



# The Journey

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## Joy – December 17

by Steve McCreary

One of the greatest joys in life is the birth of a child. When Mary was with child and visited her cousin Elizabeth, whose child was to become John the Baptist, while still in Elizabeth's womb, leaped for Joy (Luke 1:44). Can you imagine the Joy that God must have felt at the birth of His child, Jesus Christ? It is during this Advent season leading up to Christmas that we begin to remember and celebrate with Joy the birth of Christ which culminates with His resurrection, giving us not only Joy but the hope of life eternal in the presence of God's glory, bathing us in His love. The Holy Spirit fills our hearts with a special exuberant feeling of Joy knowing that we celebrate the birth of the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ, (John 1:1-14) whose example provides a path for us to follow so that we can do the most important thing each day that we should be striving to accomplish, please God.

During the season of Christmas our hearts are filled with the spirit of giving, helping our fellow beings live better, happier lives through donations of time, effort, work, food, clothing, shelter, money. Can there be greater Joy than from the blessing of giving? We experience Joy with family and friends, singing and listening to Christmas songs, sharing gifts, coming together in love and fellowship to worship, eat special foods, and enjoy each other's company during festive meals. May the Joy of celebrating the birth of Christ fill your soul with gladness this Christmas Season.

### Prayer

Dear God in Heaven, we love you. Thank you for loving us and all the good things in life you have given us. Thank you for the Joy we share during this season as we come together to worship and pray. We most especially thank you for giving us Jesus Christ whose birth we celebrate during this season. Thank you for His resurrection which gives us hope of life eternal. Be with us, Lord, and fill us with the Holy Spirit and the Joy and glory of your Love. For those who are sick or injured, we pray for healing. For those who are troubled, we pray for strength and guidance. For those who grieve, we pray for comfort. In a world which sometimes seems filled with chaos, we pray for peace and comfort in the arms of Your Love. Amen.



### THANK YOU

Thank you all for the help and participation in the Hanging of the Greens service. I have heard many compliments for the service. The sanctuary looks beautiful.

The readers, the devotion booklet, the choir, the preparers, the helpers, the children assistants, the youth, the director, one and all, Thank You! Margaret J. Vann, Worship chair

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, December 14**, at Noon [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:publisher@fcc-hsv.org)

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 17

### First Service

Sermon Scripture Luke 1: 46-56

Sermon "Mary's Song of Praise"

**Second Service** Special Music Program

### ADVENT CANDLE

8:15 Justin, Michelle, & Sadie Givens

10:30 Matt, Karen & Stan Ball

### SERVING AT THE TABLE

10:00 Andy Herron & Bob Senn

Karen Ball & Gayle Herber

### COMMUNION PREPARATION

Lynn Abernathy

### SERVING COMMUNION

8:15 Delores Edgeton & Linda Hooker

Carl & Carol Jones

10:30 Mary Ann Anderson & Elaine French

Sabrina Beckman & Tré Davis

Carolyn Brown

### COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Rick & Kay Shrout

**SUNDAY'S FOOD BASKET** is in honor of Kyle Holly's (son-in-law) and Anita Wood's birthdays by Randy Wood and Maranda Wood Holley.

### CHILDREN WORSHIP & WONDER

No Worship & Wonder this Sunday

Children singing at musical program

### YOUNG DISCIPLES (Meets 2nd & 4th Sundays)

ATTENDANCE	12/3	12/10
First Service Worship	NA	46
Sunday School	30	30
Second Service Worship	NA	79
Hanging of the Greens	128	NA
Children's Church	NA	6
Young Disciples	NA	7
Total Worship	128	138

## CHRISTMAS FEST THANK YOU'S!

On Saturday, December 2, we had our Christmas Fest event and it was a tremendous success! Participants started arriving before the event started and kept coming right up until the end time.



We estimate that we had at least 200 children and families come and participate in this event! What an incredible blessing from God that we were able to welcome that many people from our community to our church event.

At the event participants started in Family Services where they received a brochure about our ministries here and a flyer inviting them to all of our Advent activities. Thanks to a "Guess How Many Colored Marshmallows Jar" at our entrance table, we received contact information from several of the participants and they will be hearing from us about our future events. The first thing that children did was to decorate gift bags that they could use at each station to carry their crafts.

Children and families then went together to various stations that were set up around the church. Families picked which stations they wanted to visit and how long they wanted to stay at each station. They had seven craft stations, the Christmas story, visit with Santa, Christmas caroling and food!

This event would not have been possible without all of the wonderful volunteers who stepped up and gave their time, talents, and treasures to this. A big thank you for those who donated food, decorated the areas, prepared the crafts, helped with the set-up, served the food, helped with clean up, greeted at the welcome table, led the craft stations, played Santa, helped with the Santa station, acted as storytellers for the Christmas story, played and led the Christmas singing, directed people to the stations, advertised the event, promoted the event, shared the event, invited people to the event, came to the event and prayed for the event!

We have a wonderful church and we serve an awesome God! My hope and prayer is the people who came to this event felt some of that same love and they will be made welcome when they return to see us in the near future.

Thanks be to God! ~Pastor Laura West

### 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 [trilliumjv@att.net](mailto:trilliumjv@att.net) or phone 256-533-4213.



### HELP THE CHURCH WHEN YOU SHOP AMAZON

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 <https://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 <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/63-6017148> if you shop at Amazon.

### GIFT CARDS FOR NEEDY ADULTS

For several years, Community Outreach has donated \$25 Walmart gift cards in December to DHR, CASA, and Grateful Life 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. There are two ways to support this project: purchase a card (and put in offering plate or give to a Community Outreach member) or make a monetary contribution and the committee will purchase a card for you. The deadline for donations is December 31. Your support will make a difference as these three organizations help our community's vulnerable adults. Thank you for caring.

**The Post Office is back** and ready to receive your Christmas cards. You will find it in the Commons Area. Place your cards in the postal box and our youth will help to deliver the cards to the congregation. It will be open now thru Jan. 1st.

**Remember these cards must be picked up. They will not be mailed out.**

Dinah Love

### YOU ARE INVITED!

We welcome you to attend *Jesus and Java* to see what our Youth are learning. Your presence allows our Youth to get to know you better, know your name and learn from you. If we reflect on the Bible, the Israelites often would turn to the Elders for advice, wisdom and knowledge. This is a relationship that is very important for this generation of youth to have, so please consider this opportunity. Please contact Pastor Linda Davis at [FCCyouthmin1@gmail.com](mailto:FCCyouthmin1@gmail.com)

### IRS CREDIT FOR 2017 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 2017 giving must be received by the church office **before 12:30 pm on Friday, December 29, 2017** (that is when the office closes for New Year's Eve) or **postmarked by December 30, 2017** (If mailing, make sure to note collection times to ensure the appropriate postmark.) or **placed in the collection plate by Sunday, December 31, 2017.**

***Post dated checks received after December 31 (unless received by mail postmarked December 31 or prior) will be credited to your 2018 giving and not 2017 per IRS regulations..***

### YOUTHTOPIA

**THEME:** "Be Salt and Light" (Matthew 5:13-16)

**Date:** January 26-28th

**Location:** Camp Chandler

**Cost:** \$125.00

**The deadline for all applications is January 8th.** Please submit payment and application to Pastor Linda.



**CAN'T MAKE IT TO CHURCH?** Stream it live at: [www.fcchsvtech.weebly.com](http://www.fcchsvtech.weebly.com)

**MISS A SERMON?** See previous sermons at: [www.fcc-hsv.org/sermons/](http://www.fcc-hsv.org/sermons/)

#### **HOW TO GIVE ON LINE**

Miss church but would still like to give your tithes or offerings? You may give online through PayPal by going to the church website <http://fcc-hsv.org/who-we-are/how-to-give/> and scrolling down to the donate button. You may designate your tithe or offering for the General Fund or specify a particular church ministry/fund. You may also designate if you would like this to be a recurring or single donation.