

ATTENDANCE	11/20	11/27
First Service Worship	49	NR
Sunday School	34	NR
Second Service Worship	100	80
Children's Church	7	0
Young Disciples	NA	6
Hanging of the Greens	NA	65
Total Worship	156	151

THANKS AGAIN FROM COMMUNITY

OUTREACH

First Christian Church has been a "Beacon of God's Light" once more. Thank you for all the can goods and donations for CASA, Hope Place, Grateful Life, and St. Paul's Pantry. You helped feed many people this season.

Deadline for the Journey is Thursday, December 1, at Noon publisher@fcc-hsv.org



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
 3209 Whitesburg Drive
 Huntsville, AL 35802



FOCUS ON THANKSGIVING

Everywhere I look during the Advent season I see images of angels. Angels have been a hot topic over the years. There have been movies on angels (remember John Travolta played an Archangel Michael in a movie by that same name). There have been TV shows about angels like "Highway to Heaven" and "Touched By an Angel." Remember them? Then this last TV season there was a newer rendition that seems to have been canceled. I don't remember the name of the program, but it portrayed an angel acting much more like a provocative drunk than a heavenly being.

Biblical angels have little to do with the traditional depiction of angels as winged, anthropological creatures with unblemished appearances. The cherubim and seraphim presented in the Bible are winged creatures with bodies of animals such as lions and serpents. BUT most of the time when angels appear in the Bible they look like human beings. Those to whom they appear often do not recognize them as angels until after these representatives of God have left. They have no halo or wings or glow to alert earthlings that they are special. Perhaps one of the most illuminating stories about angels is found in Genesis 18 where Abraham entertains three angels all the time assuming these were three men traveling through the Near East. Hebrews 13:2 says, "Do not neglect to show

hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some have entertained angels unawares."

Perhaps the most helpful observation is that the words for angel in both Hebrew (malak) and Greek (angelos) mean simply "messenger." These words can be used for human messengers (sent by God to ordinary people) as well as heavenly messengers. Although the period between the Testaments was a time of much speculation about angels, for the most part the Biblical witness sees angels as messengers of God whose duty is to communicate God's will and challenge humans to step out in faith as they pursue that will.

Almost without exception the appearances of angels in the Bible spells uncomfortable change for those receiving revelations from God. Mary is told that she (an unmarried virgin in a community which stoned permissive women) will become pregnant by the Holy Spirit and bear a son. We see that announcement as good news, but I doubt if Mary's first thought was. "Oh boy, I'm going to have a baby! Lucky me." The bottom line about angels is this: Be prepared for awesome and radical change in your life if you are so fortunate (?) to be visited by one of God's messengers. Things will never be the same.

I've never seen an angel – or at least not one with a halo and fluffy wings. But I have frequently *Thanksgiving* continued on inside cover...

The Journey

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3209 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, Alabama 35802 Telephone: 256-881-0150 Office Hours: 9am - 5pm M-F
Sunday Worship Services: 8:15 & 10:30 a.m. Christian Education for all ages - 9:15 a.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

Old Testament Isaiah 11:1-10
 Epistle Romans 15:4-13
 Sermon Text Matthew 3:1-12
 Sermon "Getting Ready"

SERVING AT THE TABLE

8:15 Bob Senn & Karen Ball
 10:30 Mack Vann & Jeff Seward

COMMUNION PREPARATION

Bev Williamson

SERVING COMMUNION

8:15 Linda Lykins & Ann Thompson
 Rick & Kay Shrout
 10:30 Nancy Adams & Bev Williamson
 Carolyn Brown & Roberta Shivers

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Lynn Abernathy

SUNDAY'S FOOD BASKET is in honor of the Communion Team.

CHILDREN WORSHIP & WONDER

Mary & Joseph Show the Way to Bethlehem
 Margaret J. Vann
 Mary Ann Williams
 Jacob Brockway

YOUNG DISCIPLES

(Meets 2nd & 4th Sundays)

...*Thanksgiving* continued from cover been visited by messengers from God. Their voices and examples have challenged my discipleship, stretched my vision of God's presence and ways in this world, and made me terribly uncomfortable with my status quo. I have a more than casual suspicion that what is most important about angels is not their appearance or accouterments. What is most important is the message they bring from God. We should not be surprised to find angels in the most unlikely of places and people. After all this season we are celebrating a God who came into this world as a peasant couple's baby who was laid to rest in a feeding trough. Angels are dynamite if we take them seriously. This Advent I wonder what angels I will entertain unawares.

See you Sunday,

Pastor Cameron

CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARDS MAIL STATION

Starting December 4th, and running until January 1st, our Church Mailbox will be back so that we can exchange Christmas cards among the congregation. If you will deposit them in the large Christmas Mailbox, we will sort them and put them out for you to pick up. You will be able to pick them up in the Commons Area at the "Post Office". **We will not mail these cards**, so only the name is needed on the envelope. **You will have until January 8th to pick them up.**



6	Tom Killough
7	Marilee Jones, Bobby Reese
9	Mack Vann
10	Lindsey Brennaman
12	Stan Ball, Sadie Givens
13	David Crockett, Bob Senn
14	Emily Arrington
16	Melanie Brennaman, Barbara Daniel
17	Tereca Spain, Charlotte Urserly, Anita Wood
18	Grace Burks, Linda Lykins
21	Jonathan Ahlbin, Daisy Blackman
22	Roger Sameck, Beverly Williamson
23	Pam Gilliland, Patty McMahon
24	Charlie Stroud
27	Meghan Browning, Dr. Joyce Neighbors



Please remember to keep the following individuals in your prayers.

Steve Brown
 John & Mary Dorough
 Mickey & Paula Guthrie, friends of Lisa Fitzgerald
 Maranda Wood Holley
 Carey Link, friend of Margaret Vann
 Jean Patterson
 Tom Paul, son of Doris Paul
 Jason Price, father of nursery attendant
 Alicia Price
 Mona Qualls
 Mack Vann
 Ron Volinski

Continuing prayer concerns are published once a month in the *Journey*. *Please keep the church office informed of the status of individuals you put on the lists.*

VINTAGE VAGABONDS CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Sign up now for a guaranteed spot on the VV trip to Yesterday's event center in Athens for lunch and musical entertainment on Friday, Dec. 16. Cost is \$11 paid at time of sign up with check made out to FCC (Note: VV Dec.). Sign up sheet and folder are in the church office. Reservations must be completed by Friday, Dec. 9. We have only 20 reservations. Gather at 9:30/ Return about 2:00. Contact Sue Seward for more information.

CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITY

The Community Outreach December service project offers another opportunity to share our many blessing with others. A twenty-five dollar (\$25) gift card from Kroger or Walmart will be collected for DHR, CASA, or Grateful Life this holiday season. Please leave the gift card in the collection bowl or the office. If you wish the committee to purchase the gift card for you, please make your check to FCC and "CO - gift cards" in the item line. The last day for collection is Sunday, December 18.



Last year 16 cards per group were delivered! Can we make it happen again this year?

GRATEFUL LIFE PROJECT EXCEPTIONAL RESPONSE

The response for hygiene products, socks, and Depends was fantastic. The collection provided the largest item and dollar support for a project since it began several years ago. One example of the generosity was 96 pair of socks! Ahhh, there will be warm, dry feet for the winter months. The toiletry items were given in abundance and most will have a toothbrush, soap, foot powder or other hygiene needs met this winter season due to your thoughtful giving. Thank you for your support for this community.

THANK YOU!

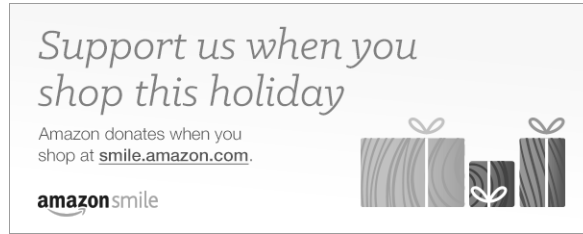
The Bake Sale was a huge success and all thanks to the bakers, helpers and donations of baked goods and items. To date we have made over \$2300.00. Approximately \$575 of that was brought in by the silent auction the remainder was cakes, cookies and pies. I had several old customers tell me that they were happy we were doing this again so we will put our aprons on again next year. Again, and I can't say it enough, "Thank you, thank you, thank you. We couldn't have done this except for the help we received. We will send 10% to the region when we have a final tally on the amount we made. I hope the rest will go to help remodel our parlor kitchen but I am open to suggestions. We will meet sometime after the holidays and decided where it should go.

Again, thank you!
Dinah Love

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, December 11, after second service (11:30) to approve the 2017 budget.

Please prayerfully consider pledging for 2017. If you intend to pledge and haven't done so yet, please return your pledge card to the offering bowl or church office prior to the Congregational meeting on the 11th. Your pledge is important for underwriting the proposed 2017 budget. Pledge cards are on the table in the narthex next to the main entrance. Thank you for your consideration and support.
Dave McMahan, Moderator



If you shop at Amazon, why not help the church out at the same time? **First Christian Church-Huntsville** is a listed charitable organization with AmazonSmile and receives 0.5% of the eligible purchases you make on Amazon. To use AmazonSmile, go to <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/63-6017148> (this address is for First Christian Church-Huntsville and will automatically credit your purchases to the FCC account) and sign on your Amazon account as usual. Amazon pays all expenses of the AmazonSmile program and there is no additional expense to you or deductions from the donation amounts generated from your purchases.

Remember to log on through AmazonSmile at <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/63-6017148> if you shop at Amazon!

FCC Preschool/Elementary Class Needs Your Help for a Sheep

As part of Heifer International, the preschool/elementary class is raising money for a sheep. A coffee container is on the coffee table in the Commons Area. Please help us raise enough for a sheep.

Thank You Preschool/ Elementary Class



WE JOIN FORCES WITH HEROES TO CELEBRATE CHILDREN

Community Outreach and Christian Women's Ministries are working together to support Shop With a Hero, a project designed to give "at risk" children in the Huntsville/Madison County School Systems a Merry Christmas. On December 10, 2016, each "Hero" will be paired with a child and given a \$100 gift card. The "Hero" will help the child purchase presents for their family and themselves. You can sponsor a child / children anytime until the event on Dec. 10 by writing a check to FCC with Shop With a Hero (SWAH) on the memo line. Any amount is appreciated. We are signing up heroes and volunteers to help with this project, so please consider volunteering on Dec. 10 to help the children shop and to help wrap their gifts. For more information contact Jeff Seward or visit www.shopwithahero.info.



POINSETTIAS FOR THE ADVENT SEASON

If you would you like to honor a friend or remember a loved one with a poinsettia for our Advent tree, please make a \$10.00 donation to cover the cost of a poinsettia, and list your donor information on the signup sheet posted on the flower sheet across from McMains Hall. Make your check payable to FCC, write "poinsettia" in the memo line, and drop it in the offering plate or church office. If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Vann

December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study 4 pm Conveners' Meeting 5:30 pm Worship Committee	2 10 am Evangelism Committee	3 9 am Phoebe Circle (Off Site) 10 am Parents' Time Out
4 3 pm Pickleball	5 10 am Quilters	6 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study 5:30 pm Personnel Committee Meeting 6 pm DISCIPLES Bible Study •ECM Christmas Sing	7 8:30 am Emmaus 10:15 am ECM Wednesday Worship 7 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	8 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study 10 am Elizabeth Circle 7 pm Board Meeting	9	10 4 pm District 1 Youth Christmas Outing
11 Food Pantry Sunday 11:30 am Congregational Budget Meeting 2 pm Deacon Meeting 3 pm Pickleball	12 9:30 am Esther Circle 10 am Quilters 5 pm Kids & Youth Task Group	13 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study 6 pm DISCIPLES Bible Study	14 8:30 am Emmaus 10:15 am ECM Wednesday Worship 7 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal •Community Outreach	15 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study	16 9:30 Vintage Vagabonds	17
18 11:30 am Elders' Meeting 3 pm Pickleball	19 8:30 am Praying for FCC (Off Site) 10 am Quilters 1 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry	20 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study 6 pm DISCIPLES Bible Study	21 8:30 am Emmaus 7 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	22 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study	23 Church Office Closes at 12:30	24 5 pm Christmas Eve Service 11 pm Christmas Eve Service
25 Christmas Day 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Unified Service	26 Church Office Closed 10 am Quilters	27 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study 6 pm DISCIPLES Bible Study	28 8:30 am Emmaus 5:30 pm ECM Board Meeting 7 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	29 9 am DISCIPLES Bible Study	30 Church Office Closes at 12:30	31