

First Christian Visitor

“Where the Grace of God Awaits You.”

www.fcc-bhm.org

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 01 JANUARY 5, 2010



A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

Holy God, God of our yesterdays, our today, and our tomorrows. We praise You for Your unequalled greatness. We thank You for the year behind us and for the year ahead. Help us in Your new year, to fret less and laugh more. Teach us to show our children to laugh by laughing with them. Teach us to love by loving those whom we need to forgive. Remind us that when Love was born in Bethlehem, that Love in the form of Jesus came for us, so we would know how to share that Love with others. Help us to hear Your love song in every voice we hear and every word we utter. Help us to stop and listen to Your love songs, so that we may know You better. We thank You for another new year and for new opportunities to grow and become more like your Son. We leave the irreparable past in your hands, and step out into the unknown New Year knowing you will go with us. We are grateful for Your gift of a New Year and we rejoice that you are our Loving God. *Amen*

Congregational Transformation Event February 12-13 - at First Christian Church

The regional Program Committee on Church Development is sponsoring the 3rd annual congregational transformation event here at our church on Feb. 12-13. This event is designed for clergy, congregational leaders and members. The theme is, “Being - Well: Congregational Health, Vitality and YOU.” Our Friday night preacher will be Rev. Bill Lee, minister of Loudon Ave. Christian Church in Roanoke, VA. He will preach at 7:30. He is regarded as one of the most dynamic preachers in the Christian Church. He has also served as our Moderator for the Christian Church (DOC), is a strong advocate for health ministries and has created medical and social services to the disadvantaged. Several workshops will be held on Saturday. Topics include: Momentum for Life, “I will Lift My Eyes to the Hills: Help for Churches That Are Stuck, Sinking or Sapped,” crafting a Transformation of Spiritual Life, True Community, Shalom and Sabbath.

This is a regional event for both lay people and clergy. The cost per congregation is \$250, which includes lunch on Saturday. Desserts will be provided by various congregations. Our nursery will be open for children under 3. Cokesbury will have a book display and valuable resources to help those who are seeking to be healthy in every way. Plan to attend and receive some special blessings, meet some new friends and get reacquainted with some old ones.

AN INVITATION

Now is the time to begin the New Year with a commitment to your spiritual growth. We have Sunday school classes for all ages, plus a nursery for those under 3. As adults, you are encouraged to begin this New Year in one of our three adult classes which begin at 9:00. The following are classes which provide opportunities to exercise your faith, stretch your

understanding of the scriptures, and develop lasting friendships:

The Insighters Class (Room 202-upper level)

The Insighters Class will be discussing practical, scriptural ways that we can prepare ourselves to be better witnesses for the Lord Jesus. If you're looking for some lively discussion with "lovely" Christian folks, be upstairs at 9:00 on Sunday mornings. In addition, beginning in January the class will start three different four-month studies based on the results from the survey. The first team teacher will be George Dudley, who will explore practical applications of the scriptures to everyday life. The other team teachers are Jim Langley and Bud Flora. Come and invite a friend to Sunday school.

The Seekers Class (Room 205-upper level)

Beginning in January, the Seekers Class will start studying the book, “Momentum for Life”, by Michael Slaughter. This study calls us to a renewed life of faith, health, and balance that will prepare us to fulfill God's plan and our own potential. Class members will focus on five key areas- devotion to God, lifelong learning, key relationships, vision and a healthy lifestyle - to be our best selves and move forward to God's promised future. We hope that you will consider joining our class as together we commit to being more faithful servants to our Lord.

Comrades Class (Room 104/Farkas Room)

Are you looking for a wonderful Sunday school class? If you are, consider the Christian Comrades. We are always ready to welcome new members. We base our studies on scripture, and every week we have lively discussions about what we're learning. Each month, we rotate one of four teachers, so you don't have to worry about getting bored with only one person's presentation. Of course, lessons aren't all that you look for in Sunday school; fellowship is also important. That's where our class excels! No matter your age, you will fit right in. Love, warmth, and acceptance are the feelings I always take away from our class. Prayer and support are ongoing, but we also have a lot of fun. Our Christmas parties, which we usually have in a member's home, feature great food, a holiday atmosphere, plenty of laughter and, last but not least, a reverence for what the season is all about. Everyone can derive so much from belonging to a Sunday school class. Why not give us a try? We're located in the Farkas Room, and we'll be looking for you. Remember: “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.”

Children and Youth Classes

Sunday school classes for our children are in room #108 and our youth in #204. Our nursery is available for children under 3 in room #107.

First Christian Church
4954 Valleydale Road
Birmingham, Al. 35242

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: FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 4954 VALLEYDALE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM, AL 35242.

Life In Our Community This Week

Sunday, January 10

- 9:00 Sunday School
- 10:00 Worship Service
- 11:30 Rebekah Group
- 11:30 Ona/Ruth Group
- 5:30 Children & Youth
- 6:45 Snack Supper

Monday, January 11

- 10:00 Staff Meeting

Tuesday, January 12

- 9:45 Chapel

Wednesday, January 13

- 9:45 Chapel
- 6:30 Choir Rehearsal

Friday-Saturday, January 15-16

Youth Conference at the Great Smoky Mountains

GRACE NOTES

- † Charlie, Jennifer and all the Powell family wish to express their sincere thanks for all the expressions of sympathy from church members and a special thanks to Virginia’s Sunday school class.
- † Our sympathy is expressed to Fran Gatewood in the loss of her sister Virginia, who died Christmas Day. She was 87.
- † Special thanks and appreciation to all our college/career young adults who participated in worship service Dec. 27th. We are so proud of each of you. May God continue to bless and use you.
- † Thank you to all who helped the youth Spread the Light of Christ with your love gifts in honor/memory of those you love.
- † If you borrowed the round chafing dish buffet ware, please return it to the church.

YOUTH CONFERENCE

Our Chi Rho and CYF youth will be attending a youth conference called “Resurrection” over the Martin Luther King weekend, January 15-17. It is an experience for spiritual renewal where the gospel is proclaimed and where the youth learn how to have a closer walk with Christ. Youth can expect terrific speakers, a God- centered message and fantastic worship and music. This event is sponsored by the United Methodist Church. The conference will be in Gatlinburg, and the youth will stay in Pigeon Forge. Our Youth will be the first to travel in our new church bus.

THE 2009 VISITOR

If you would like to bind the 2009 Visitor in honor or memory of a loved one, please contact Cece in the church office. The cost is approx. \$35.

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ELDER RETREAT

There will be an Elder Retreat at Lake Guntersville State Park on January 27-28. Elders are looking forward to this time when they can step out of their busy lives and focus on the beauty of God’s creation. The theme will emphasize communion with our Master and a “Spiritual Renewal”. It is also Eagle Awareness Weekend at Guntersville, where everyone hopes to spot an eagle! Please pray for your Elders as they attend this opportunity for growth and fellowship.

ATTENTION!!

The Ala-Northwest Florida Newsletter will be distributed electronically in 2010!

Beginning in 2010 the bi-monthly newsletter called The Christian Ala-Northwest Florida will no longer be mailed out to individuals and congregations. It will be available at no cost by visiting the AI-NW Florida website at: www.alnwfldisciples.org.

You will be able to print out the newsletter or simply view it on-line.

What To Do To Access The Newsletter On-Line.

Go to: www.alnwfldisciples.org , click on “Register” button in top left corner and follow the process. This will also allow you to receive regular updates from the region that will keep you informed of all the latest news and events. Please call 425-5245 with any questions.

PLEDGE REPORT

We have received 60 pledges that represent \$254,880.00 toward our budget for 2010. If you have not made your pledge, please return your pledge card soon. We all need to share in our part of supporting the Lord’s work at First Christian.

PLEASE NOTE THE DATE CHANGES

- No Elder Gathering on Monday, January 11
- Finance Council moved to Tuesday, January 19
- Pastor’s Cabinet now on Thursday, January 21
- Mission Council moved to Monday, January 25
- No Men’s Gathering on Monday, January 25

The Finance Council and Mission Council have been changed in order to allow more time to receive pledges towards the 2010 Budget.

SUNDAY’S ATTENDANCE

SUNDAY SCHOOL	34
WORSHIP	115

CHRISTIAN COMRADES SUNDAY LESSON

Sunday, January 10th
“Strengthened in Temptation”
Matthew 4: 1-11