



# THE VINE

Aspen Hill Christian Church

13501 Georgia Avenue, Aspen Hill, Maryland 20906

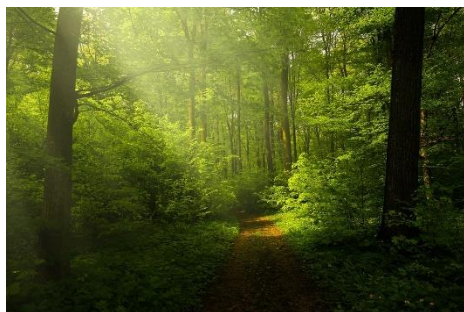
(301)871-7222

Pastor: Dr. D. Robert Chance

APRIL 2024

## **BY CHANCE**

### Light In The Forest



With my rear deck facing directly into the forest I have observed and appreciated things about the forest I never knew quite the same way in the past. I've always been at home in the forest and deeply appreciative of all things about the forest. Over the years I've accumulated and enjoyed a wide variety of books and articles about the forest. Reading the woods became an avocation of mine. Learning how to identify and know the particulars about the different native trees along the East Coast forest and mountains became a lifelong joy. In short, I love the forest and all that is within it. Over the last 25 years living backed up to the Patuxent River Watershed I have learned new things about the forest and reached new levels of joy as I watch life unfold in the forest that surrounds us.

Among the things that I have had the time and opportunity to observe is the role of sunlight in the forest. Light is always a part of the ongoing day in the forest. Whether it is the absence of sunlight in the middle of storms or the presence of light as the early morning unfolds or the quiet departure of light as the day ends or in the middle of the daylight in the forest is an amazing thing.

We often don't take the time to notice all the different ways light unfolds in the forest. Sometimes a single ray of light will illuminate a sliver of the trees or even just one tree. Other times the forest is bathed in sunlight. As the light arrives in the morning it plays tricks on my eyes as it begins ever so small but continues to unfold. As the light recedes in the evening it is a gradual departure from light to dark and new scenes come into play. Sometimes a ray of light will surprise me as it spackles upon the trees or pops up here and there or on the forest floor. It's amazing treat to enjoy all the ways sun light plays out in the forest.

There's another kind of light that is even more amazing than the sunlight in the forest. The Bible refers to it often. It is the kind of light in which we live our daily lives. It is the kind of light that shines in our heart and reflects on our face. It is the light behind our smiles. It is the light that plays out in our words and even more importantly in our spirit. Call it the light of God or the light of the Holy Spirit or the light of our own soul but by whatever name we call it the light within is shines or doesn't every day in who we are and how we live.

The Old Testament and the New Testament alike are filled with references about how the light of God shines through people and call us all to live in His light. How does the light of God play out in your life? Much like the sunlight of the forest the inner light within us plays out in lots of different and amazing ways. We are called by faith to live in the light and come out of the darkness. We are called to walk in the light and not hide in darkness. That light within us plays out differently for every one of us. It is as varied and nuanced as the sunlight of the forest.

How do you live in the light? What are the unique ways the light of God come to life throughout the day, day in and day out in your own life? In a world of growing darkness be the light!

*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.*

*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.*

*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**

- 2 Erin Burch
- 2 Linda Groome
- 4 Amy Buckingham
- 5 Steve Sullivan
- 7 Beth Konzmann
- 8 Gorretti Mugatha
- 19 Carol Knott
- 20 Marybeth Appelyard
- 20 Robert & Marjorie Flaherty
- 21 Tristan Chance
- 23 Michael Lastre

\*\*\*\*\*

**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 had a wonderful fellowship period together on St. Patrick's Day and our annual Son Rise Breakfast on Easter morning. It was so great to have so many people together having fun fellowship and food. Please check your calendar and sign up to sponsor a fellowship time so we can continue with the fun. Fellowship and food!

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](mailto: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

Many thanks for the Week of Compassion contributions which totaled \$ 1,175. These funds will be available immediately to help so many in need around the world. God bless you! Our food pantry needs donations. Please refer to the list in this newsletter for needed items.

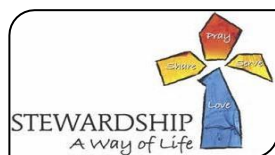
## WORSHIP...Gwen Mott via Carol Knott



We have journeyed through the period of Lent and the beautiful day of Easter Sunday as we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus. Christ's selfless act of dying for us allows us to find peace and forgiveness with God as we accept this gift through faith. Let us continue to stand firm in our faith.

Romans 5:6-8

Join us in church each Sunday.



## 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!***



ONLINE



## Highlights from the Board Meeting, March 13, 2024



- 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 discussed.
- The Board discussed an opportunity have the Montgomery County Police host a Keeping Seniors Safe program in the church.
- FEMA's pending revision of flood zones and its impact on our church were discussed. John Small and Dr. Chance will pursue further investigation into what we can or can't do with the revised flood zones.
- The Board approved a motion to accept an offer to purchase a new "used" piano for the sanctuary.



## FACTS & FIGURES: WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FOR JANUARY

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)

March Average Total: 58 (42 in person /17 online) An increase from February 😊

Year to Date Average: Total: 52 (37 in person /16 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](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.

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 May newsletter is April 21<sup>st</sup>.

**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](mailto: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

- 7 - Fort Washington Christian Church, Fort Washington, Maryland - [www.fortwashingtonchurch.com](http://www.fortwashingtonchurch.com) / Lebanon
- 14 - Garfield Memorial Christian Church, McLean, Virginia - <http://www.garfieldmemorialcc.com/> Korea
- 21 - First Christian Church, Falls Church, Virginia - [www.fccfc.org](http://www.fccfc.org) / Honduras
- 28 - First Christian Church, Hagerstown, Maryland - <http://www.fcchagerstown.org> / East Timor

### **COMING ATTRACTIONS Be sure to put them on your calendar.**

- May 12 Mother's Day Flowers for every mother present.
- May 19 Pentecost...Celebrate the Holy Spirit
- June 09 Graduates Sunday...Let the office know if you have a 2024 graduate.
- June 16 Father's Day...A gift for every father present.
- June 23 Hello Summer Cookout Sunday