



From the Pastor:

Dear Congregation,

I have a few rambling odds and ends for you this week.

First, a correction to the letter from two weeks ago: our church is 51 years old. Somehow my brain was on adding the one to fifty, as well as 1966, hence the 61. We give thanks to our Lord for 51 years of ministry at First.

Next, a little organizational news. The Diaconate and Session had a joint meeting just before the snowstorm. We looked at the year ahead and reviewed 2015 financials. Also, each board elected their leadership for the year.

In the area of finances, we noted that giving in 2015 was low while the church searched for a pastor. Giving ticked up consistently as the year moved towards conclusion. It is our prayer that our whole congregation will examine their ability and desire to give, making an eternal investment in the work of the ministry God has given us.

Along those same lines, our Treasurer (Laurene Howington) and Financial Secretary (Gloria Hendry) noted that the congregation made up the missed week of giving due to the snow storm. Historically, most churches, including ours, "lose" a Sunday of giving when church services are cancelled. I think a hearty "thank you" and "way to keep faithful" is due to our congregation.

Serving the Deacons as Chairman this year will be Glenn Owens. He has served in this capacity before. David Newton was elected Secretary for the Diaconate. Please pray for David, Glenn and Stephen Robinson as they serve our church in the areas of sympathy and service. If you have any desire to help them in any way, please be sure to approach them.

By virtue of the office of minister, the pastor serves the Session as Moderator. Bill Haynes was elected by the Elders to serve as this year's Vice-Moderator. Serving as Clerk of Session, as well as Secretary of the Congregation, will be John Robinson.

I am sure that we all enjoyed the recent snow and the beauty of it. I've even heard stories of fun sledding at Willowbrook Park and the Woodland Avenue hill. As is often the case in the south, the snow freezes us out of activities due to cancellations.

A handful of committees missed meetings that would have pushed forward some anticipated event planning. Many of you are finishing playing catch-up as you begin to get out again. We will get back on our regular schedule and get our meetings made up - stay tuned!

Be sure to catch Connie Bennett and ask her about her mission trip to Trinidad! It was an adventure getting there - while we had snow, she had to fight of a tropical storm! The Lord was good and gave her team success in their labors. Sometime soon we will plan a time for her to report.

This Sunday, we will continue our study in Hebrews, looking at Christ our hope. During Sunday evening's service, we will consider an introduction to the book of Psalms, which will help us to get to know the individual Psalms we will consider in the weeks and months ahead. Also, a new Sunday School series has commenced in the elective class meeting in the Fellowship Hall. Using R.C. Sproul's teaching on Suffering, this class will take a look at how God uses suffering and hardship in our lives. If you would like to begin participating in Sunday School, this would be a great time to join. Bill Haynes is facilitating the class.

Lord willing, see you on Sunday!

NEW MEMBERS CLASS

A New Members Class will be offered during the 9:45 Sunday School hour in the near future. If you are interested in membership at First A.R.P. Church, please let Pastor Crofts know.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Please plan to attend a women's fellowship luncheon Saturday, March 19 at Two for Tea at 11:30! More details to come.

LADIES MONTHLY BOOK STUDY

Please join us on Tuesday evening, February 9 at 7 PM as we resume our book study in *Extravagant Grace: God's Glory Displayed in our Weakness*.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT FIRST ARP

February

- 1 Men's Lunch
- 3 Ladies Weekly Bible Study
- 7 Lord's Supper
- 9 Ladies Monthly Book Study
- 10 Ladies Weekly Bible Study
- 21 Congregational Luncheon
- 17 Ladies Weekly Bible Study
- 18 Stated Session Meeting
- 23 Young at Heart

March

- 2 Ladies Weekly Bible Study
- 5 1st Saturday Workday
- 6 Lord's Supper
- 7 Men's Lunch
- 8 Ladies Monthly Book Study-PM
- 9 Ladies Weekly Bible Study
- 13 Daylight Savings Time
- 16 Ladies Weekly Bible Study
- 17 Stated Session Meeting
- 20 Palm Sunday
- 22 Young at Heart
- 24 Maundy Thursday Service
- 27 Easter Sunday

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

Sarah Ickes	2/1
Donald Childrey	2/2
Dylan Jones	2/2
Harold Boswell	2/4
Janice Richardson	2/4
John Robinson	2/7
George McKinney	2/10
Margaret Owens	2/10
Abigail Newton	2/13
Jan Burwell	2/15
Karen Hoke	2/17
Lynn Limon	2/18
Al Wright	2/18
Alex Jones	2/22
John Greeson	2/23
Karen Jones	2/27
Mary Lou McKinney	2/27
Jim Christopher	2/28
Tim Bessette	2/29

ANNIVERSARIES

John & Cathy Young (37)	2/3
Gene & Helen Parks (64)	2/8
Ossie & Jennifer Spaulding (20)	2/14

MUSIC MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY

Any member who would like to serve the Lord in the music ministry of the church, contact Ed Limon.

Nursery:

Feb 7: Nicole Newton / Carol Erb
Feb 14: Fran Haynes / Macon Baird

Counter:

Jan 31: Jay Snow
Feb 7: David Newton

Deacon Duty:

Jan 31: Stephen Robinson
Feb 7: Glenn Owens

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