



From the Pastor:

Dear Friends in the Faith,

A church is a funny organism. It is made up of all sorts of people, personalities, qualities, tastes, choices, habits and more.

Some churches are mostly brain. They love truth. Learning more and more is top priority.

Other churches are full of heart. The people feel, often deeply. They love one another well. Compassions towards one another is a key feature of their church.

There are also churches that are doers. Soup kitchens, homeless shelters, divorce ministries and the list goes on.

We should note that Jesus says to be all three. We are to love God with our minds, hearts, souls and strength. It's the great commandment (see Mark 12:28-34). To put it another way, we are to love God with our brains, our hearts and our hands.

In the Bible, there seems to be a priority to love God with our minds. Paul tells the Roman church (chapter 12) to be transformed by the renewal of the mind. Part of the effects and curses of the fall of man into sin is that our minds are bent, broken and ignorant of truth. We need the Word to teach us, transform us, enlighten us, shape our lives, give us our marching orders and help us to live according to all that Jesus has commanded for us.

From that new knowledge comes a love for God, a love for others. How can we love God if we don't know who he is or what he has done? How can we love our neighbor if not taught the what, where, when and why of loving those around us? Our love for God and others, rooted in the truth of the word of God, is mighty powerful love. Our hearts, overwhelmed by God's grace to us, overflow with appropriate and necessary love towards our fellow man.

What about our hands? Or, what about our hands and feet in service to God and others? Our knowledge, overflowing to our hearts, surely will lead us to serve our God and neighbor. Who, being filled full of the truth of God and knowing that truth in our hearts, will let a person go hungry, hurt in seclusion or say, "Be warm and be fed?"

You see, a well-rounded Christian serves God with an ear to the Bible, a heart toward his neighbor and hands ready & saying, "Where am I needed next?"

We live and worship in an era that says, "Serve ME! Fashion church for ME! Give ME options for MY benefit."

I've been making challenges lately. Here's another one!

We are a church that is rather "brainy". We learn, we study, we listen, we discuss, we read. All good things! All things that are commanded by the Lord to be done by his church and children.

Our church loves well. We love well inside our body. And so we should give great care for those in the household of faith!

Let's think more about loving those outside of our doors. Yes, that's my challenge! We tinker a lot with our own needs and desires. Our own homes and our church home are all well-cared for in so many ways. If left to ourselves, we'd add new ministries that are just for...that's right - us.

But what of those who need to know the blessings of Christ and that he has come "to make his blessings flow as far as the curse is found? The curse is all over their lives. What you have been redeemed and relieved from, they are wallowing in still: poverty, laziness, idolatry, estrangement, misery and so much more.

A visitor to our church door in recent weeks could not afford pain relief medicine for her child who had just come from the dentist. Put that into perspective. We probably have pain pills in our purses, medicine cabinets, desk drawers and automobile consoles. Not this lady. And no money for such a bottle of relief!

Two visitors to our church door on a severely hot summer day this year were in a bad way. She was pregnant. He was eighteen and freshly sprung out of jail. Their motorized scooter broke down in the neighborhood. I mentioned it was a hot day - yes, ninety-eight degrees in the shade. No mobile telephone. No one to come to their rescue. No end to their many troubles in sight.

I'm sure the brokenness around us is greater than we know. Some of you deal with issues like these as you teach school, serve as public servants, labor as case managers for local communities and more. Our church is partnered locally with Alamance Pregnancy Center, Allied Churches and Meals on Wheels. I know that personally, some of you work with local relief through woman's clubs, civic organizations and other wonderful avenues. What if we could do something together - as a church body?

There's always talk of let's add back Wednesday suppers and a little teaching time. That serves us well! It surely could help us love God and one another more! But what if, instead of serving ourselves a little more, we took to going out and about on Wednesdays? Or Tuesdays? What if 30-50 of us represented the church at a soup kitchen, a pregnancy care center or a homeless shelter. We get filled pretty full on Sundays - three square meals of spiritual diet if you participate in Sunday School, Morning Worship and Evening Service. Could we not go out, filled full & blessed by God, to be a blessing to others?

People need to eat. They need job search and interviewing skills. Neglected children would love it if some could read a book to them!

It's a modest proposal. No, maybe it's a radical one? Let's talk together and see if this isn't something we could do. Together. For the sake of Christ. And to make that blessing that we know fully in Christ Jesus - known to the dark and dying world that so badly needs it!

Something like this makes many of us uncomfortable. It should! But like we'd say to our childhood buddies when daring to investigate something scary but interesting, "Let's go together!"

Yours in Christ,

HOMEcoming 2016

This year's Homecoming Sunday will be Sunday, September 25. At 9:45 AM during the Sunday School hour, we will have the Moderator of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church speak to us about this year's spiritual emphasis. Phil Williams, a ruling elder from Covenant of Grace ARP Church in Winston-Salem is our moderator and his topic will be "Heart, Soul, Mind & Strength". Our 11:00 AM worship service will include a sermon from Pastor Crofts on the same theme. A luncheon will follow the service in the Fellowship Hall. Ham and turkey will be provided. If you are able, please bring a fall-themed side item (vegetable, bread, relish, fruit, stuffing, etc.), dessert or beverage (tea, lemonade, soft drink) to share. Contact/coordinator is Dot Hutelmyer.

MEN'S BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Join us on September 12 at noon at Southbound Sandwich Works. Our discussion will be chapter 8 of *Masculine Mandate*. The Thursday evening Men's Gathering will meet to discuss chapter 5 of *Masculine Mandate* on Thursday, September 22 at 7 PM at Panera Bread.

YOUNG AT HEART

Young at Heart will next gather on Tuesday, Sept 27 from 11:45 AM - 1:00 PM with guest Sgt. Gregg Turner of the Burlington Police Department presenting a program on safety for seniors, community watch, scam protection and Burlington police statistics. Come prepared to ask questions. This luncheon will be a traditional covered dish, so please (if you are able) bring a favorite meat, vegetable, fruit, salad, or dessert to share! We are looking forward to a blessed time of fellowship. Love, Margaret and Glenn.

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.

MINISTRY TEAM KICKOFF

September 21 at 7:15 PM. This event is designed to help the different ministry teams get started!

MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

CHOIR

We are growing in choir — God is good — Sing with us on Sunday mornings. We rehearse on Sunday at 5 PM. Thank you to all who signed up to sing!

HANDBELL CHOIR

Handbell choir is underway. We will rehearse on Wednesdays at 6:15 PM. Thank you for signing up to share your talents.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT FIRST ARP

September

- 12 Men's Lunch
- 15 Stated Session Meeting
- 17 Homebound Basket Delivery
- 21 Ministry Teams Kickoff
- 22 Men's Gathering
- 25 Homecoming and Luncheon
- 27 Young at Heart Luncheon

SEPTEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

Bennett Richardson	9/1
Gwen Hilton	9/4
Libby Cobb	9/6
Karen Hayes	9/6
Jill Roy	9/6
Carolyn Crofts	9/7
Doug Cobb	9/15
Nicole Newton	9/18
Ariel Constable	9/19
Larry Isley	9/20
Jillian Roy	9/29
Beth Seay	9/30
John Snow	9/30

ANNIVERSARIES

Tom & Vicki McPherson (40)	9/4
Len & Jessica Sneed (17)	9/17
Charles & Beth Seay (35)	9/19
Tom & Lorene Childrey (56)	9/25

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please be sure to drop by the Narthex on Sunday mornings over the next few weeks to have an updated church directory picture taken.

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: Sept 26, 27; October 24, 25; November 21, 22; December 19, 20. Speak to the Owens about serving - 336-269-3055.

SHEPHERDING A CHILD'S HEART

Parenting Seminar with Dr Tedd Tripp.

When: September 9-10,
 Friday: 7-9 PM
 Saturday 9 AM - 12:30 PM

Cost: \$10 per person
 \$15 per couple

Where: Harvest Baptist Church
 3741 S Church Street
 Burlington, NC 27215

Nursery:

Sept 11: John Robinson & Jessica Sneed
Sept 18: Carol Erb & Dot Hutelmyer

Counter:

Sept 11: John Robinson
Sept 18: Bill Haynes

Deacon Duty:

Sept 11: Glenn Owens
Sept 18: Stephen Robinson

2250 Saddle Club Road, Burlington, NC 27215

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