



# The Connection

May 2026

A Monthly Newsletter of Turner Christian Church

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## Dear Church... from Pastor Matt

I've been thinking about an old church joke recently:

A Sunday school teacher told her kids, "I'm going to describe something. Raise your hand when you know what it is." The kids nodded eagerly. "I'm small and furry.... I eat nuts.... I live in trees..." Not a kid budged. "My fur is grey.... I have a big bushy tail.... I make chattering noises at people..." Still nothing. "Come on, kids, you know this! What am I?" One child slowly raised his hand. "Teacher?" he said, "I know the answer is Jesus, but it sure sounds like a squirrel to me!"

Recently I've been feeling a lot like that kid. Throughout my life, I've always been drawn to the church, even when I didn't understand it. There was something different and beautiful in the community of people who were all committed to being like Jesus. Just being part of that family made me feel safer, more confident, more at peace. At the same time, however, I didn't think that what happened in the church was the point of church. I was raised in a generation that was taught that the point of church was to equip believers for what happens outside of church. In fact, focusing too much on what happened inside the church was a sign that you weren't on track with Jesus' mission. I was stuck in the same situation as the kid from the joke: to me, it seemed like the most important parts of the faith happened inside the church, but I knew that the "right" answer was to focus on the outside.

The funny thing is, I think most people are in the same position. The people who are drawn to actually participate in a congregation do so because they see the beauty and value of the family of God. This doesn't mean that they don't care about learning scripture, sharing the Gospel, or serving their community; but what keeps them coming back to the church, and inviting others, is the fact that the church is a beautiful place to be.

Over this past year, God has done a lot to show me (at least) one important thing: the family created in the church is the main thing. Evangelism and service are essential things that the church does, but they are not what the church is. The church is a family, reconciled and adopted by God, grounded in his love, sharing his grace with each other, and welcoming any and all to join. The family of the church—that beautiful community of support and commitment and love—is the most precious thing we have to offer lost people in our community. I am so grateful to be a part of this family, and I am so humbled by the many ways I see you being the body of Christ to each other and our community. And I am looking forward to what God has for us next, as we focus on making the main thing the main thing.



## Little Lamb Christian Preschool A Note from Our Director, Bethany Robinson

During our church service this past month, I had the opportunity to share some exciting news about the growth of our preschool. As we embrace this growth, it also brings to light the important need for additional support, and I'd like to take a moment to outline how you can help; whether you were able to join us for the service or if you're just hearing about this now.

At our church, we believe in fostering a strong connection between our preschool and the broader church community. To achieve this goal, we are eager to establish a dedicated support group that consists of both church members and preschool parents. This group will play a vital role in both supporting Maritza and I as our classes grow and strengthening ties between our church and preschool communities.

We have identified three main areas where support is needed, each categorized by different levels of time commitment:

- 1. Monthly Tasks:** This category includes tasks that require attention once a month. Responsibilities may involve changing the materials on our bulletin boards, updating classroom calendars, and organizing classroom materials. These activities provide a great opportunity for individuals who want to contribute on a regular basis without a large-time commitment. If you enjoy working in a collaborative environment and have a couple of hours each month to spare, this is the perfect way to engage!
- 2. Seasonal Volunteers:** We recognize the importance of maintaining a clean and safe environment for our children while acknowledging daily wipe down disinfecting isn't always enough. Therefore, we are looking for volunteers who can join us for seasonal clean-up days. These events will take place once every season and will involve deep cleaning our toys and disinfecting our spaces. This effort is critical in minimizing germs and ensuring our preschool remains a healthy place for learning and play. It's a chance to make a tangible impact on the preschool environment while connecting with others in our congregation.
- 3. Biannual Opportunities:** For those who are interested in contributing to larger events, there will be biannual opportunities to assist with our programs, such as the Christmas program and our graduation. These opportunities involve preparing materials, setting up, and cleaning up after events, and your involvement will ensure that these celebrations are successful and enjoyable for our families.

We are blessed by our church congregation and your participation in this support group would make a significant difference in our preschool world. If you're curious about getting involved or simply want to learn more about how you can contribute to our preschool, I warmly invite you to join us for an informational meeting on Sunday, May 17, at 1:00 PM. Your engagement is valued, and together we can create a vibrant community where our preschool families feel connected and supported.

Thank you for being a congregation that is committed to the growth and development of our preschool. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting and exploring the many ways we can work together to show His love and support our preschool families.



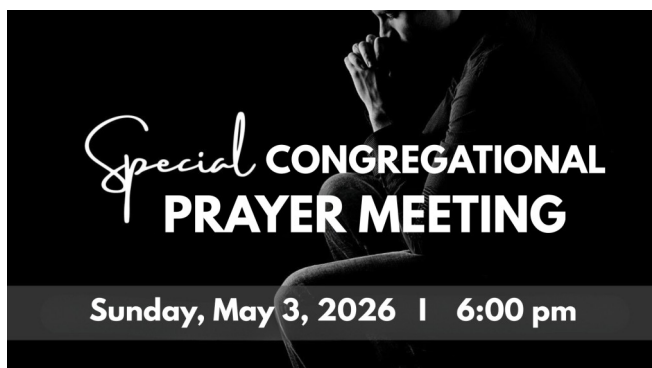
**It is so exciting to see what God is doing in and through the ministry of Operation Christmas Child here in the Greater Salem Area.**

If you remember, we got to watch Him provide for over 2700 Shoeboxes through the Work Shoppe in the Davis Hall basement last year. We are firmly believing that He's going to supply for over 3000 this year. He is so amazing! We continue to have a great group of volunteers work with us every Tuesday afternoon. In fact, there is so much to do that we've recently added a second Work Shoppe time on Friday mornings. And if you also remember, the Work Shoppe work is really an extension of what we were doing here at TCC in years past before we "outgrew" the TCC building. The ministry continues to grow and all who participate here are just as blessed as the children and their families and friends on the other side of the world.

As our big Community Packing Party is approaching in about four months, we are aware of so many things that we need to have happen between now and then. It's going to be crazy and busy and wonderful, and if you want to be a part of it, please feel free to contact me for information on ways you can help. (Texts to 503-910-3187 work best.)

God is good and loving and kind. He wants all people to hear that and to know that. We are instructed to get that Good News out to all the people around the world. This is one of the most efficient ways to get this message out there. Please help if you can.

-Ann Stoker-



**Our preschool is seeing a rising need in our community and has the opportunity to expand to help meet that need, but doing so would require volunteer and financial support from the congregation. This prayer meeting is being called so the congregation can discern together whether God is calling and equipping us to take this step with them. Everyone is invited to attend, especially anyone who may be interested in helping to volunteer to support the preschool.**

Guest Speaker:  
Dr. Melissa Berry

*Daughter Dessert*

Please Register Online:

Friday, May 8 at 6 pm

All daughters, moms, sisters, aunts, grandmothers are invited to come and celebrate being Daughters of God and Sisters in Christ! Please RSVP at <https://turnerchristianchurch.subspla.sh/stpq5rd>.

**Seniors Trip to Adelman Peony Garden**  
**Lunch & Tour**  
**Friday, May 8th**

Flowers are blooming! Join us for a walk in the peonies and enjoy a fun picnic. We will leave the church parking lot at 9:30 am and return about 3:30 pm. Come join people that love flowers and having a good time. Register on the event registration card or on the church app: <https://turnerchristianchurch.subspla.sh/y53qqs4>

**2026 Youth Camp Schedule**  
**Winema Christian Camp**

FIRST CHANCE CAMP JULY 19-23	
1ST JUNIOR JUNE 21-27	1ST MIDDLE SCHOOL JULY 5-11
2ND JUNIOR AUGUST 16-22	1ST HIGH SCHOOL JULY 12-18
2ND MIDDLE SCHOOL AUGUST 9-15	
2ND HIGH SCHOOL AUGUST 9-15	

5195 Winema Road, Cloverdale, OR 97112

Find more information and register at:

<https://www.winema.org/summerschedule.html>

**2026 Seniorfest!**

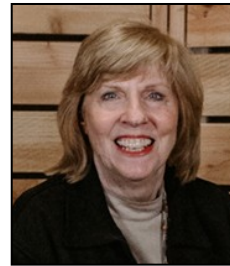
**May 14th | 10:00am—4:00pm**



Special Speaker:  
Dr. Bob Chapman



Special Speaker:  
Jim Sequeira



Special Speaker:  
Carol Menken-Schaudt

Come listen and be inspired by incredible stories that weave together how our lives, what we do, how we use the time and talents God gives us. . . is all part of the story of the body of Christ, the Church. Which, of course, makes it part of His-story.

Starts at 10 AM in the Tabernacle  
 Welcome, Announcements and Singing  
 Guest Speaker: Jim Sequeira

Break  
 Sing

“Hats for Sale” with Trudi Sang  
 Guest Speaker: Bob Chapman  
 Lunch-Jubilee Lodge

Workshops (pick one):

- 1-Jim Sequeira—“Turning Your Story into A Legacy”
- 2-Carol Menken-Schaudt—“What a Story!”

More information and registration at:

[Seniorfest! | Northwest Christian Network](#)

**ABOVE ALL**

LOVE EACH OTHER DEEPLY ♡ 1 PETER 4:8

NORTHWEST CHRISTIAN CONVENTION  
 JUNE 23 -28, 2026

More information and registration can be found at:

<https://www.nwchristiannetwork.com/nwcc>