

The Good News

First Christian Church www.fccanniston.org
Anniston, AL 256-236-1316

September 2009

email: fccanniston@bellsouth.net

⊕ ♥ “Building It Up in Love” ♥ ⊕

Mark your calendar for **September 11-12** and make sure to be here then for our annual **Church Family Retreat!** We are changing things up a little bit this year, aiming to make the retreat a more inter-generational experience. We hope everyone will make a point to be here, to spend time getting to know your church family better, to pray, to plan and to play! ♥ ⊕

Our theme this year is “Building It Up in Love” based on Ephesians 4:1-5, 15-16. In our Mission Statement, we have committed ourselves to “seeking out those in our community who will discover the joy of life in Christ when we welcome them into our church family.” This retreat weekend will be all about sharing in that joy with your church family. ♥ ⊕

Our retreat will begin with a Covered Dish Supper on Friday, September 11, starting at 5:30. We will have some activities after supper and a short worship service. Child care will be available for the whole retreat. On Saturday, we will start again at 2:00, with activities, service projects, prayer stations, a cook-out and a closing worship service. We aim to be done around 7:30 that night. ♥ ⊕

There are few supplies needed for our retreat. A sign-up sheet is on the Engaged Faith table in the Friendship Room. Please check to see what you can bring to enrich our Church Family Retreat! ♥ ⊕

Sun., Sept. 6 ~ Miracle Day Committee meeting ♥

Friday & Saturday, Sept 11-12 ~ Church Family Retreat ⊕ ♥

Sun., Sept. 13 ~ Miracle Day poll, in worship ♥

Sun., Sept 27 ~ Reconciliation Special Speakers ⊕ ♥ Ω

Sun., Sept. 27 ~ Baby Shower for Jennifer & Scott Roszell ♥

MIRACLE DAY ♥

At our Congregational Meeting on August 16th, we heard more information and some members' questions and concerns about Miracle Day. A poll of commitment was taken. 29 out of 36 respondents **(80.5%) believe that FCC should commit** to hosting Miracle Day 2010. 23 households committed to donating toward our financial goal. 18 folks volunteered to help with planning. And all 36 people responding said they would **pray for this project!** ♥

Now is the time to get started on planning. A **meeting** will be held on **Sept. 6th** after worship to help us prepare for our first meeting with the official Miracle Day Committee. There are certain positions on that committee that would best be filled by local volunteers. **Please pray specifically that these leaders will hear the call to serve.** ♥

On **Sunday, Sept. 13th**, we will be taking **another poll**, to ensure that we have enough agreement about all four projects, including changing the look of the paneling in the sanctuary, to move forward with planning. Be sure to be here to express yourself! ♥

The first official Miracle Day Committee meeting will be Wed., Sept. 30th at 6:00 pm. **Please be in prayer for all involved.** ♥

Celebrating Reconciliation

September 20 & 27 Ω

One of the four Mission Priorities of the Christian Church is to be an anti-racism, pro-reconciliation church. Our congregation has taken this on as well, through our True Community commitment. (See page 5.) Ω ♥

One of the ways we support this ministry is through our annual Reconciliation Special Offering. Of all the funds collected, half stay in our Region to provide grants to churches doing racial reconciliation work. We have received these grants in the past and will again for Miracle Day. Ω ♥

This year, we will be receiving the Reconciliation Offering on Sept. 20th & 27th. On Sept. 27th, our sermon will be presented by members of the congregation, sharing their reflections on racism and faith. Ω ♥

♥ You are invited to a ♥
Baby Shower
on Sunday, Sept. 27th
at First Christian Church,
after worship, for
Jennifer & Scott Rozsell.

They are expecting a baby girl,
and they're registered at Target,
Babies-R-Us and Rabbit Hutch.

From the Pastor's Pen...

Beloved Church,

Even though we've started to taste fall, the season of slowing down and preparing for dormancy, New Life is bursting out all over here at First Christian Church!

People are becoming more deeply engaged with scripture; we've got multiple new babies on the way; and we've just set our feet on the path of an exciting new adventure – Miracle Day! I am reminded of a Junior Choir song from my youth – “Every morning is Easter morning from now on!”

I hope that you will make a point of being part of the excitement around here, even if it seems overwhelming. I hope that you will make a point of sharing that excitement with friends, family and neighbors. We could be at an important turning point in our history, but that will only happen if we spread the word and grow our witness to match the size of our call from God. How can you share the joy of life in Christ that we celebrate here at First Christian Church?

Peace and grace,

Pastor Rebecca

p.s. See you in church!

Service Schedules ♥

September Meetings ♥

Mission CT – Wed., Sept. 2, 6:00

Elders – Sun., Sept. 6, 12:15

Miracle Day – Sun., Sept. 6, 12:45

Fellowship CT – Tue., Sept. 8, 6:00

Congregation Retreat – Sep. 11-12

Steward. CT – Tue., Sept. 15, 4:30

Evangelism – Wed., Sept. 16, 6:00

Spirit. Form. – Sun., Sept. 20, 12:30

Elders ♥:

Sept. 6: Anne Phillips

Sept. 13: Judy Bell

Sept. 20: Robert Soleman

Sept. 27: Marie Bittle

Communion Set-Up/Service ♥:

Sept. 6/13: Kenny & Lori Hays

Sept. 20/27: Eva M. & Suzy S.

Fellowship Hosts ♥:

Sept. 6: Maria Zamarripa

Sept. 13: Karen & J.R. Reaves

Sept. 20: Laura Phillips

Sept. 27: **Baby Shower!**

Liturgists / Kids Message ♥:

Sept. 6 : Julie Nix / Rebecca

Sept. 13: Colin Green / Janie Morrow

Sept. 20: Robert Soleman / Rebecca

Sept. 27: Joanne Wells / Lori Hays

Pre-School / CC / Floater ♥:

Sept. 6: Suzy S. / Marie B. / Karen R.

Sept. 13: Suzy S. / Dick B. / Mary Lib J.

Sept. 20: Janna S./ Laura P./ Janie M.

Sept. 27: Anne P. / Karen R. / Deane A.

FCC ♥s Our Kids!

We hope everyone will get involved with “**FCC ♥s Our Kids!**” this fall. We are asking parents to post their children’s activities schedules on the calendar in the Friendship Room. (We can help you in getting everything on there.) ♥

Then, our supporters will check the calendar, find a game or concert, etc., to attend, and show up! Wear your FCC t-shirt if that’s appropriate, and make sure to take some “**FCC ♥s Our Kids!**” stickers so you can put one on your shirt. ♥

Neighborhood Halloween Project Ω

Mark your calendars to help out with our 2nd Annual Neighborhood Halloween Project, October 10th, 17th and, of course, the 31st. It was such a great success last year, we will need even more help this year! Ω

TASTE Sunday & Young Adults

On Sunday, September 13th, our Region is sponsoring TASTE Sunday (Take A Student To Eat). We are inviting all our Young Adults to go out to lunch that day, and we’ll be extending a special invitation to local college students, some of whom are from other Disciples churches around the Region. Watch for more info! ⊕

Ecumenical Book Group ⊕

Our Ecumenical Book Group will begin its 13th session on Tuesday, September 29th at noon. We will be reading “On the Mystery: Discerning Divinity in Process” by Catherine Keller. Though more academic, this book is shorter, so we will only have ten sessions total. Copies of the book should be reserved by Sept. 10th. The cost is around \$14.00. We will meet each Tuesday at noon through December 8th. ⊕

Bible Study for All ⊕

Our Common Daily Bible Reading continues. We will be studying the previous week’s scriptures each Sunday morning at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall. We’d love to have you join us! Discussion is picking up in the online group as well. Contact Pastor Rebecca if you would like to participate. ⊕

Pastor’s Study & Vacation ⊕

Pastor Rebecca will be attending a continuing education event at Samford in B’ham on Sept. 21st and on vacation, Sept. 22-25. ⊕

One + One + One Key

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

Council votes to become a “True Community” church

On Sunday, August 23rd, the Council of First Christian Church approved a recommendation from the Mission Coordinating Team to enter into the Region’s True Community initiative. By signing onto this effort, First Christian church “commits to being an instrument of true community by addressing the brokenness that is caused by the sin of racism and being a voice for reconciliation, in the spirit of Christ.” A commitment card was signed by our Moderator and Pastor and turned into the Region so we can be counted among the first congregations participating in this new project. Ω

The Regional Anti-Racism Team has developed a guidebook to help churches live into this witness. The six categories of response include praying, studying, organizing, relating, giving and working. First Christian Church has had an informal commitment to racial reconciliation for years; this action allows us to stand up and be counted, as well as to be more intentional about living out our convictions. The Mission Coordinating Team was seen as the most appropriate group to coordinate our efforts in this direction. One way we can formalize this commitment is to amend our by-laws to reflect this addition to the Mission Coordinating Team’s mandate for ministry. You will also see concerns about racism intentionally addressed in our Sunday bulletin and our prayer time. If you have ideas about how we can live into this newly official commitment, please share them with the Mission CT members (Colin Green, Dick Bell or Joanne Wells) or Pastor Rebecca. Ω

Sharing about Stewardship ~ Heat Advisory!!! ♥

Sometime in July, it became clear that our air conditioning in the sanctuary was not working as well as it should be. After a visit from the technician, we were informed that we have a leaky coil and two non-functioning circuit boards. The coil was refilled with freon, which should last the rest of the summer, but the leak is too large to be repaired, so the coil will need to be replaced, along with the circuit boards. The estimated cost of these repairs is \$3800. We could pull money from our reserves to pay for this, but the Stewardship Coordinating Team is asking the congregation to help us avoid that. We are collecting over-and-above donations to help with these costs through Sunday, September 6th. At that time, we will figure out how much we will need to pull from our reserves. Please give generously if you can! ♥

Church in Covenant Opportunities and News

Regional Women's Retreat - Oct. 2-4 - "Knowing and Being Known"

The annual Regional Women's Retreat will be held Friday-Sunday, October 2-4 at Camp Chandler in Wetumpka, AL. The location has changed this year in order to provide better facilities for retreaters, especially those with difficulty getting around. It is a more central location for the whole region and situated on Lake Jordan. ☉

The theme this year is "Knowing and Being Known: Deepening Your Connection with God." Keynote Speaker Diane Wood says, "It is my prayer that each participant will have an experience of God that draws her deeper into the relationship with the Divine." ☉ Diane is pastor of Village Christian Church, our Regional Young Adult Minister, and an experienced leader of spiritual formation.

The sessions during the retreat will help each person identify their spiritual type, their "God language" and spiritual practices for their type. There will be more quiet time at this retreat than in past years. ☉

The registration fee for the retreat is \$110 (before Sept. 20), which includes 2 nights lodging, meals and costs of the retreat. After Sept. 20, it is \$120, and one-day registration is \$45 plus \$23 for meals. Registration forms and more information are available in the office. Marie Bittle and Pastor Rebecca are planning to go and would love company! ☉

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. In the summer, we include ministers who serve in non-congregational settings. The Prayer Calendar for September is:

- Sept. 6: Ambassadors for Christ, Greenville, AL – Pamela Wilson
John Mobley, Regional Minister; Dale Braxton, Assoc. Reg. Minister
- Sept. 13: Braggs Christian Church, Minter, AL – Joe Crook, Board Chair
James Clifford, Hospice Chaplain, Birmingham, AL
- Sept. 20: Cloverdale Christian Church, Montgomery, AL – Tommy Morgan
Theron Gunn, Military Chaplain, National Guard, Warrior, AL
- Sept. 27: First Christian Church, Pensacola, FL – James Gazaway
Scott Bowen, Baptist Health System, Chaplain, Birmingham, AL