



THE VINE

Aspen Hill Christian Church

13501 Georgia Avenue, Aspen Hill, Maryland 20906

(301)871-7222

Pastor: Dr. D. Robert Chance

February 2026 

Being The Church In Hard Times



It's tough times being the church. Our country is in all the wrong places and heading the wrong way. Without getting too hysterical or too historical, it's a common path for all nations throughout history. It happened to the Romans, it happened to the Greeks, it's happened to every great country throughout history. It's happening to us today. The good news is it's not too late. But like all problems, you have to recognize and acknowledge a problem before you can ever deal with it.

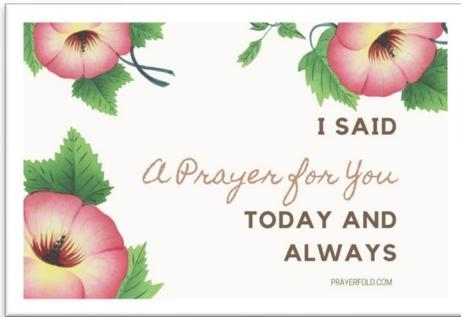
What's wrong with our country today? Lots of things, but I'll just mention a couple of the major things that come to me. The first problem is that we worship false gods. We worship sports and the athletes that go along with sports above all else. Secondly, we worship entertainment and the entertainers that go along with it. Third, we've gotten away from church and spiritual values that should be driving our daily lives. These three things, among many others, have resulted in why it's hard for the church in hard times.

The Covid Pandemic accelerated changes that have been slowly taking place for many years and made the church's place in our country all the harder. Given a choice between youth sports for our kids or bringing them to church, it's no contest. Youth sports win every time, hands down. We'll spend unimaginable amounts of time and money on our youth's sports programs (football, basketball, baseball, soccer, whatever), but penny-pinch when it comes to church or youth activities.

You can see it everywhere. Church attendance across the board and across the church is down...way down. People just aren't coming out to church like we once did. The few and the faithful remain, but it's hard being the church with fewer people to draw upon. Denomination doesn't matter, liberal or conservative doesn't matter, attendance is down. In addition, most of our churches are older and older. The young people are elsewhere. I wince when I drive past one church in my neighborhood, and the sign says *"Please Come to Church With Us This Sunday"*. Are we now begging people to attend church? My way of saying all of this is "the church has been moved out of the center of town to the outskirts of town...the far outskirts!"

What can we do about it? Number one, we can keep our own priorities straight, true, and honest. We can't change anyone except ourselves anyway, so we all have to keep reminding ourselves that the Commanders' game on television or at the stadium, or in my case, the Terps game on T.V or at the campus, isn't nearly as important as my time and commitment to my church. "To thine own self be true" has never been truer than today, and that means we have to live the spiritual values we profess.

My last thought is this...The church has always been more faithful in hard times than in good times. Though smaller, we can be more faithful. We may not fill the pews like we once did, but the folks who are here are strong and good disciples. Also, let us never forget that the first call of every Christian is to "go and make disciples." Tell others about your faith, tell others about how God loves us all, and by all means, invite others to church with you. Tough times...For sure! But tough times make for great opportunities. Jesus never said it would be easy, but the rewards are out of this world.



Please let us know if you are aware of someone who is ill or is a shut-in.

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

Susan Montgomery needs our prayers as she recovers from some difficult surgery.

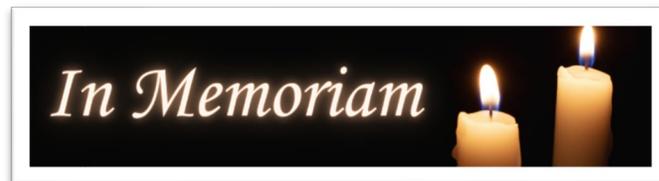
David Jordan, who is struggling, appreciates our prayers. He is in Brooke

Grove Rehab Center.

Janis Hanson, who is limited to being home due to other health issues.

Arlyn Sanchez and family for the loss of Arlyn’s father.

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



Arlyn Sanchez and her family need our prayers on the loss of her father, Francisco Sanchez.

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



Please lift the following congregations in your prayers this month.

February

2-Bethany House Apartments & Rockville Nursing Home, Rockville, Maryland / Lesotho

9-English Consul Christian Church, Baltimore, Maryland / Jordan

16-Fairfax Christian Church, Fairfax, Virginia / Japan

23-First Christian Church, Alexandria, Alexandria, Virginia / Sri Lanka



We have had updates since we released a new directory in December. Please let us know of any other corrections, as we are going to release a new directory with all the updates.

If you have a change in your address, phone number, or email, contact Cyndi in the office so she can keep our information up to date. You can reach her at office@aspenhillcc.org or call 301-871-7222.



Church Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday and Friday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Wednesday 8:00 – 2:00 PM

Please let the office know how you would like your newsletter delivered! USPS, Email, or Both. office@aspenhillcc.org or call 301-871-722

The office will be closed January 19th.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Susan Montgomery	February 4
Matthew Chance	February 13
Marie Mulligan	February 19
Jill D'Andrea	February 20
Lisa Price	February 25

Please let the Church Office know if Your Birthdate or Anniversary Date Is Wrong or missing, so we may correct it .



Highlights From The Board

- The Board meeting was held on January 14, 2026.
 - Financial reports were reviewed.
 - An update on our Search Process was provided.
 - Ministry Reports were shared.
 - Budget for the upcoming year was discussed.
 - The Plan of Procedure (By Laws) were approved for 2026.
- The lease of our copier was renewed for less cost and significant savings on the both the monthly lease cost and the per copy cost.

NEWS FROM OUR MINISTRIES



Fellowship / Amy Buckingham and Mary Chance

If you plan to sponsor a fellowship period, please sign up on the sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall on the poster next to the kitchen door, and let the church office know. We provide coffee, you provide cookies, pretzels, whatever you like. We depend on our members and friends to provide as much of the Fellowship as possible. Thanks for signing up.

The Fellowship hour is growing, so come on over, bring our visitors with you, and enjoy being together around the tables.



Christian Education / Position Vacant At This Time

Christian Education...We have an Adult Sunday School Class each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Small Conference Room.

We have Children's Church during the Worship Service in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you to our volunteers who lead Children's Church each week: Phyllis Brown, Pam Force, Lisa Knight & Jayna, Jennifer Sharma, and Lou Ann Rector. It was really great to see both Colson and Jayna Knight come to teach the class last week.



Worship / Gwen Mott

It's hard to believe, but the calendar shows that Ash Wednesday is on February 18, with the first Sunday of Lent beginning on February 22. Don't miss worship! After reading a recent devotional, I would like to share this with you. Do you ever speak too quickly before thinking? When we speak, are our words ??

- T - truthful
- H - helpful
- I - inspirational
- N - necessary
- K – kind

We can help to make our world a better place to be in a small way. Ps. 19:14

Don't miss this time of worship! In-person and Online Worship Services are available every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. www.aspenhillcc.org /go to "See Us on YouTube link and click on the current week or any week in the past that you would like to see.

Average Attendance for December 2025

Month...	In Person 34	Online 13	Total 47
YTD...	In Person 35	Online 17	Total 52



Property

The property is in relatively good shape. A few minor issues have been addressed, with special thanks to Roberto Lopez. We are currently working on cleaning out and updating some of the old offices and the library. If you would like to help with property projects, please talk to John Small.



Stewardship

To make giving as convenient as possible. We offer several options for you to contribute.

- Mail Slot – You can place your offering in the secure mail slot located at the church entrance.
- Online Giving – Visit our website <https://aspenhillcc.org> to make your donation.
- Sunday Service – Offering will be collected during our Sunday worship services.
- Mail – You may also send your gift by mail to the church office.

Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. - Luke 6:38 NIV



Altar Flowers

Honor a loved one, celebrate a birthday, or an anniversary. Sign up to donate altar flowers. Sign up in the fellowship hall or email Cyndi at office@aspenhillcc.org. Please include the date of dedication, your name, and the dedication (dedicated to/for). AHCC requests a donation of \$30 (\$25 for the flowers and \$5 for delivery) to cover the cost of flowers each week.

Outreach

SOUPER BOWL - January 25 - February 8

Each year, we have a SOUPER Bowl of our own. It's related to our desire to help feed the hungry. We divided our congregation into two teams to compete with one another to see which team collects the most cans of soup. At the end of the competition, all the soup goes to MUM, a local food bank helping those in the community with their grocery needs.

This year, the Teams will be the "First Halfers" and the "Second Halfers". You are a "First Halfer" if you were born between January 1 and June 30. Likewise, if you were born between July and December, you are a "Second Halfer".

The game is on ... Bring cans of soup for your team in front of the sanctuary. The real "winners" will be the hungry, who will benefit.

Thanks!

The food pantry is fully stocked and available for anyone in need. Contact Cyndi in the church office for assistance. Call the office at 301-871-7222 or email her at office@aspenhillcc.org.

Connie Spoon

Join us for
**SOUPER
Bowl**

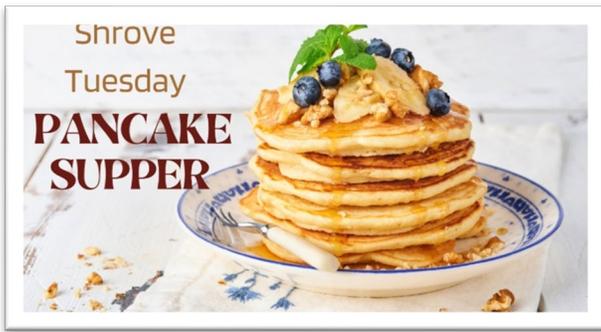
Join us for the ultimate
competition

JAN. 25 - FEB. 8

2 Teams Created by Birth Month

First Half Team - Months January - June
Second Half Team - Months July - December

We will be collecting canned soup
to donate to a food pantry.
Whoever collects the most cans
wins bragging rights.



Pancake Supper...

The traditional and fun filled Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held on February 17 at 6:00 p.m. The sign up sheet and more information is available on one of our poster boards in the church. Sign up and if you can help with any of the plans please see Mary Chance.



Coming Programs and Ministries

Souper Bowl / Jan 25 / Feb 1 / Feb 8

Week of Compassion / Feb 15 / Feb 22

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper / Feb 17

Lenten / Mar 29-Apr 29

Palm Sunday / March 29

Easter Sunday / April 5

Son Rise Breakfast. / April 5



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