



The Connection

We are called to share Jesus in creative and intentional ways, through:
Connecting with God and His Church, **Growing** in Faith and Love,
and **Serving** Our Community and World.

January 2024

A Monthly Newsletter of Turner Christian Church

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Dear Church... from Pastor Matt

"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

"...[T]hose parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."

(1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 22-26 NIV)

This Christmas season, we put together a "design team" whose job it was to plan out our Christmas decorations. The goal was to make the room feel "peaceful" to fit with our theme of "Peace on Earth." They decided to make the sanctuary feel like a cozy living room. We started by putting a fireplace on the stage, along with a rocking chair and a window looking out onto a snowy scene. Then we came up with the idea of scattering living-room furniture throughout the sanctuary. We went around the church and scrounged up every couch and padded chair we could find. As an afterthought, we decided to put the youth room bean bag chairs on the front row, having no idea what might happen if we did. Frankly, I didn't expect anyone to sit in them.

Boy, what a difference a bean-bag chair makes.

From the very first Sunday, kids gravitated toward the bean bags. Every kid, whether they had attended here for years or only a couple of weeks, knew instinctually what to do. Before we knew it, we had a kids' section in the front row, where kids from several different families sat together with their activity packets, while their parents sat in the row behind sharing a zone defense.

After a few weeks, I overheard one of the kids in our youth group showing a friend around who was there for the first time. I heard him say, "These are *our* bean bags! We get to sit in these on Sunday mornings! Isn't that awesome?" You could hear the ownership in his voice—this was *his* church home, and these chairs were *his* spot. And I mean ownership in the best possible way—not possessiveness, but a sense that he belonged. All because of a few bean bags.

It was around that time that the number of bean bags suddenly increased—the Hospitality Team decided to add ten new bean bags to the youth group's three. The reason was that we all knew the bean bags would eventually have to go back to the youth room, but we also knew that there was no going back. The bean bag section had to stay, because it had become our way of demonstrating that kids belong in the Sunday service. They are welcome even if they can't sit still or always pay attention. There is an area in the sanctuary that is *theirs*. We have given them real estate, furniture, a place that is theirs *among the rest of us*.

Then I started hearing older people in the sanctuary. No, they weren't complaining about the bean bags (thus far, not a single person has said anything negative to me about them). They were talking about the cushy chairs we had put out among the other seats in the sanctuary. Some of them had found that one particular new chair worked really well for their back, or was easier to get in and out of. For them too, those pieces of furniture had made a difference in how they felt in the sanctuary.

Of course, as you look out at the seating right now, the sanctuary looks a lot less formal and symmetrical. It looks more *lived in*. The couches don't match, some of the chairs don't fit neatly in the rows, and some of the rows are broken up by coffee tables. And I have no idea how much of that we will keep when we take down our Christmas decorations (other than the bean bags!). But as I look out at our sanctuary right now, I see a great picture of what a Christ-centered church should be. We don't all look the same. We don't all fit in the same rows. Some of us need more back support, some of us are more comfortable splayed out on the ground with a coloring packet. A Christ-centered church makes space for them all. We sacrifice uniformity for grace. We prioritize compassion over decorum. We make allowances for each other's needs, limitations, flaws, and quirks. We make room for bean bags and lumbar support. We let others sit in the comfy chairs, even when we are left in the standard sanctuary chairs. And we celebrate in the fact that such a strange collection of people (and furniture) are brought together around Jesus Christ.

I am excited to be part of a church with such a wide range of members and furniture, and I am so excited about what 2024 has in store for us! I hope you will set a goal this year of getting to know more of your church family, especially the ones who sit in different kinds of chairs from you.

Happy New Year!

I've been thinking... About Junior Worship!

From Pastor Rachel

Junior Worship has been on my mind constantly this fall. At the same time as our need for more teachers has been growing, we have also had some teacher turnover. We are operating at such a deficit that volunteers and I have been scrambling to cover holes each week—many of us regularly missing Sunday sermons.

As you can imagine, that kind of frenetic energy does not always create the best classrooms. And yet, God has been so gracious. We have some families reporting to us how excited their kids are to come to church for Junior Worship! And while I love hearing that, my heart also always sinks a little. Right now, it feels like the program is continuing only because of small miracles.

I believe that God has provided our church family with people who can volunteer in these roles. I believe that we have faithful members who God can equip to be just what Junior Worship needs—I just don't know who yet! Might it be you?

My usual approach to holes in ministry is to ask people personally, not to write newsletter articles. But I have experienced a lot of hesitancy from people around volunteering for Junior Worship. There can be questions about the amount of energy it takes to interact with the kids. There can be questions about connecting with the next generation. There can be hesitancy around the commitment required, or over personal ability.

But when there is a willingness, God can do amazing things through His people! There is such an incredible spiritual richness in connecting with kids, in teaching them and learning with them and in building relationships with their parents.

I hope that you'll diligently pray about joining our upcoming trainings and learning more about getting involved in Junior Worship.

Jr. Worship is Growing, and So is Our Need for Volunteers!

Church members with or without child teaching experience are encouraged to come to our January training. If you're unsure whether Jr. Worship might be a good fit for you to volunteer, the trainings will be a great way to discern that.

Prerequisites for Teaching:

- Church member.
- Ability to pass a background check.
- Flexibility and willingness to grow with a team.
- An agreement with our "Beliefs We Teach" statement (discussed in training).

Topics Covered:

- TCC's approach to family ministry
- Methods for reaching and teaching the next generation.
- Safety policies and procedures.
- Our curriculum and curriculum prep.
- Being part of a Jr. Worship Team; benefiting as a volunteer
- Approaches to supporting and encouraging parents.

The trainings are progressive and potential volunteers must take both.

Training 1:

Thursday, Jan 4th
at 10 am **OR** at 6 PM

Training 2:

Thursday, Jan. 18th,
at 10 am **OR** at 6 PM



Welcome New Members

The following people transferred their membership to Turner Christian Church on December 10, 2023: **Sonya Chung, Barbara Huckins, Julian & Heather Martin.**

Rod and Kathleen Marshall transferred their membership to Turner Christian Church on December 17, 2023.

Bill & Denise Price transferred their membership to Turner Christian Church On December 24, 2023.

Sunday Classes

Start Again on January 7th • 9:00-10:00 am

Three courses are offered this winter:

- **102:** "How to Read the Bible"
Led by Pastor Matt
- **202:** "My Testament of Faith"
Discussion Class with Frank Musgrave
- **205:** "Bible Study: Timothy & Titus "
Led by Carol George

*Children's Classes & Nursery Care are Available
Teens are invited to attend Pastor Matt's Class*

Serving TCC in 2024!

All church leaders and the church budget for 2024 were approved by the congregation by ballot on December 10, 2023.

Chair of the Congregation: Frank Musgrave
Secretary of the Congregation: Julie Leppert
Financial Secretary: Kris Jakubowski
Assistant Financial Sec: Hailiane Sorensen

Trustees

Bill Penhollow (2024)
Larry George (2025)
Ray Telfer (2026)

Elders

Mike O'Dell (2024)
Jon Remy (2024)
Frank Musgrave (2025)
Bill Penhollow (2025)
Alan Grunstad (2026)

Deacons

Keith Elsberry (*Food Bank Service Team*)
Kris Jakubowski (*Hospitality Service Team*)
Debbie Loyd (*Missions Service Team*)
Shane Miller (*Facilities Service Team*)
Virginia Musgrave (*Senior Service Team*)
Gary Tiffin (*Finance Service Team*)

*Elders and Trustees serve 3-year terms.
All others serve a 1-year term.*

Turner Christian Church



Seniors Meeting

Friday, January 19, 2024
10:30 am

All Seniors are encouraged to come out to hear Robert Rooney, from Marion County Senior Services, speak about various services available to Seniors, including "Meals on Wheels." There will also be someone present to help determine your eligibility for programs. Lunch will be served afterwards!



Ladies
Movie & Prayer Night!
 Friday, January 5, 2024 • 6:30 pm

All Ladies are Invited to an Evening
 of Fun, Fellowship and Prayer!

We will watch the movie *“The Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader.”*

After the movie we will share in a time of prayer for our church and community. Invite a friend to come with you and bring a snack to share!



**Parent's
Night Out!**

**Sign up on the
Church App!
Volunteers
Needed!**

Sunday, January 28, 2024

4:00—7:00 pm

Calling All Parents!—we want you to have a night of rest! Volunteers at the church will watch kids 0-5th grade and provide a pizza dinner. There will be games, crafts and a movie (TBA). While the kids have a good time here, we encourage you to take a date night, get in a nap or spend some quality time with Jesus. Sign-ups required. Register through the church app. Please contact Pastor Rachel if you would like to volunteer to help care for the kids!

<p>Office Hours: Monday—Thursday: 8:00am—2:00pm Friday: 8:00am—11:00 am</p>	<p>Call us: 503-743-2119</p>	<p>Look us up at: www.TurnerChristianChurch.com Facebook:/turnerchristian/OR</p>
<p>Staff: Matthew Holmes.....Senior Minister—matt@turnerchristianchurch.com Rachel White.....Associate Minister—rachel@turnerchristianchurch.com Bethany Robinson...Preschool Director—littlelamb@turnerchristianchurch.com Jerry Sygney.....Office Administrator—office@turnerchristianchurch.com</p>	<p>Sunday Schedule: Worship Service at 10:30 am Online Worship at 10:30 am</p>	