

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Staff

Rev. Jim Brooks, Interim Minister
Music Director – Ron Montgomery
Secretary – Dona Sulzmann
Custodian – Rosa Jennings

Office Hours

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Monday through Friday

First Christian Church
627 Paul W. Bryant Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

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(Disciples of Christ)
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DECEMBER 2016

THE EPISTLE

Do you know anyone who is good at waiting? I'm not! I become rather impatient when I'm told to "wait just a minute"! In this instant-everything modern age, we get frustrated if we have to wait for any length of time. If you order anything on-line chances are it will be delivered within 48 hours. Amazon will bring the world to you sometimes within 24 hours! Waiting feels like time wasted. And who can afford to waste time these days? We have too much to do. Every second counts. Here we are in the midst of the Advent season when we are admonished to just wait a minute! During advent, we're reminded of all those centuries when God's people waited and waited for the fulfillment of God's promises. There were years of uncertainty and times of doubt. And while it is certainly true that our story does end with the birth of the Christ Child, there were many years of waiting. So, just wait a minute before you rush to the good part! Waiting can bring some focus to our otherwise "me" focused world.

1. WAITING REMINDS US THAT WE ARE NOT THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE. It's so easy to get caught up in our own plans, convinced that everything we do is absolutely, crucially important. Being forced to wait gives us the opportunity to remember that other people have plans and priorities as well. We are not the focal point of the universe. That doesn't make our plans unimportant, but it does put them in perspective.

2. WAITING REMINDS US THAT LIFE IS A GIFT. Forced to sit at a stop light for several precious minutes, I have a choice. I can choose to grumble and gripe about the loss of my precious time, or I can reflect on the blessings of the day and the gifts God has given me in this day!

3. WAITING REMINDS US THAT THE PRESENT MATTERS. Sometimes I think waiting frustrates us because we're too future-oriented, always focused on what comes next. What about now? Next is in God's hands. Now is what we have. I think the advent season is a great opportunity to think differently about time. Waiting reminds us that this is God's story and we are not the star of this production! It's not about us, and things don't always (often!) go the way we'd like. Finally, all the waiting helps us think differently about both the present and the future: valuing the present as a gift, cherishing the future as our ultimate hope. Will that change the way you feel as you wait for the power to come back on? I don't know. It might, or it might not. But maybe it will give you the chance to view that time differently.

THANKS FOR ALLOWING ME TO WAIT WITH YOU!

Jim

Church
Elders & Deacons

December 4th *Robert Gibson*
Dona Sulzmann

***Ed Carson**
Mike Largin
Will Largin
***Kate Matheny**

December 11th *Robert Gibson*
Dona Sulzmann

Bailey Farish
Kim Farish
***Brinley Hocutt**
***Martha Hocutt**

December 18th *Robert Gibson*
Dona Sulzmann

Cindy Harris
***Chris Largin**
***Ken Largin**
Amy Montgomery

December 25th *Robert Gibson*
Dona Sulzmann

Brinley Hocutt
Martha Hocutt
***Rosa Jennings**
***Steve Jennings**

Liturgist:



Hope Circle will meet **December 5th at 9:30 am.**

Circle I will not meet in December. Dinner at Martha Smalley's is cancelled.

Serendipity Circle will meet **December 12th at 5:30** at Anthony's Italian Kitchen.

The annual CWF/DW **Brunch/Ornament Swap** will be **December 10th** at the church. Bring your favorite breakfast food and join us.

CMF Breakfast cancelled for December



Sandra Brennan
Wiley Hales
Linda Ingram
Buddy Mason
Brenda Tanner



MISSION COUNCIL
December 11th noon

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Gift was a success!
Randi Coleman delivered 78 boxes to Circlewood Baptist on Nov. 14th.



Jon and Joan Atkinson are hosting a church Christmas Party on



December 2nd at 6:00 pm. The address is 4135 Windermere Drive

(Woodland Hills), 35405. Food and fun provided!

The East Tuscaloosa Community Soup Bowl is selling smoked hams from Robertson's for \$45. Pickup is Tuesday, Dec. 20th, 3-6 pm at Hargrove United Methodist Church. See Polly Bailey to order by Monday, Dec. 12th.



Heifer International Gift Cards are available in the narthex. This organization promotes sustainable farming around the world and is a wonderful way to give meaningful gifts to friends and family. Checks can be made out to the church & placed in the offering plate, given to Randi Coleman or turned in to the church office.




The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be at 5:30 pm.

The Chancel Choir will present "Joy" Sunday, December 11th during the worship service. Bring your family and friends!



This will be followed by the Church Christmas Party at noon. The Mission focus of this year's Christmas Party will be assisting the island of Andros in the Bahamas which was devastated by Hurricane Matthew. At the party, Jim Brooks will share about the Vacation Bible School ministry in which several members of our congregation participated, and the effects of the recent hurricane. The opportunity to give a love offering will be available at the party and for several weeks after.

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
				1	2 <i>Christmas Party at Atkinson's 6:00 pm</i>	3
4 Mission Council noon	5 Hope Circle 9:30 Anita Smelley	6 Yoga 5:30 Tom Cain	7 Circle of Prayer 6:30 Choir 7:00	8 Evan Walker	9	10 CWF/DW Ornament Swap/ Brunch – 10:00
11 <i>Cantata & Christmas Party</i>	12 Serendipity 5:30 Susan Barger Susan Brennan Jose DeJesus	13 Yoga 5:30	14 Circle of Prayer 6:30 Choir 7:00	15	16	17 Ginger Bailey
18 Parkinsons Support Group – 2:00 Tom Goebel	19	20 Ham pickup 3-6 pm (Hargrove UMC) Yoga 5:30	21 Soup Kitchen 9:30 Circle of Prayer 6:30 Choir 7:00	22	23	24 Candlelight  Service 5:30
25 	26	27  Yoga 5:30	28 Circle of Prayer 6:30 Choir 7:00	29	30	31