



# THE VINE

Aspen Hill Christian Church

13501 Georgia Avenue, Aspen Hill, Maryland 20906

(301)871-7222

Pastor: Dr. D. Robert Chance

JANUARY 2024

## *BY CHANCE*

### ***The Rear View Mirror***



A favorite saying of mine is “You can’t drive forward by looking in the rear-view mirror”. How true it is.

It’s hard enough to back up looking into the rear-view mirror. Although today’s cars have a rear-view camera which is a great improvement from the rear-view mirror it’s still hard to go forward while looking at the rear-view

camera.

It’s impossible to drive forwards while looking back over your shoulder. Heck, I’m old enough now that even twisting around to see behind me is well-nigh impossible. You can’t drive very long with the rear-view camera on. It’s downright silly if not impossible to drive forwards while focused on the rear-view mirror.

Although what I’m saying is true enough, I’m not really talking about driving but rather about living. As the new year dawns upon us it’s time to look ahead. It’s time to focus our attention on what’s ahead of us rather than what’s behind us. The start of the new year is an invitation to drive forward while looking forwards and not behind us.

In the interest of full disclosure, I have to admit that I have to work really hard at not paying too much attention to the past. After all I am a historian as well as a futurist but being glued to the rear-view mirror is a losing enterprise.

It’s one thing to identify the lessons of the past and not repeat them but it’s quite another thing to get stuck in the past. “Coulda”, “Woulda”, “Shoulda” are all fine except we can’t live in them. This means we not only get to, but we have to let go of the failures of the past. This means we get to and have to let go of the hurts, the losses, and the pains of the past and live in the present.

I saw a post on Facebook from one of my friends in which she noted that she wasn’t carrying anything with her into 2024. She says she is leaving debts, wrongs, hurts, and anything else in the past as she moves in the new year. What a concept. I congratulate her if she can pull it off. Knowing Kay, I’m sure she will do a better job than most of us but it sure isn’t easy.

We need all the reminders we can get to remember to start fresh, start new, let go of the past and enjoy the invitation to a full and joyful life today! That’s right, it may be a cliché but today is the first day of the rest of your life.

Clearly the one life we have now is now. The past may be prologue, but we can’t live today in the prologue. Coming into the new year is a timely reminder that the life we have to live today is in the today, not in the past. The future will be, but we live in the present.

Remember the past, celebrate the past, never forget the people from your past who blessed you and enriched your journey along the trail of life but remember the people as well who are with you today, who are blessing you today and will be with you today as tomorrow approaches.

*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 Wachtman – Please keep Ed in your prayers.*

*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*

*Patty Clark-Sam Splaine's mother. Phone calls welcome.*

*The people of Ukraine- Keep in your prayers*

*The people in the war in Israel.*

*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.*

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**



- 10 Arnita Crutchfield  
13 Jack Hanson  
29 Joel Owen

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**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 2024 CHURCH DIRECTORY IS AVAILABLE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE DURING OFFICE HOURS.  
ONE COPY PER HOUSEHOLD, PLEASE.**

# NEWS FROM OUR MINISTRIES



## FELLOWSHIP...Amy Buckingham/Mary Chance

We are so blessed to be a part of such a wonderful church family. We really enjoy each other and look forward to the time on Sundays when our spiritual needs are met and refreshed and spending time catching up with each other. And we do love to eat! As the new year begins take a few minutes to check your calendar and sign up to sponsor a fellowship hour after church. We have 52 Sundays to choose from - pick several. It can be as big or as small as you are comfortable with. All you need is to provide something to drink, (juice, coffee, etc.) and if you like a little snack (cookies, chips, etc.) .

Looking forward to a new year of fellowship with you all.



## PROPERTY...John Small

Each year about this time we put together "Snow Teams" to clear the snow from our sidewalks during the winter months. Montgomery County treats us like a business which means we have 24 hours from the time the snow (2" and above) stops falling to clear it from the sidewalks in front of the church or pay a large fine. Of course, we need our own sidewalk inside the driveway shoveled too.

Due to people moving out of the area, we are down to a very small number of volunteers. In the past we had two people per team with each team serving for a two-week period between the end of November and March. Last winter we only had one person per team, which isn't enough. We need more than one. We have a good big snow blower, salt on hand and hopefully a snowplow on our mower ready for use. We do pay for the lot to be cleared, but to add the cost of a person(s) to clear the sidewalks is prohibitive.

If you can volunteer to join our snow teams for the coming winter please let Dr. Chance or me know as soon as possible, but no later than two weeks from now. This way we can put our teams together and provide a schedule for the Snow Team members.

If you are interested in helping with our property ministry to keep our church facilities in good condition, please contact me ([johnsmallmb66@gmail.com](mailto:johnsmallmb66@gmail.com)).



## OUTREACH...Connie Spoon

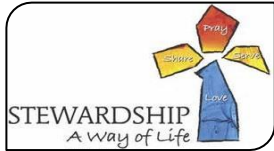
Thank you to everyone who generously donated toys or funds for the Georgian Forest Elementary School students. Our final total was 49 toys with 12 \$10 gift cards for the older siblings. Our next annual Outreach project of "Souper Bowl" begins in mid-January. All soup will be donated to a local food pantry. Please consider a donation when we begin this important food drive.



## WORSHIP...Gwen Mott via Carol Knott

Another year has ended, and the new year is beginning. The year has been filled with each Sunday's inspiring sermons and special programs. Let us begin the new year by being in church, in person and sharing this worship time with others. Psalm 122:1

See you in Church!



## 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. We will soon be launching our Annual Every Member Commitment program. Be on the lookout for a thoughtful and creative and important EMC effort as we seek your pledges for our 2024 ministries. The cost of living is somewhere around 2.5 % so any increase in your giving of less than that is actually a cut in your giving. Faithful Living Equals Faithful Giving!

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



## Highlights from the Board Meeting, December 13, 2023

- The meeting was opened with prayer and devotional.
- Treasurer and Financial Secretary Reports were received.
- The Pastor's Report was received.
- Ministry Reports were shared by the Ministry Chairs and good discussion was held in response to the ministries taking place in the life of the church.
- Upcoming events were reviewed and final details discussed.
- Another gift of \$5000.00 (\$4000. Now and another 1000 in the near future) was received from the estate of Betty Williams.
- After looking at several alternatives we decided to secure a contract with McCarthy Landscaping to keep our sidewalks cleared in the event of snow this year.
- The County has offered a new easement (replacing the current one) in which the county accepts responsibility for clearing and maintaining the levee from the top down to the creek. We approved that agreement.
- The Board approved a much needed repair to the parking lot at a cost of \$4500.00.



## **FACTS & FIGURES: WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FOR OCTOBER**

The good news is attendance is increasing and heading in the right direction. 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.

**(INCLUDES BOTH IN PERSON AND ONLINE)**

December Average Total: 43 (38 in person /15 online)

Year to Date Average: Total: 56 (22 in person /34 online)

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

**11:00 AM Sunday**

The Worship service will also continue to be offered live and online. Keep checking [www.aspenhillcc.org](http://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](http://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.

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

The deadline for the February newsletter is January 21<sup>st</sup>.

**NEW Church Office Hours:**

**Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM**

**Friday 9:00 AM-2:00 pm**



*Please let the office know how you would like your newsletter delivered! USPS, Email or Both.*  
[office@aspenhillcc.org](mailto:office@aspenhillcc.org) or call 301-871-7222



Thank you for your gifts to the **Giving Tree. The total amount given was \$1,405.**

**Toys for Children Tree...** You made possible a beautiful Christmas Tree on the Chancel in the Sanctuary to be filled beneath it with gifts for children. Thank you! You made some children with greater needs very happy this Christmas.

## *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.



### 2023 Capital Area Prayer Calendar for This Month

For weekly prayers, go online to: [http://www.globalministries.org/weekly\\_prayers](http://www.globalministries.org/weekly_prayers)  
[Note: The Capital Area has a special relationship with two missionary sites: China and Colombia]

### THANK YOU!



Mary and I want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for remembering us at Christmas. Your gift of cash was unbelievable and much appreciated. More importantly your love and support and friendship make our lives so much richer. God bless you and Thank You!

**Dr. & Mrs. Chance**

Thank  
you 

Thank you all so very much for the Christmas gift and also for welcoming me with open arms. Your generous gift serves as a reminder of how blessed I truly am to have the opportunity to work for the Aspen Hill Christian Church community.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year!

-Rose.



Dr. Robert Chance  
Aspen Hill Christian Church  
13501 Georgia Avenue  
Aspen Hill, MD  
20906

December 21, 2023

Dear Dr. Chance,

I hope this message finds you surrounded by peace and kindness, reflective of the generosity you have so graciously extended to Shepherd's Table.



Your continued unwavering support has been a cornerstone of our mission to combat hunger and promote food security. The journey we've embarked on together has been nothing short of inspiring, and it's with a heart full of gratitude that I write to you today.

Your contributions have been instrumental in providing not just meals but hope and a sense of community to those we serve. It is because of friends like you that we can continue this vital work, transforming lives one plate at a time.

Joining other devoted supporters like yourselves, you've helped create a ripple effect of kindness that reaches far beyond our walls.

Your dedication truly embodies the spirit of fellowship and compassion that is Shepherd's Table.

Thank you, once again, for being a beacon of light in our shared quest to provide solace and sustenance to those in need. Your benevolence is a testament to the power of communal faith and action.

With deepest appreciation and warm regards for the holiday season,

Manny Hidalgo  
Executive Director

8106 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20910 Tel: 301-585-6463 Fax: 301-585-4718  
[www.shepherdstable.org](http://www.shepherdstable.org)



DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

**Marc Elrich**  
*County Executive*

**Marcus G. Jones**  
*Chief of Police*

December 11, 2023

Aspen Hill Christian Church  
13501 Georgia Avenue  
Aspen Hill, Maryland 20906

Dear Members of the Aspen Hill Christian Church:

On behalf of the Montgomery County Police 4<sup>th</sup> District, I extend our appreciation for the wonderful fruits you provided to the officers and staff of the 4<sup>th</sup> District on 12/10/2023.

The Montgomery County Police Department strongly believes that a key component to keeping our community safe, is that strong relationships are established between residents, businesses, civic organizations, and the police. By working together, we become stronger, safer, and make our community a great place to work and live. Our officers remain dedicated to serve the community and your contribution reiterates the community's appreciation for their service.

Thank you again for your generous contribution to the Montgomery County Police 4<sup>th</sup> District. Please accept my best wishes for a happy and health holiday season!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Smith".

Commander David Smith  
Montgomery County Police – 4<sup>th</sup> District  
240-773-5500

4<sup>th</sup> District