

First Christian Visitor

“Where the Grace of God Awaits You.”

www.fcc-bhm.org

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A PASTORAL WORD 2011 STORMS AND FLOODS

From Your General Minister and President

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As I continue to see the evidence of the storm damage in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee and Missouri; as I watch the flood waters spread in Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, my prayers intensify for you.

- Prayers of intercession for the injured and for those who have lost loved ones and colleagues; for those whose security has been shattered through damage to homes and schools and churches and land and places of business.
- Prayers of thanksgiving for all those who have stepped up to be a neighbor to others in this time – who just instinctively reached out to grab a hand and develop partnerships to meet the need.
- Prayers of especial gratitude for Disciples ministries: the regions, Week of Compassion, Disciples Volunteering, and local congregations who have been there in the immediate aftermath and will be there for the long haul.

May each of you have the strength you need for each day. May the partnerships formed throughout this ordeal speak of God's love and God's will for life, even in the midst of loss. May God bring healing to both body and soul. Your sister in Christ, Sharon

FCC RECEIVES WEEK OF COMPASSION GRANT

The Week of Compassion granted our church \$1000.00 for use in our local community-based efforts in the recovery effort from the devastating tornadoes of April 27, 2011. This grant will help us to continue to our express love and support to damaged communities as they seek to rebuild from the disaster. The Week of Compassion ministry is active worldwide throughout the year, offering help in times of crisis and rebuilding. This ministry reflects the spirit of Jesus Christ to those who are impacted by natural or man-made disasters. It is our hope that this grant will help us to establish and maintain a Mission Station so that we may host and serve those who travel here to serve in the rebuilding in our nearby communities. It is one of the ministries of the Church that makes us all proud to be Disciples of Christ.

FCC RECEIVES REGIONAL RECOGNITION

First Christian Church was presented a Certificate of Recognition for outstanding support of the ministries of the Christian Church (DOC) in Alabama and Northwest Florida. This certificate was presented to Edd and Mary Pat by Rev. John Mobley at a luncheon thanking our congregation for our generous outreach gifts of \$ 43,383.00 in 2010.

SOUTH JOPLIN CHURCH SUFFERS DAMAGE

There are two Disciple churches in Joplin Mo. where the deadly tornadoes hit Sunday on May 22. The FCC in Joplin is okay; however, south Joplin Christian Church suffered damage to their building and 15 of their families lost everything. This email was received from their pastor Rev. Jill Michel, *“Our church lost about 1/3 of the roof and windows. At this point due to continuing rain we have water through all three floors - although so far just on the north side. About 15 families in our congregation have homes that are total losses. Several others have various degrees of damage. Thanks for your prayers and for your guidance as we figure out how to respond to our community amidst our own recovery.”*

In the midst of our own ministry and mission we still believe that God is calling us to reach out to our sisters and brothers in this Disciple congregation. A special love offering has been collected, and our children in Worship & Wonder have made cards to send to the church and their families. If you would like to respond with words of comfort and encouragement you may email Rev. Jill Michael at pastor@southjoplindisciples.org or mail to their temporary address which is: 115 Kellie Lane, Carl Junction, MO 64834. May we be a blessing to this sister congregation as we practice our Southern hospitality and our love for Jesus Christ.

TORNADO RELIEF UPDATE

As we mark the one month anniversary of the horrific tornadoes that wreaked havoc on many communities in our state, we remain committed to doing all that we can to help our neighbors. We continue to collect needed items: Gatorade and other sports drinks; sodas; new underwear (for men, women, and children); and new socks (all sizes). Nonperishable foods and snacks are also needed.

We have partnered with the Pleasant Grove Masonic Lodge, and they would like to have any foods that are suitable for grilling. Please contact Charles Daniels or Jerry Wallace if you can help with this need.

Children need to be fed, but they also need to play. We are partnering with Lost Toys to meet this need. This organization is collecting and distributing toys and games for all ages. Please bring new or “almost new” toys and games to the church. This is a new call, so spread the word.

Finally, we are in the initial stage of opening the FCC Mission Station so that we can “serve those who serve”. We have set June 10th as our opening day, and we expect to house volunteers over the summer months. Please consider how you can help with this important outreach: everyone can help! Look for more information in the Narthex. Contact Marion Moon or Janet Clark to see how you can help.

“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35 (NIV)

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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

	<u>Sunday, June 5</u>
9:00	Sunday School
9:45-10:15	Fellowship Moment
10:15	Worship Service
10:30	Worship & Wonder
	<u>Monday, June 6</u>
7:00	Men's Bible Study
	<u>Tuesday, June 7</u>
6:30	Pastor's Cabinet
	<u>Thursday, June 9</u>
7:00	Advocates Bible Study

GRACE NOTES

- † Congratulations to Hannah Harms on her graduation from Trinity University on May 14. Hannah received her B.A. degree in history with minors in French and business. She is currently in Birmingham and pursuing career options around the country.
- † If there are any other college graduates, please let us know. This year we have no graduating high school seniors.
- † The Pentecost offering will be received on June 5th and June 12th. The offering will be used to start new Disciples congregations.
- † Edd will be hiking in God's natural sanctuary June 15th – August 15th.
- † I would like to express my sincere thanks to my church family for their prayers, cards, and phone calls during my recent surgery. Linda Hamilton.
- † Please keep bringing donations for Tornado Relief.

WALK WHERE JESUS WALKED

You are invited to follow our CYF youth on their Journey of Faith via our blog. Katherine Mee, one of our young people and our group journalist, has set up our blog. All you have to do is go to: www.cyfjourneyoffaith.blogspot.com and follow us on our journey. Be sure to save it as a favorite so you can visit us everyday. Thank you FCC, for all your support and prayers. We love you. CYF Journey in Faith Travelers.

CHRISTIAN COMRADES SUNDAY LESSON

Sunday, June 5th
“Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians”
I Thessalonians 2: 1-16

“THE DISCIPLES”

Sunday, June 5th
God's Promises Fulfilled
Joshua 1: 1-6; 11: 16-19, 21-23

CHURCH HISTORY CONTINUED

June, 1996, began with Camp High Hopes which concluded on Sunday with a church-wide summer fun picnic. This gave the congregation an opportunity to meet our special High Hopes friends and to encourage our volunteers. The day camp open house was also held that Sunday afternoon. The second Sunday in June was celebrated as Andros Day. This marked the 10th anniversary of the Andros Island Vacation Bible School. Some special island dishes were served at the luncheon after church, and the program included stories from several members who had participated in this ministry.

We welcomed Bob Franz as our new interim minister on July 21 and enjoyed getting acquainted at the luncheon after church. We honored Jim and Katrine Brooks with a farewell dinner on the first Saturday in August. Many shared special memories of our years together. Jim brought the message at both services the following Sunday, his and Katrine's last day with us.

In September we welcomed Rev. Jeannie Edge of Tuscaloosa as our interim associate minister. The women of the church celebrated our heritage with Frontier Saturday on September 14. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was born on the American frontier. It spoke to the conditions of the pioneers, made an impact on them, and the church was formed by it. A frontier breakfast of biscuits, saw-mill gravy, sorghum and homemade jam was followed by a movie.

Our office administrator, Cynthia Warren, submitted her resignation in October after 4 1/2 years of faithful service, as she and her husband were moving to a new home at Lay Lake. The Christian Children's Fellowship enjoyed a Sunday afternoon at the Hargis Pumpkin Patch in October. They roasted marshmallows, enjoyed a hayride and had sunset vespers at lakeside. Everyone chose a pumpkin to take home.

Youth Sunday was celebrated on the second Sunday in November. This was an opportunity to recognize our young people's many gifts to our congregation. Their service projects and special activities were an important part of our total ministry, and their dreams and vision guided and challenged us. Thanksgiving morning worship in the chapel at Hargis was followed by the traditional turkey dinner in the dining hall.

On the first two Sundays in December we only had one worship service. Hanging of the Greens on the first Sunday highlighted our Christmas decorations and their meaning and significance in our worship. The chancel choir led us in the Service of Lessons and Carols on the second Sunday. That evening we had an inter-generational pageant, "Christmas Windows", with about 60 people involved in preparing for this production. The early Christmas Eve service included dinner at the Retreat, then a time to go outside for the live nativity and carol singing. The late service at church was the traditional Candlelight Communion worship.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

July 25-29

Our VBS will be July 25-29, from 9:30-11:30. Our VBS will be for children age 4 through those who have completed the 6th grade. There is no fee for this VBS; however, we are inviting all children to bring canned goods for Oak Mountain Ministries as part of our Mission Project. Our theme this year is, "Galactic Blast". It is a space theme where we will explore and praise God's magnificent creation. We have a fantastic staff lined up as well as a very special guest named Galileo the Green Gorilla. So mark your calendars and invite your neighbors and friends. We already have some 15 pre-registrations. Please know that we encourage you to pick up registration forms to share with family and friends. The orange forms are in our narthex. Please fill them out and return them soon. Thank you!

*The Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
In Alabama-Northwest Florida
Presents This
CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION
To*

*First Christian Church
Birmingham, Alabama
For gifts of \$43,383 in 2010 supporting
ministries of the Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
beyond the local congregation.
Your congregation's support of these
ministries is not only appreciated by the
Region, but also by every Disciples'
educational institution and general unit.
This Certificate is given with appreciation in
recognition of your outstanding support.
John P. Mobley
Regional Minister*