



First Christian Visitor

“Where the Grace of God Awaits You.”

[visit us at : www.fcc-bhm.org](http://www.fcc-bhm.org) or call us at: 991-5000

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A WORD FROM YOUR PASTORS

The Bible teaches us that we are new creations. As 2 Corinthians 5:17 shares, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” When we came to Jesus, we gave up our old ways and sins. He forgave our sins, put our weaknesses behind us, and blotted out our failures.

Now as Christians we serve a God who tells us, “I am making everything new!” (Revelations 21:5). No matter how bad things may be for us today, with Jesus we can start new things immediately. The Bible promises us that “the Lord’s mercies...are new every morning”. (Lamentations 3: 22-23). Therefore, we as Christians can start a new life with each new day.

With all these blessings of being new creations and with a fresh start each morning, may we all celebrate and Praise God. This is a joyous promise – your life is always new in Christ.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

God Bless you, Edd & Mary Pat

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

Members and friends of First Christian: this note is written to let you know how much the staff appreciates you. Your Christmas gift to each one of us gives us joy, encouragement, and a new sense of blessing in serving you at First Christian.

We look forward to our association together in the name of Christ for the new year.

Thank you again for the wonderful Christmas Gift. Your generosity reflects God’s love.

God Bless you, Your Church Staff

THANK YOU FROM THE ADVENTURE NOOK

The Adventure Nook would like to thank all those who helped with a jolly time during the month of December:

- ♣ Pastor Edd for taking us on a Christmas friends walk.
- ♣ Pastor Mary Pat for leading us in a special chapel about the real meaning of Christmas.
- ♣ Russ and Pat Favorite for visiting us as Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

LOOKING AHEAD IN JANUARY

Saturday, January 14- Monday, January 16 -

Chi Rho & CYF Trip to Gatlinburg, TN.

Sunday, January 15 - Deacon Meeting

Monday, January 16 – Elder Meeting

Sunday, January 22 - Installation Service for Church Officers, Deacons, Mission Chairs, and Leaders.

Monday, January 23 - First Mission Council of 2012.

Wednesday, January 25 - Young At Heart.

Sunday, January 29 - Laity Sunday and Fifth Sunday Pot Luck.

Monday, January 30 - Christian Men's Fellowship.

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT

Our Regional Minister has written an inspirational book during his sabbatical. The title of the book is Humility, Gratitude, and Generosity: Reflections on Abundant Living. He shares that “the reader will be helped to see the importance of these three qualities – humility, gratitude, and generosity – in developing the spiritual character that leads to the kind of abundant life Jesus wants for us.” The emphasis upon these three particular qualities comes from the author’s own reflections on the life and teaching of Jesus.

Copies of his book are available on the welcome table in the narthex. A donation of \$8.00 is requested toward the purchase of a book. All proceeds go to the ministry of the Region.

Consider buying a book for the New Year. John’s thoughts can guide us toward an abundant life in 2012. His book is just another way to claim the promise of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of John, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly”. (John 10:10).

Backpack Buddies Donations Needed

As part of our Local Outreach efforts, we are Backpack Buddies for Vincent Elementary School. This national program is coordinated locally by Vineyard Family Services, and we are partnering with them to provide food and snacks to 28 children who do not have adequate food (or any food) over the weekend. You can help by donating any of the following items:

100% juice boxes (small sizes for elementary age school children); Fruit cups and applesauce (in individual packages); Granola bars/snack bars (not candy); Pop-top cans of past (e.g., ravioli, spaghetti, macaroni and cheese, etc.); Snack crackers (e.g., peanut butter crackers, cheese and crackers, etc.)

pudding cups (ones that do not require refrigeration).

The foods needs to be accessible for elementary school children to open without assistance. Please bring your donation to the big orange tub by the Outreach table in the Narthex. If you would like more information about Backpack Buddies, please contact Charlotte Brammer or Sandi Hamilton.

OUR COMMITMENTS

We continue to receive commitments for our 2012 budget toward our ministry together at First Christian. With our commitments there are happy days ahead. Bright, cheerful, happy days. There will be happy days for those who are hungry for physical food and spiritual food. But it takes support-financial support-to bring these happy days.

If you have not made your commitment, please share your promise as soon as possible. Commitment cards are available in the narthex. Thank you for your support as together we bring hope and happiness to God’s world.

*Happy New Year and God Bless,
Your Finance Council*

SUNDAY'S ATTENDANCE

WORSHIP SERVICE	83
SUNDAY SCHOOL	38

“Where the Grace of God Awaits You.”

FIRST CHRISTIAN VISITOR (UPS 0195-880) IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY EXCEPT A WEEK IN DECEMBER AND A WEEK IN JULY, BY FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH. **PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT BIRMINGHAM, AL, 35203.** POSTMASTER PLEASE SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:
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Life In Our Community This Week

Sunday, January 8

9:00 Sunday School
9:45 Fellowship Moment
10:15 Worship Service
10:30 Worship & Wonder
12:00 Rebekah at Lucille Leaman's
5:00 Children and Youth Groups
6:15 Snack Supper

Monday – Thursday

9:30 – 1:30 The Adventure Nook

Monday, January 9

7:00 Men's Bible Study

Tuesday, January 10

10:00 Women's Bible Study

Thursday, January 12

7:00 Advocates Bible Study

7:00 Women's Bible Study

GRACE NOTES

- ▲ Our sympathy is expressed to Derrick McQuitery, on the loss of his mother, Mrs. Patricia McQuitery.
- ▲ Our joy is with Haylee Horne, who was baptized on Christmas Sunday.
- ▲ Our joy is with Hannah Elsmore, who was baptized on January 1, 2012, in her home church of First Christian Church in Conroe, TX. Hannah is a member of our youth group.
- ▲ Congratulations to James Cason for passing his CPA exams.
- ▲ The Elder meeting has been changed to Monday, January 16 at 6:30 pm. Also, the Mission Council meeting has been changed to Monday, January 23 at 6:30 pm.

PLANNING FOR 2012?

As you plan for the New Year, consider making a resolution to finalize your personal end-of-life plans. Rather than leaving difficult decisions for your bereaved loved ones to handle, make your own wishes known ahead of time. Consider reserving a niche in the FCC Columbarium in our lovely outdoor worship center. To ask about our Columbarium and related end of life matters, please contact Jim or Ann Langley, Jim Baxter, or Clarissa Harms.

CHRISTIAN COMRADES SUNDAY LESSON

Sunday, January 8th

A Study of The Book of James

THE DISCIPLES

Sunday, January 8th

Josephs Finds Favor

Genesis 41: 37-45, 50-52

CHURCH HISTORY CONTINUED

In August, 2006, the Chi Rho youth went on their summer mission trip to Black Mountain, North Carolina to visit Christmount, the national retreat facility of the Disciples of Christ. They participated with other Chi Rho youth from across the country in various service projects which included trail clearing and maintenance, renovating and updating the playground and general maintenance work. They also had fun at the nearby YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly and enjoyed hiking and riding inner tubes down the creek.

Jerry Wallace asked for volunteers to form a disaster response team to go to the Mississippi Gulf Coast to help with rebuilding efforts following the 2005 hurricane, Katrina. The group went in August, and they were amazed at the total destruction of the area and also by the faith and resilience of the families they were assisting. This was truly an experience the group would never forget.

September 24 was designated Mission Sunday. Our church was blessed by four mission trips during the summer: to Andros Island, to Alaska, to North Carolina and to Mississippi. During morning worship we heard from representatives of each of these groups as they shared some of their experiences. We were invited to stay for a baked potato bar after church and to see photos from the trips.

The CYF and Chi Rho youth asked everyone to come to their annual Cajun Festival in October. CYF youth are also selling olive wood items made by Christian artisans in the Bethlehem area of the Holy Land. This craft started in the 16th century and is still a main source of income for many families.

In November the Chi Rho group collected non-perishable food items for Ronald McDonald House, a competition between Alabama and Auburn fans to see which fans contributed the most food. They also sponsored a Parents Day Out fundraiser on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

On the second Friday evening in December we were invited to a Christmas Dinner Theatre. The play, "Away from The Manger", was a humorous story about the groups of people and animals who didn't go to the manger to see the baby Jesus for various reasons. This challenged us to examine our reasons for "staying away from the manger". Along with the play we enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner prepared and served by the Fellowship Mission. The choir presented a beautiful Christmas cantata on the following Sunday. This year the past moderators and board chairs were asked to light the Advent candles. Since Christmas Eve was on a Sunday, it was decided to have only one candlelight communion service at 11:00 pm.

Our organist, Rosamond Black, was honored at a reception in December after announcing plans to retire at the end of the year after sharing her ministry of music with us for seven years.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE IN 2012

The following are some wonderful opportunities to serve our Lord at First Christian in 2012. Please choose one and notify Scott Jackson, Steve Pasky, Edd or Mary Pat. All members of First Christian are encouraged to serve as a member of a Mission.

Worship Mission: Responsible for all Sunday morning worship services and special services such as Christmas and Easter.

Education Mission: Responsible for Sunday school of all ages, youth work and the total education program of the church.

Evangelism Mission: Responsible for bringing new members into the life of the church.

Fellowship Mission: Responsible for providing a social life and fellowship activities for the church.

Administration Mission: Responsible for the financial program, maintenance of property and general administration policies for the church.

Outreach Mission: Responsible for giving to the needy within Birmingham and throughout the world.

Membership Mission: Responsible for care and nurturing of church members.