



# *The Journey*

Volume XXIX No. 50  
December 13, 2021  
[www.fcc-hsv.org](http://www.fcc-hsv.org)

## **SPECIAL OFFERING FOR THE ALABAMA-NORTHWEST FLORIDA REGION**

In addition to its more than 3,200 congregations and its General Ministries, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) expresses itself in 31 geographic areas called Regions. The Regions cover every part of the United States and Canada. The primary nature of Regional Ministries is to look after the congregations in their regions. Regions have two main purposes: nurture and mission. They are called to fulfill the mission of the Church by taking the lead in developing new forms of ministry in mission, witness, and service. Regions also are nurturing agents that provide support, guidance, and pastoral care to ministers and congregations.

Additionally, Regions play the role of counselor and advisor in matters such as the standing and credentialing of ministers, relocation of pastors, and filling vacant ministerial positions, among other responsibilities. Regions help find interim ministers for churches that are without full-time pastors.

Regional ministers often serve as mentors to congregational pastors. They offer training to clergy and laity and assistance in cases of difficulties between ministers and congregations. Regions call their staffs, own and manage their own property, determine their budgets and administer regional finances within their available resources. They hold regional assemblies and develop procedures for seeking counsel from the Office of General Minister and President.

“The mission of the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region is to encourage and equip its congregations and pastors for the ministry of Jesus Christ in local communities and throughout the world, while seeking to nurture them into deeper relationship with God, with each other, and with the whole Church.”

Our Region has 57 congregations that are part of the family of Disciples in the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region. In covenant with one another, each congregation understands that it is a part of the larger Body of Christ and lives in relationship with other parts of the Body. Each congregation voluntarily commits to the work and mission of the whole church through prayers, involvement, and financial support.

The ministry of the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region is only possible through the voluntary commitment of individuals and congregations. The services and support the Region provides to congregations is a witness to our common commitment to one another. The Alabama-Northwest Florida Region provides a wide variety of ministries aimed at leadership development, congregational vitality, and spiritual renewal and growth. We are committed to the strengthening of our congregations as they give witness to the good news of God’s grace in their communities. Our goal is to achieve excellence in our ministries. In this time of giving please support the ministries of the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region through our Christmas Special Offering on December 12th and 19th. Merry Christmas.

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, December 16**, 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.**

### JOIN THE COFFEE CREW

Looking for a way to serve the church? Join the Coffee Crew! It is not rocket science, but rocket scientists are welcome. Drop a coffee pouch in the machine and press brew, get some orange juice out of the Parlor kitchen refrigerator, and set up on the cart in the Commons area. Bingo! You've helped to facilitate fellowship at the church. (Kitchen orientation is provided.) Depending on the size of the crew, you serve about once every other month. Email publisher@fcc-hsv.org or call 256-881-0150 and say that you want to sign up for the Coffee Crew!



### SHORT TERM PRAYER CONCERNS



## Not Published Online

### CHURCH CALENDAR

- Dec. 13 10:30 am Quilters  
11 am Esther Circle
- Dec. 14 6 pm ECM Christmas Sing  
6:45 pm Elders' Meeting
- Dec. 15 5:30 pm Youth Shopping  
7 pm Choir Rehearsal
- Dec. 19 8:30 am Small Groups  
9:30 am Worship Service  
10:30 am Family Church Service
- Dec. 20 10:30 am Quilters
- Dec. 23 12:30 pm **Church Office Closes**
- Dec. 24 **Church Office Closed**  
5:00 pm **Christmas Eve Service**
- Dec. 26 8:30 am Small Groups  
9:30 am Worship Service  
10:30 am Small Groups
- Dec. 27 10:30 am Quilters
- Dec. 30 12:30 pm **Church Office Closes**
- Dec. 31 **Church Office Closed**

### THANK YOU FOR CARING!

Because of your generosity, a check for \$780 was sent to Harris Home for Children. What a great gift for the Home as they work with foster children and other at-risk youth! Funding is always a great concern for agencies and you have eased that burden. Thank you for caring about those in crisis in our community.



Harris Home  
for Children

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

Ambassadors for Christ Christian Church  
Greenville, AL

**THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET** is in honor of Stan Ball's birthday by Matt & Karen Ball



## CHRISTMAS OFFERING - DECEMBER 19

### "Encouraging...Mission"

The Region is committed to finding ways for congregations to work together in mission, helping them to accomplish more by working together than they could accomplish alone. Without the Region facilitating these opportunities, fine mission work might not take place.

A major area of collaboration, led by the Region, is in the establishment of new congregations. The Region brings together committed leaders to give oversight to new church projects, guiding them as they are in formation.. The Region gave full recognition in 2021 to Pacific Islander Agape Church, Pensacola, FL as its newest congregation, and expects to give full recognition in 2022 to Iglesia Cristiana-Nuevo Comienzo in Oxford, AL.

The Region is a valuable partner with Christian Services for Children in Alabama (CSCA) which provides in-home services and therapeutic foster care to children who need special care in their growth and development. Through involvement on the CSCA Board and through sponsorship of an annual Christmas Party for the children and their families, the Disciples in the Region express support for this important ministry.

The Region encourages its congregations to stand with the poor and vulnerable by supporting the efforts of Alabama Arise, Greater Birmingham Ministries and other local advocacy groups.

All gifts to the 2021 Christmas Offering are directed to the ministries of the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region. Note Christmas Offering on the memo/note line of your check made out to FCC and place it in the collection plate on Sunday or mail it to the Church Office. You may also designate Thanksgiving Offering if you contribute through PayPal. (<http://fcc-hsv.org/who-we-are/how-to-give/>).



The next time you are at church, take a look at the beautiful Camellia blooming in the Courtyard.

## FINANCIAL AID FOR THE FORGOTTEN ONES, NEEDY ADULTS

Needy Adults are often a forgotten population but one that is frequently in desperate need, particularly in these difficult times. For several years, Community Outreach has contributed financially during December to the Adult Services Unit of DHR and CASA to be used throughout the year in their work with needy adults.

As you make your Christmas list, please consider a donation to these two agencies. Checks can be made to FCC with *CO December project* in the memo line. The project will go through the end of December. Your support will make a difference to our community's vulnerable adults who are supported by DHR and CASA.

Thank you for caring, Community Outreach

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.

### ATTENDANCE NOVEMBER 5

Worship Service: 103

Small Groups: 13

### HELP THE CHURCH WHEN YOU SHOP AT AMAZON

Click the link below, click on Start Shopping, and sign in to your Amazon account. FCC will automatically be credited with 0.5% of your purchases at no additional cost to you and no deductions from the donated amount to FCC.

**Shop at AmazonSmile**  
and Amazon will make  
a donation to:  
**First Christian Church**

Get started

**amazon**smile

## RELENTLESS LIGHT by Kenneth Samuel

*I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. -*

Psalm 27:13 (KJV)

When I was in fifth grade, I asked my science teacher, "Where do the stars go during the day-time?" He responded, "They don't go anywhere; you just can't see them because of the dominant light from the star of the sun. The stars around us shine during the day, just as they do at night."

These days, the bleakness of our circumstances can make it difficult for us to see any glimmers of light from the stars of faith around us.

Yet, despite the disruptions that could have caused us to faint, those stars have never stopped shining. They continued to emanate light even when we could not see them.

Faith is like a star that refuses to stop shining, even when it's not noticed. Faith is a star that refuses to stop shining, even when other things around it get all the attention. Faith is a star that refuses to stop shining even when its brightness seems lost in the competition from other sources of brightness.

Faith is relentless. So relentless that even after being ignored all day long, it continues to give light through the darkness of the night. It's illumination when it can be seen in no way lessens the consistency of its illumination when it can't be seen.

Advent is all about a light that refuses to go out. It's about an expectancy of new life that refuses to surrender to the scorching rays of distress. It's about a star of hope that will not surrender its light to any searing season of turmoil.

### Prayer

Lord, as the sun sets on this year, may the unrelenting light of faith reveal the consistency of your goodness and mercy.

Amen.

## COVID-19 CHURCH PROTOCOLS

(Approved by the Board on October 14.)

- **One 9:30 a.m. service** will be offered at least through May 2022. First Christian Church offers virtual services ([facebook.com/fcchsv](https://facebook.com/fcchsv), [twitch.tv/fcchsv](https://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.
- **Enter the church through the Bell Tower Garden/Narthex doors.** The doors by the church office are locked.
- **Wearing face coverings/masks at all times inside the church is encouraged for everyone.**
- 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.
- **Every other row of pews is roped off on the pulpit side of the sanctuary to allow individuals to practice social distancing so that they may worship at their level of comfort. The front section on the pulpit side is the least impacted zone with our heating and cooling system.**
- **Attendees may vocalize** during the service, such as stating the Lord's Prayer, litanies, etc., and sing hymns/songs when lyrics are projected on the screens.
- 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) 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 service.