



The Connection

January 2025

A Monthly Newsletter of Turner Christian Church

Volume 20; Issue 1



Dear Church... from Pastor Matt

Welcome to 2025! As we step out into a new year, I want us to look back at something special that happened right at the end of the year. On December 29 we had (in my opinion) the best worship service we've had since I've been here. Eve Walborn did the announcements with me; Eliza Aegerter and Noah Harland led the prayers of the church, and the sermon was delivered by Eli Walborn, Lincoln Klinger, Hunter Brinlee, Luke Brinlee and Myra Robinson (all are in Middle School). After the sermon we got to celebrate two baptisms, Phil and Melinda Olszewski (oh-SHEV-ski). It was such a great service from beginning to end!

That service also serves as a great indicator of where we are going in 2025. This year we are going to put a special emphasis on leadership development—meaning we are going to work on identifying and equipping more people to take on leadership roles in the church. You may notice that I have been doing less on the platform over the past month—that is by design! Our hope is that you will see more people taking on roles in the service and leadership roles in the work of the church. A healthy church is a congregation in which every ligament—every member—is playing a role in the work of the church. I hope you will be thinking and praying about the role God has for you in this church; if you're already in leadership, be thinking and praying about how you can share your role with others in the church that God has called to serve alongside you!

Another ongoing focus that was on display on December 29th was developing the children and youth in our church. Teens and children are NOT the future of Turner Christian Church: they are the PRESENT. In the same way, our adults and seniors are not the past of Turner Christian Church—they are the PRESENT. Pastor Rachel and her team have been doing amazing work raising up our kids to be a part of the church right now, and we are going to invest in that work this year so we can see even more of the great things our kids and teens have to contribute to work and worship of the church.

This kind of youth and children's ministry requires a big investment from our congregation—we need regular teachers and assistants to work with kids from nursery all the way through high school. I hope you will be thinking and praying about how you can contribute to our children's and youth ministry. For some of us it means becoming teachers, assistants, and youth sponsors; for all of us, it means supporting and encouraging kids as they take on roles in our congregation.

I am deeply proud of this congregation and how far we have come. I am genuinely excited about what God has in store for us in 2025.

May our God bless your new year, and may He lead you into greater joy, peace, and faithful service!

I've been thinking... From Pastor Rachel

I'd like to start the year by talking about grief. Grief is a powerful emotion. And without putting our grief into the Lord's tender hands, grief can be a life-stopping emotion. For some people, it freezes them in time. For others, it steals their joy. For others, they turn their grief into anger, or other emotions, or find themselves completely numb.

As followers of Jesus, the way we interact with our grief matters. And we look to the Bible for wisdom on how to approach our grief.

"God was grieved to his heart, Genesis declares, over the violent wickedness of his human creatures. He was devastated when his own bride, the people of Israel, turned away from him. And when God came back to his people in person. . . . he wept at the tomb of his friend. St. Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit "groaning" within us, as we ourselves groan within the pain of the whole creation. The ancient doctrine of the Trinity teaches us to recognize the One God in the tears of Jesus and the anguish of the Spirit."

—N. T. Wright, 2020

Some of God's emotions, His perfect and all-knowing emotions, are written out for us in the pages of scripture. We serve and love the God who weeps. Who mourns and laments. As we seek to imitate our perfect king, minimizing grief is not an option. Paul even demonstrates the depth of God's emotions when he cautions us not "grieve the Holy Spirit" in Ephesians 4:30, because by our actions, thoughts and words we can cause grief to God. That is not a weakness of God's—it's an expression of his love for us. He cares so much for us that he has an emotional response to our choices and experiences.

Grief is an acknowledgement that the world is not as it should be and that we are not as we should be.

How does a Christian express grief? Depending on what you are grieving—job loss, a death, the end of a dream, a child leaving for college, a divorce, a broken relationship, the loss of physical health—grief might need to take different forms. But we always need to voice it. We need to communicate the loss. We need to express to God our sadness. We might need to express with others our sadness. We need our grief to be acknowledged.

We might cry, write thoughts down on paper, express ourselves through poetry, or ask a friend or spouse to hold us. We might take a long walk, or sit in silence and just acknowledge the feelings we are experiencing. We might need grief counseling, or grief support groups. There are a lot of "mights" with grief. But there is also a very specific need—as Christians we need to be vulnerable with Jesus about how we are really doing.

Without shaming yourself or without telling yourself how you should feel, or how "good" Christians would feel in your circumstance, just tell the Lord. Speak with him from a place of raw honesty. And if everything I am writing sounds foreign to you, start by asking for his help. Ask the God who loves you to help you be honest with him. Ask him to give you the courage and strength to be vulnerable.

If you are on a journey of grief: May God comfort you, may God guide you, and may your vulnerability be met by His deep and abiding love. He is strong enough for your grief.

If you could use extra support, or are experiencing debilitating and long-term emotional distress, please reach out to a licensed Christian mental health counselor. In all emergency situations, call 911.



With Sympathy

Dorothy Sargent passed away and went home to the Lord on November 28th. A Celebration of Life will be held at TCC on January 18, 2025 at 1:00 pm.

Lynne Walker passed away and went home to the Lord on December 19, 2024. A Memorial Service will be held at Turner Christian Church on January 4, 2025 at 2:30 pm.



Jan West transferred her membership to Turner Christian Church on November 10th.

Kayla Klinger transferred her membership to Turner Christian Church on November 17th.

Phil and Melinda Olszewski were baptized into Christ on December 29th and became members of Turner Christian Church.

Mission Trip!

Grace Brown



Please keep Grace in your prayers as she travels to Amsterdam, Netherlands to attend YWAM (*Youth With A Mission*) International Mission School.

Serving TCC in 2025!

All church leaders and the church budget for 2024 were approved by the congregation by ballot on December 8, 2024.

Chair of the Congregation: Jon Remy
Secretary of the Congregation: Casey Holmes
Financial Secretary: Kris Jakubowski
Assistant Financial Sec: Hailiane Sorensen

Trustees

Larry George (2025)
Ray Telfer (2026)
Mel Metcalf (2027)

Elders

Frank Musgrave (2025)
Bill Penhollow (2025)
Alan Grunstad (2026)
Gary Tiffin (2026)
Frank Loyd (2027)
Dave Stoker (2027)

Deacons

Casey Holmes (*Hospitality Service Team*)
Gary Tiffin (*Missions Service Team*)
Sharon Teixeira (*Senior Service Team*)
Laurie Boyle (*Finance Service Team*)

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

Bethany Robinson

. . .has recovered so well from surgery that she is back to work as Preschool Director! Many thanks to Maritza Rivera for filling in for Bethany and also to Teri Bales who served as the teaching assistant.

Winter Youth Kick-off

**Sunday, January 12, 2025
6:00—7:30 pm**

Dinner, games, and time with Jesus among friends. TCC Youth group is for all middle school and high school students.

Nacho Average Bingo Night!

**January 4, 2025
6:00—7:00 pm**

Come for the nachos, stay for the bingo! An hour of deliciousness and fun with your church family. End the holidays with prizes, quality nachos and some healthy competition. Please register on the church app: <https://subspla.sh/4dvy4sc/>

Seniors Lunch & Game Day

January 17, 2025 at 11:30 am

What is your favorite table game? Bring your new favorite game or bring one that you have loved for a long time. Soup and bread will be served at 11:30 am. Then let the games begin! Please register for this event at <https://subspla.sh/k9jix5k/> or in the foyer.

Church De-Decorating

Sunday, January 5th

Volunteers are needed to stay after the worship service to take down and store Christmas decorations. Just remain in the auditorium and instructions will be given.

Potluck & Missions Presentation

January 26, 2025

Silas & Katie Moe, our missionaries to Africa, will be with us on Sunday, January 26th. They will do a “Missions Moment” presentation during worship and then a larger presentation after church at an all-church potluck. There will also be a cash “baby shower” so they can buy things where they live.

The missions team will provide fried chicken for the potluck. If your last name begins with A-M, please bring salads or other sides. If your last name begins with N-Z, please bring a dessert.

Please sign up either on the church app <https://subspla.sh/k9jix5k/> or in the foyer so we know how much chicken to buy.

Winter Sunday School Classes

**December 8 — March 2
Sunday Mornings at 9:00 am**

Bible Study for Everyone
Carol George

Talking With God
Frank Musgrave

Restoring Spiritual Passion
Frank Loyd

Ministry With Children
Rachel White

Thursday Evening Worship

6:00 pm

Not able to attend the Sunday morning worship service? The Thursday service is the same service as the previous Sunday. Child-care and Junior worship are not available.