



The Connection

September 2024

A Monthly Newsletter of Turner Christian Church

Volume 19; Issue 9



Dear Church... from Pastor Matt

On August 18th we announced that we are launching a new project for our building. The siding for the sanctuary, which has withstood a lot of weather over the past 30 years—including a substantial flood—is reaching the point where it needs to be replaced. We told the congregation that we had two options: begin raising funds to start the project next year, or, if the congregation has the money available, to raise all of it in time to do the project this Fall. The bid for doing the job in 2024 is about \$80,000 (with margin for overages). Doing the job in 2025 would require a new bid, which could be more expensive.

We began collecting pledges on August 25th, and the response was tremendous! In fact, we have already received pledges for more than the entire amount! That's awesome! God has been so generous (through you!) that we weren't even prepared for this kind of response!

Here is where we are at, as of the beginning of September:

1. We have decided to move forward with replacing the siding this Fall.
2. We will continue to collect pledge cards as planned. Remember, these are pledges, not donations. We want to make sure that everyone has a chance to contribute if they feel led by God. Once we have all the pledges in, the board will decide how to move forward with collecting the pledges.
3. We will need volunteer teams to help take down the current siding, as well as volunteers to support them (providing refreshments, watching their kids, etc.). The demolition will happen in late September, so be ready for us to ask for help!

If you are part of the extended TCC family who no longer lives in the area, but you would like to support the siding project in some way, feel free to reach out to the office for more information. Prayer is always needed!

God bless all of you! Thank you so much for your generosity!

I have been spending a lot of time in the book of Ephesians this summer, especially one particular passage:

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (4:11-13, NIV)

At first, I focused in on this passage because of what it had to say about the role of leaders in the church—I want to make sure that I am fulfilling my purpose in the church. As we began to talk about the upcoming Sanctuary Siding Project, however, I started thinking more about “works of service.” That phrase could include a lot of things, and it probably refers mostly to the acts of love and care we perform for each other and for our community. However, I think that even something like a siding project can qualify as an “work of service,” meaning that it too can help to build us up toward unity, maturity, and “the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

But how can something as mundane as replacing the siding of the sanctuary do all that? I think we often miss the way even simple actions can form us into the image of God.

After all, the main obstacle that keeps us from acting like God is our focus on ourselves, our own comfort and desires. We talked about that in the sermon on “Lead us Not Into Temptation.” The most basic skill we have to learn is how to choose to act for the good of other people, for the Kingdom of God, instead of our own.

I am reminded of a book called *Domestic Monastery*, where the author talks about how a mother of small children learns spiritual maturity more than a monk or pastor because she spends her time responding to the needs of others:

“For years, while she is raising small children, her time is not her own, her own needs have to be put into second place, and every time she turns around some hand is reaching out demanding something. Years of this will mature most anyone.”

There is nothing especially spiritual about replacing the siding on the church building. There are no brownie points in Heaven for giving money to a building fund or spending time helping tear down a church’s siding. There may be more spiritual value in giving money to needy individuals, or helping work on a widow’s house—and ultimately that kind of service is the goal. We are not working on the church building because it’s holy, but because it’s our building, and our responsibility. But as we work on it, we learn how to pull together for the purpose of something other than ourselves. We exercise the muscles of acting together as a congregation to meet a need, and we become more mature and more prepared for those needs that arise in our family and community.

I am excited about this building project because it gives us a chance to grow as a congregation, to build our muscles of service and giving, so we can be more mature and better prepared to act on God’s mission in the world. So I hope you’re ready to help out, to do the work with us in whatever way God has enabled you to do. See you there!

I've Been thinking... "About Change (2)"

From Pastor Rachel

My cat, Jasper, was hiding under the sofa. He's not a hider, so it was a clear indicator that something was wrong. Sure enough, when I got down on all fours to peer under the couch, his ears were back, and his eyes wide. I reached for him slowly, knowing he might jerk away, but he deigned to let me pet his soft little ears and speak to him in a calm voice.

Cats are great examples of poor responses to change. Hiding, biting, scratching, peeing in strange places, hissing, sulking, undereating, lack of cleanliness . . . the list can go on. While Jasper, fortunately, has not suffered from all these symptoms, he is not what I would call "calm in a crisis." And for him, any change is a crisis. If I don't get up at the right time, if I pop home for my lunch instead of staying at the office, if I'm home sick, or if I'm gone overnight . . . Any difference in behavior from me is distressing to him.

Jasper will never become spiritually mature in the Lord; he is a cat. So him and I have found generally good solutions to avoid excessive distress for him (routines when possible, extra games and cuddles when not, and a little medication). We can also benefit from routines, extra games, good hugs from friends and when appropriate, medication! But as a Christ-follower these things, however important, are insufficient. We need more. A good routine might protect us from being overwhelmed by change, but it doesn't transform us at the soul level. A medication might balance our serotonin levels, but it doesn't create a heart transformation. These important things can certainly be of great help, but they just aren't sufficient on their own.

I love Psalm 46. In it, we are invited to see what God does, and to know him as our Refuge and Strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble (NIV). In it, God is busy changing the world, and keeping his people, and we are invited to just watch. To be still, even. God is bringing peace, his name is being praised. And we can rest in Him.

This is not the same kind of rest as working in the garden, or taking a bath. This is soul rest. God is doing wonders in the world and we can be confident in Him. We can let ourselves stop moving internally. We can quiet the voices of busyness and rush and anxiety

and distress. We can stop feeling like the world is on our shoulders. God is moving.

How do we encounter God that way?

There are many spiritual practices that can lead us closer to that kind of stillness and confidence in God. Some people "meditate" on God's word constantly (Psalm 1), chewing over a verse or passage, committing it to heart and mind. Some people prioritize creating consistent rhythms of prayer, or journaling their thoughts before the Lord. Some people faithfully keep the Sabbath, practicing weekly a time of slowness.

A practice I personally have come to value is silence. To sit in silence with God, like I am able to with those I love dearest. Sometimes it is an anxious silence, as I work to come to a calmer place from some mental chaos. At other times is a peaceful silence-I am delighted by my Heavenly Father and He is delighted with me and we are together. When I practice a few minutes of silence before my Bible reading, it can prepare me to have a focused, clear mind, ready to hear from my God. When I practice a few minutes of silence in prayer, I find myself becoming more and more peaceful. It helps me lean into the time of prayer. When I practice silence, I often feel like I've stopped working hard to connect with God, and instead I am just with Him. *I would like to clarify here, that practicing silence is a healthy part of resting in God, but should never be absented from careful Bible reading and times of prayer. It can be a helpful addition, it is not a replacement.*

Grounding ourselves in the Lord, vulnerably and consistently, is the best way to increase our trust in Him and our adaptability to change. It won't happen overnight-you might not even get to your goalpost in this lifetime! But He is always faithful and as we pursue Him, we might stop trying to hide or scratch or bite when change comes. Or, at least, we might do it less!

Take some time in prayer to ponder a recent change and how you reacted to it. Thank God for areas in which you have grown and invite His provision in places where you are struggling. Consider spending a few moments before or after the prayer to just be with God.

Fall Sunday School Schedule

September 8—November 17

9:00 – 10:00 am

(Childcare/Children's Programs Available)

Bible Study For Everyone (Carol George)

A chapter-by-chapter study of books of the Bible using an accompanying workbook. This class runs continuously throughout the year.

What You Believe Matters (Debbie Loyd)

Sometimes we are not aware of certain religious beliefs that harm us. This class will look at some of these beliefs, where they came from, why they are harmful, and characteristics that make us more vulnerable to these.

Christian Civics: Following Jesus in a Politically-Divided World (Gary Tiffin)

This class will use a book by John Whittaker to help participants work out how their personal faith should inform the way they think and act as citizens of their country (This is about how to think, not what to think.

Speaking in Church—For Beginners (Pastor Matt)

This class is for anyone who is interested in taking on speaking roles in our church services. We will learn about the basics of public speaking, as well as the specifics of leading confession, prayers of the church, communion and offering meditations, and other speaking roles.

Worship Reset!

September 13th • 6:00 pm

Is your heart feeling discouraged? Have you forgotten the joy of knowing Jesus? Come join us for an evening of worship to remember and REJOICE in the salvation and joy of knowing Jesus as Lord.

HAPPY 75th


anniversary

Congratulations to **George & Frances Knox** who are celebrating their 75th wedding anniversary on September 2, 2024!

Recent Births

Kris Jakubowski and Jane Gutter recently became Grandmother and Great-Grandmother!

Callahan was born to Dan & Megan Cuneo on July 18. 2024. Their address is: PO Box 986, Pendleton, OR 97801.

Lyla Anne was born to Erik & Sydnee Jakubowski on August 19, 2024. Their address is: 5 William Lane Rd , Bradford, TN 38316.

New Address for:

Isaiah Rupp, who recently enrolled as a student at Linfield University. His address is:

Isaiah Rupp, Unit 3575
Linfield University
190 SE Lakamas Lane
McMinnville OR 97128-6899

Seniors Outing

to Mt Angel Oktoberfest

Friday, September 13, 2024

Come enjoy the day and all the food options that the Oktoberfest in Mt. Angel has to offer. There will be dancing in the streets and music in several locations around the town. Transportation will leave from the TCC parking lot at 9:30 a.m. and return about 3:30 p.m. Remember to wear walking shoes and a sun hat! Please bring a buddy so you aren't alone.



While Septemberfest is primarily for seniors and retirees, we welcome all adults to join us for a wonderful few days at Camp Winema, on the beautiful Oregon Coast.

The main speakers are (our own) Gary Tiffin and Gene Sonnenberg. The theme for the conference is *"The Family of God: Then and Now"*. Housing and meals are available. You do however, need to bring your own bedding and towel!

For registration: call 503-392-3362 or online at <https://www.winema.org/septemberfest.html>.

SEPTEMBERFEST

SEPTEMBER 2024

Registration Fees

PRIMARY REGISTRATION

- Admission to all sessions
- Admission to highlighted events
- Includes Parking

\$60

SECONDARY REGISTRATION

- Admission to all sessions
- Admission to highlighted events
- Includes Parking

\$55

HOUSING OPTIONS

- Camp Housing, Individual room: \$135
- Single Bed in Men's or Women's Dorm: \$40
- RV Space: \$125 | Tent Space: \$75 | Satelite Tent: \$40

VARIED

MEAL OPTIONS

- Meal Ticket (includes all 9 meals)

\$85

WHAT TO BRING?

- Pillow, bedding (sleeping bag or sheets & blanket)
- Toiletries and towel
- Grateful attitude, interest and an appetite!

W.T.B.

CONTACT CARMEN RUDBERG OR EMMEREY WALKER WITH QUESTIONS
AT WINEMA@WINEMA.ORG

Ladies Movie & Prayer Night!
September 6, 2024 • 6:30 pm

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

We will watch the movie *"Boys in the Boat."*

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!

LITTLE LAMB CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL IS CELEBRATING:

20 YEARS!

Save the Date

OCTOBER 5

6:30 PM

COME FOR DESSERT, REMINISCING & MEMORIES