

First Christian Visitor

“Where the Grace of God Awaits You.”

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A WORD FROM YOUR PASTORS

We are blessed as a church to celebrate the Lord's Supper every Sunday. Maybe during these troubled times in our world we should celebrate the Lord's Supper more often.

Imagine Jesus as a guest in your home for the evening meal. You ask Jesus to say grace. To your surprise, He says not only grace, but all the words of the Communion Service. Imagine Jesus taking one of the dinner rolls, breaking it, and saying, "This is my body...". Then imagine Him taking a glass and saying, "This is my blood...". Jesus tells you that He never intended for the last supper to be shared only in a church service. He intended for every meal to be a remembrance.

During these troubled times, may we all remember the love and power of Jesus at our table at home. He is our hope in a fragmented world.

God Bless You, Edd & Mary Pat

Vacation Bible School Orientation and Training Thursday, April 28 at 10:00

July 25-29 will be here before we know it. Soon we will all be scattering for summer fun and vacations, so before we get away we want to have our VBS training for all our volunteers. We will meet in the Farkas room at 10:00 on Thursday, April 28. We promise to have you out by noon at the latest. We may even want to grab some lunch together. We are excited about our theme and staff. Our theme this year is **Galactic Blast**. Our 4-year-olds through the 6th grade will explore a cosmic adventure focusing on praising our wonderful, incredible amazing, magnificent and awesome God! We will do this through Story Telling, Discovery Time, Crafts, Music, and even our snack time in our Galactic Café'. In addition, each day as we come for our Starship Galactic Praise time, we will have as our special guest, Galileo the Green Gorilla. Not to worry, he is a very friendly Gorilla. Galileo is friends with the Commander of our Starship and they will help us complete our mission. Our first priority is to be **trained** for this special Mission. So Galactic Blast staff and volunteers- please report to your station on Thursday, April 28th at 10:00. See you there. Thanks, Crew, we really appreciate you.

Mary Pat and Julie

THE ADVENTURE NOOK MUSICAL AND ART SHOW – MAY 3rd

We invite you to visit the Art Gallery on Tuesday, May 3rd from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Our children have been busy throughout the year working on special art projects. Our 3's and 4's will entertain us in the sanctuary with special music they have learned this year. Come join us! *The Adventure Nook*

June 3- 14

As most of you know, our CYF youth have been working hard and studying for over two years to travel to the Holy Land this summer. The unrest in the Middle East gave us pause but with many personal contacts and friends in Beit Sahour/Bethlehem and in Jerusalem, we are assured things are normal and tourism is thriving. Both the youth and their parents/grandparents have had two meetings to discern the direction of this trip. On Palm Sunday the parents/grandparents voted unanimously to go forward with the plans. Needless to say, the youth are extremely excited and are all but packed and ready to go. We feel it is commendable that these youth chose to visit the Holy Land where our Lord was born, lived, loved, taught, healed, performed miracles, was crucified, died, and rose again, because He loves us so much. This youth trip will not be the typical Holy Land tour like our adults took three years ago. This will be an experiential trip where our youth will be immersed in the culture. They will experience the land as well as the people of Palestine and Israel. Your young person will have opportunities to reflect on the people, the places, the experiences and the emotions they encounter through journaling/writing poetry, painting/drawing, composing and much more. These images and memories will have a lasting effect as everything they learn from now on will have a visual and spiritual memory. In addition, they will be engaged in numerous service projects with our brothers and sisters in Palestine. They will also experience God's presence in new ways as God performs miracles in their own lives. These youth will come home with a deeper appreciation of God's people in Israel/Palestine and with a deeper commitment to be God's people and Disciples of Christ. We are happy for our youth to be able to travel and have an experience that will remain with them the rest of their lives. We sincerely appreciate all your support in all their fund raisers to help make this dream a reality. The youth have decided to postpone their youth Sunday service until they return to share their experiences. We will continue to share about our trip in future Visitors in the weeks to come. May God Bless each of you and thank you as always for your love and support.

CHRISTIAN COMRADES SUNDAY LESSON

Sunday, May 1st

“Paul’s Epistles to the Thessalonians”

Acts 16:1-17 I Thessalonians 1 & 2

“THE DISCIPLES”

Sunday, May 1st

Ancient Words of Praise

The Christ Hymn Philippians 2:1-11

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Life In Our Community This Week

- Sunday, May 1
- 9:00 Sunday School
9:45-10:15 Fellowship Moment
10:15 Worship Service
10:30 Worship & Wonder
- Monday, May 2
- 7:00 Men's Bible Study
10:00 Staff Meeting
- Tuesday, May 3
- 9:45 Chapel
10:00 Women's Bible Study
7:00 Elder Calls
- Wednesday, May 5
- 6:30 Choir Practice
- Thursday, May 4
- 7:00 Women's Bible Study
7:00 Men's Bible Study
- Saturday, May 7
- 9:00-Noon Stage Building Work Day

GRACE NOTES

- † Our prayers are with Frances Battle, who is in St. Vincent's.
- † Our Lenten and Easter Services were a blessing. Now we look forward to blessings of the summer such as Mother and Father's Day Worship, Pentecost and Freedom Sundays, Sacred Heart Music, Blessing of the Pets, Fifth Sunday Pot Luck, Vacation Bible School, Broadway Musical, and all the other gatherings at First Christian Church.
- † Our men's organization are offering an early spring t-shirt for sale. The shirts are \$10 each, with the proceeds going to help our various and growing projects. A variety of sizes are available & we have one to fit you. See Gary Howard, Jerry Wallace or others for your Disciples shirt.
Thanks, Jerry Wallace
- † Mac Heaton and Beverly Smith are resting at home.

STAGE BUILDING WORKDAY

Saturday, May 7th 9:00 am – Noon

All we need is 8-10 workers to build 25 stage platforms in the gym. The more help we have, the faster it gets done. We are not installing the stage, just building the platforms to put into storage. Bring a power screwdriver. We have the materials. Please call Bill Watts at 966-1907 to let him know you'll be there. *Thanks, Bill Watts*

SUNDAY'S ATTENDANCE	
EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE	80
SUNDAY SCHOOL	77
WORSHIP SERVICE	247

CHURCH HISTORY CONTINUED

The first Sunday in November, 1995, was observed as All Saints' Day. This was an ancient tradition of the church to commemorate those who have died in Christ, and we honored the memory of those of our congregation who passed away during the past year. The following Sunday was designated "Bring a Friend to Church" Sunday, and more than 300 attended the two worship services. After lunch there was an Organ Rededication Service and a recital by Rick Phillips. Advent workshops were held on Sunday evenings in November. Many attended Thanksgiving worship in the chapel at Hargis and then enjoyed the traditional turkey dinner in the dining hall. The month ended with a Wednesday evening chili supper followed by the Hanging of the Greens in the sanctuary. The children presented their Christmas pageant during the Sunday school hour on December 17. Worship was a special service of Christmas carols followed by Christmas dinner. Since Christmas Eve was on Sunday, there was only one morning worship service held at the Hargis Retreat with dinner and a play, "In Bethlehem Inn". The setting of the play was the dining room of the inn on the night of Jesus' birth, so dinner (which was part of the drama) and the play were held in Giltner Hall. Those attending became guests at the inn and were participants as well as observers. Guests left the dining area and moved outside to observe the live nativity scene and to sing carols. The late Candlelight Christmas Eve Communion Service was held at the church.

In December, Rev. John Mobley of Shelbyville, Tennessee, was unanimously approved as our new Regional Minister. He was scheduled to begin serving in this capacity in March, 1996.

Services were canceled for the first Sunday in January, 1996, because of snow and also the first Sunday in February because of an ice storm. We started 1996 with a new administrative structure: the Mission Council replaced the Official Board, the Moderator replaced the Board Chairman and Mission Directors replaced the Department Heads.

The youth of the church sponsored their 7th annual Valentine dinner and raised nearly \$300 for Little Zion Baptist Church in south Alabama which burned. We had recently donated our old hymnals to Little Zion and were saddened at the loss of this place of worship.

The annual All Church Retreat was held at Hargis the first weekend of March with Dr. Penny Marler, Department of Religion at Samford, as leader. The theme was "Circle of Love", an exploration of the church as family. The CWF held a Silent Auction at the Retreat and raised nearly \$1700 to benefit Camp High Hopes.