



# Voice

A PUBLICATION OF VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
*(Disciples of Christ) Birmingham, Alabama*



**Valley Christian Church**  
**(Disciples of Christ)**  
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**Website: [www.vccbhm.org](http://www.vccbhm.org)**  
**Office Hours: 8am-12pm**  
**Monday through Friday**

## Fall Worship Schedule

**Sunday, Dec 12**

10:30 a.m.

**Sunday, Dec 19**

10:30 a.m.

**Friday, Dec 24**

4:00 p.m.

**Sunday, Dec 26**

10:30 a.m.

### Dates of Interest:

- Dec 8 - AAA Event First White House of the Confederacy — Montgomery
- Dec 15 and 22 "Sounds of Advent" Carol Sing—optional lunch offsite
- Dec 19 - Congregational Meeting after worship
- Dec 23 and 24 - office closed for Christmas
- Dec 24 — 4pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- Dec 31 office closed for New Years

*From the Pastor's Desk*

## Coffee and a Story

I first want to thank again all of you who wrote me kind notes of prayer and cards of sympathy after my grandfather's death in November. November was an extremely intense month for me—on the heels of several intense months as we have continued to try to navigate pandemic life together—and I take solace in knowing that my grandfather is no longer experiencing earthly pain.

I am also grateful to everyone who has helped make our Advent festivities thus far happen, from the hanging of the greens and the ordering of our Christmas poinsettias to our first installment of the newly-reinstated Sounds of Advent series, which we kicked off this past Wednesday with piano, organ, and mandolin music from John Neville. I would love for you to join us in the sanctuary at 11:30 am on Wednesday, December 15, when I will be leading on my saxophone, and on Wednesday, December 22, when our music director Mary Ellen Caughran will be leading.

Sunday, December 19 will be a very important day—not only will it be the fourth and final Sunday of Advent, but after worship in our fellowship hall, we will hold our annual congregational meeting. This meeting serves two key functions: to vote on the following year's proposed budget (prepared this year very deliberately and thoughtfully by our stewardship department under chair Sara Simon) and on the following year's slate of lay leaders. I want to apologize for the very late start on nominating lay leaders for 2022 as, this having been my first go through Valley's calendar, I was unaware the process was meant to start back in May and June, when I was focused primarily on restarting our in-person worship. Anyone is welcome to attend the meeting regardless of membership status, and anyone holding membership at Valley Christian Church is welcome to vote.

Finally, I look forward to seeing you and yours for Valley's Christmas Eve worship service at 4:00 pm on Friday, December 24. We will hear the Christmas story as told in Luke's Gospel and sing some favorite traditional Christmas carols, culminating in a candlelight rendition of Silent Night. I would love to have you celebrate Christ's birth with us in-person (with masks and social distancing) or online.

That is a lot to have on tap after an Advent and Christmas season last year when so much had to be on hold due to the winter covid surge, and I am sure you have other holiday obligations as well. I hope you will set aside time to join us this season!

Christ's and yours, Pastor Eric

**December 7 2021**

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## Life in the Valley

### Prayers, Joys and Concerns

- Janice Clifford, wife of our former minister, Jim Clifford has been in the hospital through the holidays and may be facing surgery. Please pray for them.
- Please pray for Melinda Robertson, our beloved member, who had a fall and broke some ribs. She is home now.
- Valley has another big thank you to Jean Thrasher for afghan quilts to be used in the sanctuary. They are beautiful!
- Please pray for Joel Kramme, Lola Kiser's niece's husband. He needs our prayers right now.
- Thanks to everyone who participated in the Hanging of the Greens and getting the church ready for Advent and Christmas.
- A big thank you to Dana Stuckenschneider for making the new wreaths on all the front doors.

## Toys for GBM

We have been given a later date to have our gift cards in for toys for children at Greater Birmingham Ministries. The new deadline will be Sunday, Dec. 12. Thank you for all you do "for the least of these".

## Sounds of Advent Carol-Sings Return

You are warmly invited to be a part of the return of our Sounds of Advent carol-sing tradition. While we could not offer this worship and fellowship opportunity last year due to the winter wave of covid-19, we are excited to be continuing it this year! Join us at 11:30 am at the church on December 15, and 22 (both Wednesdays) for Advent carol-singing and a brief accompanying Bible study led by Pastor Eric. Our first carol-sing, on December 1, was led by John Neville on the piano, Pastor Eric will bring out his saxophone on December 15th, and our music director, Mary Ellen Caughran will lead on December 22nd. We hope to see you there!

## Disciples Women

### Christmas Card Tree project

To greet your Valley church family, the Disciples Women invite you to bring a signed Christmas card and attach it to the Christmas tree in the parlor. You may also wish to leave a monetary donation (cash or check made out to Disciples Women) in the box that will be sent to the Florida Christian Center, a Disciples of Christ living facility serving senior adults and adults with special needs in

Jacksonville, Florida. Within the Center is the Wishing Well Gift Shop, which offers residents a convenient way to shop for personal items and gifts for friends and family. Our offering will help the gift shop staff purchase items with which to stock the shop. The Disciples Women have supported the gift shop in this way for several years, and the Center's staff is very grateful for the assistance.

## Sh! Sh!

The church mice are busy accepting contributions for Christmas gifts for the Valley church staff. Contributions may be brought or mailed to the church office or placed in the offering plates on Dec. 12th and Dec. 19th. Please make checks out to the church and designate for "staff gift".



Disciples Women Christmas Coffee 2021

## Annual Congregational Meeting

Valley Christian Church's annual congregational meeting will take place after worship on Sunday, December 19, in the sanctuary. A proposed 2022 budget will be voted on and an update on a slate of officers given. If you would like to attend via Zoom, Pastor Eric will have his laptop set up. If you are worshipping by Zoom please remain in the Worship Zoom Meeting.

## Christmas Offering

**December 12th and 19th**

We will be receiving offerings for the Christmas offerings for these two Sundays, December 12th and 18th. The Christmas offering remains in the Region to support camps and conferences, ministerial support, training opportunities and many other programs. Please give generously.