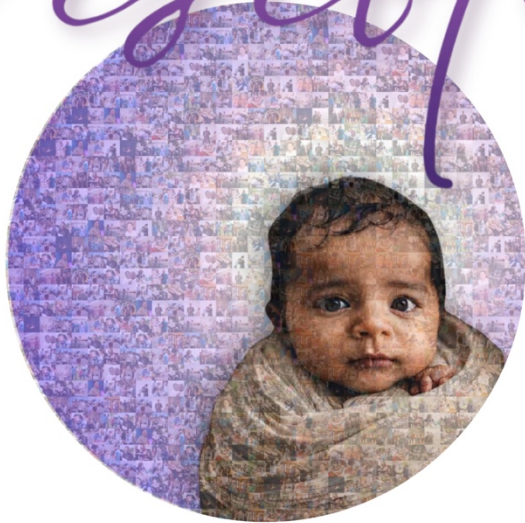


2024 CHRISTMAS OFFERING

God's love

visible



Thank you for your generous support! 100% of the Christmas Offering stays in our region to support our shared ministries!



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In January 2023, I was tasked with chairing the **Search and Call** committee to procure a new minister for First Christian Church, Ocala, Florida. One of the first people to reach out to offer assistance and support/guidance was our Regional Minister, Sandy Messick. Reverend Messick offered to meet with my committee immediately and share what our task entailed. During that first meeting, Sandy handed each of us a folder that included guidelines and other tools we would need such as a video showcasing our church, and a poster to inform congregation of our progress

Once we had an Interim Minister in place, the search began in earnest. Reverend Messick was very helpful in assisting us in completing the congregational profile (not an easy task). As applications began to come in, Reverend Sandy vetted each candidate then sent the profiles to the committee. As the committee met to discuss candidates, we made use of Reverend Messick's expertise when we had questions. She was always quick to respond. In addition, her regional staff were always willing to lend a hand to offer assistance, clarification, and pep talks when necessary.

We were so blessed to be able to call a new minister in September 2024 and he began his ministry at First Christian, Ocala, on October 1, 2024. The Regional office offered guidance and assistance in planning the Installation service scheduled for January 2025.

Serving on a Search and Call committee requires real dedication, commitment, and willingness to spend many hours poring over applications, conducting interviews, and reassuring the congregation that a new minister will be found. As chair of the committee, I cannot tell you how reassuring it was to know that the regional office was only a phone call away to offer help and encouragement. They embodied the theme of **"God's Love Made Visible"** throughout the process. How lucky our region is to have such wonderful leadership!

Blessings,

Leanna Dixon, Search Committee Chairperson
First Christian Church, Ocala, FL

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