

It's sooo hard to be a community.

And what I mean is that no matter how hard we try, it seems like there are constantly hurdles that need to be crossed when we try to do life together. And as much as we all know and have read repeatedly how the Bible and Jesus tells us how we need to find ways to work together and love each other, we repeatedly fail at that attempt.

And I'm to blame as much as anyone. It seems to be a significant dynamic in human nature. And even as we try to be humble, especially in the church, conflict continues to arise. Ultimately, in the one place that the world should see the most unity, the most community and the most love, we often seem to fail the most.

And, in my opinion, that's probably one of the main reasons the church doesn't look appealing to a lot of people. A lot of people can't see the love of Jesus through all the mess that the church can be. And I can't say too much because I'm part of the problem. But, my heart hurts by the problems we, as the church, cause.

And regardless of how we feel about certain topics, especially difficult biblical truths, the one truth that I believe all Christian churches can agree on is love. Love that is patient. Love that is kind. Love that isn't jealous or boastful or proud. Love that doesn't demand its own way. And there's so much more, but that last one really sticks out to me. In various situations, am I demanding 'my own way'?

And that a question I think we all need to ask ourselves, 'am I demanding my own way'? And for the sake of our community and those who don't know the awesome love of God, am I willing put my own way aside so He becomes

clearer? I think we all want others to see God clearly in the church. To see her people standing arm in arm rather than in conflict and chaos. James writes to us "You want things, but you cannot have them, so you are ready to kill; you strongly desire things, but you cannot get them, so you quarrel and fight." (4.2, GNT) And I don't think anyone would kill anyone else, but if we're so angry and frustrated and upset with someone else, we might well be close to what James is talking about here. But James resolves this with these words, "You do not have what you want because you do not ask God for it."

In the midst of conflict, have we sought God in it? Honestly, if we're upset about something, annoyed or angry, have we stopped and prayed about our need, our anger and what we truly want? I often assume, yeah, sure I've prayed about it, but, have I really?

And then have we patiently waited for God's answer? He might be giving us exactly what we need (not necessarily want) in order for us to grow, mature and learn. He might be giving us the opportunity to understand and see him in a different light. Because, in the end, we need to do that. We need to continue to grow. We need to be open to the ways that God wants us to live in this world.

My prayer recently has been how can we shine a light in our community better? It starts with my individual light (and your individual light) but then we need to find ways to bring those lights together. To reveal, in the midst of sooo much darkness, a beacon that draws others to Him. I pray we find ways to put our lights together well. Serving Him and you,
Matthew

Community Thanks Christmas Service

The Ministerial Alliance has decided to cancel the community service on December 6th due to COVID restrictions.

Community Christmas Caroling

The Ministerial Alliance, at this time, have planned to do a combined Christmas caroling event on **Wednesday, December 16th**. We plan to meet outside the **Methodist Church at 6:00pm** and determine final plans there.

Current Needs

There is currently several needs within our church that could use your attention. We continue to look for a **Sunday School Superintendent** who can oversee the Sunday School curriculum and such. We also are looking for someone in the community to **coordinate the blood drive** that we host at the church twice a year. Recently we have a need for someone to be the **point person to coordinate our funeral dinners**. And we also could use some individuals who would be **willing to teach in either the nursery or a kid's class during the sermon**. This last position would allow a couple of families who cannot attend due to their child's age to be able to begin attending. Please contact an elder if you are interested in any of these positions. Some of these ministries will simply become unavailable if we do not have individuals who will lead them. Please prayerfully consider where you could step in.

Prayer List

Tina Althiser (Judy B's friend) – cancer
Tammy Bowman – kidney failure and other health concerns
Dorothy Clevenger – heart issues and cancer treatments
Todd Hamm – cancer
Dean Harris (Marion T's uncle) – stage 4 throat cancer
Sandra Howell – esophageal procedure went well, other procedure went smoothly, no cancer
Gary Hulett – stress test for unusual EKG results
Amanda Rennert – positive results from procedure
Lori Rodriguez – stage 4 cirrhosis of liver
Ted Stambaugh (Joe's cousin) – COVID recovery
Todd Stambaugh – surgery recovery and cancer treatments
Judy Windsor – hospice
Those with COVID – Evelyn Danner, Roger (Rushville Bakery), Liz Stimer
Condolences:
Carissa Sutphen (Sandy Morris' daughter) family
Ann Hicke family (wife of Steve T's cousin)
Marion T's son-in-law's dad's (Church Gilson) girlfriend (Deb) passed away suddenly
Lardy Stambaugh family

November Financials

	Weekly Actual	Yearly Actual	Yearly Budget
Nov 1	\$835.00	\$54,780.60	\$58,576.76
Nov 8	\$985.00	\$55,765.60	\$59,908.05
Nov 15	\$538.00	\$56,303.60	\$61,239.34
Nov 22	\$715.00	\$57,018.60	\$62,570.63
Nov 29	\$685.00	\$57,703.60	\$63,901.92
Totals	\$3,758.00		

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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.

Events:

Sat, Dec 5th 7:00 am – 10:30 am
Blood Drive

Sun, Dec 6th 6:00 pm Community
Christmas Sing @
United Methodist
Church

Tues, Dec 8th 6:30 pm Man Up

Sun, Dec 13th 6:00 pm Board
Meeting

Wed, Dec 16th 6:00 pm Community
Christmas Caroling @
UMC parking lot

Tues, Dec 24th 5:00 pm **Christmas
Eve Service**

*All events are subject to change. Please
keep up to date by checking the bulletin,
Facebook page or website.



Astoria Christian Church

