

## Church Calendar of Missions and Ministry Opportunities

- Sunday, January 4:  
9 a.m. Continental Breakfast  
9:15 a.m. Spiritual Formation/Bible Study Classes  
10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Worship  
8 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous
- Monday, January 5:  
10 a.m. Staff Meeting  
11 a.m. Prayer Group  
3:30 p.m. Cello Lessons
- Tuesday, January 6:  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Chalice Thrift Store  
1 p.m. Lydia Circle  
3:30 – 6 p.m. Music Theory Group  
8 p.m. AA/ALANON
- Wednesday, January 7:  
3:30 p.m.-6 p.m. Music Theory Group
- Thursday, January 8:  
10 a.m.-2 p.m. Chalice Thrift Store
- Friday, January 9: Church Leadership Retreat at Camp Christian
- Saturday, January 10:  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Chalice Thrift Store  
1 p.m. - 9 p.m. SCA in Social Hall
- Sunday, January 11:  
9 a.m. Continental Breakfast  
9:15 a.m. Spiritual Formation/Bible Study Classes  
10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service  
12 noon Disciples Women Executive Committee Meeting  
8 p.m. Narcotics Anonymous

### **Spiritual Formation Each Sunday at 9:15 a.m.**

“Seeking Understanding in Scripture” in Carmack Room  
This Week: Exodus 25: 10-16; 40: 16-21, 33-38 “The Ark of the Covenant”

“Pathfinders Class” in the Pathfinders Room  
This Week: “Lord, Give Me Patience! And give it to me right now!” by James Moore and Bob J. Moore

“The Nature of True Community” Bible Class Begins Sunday, Jan. 18  
Texts includes Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s **Life Together**



## First Christian Church of Decatur (Disciples of Christ)

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### **Matthew 2: 1-12**

**2** In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, **2** asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” **3** When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; **4** and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. **5** They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: *6 ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’*”

**7** Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. **8** Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” **9** When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. **11** On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. **12** And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

### **2 Corinthians 12: 1-9**

**1** It is necessary to boast; nothing is to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. **2** I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. **3** And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows— **4** was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat.

**5** On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. **6** But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, **7** even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. **8** Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, **9** but he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

## Joys and Concerns for Church and Community

*The joys and concerns of our congregation and community follow. Please remember that some requests are marked confidential and are lifted up within the Monday Morning Prayer Circle yet not reflected here. Sometimes, simply a person's name will be listed with no explanation. Trust in the wisdom and confidentiality of the Prayer Group, and lift up that person's whole being to God's holy, healing Light.*

- **Lillie Sapp** says she will be away for a much needed and deserved vacation. Prayers for safe travel and return are needed and appreciated. Her son-in-law, **Nicolas Jordan** is very ill. Prayers are needed for healing and the right physician.
- **Jeanette Duncan** says, “**Jim Hughes**, a close friend, is at Emory Johns Creek with congestive heart failure.”
- **Danl and Wiley** said, “Praise for [simplicity]. Love without limits is what this time means to us. Please keep us in your prayers for strength, healing, and understanding until Christ comes.”
- **Larry Todd** asks for prayer for his brother-in-law, **Terry Tolbert**, who is scheduled for kidney surgery in January for cancer.
- **Minnie Haynes** says, “**Baby Kalani** (now 7 months old) is progressing in a healthy, developmentally on target way. He brought his family from San Diego to share Christmas with us.”
- **Julie Fleming** says, “Thanksgiving for our caregivers **Marva** and **Norman**, who care tenderly, compassionately, lovingly for my dad. We are truly blessed. Please keep them in prayer.”
- **Anne Barr** says she gives thanks that her friend, **Carol** is recovering well from a car accident.
- **Rose Bianco-Szymanski** prays that God keeps her daughter safe and well. She's had many health issues, but is now better and driving to Florida.
- **Nancy Shealy** asks for prayer for **Don Middour, Sr.**, who is now home from the hospital.
- **Glen** and **Brandy Alsobrook** ask for prayer for **Romona Rathel**.
- **Sylvia Gibbs** asks for prayers for her mother, **Willie Mae Durr**, grandma and great grandma to the **Jackson family**. She is at home recovering from a stroke. **Sylvia** will be with her in Indiana for the next few months. **Tori Michelle Jackson** says, “My great-grandma **Mae-Mae** is starting to have strokes. I pray that **Mae-Mae** will get better and live a healthy long life.”
- **Nancy** and **Steve Oliver** request prayers for all who have lost loved ones at this time of year, especially for the **Gerrard family**.
- **Furat** and **Deb Almauhy** request prayer for their daughter's I-130 USCIS petition to be expedited so they can bring her to the U.S. from Iraq and out of danger.
- **Emmie Lee's** brother, **Monte Mathis**, is in Henry County Piedmont and his wife **Sarah Mathis** is in Rehab.
- **Pamela Head** requests prayers to find her church home; traveling mercies for her children as they come here for Christmas; healing prayer for her dad who is having radiation for a melanoma on his head.
- We continue to lift up **Glen Alsobrook, Sr.**, **Johnnie Barber**, **Betty Carroll**, **Julia Glenn Carter**, **Elizabeth Cunningham**, **The Delk Family**, **Jeanette Duncan**, **Sylvia Ennis**, **Hank Ferry**, **Shannen Ferry**, **J.D. Fleming**, **Mary Ellen Fountain**, **Dottie Gill**, **Adei Grenpastures**, **Barbara Hennig**, **Clara Holley**, **Jackie Hudson** and daughter **Alexis**, **The Kidd Family**, **Blair Lewellyn**, **Jay Love**, **Monte** and **Sarah Mathis**, **Judy McMahan**, **Carol Givens (Evans) McGinnis**, **Lynn Nabers**, **The Norton**

**Family, Ramona Rathel, Kim Stanley, Lee Stanley, Tate Family, Mildred Trott, Carol Wheeler, and Ellen Young.**

Dear Friends:

On behalf of First Christian Church of Decatur, I write to thank you for your participation and prayers while worshipping Jesus Christ here amongst the whole people of God. Shalom, Pastor James Brewer-Calvert

**The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)** was born in the early 1800s as a dynamic movement for God that spread across the American frontier. Seeking to move beyond denominational division and toward being a New Testament Church, our founders envisioned a united community of faith grounded in the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Today we are over 3,700 congregations strong across the United States, Canada, and around the world. The red Chalice with St. Andrew's Cross symbolizes our focus on the weekly celebration of Holy Communion and the openness of the Lord's Table, where all are made welcome and invited to partake.

**First Christian Church of Decatur** was founded on Christmas Day 1921, and has served faithfully ever since with a significant urban ministry, an inclusive theology, and a Kingdom-building vision. We are open and accepting of all of God's people, and encourage women, men, and young people to follow their call from God to serve, just as Christ first served us.

**Here is a brief theology and history lesson about this Body of Christ.** First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Decatur, Georgia has a covenantal relationship with sister churches across the city and around the world. While each congregation is independent – no one has the ecclesial authority to direct us what to do, say, believe, or call to serve as pastor—we are connected by a covenant of love. Beginning in the early 1800's, Christian Churches and Disciples of Christ congregations flourished across the USA and around the world. In 1968, the separate bodies yoked to become the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with three manifestations: local congregations, regional churches, and a general church to facilitate national and international missions. Ever since we have covenanted to support and encourage fellow Disciples and to practice Christian ministry locally, regionally and globally.

**Having said that, there are some theological practices we share in common.** We are non-creedal; everyone is invited to love and serve God through Jesus Christ, but how and why you move in that direction is between each soul and God. We practice baptism by immersion at an age of understanding, yet we recognize all forms of baptism and therefore do not require anyone to be re-baptized. The Lord's Table is open because Christ is the host and the purpose. We celebrate the birth, ministry, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in the context of worship we offer Holy Communion every Sunday. Everyone has a vocation, and we affirm Christ's call to children, youth, women and men to serve. We turn to the Holy Scriptures for guidance and direction in our daily living, yet also recognize that the Holy Spirit, in God's infinite wisdom, continues to lovingly communicate through additional voices and acts of grace. At the intersection of faith and reason we meet the Risen Christ and one another. The call of the Gospel for social justice and the building of community is intricately woven into the very fabric of the worship, study, and prayer life of the church.

**How to Join:** You may join First Christian Church by transfer of membership, confession of faith, or by renewal of the vows of your baptism. Please fill out a Friends and Visitors Card (found in your worship program) and bring it forward with you during the Hymn of Invitation, where our Pastor will be delighted to welcome you. Disciples of Christ congregations are delighted to recognize all baptisms. We baptize by immersion at an age of understanding. If you have not been baptized we will schedule one with you at a later date.