

There's a lot of

emotions this time of year. Obviously, there's the sense of joy and excitement about the events, celebrations and get-togethers during the Christmas season, not to mention all the presents and good food. But there's also the pain and sorrow we experience if we've had a hard year or are trying to celebrate a first Christmas without a loved one. But there's also the anxiety and worry that comes with the schedules and planning and adjustments that we need to make during the holiday season.

And it's easy to experience all of those emotions, from joy to sadness to worry all within the same day or even at the same time to an extent.

There was a meme I read today that said that a man going through a tough time will often respond in these four ways:

Struggle with sleep, throw himself into work, lose himself in his phone to forget his reality, and/or stay silent and try to figure a way out of his tough time. And apparently I'm very much a man because I do all of these when I find myself with anxiety or worry in life. And women can do these things, too, but the work one, especially, is often more of a man's way of dealing with things. And, obviously, there are good ways of dealing with difficult times and less healthy ways, most of these aren't too unhealthy, but finding work to do is definitely better than a phone or silence when dealing with a difficult situation.

And I found this to be true this week. After a funeral I performed, I felt a lot of anxiety and stress because of how I felt it went and my perception of it. I don't think my feelings were accurate to what occurred, but I couldn't shake

the feeling of failing in some way after it. And my first thought was to just go home and sit and watch TV, play on my phone or take a nap. I just wanted to rest. However, I decided instead to go back to the church and talk with the ladies who were having a meal for the family and chat, eat but also help out a little. And I think chatting with the specific ladies who were there and then doing a few dishes helped me get out of the stress I was feeling much quicker and more efficiently than sitting on the couch alone at home. And I believe there are times where sitting alone and resting can be exactly what we need, often putting ourselves with others and doing some work is good to get out of a negative emotion.

And there's a balance, too, because we all know we can overwork to the point we try to avoid emotions, but wallowing in our pain and difficulty rather than finding ways to heal isn't healthy either. And I believe that's a part of why God gave us instructions to work at the beginning of creation as well as throughout the Bible. Paul picks up that language in 1 Thessalonians 4.11 where he tells them, "...to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you..." (ESV) And though there are specific reasons why Paul writes that to the Thessalonians, there's value in living that for ourselves, too.

So, I encourage you (and myself) that this season especially when we find ourselves anxious or worried or even sad, to find some work to do, especially work that can be shared with others or ways to help those around us. And in that work, don't bury or ignore your feelings but allow yourself to be filled with the community around

you and the Spirit that God wants to give you. Serving Him and you, Matthew

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24th at 5:00pm we will be having our annual Christmas Eve service. This is a simple service to help keep our focus on Jesus.

Family Night Christmas

On **Wednesday, December 13th** we will be having a *Christmas Celebration at Family Night*. We will start with a Christmas potluck (ham provided) followed by some songs by the kids and a family craft for everyone to participate in. Everyone is invited to this joyful celebration. We eat **at 6:00pm**. There will be no Family Night December 20th or 27th or January 3rd.

Live Nativity

We will be hosting a Live Nativity on **Sunday, December 17th** from 6-8pm. There is a signup sheet in the back of the sanctuary to sign up for kitchen help as well as for shifts as characters in the scenes.

Prayer List

Kirsta Anderson-colon cancer spread to liver
Kaidn Bayer - severe burns
David Cassel – cancer
Robert Cassel - St. Louis hospital
Anissa Clary – testing
Dorothy Cleavinger – serious health issues
Bill Danner – continued healing, dialysis

Betty Davis - hospice
Jody Dean – treatments
Steve Derry – home after emergency procedure
Shelby Eyer - ICU, St. John's
Karen Fredrick – in hospital, not well
Mike Grater – cancer
Eric Hamm – leukemia
Nancy Herron - brain tumor surgery recovery
Larry Jones – fall, broken elbow but home
Jim Kinzer – cancer, heart attack
Butch Maloney - cancer
Deb McCoy – home after scary infection
Dan Palmer - health issues
Lori Rodriguez – health and personal issues
Debbie Opp – chemo treatment, off work
Unspoken Prayer Concern
Ellen Webb – cancer, colon surgery
Clyde Prater family
Richardson family
Chester Lein family
Jeannette Stambaugh family

November Financials

	Weekly Actual	Annual Actual	Annual Budget
Nov 5th	\$1,140.00	\$36,609.69	\$47,985.75
Nov 12th	\$903.00	\$37,512.69	\$49,052.10
Nov 19th	\$656.00	\$38,168.69	\$50,118.45
Nov 26th	\$495.00	\$38,663.69	\$51,184.80

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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:

Sun. Dec. 3rd – Community Christmas Sing, UMC @6pm

Weds. Dec. 6th – Family Night @6pm

Sun. Dec. 10th – Board Meeting @6pm

Weds. Dec. 13th – Family Night Christmas Celebration & Potluck @6pm

Thurs. Dec. 14th – Ladies' Fellowship @6pm

Fri. Dec. 15th – Shelf Distribution @6-8pm

Sat. Dec. 16th – Blood Drive @7-11am

Sun. Dec. 17th – Live Nativity @6-8pm

Sun. Dec. 24th – Christmas Eve Service @5pm

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



Astoria Christian Church

"The days are coming," declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel...in those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line."

Jeremiah 33:14-15