



From the Pastor:

Dear Friends in Christ,

Like many of you, I am trying to grow grass in my yard.

It is the right time of year for getting new grass to grow - less intense sun, morning dew, fall rains and pre-leaf fall conditions are perfect.

I recently spent an afternoon getting dragged around the yard by a rented aerator. While it plugged up the yard, allowing oxygen into the soil, it also left me worn out with blistered hands. I think I got a bit sun-burned to boot.

After a rest in the yard swing and some gulps of drink, I spread my seed. Thankfully the weather predictions were showing rain in the coming days. My soil preparations, my sowing of seeds and my extra labor in the bare spots would soon have some assistance with growth. I was excited.

Rain did come (lots of it). And now our unseasonably warm late-October weather is helping out.

My labor in the yard may pay off with a green lawn. On the other hand, circumstances in weather, soil and other things beyond my control may produce nothing. It's a wait-and-see game.

You wonder sometimes what the preacher does on his day off? There you have it! And it has some parallels to Gospel ministry.

God gives to his church servants (pastors/shepherds/teachers) who plant and water. It is God who brings the growth. Spiritual things come from the work of the Holy Spirit. (see 1 Corinthians 2 & 3) The pastor can only serve, expecting results from the Lord.

I love a good grass-growing challenge. It's fun to work hard and see the fruit of labor. But I can't begin to tell you how much more rewarding it is to be able to sow, plant and water in the Gospel ministry. To see people challenged by the Word, worked over by the grace of the Holy Spirit and watch humanly-impossible harvests of righteousness come to fruition in the lives of the church is a great joy.

I'll probably not ever have a perfect yard. There will be bare spots, acorn shoots, crabgrass and more. That's okay. I think in the New Heavens and New Earth, the yard I am gifted by God will be more satisfying!

I also know that I'll never pastor a perfect church. This side of heaven there will be seasons of planting and watering with seemingly little fruit. There will be frustrations. And there will be great joys too. This month will mark 13 years of ordained ministry and I can think of so many wonders of grace that I have watched and in which the Lord has allowed me to serve.

I'll never get to pastor a perfect church, but Christ will! When he comes to gather all his saints - those alive, those already in the heavenly festal gathering - his gathered church will be made perfectly holy forever in soul & body. Until then, I'll keep that goal in mind as I sow, plant, water, weed, watch, wait - and pray for the best for us from the head Gardener - Jesus Christ.

May God grant us growth - in seeds of conversion and sanctification.

See you Sunday,

OCTOBER FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES!

- Plan to join us Sunday night, October 23 at 6 PM for a Potato Bar supper and great fellowship!
- The next 5th Sunday Hymn Sing and Social will be at 6 PM on Sunday, October 30.

WOMEN'S BIBLE/BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Wednesday Ladies *Weekly Bible Study* meets in the Conference Room at 11 AM to study Galatians for You by Timothy Keller.

YOUNG AT HEART

Plan to join us on October 25 at 11:45 for our next Young at Heart luncheon. Jo Ely, Exercise Physical Therapist from Kernodle Center will be our speaker. The meal will be a covered dish with fried chicken provided.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child Boxes: Things to remember:

- * \$7 postage is necessary for all boxes. If you would like to have postage paid, please contact Joyce Payne.
 - * Boxes (plastic or cardboard) Standard size only 5qt.
 - * Boxes are due no later than Sunday morning, Nov. 20
- More Suggestions:
- * Utility candles
 - * Thick, 40 gal. garbage bag (used to sleep on)
 - * Older girls: sewing kit, needles & thread, 1 1/2 yds. of fabric
 - * Older boys: hammer & nails, screw driver & screws

Any questions, please contact Joyce Payne 222-1133

Want to serve folks in our community?

We participate in Meals on Wheels locally and are in need of volunteers. Please consider partnering with Glenn & Margaret Owens and Gary Gregory in monthly deliveries. Our upcoming commitments are: **October 24, 25**; November 21, 22; December 19, 20. Speak to the Owens about serving - 336-269-3055.

NURSERY WORKERS

We are in need of volunteers for our Nursery ministry. Please contact Vicki McPherson for more details. Vicki's email address is: vickimac@triad.rr.com.

NOVEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

Caleb Sneed	11/1
Phillip Beaman	11/3
Natalie Wright	11/3
Fran Haynes	11/4
Jean Cathey	11/5
Ann Dobbins	11/5
Chip Wright	11/8
Pat Montgomery	11/10
Jack Snow	11/10
David Newton	11/12
Martha Ann Crotts	11/13
Stephanie Payne	11/14
Sandy Childrey	11/15
Laurene Howington	11/20
Martha Alexander	11/22
Ellen Huffman	11/24
Audrey Turner	11/24
Laura Nicholson	11/27

ANNIVERSARIES

Russ & Joyce Payne (37)	11/3
William & Jill Roy (35)	11/7
Randall & Libby Cobb (30)	11/8
Jim & Carolyn Christopher (46)	11/21
Chuck & Mary Renegar (64)	11/22
Steve & Sue Walton	11/27
Rick & Carol Erb (24)	11/28

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT FIRST ARP

October

- 19 Women's Bible Study
- 20 Stated Session
- 23 Sunday night supper - Potato Bar
- 25 Young at Heart
- 26 Women's Bible Study
- 30 Fifth Sunday Hymn Sing and Social

Nursery:

Oct 23: Dot Hutelmyer & Jimmy Smith
Oct 30: John Robinson & Fran Haynes

Counter:

Oct 23: Ferald Mann
Oct 30: Glenn Owens

Deacon Duty:

Oct 23: Glenn Owens
Oct 30: Stephen Robinson

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