



# The Journey

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[www.fcc-hsv.org](http://www.fcc-hsv.org)

## VIRTUAL WORSHIP

If you had told me a year ago that the church's virtual service would soon be our primary source of worship, I would have laughed in your face. Our congregation has livestreamed our traditional service for the last several years and we have offered sermons and special music selections on our website, but they have always been secondary to the in person worship services on Sunday mornings. Then COVID-19 changed the world, and churches had to become comfortable with virtual worship very quickly.

I have been very impressed with what we could do in a short amount of time. The Sunday after the state of Alabama closed, our worship service was online. Soon after, we began using Facebook Live and posting services on our YouTube channel. If you look at the views of our services, you will see that hundreds of people have tuned in throughout the world. While virtual worship became a necessity when we could not meet in person, now it has become a part of our ministry that will continue.

Many of us do not prefer virtual worship to in person events and I am one of these people. I have missed seeing the faces of church members, asking about their lives, telling jokes, singing and sharing the gospel together. It was a difficult transition to preach to a nearly empty sanctuary and to find new ways to make our virtual service interesting. I could not have done it without a slew of volunteers, especially our Tech crew at First Christian Church.

The past two weeks we have tried something new, a Drive-In Service that allows members and visitors to stay in their cars and tune into the service on their radios, or open their windows in the car or sit in lawn chairs as the service takes place in our church courtyard. Again, this has been an interesting transition, something new that many enjoy. While most people that I have spoken to are looking forward to the time when we can worship together in our building once again, a few have stated they will miss going to church in their pajamas or being able to mute the preacher when he gets long winded.

In the gospels we read about how Jesus worshiped. Of course, he went to the temple, he participated in services in local synagogues, but Jesus also worshiped in the wilderness, on top of mountains and in boats during stormy seas. He worshiped in valleys and on hills, sharing the good news in unexpected places. While Jesus never worshiped virtually, he did celebrate God's presence in areas that were unexpected, yet still holy. This should be a reminder that worshiping God can happen anywhere and at any time, be it in a church or in a parking lot, on the radio or on a computer screen, in a home or at a campground. Worship happens when we thank God for the blessings we have received and pledge to share our resources and our faith with others so they too may know the life-saving message of Jesus Christ.

I do not know if our world will ever go back to what we think of as normal, but I do know this, worship will continue, our faith will continue, our connection with God and with each other will continue, because nothing is impossible for God. Let us worship and celebrate together, Amen.

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, July 9**, at Noon. Email to: [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:publisher@fcc-hsv.org)

3209 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, Alabama 35802 Telephone: 256-881-0150 **Leave a message.**

### CHANGES IN WORSHIP SERVICES

We will offer an **in-person worship service at 8:15 a.m. in McMains Hall** on Sunday, July 12, followed by a drive-in service at 10:30 a.m. We have limited space at the 8:15 a.m. service so you will need to **call the church office by noon on Thursday, July 9th, to reserve a place** since we will have limited capacity. You will enter through Family Services for the 8:15 a.m. service. You will need to bring your face mask (we have some if you forget and have hand sanitizer available), your own communion elements, and observe physical distancing when standing or seated (three chairs between you or your family and the next person in McMains). The 8:15 a.m. service will be streamed later that day.



### JULY BIRTHDAYS



Not Listed Online

### JANUARY THROUGH JUNE 2020

#### GIVING STATEMENTS

If you would like to receive a FCC giving statement with your donations from January 1 until June 31 you will need to contact the church. You can email us at [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:publisher@fcc-hsv.org) or phone the office at 256 881-0150.

We can email your statement if you include the email address you want it sent to, or we can mail it to your physical address. We realize that many people do not care about receiving this information so we will only send it to those who request it. Thank you for continuing to support First Christian Church during these challenging months.

### WEEKLY PRAYER CONCERNS

Not Listed Online

### REGIONAL PRAYER REQUEST

Valley Christian Church  
Birmingham, AL

We are temporarily publishing, as space allows in the printed version of the *Journey*, the prayer concerns that are usually listed in the Sunday bulletins. Concerns are listed for one month unless we receive an update. Long term prayer concerns are published monthly in the *Journey*. Send requests to [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:publisher@fcc-hsv.org) or call the church office at 256-881-0150 and leave a message.

**Please notify the Pastors or the church office if you are going to the hospital and would like to be contacted**



**THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET** is in honor of Kelsi (Shrout) & Jordan Green's anniversary by Rick & Kay Shrout and in memory of Valerie Woodall by Grant Woodall.

## LONG TERM PRAYER CONCERNS

### Not Listed Online

Long term 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.

#### SMALL GROUP MEETINGS AT CHURCH

Starting Monday, June 22nd, small groups will be allowed to start meeting inside the Church building in **Family Services**. At this time we can only allow **one meeting a day ending before 5:00 PM** since we will have a professional cleaning company sanitize the room each evening. The schedule for using the Family Services room will be kept in the office. We will also ask you to use the outside Family Services doors, located in our Bell Tower Courtyard on the west side of the church, to enter the building. The door will be unlocked for your meeting.

We ask that:

- You follow social distancing procedures.
- The meeting has less than 10 people.
- You record the names of all participants.
- All participants will wear a mask.

## IN THE STORM

by Martha Spong

A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. - Galatians 5:9 (NRSV)

One of my commitments for 2020 was to start baking bread again, and the first attempts were about as disappointing as anything we try for the first time in a long time. I was particularly disappointed in the rise of an early loaf. A baking website I follow recommended a brand of yeast I couldn't find in my local grocery store, so I ordered a 16-ounce bag online in late February. Little did I know there would be a pandemic-induced shortage!

The new yeast – no doubt much fresher than the packets on a high shelf at the store down the street – made a huge difference. The whole loaf of bread was affected by the tiny amount of yeast mixed in with the flour and other ingredients, in this case for the better.

I am like my loaves of bread. The things I incorporate, the spiritual influences and personal contacts and media sources, have the power to leaven me, to transform me.

Some days they change me for the better, like the beautiful loaf of whole wheat bread I made for my family this week. Sometimes they change me for the worse, and I feel spread out on the pan of life like a dough that did not come together. Today, may I choose the yeast that makes me better.

#### Prayer

Creating God, you have given us all the ingredients for a holy life. Help us to choose well. Amen.

We are having some technical difficulties with our streamed services. Services will continue to be posted but not necessarily at the times listed below.

#### ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES

Stream live at 10:30 am on Sundays (or watch previous services anytime) on YouTube at: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCzQCRY8Vfa-IDhugUnUhCKw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzQCRY8Vfa-IDhugUnUhCKw)

You may also stream services live on Sundays at 10:30 am (and see announcements throughout the week) on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/fcchsv/](http://www.facebook.com/fcchsv/)