



# The Journey

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

## PREPARING FOR ADVENT

I have been accused of being grumpy in October and November because I do not like it when Christmas decorations show up before Halloween. Hearing Christmas Carols in early fall makes me groan, as I wonder if we are skipping over holidays that are meaningful and thought provoking so we can move ahead to Christmas. I also really enjoy Thanksgiving. It may not have begun as a religious holiday, but a day to be thankful for what we have received and what we share has profound implications. Add in Turkey and Football and I am hooked.

I am not a Scrooge when it comes to Christmas, I love Christmas. The twinkling lights, the cold winter chill, snow on the ground, the smell of pine, music in the air, candles aglow as we worship and pray. All of these images and memories fill me with a sense of joy and wonder. Yet, everything has its own time. There is a reason why our church ancestors created the season of Advent. It is so we can prepare ourselves, our homes, our church, our lives, our thoughts and actions for the coming of the Emmanuel once again. Emmanuel literally means God is with us; so during Advent we celebrate the coming of God into the world and into our hearts, minds and souls. Why wouldn't we want to rejoice?

Much of this pressure to get ready for Christmas comes from our society. This is the time when stores rake in huge profits because we are encouraged to buy presents, decorations, trees, clothes, novelties, anything and everything you can think of that can be painted red, green, gold and white. Now when we think of Christmas we do not imagine peace on earth, we think of busy malls, the rush to get into Wal-Mart, or calendars that seem so full we cannot fit another obligation into our lives.

As busy as Advent and Christmas can become, we have to remember why we celebrate this day in the first place. It is not just Jesus' birthday, we do not even think he was born anywhere near December. Christmas is the realization that God came to earth so that humanity could be redeemed, the Kingdom of God could be realized, and the world would know they are a part of God's great family. Christmas is about love!

It is my hope that this year the seasons of Advent and Christmas will take on new meaning for you, especially in a year where things have been, and will continue to be, so different. As we worship together on Sunday, as we prepare our sanctuary on November 29th, light the candles of Advent, and prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ, let us know that God is always with us, God's love shines down upon each of us, and that we are called to spread the true message of Christmas not just during this season, but every day of our lives.

May the love of God enfold you, the blessings of Jesus Christ flow down upon you, and the encouragement of the Holy Spirit give you strength so that the seasons ahead will be filled with wonder and joy.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

**The Church Office will be closed Thursday & Friday, November 26 & 27, for the Thanksgiving Holiday.**

Deadline for the *Journey* is **Wednesday, November 25**, 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.**

**THANKSGIVING ONLINE GET TOGETHER**

**November 26, at 3:00 PM Central Time**

On Thanksgiving Thursday, First Christian Church will be hosting a Zoom get together for anyone who might want to see a friendly face on Thanksgiving. You can talk, play a game, or just sit back and enjoy each other's company. We know that many of your Thanksgiving plans have changed and it would be nice to see your FCC family. The Zoom link is below and you will need the Zoom app on your cell phone, tablet, or computer to participate. Sharifa Love-Rutledge will be hosting the event.

To join the Zoom meeting go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88417087327?pwd=RzBLa0FueGk3NUNITTR4UUlpZkc5QT09> on Thursday, November 26, at 3:00 Central Time.

Have a very Happy Thanksgiving!



**WEEKLY PRAYER CONCERNS**



**Not Published Online**



**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**



**Not Published Online**

**CONDOLENCES** to the family of Harriet Lash, mother of Mike Lash, who recently passed.

**REGIONAL PRAYER REQUESTS**  
River View Christian Church, Valley, 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**

**UPCOMING SCRIPTURES & SERMON TITLES**

**November 29, 2020**

**Modified Hanging of the Greens Service**

**December 6, 2020**

**Scripture:** Isaiah 64: 1-9 & Mark 13: 24-37

**Sermon:** "What Are We Preparing For?"

**ALABAMA AND NORTHWEST FLORIDA CHRISTIAN  
WOMEN'S MINISTRIES (CWM)**

**REGIONAL PROJECTS**

CWM has 2 projects that we are asking you support this month. One is The Wellhouse (TW).

Interstate I 20 from Atlanta to Birmingham is considered the sex trafficking Super Highway. Female victims that are rescued are provided medical, spiritual, mental and emotional care. Programs offered include: 24/7 crisis line, trauma center, immediate shelter, long-term recovery program, transitional living apartment community for grads of their programs. Your monetary donations are tax deductible. For more info check out [www.the-wellhouse.org](http://www.the-wellhouse.org)

The second project is Bread for the World (BFTW). This project believes it is the moral calling for Christians to be politically engaged. Practicing faith-filled citizenship is our right under the US Constitution. We are serving God when we raise issues of hunger and poverty with our government. Hunger is at historic levels amid this pandemic. BFTW asks us to urge our government to pass a comprehensive COVID-19 relief package that includes assistance for families struggling with hunger. When we add our voices to BFTW we are building the political will to end hunger. You can do this by going to BFTW website ([www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)) and following the links to send a letter to our AL Senators and Representatives. You can use the letter already pre-written with the ability to add your own comments, or write your own. Enter your name, address and zip code and the letter will automatically be sent to your Congressional members. Easy peasy! Monetary donations can also be made which will help BFTW in their efforts to lobby members of Congress regarding hunger, however they are NOT tax deductible.

Ruth Lackey, CWM Nov. Service Coordinator

**THIS WEEK'S FOOD BASKET** is in honor of John & Jill Hall's anniversary.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22 WORSHIP ATTENDANCE: 45**

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH IN NOVEMBER**

Founded in 1954, the Harris Home for Children is a private, non-profit agency that provides full-time foster care services for neglected adolescent children in our community and around the state. It is the only emergency crisis service for children in Alabama. Harris Home provides foster care, therapeutic care, and educational services to nurture and empower its children to become capable and compassionate adults. Your monetary donations will purchase linens, household and hygiene supplies, and Christmas gift cards for the residents.

Thank you for giving! Mary Ann Anderson

**CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S MINISTRIES**

**CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

This year we won't be doing our traditional stocking filling with Christmas Charities Year Round (CCYR). They have enough stockings committed for that project this year and suggested an alternative, particularly regarding dealing with COVID19 and providing a safe way to donate toys. The Chamber of Commerce/team from Cummings Research Park created a Toy Drive Wish List s on Amazon.

If you have an Amazon account, and would like to support CCYR, follow this link [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and it will take you to the CCYR Toy Drive Wish List. Select the items you wish to purchase from the list and add them to our cart. **When you check out you will see Julia Kaye as a delivery option**, she is the Chamber of Commerce contact who is collecting the toys. Select her as the delivery option for your order and check out.

Thank you for your support, CWM

**CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S MINISTRIES**

**OCTOBER PROJECT THANK YOU**

Many thanks to the congregation of First Christian Church for their very generous support of the October CWM Project, the Neaves-Davis Center for Children.

Due to the generosity of our church members, a donation of \$696 was sent to the Center this week. This financial support will enable the staff at Neaves-Davis to continue the work of providing much needed services to some of the children in our community who need it the most.

Thank you so much for your compassion and your support, Janet Sholes

## ***We Belong to Each Other*** by Marchaé Grair

*How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!* - Psalm 133:1

When I was in high school, I was selected to go on a leadership trip in Washington, D.C. My mom couldn't afford to send me. She was a single parent, and it was too expensive for her to buy me a roundtrip plane ticket and pay a hefty tuition.

The Sunday after I received the invitation, our small but mighty church passed a collection plate and collected enough money to send me on the trip. This was not a group of wealthy people for whom a donation meant no sacrifice. But they saw a person they loved in need and knew that, collectively, they could do something about it.

They decided I belonged to them and they belonged to me. They decided that because they were my village, they would do what they could, and they had faith that it would be enough.

I have channeled the memory of that collection plate often, especially when I'm broke and feel as if my offering is too small. There have been times when a couple of dollars was all I could give, and I almost let the embarrassment about the amount of the gift stop me from giving at all.

And then I remember how that collection plate changed my life. And it wasn't because of how much each person gave, it was because of the spirit with which they gave it.

Giving isn't about who has the most money or who can give the biggest offering. We give so that people can feel a tangible impact of our love for God and for one another. Giving is a concrete declaration that we belong to each other.

And belonging to each other means that we give what we can, when we can, to support the collective good of the church.

**Prayer;** How good it is to belong, O God! How glad I am to offer my support and love so that others know they belong, too.

### **FCC ONLINE VIDEOS**

Miss a service? Watch previous services on [YouTube](#). For a mixture of children's stories, special music, and special activities on [Facebook](#).

## **Sanctuary Service Protocols**

- There is only one 9:30 a.m. Sunday service offered currently. Virtual services will continue with live streaming and recorded services uploaded to social media platforms.
- Sunday school classes, the nursery, and youth gatherings are temporarily suspended.
- Food, coffee, and other hospitality services are also suspended.
- High risk members and families with children unable to reliably social distance are encouraged to remain home for virtual services offered on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com), [twitch.tv](https://www.twitch.tv), or [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)
- 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.
- **Attendees will wear face coverings/masks inside the church and practice social distancing (6 feet apart for non-household members) for everyone's safety.**
- Bring your own communion elements (we have prepackaged if you forget or do not have them).
- 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.
- Every other pew is roped off for social distancing.
- 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 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.**