

# The Good News

First Christian Church  
Anniston, AL

[www.fccanniston.org](http://www.fccanniston.org)

256-236-1316

January 2009

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## Preparing for the Upcoming Year!

### Orientation and Planning Retreat ~ Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am ♥

All Council officers and Coordinating Team members are asked to attend the Orientation & Planning Retreat on Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup>. We will begin with a brunch provided by the Fellowship C-Team. The first hour will be spent together with the whole group, outlining the upcoming year and clarifying how the ministry structure works. Then, the Coordinating Teams will split up for their January meetings. ♥

### Installation of Lay Leaders and Billy Weeks Presentation ~ Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> ♥

On Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, we will install our new lay leaders for 2009. This is an important moment of blessing when we remind ourselves that it is not our work we are about here, but God's. Please be here to support those called into leadership. We will also present the 2008 Billy Weeks Award for Outstanding Lay Service, which will be voted on during worship on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. ♥

### Deacon Training ~ Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup> after worship ♥

All new and returning Deacons should attend the 2009 training, after worship on Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>. The schedule for the year will be created, and the new format for the offering will be reviewed. Don't miss it! ♥

**Sat., Jan. 10 ~ Orientation & Planning Retreat ~ 10 am ♥**

**Sun., Jan. 11 ~ Leader Installation !! and Deacon Training ♥**

**Mon., Jan. 19 ~ MLK Documentary Marathon ~ 10 am ⊕ Ω !!**

**Sun., Jan 25 ~ Young Adult Lunch & Inquirers Class ~ ⊕ ♥ !!**

## Adult Study on Acts ⊕

Beginning January 11<sup>th</sup>, our Sunday Morning Adult Study (SMAS) will embark on a Bible study of the Book of Acts. Our Disciples forebears would be scandalized at how unfamiliar most of us are with this book of the Bible, as they saw it for the blue print of how the church should be shaped today. Acts is full of incredible stories and interesting journeys. We will just study the highlights, as it is a long book. ⊕

SMAS meets every Sunday at 9:30 before worship in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone Junior High on up is welcome to join us. ⊕

## "Home Is Where the Heart Is"

The Mission Coordinating Team wants to make a Valentine's Day date with you! We are hoping you will be here to help out with "Home Is Where the Heart Is," our Valentine's benefit for Habitat for Humanity. We will be serving dessert and providing entertainment. Rebecca and Gerald will perform, and the community is being invited to participate in a Talent Show. We will be asking you to donate desserts and to help with set-up, serving and clean-up for the event. All hands will be needed! Sign-up sheets are out now. Ω

## Celebrate MLK Jr. Day!

### Documentary Marathon ⊕

The Mission C-Team invites you to join us for our Documentary Marathon celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day. Each film will be followed by discussion. ⊕ !!

#### Viewing Schedule

- 10:00** – **"Eyes on the Prize"** – a segment on MLK, Jr. (60 min)
- 12:00** – **"War/Dance"** – An inspiring story of Ugandan orphans who find solace competing in a national music and dance contest (105 min)
- 2:30** – **"A Time for Burning"** – About a church in Omaha in the 60s and their pastor who tries to encourage racial understanding (58 min)
- 4:30** – **"Promises"** – About kids in Israel and Palestine getting to know each other ( 106 min)
- 7:00** – **"It's A Thick Book"** – About the Alabama constitution (50 min)

~ Young Adult Lunch ~

### Special Invitation to Inquirers

The Young Adults will have lunch after worship on Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>. This will be a special session focused on what it means to be a member of First Christian Church. Any other new members or visitors who are interested are invited to join us for lunch. ⊕ !!

## From the Pastor's Pen...

Beloved Church,

As we settle down from the excitement of the Christmas season, it is tempting to take a little break. And we should. There are a few things we will not be doing this month, in order to get the rest we need.

But this is also a time, as the New Year begins, to renew our commitments to what God is doing in our lives and in our church. You will be hearing from the Evangelism Team this month about how you can get involved in helping FCC grow into the church God is calling us to be.

I hope that each and every one of you will take the chance to become more intentional about your spiritual growth – by participating in the “Unbinding Your Heart” study, by joining a small group or our Adult Study, and by coming to worship regularly. This is the time for us to renew our commitment to our Mission Statement and truly focus on deepening our relationships with Christ through worship, prayer, study and stewardship. Blessings!

*Peace and grace,*

*Pastor Rebecca*

*p.s. See you in church!*

## **Service Schedules ♥**

### **January Meetings ♥**

All CTs – Sat., Jan. 10, 10:00

Deacons – Sun., Jan. 11, 12:30

Evang. Team – Thu., Jan. 15, 5:30

### **Elders ♥:**

Jan. 4: Mary Elizabeth Johnson

Jan. 11: Marie Bittle

Jan. 18: Anne Phillips

Jan. 25: Judy Bell

### **Communion Set-Up/Service ♥:**

Arlan R. & Joanne W.

### **Fellowship Hosts ♥:**

Jan. 4: Mary Lib J. & Bill R.

Jan. 11: Marie Bittle

Jan. 18: Maria Zamarripa

Jan. 25: Joanne W. & Robert S.

### **Liturgists / Kids Message ♥:**

Jan. 4: Robert Soleman / Rebecca

Jan. 11: Dick Bell / Judy Bell

Jan. 18: Trace Smith / Rebecca

Jan. 25: Judy Bell /

### **Floater / Pre-School / CC ♥:**

Jan. 4: Joanne W. / Janna S. / Laura P.

Jan. 11: Deane A. / Suzy S. / Lori H.

Jan. 18: Karen R. / Janie M. / Marie B.

Jan. 25: Mary Lib. J. / Anne P. / Dick B.

### **One + One + One Key**

⊕ = You ♥ = Church Ω = World

!! = Bring a friend!

## **Disciples Women** ⊕

CWF/DW will not meet in January. The next meeting will be February 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at Pastor Rebecca's house. All women are invited to come and bring a friend. ⊕ !!

**THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO  
DONATED TO CHRISTMAS  
CLEARING HOUSE!!!** Ω

## Pause for Prayer Winter Hiatus

Our weekly prayer service, "Pause for Prayer" will not meet in the month of January. Due to the dark nights and the numerous things happening to get the year started, it will be on winter hiatus. Pause for Prayer will resume the first Wednesday of February, and Pause for Prayer PLUS, our monthly Bible study with communion will be held Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>. ⊕

## **What Goes Up, Must Come Down**

Please plan to stay after worship on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup> to help take down and put away our Christmas decorations. There will be jobs for everyone, big and small. With many helping, it shouldn't take very long at all. Thanks for your help! ♥

## Praying the Psalms ⊕

Are you looking for a way to start the year off right, by getting deeper into Bible Study? ⊕ You are invited to join the "**Praying the Psalms**" group. They meet twice a month on Monday evenings at 5:30. In each session, the group reads through a psalm and discusses what it can teach us about having a real relationship with God. You can join at any time, and come whenever you can. See Marie Bittle for more information. ⊕

## Novels Group ~ "The Shack"

The Novels group will be discussing "The Shack" by William Young on Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm at the church. Anyone who has read the book is welcome to come for the conversation. ⊕

## **Ecumenical Book Group** ⊕

The Ecumenical Book Group will be reading "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" by Studs Terkel this spring. ⊕ They will meet on Tuesdays at noon, Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> through May 19<sup>th</sup>. Orders will be taken in January, for \$12.00. The book is a collection of interviews with a variety of people about their thoughts, fears and hopes – about death. Join us for a provocative session! ⊕

## Evangelism Team Invites You to Unbind Your Heart ♥

As 2009 begins, the Evangelism Team has big plans for the whole congregation. While the E-Team members are the leaders in these efforts, everyone needs to get involved so we can grow into the church God is calling us to be. So here's what you can do... ♥

### Evangelism Training on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>

During Fellowship Time on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, the Evangelism Team will be conducting a short workshop to introduce everyone to our plans for a **congregation-wide short-term small group experience**, using the book "**Unbinding Your Heart**" from the Real Life Evangelism Series by Martha Grace Reese. Every member will be asked to participate in a small group for the **six weeks of Lent** to study and experience this book and the **40 days of prayer** that go with it. Start praying now for how God will make this work in your life.

### Neighborhood Outreach scheduled for January 31<sup>st</sup>

On Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 1:00, we will go out to visit our neighbors once again, this time with information about our **Valentine's Day Habitat Benefit**. This project will once again communicate that FCC is a church that serves the community, and that we know how to have fun. Please plan to be part of this project; we need some new faces to come along this time!

***FCC T-Shirts still available! Only \$15! Order yours today!***

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## *Sharing about Stewardship ~ New Year, New Habits*

As you may have heard, our 2009 budget is going to require new thrifty habits from all of us. Hopefully, you are either reading this newsletter online, or you picked it up yourself at church on Sunday. If not, maybe you can next month! If you have any trouble viewing the newsletter online let us know. This helps us cut down on paper and postage costs. ♥

You will also begin to notice occasional requests for people to donate certain kinds of goods, primarily paper towels, paper napkins, dish soap, hand soap, etc. The costs of these supplies add up quickly, so if we all chip in once in a while, we can save the church money. We are also trying to use real plates, cups and silverware more often, to cut down on the costs of disposable items and to be a "greener" community! ♥ Ω

# Church in Covenant Opportunities and News

## Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins to preach at Regional Event - Feb. 20-21

Plan now to attend “**Matters of the Heart – God’s Transforming Love**” on Feb. 20-21 at First Christian Church in Birmingham. Our General Minister and President, Rev. Dr. **Sharon Watkins** will be preaching at the worship service on Friday night. Her husband, Rev. Dr. **Richard Lowery**, an Old Testament professor, will also be with us to lead workshops on transformation.

This event is designed for congregations like ours that are in processes of renewal and transformation. The cost is \$20 per person or \$200 per congregation with an unlimited number of participants. You won’t want to miss it!

## Young Adult Retreat -- January 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> at Hargis

All young adults are invited to attend the Regional Young Adult Retreat being held at Hargis YMCA Camp, Friday through Sunday, Jan. 16-18. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Emily Askew on “Ecological Theology: Living Sustainably.” See Pastor Rebecca for more information.

## Pastor Rebecca & Todd to attend Ministers & Mates Retreat

Pastor Rebecca and Todd will be attending the Regional Ministers and Mates retreat this month. Held in Ft. Walton Beach, January 12-14, this year’s retreat will focus on “What does ‘Here I Am, Lord’ Really Mean?” with Rev. David Vargas of Global Ministries as keynote speaker. This retreat is an important time for our minister to re-charge her spiritual batteries and spend time with family and friends. This year, we give thanks to the Region for helping make it possible for Rebecca & Todd to attend.

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## **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 January is:*

Jan. 4: First Christian Church, Athens, AL – Jim Osborne and Phillip Gilbert

Jan. 11: First Christian Church, Anniston, AL – Rebecca Littlejohn

Jan. 18: Village Christian Church, Auburn, AL – Diane Wood

Jan. 25: First Christian Church, Dothan, AL – Bill Smith

Edward Point Christian Church, Century, AL – Alfonzie Cottrell, board chair

# Have you made a New Year's resolution to deepen your faith this year?

## Try the One and One and One method.

1 + 1 + 1 is a way of measuring where you're at in your faith life. Look at what you're involved in, and make sure there is at least:

⊕ One thing for your own spiritual growth ⊕

♥ One thing that builds up the Body of Christ ♥

Ω One thing that serves God's people in the wider world Ω

Then see which category you can add One more to. Throughout this newsletter, you will see symbols guiding you to opportunities for each kind of growth.

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*Celebrating the Unity and Diversity of the Body of Christ!*

First Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
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Anniston, AL 36207

Visit us at [www.fccanniston.org](http://www.fccanniston.org)

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