



The Journey

Volume XXIV No. 50
December 12, 2016
www.fcc-hsv.org

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, December 15**, at Noon publisher@fcc-hsv.org

A CHRISTMAS BIBLE QUIZ

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way ...” Matthew 1:18a

The Biblical Christmas story appears only in Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2. Do you know the story? Try answering these questions. Oh, come on, go ahead, and get out your pen or pencil and give it a try.

1. Mary rode on what animal on the journey to Bethlehem?
2. How soon after they arrived in Bethlehem was Jesus born?
3. In what sort of building or cave was Jesus born?
4. What animals were gathered about the manger?
5. How many Wise Men brought their gifts to Jesus?
6. How did the star compare in brightness with other stars?
7. Did Joseph meet the Wise Men?
8. What was the name of the angel who appeared to Joseph in a dream?
9. Was Jesus born in the winter?
10. Why was the child named Jesus?

Would it surprise you to learn that nobody knows the answer to any of those questions. Oh well, it's fun to talk and speculate about such things. A lot of our cultural understanding of the birth of Jesus comes from years, decades, and centuries of singing Christmas carols which may or may not be based on the Biblical facts of the story. Plus our decorations at Christmas time may mix some of the facts we learn from the Bible with pure assumption or speculation.

So... (1) no one knows if Mary rode anything like a donkey to Jerusalem. Actually she probably walked, and the word donkey is nowhere in the Bible story of Jesus' birth. (2) The Bible does not say how soon Mary gave birth to Jesus after arriving in Bethlehem. It could have been a week, or a day, or days, or hours. (3) Last week's *The Journey* lead article was all about the manger and the inn. The Bible doesn't exactly say, although the Bible clearly says it was a house where the Holy family was staying, and no mention of a barn or (4) animals being present. (5) There were three gifts mentioned, but no mention of the number of Wise Men. (6) It only says "his" star led them and not that it was particularly bright. (7) No mention of Joseph meeting the Wise Men; maybe he did or maybe not. (8) The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, but no mention of the angel's name in Joseph's dream. (9) No birth calendar date is in the Bible for Jesus. We don't know of any season. It was just church tradition many centuries later that settled on a December date to celebrate his birth.

About question 10, however, we do have an answer. In Judaism, babies were always named by their father. In this case it was God the father, and not Joseph, that named him. He was called Jesus "for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). The name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, the successor of Moses, which means "Yahweh saves." If you would like to find out what the Christmas stories in the Gospels do say, I invite you to come to church on Sunday(s) and particularly on Christmas Eve.

See you Sunday and Christmas Eve,

Pastor Cameron

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 18

Old Testament Isaiah 7: 10-16
 Epistle Romans 1:1-7
 Sermon Text Matthew 1:18-25
 Sermon "What Jesus Wants for Christmas"

SERVING AT THE TABLE

8:15 Lisa Fitzgerald & Joe Brockway
 10:30 Nancy Waites & Joe Brockway

COMMUNION PREPARATION

Nancy Woodall

SERVING COMMUNION

8:15 Delores Edgeton & TBA
 Eddie & Valerie Parks
 10:30 Sabrina Beckman & Marie Bittle
 Marilee Keim & Ruth Lackey

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Gray & Theresa Killough

SUNDAY'S FOOD BASKET is in honor of Coleen Cannon Jenkens' birthday by Beverly & James Cannon.

CHILDREN WORSHIP & WONDER

The Magi Show the Way to Bethlehem
 Pastor Laura
 John Hall
 Braly Beutjer

YOUNG DISCIPLES

(Meets 2nd & 4th Sundays)

HELP IS NEEDED in the Nursery and Toddler rooms on Sunday mornings. Please see the sign up poster in the Commons and sign up now for first or second shift on one Sunday in December and January. We need loving hands to assist our attendants.

CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITY

The Community Outreach December service project offers another opportunity to share our many blessings 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?

IRS CREDIT FOR 2016 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 toward 2016 giving must be received by the church office **before 12:30 pm on Friday, December 30, 2016** (that is when the office closes for New Year's Eve) to be credited toward your 2016 giving. However, mailed contributions will be credited toward 2016 giving as long as they are **postmarked by December 31, 2016**. (If mailing, make sure to note collection times to ensure the appropriate postmark.)

Post dated checks received after December 31 (unless received by mail postmarked December 31 or prior) will be credited to your 2017 giving and not 2016 per IRS regulations..

Partners in Prayer Advent devotional booklets are available in the Commons Area. The supply is limited, so take one per family

ATTENDANCE	12/4	12/11
First Service Worship	48	39
Sunday School	45	38
Second Service Worship	91	75
Children's Church	5	5
Young Disciples	NA	4
Total Worship	144	123

**LET'S BE MERRY & BRIGHT
CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE**

The Beutjer's request your presence
for a Christmas Celebration!!!
Festive music, delicious treats and
seasonal spirits
December 17th, 2:00-5:00pm
11024 Everest Circle
Come and go as you please!!!

*Support us when you
shop this holiday*

Amazon donates when you
shop at smile.amazon.com.

amazonsmile



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!

YOUR KINDNESS IS APPRECIATED

Dear First Christian,

Thank you so very much for your love and support during my illness.

It is such a blessing to be a member of such a kind and caring church family.

I love and appreciate each one of you.

Jean Patterson

CHURCH CHRISTMAS CARDS MAILBOX

Starting December 4th, and running until January 1st, our Church Christmas 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.**

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 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 J. Vann at email: triliumjv@knology.net or phone 256-533-4213



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

Thanks to all who supported our regional CWM service project, the WellHouse in Leeds, AL. The congregation will send \$820 to the WellHouse, which provides rescue and opportunities for victims of human trafficking and educates the public on this issue.