



# The Connection

July 2025

A Monthly Newsletter of Turner Christian Church

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## Dear Church... from Pastor Matt

### **Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. (Mt. 5:7)**

The teachings of Jesus are always difficult. Jesus doesn't pull punches when he tells us how we ought to live. Most of the time, however, we are inspired by his teachings because they are so obviously good and right. This beatitude, if we're honest, is not one of those teachings. Don't get me wrong: being merciful is difficult. But for most people today, being merciful is not so obviously good or right. How often do we withhold mercy because it seems like the wrong thing to do? If you don't punish that person, they won't learn. If you help that person, you'll just be enabling their behaviors. If you forgive that person, you are condoning what they did. In our anxious, justice-minded culture, mercy frequently seems to be the wrong course of action. How can we possibly show mercy without sacrificing justice?

Interestingly enough, the Bible does not seem to struggle with holding mercy and justice together. The Old Testament frequently praises God for his mercy and justice in the same breath (for instance, Psalm 89:14, 101:1, 103:17, Jer. 9:24). Not only this, but God also famously instructs us to "act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). In the Bible there seems to be no conflict between mercy and justice. How can this be?

I think the answer comes down to our definition of justice. When we talk about justice, what we mean is that "everyone is getting what they deserve." The thing is, human beings have had many different perspectives on what everyone deserves. Today we believe that everyone deserves an equal share of the pie. We are, after all, created equal, so justice means ensuring that everyone gets the same amount. This creates a problem for mercy: if justice means giving everyone an equal share, and mercy means giving someone special treatment—giving them more than they deserve or punishing them less than they deserve—then we can never be merciful and just at the same time. As long as justice means equality, justice and mercy can never coexist.

But what if we weren't dividing a pie? What if our resources and opportunities weren't limited? What if you could give more to one person without taking away from another person? Would that change our perspective on mercy and justice? The reason we object to mercy is because, if you give that person more, you have to take it from someone else. But what if you could give more to one person without taking from someone else? Think about this: air is the most precious resource we have—you need it more urgently than you need food or water or shelter. We have fought countless wars over food and water and shelter, but never about air. We don't buy or sell air; we don't even track how much air each person breathes. No one gets upset if another person takes a deeper breath than them. Why not? Because there is plenty to go around! Another person's breathing does not take away from my air (unless you get locked in an airtight container with someone—then suddenly your attitude would change!).

This is why the Bible can hold mercy and justice together. God has no limitations. He can be merciful to anyone—and everyone!--without taking away from anyone else. And that's exactly what he does! God is generous and merciful to all. This is why the merciful are blessed. We can afford to be merciful because we know that God will be merciful to us. We can share generously and forgive recklessly because God shares with and forgives us. Jesus will make this connection over and over again in the Sermon on the Mount:

- Love your enemies, because God gives rain to the righteous and the unrighteous. (Mt. 5:44-45)
- Forgive others as God forgives you (Mt. 6:12)
- God gives good gifts to his children, so you should treat others how you want to be treated. (7:11-12)

In a world governed by a generous God, we can be merciful and just at the same time. In fact, in such a world, mercy and justice *must* go together, because mercy itself *is* just. The merciful are blessed because we can be a part of the world of mercy God is creating.

May our congregation be a community of mercy that shares in the generosity of God!

### Jean McElfresh

passed away and went home to the Lord on June 2, 2025. Please pray for the family around the USA and mission field in Honduras.

### Grace Brown

returned home on June 21st after completing training for mission work in Amsterdam and then taking a mission trip to the Middle East to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ there. We look forward to hearing about her experiences and future plans!

### Retirements!

**Ann Cecil** retired as Church Treasurer at the end of May. We thank Ann for her excellent service to the Lord and congregation the past 2+ years.

**Jerry Sygney** will be retiring as Office Administrator at the end of August.

### Job Openings!

TCC is currently hiring for two open positions:  
Office Administrator (30 hrs. per week)  
Church Treasurer (10 hrs. per week)

Anyone interested in either position can go to [www.turnerchristianchurch.com/jobs](http://www.turnerchristianchurch.com/jobs) for information and instructions on how to apply

Please pray for the hiring process as we look for our new staff team members!

### Church Family Services in July!

On the Sunday mornings in July we want to bring the entire church family together, including kids and volunteers, for a special type of worship service that everyone can participate in! The services will be shorter, and everything will be designed to be accessible to the whole church. But remember, these are not “church services for families” — they are services for our whole church family together. We hope you’ll join us!



Seniors  
Lavender Farm  
Trip & Picnic  
JULY 11TH  
9:30AM-3:30PM



Arrowhead  
LAVENDER FARM & CO.



ROOTN' TOOTN'  
BINGO!  
JULY 11, 2025  
6:00-7:00 PM



|   |    |    |    |    |
|---|----|----|----|----|
| B | 30 | 44 | 59 | 66 |
| 4 | 35 | 56 | 74 |    |
| 1 | 20 | 50 | 64 |    |
| 5 | 24 | 42 | 67 |    |
| 2 | 27 | 37 | 56 |    |

The whole church is invited to join in for prizes, soda floats, time with church family, and, of course - Bingo!



TRUE NORTH  
Trusting Jesus in a Wild World

VBS  
Summer 2025  
JULY 21-24  
9:00-11:30 AM  
REGISTRATION  
NOW OPEN!

VBS takes a whole church to put on and we need YOU! All kinds of volunteer options are available. If you're interested in getting involved, please contact Pastor Rachel or the church office. You and Pastor Rachel will work together to find the perfect VBS role that works for you.





**YOU'RE INVITED!**

# Community Packing Party!

August is almost here, and that means that our Annual Packing Party is just a few short weeks away. We are so excited to get to share this wonderful experience with all of you!

On Sunday afternoon, August 17th, we will be set up in the Salem Evangelical Church GYMNASIUM to fill at least 1200 Shoeboxes to be used as Gospel Opportunities in various countries around the globe. We'd love to have you join us for the fun at 2:00 PM on the 17th and we'd also love to have you join us in preparing for this event.

**We are still in need of quite a few items**, especially since this is such a BIG project! If you see any crayons on sale, for example, we are still in need of hundreds of 24 count boxes. We still need pencils, sharpeners, erasers, pens, 6" rulers, and scissors. We could use more washcloths, tennis (or similar size) balls, and small filler items like finger puppets and fidget toys. Small baby dolls or Barbies are always needed, and so are Hotwheels, Adventure Force, or Matchbox cars. If you're looking for specific items to purchase, you can also check out our Amazon gift registry. Just search registry for Ann Stoker, then select the Shoebox Work Shoppe 2025 list.

We're also still meeting in our Work Shoppe in Turner each Tuesday at noon to prepare for the Community Packing Party, so please feel free to come on down and see what all the excitement is about.

Thanks for your continuing support of this worldwide mission!



## Online:

- Go to [www.instantchurchdirectory.com](http://www.instantchurchdirectory.com)  
You can use your web browser, or open the TCC app and find "New Church Directory" under "TCC Community."
- Click the "members" button in the top right.
- Enter your email address. **You must use the email address you gave us for the directory.**
- The site will have you create an account with a password. This ensures that only people *in* the directory can access it.
- That's it! You can log in and access the directory from in internet any time. Just use the web address or the button in the app!

## In Print:

We will be offering a print version of the directory once we have the photos ready. We will announce as soon as those are available. In the meantime, if you didn't get your picture taken for the directory, please feel free to send us a picture of yourself to include. Email it to [office@turnerchristianchurch.com](mailto:office@turnerchristianchurch.com)

# Summer Conferences at Camp Winema



**Josh  
Branham**

# WEEK OF MISSIONS

**WINEMA CHRISTIAN CAMP ➡ JUL 27-AUG 2**

Week of Missions is a time for the whole family to come and see how God is moving through missionary organizations around the world. We hear from current missionaries sharing about their work, offer training from experienced missionaries, encourage cross cultural missions, and challenge participants to minister to missionaries at the conference and beyond. Come join us as we join in God's worldwide mission!



*For More  
Information  
And  
Registration*

Are you looking for a time where you can get away with the whole family? How about a time where you and your family can grow in your faith and worship with other families? What about a sandy beach and a glassy lake? If all of these sound great, then Family Camp is for you! For four days, families come together for a camp experience for all ages!

# FAMILY CAMP 2025

AUGUST 29-SEPTEMBER 1

