

THE VINE

Aspen Hill Christian Church

13501 Georgia Avenue, Aspen Hill, Maryland 20906

(301)871-7222

Pastor: Dr. D. Robert Chance

FEBRUARY 2024

BY CHANCE

A Manatee Rescue



While in the Citrus Springs Florida area Mary and I had the opportunity to see hundreds of Manatees. I have a new appreciation for Manatees. They are amazing animals. Manatees are large, gray aquatic mammals with bodies that taper to a flat, paddle-shaped tail. They have two forelimbs, called flippers.

Their head and face are wrinkled with whiskers on the snout. Their closest living relatives are the elephant and the hyrax. The average adult manatee is about 10 feet long and weighs between 800 and 1,200 pounds. During the winter they gather in the rivers and springs of warm waters. Due to the unusual cold weather in Florida, scrapes with boat propellers or other issues they can become sick and in need of rescue.

One day Mary and I went to Three Sisters Springs and just happened upon a Manatee Rescue. It was absolutely amazing to see how a Manatee Rescue unfolds. The goal was to rescue a Manatee in danger or poor health and send it to a place where it can be healed and brought back to good health and then re-released back into the wild. We were so lucky to see Rescue unfold. There were 50 or 60 Manatees in the Three Sisters Springs. Somehow the rescuers had to coax the one who was sick into a smaller and smaller area where a strong rescue tarp could be put under it and then the Manatee lifted to a large tank of water and then driven to the Manatee Hospital.

What amazed us was the number of people involved, the degree of cooperation required among twenty or so people and the time and patience required. Basically, the group of people rescuing the Manatee had a large net and they had to work in harmony with one another to coax the injured Manatee into the area where the net was suspended in the water. Then, little by little without startling the Manatee the confined area got smaller and smaller to where eventually the Manatee was in a space just big enough to slide the rescue tarp under it. Then six or eight people lifted the tarp with the 1000 pound Manatee in it and took it the waiting tank of water. Then they loaded the Manatee and tank into a truck to be taken to the rescue hospital. In addition, another person or two had to keep scooping fresh warm spring water on the back of the Manatee.

What really impressed me was how everyone knew their job. Each person or group of people had a specific role to play. They were all volunteers, yet, they all had to work in unison and with full cooperation. There were no single actors. With all of that, however, there was one person who was clearly in charge. One person called out the orders, telling everyone exactly when to move and what to do next. There wasn't room for debate or discussion of "alternative ideas. Clear leadership was critical to mission success.

Perhaps that's a great model for the church to follow. Many people committed to a shared vision, many people sharing in helping to make that vision happen. Vision, mission, clear leadership and direction from a leader or leaders. Not a sermon, just a thought!

*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 – Ed passed away recently. A Memorial Service will be scheduled in the near future.

The Lastre's family lost their mother and grandmother Bertha recently. Please keep the family in your prayers.

Sally Tomkinson passed away in July and Richard passed away last week. A Memorial Service will be held at the church on Saturday, February 17 at 11:30 a.m.

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

Patty Collins- Please keep Sam's Splaine's mother Patty, in your prayers. She loves telephone calls too.

Susan Montgomery – 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 Will Sharp
- 4 Susan Montgomery
- 6 Cooper Buckingham
- 13 Mathew Chance
- 14 Carter Buckingham
- 19 Marie Mulligan
- 20 Jill D'Andrea
- 25 Lisa Price

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

UPDATED CHURCH DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

**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 very blessed in our congregation to be more like an extended family. We all seem to like each other and really care about each other. Fellowship hour after church is a time when we like to gather together, share some light goodies and something to drink (coffee, juice). We need folks to sign up to sponsor a fellowship hour. Check your calendar and sign up to bring some treats to share. Setting up and cleaning up are relatively quick and easy and the treats can be as simple or fancy as you like. The sign-up sheet is next to the door to the kitchen. Let's fill up all the blank spaces this week. Thanks.

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



PROPERTY...John Small

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

We entered into a contract with McCarthy Landscaping for snow removal on the sidewalks. While expensive we simply didn't get enough volunteers to continue doing it ourselves.

We have had several large building expenses but due to your generosity are able to keep our building in excellent condition.



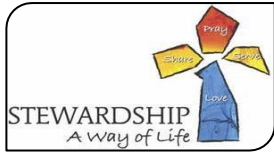
OUTREACH...Connie Spoon

The SOUPER Bowl is underway through February 4 when all the donations will be collected by Mid-County Ministries (MUM) for those in need. Let's make this a competition between those of born in January through June (Team 1) versus those of us born in July through December (Team 2). Please contribute to this worthy cause! The Week of Compassion offerings will be collected on February 18 through February 25. These funds are used to help those in future crises or disasters.

WORSHIP...Gwen Mott via Carol Knott



Even with snow on the ground as I write, the start of Lent is almost upon us. It begins on February 14th, Ash Wednesday, and lasts 40 days, not counting Sundays. I think of it as more toward the beginning of springtime. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians. Penance is not to diminish life but to enrich it. How can we observe Lent? We can sacrifice something. Our time, our service to church, our over and above gifts to church. Learn more, 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.
- We were notified by our Insurance Company that they are converting to a "Mutual Insurance Stock" company.
- The distribution of the pastor's salary and allowances was approved for 2024 per IRS requirements.
- The meeting ended with prayer.
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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)

January Average Total: 48 (34 in person /14 online)

Year to Date Average: Total: 48 (34 in person /14 online)

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

Are you inviting friends, neighbors, co-workers to church? Sharing the Good News of Jesus and of our church are a privilege and responsibility of every one of us.

11:00 AM 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 Rosemary for possible inclusion in the future.

The deadline for the March newsletter is February 18th.

**NEW Church Office Hours:
Monday-Friday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM**



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



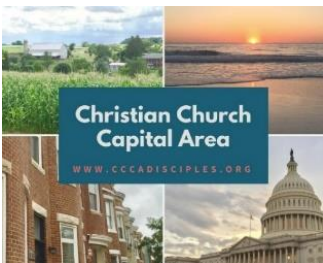
Help us re-stock our food pantry.



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

- Feb 4-Twelfth Street Christian Church, Washington, DC - / Ghana
- Feb 11-The Capital Area Commission for Ministry and all candidates currently under care / Marshall Islands
- Feb 18 -Edgemere First Christian Church, Baltimore, Maryland / Thailand
- Feb 24-Downsville Christian Church, Williamsport, Maryland / Costa Rica