



THE BELL

A Monthly Newsletter
15th Avenue Christian Church

A message from Pastor Mike—

In the Book of 2 Corinthians, Paul wrote, *“For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.”*

Paul identified himself as an apostle of Christ who preached the good news that Jesus had come in the flesh. Paul, at great cost to himself, relayed the core message that the kingdom of God had come near. He spelled out the upside-down nature of the kingdom. Conflict can lead to comfort and even to contentment. Power can be manifested through weakness and through humility. Jesus’ way was both different and *difficult*. Paul was saying that it’s not about us! We are fallible containers, but we are given priceless treasure to carry around. We stand in a long line of Christians who have testified of God’s goodness, mercy, blessing and joy. Paul reminds us, across the centuries, to not lose heart when the chips are down. He reminds us that we are being renewed day by day, that we are blessed abundantly, and that the gifts of God are to be shared in this world of scarcity, confusion and despair.

Paul’s instructions apply for us as we carry on the work of the church. It really isn’t about us, we’re simply pointing each other to the one who makes all things new. Brittle and low cost clay pots were not worth much by themselves. It’s what was *in* those containers that really mattered. That is still true for us as we enter the new year.

In the normal course of our lives, we can expect to run into those who are looking for the temporary treasures that modern life puts front and center. In the flashiness of our consumer culture, the good news of the gospel might seem out of touch to people who aren’t sure what they are looking for... who aren’t yet open to a message of hope and joy.

Following Paul’s lead, we know that it is when we rely on God that we are most effective. Even in our human state, we are designated carriers of the treasure. We aren’t the treasure, we are *toting* the treasure! We carry the good news in our hearts and in our souls. *“We do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord...”* As witnesses, we do have our work cut out for us! We carry the joy of the Lord around with us. Our job is to let it bubble over! May God bless you as you go about that important work all through the dawning new year!

“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.” - 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 -

New Year ~ New Numbers

2025 financial statements are available for pickup in the Narthex beginning January 4th. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the number printed on the bottom of your statement. I will look into your question as soon as possible and get back to you.

Also, a reminder that some members have received new giving numbers this year. The old numbers have been linked to your name, so previous giving information has not been lost.

Lisa Hatlett
Financial Secretary



Music Notes

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! What a wonderful time of the year to share music with you and celebrate the Birth of Our Lord! Our special music starts off in 2026 with Gary Troyer singing Jesus Loves Me. After that, we'll hear from Susan Runyon, Lillian Dawn, and Claire Reger. Please let me know if there is anyone else you'd like to hear from in the coming months. Wishing you all much peace and joy!

Yours in Christ,
Sheila Doak



Thank you to all of those that participated in the services during the Christmas season with either music or readings. Special thanks to Pastor Mike and Sheila for all they do.

Thank you to Nancy Mott, Barb Hansen, Judie Holmer, Lynne Swanson, Steve Swanson, Marcia Swanson, Tim Flemming, Aaron Flemming and Tyler Flemming for the help decorating the sanctuary.

Jackie Flemming



~ Thankful, Grateful, Blessed ~ Again!

My favorite mantra holds true again. What a beautiful holiday season of worship we just experienced. Meaningful sermons and Advent readings, beautiful music, and the sanctuary decorated in glory. Thank you to everyone that supported these efforts in any and all ways.

As we close out 2025, I would like to say thank you for your confidence in me as Board Chair for the past 2 years. I am looking forward to some time away from this role but will support Judie Holmer as she steps back into this role, if needed.

Yesterday I was humbled to deliver a check to the YouthHope Food Pantry. They were so grateful for our donation. This year our generous congregation gave just over \$4000 to this charitable organization that helps those who are hungry. But that's not all. Our members are generous when giving to Birdies for Charity, as well as through the six special offerings taken each year.

I have said before that we are a small congregation, but we are capable of doing mighty things. I'm always interested in hearing about what others do in our community. I'd like to know more about what our church members do in the community and think of other ways we can move our Outreach campaign into the community. Let me know.

Wishing you blessings in the New Year.

Lisa Hatlett

2025 Board and Outreach Chair



Profit & Loss Report

Income	\$45,751.47
Expenses	\$14,608.72
Net Income	\$31,141.75

December Attendance

December 7	23
December 14	31
December 21	38
December 28	25

Birthdays

1	Doug Nelson
3	Margaret Carroll
10	Sheila Doak
11	Cali Smith
12	Lisa Hatlett
13	Ron Standley
22	Bob Popp
30	Diane Block



Board and Cabinet Meetings for 2026

Board Meetings are open to all members of the congregation, although only the officers of the Board, Elders, and all Deacons can vote on items of business. Cabinet Meetings are for Officers of the Board and Committee Chairs. Meetings are held on Sunday mornings after the Worship service has concluded, unless scheduled on another date/time. * We are still looking for a Vice Chair for 2026. If you are interested, please contact Judie Holmer, Chair of the Board (304) 890-6042 or churchjudie@gmail.com

January 18th-Board Meeting

February 15th - Cabinet Meeting

March 15th - Board Meeting

April 19th - Cabinet Meeting

May 17th - Board Meeting

June 21st - Cabinet Meeting

July 19th-Board Meeting

August 16th-Cabinet Meeting

September 20th-Board Meeting

October 18th-Cabinet Meeting

November 15th-Board meeting

December—Congregational Meeting

REMEMBER TO SIGN UP ON THE
2026 Flower calendar - in the Narthex



FEBRUARY BELL

Bell articles for the February Bell are due by 9am January 30th.



Elders Prayer Update Bell Edition

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." - Isaiah 7:14

Please keep these family, friends and neighbors in your daily thoughts and prayers. Send a card, call on the phone or make a visit. Let them know they are not forgotten.

Edward G. is in the hospital undergoing tests. (Cindy and family)

Prayers for Greg H. who has received a cancer diagnosis. (Diane B.)

Melanie is being treated for infection and will have surgery. (Diane B.)

Diane, multiple family health concerns. (Kathy)

Diane, a friend of Kathy's, family tensions which are seriously straining relationships. (Kathy)

Please continue to keep all of the families who have lost loved ones in your prayers. (15th Avenue Church family)

Prayers for Lynne and Steve Sheese' grandson, Ethan. (Steve and Lynne)

Dennis Popp is recovering from two falls and a visit to the emergency room. (Helen)

Alice (Sandy, Mable & family)

Brad, cancer. (Son of Sally's friend)

Continued prayers for Bert Mayne, who is now at Celebrate in Moline. (Family)

Olivet Jagusah needs prayer for serious health concerns. (Sheila and family)

Kathy O. undergoing cancer treatments in Houston (Helen)

Don Young continues to receive weekly treatments. (Sheri & family)

Chris will continue her treatment program for another month, and appreciates continued prayer. (Kathy Weston)

Mona (Alice and Mable)

Lorraine, cancer diagnosis (Sally and Gene)

Jeremy (Grindley family)

Gail, health challenges (Sally and Gene)

Prayers for Barb for an upcoming lung biopsy. (Kathy)

Karen, prayers for a possible auto-immune disorder. (Kathy)

A cousin, Stacey, needs prayer following a cancer diagnosis (Jeanie)

Lili (9 yrs old) leukemia treatments and recovery process (family)

Judy Turner, lymphoma treatments (Craig & family)

Tyler (Jeanne K.)

Joetta E. tumors (in-operable) Family

Pam DeSmet (family)

Continued prayers for Julianna and Hector (Jeanie)

Emma (Jeanie) / Hunter (family)

Julie (cancer)

Brenda O. (family)

Carla / Rosalie / Molly / Mary / Nickie (family)

Nancy G., cancer (family)

Dawn F. (family)

Kent Christensen (Kathy & family)

Calendar 2026

15th Avenue
Christian
Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3
4 8:30am Elder Mtg 9:30am Service	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 9:30am Service Food Pantry	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 9:30am Service 10:30am Board Meeting	19 Martin Luther King Day Office Closed	20	21	22	23	24
25 9:30am Service	26	27	28	29	30 9am Bell Deadline	31

Serving Elders
4 Diane Block
11 Steve Swanson
18 Mark Carlson
25 Lisa Hatlett
Visiting Elders
Helen Popp and Steve Swanson

Serving Deacons
HD Jackie Flemming, Sally Bar- tosh, Grace Carlson and Marcia Swanson
Preparing Deacon
Lisa Hatlett

Flowers
4
11 Lisa Hatlett
18
25



January



31 Day Scripture Writing Plan

Each of the scriptures below takes ten minutes or less to write out.
Commit to spending ten minutes each day listening to God's voice
as you simply copy these texts out of your Bible.

Day 1- Isaiah 43:16-19
Day 2- Lamentations 3:22-26
Day 3- Ecclesiastes 3:11-15
Day 4- Psalm 98:1-9
Day 5- Psalm 90: 12-17
Day 6- Jeremiah 29:11-14
Day 7- Philippians 3:7-14
Day 8- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Day 9- 1 Peter 1:3-9
Day 10- Mark 12:28-33

Day 11- Ezekiel 36:24-28
Day 12- 1 Chronicles 16:8-14
Day 13- Colossians 3:12-17
Day 14- Hebrews 12:7-13
Day 15- Isaiah 40:28-31
Day 16- Philippians 4:4-9
Day 17- Luke 14:28-35
Day 18- Romans 12:1-8
Day 19- Romans 12:9-16
Day 20- Romans 12:17-21

Day 21- Psalm 37:1-6
Day 22- Psalm 37:7-11
Day 23- Psalm 37:18-19, 23-24, 27-28
Day 24- 2 Peter 1:1-4
Day 25- 2 Peter 1:5-11
Day 26- Romans 8:18-25
Day 27- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
Day 28- Psalm 27:1-4
Day 29- Psalm 27:5-8
Day 30- Psalm 27:9-14
Day 31- Choose your own verse



Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.
Psalm 119:18