



# The Journey

Volume XXIX No. 9  
March 1, 2021  
[www.fcc-hsv.org](http://www.fcc-hsv.org)

## EVANGELISM AS A LIFE-STYLE

We are still in the season of Lent but at the end of March we will worship together and celebrate Palm Sunday. Then, beginning on April 1 we will host the Holy Week services of Maundy Thursday and of course Easter on April 4. This week of loss and celebration is also unique because it often brings new people into our congregation or those that we have not seen in a while. Especially this year, since so many members and visitors alike have been hesitant to come to worship because of COVID-19 and worries about safety. When we meet and greet these visitors or old friends it is important to think about how we will welcome them and what steps we will take to ask them to come and worship with us again.

Evangelism is one of the most misunderstood words in our faith language and it can often fear with those who have visions of cold calls, knocking on unfamiliar doors, or speaking to those who may not be receptive. In the modern church evangelism is defined as the process of converting non-believers to Christianity. There are numerous books and workshops that reduce evangelism to strategies, programs, and rhetoric.

However, this was not the practice of the early church. In his book, *Journey to Jesus*, Robert Webber suggests that the early church evangelized the Roman Empire through “the personal witness of individual Christians and through the corporate witness of the congregation whose inner and outer actions demonstrated the continuing presence of Jesus Christ in and to the world.” In the first century, people were drawn to the church because believers consciously and consistently mirrored the message of Jesus Christ in their lives. Evangelism was more than just a program or a way to obtain new members, it was a life-style.

People have always been more convinced by our actions than by our words. We just need to look at sports or media figures to see that it is easy speak in what sounds like a heartfelt manner, but it is rather more difficult to live our ethics. This does not mean that our words do not matter, but if our actions do not mirror our speech it becomes unconvincing. Today, people are not looking for the “perfect church”, they are looking for a place where they can experience the joy and energy of a loving and life-giving faith community. They want to feel more than welcomed; they want to become a part of the life of the church and its mission. Therefore, evangelism must continue to be the conscious and continuous practice of sharing the message of Jesus Christ in every action, word, and moment of our life. We have to live out the beliefs that we claim as our own or our faith becomes stale, meaningless, and unattractive to those who are seeking fulfillment. Evangelism is not the responsibility of the minister or a particular committee; it is the responsibility of each and every Christian because true evangelism is a byproduct of a life well lived and a faith well practiced. I am convinced that when we do this, people will be drawn to the Church and the good news that we offer just as they have been for centuries.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Thursday, March 4**, 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.**



## LONG TERM PRAYER CONCERNS



Please remember to keep the following individuals in your prayers.

## Not Published Online

## WEEKLY PRAYER CONCERNS

## Not Published 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.

We have resumed our **9:30 a.m. Sunday in Sanctuary worship service**. The service will be broadcast live to the church parking lot and streamed on line (see next below for streaming information).

### ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES

We have resumed in-person worship service but you may still stream live at 9:30 am on Sundays (or watch previous services anytime) on YouTube at: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCzQCRY8Vfa-IDhuqUnUhCKw](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzQCRY8Vfa-IDhuqUnUhCKw)

You may also stream services live on Sundays at 9:30 am, watch previous services, videos for children, and special activities on our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/fcchsv/videos](http://www.facebook.com/fcchsv/videos)

Finally, stream services at 9:30 am on Sunday at: [www.twitch.tv/fcchsv](http://www.twitch.tv/fcchsv)

We are temporarily publishing, as space allows, the prayer concerns that are normally 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 to leave a message. **Please notify the Pastors or the church office if you are going to the hospital and would like to be contacted**

### REGIONAL PRAYER REQUESTS

Pleasant View Christian Church, Camp Hill, AL

Rev. Linda Lou Curwood (former youth minister at FCC and the wife of a former interim pastor of FCC) will be turning 80 on March 12. We are encouraged to send her cards to help her celebrate. The Curwoods' address is Quarter Horse Court, Lexington, KY 40503. We are planning a few surprises for mom's birthday as we encourage friends and family to help us celebrate from afar.

Thanks for your consideration,  
Anna Hope Curwood Wills

## WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT

MF 2 and "Momma Phyl" are happy to announce the upcoming wedding of Trey Leonard and Abby McKibben on May 8 in Starkville, MS. The interesting story of this young couple can be found on [theknot.com/McKibbenLeonard](http://theknot.com/McKibbenLeonard). May the foundation Trey gained from his years with the youth at FCC be a guiding light in this next phase of life.

## ECM REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER AND FALL 2021

Know anyone looking for day care or pre-school? A few openings are available, depending on age and type of care, to the public on first-come first-served basis starting this week. If you see someone looking, ask them to contact Susan Cooley at 256-881-4291 or [susan@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:susan@fcc-hsv.org) for more information.

**CONGRATULATIONS to Michelle Givens**, Image in a Box, the winner of this year's Creative Entrepreneur award given by The Catalyst Center for Business & Entrepreneurship. The award goes to an entrepreneurial venture that focuses on the retail, arts, entertainment, or culinary industry and has a proven track record for sustainability. "Today, we celebrate the finest entrepreneurs in our community," said Lauren Smith, 2021 Catalyst Board Chair. "Entrepreneurs are the lifeblood of our community and our economy. They are the dealmakers, the changemakers, and the dream makers. They are our future."

The 2021 sign up chart for **FOOD BASKETS** is available. You may call the office at 256-881-0150 or email [publisher@fcc-hsv.org](mailto:publisher@fcc-hsv.org) to select a Sunday to remember or honor a friend, loved one, anniversary, birthday, or other special occasion. Donations are \$25.00, with checks made out to First Christian Church and Food Basket on the notation line, and go to Community Outreach.



## CWM BLESSING BOXES DUE

Ladies, the money you have collected for the Blessing Box ministry is due in March. You can contribute whatever you wish as you count your blessings from this past year even if you did not keep a special blessing box. This money is contributed to the Disciples Mission Fund with half of the donations going directly to the International Disciples Women's Ministries. Your giving makes a significant difference in the mission of the church at home and abroad. Please make your donation at your March Circle meeting or in your FCC offering noting Blessing Box in the memo line.

### Blessing Box Dedication Prayer:

Dear God, giver of everything, use these gifts which we present. May they show forth your love and our faith in ways beyond our thoughts, sight, and imagination. Make us one as we go forth in your service. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

- Sue Alexander, East Side Christian Church, Longview, Texas

## NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER

One of CWM's service projects for March is the Healthy Families program at the National Children's Advocacy Center. Healthy Families is a parent support program for first-time parents living in Madison County. It offers family support and education services that begin in the last trimester of the pregnancy or before the baby is 1 month old and may continue until the child begins kindergarten.

Please consider a monetary donation to this program, marking your check 'NCAC Healthy Families' in the memo line and dropping in the Sassafras bowl at church or mailing to the church office.

Thank you! Mary Ann Anderson



## FEELING FOR NINEVEH

By Mary Luti

*Jonah said, "That is why I fled. I knew that you are a merciful God, ready to relent from punishing." Then God said, "Should I not be concerned about Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left?"*

- excerpts of Jonah 4:1-2 & 11 (NRSV)

God sends Jonah to preach "Repent or else!" to Nineveh, Israel's mortal enemy. Jonah hates Nineveh with a purple passion, so he ducks the assignment and boards a ship to Far Away. When a storm comes up, the sailors, blaming Jonah's disobedience, heave him over the side.

God sends a rescue fish to swallow him. Some rescue, Jonah thinks. Still, if God put him in, God can get him out. So he offers up a flowery, self-pitying prayer for deliverance in which he actually refers to himself as God's "obedient servant," a fish story if there ever was one.

The fish, nauseated by the prayer, vomits him on shore. God sends him to Nineveh again. This time, Jonah delivers the message. Nineveh immediately repents, God immediately relents, Jonah immediately goes ballistic with disappointment, and we learn the reason for his bile.

Turns out Jonah suspected from the start that God was never going to punish anybody: God feels for Nineveh. What self-respecting prophet could be happy serving a Deity who refuses to obliterate the enemy and won't put his own people first?

God confirms his suspicion: "Look, Jonah, those pathetic shmucks can't tell left from right. Why shouldn't I feel for them? And tell me, why don't you?"

Jonah doesn't answer the question. It's hung in the air ever since.

### Prayer

When will I stop hoping you'll hate the people I hate? Will I ever feel for them the way you do?

## Sanctuary Service Protocols

- In person worship is at 9:30 a.m.
- Sunday school classes, the nursery, children/youth gatherings, coffee, and other hospitality services are currently suspended.
- While FCC and the State recommendations are good benchmarks, we invite all people to worship with us based on their comfort level. Virtual services are offered ([facebook.com/fcchsv](https://facebook.com/fcchsv), [twitch.tv/fcchsv](https://twitch.tv/fcchsv), or First Christian Church Huntsville on Youtube) every Sunday.
- **Attendees, including children, will wear face coverings/masks inside the church and practice social distancing (6 feet apart for non-household members) for everyone's safety.**
- Attendance is limited (approximately 75) to the ability to social distance and the service will be broadcast (107.9) to the parking lot in the event of overflow attendance.
- Enter the church through the Bell Tower Garden/Narthex doors. The doors by the church office will be locked.
- Greeters will provide hand sanitizer to all who enter and provide masks for those who have not brought their own.
- Ushers will seat people down the center/side aisles
- No choir/congregational singing.
- Following the service, rows will **leave by the side aisles** with the east aisle exiting through Family Services and the west aisle through the Narthex doors. (There will be directional signs.)
- Offerings may be placed in the brass plate when exiting the sanctuary or sent by mail.
- Please, **no congregating indoors** before or after service - social distancing outdoors.
- **Anyone with any symptoms will remain home and celebrate virtually for at least 14 days.**
- **Notify the church office immediately if you develop symptoms after attending a service.**