



Voice

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



**Valley Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
2600 Cherokee Place
Birmingham, Alabama
35216**

205-879-0419

Email: office@vccbhm.org

Website: www.vccbhm.org

**Office Hours: 7:30am-
12:30pm Monday, Tuesday
and Wednesday**

November 21, 2023

VOLUME 74, NUMBER 20

A Word from Your Pastor

Three years and three months ago I wrote the following article for the Voice. I want to share it again as I retire from being the Interim Minister at Valley for the second time.

My last Sunday to be with you is Sunday, December 24, 2023. I thank God for the time we have had together. I have enjoyed you both, as a congregation and as friends.

Often in my prayer life, I lift up to God your wonderful ministry and commitment at Valley Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). I appreciate your faithfulness, your untiring service to the church, and your Christian outreach to the needs of others.

As you know, I am always sharing a story with you. So, there was a little girl who often in the evening saw her grandmother in prayer before she went to bed. The next morning at breakfast the little girl would say, "Grandma, you must sleep in heaven, because you are so happy at breakfast."

Your commitment to the Lord has enabled me to live in a spirit of heaven that has brought happiness to my life.

I will keep you in my prayers. May you experience joy and happiness under the pastoral care of Rick. Thank you for being part of my life, you will always be important to me.

God Bless You, Edd

Christmas Greetings From Your Staff

All of us as your church staff want to wish you a merry and blessed Christmas. We celebrate the opportunity to serve you in the name of the one born in Bethlehem.

May each one of you during this holy season share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

God Bless You and Merry Christmas, Edd, Marilyn, Margaret and Beth

Two Worship Services on Christmas Eve Contemporary Advent Worship

Sunday morning at 10:30am on December 24th there will be a contemporary advent worship service in the parlor. The service will be a joyful celebration for Christmas with Christmas carols, communion, a message on the hymn, "Joy to the World", and praising God with our Christmas "Clappers".

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion service will be in the Sanctuary at 4:00pm on December 24th. The service will be our traditional service with a Christmas meditation, singing of Christmas hymns, Jan Watts singing a solo, coming forward for Holy Communion, and circling the Sanctuary holding a candle singing "Silent Night". Invite your family, a friend or neighbor on Christmas Eve for this special worship service at 4:00pm.

Dates of Interest:

- Nov 26 - Decorate Sanctuary for Christmas after worship
- Dec 6 - 6:00pm Building Valley Macedonia Christmas Fellowship (PawPaw Patch)
- Dec 8 - 11:30am AAA Event - Classic on Noble Holiday Lunch (Anniston)
- Dec 10 and 17 - Christmas Offering
- Dec 13 - 11:15am Brown Bag Lunch and Worship
- Dec 14 - 11:30am Men's Christmas Luncheon
- Dec 17 - Church Christmas Dinner after worship
- Dec 18 - Voice Deadline
- Dec 20 - 11:15am Brown Bag Lunch and Worship
- Dec 24 - 4:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- Dec 25 - Christmas Day

Life in the Valley

Prayers, Joys and Concerns

- Please contact the church if you need a ride to the Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service at 4:00pm.
- We celebrate that Peggy Hiller is home from the hospital and is doing well. She will celebrate her 104th birthday on Sunday, December 17th.
- Thank you Mary Pat for preaching on Sunday, November 12. We are grateful for your challenge to us to be the light of Christ as we share a new ministry with Rick in 2024.
- Everyone is invited to decorate the Sanctuary and Parlor for Advent after worship on Sunday, November 26th.
- Active friends of Valley will light the Advent candles this year.
- The men of Valley will be singing the Christmas carol, "Joy to the World" in worship on Sunday, December 17th.
- Please pray for Clarence Sellers who was hit by a car and his truck was totaled. However he is ok and we give God praise.
- Our prayers are with Jean Thrasher's brother Roy who is in the hospital.
- Our prayers are with Martha Latimer who fell and broke her hip.
- Margaret Cox has asked for prayers for her friend Gari who is very ill and in the hospital with internal bleeding.
- Jan Watt's has asked for your prayers for her because she has a little tumor and she is praying that it is benign.
- Kay Keith has asked for prayers for her sister Betty's family because they lost their first great granddaughter.
- Our prayers are with Mike Mee who is having some heart concerns.
- Lola has a joy and a big thank you to everyone who wrote a devotional for the Advent booklet.
- We have a joy that Rick and Ellen Malugani are in church this past Sunday and they have completed their move to Birmingham.
- The Advent Booklets will be available for everyone this Sunday, November 26th. Our gratitude is expressed to everyone who wrote a devotion for the booklet.
- Thank you to everyone who was able to make a financial pledge to the church for 2024.
- Food Pantry Sunday will be December 3rd and the need is for Canned Vegetables. However, you can bring your donations at any time during the month of December and the Outreach Chairpersons will take them to GBM for you.

Sermon Series for December

The sermons for Advent will be centered around Christmas carols. The following is a list of the sermons.

Sunday, December 3rd, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Sunday, December 10th, "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Sunday, December 17th, "Away in a Manger"

Sunday, December 24th, "Joy to the World"

Christmas Coffee

All women are invited to begin the Christmas season with a festive Christmas Coffee on Saturday, Decem-

ber 2, 2023, 10:00am hosted by the Disciples Women of Valley Christian Church. We are very pleased to announce that Sharon Hill of Macedonia Christian Church will present our program this year. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy this fellowship event. Bring a friend to join the celebration!!

Operation Christmas Stocking

Since 1993 Valley and Macedonia Christian Churches have worked together to build both churches and to bring the message of God's love to people everywhere. As part of this program on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 we invite everyone to a Christmas Fellowship at the PawPaw Patch Restaurant in Homewood at 410 Green Springs Highway, Homewood, Alabama 35209. We will go through the restaurant line individually and then meet together in a private room to enjoy the food and a Christmas program. As part of our community service we invite everyone to purchase a Christmas stocking and fill it with suitable gifts to be taken to needy residents at North Hill Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Gardendale, Alabama. Please bring your Christmas stocking filled with gifts to the Christmas Fellowship on December 6th. We will deliver the stockings to the Nursing Home in time for Christmas. A list of suggest suitable gifts is below. Please label stocking (M) for men and (W) for women. Filled stockings may be left at the church on or before December 5th if you cannot join us at the dinner on December 6th. Thank you very much. May God bless you for putting a smile on someone's beautiful face at Christmas.

Items for Christmas Stockings:

Socks, knit caps, t-shirts, deodorant, lotion, perfume/cologne, body wash, soap, games, puzzles, small stuffed animals, Kleenex, lip balm, scarves, magnifying glasses, shaving lotion, handkerchiefs, Vaseline, books, battery operated candles, small flashlights, gum, bow ties, eyeglass wipes, and wrapped candy. (No sanitizer nor anything with alcohol in it will be accepted)

Staff Christmas

It's time again to show our staff how much we appreciate them and all of their hard work through the year. We are collecting for our staff Christmas bonus for the next three weeks. Please mark your check "Staff Christmas" and place it in the offering plate or give it to Ed or Ginny Guindon.

A AAA Christmas

Where was the biggest Christmas tree you've ever seen? Quite possibly it is the traditional one at the Classic on Noble Restaurant in Anniston, Alabama. A tree that reaches from the first floor, up the stairs to the second floor, decorated with every ornament you've ever seen. That is just where AAA is going for our Christmas event on Friday, December 8, 2023 leaving the church in the van at 10:00am for a wonderful lunch at 11:30am. Members of the Christian Church in Anniston will be joining us there in keeping with our AAA traditional Christmas celebration. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy the fellowship, fun and food. Reservations should be given to Peggi Zinser or Lola Kiser by Friday, December 1, 2023. The gas charge for van transportation will be \$8.00

Reminder - Gift Cards for Toys

We are also receiving Walmart gift cards in the amount of \$20 & \$25. These will be used to purchase toys for the children of GBM. Give your cards to Sarah Draper or leave them with Marilyn.

Three Special Wednesdays

There are three special Wednesdays at Valley during December. The first special Wednesday is December 6, 2023. On this day Valley will join Macedonia for a Christmas Dinner at 6:00pm at the PawPaw Patch Restaurant. More information about this event can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

There will also be a brown bag lunch and worship on Wednesday, December 13 and Wednesday, December 20 at 11:15am. The worship this year will be on Chrismons. The word Chrismon is a combination of two words - Christ and monogram. A Chrismon is a symbol of Christ. On Wednesday December 13 the worship will be on the Chrismon of the Epiphany star that led the Wise Men to Jesus. On Wednesday, December 20, the Chrismon will be on the cross and orb. The orb or sphere symbolizes the world and with a cross, the triumph of Christ over it. Bring your lunch for these two services and the church will provide the desserts after lunch. We will gather in the sanctuary in a spirit of worship around the Chrismons.

Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting will be held after morning worship on Sunday, December 3, 2023. The purpose is to approve the nominating committee report and the 2024 budget. Also, any other business will be considered at the meeting.

Poinsettia Sign Up Form

This year we will have 33 poinsettias representing every year that Jesus lived on earth. The poinsettia sign up form will be in the Worship Bulletins Sunday, December 3rd and 11th. You may also order by calling Marilyn. Please sign up for poinsettias by Monday, December 11th in honor or in Memory of your loved ones and friends. The cost is \$11.00 per plant. Please note on the memo line of your check - "For Poinsettias".

Christmas Offering - December 10 & 17

We will receive the Christmas Offering on December 10 & 17. This is the offering that stays here in our region. The funds are used to help with Camp & Conferences, leadership training for adults, and preparation and authorization for Ministerial ordination.

All Church Christmas Dinner

The Christmas dinner will be after worship on Sunday, December 17th. The church will provide a pot roast, potatoes and drink. A sign up sheet will be in the narthex for members and friends to bring side dishes, salads and desserts. May all look forward to this dinner together as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Decorate for Christmas

We will decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas on Sunday, November 26th after worship. Everyone is invited to participate as we add beauty to our sanctuary for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Looking Ahead to Worship in December

- Brown Bag Lunch/Worship on Wednesdays, December 6th, 13th and 20th at 11:15am. The worship will focus on Chrismons.
- Morning worship on Sunday mornings will include sermons on Christmas carols and active visitors of Valley lighting the Advent candles.
- Christmas Eve worship on Sunday, December 24th with candlelight communion and beautiful poinsettias.

An Advent Prayer

During Advent Lord Jesus, enter our world and our lives with light enough to chase away sadness and fear. May your light burn away all our resentments. Open our eyes to your healing light. Amen.

