



The Journey

Volume XXVIII No. 12
March 23, 2020
www.fcc-hsv.org

First Christian Church Members and Visitors,

I hope that you are safe, staying home as much as possible, and have done whatever you can to protect yourselves in this time of self-isolation. This is an unprecedented time. I cannot remember a time when the church urged congregants to stay home from worship; however, I do thank God for the ability to share in worship through online platforms. You can participate in the services we have placed on Facebook and Twitch. Soon they will be up on our YouTube channel as well. If you are having difficulty finding our services please let us know. Our Twitch services may be found at www.twitch.tv/fcchsv or by clicking the link on our Facebook page.

On Thursday of last week, Governor Kay Ivey issued a statewide health order prohibiting gatherings of more than 25 people in a room that cannot keep a 6-foot distance. This order will be in effect until April 5. **This means that our worship services for March 29 and April 5 will be suspended along with all of the meetings or events regularly scheduled during the next two weeks.** Once again, after April 5, church leadership will make a decision, based on information at that time, as to whether services can resume.

This means that we will not be able to worship together on Palm Sunday. It is my hope we can celebrate Maundy Thursday and Easter together, but we will continue to follow the advice of medical professionals and the state to keep our congregation and community safe.

The church office will remain open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm. We have one staff member at the office every day so we can answer the phones and take care of work that can only be done in the office. Our other staff members are working at home. The Journey is still going out weekly, services are still being planned, and we are still holding some meetings through online platforms. If your group our like to meet in this way we can connect you with a platform that will accommodate you. You will still be able to contact Rev. Laura West and me by phone, text or email, however, we will not be visiting in person unless it is an emergency situation and the member or family requests our presence.

Our Mission Family Deacons and Elders continue to contact our members, especially those who are most vulnerable, to ensure that our community is cared for in the absence of our regular worship and fellowship events. Please let us know your needs and continue to pray for those in our community and in the world that have already been affected by this virus. We also have volunteers who will pick up groceries, supplies, or prescription medications for those who are at risk.

I urge you to stay safe, stay home as much as possible, and limit contact. We can continue to pray for each other and the world, trusting that God will see us through this life-changing time. Let us continue to keep our first responders, health professionals, and all those who work to keep us safe in our prayers as well as asking God to help remedy this situation globally.

May God bless you and keep you, *Rev. Paul Allen*

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, March 26**, at Noon 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.

My Friends,

As the coronavirus, or COVID-19, pandemic continues, we must continue to show compassion and love to our family, friends, neighbors, and strangers. We are in an unprecedented situation and must remain vigilant. At the same time, our Church ministers and staff continue to work providing support through phone calls, emails, and video postings. Even though we are not meeting in person, it is important for you to keep-up with your giving. Please continue to send your checks or use our PayPal link on the website to give.

Once the pandemic is over, I look forward to seeing you again at Church!

Blessings, Jon Ahlbin, Moderator

CHURCH SAFETY IMPROVEMENT

To make our Sunday worship safer and more secure during worship service times, we will begin locking the north side door (by the Church Office and currently designated as "Sunday Entrance") shortly after we resume church services. That is, from 8:15 a.m. until 9:15 and from 10:30 until 11:30 this door will remain locked. Additionally, this door will remain locked during any combined service, as well. However, the door will be unlocked and monitored during Sunday school time - 9:15 until 10:30 and during the adjusted Sunday school times associated with a combined service. **The exterior Narthex doors leading into the Sanctuary will remain open throughout Sunday morning.** This measure is not intended to inconvenience anyone; we want our church to be open and welcoming, but we also want to keep our children, members, and guests safe.

Thank you, Safety & Security Committee

HABITAT UPDATE

Habitat is having a 3 person schedule on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday weather permitting. Our house is on Lot 6, 201 McDonnell Street.

I will not be working but you can if you contact our house leader, Art Hargrove, Cell phone: 256-527-4099, and get included in the three-person roster.

The house is located across the street from MLK Jr Grade School on Meridian. If you go, ask Art where to park (not on McDowell). I can give you some detailed information on how to get there. Bob Senn

CAN'T MAKE IT TO CHURCH?

Stream it live at: www.twitch.tv/fcchsv

HELP FROM FCC

If you are over 60 and would like to stay home during this virus outbreak you can call the church and ask for help getting groceries and pharmaceutical items brought to your home. We have several volunteers ready to help you so you can stay well. **We are also looking for additional volunteers** to run short errands for groceries or pharmaceuticals for older church members who cannot get out.

Call 256 881-0150 during normal office hours Monday through Friday or call Lynn Abernathy at 256 655-4114 if you need assistance or wish to volunteer.

During this time of social distancing **the church office will maintain normal hours, Monday – Friday from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.** However, we will be operating with minimal staff at the office while others are working from their homes. This means that you should call back or leave a message if you call the office and do not get an answer. Someone is there but may not be able to answer the phone at that time.

Also, please remember your tithes and offerings. You may use PayPal (click on the Donate button at the bottom of the linked page <http://fcc-hsv.org/who-we-are/how-to-give/>), drop it off at the church during office hours, or mail to: First Christian Church, 3209 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, AL 35802

We will be posting at least the Sunday services on the church Facebook page and to our YouTube and Twitch channels. Here is a link to last Sunday's service on Twitch. Currently there is a little glitch so you may need to skip ahead to 8 minutes 30 seconds for the service to begin:

<https://www.twitch.tv/videos/572723713?fbclid=IwAR34BRe-ProV-lcFhX5Bslhn2e3KsXG1wU876qz66fUQ4bj2esAB-ph1a8p8>

HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAM

During March, Christian Women's Ministries is sponsoring the collection of items for baby baskets for the National Children's Advocacy Center. Each year, approximately 20 baskets are distributed to the new mothers attending classes for caring for new born children. The baskets provide needed items and a gift of support to these struggling mothers.

The suggested items for collection are: 3 month size sleeping attire, baby wipes, shampoo, pacifiers, bibs, diaper rash cream, socks or booties, and receiving blankets. Items may be dropped off Monday - Friday, between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, at the Church Office. Monetary offerings are also welcome. Make checks payable to First Christian Church with NCAC in the note/memo line.