



From the Pastor:

Dear Congregation,

I recently received a notice that my postal forwarding order was near its expiration date, which means that we have lived at our address for nearly one year.

And that means that my one year anniversary at First Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church is close at hand.

The little reminder card from the postal service was a nudge to think through the last year with thanksgiving.

A year ago, our family was scrambling to secure housing in town, we packed our belongings and we made our way here.

I made all of the necessary steps to transfer my ministerial credentials from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. A few weeks of refresher studies, a written examination that took the better part of a day and a two-hour oral examination in front of a committee all had to be accomplished.

After all was in order for us to head this way, we set up camp at my parents' home. Our house here needed to close and have some minor work done before we could move in and begin to settle.

Sunday, May 3 was my first Sunday here. We celebrated an evening installation service that same day.

And it has been a fast twelve months since.

My hope and prayers have been to have the church do five things very well: Worship, Discipleship, Community, Mercy and Stewardship.

God has blessed in all of these areas as we have worked hard together, followed our Elders and Deacons, and been well-served by our staff.

In our worship service, we have seen our choir and bell ensemble grow in numbers. Our order of service now follows the standard Presbyterian book of worship order. We enjoyed a Christmas Lessons and Carols service, as well as a Holy Week service. Our Sunday evening gathering has been a delightful time of fellowship, song, prayer, catechism and study. Each Sunday our sanctuary is a delightful place of friendliness, visiting and worship.

We have been blessed with numbers of opportunities for discipleship this last year. We are over halfway through our morning sermons on Hebrews, we have considered a number of Psalms in the evening, studied the Christian life, and heard many sermons on various topics as family, baptism, church life, human dignity and leadership. Our elders have been busy teaching the Westminster Confession of Faith, Prayer, Suffering, spiritual change, New Member Classes, children's classes and more. Our men are studying the Masculine Mandate. Our women have studied Joshua, Extravagant Grace and Women's Ministry in the Local Church.

There have been many fun events this year - opportunities for life together in community - two teas for our ladies, visits to our homebound members, a 50th anniversary homecoming, several lunches and socials, breakfast at Easter, men's lunch, baby showers, wedding showers and more! Our fellowship has grown as we have seen visitors and received new members. Folks come early, stay late, children play on the lawn and its often we hear of folks getting together on their own.

Our congregation has had opportunity to be merciful. We serve our families well when a death occurs, or when some sort of hardship falls upon one of us, we jump in to help. Two families were added to our full-time missionary support this year - one in Scotland, another in Wales. We sent Connie Bennett to serve the church through medicine in Trinidad. Another family, the Limons, will go soon to teach music camp in Mexico.

God has moved us in the area of stewardship this year as well. You elected new officers, your financial investment in the ministry of our church is strong, our facility is well-cared for, every area of ministry has energy and enthusiasm and the opportunity to speak of Christ is ours for stewarding as well.

I'm sure there's something that I've forgotten to mention. God has blessed us. There is much for thanksgiving!

Our little church is an outpost of heaven. Our task is to make realities of heaven visible on earth. We can do that by continuing to do our five areas of ministry very well: Worship, Discipleship, Community, Mercy and Stewardship.

How about another year? May God grant it and bless it for His glory and our good!

YOUNG AT HEART

Thirty-six of us were blessed at YAH by Bryan and Sarah Ickes love story: their love for God, their love for each other, and their love for their children. A special thank you to all of our wonderful cooks and those who go the extra mile to help clean up. We couldn't do it without you.

Dear Church Family,

We appreciate all the cards, phone calls, and personal words of sympathy in the death of my sister Margaret and my niece Teresa. Thank you.

Ferald and Betty Mann

SYMPATHY

Please continue to pray for the family of Rucker Turner who passed away on April 20, 2016.

SHORT-TERM MISSIONS & JUBILEE BIRTHDAY REPORT

On May 22, Sheila Osborne, a representative from World Witness, will be here during the Sunday School hour to speak about short-term missions opportunities through the denomination. She will also speak about the Jubilee Birthday Celebration Offering that we collect each year. Additionally, Ed and Lynn Limon will share about their summer missions opportunity in Mexico.

MISSIONS SUNDAY & CONGREGATIONAL LUNCH

Mark your calendars for Sunday, June 5. Drew and Lauren Goodman will be with us for Sunday School, Worship, and Lunch. Pastor Goodman will share in the Sunday School hour, preach in our morning service, and be available during lunch to tell us about their pastoral ministry in Wales. They serve through the denomination's World Witness agency and serve the evangelical church in Wales.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT FIRST ARP

May

- 1 Lord's Supper
- 2 Men's Lunch Book Study
- 3 Women's Ministry Leadership Training
- 4 WM morning Bible Study
- 5 Men's Evening Study
- 8 MOTHER'S DAY
- 10 WM evening book study
- 11 WM morning Bible Study
- 19 Stated Session Meeting
- 22 Sunday School with missionary, Sheila Osborne
- 24 Young at Heart
- 29 5th Sunday Hymn Sing

MAY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

Bill Haynes	5/1
Graig Pulley	5/1
Connie Bennett	5/4
Tom McPherson	5/6
Vicki McPherson	5/6
Sue Walton	5/8
Lauren Childrey	5/9
Pat Kinney	5/10
Frances Vanderford	5/10
Wendell Turner	5/11
Ben Gregory	5/12
Ian Constable	5/14
Mary Jane Glass	5/16
Zoey Ensley	5/18
Ben Wright	5/18
David Spaulding	5/20
Shirley Boswell	5/21
Michael Peppo	5/24
Jacob Christopher	5/26
Jason Massey	5/28
Esther Roy	5/28
Kathy Isley	5/30
Mae Wilburn	5/31

ANNIVERSARIES

Matt & Britt Causey (13)	5/10
Bill & Fran Haynes (55)	5/14
David & Nicole Newton (12)	5/15
Larry & Lynn Causey (44)	5/20
Ferald & Betty Mann (49)	5/28

BULLETIN BOARDS

Please stop by the bulletin boards near the new narthex entrance. There you will find current announcements and recent notes of appreciation.

Nursery:

May 1: Carol Erb & _____
May 8: Bryan Ickes & Nicole Newton

Counter:

May 1: Jay Snow
May 8: Ferald Mann

Deacon Duty:

May 1: Stephen Robinson
May 8: Glenn Owens

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