

The Good News

First Christian Church
Anniston, AL

www.fccanniston.org

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December 2009

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Christmas at First Christian Church

Christmas Card Exchange ~ All of December

We encourage you to hang a card on the little tree in the Friendship Room to greet your whole FCC family for the holidays. ♥ Many people use the saved postage money to give a donation to Christmas Clearing House (see page 2). Ω

Christmas Cookie Exchange ~ Sunday, December 13th

Bring in a batch of your favorite Christmas cookies to share. During Fellowship Time, we'll mix them all up and send everyone home with a plate full of tasty holiday treats! ♥ !!

Pastor's Christmas Open House ~ Saturday, December 19th

Pastor Rebecca and Todd invite you to their home from 3:00-7:00 pm, to celebrate Christmas and thank you for all you've done this year. (This will replace the Christmas Eve reception this year.) ♥

Candlelight Christmas Eve ~ Thurs., December 24th, 6:00 pm

Plan to bring the whole family to this beautiful celebration of the Christ Child!
⊕

Post-Christmas Contemplative Service ~ Sun., Dec. 27th

Come to worship the Sunday after Christmas for a chance to catch your breath. We'll have readings and soothing music to calm your spirit. ⊕ !!

Sun., Dec. 6 ~ Congregational Meeting (see page 2.) ♥

Sun., Dec. 6 ~ Special Offering for DMF (See page 5.) ♥

Sun., Dec. 13 ~ Baby Dedication for Hailey Brooke Roszell ♥ !!

Congregational Meeting 12/6

On Sunday, December 6th, we will hold our annual congregational meeting. All members are asked to attend this meeting to vote on the proposed budget and the proposed slate of lay leaders for 2010. All members should get a letter in the mail with a sample ballot and the needed info before the meeting. ♥

Included on the ballot this year is a Miracle Day Opinion Poll. The Sanctuary Project Team wants your feedback about how to proceed with their plans. Please see the back of the calendar for more information. ♥

Christmas Clearing House

We invite you to join in helping area families have a Christmas by making a donation to Christmas Clearing House. CCH is organized by Interfaith Ministries. Local families are carefully and compassionately screened. They are given gift cards that are redeemable for food, clothes or toys. Many local congregations come together to serve these families. CCH works in partnership with Community Enabler and the Salvation Army. Ω

Donation envelopes are on the Card Tree in the Friendship Room. A box is there to drop them in. Checks can be made to FCC or CCH. Ω

Baby Dedication

On **Sunday, December 13th**, we will welcome **Hailey Brooke Roszell** into our church family, as her parents, Scott & Jennifer Roszell, bring her to be dedicated. ♥ !!

We hope that everyone will be here for this joyous occasion. We want to surround Hailey with our love and blessings. ♥ !!

Seasonal Evangelism

Did you know that the Christmas season is the one time during the year when people without a church home are most likely to be looking for one? It's true! Who do you know that would welcome an invitation to come to worship with you this month? Or maybe even to our Christmas Eve service or the Cookie Exchange? Think about it; pray about it and ask someone today! ♥ !!

The Evangelism Team invites you to join in two more Christmas Parade Outreaches. Please let us know asap if you can cover the Jacksonville parade on Tuesday, Dec. 1st at 6:00; otherwise, we will have the Hispanic Association pass out our candy. On Thursday, Dec. 3rd, we'll meet at the church at 5:30 to head to the Oxford parade. It won't take very long, and who knows whom it might touch! ♥ !!

From the Pastor's Pen...

Beloved Church,

"Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord; keep watch, take heart!"

So goes one of my favorite Taizé songs that we play at "Pause for Prayer". The season of anticipation is upon us. Are you ready?

The preparations we think we have to make for Christmas are often in conflict with the preparations we need to make to be ready to welcome the Christ Child into our hearts. The church offers us the season of Advent, four weeks of waiting, as opposed to the season of shopping, with four weeks (or more!) of rushing around spending more money than we should. I know which I prefer. What about you?

As you hurry around doing the things we've come to count on to make Christmas happen, keep this song in your heart. Perhaps it can help you discern what truly needs to happen and what can be let go. Perhaps it can help quiet your heart so you'll be ready to welcome Emmanuel (God-with-us) when the day comes.

*Grace and peace,
Pastor Rebecca*

p.s. See you in church!

Service Schedules ♥

December Meetings ♥

Spirit. Form. CT – Tue., Dec. 1, 4:00

Miracle Day – Tue., Dec. 1, 6:00

Mission CT – Wed., Dec. 2, 6:00

Congregational Meeting ~

Sunday, December 6, 12:15

Stewardship CT – Tue., Dec. 8, 4:30

Fellowship CT – Wed., Dec. 9, 6:00

125th Comm. – Thu., Dec. 10, 3:00

Elders ♥:

Dec. 6: Marie Bittle

Dec. 13: Mary Elizabeth Johnson

Dec. 20: Anne Phillips

Dec. 27: Judy Bell

Communion Set-Up/Service ♥:

Colin Green & Janna Sutherland

Fellowship Hosts ♥:

Dec. 6: Judy Bell

Dec. 13: ***Cookie Exchange*** (Lori Hays)

Dec. 20:

Dec. 27:

Liturgists / Kids Message ♥:

Dec. 6: Julie Nix / Rebecca L.

Dec. 13: Laura Phillips / Janie Morrow

Dec. 20: Mary Lib Johnson / Rebecca L.

Dec. 27: Bill Rowland / Lori Hays

Pre-School / CC / Floater ♥:

Dec. 6: Anne P. / Laura P. / Janie M.

Dec. 13: Suzy S. / Karen R. / Deane A.

Dec. 20: Janie M. / Dick B. / Mary Lib J.

Dec. 27: Anne P. / Lori H. / Karen R.

Disciples Women Update

Because of the busy-ness of the holiday season, Disciples Women will not be meeting this month. Lori Hays will be hosting a gathering in January. Watch for more information. ⊕

Children's Ministries Donations Needed ♥

Our Children's Ministries need your donations of the following items ♥:
(Please put them in the Pre-School Room.)

- Baby wipes, Lysol spray
- Bouncy seat, baby swing
- Infant toys & mobiles
- Cabinet w/ securable doors
- Adult-size chair with wipe-able surface
- Milk crates and non-clear tubs for toys (not too large)
- Flip chart, construction paper, file folders, Bible-themed dvds
- Snacks (individually wrapped are best – animal crackers, teddy grahams, cheezits, goldfish, fruit snacks) and juice boxes.

Pastor on Christmas Vacation

Pastor Rebecca will be on vacation, visiting family in IL and FL for Christmas, Dec. 25th-Jan. 2nd. If you need assistance, call the church pastor or an elder. ⊕

Changes to "Pass the Salt" Ω

The Council has approved the Mission Team's recommendation to rotate the recipient of our monthly "Pass the Salt" offering, beginning in 2010. The collection will go to a different agency each month, in this order: Interfaith Ministries; Daybreak Rape Crisis Recovery Center; Sister Mary's Center of Concern; Habitat for Humanity; Community Enabler; Big Brothers Big Sisters. Ω

Bible Study for All ⊕

A new year of our Common Daily Bible Reading began Nov. 29th! Pick up the new booklet now, and come join us in Bible Study on Sundays at 9:30 or online. See Pastor Rebecca for more information. ⊕ !!

Council Approves Amendments

At the November meeting, the Council approved amendments to the by-laws, proposed by the Mission Coordinating Team. The two amendments both involve assigning responsibility for the congregation's "True Community" commitment to the Mission Coordinating Team. Ω

One + One + One Key

⊕ = You ♥ = Church Ω = World
!! = Bring a friend!

125th Anniversary Plans ♥

First Christian will be kicking off our 125th Anniversary Year by welcoming Regional Minister, **Rev. John Mobley**, into our pulpit on **Sunday, January 3rd**. Please make a point of being here to get the celebration started! ♥ !!

Anyone interested in helping plan for our anniversary celebration is invited to attend a meeting on Thursday, December 10th at 3:00. We will be making decisions about other events and special guests, our banner, our photo directory, our time capsule(s), children's activities, and more. ♥

Leadership Orientation & Planning Retreat – Jan. 23rd

All continuing and in-coming Council and Coordinating Team Members are asked to attend our annual Orientation & Planning Retreat on Saturday, January 23rd from 9:00-1:00. This will take the place of January CT meetings. There will be time for each C-Team to meet separately, and a special session about leading meetings. On Sunday, January 24th, all lay leaders will be installed, and pictures will be taken after worship for our website. The Elders will have a special training after worship that day. Please make a point of being here on this important weekend that kicks off the Week of the Laity. ♥

Sharing about Stewardship ~ Special Offering for DMF ♥

One of the hard decisions we made to create a viable budget for 2009 was to decrease our giving to Disciples Mission Fund (DMF) by half. Instead of sending the tithe we had been giving, we have been sending 5% of each month's general fund income to our denominational-wide funding pool. Important things like our regional ministries, our missionaries, our justice and advocacy work, our women's, men's and youth ministries, and more are funded through DMF. More importantly, by sending 10% of our congregational income each month, we set up the tithe as the model for faithful stewardship for each individual member of the church. In recognition that the 5% we have been sending is not a tithe, and therefore, not a particularly faithful example, we will be receiving a special offering on Sunday, December 6th. All funds collected in this offering will be sent directly to Disciples Mission Fund. We do not expect to make up the lost 5%, but we hope this symbolic gesture will keep the importance of faithful, biblical stewardship at the forefront of our hearts and minds. ♥ Ω

Church in Covenant Opportunities and News

Christmas Special Offering Supports Regional Ministries Dec. 13-20

On Sundays, December 13 & 20, we will be collecting our denominational Christmas Special Offering. Each year, the Christmas offering goes to support the ministries of our Region. For FCC most directly, that means Miracle Day! Other things made possible through this offering include the support our regional ministers give to congregations; women's, men's, youth and young adult ministries; camps, retreats and conferences; support to congregations and ministers in transition; congregational transformation assistance; shared mission work and more. Since we will be the focus of the coming's year Miracle Day, it is fitting that we support this year's Christmas Offering generously. Special flyers and envelopes are included with (hard copies of) this newsletter. They will also be in the bulletins on Dec. 13th & 20th. Please make plans to give generously to the Christmas Special Offering. Ω

Regional Minister Rev. John Mobley to Preach January 3rd for 125th

Our Regional Minister, Rev. John Mobley, will be with us in worship on Sunday, January 3rd to preach and help us celebrate the beginning of our 125th anniversary year. Be sure to be here to welcome him! ♥

Be thinking about any ideas you might have for celebrating our anniversary. We will be opening the time capsule from our centennial, but we'll also be making a new one to be opened at our 150th anniversary. What do you think should go in it? What does our church mean to you? What do you think the church of the future should know about our family of faith right now? We want this anniversary to be a time of looking forward, not just back. ♥

Regional Prayer Calendar

In 2009, we will continue to send cards with our prayer blessings to our partner churches in the Alabama-Northwest Florida Region. This year, we are inviting Iglésia to join us in signing the cards. The Prayer Calendar for December is:

Dec. 6: First Christian Church, Tuscaloosa, AL – Phillip Hayes

Dec. 13: River View Christian Church, Valley, AL – Allen Hollis

Dec. 20: Westwood Christian Church, Pensacola, FL – Connie Bradow

Dec. 27: Primera Iglésia Cristiana Hispana, Ft. Walton Beach, FL – José Diaz

Long-Term Calendar

Sun., Dec. 6 ~ Congregational Meeting & Special Offering for DMF

Sun., Dec. 13 ~ Christmas Cookie Exchange and Baby Dedication

Sat., Dec. 19 ~ Pastor's Christmas Open House

Thu., Dec. 24 ~ Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, 6:00

Sun., Dec. 27 ~ Christmas Contemplative Service

Sun., Jan. 3 ~ Regional Minister Rev. John Mobley preaching for 125th

Jan 11-13 ~ Regional Ministers & Mates Retreat

Sun., Jan. 17 ~ Voting on Billy Weeks Award

Sat., Jan. 23 ~ Leadership Orientation & Planning Retreat, 9:00-1:00

Sun., Jan. 24 ~ Installation of Lay Leaders and Picture Day ~ Elders Training

Feb 12-13 ~ Regional Transformation Event ~ Miracle Day Publicity

Wed., Feb. 17 ~ Ash Wednesday ~ Lent Begins

Feb. 21-28 ~ Week of Compassion

Mar. 12-13 ~ Regional Men's Retreat ~ Miracle Day Publicity

Apr. 23-25 ~ Regional Assembly in Decatur ~ Miracle Day Publicity

Saturday, June 5 ~ Miracle Day! Sunday, June 6 ~ 125th Anniversary!

Celebrating the Unity and Diversity of the Body of Christ!

First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
1327 Leighton Ave.
Anniston, AL 36207

Visit us at www.fccanniston.org

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.