



## FIVE STEPS TO INVITE VISITORS TO CHURCH

With the Thanksgiving Holiday upon us, the season of Advent arriving soon, and Christmas and the New Year right around the corner now is a wonderful time to invite friends, family, and neighbors to church. We have a host of activities coming soon, including our Hanging of the Greens Service on November 27. The Funky Christmas Fashion Show on December 7, The Christmas Fest on December 10, the Festival of Carols on December 11, and of course our Christmas Eve and Day services, that will appeal to different people. I thought it might be a good idea to revisit how to invite others to our church.

### Five Steps to Invite Visitors to Church

1. First of all, pray before inviting someone. See out God's guidance and ask the Holy Spirit to prompt you on whom you should invite. If you have someone in mind ask for assistance from God in this endeavor.
2. Ask the visitor if they would like to go WITH you. Do not throw an open invite, but instead offer to meet them:
  - Outside the main entrance of the church (and explain which entrance it is.),
  - At your home, so you can carpool together,
  - Offer to meet in the parking lot and walk in together,
  - Offer to meet before or after for a shared meal.
3. Explain what the service and the experience will look like. They may have questions such as :
  - What to wear,
  - How long the service is,
  - What to expect during the service,
  - How we take communion,
  - Which door should they enter if you aren't meeting them beforehand,
  - Whether are they expected to give,
  - and others.Take away as much of the unknown as possible, making it less scary to attend.
4. Be by their side as they step into the unknown. Your presence will comfort them and give them the strength to see for themselves what church is really about. Sit with them, introduce them to others, and help them feel comfortable during the service.
5. Finally, follow up. If they attended church, follow up and ask what they thought. Are they interested in attending again? Did they have questions or concerns? Do they know where to start next? Getting them to church is a huge victory, but there is still work to be done.

I look forward to seeing you, and some new faces, throughout the Advent and Christmas season. May God bless and keep you. Amen.

The *Journey* is published on the first and third Monday of the month.  
Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, December 1**, at Noon. Email to: [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:publisher@fcc-hsv.org)

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### HANGING OF THE GREENS

Join us in person or online this Sunday, November 27, at 9:30 am for our Hanging of the Greens Service.



Join us on Sunday morning, December 11th at 9:30 am as the FCC Choir and guest musicians present "A Festival of Christmas Carols".

Listen to beautiful singing, learn the history behind these classic pieces, and sing along with some of the most-loved Christmas Carols ever written. We look forward to seeing you there!

### FUNKY CHRISTMAS FASHION SHOW!

Hello all! Get ready for a brand-new fundraiser led by the youth group! Introducing the Funky Christmas Fashion show. This fundraiser doubles as a fun event for the entire church. **Following the 5:30 meal on Wednesday, December 7**, join the youth for a night of Christmas cheer and ugly Christmas sweaters to fund Christmas presents for 5 local children. The way the Funky Christmas Fashion show works is that members of the church, children's group, and youth group sign up to dress up in their ugliest, funkiest, most adorable, Christmas outfits and show them off to the congregation in the fashion show of the advent season. The fundraising part of this event happens directly following the runway show when all are invited to vote for their favorite contestant, one dollar is equal to one vote! At the end of this event, we will tally the votes and announce the winner!



Make sure to mark your calendars for **December 7th at 5:30 pm** in McMains! If you are interested in participating in the fashion show or would like to donate towards the shopping please contact Alyssa Burton at [alyssa@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:alyssa@fcc-hsv.org) or sign up on the board located outside of the sanctuary!

**HARRIS HOME FOR CHILDREN** is a non-profit agency in Huntsville that has provided foster care and emergency crisis care for neglected and dependent children in our community since 1954. Harris Home provides full-time foster care, therapeutic care, and educational services to help these children reach their full potential. Currently, all residents are males aged 12-20.

In November, Community Outreach will collect monetary donations as well as cleaning supplies, paper products, laundry supplies, personal hygiene products, first aid supplies, bath towels and washcloths, and sheets, blankets and pillows, etc. to support Harris Home's mission. For a more specific list, see the display in the narthex. Please leave donated items in the basket at the display, or send a check to FCC with "Harris Home" in the memo line or leave it in the offering bowl on Sunday.

For more information about Harris Home's history and mission, please go to [harrishomeforchildren.org](http://harrishomeforchildren.org).

Thank you! Mary Ann Anderson

### WELLHOUSE

CWM/AL/NWFL Regional Project for November

This worthwhile center provides residential and therapeutic programs to female victims of human trafficking. This service was actually started by a survivor of human trafficking who saw the need for such a refuge. It is the largest single-site residential provider for victims in the US. 2020 data from a national hot line showed it to be pandemic-proof. They reported a 22% increase in online recruitment. 42% of victims were brought into human trafficking by a member of their family. In 2021 Wellhouse was able to finance and open a separate house on their campus just for children and teens.

Please take a few minutes to check out their website: [www.the-wellhouse.org](http://www.the-wellhouse.org). While you are there click on "Shop" and see the various items made by trained survivors that are for sale.

Please prayerfully consider a donation to this organization.

## NAOMI CIRCLE

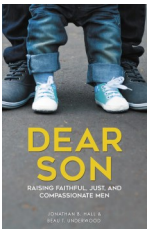
"A safe space for grieving hearts"

We will be meeting (2nd Wednesday at 6pm) virtually over zoom for the months of December, January and February. If you would like the zoom link please contact Sharifa Love-Rutledge at the church office, 256-881-0150.

Many thanks to the congregation of First Christian Church for your strong support of the CWM October Project. Because of your generosity a check for \$908.80 will be sent to the Neaves-Davis Center for Children. Please be assured that your donations will be put to good use to benefit the youth of Huntsville and Madison County through the many programs and services provided by the Neaves-Davis Center.

## DEAR SON

by Jonathan B. Hall



Rev. Jonathan Hall, son of John and Jill Hall, has written a book on raising faithful, just and compassionate men.

A copy is available in the church office. If you would like to read it, please see Lynn on Mondays or Tuesdays. The book is also available on Amazon.

## THANK YOU FROM COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A big thanks goes out to First Christian! We collected \$800 for Grateful Life Church in October. Thanks so much for your generosity

Community Outreach 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

## What return shall I make to God for all God's bounty to me? Psalm 116:12

This has been our focus for the stewardship campaign for the past six weeks. That campaign has drawn to a close with many submitting their estimates of giving for 2023. It's not too late if you have not submitted your estimate for the coming year. Just call Matt at the church office to make your pledge. In the past weeks we have heard from Nancy Waites and Chris Haury who brought their cups forward and who gave us messages about giving as a choice and all gifts standing out to the Lord. Lee Boles followed with her cup from her parents home where she grew up in a family that believed in God and church. Her message focused on gratitude that begins with intentionality. Carrie German Love brought Amos's sippy cup to the table and spoke about the future of the church and all the good work that our gifts can do. Jeff ended the series this Sunday by adding a communion cup to the collection to signify the cup that is never empty and is always full of love and mercy for all. We pray you have taken time to count your blessings in this time and have counted your church as a great blessing in your life.

Sue & Jeff Seward

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - 2023 BUDGET

Sunday, December 11, 10:30 am.

## REGIONAL PRAYER REQUESTS

Fairfax First Christian, Valley, AL  
United Christian Church, Montgomery, AL

## ATTENDANCE

**November 13:** Worship Service: 77  
Small Groups (During week & Sunday): 81  
**November 20:** Worship Service: 69  
Small Groups (During week & Sunday): 37

