



The Connection

August 2025

A Monthly Newsletter of Turner Christian Church

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Dear Church... from Pastor Matt

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. (Mt. 5:8)

What does it mean to have a “pure heart?” I always thought of perfection—having no “impure” thoughts. I imagined that “purity of heart” meant having the discipline and focus to prevent bad thoughts from entering the mind. Of course, I found that goal impossible. It’s hard enough not to dwell on impure thoughts, but to keep them from even entering the mind? That was beyond me!

The problem with my way of thinking was that I started with impurity—which I assumed meant evil or sinful things—rather than starting with purity. What does purity mean? To be pure is to be made out of only one substance. A piece of Jewelry is made of pure gold if there are no traces of other metal in it—only gold. It doesn’t matter whether the “impurity” is silver or iron—having any other metal in the jewelry makes it impure.

So when Jesus talks about having a pure heart, he’s not talking about keeping out evil thoughts—it would be closer to say that he wants us to keep out every thought but one. This is why James says, “Purify your hearts, you double-minded. (4:8)” To be pure in heart, you must not have two different things in your mind—only one.

Of course, this only seems to make things harder. Now I’m supposed to suppress every other thought except one? How am I supposed to do that?! Well, there’s one more step to make. Remember that Jesus says, “Purify your heart,” not your mind. In the New Testament, your heart is the place of your will—the place where you make decisions and set priorities. Soren Kierkegaard famously said that “Purity of heart is to will one thing”—meaning that we only want one thing, only seek after one thing. Everything we do, every decision we make, is aimed toward God.

Here’s the kicker: in a way, this is always true of each of us. All of our desires are always aimed at God, because God is what we all really want and need. We were made by God, for God. Our hearts are restless, Augustine wrote, “until they find their rest in God. The prob-

lem is that we have each become fractured by sin, and our desires have gotten twisted and bent away from where they are supposed to go. In our fallen state, our heart leads us in all different directions, often at the same time, trying to find our fulfillment, but all along the only thing we really want or need is God.”

Purifying your heart, then, isn’t really about suppressing thoughts or sacrificing our desires, so much as it is refocusing them on God. Each desire you have is really a bent desire for God, and only he can really fulfill it. I am very much a rookie at this myself, but let me suggest an experiment for you. When your heart begins to pull you in a direction, ask yourself, “How is this desire really a desire for God? How did it get bent out of place? And how can I satisfy the real desire in my heart?”

Let me give you an example. There once were two sisters, Mary and Martha. When Jesus came to visit them, Mary sat and listened at Jesus’ feet while Martha did all the work to prepare the meal. Finally Martha became so frustrated that she asked Jesus to send Mary back to help. What did Jesus say?

“Martha, Martha... you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41-42)

Notice what Jesus says: “You are worried and upset about many things.” The problem isn’t that she was working to prepare the meal—the problem was that she had become so focused on preparing that she forgot who she was preparing for. The true desire of her heart was to know and be known by Jesus. This is why she was making the meal. But her worry and concern split her attention: getting the meal done right and making sure Mary did her part became distractions from the true desire. Even if Mary had gotten up and helped, it would not have given Martha what she truly desired. Only being with Jesus could do that. On the other hand, with Jesus at the center of her will, everything Martha did to honor and serve him—even the dishes—could be utterly fulfilling as it brings her heart closer to him.



Little Lamb Christian Preschool

A Note from Our Director, Bethany Robinson

As we approach the start of a new school year, I can hardly believe that this will be my third year as the director of Little Lamb Preschool! Each year brings a fresh start and a clean slate, and I can feel the excitement as I begin preparing for a classroom filled with new faces and returning students.

This year, we will welcome children from diverse backgrounds: some may already know Jesus, while others may be meeting Him for the first time here at preschool. Many will eagerly walk through our doors, filled with excitement, while others may feel anxious about separating from their parents and meeting new teachers. It is our mission to nurture each child's unique journey and create a warm, welcoming environment for everyone.

We take intentional time and thought to design our classrooms to meet the needs of all our students. Setting up the space thoughtfully helps ease the transition for our little ones, making them feel comfortable and excited about their new surroundings.

If you're interested in helping us prepare our classroom this month, we would greatly appreciate any contributions. We have created an Amazon wish list containing some essential items we use throughout the year as well as new manipulatives for the classroom. Your generosity will directly impact the resources available to our students.

Additionally, I invite you to join us in prayer for our preschool community as we embark on this new year. If you find some time at the church over the next month, please feel free to come down and pray over our space. Together, we can fill our classrooms with love, hope, and prayers for our students. Thank you for your continued support. I am looking forward to another wonderful year at Little Lamb Preschool, working hand-in-hand with each of you to provide the best possible experience for our children.



← Preschool Amazon
Wish List



I've been thinking... From Pastor Rachel

About how special my time here has been. . .

The last years hold so many memories—of laughter, of worship, of loss (too many funerals of people we all love), of healing and of hope. This congregation has been so loving and kind to me—and I will miss you.

It's been an interesting month. I told my dad a few days into the month, "I don't think I can do this," because it is so hard to say so many goodbyes. It's hard to leave a church. And yet, at the same time, as my chapter here is ending, it's obvious that God is continuing to unfold wonderful things here at TCC. A mother told me her kids had ended up at VBS because of Casey. A different parent said her child wanted to serve on the A/V team—and the family had already talked about reaching to our A/V head, Ben. Someone else had an idea for programming, someone else volunteered for a role they don't normally do . . . and on and on, as the church does what it does best—acts as the church to one another, taking care of each other and being a light in this community.

But it's hard to let go of something that I have valued so much, and a role that I have been honored to inhabit. It's hard to take a backseat and trust that God knows what he's doing.

And yet, as I have sought to let go of my desire to control and have tried to get comfortable in the backseat, God has shown me again and again that he really has all this covered. He knows what is best for this congregation, he knows what he is doing in my life, and he loves you all more than I ever could.

I will miss you all so much, *and*, I believe that God is doing an incredible work in and through you in this season. This loss has purpose.

So, with deep, deep love, and profound gratitude, I repeat to you what Pastor Matt says every Sunday: Stay healthy, stay hopeful, and go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Rachel

JOB OPENINGS!

TCC is currently hiring for two open positions:

Office Administrator (30 hrs. per week)

Church Treasurer (10 hrs. per week)

Anyone interested in either position can go to
<http://www.turnerchristianchurch.com/jobs>
for information and instructions on how to apply

Please pray for the hiring process as we look for
our new staff team members!

A Note from Linda Shearer:

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the cards of condolences for the passing of my mother. She lived a full life, albeit the past several years were tough due to dementia. She's in heaven now!

I cherish your prayers given the past few months while she was on hospice. It's a comfort to know that our sorrows of this life are shared by such special Christian friends.

Linda & D.H.



August is almost here, and that means that our Annual Packing Party is just a few short weeks away. We are so excited to get to share this wonderful experience with all of you!

On Sunday afternoon, August 17th, we will be set up in the Salem Evangelical Church GYMNASIUM to fill at least 1200 Shoeboxes to be used as Gospel Opportunities in various countries around the globe. We'd love to have you join us for the fun at 2:00 PM on the 17th and we'd also love to have you join us in preparing for this event.

We are still in need of quite a few items, especially since this is such a BIG project! If you see any crayons on sale, for example, we are still in need of hundreds of 24 count boxes. We still need pencils, sharpeners, erasers, pens, 6" rulers, and scissors. We could use more washcloths, tennis (or similar size) balls, and small filler items like finger puppets and fidget toys. Small baby dolls or Barbies are always needed, and so are Hotwheels, Adventure Force, or Matchbox cars. If you're looking for specific items to purchase, you can also check out our Amazon gift registry. Just search registry for Ann Stoker, then select the Shoebox Work Shoppe 2025 list.

We're also still meeting in our Work Shoppe in Turner each Tuesday at noon to prepare for the Community Packing Party, so please feel free to come on down and see what all the excitement is about.

Thanks for your continuing support of this worldwide mission!



Online:

- Go to www.instantchurchdirectory.com
You can use your web browser, or open the TCC app and find "New Church Directory" under "TCC Community."
- Click the "members" button in the top right.
- Enter your email address. **You must use the email address you gave us for the directory.**
- The site will have you create an account with a password. This ensures that only people *in* the directory can access it.
- That's it! You can log in and access the directory from in internet any time. Just use the web address or the button in the app!

In Print:

We will be offering a print version of the directory once we have the photos ready. We will announce as soon as those are available. In the meantime, **if you didn't get your picture taken for the directory, please feel free to send us a picture of yourself to include.** Email it to office@turnerchristianchurch.com



You are invited to
**Jeanette's
80th Birthday!**

Saturday, August 16, 2025, 2-4pm
Turner Christian Church
Turner, Oregon

Please stop by and wish Jeanette Campbell a Happy Birthday on Saturday, August 16th between 2:00—4:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. No gifts please. Your presence is present enough! We hope to see you there! The Campbell Kids (Jeff, Philip, Sara).

**50/50
CELEBRATION**

**FRANK
&
DEBBIE
LOYD**

August 23, 2025
1:00 - 4:00 pm



50 Years of Marriage



50 Years of Ordained Ministry

Frank & Debbie are celebrating 50 years of marriage and Frank is celebrating 50 years of ordained ministry on Saturday, August 23, 2025 from 1:00—4:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We would love to have you celebrate with us—no gifts, please!



Save the Date for
**OUR OUTDOOR
MOVIE NIGHT!**

Aug. 22nd

Arrive at 7:00 pm - The Movie Will Start at 7:30 pm
Bring your own Chairs to watch the movie
Refreshments will be served!



Seniors Trip
August 2, 2025
8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Bring a friend and Celebrate Oregon's Industrial past with the Great Oregon Steam Up at Powerland Heritage Park in Brooks. Trolley cars, steam engines and much more.

The Congregation is invited
to come along with us!

We will gather in the church parking lot at 8:30 am in the morning and then head to Brooks. There is an entrance fee of (\$17.00); payable at the gate. Youth 13-17 (\$12.00); 12 and under (FREE); for current and/or retired Military with ID or uniform (FREE). There are food trucks at the event if you get hungry!



Seniors Trip - August 12th
Lunch at the Gingerbread House
11:30am-3:30pm

Come join us as we journey "Up the Canyon" to Me-hama to have a no host meal at the Gingerbread House. We will meet at the church parking lot at 10:30 am and return by 3:30 pm. Please sign up either at the registration desk at the church or on the church app:
<https://turnerchristianchurch.subspla.sh/sf3fyvn>



Seniors' Bowling Trip

Join us for an exciting afternoon at the Northgate Bowling Alley in Salem. The cost is \$5.00 per bowler which includes shoes and bowling ball. We will leave the TCC parking lot at 1:00 and return about 3:30.
<https://turnerchristianchurch.subspla.sh/fr8zrzr>

Are you looking for a time where you can get away with the whole family? How about a time where you and your family can grow in your faith and worship with other families? What about a sandy beach and a glassy lake? If all of these sound great, then Family Camp is for you! For four days, families come together for a camp experience for all ages!

FAMILY CAMP 2025

AUGUST 29-SEPTEMBER 1

Wi-Ne-Ma Family Camp (with Turner Christian Church)

Wi-Ne-Ma Family camp is a great chance for church members of all ages to camp together with other Christians from around the Northwest. TCC has reserved an area at camp for our families to camp next to each other. This means you can camp next to people you already know, AND it means we can pool resources for people who may not be used to camping or have all the supplies. If you would like to register for Family Camp with us, please follow these steps:

1. Join the Chat, or contact the church

(Go to TCC Community >>> Chat Rooms >> Discover > Family Camp 2025 on the Church App)

(Go to Connect >> TCC Messaging > Family Camp 2025 on the Church Website)

If you have questions, or if you need/want to coordinate with other people (Maybe you want to do, but you need a tent--or to share someone else's camp stove?), please reach out. You can either contact the church office, or you can join the chat room for Family Camp and ask questions/make plans there.

2. Register with Us - <https://subsplash.com/turnerchristianchurch/lb/ev/+2m5n6kz>

Use our event page to check and reserve the kind of spot you would like. There are a limited number of hook-ups in the TCC area, and those are reserved through our events page. But remember, you aren't registered for camp until you register with them!

3. Register with Wi-Ne-Ma - <https://winema.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2702189>

When you register, in the box labelled "Do you have any requests," tell them you are camping with TCC.