



The Connection

November 2025

A Monthly Newsletter of Turner Christian Church

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Dear Church... from Pastor Matt

My vision of the church was formed by a very specific experience in my childhood. When I was in fourth grade, my dad agreed to serve as interim pastor for a church in Eastern Washington while they searched for a new senior pastor. He brought the rest of the family with him, of course, so all of a sudden we had a new church home. What I remember about that time was that unique atmosphere they had. Without a senior minister, everyone had to pitch in to cover the ministries of the church. There was a sense of camaraderie and ownership in that church that affected me even as a child.

I didn't realize how much it had affected me until much later, when I realized that my best experiences in church had always been during those all-hands-on-deck times when the whole church family was engaged in doing its work. That wasn't just a fun time—that's what the church is supposed to be. God's design is a body in which every member has a part to play. As a pastor, it has always been my dream to recover that atmosphere in the church—but while the senior pastor is still here!

This month I hit my seventh year as a senior minister, and the one thing I have learned is just how difficult accomplishing that vision is. It's not a simple matter of wanting to involve more people in the work of the church—there are a lot of practical challenges involved that can get in the way of realizing that vision.

This month I invite you all to join me in taking a major step in that direction. Beginning this month, we will be holding **Congregational Prayer Meetings** on the first and third Sundays of each month. These meetings are open to everyone. The goal of these meetings is to pray over the future ministries of the church, to ask God to reveal to us how we can join the work he is doing in our congregation and community.

In these prayer meetings we will bring our questions to God—but we will also spend time *listening* to his answers, and then *discussing* what we hear him saying to us. As we lift up a particular need, such as youth ministry or a midweek gathering, God may prompt us to offer new ideas or volunteer to help meet a need.

To be clear, these meetings will not vote or decide anything—they are strictly about speaking with God and discerning his answers. My hope is that the conversations we have in these meetings will provide insight and direction when we do make plans for our ministries, so that our plans are based on the discernment and engagement of the whole church body.

I am really excited about these prayer meetings—not just because of what they could lead to, but because of the meetings themselves. I love spending time with this congregation, hearing your thoughts and ideas, your hopes and dreams, your skills and insights. I hope you will join us as we pray, discern, and dream about the future of our church ministries. See you there!

Let There Be Light!

You may have noticed that the lights in the church building have been a bit dodgy lately. The reason is because the type of light bulb our fixtures use is no longer being manufactured—so we haven't been able to replace them. Instead, we've been working on getting them replaced with new LED lights. We are excited to announce that the arrangements have been made, and we should be getting brand new lighting installed sometime in late November! Thank you for bearing with the old lighting!

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Annual Meeting

It's time for our annual meeting, when the members of the church vote to approve the budget and officers for the coming year. At the beginning of 2025, we suddenly realized that we were facing a budget crisis—our expenses had been exceeding our income for a long time, and our balance was getting too low. This was partly because of a slow lapse in giving, and partly because of budgeting. The congregation responded by setting a new level of giving, and the leadership team made a lot of changes to the way we gather, track, spend and communicate about money. Those changes worked wonderfully, and we were able to quickly set the church on solid financial footing.

The annual meeting is the most important part of how we communicate about finances. This is where the leadership team presents its plans for the congregation, and members can ask questions—and vote—on the new budget. This year the finance team and I have been working to create a new format for our church budget that will make it easier for the congregation to understand the decisions we are proposing and the request we are making of our members. We want this vote to mean something—we want our members to feel that they have understood, approved, and committed to a financial plan for this church that we can support through the coming year.

On November 23rd, during the Sunday School hour (9 AM), we will be holding a **Congregational Brunch**. At the brunch we will report on 2025 and present the budget and officers for 2026. Please plan to attend so you can be informed before you vote.

The **Congregational Vote** will be held a week later, on November 30th, immediately following the church service. *This meeting will be voting only*—we will pass out the ballots after the service, and once you've filled it out you are free to go.

Only members of the congregation can vote. If you are not a member of the church, but you would like to be, you will need to place your membership by Sunday, November 23rd in order to vote. There are two conditions for membership: you must have been baptized by immersion, and you must confess your faith before the congregation. If you would like to place your membership, or you have any questions, please contact Pastor Matt.



Join us on the first and third Sundays of each month at 6:00 PM for a focused time of congregational prayer. Together, we seek God's guidance for the future mission of our church—listening and discerning for the paths He is preparing. Whether you come with vision, questions, or quiet hope, this gathering is a space to align our hearts with God's purposes and pray boldly for what's ahead.

With Sympathy

Barbara Sorensen passed away and went home to the Lord on September 22, 2025. A Celebration of Life was held at TCC on October 5, 2025. Please keep Don and family in your prayers.



Hazel Brinlee

Was born on October 2, 2025

6 lbs, 14 oz; 19 in

**Hazel joins Mom Brooke, Dad Kyle,
and brothers Hunter and Luke**

Henrietta Lynn Matson

was born on Thursday, October 9

8 lbs 4 oz, 20 ¾ in

**Henrietta joins Mom Bryana, Dad Colton,
and sister Katherine**

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Gifts

National Collection Week is coming up November 17-24. Our local Salem Area Team has helped put together over 2,000 boxes so far this year! Please consider donating \$10.00 per shoebox to cover essential expenses like distribution, Bible study materials, and much more.

Seniors Game Day & Lunch Monday, November 3, 2025 11:30 am — 2:30 pm

Please join us for a fun afternoon of fellowship and games! We will have some games, but feel free to bring your favorite game to share. Please register so that we can make sure we have enough lunch. You can register at: <https://turnerchristianchurch.subspla.sh/tgnpzs>

Church Decorating Day November 23, 2025

Please join us after the worship service to help prepare the church building for Christmas! We need people capable of stringing lights, decorating trees and putting up other décor. All ages welcome!

Ladies Bible Study Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm

You are invited to join Kris Jakubowski as she leads the group through a study called "Remembering the Forgotten God," based on Francis Chan's *Forgotten God* to explore the church's true source of power: The Holy Spirit.



FOOD DRIVE

Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. (Isaiah 58:10)

With the uncertainty of food security for many individuals at this time, we are seeing an increase in food bank clients. The Lord calls us to help each other in times of need, so we are partnering with many people in the community to answer that call. One of our partners is Turner Elementary — they are doing a food drive and donating the items to our food bank. Another partner is Retro Burger Company (they are a food truck in Turner at the feed lot), who is donating all of their tips from November to our food bank to help buy necessary, high demand items as we enter the holiday season — please support this business if you can!



**We will have a food donation bin set up in the church foyer.
Please consider helping during this time if you are able.**

Turner Food Bank
(A Ministry of Turner Christian Church)
Located at: 5455 Chicago St SE
Open: Mondays, 9:00—11:30 am