



# First Associate Reformed PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



## Newsletter

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No. 44

### *From the Pastor:*

Dear Church Family,

Current events have kept us on our toes lately. A presidential election that seemed to never end, a hurricane that made landfall in our state, a gubernatorial election that is too contentious to call and now wildfires like those of the west coast have brought smoke our way. Oh yes, there was the World Series - go Cubs!

No doubt personal current events have been on the forefront of many of your minds. I'm sure you can name various trials and tribulations that have come to roost in your personal lives.

If we're not careful, we will slide past Thanksgiving without giving thanks!

Every good and perfect gift comes from our Heavenly Father, James tells us. Job, the ancient patriarch of the Old Testament who suffered greatly, reminds his wife that we must take both good and bad from the Lord. The apostle Paul encourages us that all things work together for the good of God's children.

It may sound strange, but it's biblical - to thank God for the good, the bad and the difficult! Theologian and pastor John Piper once prayed that he would not "waste his cancer" and that God would be glorified in his sufferings.

Again, James tells us in the Scriptures that we should see our trials as opportunities for joy. God is at work in us and will produce fruit: God tests our faith, give us steadfastness and we are perfected, completed and lacking no thing.

This Thanksgiving, count your blessings. Name them one by one!

For sure name the good things - health, family, provision, church, fun events, trips and more.

Name also the things that have been hard - but have shown God's mighty hand, have brought you closer to the Lord and have ultimately been good for your growth in grace. Yes, the sickness, surgeries, letdowns, uncertainties, and the way-down-low spots you've seen. God is gracious to show us how much he loves us - through these events and in the good work he produces through them in us.

On Sunday in worship we will begin a six-week series on the big picture events of the Bible. These will help us understand the big story of God saving sinners for his own glory and where we fit in his divine plan in our daily lives. These studies will also help us work through the major biblical themes related to the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. I hope you will have your Bibles, pens and notepads ready to see how God has been at work in human history in mighty ways.

Don't forget our Lessons and Carols event in just 10 or so days. It will be Sunday, December 4 at 6 PM in the Sanctuary. We will hear from God's Word as major passages related to the coming of Christ are read aloud in our hearing. We will also sing the wonderful songs of the season. There will be a reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall. I hope that you will use this event as an early opportunity in the Christmas season to get your hearts and minds ready for Christmas. Bring a friend, a loved one or someone that you know who will find this event helpful to their life.

See you on the Lord's Day!

### **ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

The Session has called the annual business meeting of the congregation for Sunday, December 11, 2016 after worship. The purpose of the meeting is to adopt the 2017 Budget and hold elections for Elder, Deacon, Trustee, Congregational Chair and Treasurer. In order to participate in the nominations process, please pick up an Officer Nomination Procedures brochure at any Sanctuary entrance. Copies of the budget and the final ballot for officers will be distributed prior to the meeting.

## NOVEMBER OPPORTUNITIES!

- **DENOMINATIONAL OFFERING.** Each year at Thanksgiving time the ARP Church collects a special offering to support some of the ministries of our denomination. This offering will be collected through Sunday, December 4.
- **LESSONS AND CAROLS.** Mark your calendars for the Sunday, December 4 Lessons and Carols event. This event is one to mark, invite your friends to it and dig out your festive wear (plaid pants and sweaters!). The service will be the read Word of God and the best of sacred Christmas music. There will be readings from the Bible that show God's wonderful plan of redemption (the Lessons) and wonderful selections of Christmas songs (the Carols). This will be a wonderful event to involve the whole body and to get our minds centered on the Christ of Christmas! There will be a reception following. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall to bring a finger food treat: Vegetable, Fruit, Salty, or Sweet! Contact Fran Haynes if you have any questions.

## 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. We will have our last study of the year on November 30 and our Christmas luncheon on December 7.

### YOUNG AT HEART Christmas Luncheon

Young At Heart will be Tuesday December 6 at 11:45. Turkey, dressing and gravy will be furnished. Please bring vegetables, fruits, salads and desserts. Tim and Lynn Robinson will present the program.

## CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL POINSETTIAS

Be sure to turn in your request of a memorial/honorarium poinsettia to be placed in the sanctuary. The last day for turning the form in is December 4. The cost will be \$8 per plant.

## DECEMBER MEN'S FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Men's Lunch. December 5  
Men's Evening Gathering. December 15

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT FIRST ARP

#### December

- 3 Hanging of the Greens
- 4 Lessons and Carols
- 5 Men's Lunch
- 6 Young at Heart Luncheon
- 11 Annual Congregational Meeting
- 15 Men's Evening Gathering
- 18 Treat Bags and Christmas Caroling
- 24 Christmas Eve Service
- 25 Christmas Day

## DECEMBER

### BIRTHDAYS

John Young	12/5
Breten Chrismon	12/7
Mary Renegar	12/9
Carol Erb	12/13
Rick Erb	12/14
Jimmy Smith	12/14
Donna Wolff	12/15
Cynthia Ward	12/16
Shauneen Roy	12/19
Andre White	12/24
Caroline Baird	12/27
Kathryn Crotts	12/27
Maggie Constable	12/28
Dot Hutelmyer	12/28
Mandy Crotts	12/30
June Little	12/30
Matt Erb	12/31

### ANNIVERSARIES

Bennett & Janice Richardson (38)	12/16
Graig & Carolyn Pulley (55)	12/17
Glenn & Margaret Owens (53)	12/20
Lonnie & Catherine Mangum	12/21
Larry & Kathy Isley (53)	12/22
Ben & Natalie Wright (13)	12/27

## CHOIR REHEARSAL

There will be a rehearsal for Lessons and Carols on Wednesday, November 30 at 6:30 PM. Supper for participants only will be provided at 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall.

#### Nursery:

Nov 27: Vicki McPherson & \_\_\_\_\_  
Dec 4: Carol Erb & Jimmy Smith

#### Counter:

Nov 27: Jay Snow  
Dec 4: John Robinson

#### Deacon Duty:

Nov 27: Glenn Owens  
Dec 4: Stephen Robinson

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