



*Demonstrating and proclaiming
God's joyful, unconditional love
and providing an inclusive
environment of spiritual growth
and nurturing for God's
children!*

JANUARY 2012

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

The Messenger

COMING IN JANUARY: BE FED!



We begin a brand new year of Wednesday fellowship January 4 ... and it's going to be FUN FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH FAMILY as we are FED physically and spiritually each week.

We begin with supper at 5:30 p.m. Come for this wonderful time of fellowship and sharing a hot, nutritious meal. The cost is \$6 for adults; \$3 for children under 12.

Then join us at 6:15 p.m. for **Xtreme Worship: Kid's Edition**. That's right—our Children will be leading us in a brief service (15 minutes) of prayer and praise in the sanctuary! This is a time in which our children will learn and grow as they lead.

At 6:30 p.m., we will disperse into small groups.

Children— will have an opportunity to visit two stations (craft, game or snack).

Youth— will be exploring the Live Bible and will have an opportunity to blog about their journey through the Bible.

Adults—You choose where you want to plug-in each week. You may stay or go to a new group depending upon your interests:

◇ **Reflecting on *The Daily Grind: GOD With Your Coffee*—S-1**

This is a group that will meet and share their spiritual reflections on readings from Pastor Susan's book.

◇ **Prayer Scarf Knitting Ministry—S-2**

Learn to knit and share as you make prayer scarves for the sick.

◇ **Art Room—S-3**

This group will put together prayer beads for our upcoming Lenten season.

◇ **Prayer Room—S-5**

Just come and be still for awhile in a quiet space for prayer and meditation.

◇ **Sweat Equity Ministry**

This group will have a different project each week; from cleaning windows to helping with the WOW room; or organizing areas that have been neglected to scrubbing the kitchen. You never know what you're going to get!

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Pastor's Page



In the November meeting with the Fellowship of Nine, we discussed our reading of Dick Hamm's book, *Recreating the Church: Leadership for the Post-modern Age*. In the book, Hamm talks about the importance of leaders moving past the idea of the "maintenance of the church as institution" toward a dynamic movement into God's future by the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. He talks about language as being an important part of this shift.

Does our language, Hamm asks, betray and shape our assumptions? For example, consider the word *installation*. We hold services of installation for church officers and for pastors. But what do we think of when we use the word "install"? You install a dish-

washer. Appliances are installed by service technicians. Do we think of clergy and lay leadership as those who make the "church machine" work properly; not to change anything, but just to keep it running?

How might it be if we were to think of ministry as a *call to service* rather than a *service call*? What if our leaders were *commissioned* for service in Christ's name and by God's grace and through the power of the Holy Spirit in the coming year to make a difference in our community through mission and ministry? What difference would it make in our attitude and our service? I think that if we will embrace this understanding and call as a congregation, 2012 can and will be a year when we see God move

in amazing ways.

We will offer two services of commissioning in January and February. The January service, held on Sunday, January 15, will be to commission our lay leaders. We will pray for and bless our elders, deacons, trustees, ministry division leaders, and executive leaders for ministry and mission. Then, on February 12, we will have a service of commissioning for Pastor Trudy, open to our community and region, at 4:00 p.m. I hope you will hold all of these in your prayers in the coming days, that we might recognize the importance of the call of God on their lives, and on all of our lives as we serve and love wholeheartedly.

Blessings, Pastor Susan



We welcome Melanie Bolling to our staff and FCC family. Melanie began working as our church bookkeeper November 22. She moved to Montgomery in 2001 to attend Huntingdon College, graduating in the Class of 2005. She and her husband, Kyle, are active members of Ridgecrest Baptist Church and love work-

Welcome Melanie Bolling!

ing with the youth and children in different ministries. She stepped out on faith earlier this year and started her own business, but was praying for a part-time position to provide some stable income. Just a few weeks later she heard about the position here

at FCC. Melanie says she looks forward to serving the church.

We extend special thanks to Brenda Layton for serving as our bookkeeper until the position was filled.

Note Worthy



Our tone chimes should arrive soon after the first of the year! Youth and adults who are interested in learning about this wonderful addition to our music department are invited to join us to learn about the chimes and about how we can use them in worship services. You don't have to know how to read music to play the chimes, but having that ability will help. You do have to love music and be will-

Noteworthy

ing to work at it. We'll find a good time for us to spend together learning how to use the chimes and working on some easy songs. If you are interested, please let Betty know.

The music department hopes that you had a wonderful Christmas and enjoyed the music presented through Advent, the cantata and Christmas Eve services. Now is a good time to start if you want to be a part of the musical life

of First Christian Church. The choir meets in the sanctuary at 7:15 p.m. on Wednesday evenings after dinner and the various classes or other events. Easter is in April in 2012 so it won't be too long before we will begin work on the special music for Lent and Easter. Come be a part of the music, drama, staging or costuming. It takes more than just singers and musicians to make our special services special.

Betty Nolan, Music Director

2012 Young Adult Retreat To Focus On Spirituality



Young adults from around the Region will gather at Camp Chandler **January 13-15, 2012,**

for a weekend of fun, fellowship, food, and discussion. The weekend includes a service project at the camp led by one of the camp staff. Weather permitting, the climbing wall and ropes course will challenge participants

physically. The program will feature spiritual practices based on personality type.

One of the spiritual practices that participants may try is walking the labyrinth.

Please contact Diane Wood, Director of Young Adult Ministries, with any questions you may have about the retreat. Her email address is: dwservant@aol.com.

YOUTHTOPIA - January 20-22, 2012

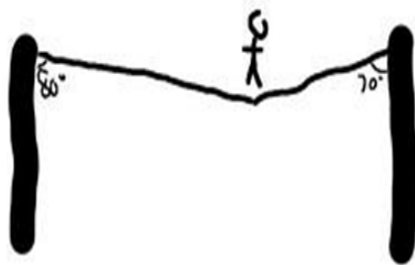
WALKING THE TEEN-AGE TIGHTROPE is the theme for Youthtopia 2012, where regional youth will tackle some of the trickiest topics of the teenage years. Regional Youth Council (RYC) members and various adults from around the Region will lead workshops on such topics as:

- Self-Worth/Self-Esteem
- Friendship
- Dating Relationships
- How To Treat Others

Topics such as social media and bullying will also be covered.

While we'll be juggling some tough issues, there will also be lots of fun and fellowship during this circus-

themed weekend. While we may not really be "under the big top," lots of clowning around is expected! We'll play plenty of zany group games and enjoy the great activities that Camp Chandler has to offer.



Division Leader Training

We are delighted to welcome a new leadership team for 2012! Serving this year in our ministry divisions are:

Don McCanness, Administrative Ministry—focusing on the staff and administrative leadership needs

Teresa Houser, Christian Education Ministry—focusing on children and youth and learning programs for all ages

Bobbie Morris, Evangelism Ministry—focusing on sharing the ministry of this church with others

Oveta White, Mission Ministry—focusing on being the hands and feet of Christ on earth

Gerri Johnson, Nurture Ministry—focusing on serving the needs of our congregation through fellowship

Steve Ofe, Property Ministry—focusing on property maintenance and improvement

Rickie Brunner, Worship Ministry—focusing on the structure and variety of worship opportunities at FCC

We will meet together **Saturday, January 14, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. with our Moderator, Tony Thacker**, for orientation and equipping for the coming year. Please pray for our leaders as they help each of us fulfill our calling to ministry and mission. If you would like to be involved in a divisional ministry, please contact the division chair.

District IV Meeting

The District IV Meeting this month will be held at New Salem Christian Church in Hayneville. Registration begins at 3:00 p.m. and worship will be at 4:00 p.m. Please plan to join us for this time of fellowship and worship together!

New Member Class

Have you been visiting with FCC for a while and want to learn more? Have you wondered about making a deeper commitment to FCC? Have you recently become a member and ministry partner of FCC? If so, this class is for you! Taught by Pastor Susan, you will learn more about First Christian and our ministry. Our next class is **Saturday, January 14, from 10:00 a.m. until noon.** If you plan to attend or would like more information, please contact the church office at 270-1320.

Super Senior Day

Join us on **Wednesday, January 25, at 10:00 a.m. for Super Senior Day.** We will use this day to plan for 2012. Lunch (\$5.00 per person) will be provided. Please sign up at the Information Desk if you plan to

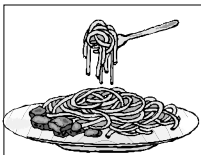
come. You are welcome to join us for lunch and fellowship or for planning, or both.



Evangelism Where You Live

The first of a new year prompts us to think about resolutions or plans for the coming year. Have you thought about being deliberate in connecting with people? To do so, you don't have to add another item to your plate full of duties. Instead, think about where you are every day. With whom can you connect? People are looking for community, something to belong to, people to be around. It follows, then, that leading those far from God to Jesus is best done through authentic relationships in genuine community. It is where we work, where we connect with people in malls and stores, ball fields, schools, and on sidewalks. In Matthew 5:15. Jesus said, "Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead put it on a stand and let it shine for all." Where can you shine God's light? I challenge you to make this part of your plan for the coming year. Be a leader where you are already. Shine your light for others.

Bobbie Morris, Evangelism



January Wednesday Night Meals

January 4-Lasagna, Green Beans, Salad, Garlic Bread, Dessert

January 11-BBQ Chicken, Three-Bean Casserole, Cabbage, Salad, Dessert

January 18-Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Salad, Dessert

January 25-Spaghetti, Salad, Bread, Dessert

"This I Know" Home Study

For those who didn't get to participate in the "This I Know" study held in October, you have another opportunity. Deborah Batson is offering the study in her home January 3, 10, 17, 24 and February 6. The "This I Know" study is a small group opportunity to study

and discuss the subject of homosexuality and the Christian faith, based upon the award-winning documentary, "The Bible Tells Me So." No book purchase is necessary. **A sign-up sheet is at the front desk. Time to be set when group is formed.**

What is the Permanent Fund?

First Christian Church offers another giving opportunity known as the Permanent Fund. The Permanent Fund allows money to be invested, the principal of which funds local, regional and global mission opportunities, capital improvement and maintenance, and ongoing general operating expenses at FCC.

The Permanent Fund is different from annual giving, which goes directly to support the daily needs of the church, and different, also, from Capital Campaign gifts, which fund named projects, such as paying the church's mortgage and expanding parking facilities. Simply put, the Permanent Fund is a planned giving investment in the church's future.

Permanent fund gifts can be given in a number of ways in addition to the traditional writing of checks. You can name the church as a beneficiary in your will; give annuities or stocks; name the church as a beneficiary to your life insurance policy;

and other means of planned gifts that leave an ongoing legacy for the perpetuity of the church for future generations.

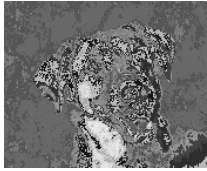
You will learn more about the Permanent Fund in the coming months. If you have questions or would like to know more about gifts to this fund, please contact Jayne Meyer or Dixie Robinson.



Did you know that you can designate First Christian Church as a beneficiary in your will or life insurance policy?

Mission Possible

Christians for Critters



Our furry friends need you. We will be collecting the following items to take to the humane shelter in Wetumpka. You may start bringing donations the first week of January and our collection will be taken to the shelter on January 8.

- Used towels/blankets
- Canned dog/puppy food (chicken or lamb preferred)
- Canned cat/kitten food (chicken or lamb preferred)

- Non-Clumping cat litter
- Bleach
- Dog/cat toys
- General purpose cleaner with bleach
- Liquid dishwashing soap
- Fabuloso detergent
- Paper towels/toilet paper
- Dog/cat/baby shampoo
- 75' – 100' garden hoses
- Garbage bags
- Office supplies
- Post-it notes
- Laundry detergent
- Dog/cat crates - all sizes

**Susan Friend, Chair,
Christians for Critters**

Love Your Neighbor Food Ministry

A big **THANK YOU** to all who helped with our Love Your Neighbor Food Ministry in November. We served approximately **137 folks** a delicious Thanksgiving meal and gave out approximately **262 bags of groceries**.



Disciples Door to Door

I hope you can join Door to Door in visiting a local nursing home on **January 14th**. **Location will be announced later**. Small dogs are welcome

to help us meet and greet the residents. We will pass out goody bags. If you have questions, please contact Lexie Ofe at (334-409-0812).



Thanks also to our **Family Promise** volunteers who made our visiting families feel at home during their stay at FCC in December.



Ongoing Missions

Disciples Door to Door is a mission program providing nurture and fellowship to nursing home residents in the Montgomery area. **The next mission opportunity is January 14th at 10:00 a.m.**

To join this mission, contact Lexie Ofe at 334-590-8412 or dare2bedifferent06@yahoo.com.

Love Your Neighbor Food Ministry is an outreach ministry that provides food, clothing, and counseling services to assist families. **The next mission opportunity is Tuesday, January 17, at 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. and Wednesday, January 18, at 11:00 a.m.**

To join this mission, please contact Don Grobe at 334-312-4281 or adinadon@knology.net.

Family Promise is a temporary housing assistance program for displaced families. **The next mission opportunity is March 11-18, 2012.**

To join this mission, contact Kelly Colson at kcolson9601@gmail.com or 334-409-2327.

HIV/AIDS Task Force is a group that meets regularly to identify ways the church can assist individuals affected by HIV/AIDS.

To join this group, contact Gary Warren at 334-272-3363 or warrengwarr@aol.com.

Christians for Critters combines recycling with caring for all God's creatures. We also take supplies to the local animal shelters. **Our next collection day for supplies is Sunday, January 8.**

To help with this mission, see or contact Susan Friend at susanfriend@hotmail.com or Sandy Smith at ssmith0214@yahoo.com.



Children's Messenger

"Let the children come to me . . . For it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs." Mark 10:14



Happy New Year Everyone!!

First, I'd like to say THANK YOU to every single member of the FCC Family for all of the wonderful, useful and greatly needed items you donated to the WOW Ministry. Our children are so blessed to be connected to each of you.

Last month we focused on "Jesus is Born". We talked about Baby Jesus and learned that Christmas is Baby Jesus' Birthday. We found out that, when Baby Jesus was born, people from all over came to see him and brought with them gifts for him. This is the reason we give gifts to the ones we love on Christmas day. We also learned that we were all babies once upon a time (because we are all big boys and girls now) and, just like Baby Jesus, we are all a gift from God. We even celebrated His birthday with a party.

This month's theme will be "Jesus is my Friend". Each Sunday we will focus on how Jesus is a friend to each of us and how being a friend to others makes God happy. Our lessons will include songs, arts, Bible Stories & who knows what else!!

Here is a brief preview of what to expect for the coming year in the WOW Ministry.

- ◆ We are also open on Wednesday nights at 6pm for children from birth to 4 years old.
- ◆ Children who are with us for Sunday school and will go to Worship & Wonder during the second service will leave from the WOW room with the Worship and Wonder Greeters. This is just to minimize traffic flow to and from the WOW room and is to avoid upsetting younger children who may see their siblings or parents pass by the room after they have been settled.
- ◆ **There will be several opportunities for our WOW children to fellowship outside of Sunday Services. Please stay tuned.**
- ◆ We will be asking all parents to fill out NEW Information Sheets on your child(ren) so that we have the most up-to-date information concerning their well being. Please fill them out and return them the same day rather than taking them home.

As we enter this new year together, I must say that I am so excited about 2012 and what it holds for our WOW Ministry. Look what God has already done. He has brought us all together from every end of the earth for a common goal; to glorify Him. But watch closely; this may be the year that "a little child shall lead them".

Beverly

Tiny Tip: Activity Bags are a great way to get through a quick car ride with minimal tantrums along the way. Depending on the length of the trip (to the market or another city) pack a bag of simple items that your tot can sift through during the car ride to keep his or her attention. Here are a few of the things I use: various snacks, family pictures (Kyndal likes to name the people she knows in the photos) paper and crayons, happy meal toys, my old cell phone and books. She never knows what I have packed in the bag so it's like a treasure chest when she opens it up and plays in the car. And by the time she has explored all of the items, the trip is over and I have been able to keep both hands on the steering wheel instead of handing her snacks over the passenger seat.

More Children's News



January Acolyte Schedule

January 1	Brody Day
January 8	Haley Donovan
January 15	Penelope Diaz
January 22	Anna Colson
January 29	Brody Day

January Worship and Wonder

January 1	Baby Jesus Presented to God Storyteller: Deborah Batson Greeter: Rebecca-Lynn LeGrady
January 8	Jesus' Baptism Storyteller: Lisa Day Greeter: Peggy Pearson
January 15	Jesus' Temptation Storyteller: Lexie Ofe Greeter: Kelly Colson
January 22	Jesus Calls the Twelve Disciples Storyteller: Adrianna Diaz Greeter: Trudy Betts
January 29	Parable of the Two Sons Storyteller: Emma Colson Greeter: Cheryl Lobb

January Following Jesus

January 1	Baby Jesus Presented to God Storyteller: Jan Wallace Greeter: Trudy Betts
January 8	The Baptism Story Storyteller: Deborah Batson Greeter: Hannah Donovan
January 15	Transfiguration of Jesus Storyteller: Trudy Betts Greeter: Karli Day
January 22	Follow Me Storyteller: Kelli Day Greeter: Hannah Donovan
January 29	A New Teaching Storyteller: Lisa Day Greeter: Trudy Betts

Associate Minister



"Josi'ah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father; and he did not turn aside to the right or to the left."

2nd Chronicles 34:1

This verse reminds me of the wisdom I find so often in my conversations with children and youth. I am astounded by the wonderings of children about God when I serve in Worship & Wonder. These wonderings often challenge me to think of God and Jesus in new ways. These fresh insights bring me joy and feed my soul. The opportunity for all of us to be led by children and youth will begin the first Wednesday in January as we gather to "Be Fed."

Xtreme Worship- Kid's edition is a chance for all who attend FCC mid-week programming to participate in worship led by children. A short (but sweet) worship service will begin our evening, followed by continued learning in small groups.

H³ Youth will explore the Live Bible on Wednesdays and may choose to blog about their journey through the Bible on the new children & youth Web site at:
http://web.me.com/trudybetts66/FCC_Children_&_Youth/Welcome.html

CYF and Chi Rho youth may choose to attend Youthtopia at Camp Chandler January 20–22. The theme this year is **"Walking the Teenage Tightrope."** See Pastor Trudy for registration forms.

Wednesday, February 1, there will be a special presentation about the coming mission trip to Guatemala. This is an opportunity to hear about the amazing work waiting for us there, and to see pictures of previous mission trips.

Special fundraisers have been planned throughout the year to help the youth and adults who are called to participate in this mission experience with expenses. There will be a Wine to Water event planned for February, and in March there will be a life-size Monopoly Game where the youth are the playing pieces! There will be a bake sale in April and Mother's Day Tea in May. A special meal is also being planned with our very own Dave Wheatcroft doing the cooking!

There will be some exciting changes happening in the Christian Education wing of the church. Due to growing numbers in Worship & Wonder, we will move the center to a larger room. We have had the joy of having the 3-year-olds join us in the worship center and this change will help us to invite even more children into the worship space.

I continue to be thankful for the children and youth at FCC who remind me to do what is right in the eyes of Lord.

**First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)**

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*Demonstrating and proclaiming God's
joyful, unconditional love and providing
an inclusive environment of spiritual
growth and nurturing for God's children!*



Thank You and Happy New Year

Rev. Susan Diamond

Pastor Trudy Betts

Jean Longshore

Su Ofe

The staff of First Christian Church would like to thank our FCC Family for remembering us at Christmas. We hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and that you will be richly blessed in 2012.

Erin Ofe

We continue to be thankful for the support of this caring congregation. Your support makes our jobs so much easier.

Betty Nolan

Lynn Gullede

Beverly Williams

Kannis Roberts