



The Journey

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NEW YEAR, NEW MINISTRY

Whenever a new year arrives, I always have trouble remembering to actually write the new year when I put the date on something. It seems a simple thing to do, but it is easy to get mired in old habits and forget for a brief moment. It is easy to forget that soon the Advent season will be over, that Christmas is not a day, it is a season itself, and that Epiphany will soon be here. December is passing by in a blur of greenery, presents, and worship services. Yet, soon we will celebrate the manifestation of God to the world through God's son Jesus Christ. We also remember the life of Jesus, the visitation of the wise men, his baptism in the Jordan, his journey to Jerusalem and finally to the cross.

As a new year begins so do new responsibilities and opportunities. This is often one of the busiest times of the year in the secular world since the rush of Christmas is over and new visions for the future are put into place. However, in the church, after the holiday season often all we want to do is take a little time and rest. However, we cannot fall back into old habits and forget our call to faith. It is my hope that the wonder of the season of Epiphany is not lost to us. In the stories of the Wise Men, Jesus' Baptism, the calling of the Disciples, and the Transfiguration we study the life and ministry of Jesus on earth hearing again of the light and life Christ provides to all people. We must realize that just as Jesus grew and developed over these years our faith must change and increase in the season ahead. We cannot remain static for without growth we become dry, brittle, and lifeless with no spiritual fruit to nourish others or ourselves.

Through the model of Christ's life, we can see that spiritual changes are not something to be feared, rather, we should celebrate the new life and possibilities we find as we worship our Lord and Savior. Let us use the excitement of a new year to recharge our spiritual batteries, encourage our faith, and offer ourselves to God's service so that we can be a part of building the Kingdom on earth. Amen.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday, December 24, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 25, 9:30 a.m.

CHURCH OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Friday, December 23, closes at 12:30 pm

Monday, December 26, closed.

Friday, December 30, closes at 12:30 pm

Monday, January 2, closed.

The *Journey* is published on the first and third Monday of the month.

The **deadline** for *Journey* submissions is **Thursday, December 29**, at Noon. Email to: publisher@fcc-hsv.org

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Telephone: 256-881-0150

**HUNTSVILLE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
NEEDS FOR DEC 2022**

Spaghetti Sauce, Corn Muffin Mix (...just add water kind), Stuffing Mix (for the Holidays), Canned Fruit, Shelf-Stable Milk (cartons appreciated), Peanut Butter & Jelly (all kinds appreciated), Instant Potato Flakes (...just add water kind), Canned Meat (tuna/chicken/Vienna sausages), Toilet Paper, Gallon Sized Zip-Locks, Baby Diapers (sizes 5, and 6, appreciated), and NEW Fabric or Plastic Sacks with Handles (no paper). Drop your contributions off on the cart in the Sanctuary Lobby. Thank you.

CWM BLANKET MONTH 2023



CWM's January service is supporting Church World Service that will send blankets to people in need all round the world. Ukraine has a special need this year. What do you do if you are cold? At home you reach for a blanket or turn up the heat.

What if you didn't have an extra blanket or no blanket at all? What if you didn't have a home because of conflict, a natural disaster, tornado, hurricane, earthquake, or flood?

Church World Service provides blankets to those without blankets all over the world. CWM invites FCC to join us in giving blankets during the month of January. The cost of a blanket is \$10. Make your check out to FCC and mark for blankets. As one person put it, "it's about loving our neighbors on this small, interconnected planet, just as Jesus commanded".

Only \$10 per blanket warms someone, furnishes a carry-all, as well as offers protection and shelter. For more information churchworldservice.org.

Margaret J. Vann, CWM Blanket Chair

ATTENDANCE

December 11: Worship Service: 82
Small Groups (During week & Sunday): 99
December 8: Worship Service: 93
Small Groups (During week & Sunday): 46

IRS CREDIT FOR 2022 GIVING

Thank you so much for your tithes and offerings; they have a tremendous impact on the missions and ministries of our church. Please remember that all contributions to be credited toward 2022 giving must be received by the church office **before 12:30 pm on Friday, December 30, 2022** (that is when the office closes for New Year's Eve). However, mailed contributions will be credited toward 2022 giving as long as they are **postmarked by December 31, 2022** (If mailing, make sure to note collection times to ensure the appropriate postmark.)

IRS regulations require that checks received after December 31, even if dated December 31 or prior (unless received by mail postmarked December 31 or prior) will be credited to your 2023 giving and not 2022.

CHRISTMAS CARD POST OFFICE



It's back! The mailbox for our Christmas card drop-off is up and running. Please remember to look for your cards each Sunday. We do not mail any of the cards and will close the Christmas Card Post Office after the season is over on January 8th.

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: ****



THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET is given in honor of Stan Ball's birthday by Matt & Karen Ball, and in honor of Colleen & Thomas Jenkins' birthdays by James & Beverly Cannon.

REGIONAL PRAYER REQUESTS

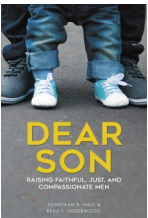
First Christian Church, Meridian, MS
First Christian Church, Athens, AL

It is such a blessing and honor to call you all my church family! You have prayed for Dad for many years as he's been struggling with several health issues and for, Kathy, his wife of 46 years as his primary caregiver. Thank you all so much for your comforting prayers, thoughts, hugs, cards, Facebook posts, calls, texts, etc. the week after Thanksgiving. My family is blessed and so thankful to have had him for 88 years and we all were so grateful for Thanksgiving day together. Thanks again for your love and support as we learn to live life without him. He'll forever be in our hearts.

In loving gratitude, Anita Wood and Family of Howard McSpadden

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.

Community Outreach (CO) 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

FINANCIAL AID FOR NEEDY ADULTS

The Forgotten Ones

For several years, Community Outreach has donated financially during December to the Adult Services Unit of DHR and Enable (formerly CASA) to be used throughout the year in their work with needy adults. This is often a forgotten population but one that is frequently in desperate need, particularly in these difficult times. 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 as these organizations help our community's vulnerable adults. Thank you for caring.

OUR CHURCH'S 28TH HABITAT HOUSE

DEDICATED ON DECEMBER 16



The dedication program was held for our current just-completed home on Friday, December 16. The program was scheduled with short notice to me on December 13. There are photos of the house and the program posted on the bulletin board in the hallway outside of the Parlor. Our next house will be scheduled next year.

Bob Senn, FCC Mr. Habitat

