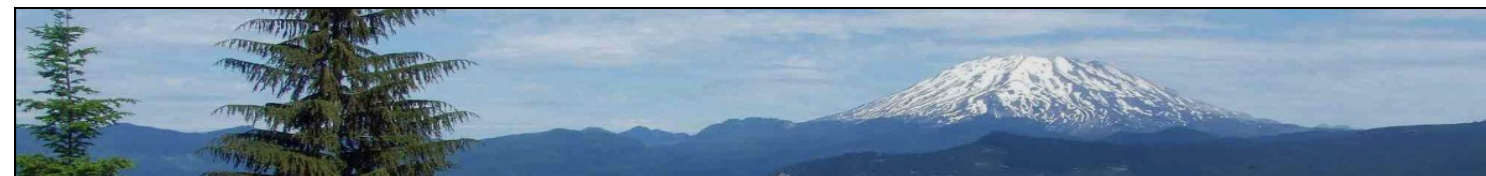




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## JANUARY

### DEACON OF THE MONTH

Debbie Engley



### SOLVE THE RIDDLES

What did the book do  
in January before  
heading back to  
school?

In me, you might find  
strength or doubt, as  
I'm a promise made to  
change one's route.  
What am I?

Stumped?  
See page 5 for the  
answers.

As you enjoy reading  
the Newsletter try to  
find the hidden cross  
somewhere in  
the newsletter.  
It looks like this.



# THE CHURCH BELL

Published Monthly

Volume 49, No. 1

"Yet when Jesus heard that [his friend] Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days." [And he died.] John 11:6 [my paraphrasing]

This is a difficult story to process. Why would Jesus wait and not hurry off to Bethany to attend to his good friend when learned that he was sick? Healing the sick was clearly in his wheelhouse. Lazarus' sisters certainly didn't understand why Jesus was NOT in a hurry to arrive at their brother's bedside. When Jesus finally did arrive, he was several days too late. Lazarus was dead. And his sisters blamed Jesus for it. "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here my brother would not have died."

Throughout the gospels we learn how Jesus was never in a hurry. Whether in his daily life or in his ministry, he proceeded at the same speed. Slow. His disciples, however, and everyone else with such pressing needs were always pushing him to go faster, do more, heal more, raise more...more, more, more.

Who does this sound like? Us and our American culture! Thanks to technology, we are constantly being pressured to go faster, do more, and consume more than ever each and every day. And it's created a disease known as hurried sickness.

Pastor John Mark Comer in his book, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, defines hurried sickness as "A behavior pattern characterized by continual rushing and anxiousness...a malaise in which a person feels chronically short of time, and so tends to perform every task faster and to get flustered when encountering any kind of delay." One cardiologist said that this disease is a major cause of heart attacks among particularly type A people. Got your attention?

But friends, Jesus was not like this. He was never driven by the intense ministry demands nor the unending to do list of his day. No. He was slow. Intentionally slow.

I was convicted by this at a recently personal spiritual retreat at Mount Angel Abbey in Mount Angel, Oregon. This is a place that I have gone to for years when I have needed to slow down so that I could get in touch with my soul. This past Advent season, I had gone there to get away to a private place where I could be with God and listen for His small quiet voice. And God said, "Chris, you've got to slow down. It's killing your soul." So that got me thinking, certainly I'm not the only one who suffers from this disease.

Starting in January 2026 all the way through Easter, we will be looking at the Gospels and specifically at Jesus' slow pace of life and ministry. We will learn from him and take his unhurried yoke upon us. For here we will find rest for our weary souls.

Looking forward to all that God is going to teach us together this next year at the speed of Jesus.

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Chris Montovino, Pastor

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**  
**9am Sunday School**  
**10:15am Worship Service**

**1st Happy New Year!**

**4th Pancake Breakfast 9am**

**10th Men's Bible Study Breakfast 8am**

**18th Top of the Hill after Worship Service**

**22nd Martin Luther King Jr. Day—Office Closed**

**24th CPC Women's Gathering 8:30am**

**25th Annual Congregational Meeting after Worship Service**







DECEMBER SESSION NOTES

Pastor Chris started with a devotion from Max Lucado’s Advent Devotional called *In the Manger*. Reviewed stewardship results, made adjustments to the 2026 budget to reflect pledged income, and approved final budget. Janet VanFleet gave update on Team Construction’s design and costing for the Kitchen Remodeling Project. Longest Night Service planned for Wed December 17. Selected Family Promise of Clark County as this year’s Christmas Eve Offering recipient. Discussed new people who have come to Cascades recently. Looking at a New Members Gathering soon. Began discussing book *Canoeing the Mountains* about the importance of adaptive change in our culture and in the Church. Overall we see progress in our church ministry and mission. Seeing how people in our church give of themselves so selflessly in many ways. Looking forward to slowing down over the Christmas holidays, spending time with family, focusing on what’s truly important, and spending more time in prayer.

TOP OF THE HILL



All seniors in our church family are invited to gather for our Top of the Hill Senior Potluck on Sunday, January 18 following the church service. Top of the Hill meets the third Sunday of each month and will include discussion topics or information shared by members or guests. All seniors are welcome.

HELP TO PUT AWAY DECORATIONS



We will be packing away all the wonderful Christmas decorations on Monday, January 5th, 10am to noon. We are in need of some helping hands for this task. If you would like to help, please contact Laura Livingston, Worship Arts Elder.

Reading Thru the Bible...

**The Bible Recap** is a 365-Day Chronological Reading Plan you can start any day of the year. Reading through the Bible chronologically takes you through the story of Scripture as it happened. It helps you to see where and how it all fits together. When you read through the entire Bible it helps you see the big picture of God & what He is trying to tell us about Himself. Hopefully after the last 2 months of reading you have developed a habit and maybe even an excitement for the Word of God and for what might come next in your reading! Let’s keep that momentum going and get a great start as we begin the New Year! If you are not able to read every day you can keep track of where you are by marking the boxes or just read on the days that you can. The most important thing is to keep reading and don’t give up! An option to reading would be to listen to the Bible on an app such as YouVersion®. As a help for understanding what you are reading each day you may want to purchase “*The Bible Recap One Year Guide*.” More info for The Bible Recap can be found at [thebible Recap.com](http://thebible Recap.com)

Day 001	Day 002	Day 003	Day 004	Day 005	Day 006	Day 007
Gen 1-3	Gen 4-7	Gen 8-11	Job 1-5	Job 6-9	Job 10-13	Job 14-16
JAN 1						
Day 008	Day 009	Day 010	Day 011	Day 012	Day 013	Day 014
Job 17-20	Job 21-23	Job 24-28	Job 29-31	Job 32-34	Job 35-37	Job 38-39
JAN 8						
Day 015	Day 016	Day 017	Day 018	Day 019	Day 020	Day 021
Job 40-42	Gen 12-15	Gen 16-18	Gen 19-21	Gen 22-24	Gen 25-26	Gen 27-29
JAN 15						
Day 022	Day 023	Day 024	Day 025	Day 026	Day 027	Day 028
Gen 30-31	Gen 32-34	Gen 35-37	Gen 38-40	Gen 41-42	Gen 43-45	Gen 46-47
JAN 22						
Day 029	Day 030	Day 031				
Gen 48-50	Exo 1-3	Exo 4-6				
JAN 29						

NEW MEMBERS GATHERING

Have you been attending Cascades for a little while and are interested in possibly joining the church as a member or transferring your membership from another location? Join the session for a breakfast fellowship on a Saturday (from 9am to noon) coming soon and to learn more about what fuels our mission, vision, and plans for the future. Contact Elders Jerry Cochran, Jeff Engley, or Pastor Chris Montovino for more details.

2026 ANNUAL MEETING

Active members and friends of the Congregation are invited to gather after worship on Sunday January 25 for our annual meeting, to receive the 2025 Annual Report, to set Pastor Chris’s terms of call for 2026 and to field any questions about the 2026 Budget. Please plan to stay and join us!



WORSHIP ENVISIONING COMMITTEE

The Worship Envisioning Committee will be wrapping up their preliminary review of many different facets of worship in January. This review has resulted in some insights and revealed the challenges of worship at Cascades. The committee will use the results to prepare a series of interview questions for advisory members of the congregation. We hope to begin these interviews starting in February. If you were previously contacted to help as an Advisor, we do hope you will be willing to participate in our interviews. We will start scheduling the interviews soon.

So what will we do with the interview results? The Committee will meet and roll up the interview results into a series of recommendations for additions, modification and possible retirement of some worship practices. The recommendations will also include resource estimates and timelines for implementation. We hope by summer to be able to brief the congregation on these recommendations. If you have any questions about the Envisioning Committee’s efforts please contact Laura Livingston, Worship Arts Elder.

BAPTISM

Have you been baptized yet as a public way to acknowledge your decision to follow Jesus Christ? Or have you considered baptizing your children in the faith that you hope for them to follow throughout their lives? On January 11, we will be celebrating Jesus’ baptism who paved the way for all believers to also show others that they are beloved children of God who have been signed as God’s special creation, sealed with the Holy Spirit, delivered from the grips of sin. If God is prompting you to take this special step in your walk with Jesus, talk to Pastor Chris and let’s celebrate your baptism on January 11th as well.

WOMEN OF CASCADES

All women of Cascades are invited to join us **Saturday January 24 from 8:30-10:00 am**. Bring something to share for a casual breakfast and prepare for a time of connection and opportunity to learn and share with other women. Debbie Engley will lead our conversation on “the aroma of faith”. Mark your calendar for **March 21 and June 6 from 8:30-10 am for future women’s gatherings**.



JANUARY NEW SHOES

January New Shoes, New Smiles, Shoe Drive  
Silver Star Elementary School is in need of tennis shoes, socks and underwear for kids of all ages and sizes. During the month of January, please help us fill our basket in the entry with donations and imagine the happy smiles of kiddos who receive them.



2026 STEWARDSHIP RESULTS

We’ve tallied our pledges for 2026 and received responses from 45 giving units totaling \$236,000. This is an increase of 5 giving units and \$12,100 from our 2025 pledges. Thank you to the entire congregation for your continued generosity and faithfulness. The Session meeting in December made reductions in our planned 2026 budget to reflect the pledged giving. Praise God for his blessings this past year and into the new year!