

THE MESSENGER

September 2015

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Montgomery, Alabama exists to demonstrate and proclaim God's joyful, unconditional love and to provide an inclusive environment of spiritual growth and nurturing for God's children.

Gems from Jim



And one more thing.....

Thank you for your generosity of spirit and service! I think it is fair to say that we've had some trying times in these 8 months we've shared together as we have sought to serve God and remain faithful to our vision and mission through the ministry at First Christian Church in Montgomery.

Before I say goodbye to you, there is something I think we should all say goodbye to.

Doubt and Fear: Most of the things we do in our lives will be impossible. If you consider that whole birth and birthing process, how is that even realistic? Yet here we are.

The 22 folks who met in Montgomery on March 29, 1908 apparently did not give in to their doubts and fears about the future because they met for 6 years without a building. Yet, here we are. Their first Pastor served not quite a year. The membership dwindled to a few after he left and the second Pastor began serving on April 1, 1911. This is what he found:

Some half-dozen sisters and one brother meeting nearly every Lord's Day to study the Sunday School lesson, in an informal way—but no church, no leaders, no deacons, no communion, and with nearly all the members and friends of the little church against any further efforts that might be made. I knew I had come to the hardest field in the United States. That is why I came! (Christian Standard, November 25, 1911)

Yet, here we are 104 years later!

Clearly, there are things that give us cause for anxiety and concern. I call that life! Growth and understanding are actually fertilized in those moments of uncertainty. Pushing through those moments enable us to know what really matters and who really matters.

Thank you for pushing through, for becoming the church you were truly called to become. Thank you for the hard work of discerning the path God is directing for you. Thank you for stepping up to the plate, owning your faith in Jesus Christ and serving unselfishly.

There is no reason to fear, God is with you, has been with you, will always be with you! All is well, all is well, and all will be well!

For several reasons, one of my favorite verses in our sacred texts comes from the First Testament from the book of Isaiah chapter 40 verse 31.

“....those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

Update from Pastoral Search Committee

Rev. Edd Spencer has agreed to be our new interim minister, effective September 13, 2015. Many of us will remember Pastor Edd from his time as our interim pastor two years ago while Pastor Susan was on Sabbatical leave. We are very fortunate to have an experienced pastor who already knows and loves our congregation to lead us as we continue our search for a permanent pastor.

Please continue to lift the Search Committee up in prayer as we diligently carry out our assigned task.

Alice McKinney, Chairperson

Reconciliation Offering



Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The 2015 Reconciliation Offering will be received on **September 27th and October 4th**. The Special offering is used to fund our Church's mission imperative to become a pro-reconciling and anti-racist church utilizing the tools experiential education (training), inclusive worship, and intentional dialogue.

Door to Door



Disciples Door to Door will be visiting **South Haven Health and Rehabilitation Center on September 19**. We will meet there at 9:00 a.m. at 1300 E South Blvd., Montgomery, AL

36116. Please join us to bless and be blessed. Small dogs are welcome to help us visit.

Please contact Alexine Saunders at 334-220-9942 if you have any questions.

Christian Education

Once again we begin our fall season with the startup of our regular Sunday School and Wednesday night programs. Our Adult SS Programs will continue to be led by Fannie Ashley, Alice McKinley and The Keystone class members, so please join us at 9:00 on Sunday mornings for Bible study. This year Sam Colson has volunteered to teach our youth (5th grade and up) on Sunday mornings, and Lana Wheatcroft and Tonya Nichols will continue to teach the K thru 4th graders. Please help all of our children get to Church for Bible study on Sunday mornings. This is an important part of their education process within the Church.

We continue to look for a 2nd part time Nursery worker and will ask for volunteers until we have secured a person for this position. If you know of anyone interested in the position please let the Front Office know.

Our Wednesday night Program, "Conversations," will start on September 9th and is an 8 week conversation focusing on questions people ask about Christians. This should be a lively discussion on all sorts of subjects led by a different facilitator each week. There is a sign-up sheet on the Information Board and the curriculum is in the office on the table for those of you who would like to volunteer to lead a session.

Our Wednesday night Youth Program (5th grade and up) will be led by Candace Bailey and Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw this fall and all are invited. The Youth will fellowship and learn together as a group as they spread their wings and soar! Youth are encouraged to bring their school friends with them, all are invited. There will be a Children's Program (K-4) on Wednesday evenings also, however, at this time we have not secured a teacher for this program but will have this filled by the time we start on September 9th. Children are also encouraged to bring their friends with them!

HELP NEEDED! Are you the crafty, innovative type? If so, please, please volunteer to coordinate this year's TRUNK or TREAT scheduled for October 28th. There is a sign-up sheet on the Information Board for a Coordinator and for Helpers to make this a spooky fun night for all of our children. Everybody loves a well-dressed Trunk and lots of candy!

Mara Donovan



Women's Fall Retreat

Disciples Women Fall Retreat

September 25-27, 2015

Camp Chandler YMCA Wetumpka, AL

"Speak Up. Do Not Be Silent"

If you need more information or would like to sign up go to the information board in the Great Hall.



Young Adult Beach Retreat

Young Adult Beach Retreat

October 16-18, 2015

"The Lighthouse"

Christian Retreat and
Conference Center

If you would like to attend
**Registration Deadline is
October 7, 2015**

COST: \$50/person, or \$85/person (for
Thursday arrivals)

All who consider themselves young adults in the Alabama-NW Florida region are invited to participate in this retreat for renewal, fun, and relationship-building. The Retreat begins with dinner on Friday, but those desiring an extra day at the beach may arrive on Thursday for an additional \$35.

If you need more information or would like to sign up go to the information board in the Great Hall.



Senior Adult Retreat

Senior Adult Retreat

November 5-6

St. Bernard Retreat & Conference Center

Cullman, AL

Theme: "Play! It's Not Just For Kids"

Led by Rev. Gary Edge

Of Valley Christian Church in Birmingham

October 15th is early bird registration deadline for a reduce fee.

If you need more information or would like to sign up go to the information board in the Great Hall.

Music Notes



During the month of September, the music program will return to weekly choir practices at 6:45 p.m. Wednesdays (except for September 2, when we'll meet at 6:30 p.m.). All ages of singers are welcome as we interpret choral works that enhance the Sunday worship experience. The more voices the better! It costs nothing to join the choir and the payback is rich beyond measure.

If you aren't a "joiner," perhaps you have a special gift you could offer "one-time-only" or with a friend in a duet or small ensemble. Let me know! We welcome joyful noise from instruments as well as voices, singular or plural, and I would love to work with you as you praise God using your talents.

Sing and play on!
Su Ofe
Director of Music



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Baptisms from Community Congregational United Church of Christ August 2, 2015

