
THE CURRENT

Celebrating 80 Years

Tates Creek Christian Church

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Go and make disciples of all nations

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From the Pastor's Desk

Anniversaries are important. I can still remember learning this inescapable fact at the young age of seven. I was in the second grade and failed to properly celebrate my two week anniversary with my elementary school girlfriend. Lesson learned. Ever since I've tried hard to acknowledge milestones as they come along. Just this past summer, my wife and I celebrated 18 years of marriage. With twenty right around the corner, I've already started taking suggestions!

November marks the 80th anniversary of Bates Creek Christian Church. Eighty years of faithful service to Jesus with the mission of reaching not only our city, but the world for Jesus. Eighty years of countless Bible studies, summer camps, trips, concerts, sermons, and prayer groups. Eighty years of families growing together in faith. Eighty years of serving our community and helping the hurting. Eighty years of following our Lord and Savior. Over that time we've seen hundreds come to know Jesus and our prayer is to see hundreds more.

In light of this important milestone, we take the time to reflect and give thanks for all that God has done through Bates Creek Christian Church. We look towards our future with great anticipation of what's to come. I believe deeply that the words Jesus said to Nathanael are true to His people today, "You shall see greater things than these." I pray we continue to see greater things!

- Justin Fluhr



Conversation with Chris Lee

Chris Lee has spent nearly his whole life as part of the Tates Creek Christian Church family. We asked him to share about his journey of faith, the moments that have shaped him, and what excites him about the church today.

1. How long have you been coming to Tates Creek, and what first brought you here?

“I’ve been attending Tates Creek Christian since I was a kid. Mom and Dad brought us to the old church in Chevy Chase I believe in 1965. They started at Gardenside Christian and were the first couple married in the new Gardenside Christian Building by Rev. Cotton Jones. Then some friends invited them to Tates Creek, and they visited and later joined, and it’s been our home ever since.”

2. How has your faith grown or changed since you became part of Tates Creek?

“Well the foundation of my Christian walk began right here at here at Tates Creek Christian and my faith was nurtured and fed and formed throughout the years here by so many people along the way. And by simply witnessing the love, devotion and faithfulness of folks around me, it continues to be strengthened and refreshed every day. It has just been a huge blessing to be raised in a church family that was so faithful and dedicated to the work of the Lord and to have a real church family who genuinely cared about you and your Christian walk.”



3. What's one moment, event, or experience at Tates Creek that has deeply impacted you?

"I have a couple. The first would be a revival we had at the old church on High Street back in 1972. That's what led my myself, my brother, and a friend of ours to come forward and dedicate our lives to the Lord. We were later baptized in the basement of that old church by Brad Walden our long-time minister. Several years later, on Brad's last Sunday here, I came forward again to rededicate myself.

And I better mention another one too which was the day I first attended the Seekers Sunday School Class 33 years ago. Now I know what you're thinking . . . how could attending Kent Mason's class be an impactful event? (I kid). Well, that's the day I met my wife, Donna. The story goes, Kent had been after me for a while to come to his class and if you know Kent he can be persistent. Still, I resisted with one excuse after another, until one day he mentioned there were some new young ladies in the class. Sooo . . . the next Sunday I dropped in for class and met Donna and her sisters. The following week we met again at the church picnic and that's what led to the family I'm blessed with today. It's been a blessing to have been a part of the Seekers family all the years as well!"

4. Who are some people at Tates Creek who have influenced your walk with Christ, and how?

"When you've been some place 60 years, so many folks have played an important part. Mike Sandlin (and his wife Lee), our youth minister at the time, is one I have to mention. He knew how to mix fun with ministry and that made an impression on a young teenage boy. It helped he was a sports nut like me and a big kid at heart too. I'll never forget some of the intense games of Nerf Basketball we played in the classrooms downstairs. Mike also had a passion for Jesus that rubbed off on all of us and that made a real difference. As I said, there have been so many more through the years, men and women alike. Each of our ministers from Brother Brad, Steve Perry, Tommy and Justin have made a real difference in my life. Kent Mason has not only been a teacher but a close friend. And Ernie Perry has been a mentor for me and so many others here as he challenges us to grow as Christian men. Just this entire church family has been a huge blessing to myself and my family."

5. How have you found ways to serve or get involved at Tates Creek, and what has that meant to you?

“I was privileged to grow up in this place where I witnessed Christian service all around me for years. I watched my father, and so many others that I looked up to, serve selflessly so I felt an urging to do so as well. I’ve been blessed to serve as an Elder and Deacon here and be a part of several other ministries through the years including the Men’s Ministry, The Barnabas Ministry, The Local Missions Team, and the former Room in the Inn Ministry. Also been a long-time member of the Seekers Sunday School Class.

Although I felt a calling to follow the examples I witnessed and to do my part, I’d be lying to say I was always eager to do so. It took a lot of encouragement and prodding from others for me get out of my comfort zone and jump in and get involved. I’m so glad they did because it’s ended up being a blessing for me. So, if you are thinking of getting involved in an area of service, I’ll do like those before me and strongly encourage you to do so, because God’s family needs you and I can assure you you’ll be blessed by it.”



6. Has there been a time in your life when the church community really supported you through something difficult?

“There have been many times I’ve leaned on my church family here but the one that probably stands out the most is when we lost Mom. Our mom was a special lady, well loved by everyone here and she fought a three-year battle with brain cancer that she lost 14 years ago. All through that battle, the love from this family surrounded ours and it made such a difference. With every encouraging word, thoughtful note, friendly visit, and warm embrace it not only provided the support we needed, but it increased our own faith even more by seeing Jesus every day in those around us. We were blessed with parents who instilled a strong sense of family, and they had a gift of extending that feeling to others beyond our own. I think that’s why they made Tates Creek their church home, they found their extended family here too.”



7. What excites you most about what God is doing at Tates Creek right now?

“There’s a lot to be encouraged by at Tates Creek today. I love to see all the new faces each week and folks from so many different age groups and cultures and backgrounds. It’s exciting to see more young families with all the kids running around like we used to. The new kid’s area is unbelievable and a far cry from the old musty basement classroom we all crammed into back in the day! The most exciting thing to me is just seeing how God has brought this family back together again. Covid was hard on churches including ours, but this family held together and welcomed so many new faces into it to continue the legacy of Christian service it has displayed for the past 80 years. It’s exciting to see what God has in store next!”

As Tates Creek Christian Church celebrates 80 years of ministry, Chris’s story is a reminder of what those decades have meant. From a teenager in a youth group to a husband, father, and servant-leader, his journey mirrors the church’s own heartbeat—steady faith, deep relationships, and lives changed by Christ. Eight decades in, TCCC continues to be a place where stories like Chris’s are still being written, and where God’s faithfulness is as evident today as it was at the very beginning.



Chris Lee
Elder



Nathan Campbell
Student Minister



The Year that Changed The World





1.

The End of WWII

In a single year, both the German and Japanese armies surrender. The world is introduced to the Atomic Bomb and we entered into the beginning phases of the Cold War.

2.

The Rise of the Suburbs

As military men returned home from battle, families began to relocate from the factory filled cities to the white picket fences of home ownership. It also launched the birth of the Baby Boomer Generation.





3.

The Age of Television

Following the war, the ban on television manufacturing was lifted and the mass production began. TV slowly began to overtake the radio as America's primary source of news and entertainment.

4.

The Birth of a Church

For the shocking cost of \$3,500, Broadway Christian Church bought a small piece of land on High Street in order to plant a new church. They built a small building for just \$1,500. The year 1945 was a year that certainly changed the global community and the landscape of our country. But the birth of a new church in Lexington, Kentucky would change the shape of eternity. We are grateful for what would later become Tates Creek Christian Church. We celebrate our past, but long for what God will do in the next 80 years!



40+ Years at Tates Creek

Brenda and her husband, Larry, have been members of Tates Creek Christian Church for more than 40 years. I recently had the privilege of sitting down with Brenda to reflect on her journey of faith and service here at TCCC.

What first drew you here, and what has kept you here all these years?

“Right after we were married—43 years ago—I started attending Tates Creek with Larry. Of course, there have been challenges and bumps along the way, but we have always been devoted to the work of the church. We’ve always felt the Lord calling us to be a stable, familiar presence for those who are here now and those who will come in the future.”

How has your faith grown or been shaped through this church?

“When I came to Tates Creek, I was just 25 years old. Over the years, I’ve grown and matured in my faith by attending, serving, and standing strong in obedience to the Lord. Larry and I were mentored by his mom, his family, individuals in the congregation and couples who had been married for 50+ years at the church. Their faithfulness left a lasting impact on us. My sister friends in my circle have also played a big part in my faith journey over the years. I’ve always followed Larry’s leadership in attending, serving, and being part of the church.”



Do you have a favorite memory from your years here?

“I don’t have one specific memory—it’s more of a collection of special moments. Church picnics, gatherings of the church body, young people who have grown up and reached back out after years and the unity we’ve shared as a congregation all stand out to me.”

How have you seen the church change or grow over the years?
“In the past, and even some today, there was a lot of focus on what clothing was considered ‘appropriate’ for church. I’m thankful that has shifted. It’s not about what we wear, but about who we live for and serve. We can unite to serve Him no matter our outward appearance.”



What’s a favorite hymn, event, or ministry that stands out in your memory?
“Larry and I have been blessed to serve in many ministries. We taught elementary students for 32 years and college-aged students for 13 years. We especially love serving in the choir. Some of my favorite hymns are ‘In the Garden’ and ‘I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.’ I’m thankful that the choir is recognized as a true ministry here at TCCC—it’s an honor to serve Him in that way.”

How has the church supported you through difficult seasons?
“Our church family has been such a blessing—through the birth of a premature baby, navigating the challenges of new parenthood, and the loss of loved ones. We’ve felt love and encouragement through prayers, phone calls, cards, and meals prepared for us. That support has meant so much.”

What advice would you give to younger generations in our church today?
“Come and see—taste and see—that the Lord is good. He is faithful, and the family of God is good.”



*Brenda
Critchfield*



*Dawn Vela
Children’s Director*

Looking Back, Pressing On

Each year that goes by, we reflect on all the changes that come our way. When our boys were young, they each looked forward to the next birthday, and how they might spend that special day. I would tease and say, “we aren’t celebrating your birthday, because you only have one.” Each year is actually the anniversary of your birth. Our wedding anniversaries are special as we remember that important day in our lives. As our boys married, we took time to celebrate. And as the grandchildren came, again, with each and everyone it was a time for family celebrations. In amongst the celebrating came times of sorrow as we bid loved-ones good-bye. In all these occasions we pause to reflect and remember.

Karen and I have now been here at Tates Creek Christian Church for only 6 years, and the changed we have seen in that short time, seems small considering it’s 80-year history. I have read all the historical facts about our Church and find them very interesting indeed, as the Lord has blessed this great work. I know the sacrifices that have been made by many. I have seen the way God has worked to change lives. At this point, it is only in my mind to visualize what He might have in-store for this church’s on-going history. And I am proud to be just a small part in His plan.

Music has played an important role in the life of Tates Creek Christian Church. It was a blessing to talk with several choir members about the role that music has played in blessing their lives. More importantly, there is the role that it plays in serving others with their giftedness.

Larry Smith, one of our faithful choir members, has spent a good deal of his life serving Lord and this church. He was here, spent time in leadership, served in music ministry at Southern Acres, and returned to faithfully use his giftedness to bless our church.

Barbara Walden, the faithful preachers wife, has used her gifts, both playing the piano and singing in the choir for many years. Even after Brad’s death, she has remained in dedicated service to this church. Her faithfulness still shines brightly.



Then, there is Carolyn Nipper from one of our long-time faithful families, who basically grew to adulthood here, became a servant of Christ at Milligan University, and at retirement came home to keep serving and working for the Lord and showing her faithfulness to Christ.

From a young girl, Gail (Critchfield) Morrison, has been faithful. She explains, "I started singing in the choir when Brenda Morrison served as choir director. That was around 1971-72. Brenda and Jim were attending UK at the time working on their master's degrees. Since Brenda was a music/vocal major and TCCC needed a choir director, Brad Walden encouraged her to apply for the job and she got it. I guess you could say, choir was responsible for Terry and me meeting and eventually marrying. Because Jim and Brenda were attending TCCC, when Terry returned to finish his law degree after getting out of the army, he would attend TCCC sometimes when he didn't go to "Christian Student Fellowship" on campus. Brad had me stand in Sunday School and read scripture so Terry would know who I was. The rest is history. Since I have been in the choir we have had several directors. After Brenda Morrison, Evelyn Seymore directed us followed by Paula Neal, Curt Jones, Danny Branham, Don SeEVERS, and now Dan Craig. I have enjoyed being a part of the choir all these years, as it allowed me to use my ability to sing and it has provided great friendships."



God has sent so many talented people here. Some are here for a short period of time, and some spend years, and so goes the seasons of life. And God keeps using people, where they are, and for His purpose. There are many more faithful servants in our music ministry, and I trust there will be even more. It is so important as we look back, and then, visualize what God has in-store for our future.

Steve Green wrote a song, some years back entitled "Find Us Faithful". The chorus goes like this:
*"O may all who come behind us find us faithful
May the fire of our devotion light their way
May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe
And the lives we live inspire them to obey.
O may all who come behind us find us faithful"*

This church's faithfulness to scripture, to God, and the teaching of Jesus Christ, will be the example the next generation needs from us. Traditions change, music changes, technology changes, all at a very rapid pace, so we must remain faithful to His calling in our lives.

O may all who come behind us find us faithful.

*Dan Craig
Worship Minister*



On the Move in Mexico

This year's Anniversary Offering will be used to support Greg and Vicki Syverson's On the Move Training program in Pachuca, Mexico. On the Move is an annual, three-month training school focused on evangelism, discipleship, and church planting. According to Greg, the program "seeks to train the average Christian to 'do the works of ministry' (Ephesians 4:12) so they are better equipped to reach people with the love and life-changing power of Jesus in their jobs, schools, neighborhoods, etc." In addition to equipping students in biblical knowledge and evangelistic know-how, they also emphasize forming family/community wherever they go, whether in Mexico or beyond. The ultimate goal is that these families/communities will become church plants that multiply into a national and global church planting movement.





On the Move Graduation

Some students in the program are residential students from different parts of Mexico and other countries who live in rented dormitory facilities and are involved in morning, afternoon, and evening sessions. The students are active in classes and hands on evangelism. Many students from the local areas have jobs and families and are part-time students, attending the evening sessions only. The program is designed so that the main content is presented in the evening sessions when all of these students who want to enter ministry can participate together.

On the Move has been very successful. Ministers and missionaries from other countries have asked Greg and Vicki to bring the program to their areas. Finances and man power have prevented this thus far, but each year, On the Move graduates disperse to many locations to spread the Gospel and build the world-wide Christian community.

*Carolyn Nipper
Global Missions*





3150 Tate's Creek Rd
Lexington, KY 40502