



JANUARY 7, 2026

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THE MESSENGER

BRENTHAVEN CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A welcoming community of Christian disciples seeking to love and serve God and neighbor

615-373-4826

www.brenthaven.org

NEW YEAR REFLECTIONS

This past Sunday, we hosted an organ concert featuring Amity Marsh and guest organist, Brenda Johnson. It was a beautiful concert with a wide variety of pieces that really showcased the extensive capabilities of our relatively new organ.

We hosted guests from throughout the Nashville area. It was a pleasure to welcome them in and give them a brief tour of our church facilities. It was a time of reminiscing for me as well. Our original church building was completed in 1971, and we moved to Brentwood from First Church, which was located just south of the Melrose area of Nashville. I was nine at the time.

As a new year tends to prompt anyway, I can't help but reflect on the changes I've seen in our church and in the church body. I think about the fine folks I've gotten to know in the last few years and the cherished friends that have been a part of my life for a little over twenty years now, and I can't imagine my life without them in it.

I am so thankful to be a part of a loving, supportive church family. I am so thankful for each choir member who tolerates my crazy warmups and selflessly gives of their time and talent to enhance our worship services. I appreciate the instrumentalists who have joined together to bring a different style of music to the worship service every few months, because worship can be experienced in so many different ways. And I appreciate you, the church family, who are willing to worship God through different styles of music, knowing that the purpose of worship is the praise and reverence of God, and the honor we give to God through our worship and through our lives.

God's blessings on you as we enter this new year! —*Linda*

As winter settles in with cooler temperatures and sparse trees and plants, it is a wonderful opportunity to consider what it means to "rest" and find space for new growth. We can take our cue more from nature instead of traditional New Year's resolutions and the determination to hit the floor running in January. (Do we really need to start the year off with more hustle and bustle after a hectic holiday season of shopping, travel, and holiday events at the end of the year? And are we really accomplishing anything new?) Perhaps this is the time to catch our breath, gather our thoughts, and contemplate the coming year with prayerful and wise introspection. God's creation around us is using this time to rest and prepare for what's coming. On the outside, it looks barren, like nothing is happening, like life has gone out of things. But underneath it all, there is a rich preparation for all the beauty and growth that is soon to come. So may we find rest and renewed strength at the beginning of this year and know that God is working within us, preparing us for the new and beautiful things that will soon spring forth.

"To everything, there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

Blessings! —*Karen*

Last week, the youth group made the long and strenuous journey to the big city of Nashville, Tennessee for our Winter Retreat. I want to tell you about two of our activities that I found particularly fulfilling. The first activity was an accomplishment cake. It's so common for people to look back on the previous year with disdain and sadness, but through an accomplishment cake, each youth wrote down multiple accomplishments that they achieved in 2025 and placed it on the cake together. By the end of the activity, the cake was full of things worthy of celebrating from 2025. The second activity was creating a bingo card for things we would like to do in 2026.

(Continued on page 2.)

Not all of the activities were particularly difficult (one youth wrote a sunrise hike), and like in regular bingo, it's not assumed that every single box will be filled in by the end of the year.

I hope that you also will look back on the joys and successes of 2025 and plan for moments of faith, hope, joy, and love (not just achievement) for 2026. —*Ean*

Have you ever been glad to see a year end? I'm not sure that I have ever come as close as I have this year. Between the struggles at the seminary, the death of our remaining pup after 13 years, seeing the struggles my parents are going through (and not being able to be there enough), and allowing those events to weigh down my spirit and find myself struggling to just to keep going, I'm glad 2025 has come to an end, and we have entered 2026. Yes, I know it is likely the most depressing start to a paragraph that I have ever written, but that's where I have been.

So, as I look to this new year, I enter it with hope. That's where I am. While I will forever miss Oscar and Felix, now we have Tucker. He's not a replacement, but a reminder how much love you can have for those furry little creatures and how much joy they really bring to life. And in just a couple of weeks, we will likely be closing the seminary and though it will hurt, we also will celebrate the decades of ministry and thousands of ministers that came through those hallowed halls. And as I write this from my parent's house, I am reminded that even if I can't be here every day, when I am here, I have an opportunity to care for them and show them how much I do love them (and give my sister a short break). I guess as I enter 2026, I'm trying to work through the struggles by seeking the hope on the other side.

I'm pretty sure that I am not the only one who has had struggles in the past year, and my prayer is that we all follow a star like the wise men, leading us to a place where hope breaks through the sadness, the disappointment, the pain, and introduces us to a gift that transcends it all. So, I will be looking for that star in 2026, because I need it to kick start me, strengthen me, and remind me that I am on a journey, filled with opportunity. May you be blessed as this new year begins and may you remember that God is with us, every step of the way. —*Kip*



BOOKEND BOOK CLUB



The Women of Oakridge, by award-winning Southern fiction author Michelle Shocklee, is January's selection for the **BookEnd Book Club**. They are meeting **Thursday, January 15** at 9:30 am in the Adult Library.

In the hills of Tennessee, two women work at a Manhattan Project site during World War II. They uncover truths that irrevocably change their lives.

JOIN US—CAN YOU DIG IT

Are you dig'n a farm-to-table feast? Then join our dig'ers table for delectable vittles and a lively mustard-seed discussion, sure to nourish your body and soul. We will gather **Saturday, January 24** from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm (location TBD). We are dig'n you joining us, and we promise you'll dig it too.

Hosts are Donna Kirby and Anita Tilley. Please RSVP to one of the hosts if interested.

CPWM NEWS

Our next **CPWM** meeting will be **Tuesday, January 27** at 10:30 am. We will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall to prepare products to help young women in third-world countries so they can attend school. We will be eating here, so bring a lunch.

VBS WINTER OLYMPICS

Brenthaven Church is hosting a one-day winter **Vacation Bible School** event with a Winter Olympics theme. This event will take place on **Saturday, January 31** from 10:00 am–3:00 pm. Look for registration information to come.



There is still time for you to join our new family of recurring donors. **Spark Bearer** recurring donors are the heartbeat of Sacred Sparks Ministry. Your monthly gifts keep our **Loads of Love laundry ministry, community meals, and outreach programs** shining with compassion and care. Every new Spark Bearer helps insure that our neighbors know they are seen, cherished, and loved. (Contact **Lisa Cook** at sacredsparksministry@gmail.com.)

PRAYER CONCERNS

Recent Additions

Darlene & Johnny Rush (*parents of Kip Rush*)

Members

Ty Allen, Jeri Behan, Joan Bledsoe, Phyllis Burkhalter, Ben Davis, David Dowland, Bob Dozier, Marilyn Ewen, Carol Ford, Barbara Gentry, Tim Ghianni, Paul Gonzales, Madge Graves, Suzanne Hawkins, Tommy Hennesy, Barbara Loyall, Dawn & Walter McBee, Marty Morris, Rose O'Hara, Jack Phillips, Larry Pulley, Jodi Rush, Phil Slagle, Cheryl & Don Tabor, Jane & James Talley

Family and Friends

Jon Bates (*nephew of Kaye Holland*), Sierra Broome (*friend of Lorri Jean Pulley*), Mary Ruth Campbell (*step-mother of Barry & Darryl Campbell*), Betty Canupp (*mother of Betsy Canupp*), Lauren (*friend of Ame Satterwhite*), Brenda Copeland (*niece of Martha Stewart*), John Copeland (*nephew of Martha Stewart*), Chrissy Deaton (*sister-in-law of Russ Deaton*), Melody Dobbins (*daughter-in-law of Kathy & Bill Dobbins*), Mary Dale Edwards (*mother of John Edwards*), Harriet Gilliam (*friend of the Rushes*), Bill Garrett (*son of Beverly Garrett*), Miklos Gerendas, Amy Glenn (*daughter of Becky & Ronny Jones*), Eddie Grant (*friend of Becky & Ronny Jones*), Gregg Gross (*father of Ben Gross*), Chazz Jones (*friend of the Crafting group*), Hudson Jones (*friend of Joan Bledsoe's family*), David Kirby (*stepson of Donna Kirby*), Dianne Lyons (*aunt of Shali Scott*), Walter McBee, Jr. (*son of Walter McBee, Sr.*), Bettie Mason (*friend of Barbara Dial*), Butch Mayes (*friend of Walter McBee*), Rick Prentice (*son-in-law of Ben Davis*), Troy Rhone (*nephew of Scott Shepherd*), Jenny Rowe (*sister of Liz Strickland*), Marjorie Shepherd (*mother of Sharon Malloy*), Bill Shouse (*uncle of Larry Pulley*), Judy Smith (*friend of Janiece Redmon*), Brittany Spradling, Caden Sullivan (*grandson of Nina Sullivan*), Jim Summitt (*uncle of Blair Summitt*), Gary Tessar (*friend of Jan Marshall*), Sarah Thomas (*friend of Megan Gregali*), Bill Turner (*brother-in-law of Cheryl Tabor*), Lynn Underwood (*daughter of Dawn McBee*), Sandi Walter (*sister of Jim Tilley*), Danny Williams (*brother of Linda Pulley*), those serving our country

Deaths

Family of Jerry Wayne Leitschuh (*brother of Martha Stewart*)

Family of Greg McEwen (*friend of Kaye Holland*)

REMINDER

There will be an **All-Ministry Meeting** on **Sunday, January 18** in the Fellowship Hall after worship service. We would like for all ministry team members to meet with their ministry teams.

SPOTLIGHT

In December, **Jacob Malloy** received his Masters of Science in Computer Science. He will continue to live in Knoxville while he pursues a PhD in Computer Science at the University of Tennessee. Congratulations, Jacob!



ORGAN CONCERT

One of Brenthaven's members who enjoyed the organ concert last Sunday commented that it was well attended, had a good number of guests, and that she was grateful for Amity's musical gifts.



MORE WAYS TO CONNECT AT BRENTHAVEN

If you are looking for some fun and fellowship during the week, check out these options.

Young @ Heart meets every first, third, and fifth Monday at 10:00 am in the Adult Library. The games played are *Rook*, *Shanghai Rummy*, and *Dominoes*. Don't forget to pack a lunch!

Bridge Group meets every second Tuesday at 10:30 am in the Youth Room. Contact the church office if you are interested in making a reservation.

CPWM, our **Women's Ministry**, meets every fourth Tuesday at 10:30 am in the Willing Workers Classroom. Watch the newsletter for details.

BookEnd Book Club meets every third Thursday at 9:30 am in the Adult Library. Please check the newsletter for current books being read.

Creative Crafts meets every Thursday at 11:00 am in the Adult Library. You may bring your own art supplies and work on your own craft.

Call the church office if you want to learn more.

BRENTHAVEN CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 516 Franklin Road
 Brentwood, TN 37027-5909

Stamp

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SUNDAY SCHOOL : 9:30 A.M.

SUNDAY WORSHIP: 10:45 A.M.

PHONE: (615) 373-4826

FAX: (615) 373-4869

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan 8** **11:00 AM** Creative Crafts (*Adult Library*)
- Jan 11** **9:30 AM** Sunday School
 10:45 AM Worship
 5:00 PM Youth ROCKS (*Youth Room*)
- Jan 13** **10:30 AM** Bridge Group (*Youth Room*)
 6:30 PM Session (*Adult Library*)
- Jan 14** **6:30 PM** Choir Practice (*Choir Room*)
- Jan 15** **9:30 AM** BookEnd Book Club (*Adult Library*)
 11:00 AM Creative Crafts (*Adult Library*)
- Jan 18** **9:30 AM** Sunday School
 10:45 AM Worship
 12:00 PM All Ministry Meeting (*FH*)
 5:00 PM Youth ROCKS (*Youth Room*)

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR JANUARY 11

Baptism of the Lord (*white*)

 Isaiah 42:1-9;
 Psalm 29;
 Acts 10:34-43;
 Matthew 3:13-17

STEWARDSHIP REPORT FOR JANUARY 4

OPERATING BUDGET

Dedicated Giving	\$.00
Donations towards Budgeted Expense	9,872.14
Weekly Need	10,468.00
Received Year-to-Date	9,872.14
Actual Spend Year-to-Date	907.32
Difference	8,964.82

STAFF & LEADERSHIP

Kip J. Rush, Senior Pastor
Ean Taylor, Associate Pastor
Linda Pulley, Director of Music
Amity Marsh, Organist
Karen Benefield, Office Admin (secretary@brenthaven.org)

Session – The Elders

<i>Class of 2026</i>	<i>Class of 2027</i>	<i>Class of 2028</i>
Jeri Behan	Chris Fleming	Rachel Campbell
Jan Davidson	Renee McCulley	Bill Dobbins
Russ Deaton	Mike Murphy	Frank Scott
Joe Malloy	Ame Satterwhite	Scott Strickland