



# 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**

## Summer Worship Schedule

### Sunday Service

Aug 27 10:30 a.m.

### Sunday Service

Sep 3 10:30 a.m.

### Sunday Service

Sep 10 10:30 a.m.

### Sunday Service

Sep 17 10:30 a.m.

### Sunday Service

Sep 24 10:30 a.m.

## Dates of Interest:

- Aug 25 and 26 - "Vital Signs" Transformation Workshop (First Christian Birmingham)
- Sep 4 - Labor Day Office is closed
- Sep 10 & 17 - Reconciliation Sunday
- Sep 13 - AAA trip to Purdy Butterfly House in Huntsville
- Sep 17 - Quarterly Cabinet Meeting after worship
- Sep 30 - Ukraine Educational Seminar in the Fellowship Hall.

## A Word from Your Pastor

**August 22, 2023**

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Jesus once said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." (Mark 10:14-15) In this scripture Jesus was calling us to have childlike hearts.

When I speak of childlike hearts, I have to admit that there is a lot of "little boy" still left in me. I sometimes do act as though I am an adult going on eleven. You all know my childlike spirit of going to Dollar Tree and buying "clappers" for you, of sharing silly magic tricks, telling riddles and coming up with crazy Children's Moments in worship.

But I do believe that we can be old in body but still very young in mind and heart. The words of Jesus in the scripture passage deals with the importance of having a childlike heart for entrance into the kingdom of God. If we don't understand children and appreciate their openness and freshness, and enjoy their warmth and trust, we can't understand the things of God.

In my library at home I have a fascinating book titled, "Children's Letters to God". It is just what the title says, a collection of letters written by children to God. They illustrate the message of a childlike spirit toward God. Let me share some of those letters in the book.

- "Dear God, my Dad can never get a fire started in the grill. Could you please make a "burning bush" in our yard? Sherry"
- "Dear God, I made 25 cents selling lemonade. I will give you some of it Sunday. Chris"
- "Dear God, Did you mean for giraffes to look like that or was it an accident? Norman"
- "Dear God, Can you marry food? Martha"
- "Dear God, I didn't think orange went very good with purple until I saw the sunset you made last Tuesday. That was cool. Eugene"
- "Dear God, Did you think up hugging? That is a good thing! Brenda"
- "Dear God, count me in in. Your friend, Herbie"

These letters are beautiful. Here in these wonderful letters we see some of the special ingredients of childlikeness.

One of those ingredients of childlikeness is to have a freshness to our lives. To be excited about all of life - even the little everyday things.

Another ingredient of childlikeness is to have a short memory. We can't nurse the wrongs that are done to us. I admire children and how quickly they bounce back from being unhappy. The child seems to forget and forgive so quickly and not carry a chip on their shoulder towards the world. This attitude is part of the kingdom of God.

A third ingredient of childlikeness is honesty. Children are honest and open about their feelings without worrying about how is might sound. This attitude is part of the kingdom of God.

Another beautiful ingredient is a child's acceptance of others. They do not judge people by their appearance. This is part of the kingdom of God.

Finally, one more ingredient is trust. Children seem to have more confidence and trust in all people. They do not expect any person to be bad. They do not suspect the worst in people, but believe in the very best in others. They have no idea of discrimination about a person's race and color, or age, until we teach them. To bring the kingdom of God on earth, we too, must have a childlike heart of trust and believe the very best in others. That is what Christ did.

Therefore, may we all keep a childlike heart. May Christ teach us that we are never too old to become younger, with childlike hearts in our outlook on life, in our ministry as a church, and in our relationships with each other. Dear God, help us to bring about your kingdom as a child of yours. God Bless You, Edd

# Life in the Valley

## *Prayers, Joys and Concerns*

- Many thanks to Jan and Bill Watts for a wonderful day at the lake! It was great!
- Gratitude is expressed to the Property Ministry for their leadership in providing new insulation for our air conditioning and heating pipes.
- Thank you Ed Guindon for installing the new hand-rail on the sidewalk in front of the sanctuary.
- Please pray for Hawaii after all the devastation there with the wildfires. We are doing a special Day of Compassion for them.
- A Memorial Service for Susan Crystal Shoemaker will be at Valley on August 31, at 11:00am. Crysty was the daughter of Fred and Margaret Shoemaker, and the granddaughter of Lillian Flood. The family, along with Crysty and her 2 brothers, were all members of Valley several years ago. Members of Valley who remember this family are invited to the service to be in the sanctuary. The surviving members of Crysty's family, Margaret and her brother Jon will be at the service.
- Our prayers are with Mary Pat Spencer whose college roommate, Vickie Maphus, passed away last week.
- Food Pantry Sunday was August 6th and the need is for Rice, Pasta and Pasta Sauce. You can bring your donations at any time during the month of August and the Outreach Chairpersons will take them to GBM for you.

## **Last Call for "Vital Signs" A Regional Transformation Event August 25th and 26th First Christian Church**

The transformation event will enable churches in our region to have the power to move from surviving to thriving. The two worship leaders for the event are Rev. Bruce Barkhauer, Director for the Center of Faith and Giving in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The other leader is Rev. Dr. Denise Bell, Regional Minister of the Christian Church (DOC) in Georgia.

The schedule is a Regional Worship Service at 7:30pm at First Christian on Friday, August 25th. On Saturday, August 26th there will be workshops from 9:00am—11:45am and after lunch at 12:45pm with closing communion at 1:45pm. The workshops will cover the eight factors that are consistent in all vital congregations—leadership, vision, discipleship, communication, expectation setting, gratitude, trust and innovation. These factors will enable the church to have a new vision for the future. They will help the church to live its vision and serve with the transforming power of the gospel.

The church is paying the registration cost so that the event will be free for those attending.

## **AAA Trip to the Purdy Butterfly House in Huntsville**

Well let's try this again. We were stormed out in June when we were first scheduled to go, so we hope this time works. We all love Butterflies and this is our chance to see about 1,000 native brightly colored ones

on our visit to the Butterfly House in Huntsville. This is the nation's largest open air butterfly house. Our trip is planned for Wednesday, September 13th. We will leave the church at 8:30am for a visit time of 11:30am. Gas charge on the van is \$8.00 and tickets for seniors is \$16.35 including tax. I hear that they have a wonderful gift shop that is for both the botanical gardens and butterfly house. Please let Peggi know if you plan to go by Friday, Sept. 9th. Our lunch will be at the German Restaurant, the Ol' Heidelberg Café. - Peggi Zinser

## **A Prayer for Labor Day**

On Labor Day September 4th, we remember those who have been faithful and hard-working in so many ways to make life good for us. We give thanks for them and for the sacrifices they have made. We pray, Lord, you would use us, and the work we do, to make life good for others. We pray especially for those without work and those unable to work, that you would sustain and provide for them from your grace and tender mercies. We pray for those in difficult work situations and ask for your encouragement and peace to be with them. To those who are overworked, we ask for strength and rest to nourish them. Keep us strong and faithful in you, remembering that you who began a good work in us will bring it to completion. In your name, we pray and work. Amen.

## **Reconciliation Offering 2023 September 10th & 17th**

It is the vision of the Reconciliation Ministry to build just communities by breaking down the walls within our church which separate us. We envision a church in which all communities are accountable to one another and God.

## **Week of Compassion One Day of Sharing-August 27th**

We will receive one day of sharing for Week of Compassion. This will be marked for the fires in Maui, Hawaii. Mark your check Week of Compassion.

## **Ukraine**

How much do you know about Ukraine?? The history? Culture? People? Religion? For answers come to the Educational Seminar about Ukraine sponsored by our Education Department on Saturday, September 30, 2023, 9:00am - 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall. The discussion will be led by Tom Cain, who has traveled in Ukraine and kept in touch with people there. Tom is a member of First Christian Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. We will have his presentation and then a question and answer period. Everyone is invited. Bring your friends!

## **Manna Market**

We have fresh organic fruits and vegetables available in our fellowship hall every other Tuesday, check the calendar for dates. Robyn Mitchell manages Manna Market and has been using our fellowship hall for many years selling, by pre-order, boxes of fresh produce, you can order off the web site at [mannamarket.net](http://mannamarket.net), or show up on Co-Op Tuesdays from 2-4 to purchase off our extras table. Robyn also has local honey for sale. The price list is on the bulletin board.