



THE VINE

Aspen Hill Christian Church

13501 Georgia Avenue, Aspen Hill, Maryland 20906

(301)871-7222

Pastor: Dr. D. Robert Chance

MAY 2023



By Chance

The Dead Church

“A new pastor in a small Midwestern town spent the first four days making personal visits to each of the members, inviting them to come to his first service. The following Sunday, the church was all but empty. Accordingly, the pastor placed a notice in the local newspapers, stating that because the church was dead, it is everyone’s duty to give it a decent Christian burial. The funeral would be held the following Sunday afternoon, the notice stated.

Morbidly curious, a large crowd turned out for the “funeral.” In front of the pulpit, they saw a closed coffin, smothered with flowers. After the pastor delivered the eulogy, he opened the coffin and invited his congregation to come forward and pay their final respects to their dead church.

Filled with curiosity as to what would represent the corpse of a “dead church,” all the people lined up to look into the coffin. Each “mourner” peeped into the coffin then quickly turned away with a guilty, sheepish look. In the coffin, tilted at the correct angle, was a large mirror!”

I read the above story on Facebook recently and thought, while it was clearly apocryphal, found it both humorous and insightful. It was an obvious “over the top” story to me but still had merit. One of my Facebook friends saw my repost of the story on my Facebook page and commented that her brother had been a pastor in Kansas City and had actually done that. She said her brother was known for doing lots of unusual things and made the newspapers with some of his “doings.” I replied that I would have liked her brother because I like “characters,” being one myself. She replied back that attendance at his church was down one Sunday, so the next Sunday he called every member of the congregation, simply saying, “This is your conscience—tomorrow is Sunday.” The sanctuary was full the next day. I loved it. I wish I had known her brother. I’ve done some “crazy” or “over the top things” myself but nothing that glorious. I may send out an email with the “This is your conscience” thing. The devil is whispering in my ears right now.

Aside from these clever and clearly over the top kinds of actions, the fundamental truth is still there. It is each of us who determines whether our church is full, half full, or half dead. It is the members and friends of every congregation that determine whether the church thrives or struggles. It is the members and friends of every congregation that determine whether that congregation is growing or dying, sharing the Good News, and bringing new disciples or becoming a museum.

Where do you fit in with all of this? Is being in church a regular priority in your life or are you an “occasional, I’ll stop by now and then” or even “long gone” kind of person? The truth is each of us makes those decisions on our own and collectively determines the future of our church. I’ve noticed over a lifetime that most people want the church to be there for them when they need it, but all too often don’t get that the church can only be here for us if we help make it so.

So, bottom line we all have to look in the mirror.

D. Robert Chance

*NEWS AMONG OUR
CHURCH FAMILY
PRAYER LIST*

Please let us know if you know of someone who is sick or is a shut-in. Thank you.

Ed & Dolores Wachtman

Bette Cox

Edwina Meheaux – Please keep in your prayers. Give her a call on the phone.

Patty Collins- Please keep Patty in your prayers. She loves telephone calls too.

Michael Lastre – Keep in your prayers

Susan Montgomery – Keep in your prayers

The people of Ukraine- Keep in your prayers

All those who suffer from grief and loss and who struggle with illness in any form.

There are always others—keep all in your prayers, named or unnamed. Let us know if we've missed someone.

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BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Erica Hanson
- 4 Betty Cox
- 11 Franklin Payne
- 15 Arlyn Sanchez & Eric Burch
- 19 Andrew Bennett
- 20 Jessie Brothers
- 21 Cecelia & Lloyd Samuels
- 25 Monica Hanson
- 29 Beth Appleyard
- 29 Dominique Jordan

PLEASE LET THE CHURCH OFFICE KNOW IF YOUR BIRTHDATE AND/OR ANNIVERSARY DATE IS WRONG OR MISSING, SO WE MAY CORRECT IT.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

THE 2023 CHURCH DIRECTORY IS COMPLETE! YOU MAY PICK UP A COPY ON SUNDAY MORNING IN THE NARTHEX OR STOP BY THE CHURCH OFFICE DURING OFFICE HOURS TO PICK UP A COPY. ONE COPY PER HOUSEHOLD, PLEASE.

NEWS FROM OUR MINISTRIES



FELLOWSHIP...Amy Buckingham/Mary Chance

We have just celebrated a beautiful Easter season. The Son Rise breakfast and the Easter egg hunt were enjoyed by all that attended and participated.

Folks are beginning to come over to the fellowship hall after the service to enjoy visiting with each other and catching up on the week's events. We need to have people sign up on the fellowship poster to sponsor a fellowship hour. It can be as big or small as you would like. Just cookies and something to drink are plenty. Check your calendar and pick some dates. Sure would love to fill up the calendar. Thanks, and see you Sunday.

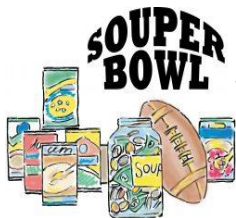


PROPERTY...John Small

Currently, the building and grounds remain in good condition with no major problems. The mild winter was a blessing, requiring little work from our fearless snow team. That said, I would like to thank everyone on the snow team for their commitment.

Like any facility, from time to time there are small tasks that need to be done around the church. A few years ago, we had a group of people known as the Carpenters Club that would meet once a month to tackle these tasks. If you are interested in helping out and joining the Carpenters Club, please let me know. Thanks.

Property Ministry Chair, John Small
John.smallmb66@mail.com



OUTREACH...Connie Spoon

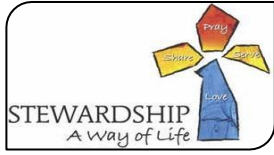
The Outreach Ministry of Aspen Hill Christian Church provides a wide variety of community support throughout the year, including fully stocked back to school backpacks, Thanksgiving baskets, and Christmas toys for local children in need. Consider becoming involved with these events as they occur. Our food pantry is minimally stocked with non-perishable items. Please contact the church office for assistance.



WORSHIP...Gwen Mott via Carol Knott

Mothers' Day will be celebrated on **May 14**. This is the day we honor all the women in the church. To fully experience this special day, being in church is a great way to begin your day.

May 28, Pentecost Sunday, is one of the most important of our Christian holidays. It commemorates the descending of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' disciples. This is also remembered as the beginning of the Christian Church. To refresh your mind, this is a good time to read **Acts Chapter 2**. Plan to be in church on this Sunday and see how we observe this day.



STEWARDSHIP...

Please Don't forget to send your offering in or place it directly in the offering plate on Sunday morning. You can also mail it to the church or drop it in the mail slot outside the main doors.

Your offering makes the Lord's ministry possible! Thank you for all you do!



Highlights from the Board Meeting, April 12, 2023.

- Sprucing up the kitchen was approved for the Hot Button Campaign during the month of June.
- The salary and number of hours available for our Administrative Assistant were approved as presented.
- Amy Buckingham was approved as the new Trustee Representative to the Board.
- Treasurer and Financial Secretary Reports were received.
- Ministry Reports were shared by the Ministry Chairs and good discussion was held in response to all the wonderful ministries taking place in the life of the church. The Pastor's Report was received.
- Upcoming events were reviewed and final details discussed.

FACTS & FIGURES WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FOR MARCH



The good news is attendance is increasing and heading in the right direction. Visitors are being welcomed and contacted as available and able to do so. The bad news is there is a long way to go to reach pre-pandemic numbers.

If you haven't returned yet now is the time and please invite and bring friends and family to join you.

"I was glad when they said unto me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1

(INCLUDES BOTH IN PERSON AND ONLINE)

April Average Total: 65 (38 in person / 27 online)

Year to Date Average: Total: 54 (33 in person / 21 online)

11:00AM Sunday

The Worship service will also continue to be offered live and online. Keep checking www.aspenhillcc.org, click on the You Tube link and choose the date you want.

Worship in person at 11:00 every Sunday & Live on our YouTube Channel



We are doing our best to get people back in person, but we do understand that some people cannot make it to church on certain Sundays. To view online click www.aspenhillcc.org, then click on the Watch Us Live on YouTube icon. Once at our YouTube Page be sure to click the thumbs-up icon and subscribe to our channel. You can also make any nice comments you want to, that helps us be more visible. Comments help drive our visibility to others up. Share the links for our weekly worship with your friends and neighbors.

Please submit your articles, updates, and information we might like to include in future newsletters to Cindy for possible inclusion in the future.

The deadline for the newsletter is the third Sunday of each month (May 21 for the June issue.)

Church Office Hours (as of May 1):
Monday-Thursday 9:00 am-3:30 pm, Friday 9:00 am-1:00 pm



Please let the office know how you want your newsletter delivered! USPS, Email or Both. office@aspenhillcc.org or call 301-871-7222.



May Meetings

Program Council – May 3 @ 7:00pm

St. Paul's Breakfast – May 7 @ 8:30am

Board Meeting – May 10 @ 7:00pm

Help us re-stock our food pantry.



Items needed:

- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Soup
- Beans
- Juice boxes

Items may be dropped off in the wooden box outside the Fellowship Hall or bring them to the church office during office hours.

Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday!





Sprucing Up the Kitchen Hot Button Campaign Coming in June

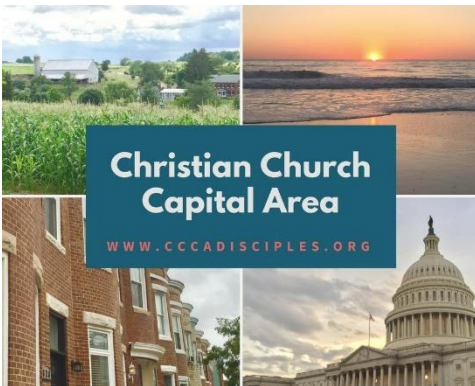
A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Proverbs 11.25

This year we are focusing on “Sprucing Up the Kitchen” in order to help us update our kitchen with some new and up-to-date appliances; fix and repair some of what we already have in the kitchen; and do a general clean-up in the kitchen. Anything we raise beyond what we absolutely need for the kitchen will go into our General Fund in order to continue making our ministries possible.

This is a wonderful opportunity to make some repairs and replacements that are needed. Thank you for sharing your gift in making this possible. You’ll be hearing more over the next few weeks.

2023 Capital Area Prayer Calendar for This Month



Ephesians 6:18: And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the LORD's people. You are invited to participate in the Capital Area Prayer Calendar by offering a prayer each day for the listed congregation, institution, or event during the week listed. Please pray for their pastor/executive director, lay leaders, and the community(ies) they serve. Pray also for the missionaries serving the world through our Global Ministries.

For weekly prayers, go online to: http://www.globalministries.org/weekly_prayers [Note: The Capital Area has a special relationship with two missionary sites: China and Colombia] * Indicates a discrepancy b/w what is listed on the Global Ministries website and their printed calendar.

- 7 Good Samaritan Christian Church, Baltimore, Maryland Danielle Murry-Knowles, Lesotho
- 14 Hospital, Military, and Institutional Chaplains, and clergy serving as Professors and in Non-Profit settings Sara Makari, Palestine
- 21 Capital Area Disciples Women - <http://www.cccadisciples.org/disciples-women> Rene Seidel, El Salvador
- 28 Haitian Pentecostal Church, Salisbury, Maryland - <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Haitian-PentecostalChristian-Church-Disciples-of-Christ/678345385664027> Rebecca Young, Indonesia