



The Valley Voice

VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

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COFFEE AND A STORY

While my stated office hours are Monday – Thursday mornings, many of you have found me at the church some afternoons, and occasionally on our walking trail or going for a walk along the sidewalk on Cherokee Road. Those walks are not just for exercise—although they are for that too—but they have long been a spiritual discipline for me, one I developed over the nearly seven years I spent as the pastor of a Disciples congregation across the street from a city park in Longview, Washington.

For me, walking and hiking (and running, back when my ankles could still handle it) are a way to clear my mind in a way that is more conducive for prayer, focus, and reflection. I find myself more capable of appreciating what God has put before me, or where God has placed me.

This spiritual discipline grew further when I was serving my interim stint at Vancouver First Presbyterian, whose senior minister introduced me to the idea of the “walking tour” of a church’s neighborhood as a sort of immersion exercise, to purposefully give your attention to the atmosphere and trappings of your neighborhood. In a time when churches are increasingly feeling challenged in reflecting their neighborhoods, I found the walking tour to be a useful, refreshing spiritual discipline.

I enjoy taking these walking tours of our neighborhood because I can see and reflect on the current season of our neighborhood’s life. I have appreciated building friendships with several of our neighbors—including some we saw at last weekend’s well-received Earth Day event!—and I look forward to keep building relationships as we return to in-person worship in just a few weeks.

On the heels of talking with y’all this past Sunday on the nature of evolution, of growing into new stages of spiritual being, I would ask, what are the walking tours you can take in your life? (Or a tour through alternate means of transportation, if walking is difficult for you.) Is it a tour of your neighborhood? Of a neighborhood near yours? Of another neighborhood of Birmingham entirely? Or perhaps it’s a tour through a book of the Bible you haven’t visited in a long time?

Tours like these can open us up to the realities of our neighbors—here in Birmingham, or in a book of Scripture, or any number of other places—in a way that little else really can. In my experience, there is little substitute for exposing and immersing yourself in the lived experiences of others. May we see God’s presence in those lives of our neighbors as we seek to minister with them and to them. Christ’s and yours, Pastor Eric

70 X 7

Hope you are continuing to collect non-perishable food items for the celebration of our 70th anniversary. The items will be taken to Greater Birmingham Ministry after our celebration on Pentecost, May 23.

We are looking for any number of items as long as it has a 7 in the number. 7 x 7 7 x 70 7 or 17 or 27 or any number you wish. Bring them to the church anytime or on our first day to worship back in the sanctuary, May 23. A special basket is in the parlor marked 70x7. Thank you, Outreach Department

LIFE IN THE VALLEY

- Please pray for our faithful member Carol Speed as she recovers from her first surgery, visits the doctor, and awaits her second surgery for heart problems.
- Please pray for our faithful member Peggi Zinser as she recovers from a fall. Peggi says she is much better but still can not drive for a while.
- Margaret Cox asked that everyone pray for Lindsey and Nathan Lyon, the family with the conjoined twins that were delivered on 4-22-21. The Lord blessed the family with 6 precious hours with Joshua and Caleb. They are with Jesus now! Praise to Him for this marvelous gift.
- Please pray for the 40 people (and their families) killed in the mass shootings in the US recently.
- Ed and Ginny Guindon were in Daphne, Alabama last Sunday visiting with extended family members and attending the service with them.
- Ed and Ginny’s daughter, Rebecca, who is due June 18th has been put back in the hospital for two weeks of bed rest. The baby is strong and seems to want to arrive early. The doctors are cautious but optimistic that there won’t be a problem.
- Ted Stuckenschneider’s sister Nelia is visiting again. Her nickname comes from her name, Margaret Cornelia Stuckenschneider Westensburger. She is 76 years old this week! Happy Birthday Nelia!
- Edd Spencer, our recent Interim Minister has started a new Interim term with First Christian Church Tuscaloosa. Thank you for your service!
- Many thanks to everyone who wrote a devotional for our Lenten Booklet, and especially to Marilyn Ireland for her work in preparing the booklet. The devotionals were wonderful!
- Peggi Zinser would like to especially thank Lola Kiser and Ed Guindon for their vision in developing and creating the Little Library for Valley and also the other members involved in the project.
- Peggi would also like to thank the Evangelism Committee and others that were involved in the “Birds of Alabama” Seminar. It was a great success and well attended by our neighborhood.
- Sarah Draper’s nephew Randy Yeager is in UAB Hospital. He is a diabetic and is having toe problems. He has had some surgery and will have future surgery but the doctors are optimistic that he won’t lose the toe.
- Pastor Eric and Carrie’s offer on a house in Rocky Ridge has been accepted! They are so thankful for their home after many months of toil.

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