



From the Pastor:

Dear Church Family,

I had lunch recently with a local realtor. I was asking him questions about his work, the market cycles and so on.

When I asked about his company and what was significant about it to him, he had this to say: "My company has received awards for training its people. In fact, we are recognized as having the best employee training program in the nation and across every industry. We're not the best in terms of all real estate firms, but the best across all industries. We're really a training company that happens to sell real estate."

I'm sure this training and continuing education helps him sell houses.

I usually leave these conversations thinking something like this: "If the world can train its people for worldly endeavors, why can't the church excel in training its people for heavenly ones?"

We can and we should! After all, Jesus' final words before ascending to heaven were: Go! Baptize. Make disciples. Teach the disciples you make all that I taught you.

Do you ever think about your ongoing training for the Christian life? You have periodic continuing education requirements for your professional life. Why not think about and prioritize for your Christian life?

Oh, yes, we dread the CE requirements placed upon us. Stuffy classrooms. Bad coffee. Instructors that drone on!

Since Jesus is serious about disciple-making, let's think on a few ways we can show our faithfulness to learn:

- Show up to class! I was always taught that the simplest way to learn is to show up early, sit up front and stay afterwards for conversation. It really does work!
- Seize the opportunities that our Elders put before us: Sunday School, Morning and Evening Services, various book & Bible studies, grab the pastor for a visit and gather when God's people gather.
- In your own time during the week, read your Bible, listen to good teaching via podcasts or on television, find a good book worth reading and so on. If you'd like some resources, just ask!

We want to land safely on heaven's shores! We want to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ! We want to be strengthened in God so that the devil, the world and our own flesh (remaining sin/actual sins) do not reign over us but can be victoriously overcome.

While the world trains for earthly success (not a bad idea, by the way!), let's also be sure to work at our spiritual success.

And when you have lunch with a friend and they ask about your God, you can say that He has the best disciple training programs across all religions! He gives every Christian the Word of God, the Spirit of God and the Church of God, so that life may go well with them here and in heaven!

See you on Sunday,



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING RESULTS

Congratulations to Larry Isley, Deacon for Class of 2019; Ferald Mann, Trustee for Class of 2020; Laurene Howington, Treasurer for 2017; James Constable, Congregational Chairman for 2017.

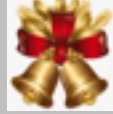
Please pray for these servants of the Lord as they give their time and talents to our church ministry.

The 2017 Budget as recommended by the Session to the Congregation was passed.

Larry Isley will be installed during Worship on Sunday, January 8, 2017.

END OF YEAR GIVING

All offerings to be included in your 2016 contribution statement must be given by Sunday, December 25, 2016. All offerings placed in the offering plate on January 1, 2017, even if dated 2016, will be recorded on your 2017 statement.



DECEMBER MEN'S FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Men's Evening Gathering.

December 15

2017 Contributions Envelopes are available in the Fellowship Hall.

Please be sure to pick yours up.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

On Sunday, December 18, we will be taking our evening service out and about as we go caroling to our homebound members. We will leave our parking lot at 6 PM sharp to make our rounds and then return for cookies and hot drinks in the Fellowship Hall.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Make plans to join us on December 24 at 5 PM for our Christmas Eve service. The Lord's Supper will be served.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Join us for worship at 11 AM. We will not have Sunday School or Sunday Evening Service.

MISSIONS TRIP

In January 2017, Connie Bennett will be sent on her seventh trip for medical missions in Trinidad. Her gifts are well-utilized on the trip. You may participate in sending Connie by your prayers and financial support. The Presbyterian Church in America's (P.C.A.) Mission to the World is hosting the trip and provides all necessary administrative support for the trip. If you wish to contribute financially to the mission, please do so by sending your check to: MTW, PO Box 2589, Suwanee, GA 30024-0982. Note in the memo Account #10865 and all proceeds will support our sister's trip. Her financial goal for support is \$2,100. The Congregation will be commissioning Connie on Sunday, January 8.

The office will be closed December 26th and January 2.

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 Mendiola	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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT FIRST ARP

December

- 15 Men's Evening Gathering
- 18 Treat Bags and Christmas Caroling
- 24 Christmas Eve Service
- 25 Christmas Day

Nursery:

Dec 18: Kathy Isley & Laurie Isley
Dec 25: John Robinson & Vicki McPherson

Counter:

Dec 18: Ferald Mann
Dec 25: Glenn Owens

Deacon Duty:

Dec 18: Stephen Robinson
Dec 25: Glenn Owens

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