

# THE BELL

A Monthly Newsletter



## *A Message from Pastor Mike.....*

My wife and I know a woman who will be turning 84 on February 29<sup>th</sup>. Oddly, she will have had only 21 *actual* birthdays because of leap-year! She's not alone. There must be a whole lot of people out there in the world who have a birthday that, technically, only comes around once every four years! Time is a funny thing. As Albert Einstein taught, time is relative. It seems to speed up when you are having a good time and it seems to slow down when you are having a hard time. This time of year, and especially after a cold and messy January, we count the extra minutes of sunlight that are added to each day as we move away from the shortest day of the year on December 21<sup>st</sup>. We may be counting down the days until Spring. Maybe the groundhog will see it's shadow? Maybe we will have *only* another 6 weeks of winter?

In the movie, *Groundhog Day*, Bill Murray got stuck repeating the same day over and over. Nobody else seemed to be aware that each day was the same as the day before. Remember how Bill Murray's character (eventually) built his daily schedule to rescue people and be in the right place at the right time to do the most good, moment by moment? How can we redeem the days that we are given? How can we become more aware of the mysteries and the gift of time? How can we use the precious and free gift of time which we have received from the hand of a loving God? It's actually a difficult question because we don't want to book our schedules so tight that we have no room for gratitude, and no time to breathe. On the other hand, we don't want to miss golden opportunities to celebrate the beauty of life, and to embrace opportunities to love and serve others, and to honor God's gifts and graces.

We have been exploring in the Gospel of Mark in recent weeks. His message is usually salted with references to the urgent nature of time in Jesus' ministry. Everything happens fast in Mark's world, and there isn't a minute to lose. Singer and songwriter Chris Rice has a song titled *Life Means So Much*. His message is powerful... "Every day is a gift you've been given, make the most of the time every minute you're livin'." And then in the chorus he gives us these wise words, "Teach us to count the days, teach us to make the days count. Lead us in better ways, somehow our souls forgot, life means so much." The gospel according to the apostle Mark, Albert Einstein, Bill Murray, and Chris Rice is that whatever season we are in, it is a beautiful gift from God that we should appreciate and embrace with joy!

*"So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart." – Psalm 90:12*

### Board and Cabinet Meeting Schedule

**The Church Board** conducts and votes on the official business of the church. All church members may attend a board meeting; however, only Board members may vote.

You are a board member if you are an elected officer, elder, or serving or preparing deacon.

#### **Scheduled Board Meetings for 2024**

February 18, 2024

April 21, 2024

June 16, 2024

September 15, 2024 ~ Appoint Nominating Committee, provide input into 2025 budget

November 10, 2024 ~ Approve 2025 Budget and 2025 Officers & Board

December 15, 2024 (If necessary)

**The Church Cabinet** is an unofficial body of the church, meeting for the purpose of planning, developing new ideas and ministries. You are a Cabinet member if you are an elected officer or a committee chair.

#### **Scheduled Cabinet Meetings:**

~~January 21, 2024~~ cancelled: no church

March 17, 2024

May 19, 2024

August 18, 2024 ~ form Nominating Committee

October 20, 2024 ~ approve list of Officers and Board Members to recommend to Board in November

### **BIBLE STUDY!!!**

Bible Study will begin February 15th at 10:00 - 11:00 am in Fellowship Hall. If you need study material THE STORY and a workbook, please let the office know, there is a book with 31 lessons and a study guide. The video can be seen on YouTube. Hope to see you there.

Judie Church-Holmer

HAPPY  
VALENTINE'S  
DAY

## 15th Avenue Christian Church 2024 Officers & Board

Nominating Committee: Lisa Hatlett (chair), Mable Carlson, Lynne Swanson, Judie Holmer

### Officers

Chairperson of Board  
Vice Chairperson of Board  
Secretary of Board  
Treasurer  
Financial Secretary  
Assistant Financial Secretaries  
Clerk of the Congregation  
Church School Superintendent

### 1 Year Terms

Lisa Hatlett \*  
  
Jackie Flemming \*  
Steve Swanson \*  
Lisa Hatlett \*  
Lynne Sheese \*, Jackie Flemming \*, Tim Flemming \*, Gary Troyer\*  
Lynne Sheese \*  
Lynne Swanson \*

### Trustees

#### 2024

Ron Standley

#### 2025

Dave Popp

#### 2026

Judie Holmer\*

### Elders

#### 2024

Steve Swanson  
Judie Holmer

#### 2025

Dave Popp  
Diane Block  
Helen Popp  
Sally Bartosh

#### 2026

Annie Bloomer\*  
Lisa Hatlett\*  
Kathy Weston\*  
Mark Carlson\*

### Elder Emeritus

Kathi Barnes

### Serving Deacons

#### 2024

Barb Hansen  
Marcia Swanson  
Karen Hitchcock

#### 2025

Grace Carlson  
Rose Deibert  
Jackie Flemming  
Tyler Flemming  
Gary Troyer

#### 2026

Lynne Sheese \*  
Steve Sheese\*  
Ron Standley\*  
Marty Larson\*

Deacon Emeritus (No new honorees)

### Preparing Deacons

#### 2024

Diane Butcher  
Sandy Wentler  
Grace Carlson

#### 2025

Lynne Swanson  
Helen Popp  
Lynne Sheese  
Steve Sheese  
Melisa Popp

#### 2026

Jackie Flemming \*  
Lisa Hatlett \*

Preparing Deacon Emeritus: (No new honorees)

\*denotes being voted on

## 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Christian Church 2024 DEACONS LIST ROSTER

<p><b><u>FEBRUARY</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Sally Bartosh                  Grace Carlson                  Rose Deibert                  Marcia Swanson</p>	<p><b><u>MARCH</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Karen Hitchcock                  Barb Hansen                  Lynne Sheese                  Steve Sheese</p>	<p><b><u>APRIL</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Barb Hansen                  Grace Carlson                  Karen Hitchcock                  Marty Larson</p>
<p><b><u>MAY</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Ron Standley                  Grace Carlson                  Marty Larson                  Gary Troyer</p>	<p><b><u>JUNE</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Grace Carlson                  Marty Larson                  Gary Troyer                  Marcia Swanson</p>	<p><b><u>JULY</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Lynne Sheese                  Sally Bartosh                  Steve Sheese                  Ron Standley</p>
<p><b><u>AUGUST</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Jackie Flemming                  Barb Hansen                  Sally Bartosh                  Marcia Swanson</p>	<p><b><u>SEPTEMBER</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Marty Larson                  Jackie Flemming                  Ron Standley                  Gary Troyer</p>	<p><b><u>OCTOBER</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Gary Troyer                  Jackie Flemming                  Karen Hitchcock                  Ron Standley</p>
<p><b><u>NOVEMBER</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Rose Deibert                  Lynne Sheese                  Karen Hitchcock                  Steve Sheese</p>	<p><b><u>DECEMBER</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Steve Sheese                  Lynne Sheese                  Rose Deibert                  Jackie Flemming</p>	<p><b><u>JANUARY 2025</u></b>  <b>HD</b> Marcia Swanson                  Sally Bartosh                  Rose Deibert                  Barb Hansen</p>



### FORMATION

(A reflection by Marcia Monsma)

***A journey,***

Eagerly anticipated  
Now nearing completion.

***A journey,***

Toward servanthood  
Symbolized  
By a towel and basin.

***A journey,***

Being formed in the image of  
Christ  
Clothed

In the garments of Christ.

***A journey ending,***

Yet  
Beginning ever anew.

***A journey joyfully continuing***

In Him

With Him

Through Him

To the glory of God the Father.

***A journey commissioned with  
a challenge:***

Believe what you read,  
Teach what you believe,  
Practice what you teach

***A journey wrapped in prayer,***

“May He who began a good  
work in us  
Carry it on

Until the day of Jesus Christ.”

*Philippians 1:6*

### 2024 Preparing Deacons Schedule

January - Lisa Hatlett

February - Melisa Popp

March – Grace Carlson

April - Helen Popp

May – Lisa Hatlett

June – Diane Butcher

July – Lynne and Steve Sheese

August – Melisa Popp

September – Lynne Swanson

October – Jackie Flemming

November – Lynne and Steve Sheese

December – Lynne Swanson

January 2025– Lisa Hatlett



**MISSION MOMENT: GIFTS TO LIVE ON Strawberries & Bicycles: How One Community****Welcomes Refugees**

A car full of strawberries and a classroom full of clothes. Applause for asking questions and quick thumbed typing into Google Translate. Well coordinated schedules and unexpected on-call moments. Local congregations involved in refugee response know all these challenges, rejoice in every success, and have countless stories to tell. Lily Cameron was born in Iran in 1979, where her father worked for the Shah (king). When the revolution started that same year, anyone connected to the Shah was targeted by the rebels and likely to be killed. Knowing the risks in any direction, her parents took Lily and her older sister and fled. With \$8 to their names when they arrived in the States, Lily's father worked three jobs, while her mother took care of the two little girls at home; when her dad came home after his workday, her mother left for an overnight shift. One thing Lily's family could not find when they arrived was support. Fearful of public spaces because of the lingering suspicions following the Iran hostage crisis, Lily's mom still found ways for them to venture into the community. She loved Christmas and its music, so at nearby churches, she would sneak into the back row with the girls all photos: Ashland Christian Church (Ashland VA) to listen to services. Even then, Lily says, "No one greeted us, supported us, welcomed us. My mom felt very alone." In the fall of 2021, as Afghans were evacuated in masses and many were resettled to the United States, a friend from First Baptist Church of Ashland called Lily, by now a member at Ashland Christian Church, with a question: How do we respond? The two churches worked alongside Reestablish Richmond, a local assistance agency, as volunteers went through needed training. With some help getting the word out to refugee communities, soon First Baptist was hosting English as a second language (ESL) classes and art programs to help children express their thoughts and feelings. English classes were led at First Baptist, and volunteers from Ashland Christian served as drivers for any who needed help, provided childcare during classes and other programs, and served as conversation partners in class. Volunteers are quick to point out that language skills aren't a requirement. "With good humor, lots of gestures, and a phone open to Google Translate, they've found that lacking a common language doesn't have to be an actual barrier."

*SPECIAL OFFERING 2024 FEBRUARY 18-25*

*As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering throughout the world, with a vision of a world where God's people transform suffering into hope.*





As ESL students moved through their coursework, volunteers took them on field trips to local libraries, businesses, and events to practice ordinary conversation. Summoning the courage to ask a question of a store clerk, whether at the local Target or the farmer’s market for strawberry picking, would earn a chorus of cheers from the proud and supportive friends looking on. This openness to revealing needs and desires led to other ways neighbors could help ... For the last year, one Saturday a month, more than 150 people visit the Disciples Depot. In this continued partnership - hosted at Ashland Christian Church, with volunteers joining from First Baptist and the community - families select from clothes, toys, kitchen items, even furniture and bicycles. A back to school event at the Disciples Depot helps students at all ages get ready for their new year. With an ongoing influx of refugees from recent crises, as well as families who have been in the resettlement process for years, congregations have stepped up in many ways. Week of Compassion’s Immigrant and Refugee Response helps experienced Disciples continue their ministry, and those new to the response find ways to get started. Week of Compassion’s support includes a broad network of resources, grant funding, and supportive connections with others doing this vital, life-giving work. As we learn from the gospel story of the generous widow (Luke 21:1-4), there is something in everyone that can be used for the glory of God. In Ashland, Virginia, established residents are providing welcome, AND new residents inspire community and resilience. All are **GIFTS TO LIVE ON**, shared with compassion and in genuine hospitality.



## 2024 Outreach Fundraiser

*This is a repeat of the Lenten Activity we did last year. I heard from several members that they found it very meaningful. I know that I personally appreciated reflecting on people and things that I am grateful for. I know my list this year will be different from last years because things change. And for that I am also grateful.*

Many people say that Lent is a journey, one of sacrifice, prayer, and charity. We are asked to break away from our normal routine and focus on our spiritual journey. This year I am challenging you to combine your spirituality with charity. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and running until Palm Sunday, I am asking that you think of gratitude. Who or what in your life brings you a sense of gratitude, grace, or growth? Can you consciously identify 1 thing daily? Do you want to keep a list? For every day you can identify at least 1 person or thing, put \$1 in an envelope. On Palm Sunday bring your envelope to church and donate to our special Outreach offering. This offering provides parts of the funds we use to support several outreach organizations each year. Please make sure to mark your donation for Outreach.

Thank you,  
Lisa Hatlett

Outreach Chair

### Journey of Gratitude

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 10. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 11. _____ | 20. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 12. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 13. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 14. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 15. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 16. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 17. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 18. _____ | 27. _____ |



**WEEK OF COMPASSION SPECIAL**

**OFFERINGS FEBRUARY 18 &**

**FEBRUARY 25**

## Music Notes

This month we can look forward to hearing solos from Gary Troyer, Claire Reger, Miriam Anderson, and ?? Please let me know if you would like to offer some music or the name of someone you'd like to hear. I will be out of town on February 11th. Dr. Charlie Schmidt should be returning as my sub. Please welcome him!

Sheila Doak, Music Director



## PROFIT & LOSS REPORT

Total Income	\$2851.00
Total Expenses	\$7684.61
Net Income	(\$5013.61)

If you have taken home Altar flowers please return the vases as soon as possible. Thanks!

## January Attendance

January 7	34
January 14	Snow!
January 21	Cold!
January 28	30



## ANNOUNCEMENT!!!

Julie's Artistic Rose has raised the price of flowers to **\$25.00**.



Thank you very much for the Christmas bonus. Also, thank you for the birthday cards and emails. It was very much appreciated!!

Cali Smith, Administrative Assistant



**COME JOIN US** for a matinee performance of the next episode for Church Basement Ladies (not repeat) at Circa 21 in Rock Island. We have a group reservation for Wednesday, March 13th. Doors open and lunch serviced at 11:45. Cost \$54.40 per person which includes meal, show and gratuity. Call Sally Bartosh 309-762-0328 or Cali Smith 309-644-1176 to make a reservation by March 6th.





## Elders Prayer Update Bell Edition

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” 1 Peter 1:3 Please keep these family, friends and neighbors in your daily thoughts and prayers. give a phone call, a card or visit to let them know they are loved and missed and not forgotten.

Lucille died Thursday afternoon 1 /25. (Pastor Mike, Karen & family)

Lucille is Karen Kindred's mother

John and Leroy Hitchcock's mother died (family)

Hunter (family) Shelly R. died 01 /02/24 (family)

Randy had a stroke Christmas Eve, is in rehab. (Lynne & Steve Sheese)

Chad Secor (Dave & Helen's nephew)

Wayne Carter (Susan, Sabrinna, Zac, Nathaniel and family)

David / Cancer (friend of Weston's) Joetta Engles (friend of Popp's)

Edward Gridley (Jacob) Mona Mlekush (family & Alice)

Carla Rosalie Molly Mary Nickie (family)

Nancy G, cancer (family) Pat – cancer (family) Kim Poleing (Karen) Kenny (Karen)

Melba Andereck (Jesse & family) Juliana & Hector (praying for family)

Chaplaincy at John Deere (Jeanie Kirgan) Jerry Roelens (Barb Hanson & family)

Wm. “Bill” Mockmore (Judie, Bill and family)

Gavin ,Mike Rushing, Connie (Karen & family) Kaylee Walker (Karen & family)

Don Young (Shari & family) Dennis Popp (Kathy, Matt, David & Helen)

Kathy Overholzer (Dave & Helen's niece) Julie (cancer)

Brenda O. (family) Dawn F. (family)

Cara (friend of Diane B.) Jessica Borland (Swanson's)

Bob Bloomer (Annie & family)

Beverly Ducey (Jim & family) Vickie (Jesse & Melba)

Kent Christensen (Kathy, Don and family)



# THE BELL



## The Heart of the Matter

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### SCRIPTURE WRITING PLAN

Day 1: Deuteronomy 4:7-9  
Day 2: Deuteronomy 6:4-6  
Day 3: Deuteronomy 10:12-13  
Day 4: Psalm 7:8-10  
Day 5: Psalm 26:2-7  
Day 6: Psalm 73:26-28  
Day 7: Psalm 84:1-2  
Day 8: Psalm 86:11-13  
Day 9: Psalm 119:9-11  
Day 10: Psalm 139:23-24  
Day 11: Proverbs 3:3-6  
Day 12: Proverbs 4:23-24  
Day 13: Proverbs 16:23-24  
Day 14: Ecclesiastes 12:13-14  
Day 15: Jeremiah 29:11-13  
Day 16: Joel 2:12-13

Day 17: Matthew 6:19-21  
Day 18: Matthew 15:17-20  
Day 19: Matthew 22:37-40  
Day 20: Luke 6:45  
Day 21: Romans 8:27-28  
Day 22: Ephesians 3:14-19  
Day 23: Colossians 3:14-17  
Day 24: 1 Timothy 1:5  
Day 25: Hebrews 4:12-13  
Day 26: Hebrews 10:22-25  
Day 27: James 4:8-10  
Day 28: 1 Peter 3:14-16  
Day 29: Jeremiah 17:9-10  
Day 30: Mark 7:21-23  
Day 31: Ezekiel 36:26

Commit to spending 10 minutes every day to meditate and reflect on God's Word. Write down what you have gleaned from each day's scripture.

# 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue Christian Church



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 8:30am Elder Mtg 9:30am Worship Service	5 6:30pm 15th Ave Bell Practice	6 6:30pm River Bend Bronze Bell Practice	7	8	9	10
11 9:30am Worship Service Food Pantry	12 6:30pm 15th Ave Bell Practice	13 6:30pm River Bend Bronze Bell Practice	14 No Ash Wednesday Svc Valentine's Day	15 10am Bible Study	16	17
18 9:30am Worship Service 10:30am Board Mtg <b>Week of Compassion Special Offering</b>	19 6:30pm 15th Ave Bell Practice	20 6:30pm River Bend Bronze Bell Practice	21	22 10am Bible Study	23	24
25 9:30am Worship Service <b>Week of Compassion Special Offering</b>	26	27	28	29 10am Bible Study		

Serving Elders	
4	Lisa Hatlett
11	Helen Popp
18	Mark Carlson
25	Steve Swanson

Serving Deacons	
HD	Sally Bartosh, Grace Carlson, Rose Deibert, Marcia Swanson
	Preparing Deacon Melisa Popp

Flowers	
4	Lisa Hatlett
11	
18	
25	Diane Block

Birthdays	
1	Don Wentler
13	Nancy Harris
22	Curt Danner