



First Christian Visitor

“Where the Grace of God Awaits You.”

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A WORD FROM YOUR PASTORS

The following affirmation is one that we can lift up in our lives and those around us as we enter the Advent and Christmas season.

I believe in the Spirit of Christmas, for it is the Spirit of our Lord Christ Jesus, whose birth it celebrates.

I believe in the green garlands and wreaths of Christmas, for they symbolize the eternal life of those in Christ.

I believe in giving gifts at Christmas, for it reaffirms the greatest gift the world has ever known.

I believe in being childlike at Christmas, for Jesus said we must become as children to enter the kingdom of heaven.

And I believe in the angels' song about peace on earth among people of good will, for when my will is good, as it is at Christmas, I feel a peace and joy in my heart that is unlike anything else in all the world. It has to be the peace and joy of God! Amen.

We wish for you the peace and joy of God during this holy season.

God Bless you, Edd & Mary Pat

ALL-CHURCH CHRISTMAS DINNER

The All-Church Christmas Dinner will be after morning worship on Sunday, December 4. The cost is \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children 5 – 10 years old, and children under 5 are free. The menu for this wonderful meal is: barbeque pork and barbeque chicken, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, bread, banana pudding, tea, and lemonade. Please make your reservation on the envelope in your pew. Invite a friend for this great moment of fellowship with your church family during this holy season.

CHRISTMAS FOR THE STAFF

Christmas time is the time for gifts of appreciation and love. During the season of Advent, we will have a decorated Christmas box in the narthex for you to place your gift for the staff of First Christian. Please note on your check that it is a gift for the church staff. You may also mail your gift to the church in care of Steve Pasky. Please remember our staff and all the many extras that they have done for us this year. We are fortunate to have them and appreciate their ministry to us. *Thank you, Steve Pasky, Chair of the Personnel Committee*

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Moderator, Hugh Henderson, has called a congregational meeting for Sunday, December 4, following morning worship. The purpose of this meeting is to approve the nominating committee reports, the proposed 2012 general budget, and any other new business.

ADVENT WORSHIP

- Sunday, November 27 - First Sunday of Advent
Lighting of The Advent Candles
Hanging of The Greens
- Sunday, December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent
All-Church Christmas Dinner
Congregational Meeting
- Sunday, December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent
Christmas Cantata “Lead Me Back To Bethlehem”
- Sunday, December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent
Holy Baptism
Christmas Outreach Offering
- Saturday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Services:
7:00 Contemporary Worship
11:00 Traditional Worship
- Sunday, December 25 - Christmas Sunday
Blessing of The Toys,
Christmas Outreach Offering
Worship at 9:00 am

Please note that on Christmas Sunday there will be no Sunday school or Worship and Wonder. Worship will begin at 9:00 am.

WALKING THE TALK

What is important, Jesus says, is not to simply cry out “Lord! Lord!” but to obey Him! During our Stewardship Emphasis this year our theme is “Walking The Talk”. A theme that reminds us to act upon Jesus' words. We have all received our commitment cards for the ministry we will accomplish together in 2012. May we fill them out with a promise that will bring the Good News of God's love to Birmingham and the world. Please return your commitment card to the church by Sunday, December 11. In 2012 let us all “Walk The Talk” and proclaim Christ is Lord in our action and service.

BLESSINGS OF A CHURCH FAMILY

Today, I am grateful for our church family that gave so generously to our Salvation Army Angel Tree through the Blessing Box campaign. We have received a total of \$2,568 for our Angels. This week we have at least 23 Angels, who will have a happier Christmas due to your thoughtfulness. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” 2 Corinthians. 9:15.

Peggy Daniels, Outreach Mission

COME DECORATE

The presence of God is felt in Advent wreaths, Christmas trees, and lights. Come this Saturday at 10:00 am as we decorate the church for Advent and Christmas so that we can feel the presence of God in a special way during the holiday season.

SUNDAY'S ATTENDANCE

WORSHIP SERVICE	141
SUNDAY SCHOOL	81

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Life In Our Community This Week

Sunday, November 27

First Sunday of Advent

9:00 Sunday School
9:45-10:15 Fellowship Moment
10:15 Worship Service – Hanging of the Greens
10:30 Worship & Wonder
3:00 Bell Choir

Monday - Thursday

9:30 – 1:30 The Adventure Nook Preschool

Monday, November 28

7:00 Men's Bible Study
10:00 Staff Meeting

Tuesday, November 29

9:45 The Adventure Nook Chapel
10:00 Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, November 30

6:30 Choir Practice
7:30 Cantata Practice

Sunday, December 4

Second Sunday of Advent

All-Church Christmas Dinner
11:30 Congregational Meeting

GRACE NOTES

- ⤴ In my Pastors article last week, I listed the wonderful outreach offerings of our church, I also want to add the Crop Walk; Transformation Ranch; Special Day offerings of Easter; Pentecost; Thanksgiving; Christmas and Reconciliation; The Salvation Army Angel Tree; and the community outreach offerings of the Adventure Nook,
- ⤴ Please return your Commitment card to the church by Sunday, December 11.
- ⤴ We are blessed to have the new Acolytes light the Altar Candles and prepare us for worship every Sunday. They are Mark Adams, Danielle Alderson, Teanna Cason, Anna Eady, Andrew Everling, Billy Farquhar, Katie Farquhar, Sierra Fox, Logan Watts, Charlie Williams, Maggie Williams, and Luke Williamson. God bless these special children.
- ⤴ Copies of the proposed 2012 budget are on the table in the narthex.
- ⤴ The Christmas poinsettia list is now in the narthex. The cost of the poinsettias are \$17.00. Please sign up and select a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one.
- ⤴ Jim Thigpen was recognized in morning worship for his wonderful ministry as greeter for the past twelve years.
- ⤴ Congratulations to David Watts and Anna Rebecca Wadsworth on their engagement on November 19.

CHURCH HISTORY CONTINUED

Once again it was the season of Advent, and the sanctuary was decorated beautifully the last Sunday evening in November, 2005. The service included readings, carols and the Hanging of the Greens by our children and youth. On the second Sunday of December, the music department presented a special Christmas program including an instrumental ensemble and all of the choirs. They performed favorite music from the last six Christmas cantatas and also some new selections. The following Wednesday evening everyone was invited to the Bethlehem Inn Dinner Theater. This Christmas play was set in the dining room of the Bethlehem Inn on the night Jesus was born. The evening ended with a brief spiritual time in the sanctuary.

Edd and Mary Pat hosted a Christmas Open House at their home on Sunday afternoon, December 18. There were two candlelight communion services on Christmas Eve, an early contemporary service and a late traditional service which ended with lifting up the light of Christ with our small candles. There was no Sunday School on Christmas Day, but the worship service included the singing of carols, the blessing of the toys, a Christmas meditation and communion.

The CYF and their sponsors spent the second weekend of January, 2006, in Gatlinburg where they relaxed, reconnected with nature and celebrated God's beautiful creation. The following weekend they participated in the annual CYF Winter Retreat at Hargis. The youth have been planning a summer mission trip to Sitka, Alaska where they will work with the First Presbyterian Church there to help the disadvantaged and homeless.

In February, the CYF went on an all-night tour of several places in the Birmingham area. They prepared and served the evening meal at the Fire House which serves the homeless in downtown Birmingham. Then they toured the studio at Fox 6 News and learned something about mass communication. They visited Southern Heritage Funeral Home and learned of the procedure that families go through when they lose a loved one. They stopped by Tae Kwan Do to learn about martial arts and to get some tips on personal safety. Sharon Orazine took them on a tour of the operating and emergency rooms at Health South Hospital. They also hoped to go to the sheriff's office and to possibly get clearance to meet with Jose' Carreras to learn about the Federal Aviation Association. The busy night concluded with an early breakfast.

The 2006 Men's Retreat was held at Hargis in March. Rev. Johnny Wray, Director of the Week of Compassion. was the keynote speaker.

THE DISCIPLES
Sunday, November 27th
Facing Life Without Worry
Matthew 6: 25-34

CHRISTIAN COMRADES SUNDAY LESSONS
Sunday, November 27th
Chosen for Salvation
2 Thessalonians 2

^ If you would like to be listed on the Prayer Chain, please contact Claradel Holcombe at 822-5645 or e-mail her at: claradelcsh@aol.com



THE THANKSGIVING OFFERING

The Thanksgiving offering benefits the colleges, universities, seminaries, and divinity houses affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These learning communities are an extension of the church, challenging students to understand and respond to God's call to serve. Your support provides scholarships, church relations programs, and chaplaincy offices. **Most importantly, your support of the 2011 Thanksgiving offering helps Disciples raise up servant leaders! We will receive the Thanksgiving offering this Sunday.**