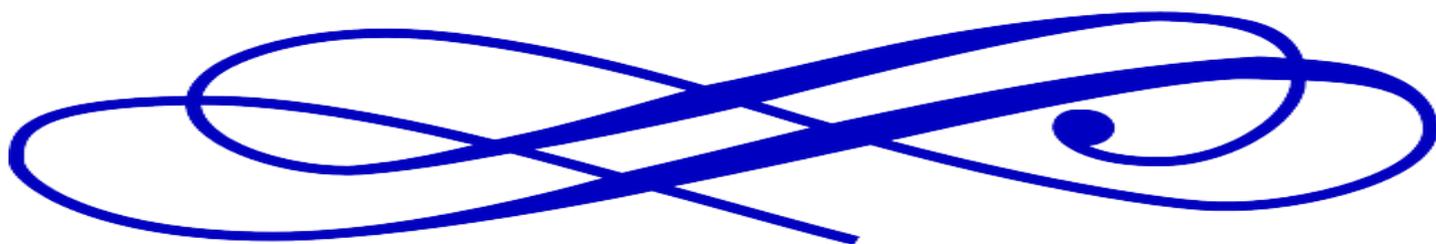
More often than not, whether we admit it or not, “we do not know how to pray as we ought.” Our prayers seem selfish or rambling. Will God stay on the other end of the line if I don’t get to the point or it’s all about me?

Paul says we have help – not only for the times we know we don’t know, but for the times when we think we do. The Holy Spirit knows that among our weaknesses is a felt need to educate God.

Words, the Apostle Paul says, are not even essential to prayer. Not for us, and not for the Holy Spirit. The Spirit knows the “will of God” (Romans 8:27) and translates our prayers accordingly. God knows what we say and is attuned to our wordless sighs.

Prayer

God, thank you today that you are not only still speaking, you’re still listening. Even when I don’t know what to say. Amen.



NEW COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

(APPROVED JUNE 10)

- **Enter the church through the Bell Tower Garden/Narthex doors.** The doors by the church office will be locked.
- **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, 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 85) 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