

Periodical postage paid By the Astoria Christian Church. Published 1st Week of the Month. POSTMASTER: Send form 3579 to The Astoria Christian Church, P.O. Box 677, Astoria, IL 61501

You Are Welcome
At Our Services!

Sunday

Morning Worship.....9 a.m.
Sunday School.....10:30 a.m.

Wednesday

Family Night.....6:00 p.m.

April Events:

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| Sun, Apr 1 st | 7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service
8:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast
9:00 a.m. Regular Sunday Worship
10:15 a.m. Sunday school |
| Wed, Apr 4 th | 6:00 p.m. Family Night |
| Sun, Apr 8 th | 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting |
| Tues, Apr 10 th | 6:30 p.m. Man Up |
| Wed, Apr 11 th | 6:00 p.m. Family Night |
| Sun, Apr 15 th | 6:30 p.m. Leadership Development |
| Mon, Apr 16 th | 6:00 p.m. Camp Fellowship, Bader |
| Wed, Apr 18 th | 6:00 p.m. Family Night |
| Sun, Apr 22 nd | 1:00 p.m. Ken Peterson Open house, Summum |
| Sun, Apr 22 nd | 4:30 p.m. Youth Committee Meeting |
| Wed, Apr 25 th | 6:00 p.m. Family Night |



“I will
send down
showers in season;
there will be
showers of
blessings.”

Ezekiel 34:26

No one likes to suffer, right? I mean when we get pushed down or spit on we don't naturally say, "Thank you sir, may I have another?" I mean that's unnatural. It's against our desires. And no one is asking us to seek more pain, thankfully. But it's interesting that while we seek to get away from pain or force ourselves to endure it or try to fix the issue, God might have a different perspective. In fact, we most often see pain and suffering as only bad, while God may see some good in it, too.

Over the past several weeks we've been looking at a sermon series called "I Am N" which focuses on the persecuted church around the world. And in that series we looked at different aspects of how and why Christians suffer through the most horrendous experiences and life-altering situations. In the final sermon, we looked at forgiveness and in that message we found that Jesus calls us to forgive even when others hate, attack and kill us.

And that's a tough call to live up to. But I think, for me, it's a little easier to accept the pain and the hurt and offer forgiveness when we know that God is amidst the events. Not that he caused them to happen, but that he can make something beautiful out of the mess. He allows these bad things in order to help us grow. It reminds me the story at the end of Genesis about Joseph and how his brother's sold him as a slave, where he endured multiple hardships even worse than the separation from his family and people. But after all the suffering, Joseph was given a position of power and was able to save many lives because of God's providence in his life.

And at the end of Joseph's story, we see his

brothers sorrowful for what they did to him but afraid that he might seek vengeance. And Joseph, instead of being angry and vengeful, says, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." (50.20, ESV)

Now not all of us will end up like Joseph, but God has a purpose for pain. In fact, I think God even sees it as having some good. Because God knows that we grow most when we hurt. We learn to trust him more when we suffer. We stop and reflect more if something gets in our way. So, my prayer for me and you is suffering. Hardship. Difficulty. I know that's the prayer you were hoping for, but even more my prayer is that in that challenge, God's work becomes increasingly apparent in our lives. And I pray that knowing that God is in the midst of that suffering can then lead us to be more ready to forgive. Serving Him and you, Matthew

Emotionally Healthy Gathering

On Saturday, May 12th we will be hosting a one day gathering to focus on our emotional and spiritual health. Dan Gildner, an EHS representative, will be presenting from 9am to 4pm about ways we can grow emotionally so that we can grow spiritually. This will be a powerful and meaningful event and is worth setting aside that day to participate. More details are available on the website or the flyer on the bulletin board. There is a \$10 fee to cover lunch expenses. **Invite** your neighbors and friends to this significant and worthwhile presentation.

LCSC Camp

Summer Camp registrations will be going home soon or can be picked up at the church. Any camper interested in attending will receive half of their cost paid by the church. There have been several updates to the camp calendar this summer. Visit lamoinecamp.org for more details.

LCSC Open House

Camp LaMoine is doing something different this year for their annual Open House. On June 2nd the camp invites everyone to participate in some new and unique changes. The camp will still have its silent auction and welcomes baskets to be donated for those, but they are also having a grill off, bake off and a disc golf tournament. If anyone is interested in participating in grilling or baking for this fundraiser, please let Matthew know. The camp would like to have one person from each church participate in each of these events. Check out more details on our website.

March Finances

	Weekly Actual	Yearly Actual	Yearly Budget
Mar 4th	\$1,354	\$14,360.24	\$14,379.84
Mar 11th	\$787	\$15,147.24	\$15,977.60
Mar 18th	\$991.00	\$16,128.24	\$17,575.36
Mar 25th	\$1,821	\$17,959.24	\$19,173.12
Totals	\$ 4,953.00		

April Prayer List

- Greg Beach – throat cancer (1-21)
- Denny Belville – no insurance, in need of surgery (8-6)
- Leroy Bollinger – home, not well (3-25)
- Pat Bultermeier and family - hospice (8-10)
- Chris Carlock – trip to Poland went well (3-25)
- Jerry Carlock – surgery (3-18)
- Shelly Claxton – cancer (Pam K's friend) (12-24)
- Tim Graham – health issues (3-18)
- Todd Hamm - cancer treatments (7-30)
- Leonard Kaufman - cancer (10-16)
- Gloria Lapping – serious health issues (Pam Carlock's mother) (3-18)
- Brandon Lleyllyn – spots on thyroid, not cancer, more tests (3-18)
- Judy Moose – stroke (1-21)
- Denise Owsley – knee surgery (3-18)
- Steve & Laura Thomas – health issues (3-18)
- Marissa – cancer (Letha Stambaugh's friend) (11-5)
- Condolences:**
- Pauline Ford Family
- Hubert Cripe Family
- Bud Shaw Family
- Richard Utter Family
- Praise:**
- Bob Fawcett- bladder cancer free (3-25)

Secretary

We want to thank those who were interested in helping the church by serving as our secretary. After much consideration, Michele Thiner was chosen as the new secretary. Please contact her for announcements, prayer lists and other administrative needs.