

It would seem that there has been an increase in illness these last few weeks. And it's some of the usual cold, flu and pneumonia that we expect this time of year, but, obviously, there's also been an increase in Covid cases as well. And we've all dealt with Covid in different ways. Some of us want to follow all the rules, get as much protection and be as safe as possible. Others of us have done the bare minimum of what is required of us. And then there are many of us in between somewhere. But what I think has struck me a little more in recent months is our attitude toward it all. At some point and time most of us have been angry about something related to this situation. Maybe you were angry that life got interrupted, that officials and leaders were making choices that you didn't like. And then you were angry at those leaders. Maybe we were even angry at those 'sheep' who chose to follow the rules and do what they were asked to do. But others might have been angry at those who couldn't conform. Angry because, if people just followed the rules and did what experts and doctors said, then we might get back to normal sooner or, more importantly, more people would stay healthy, and we'd see less loss of life. Maybe you were angry at these 'rebels' for not being willing to look at the greater good and make some sacrifices. And I've been on both sides of it. In fact, that's what's struck me out of all of this in the past several months: how my and other's views of the pandemic, Covid and others has changed as time has passed. Are we still holding the same stance we did in the beginning? Have we softened our views? Have we strengthened them? Have we said, "I told you so!"? Maybe you've even thought, (because we're not going to admit it out loud) "I was wrong."

And so, I challenge us right now at this time, to look over the past year and a half or so, and ask, 'are there any words, actions, choices, attitudes or thoughts we wish we could take back?' Does the passing of time and new information being available make us regret anything? If we knew then what we know now, would we go back and do anything differently? And I'm sure all of us could answer that last question, 'Yes'. But would we do anything different in how we treated those around us? Would we approach others with a different attitude, maybe a little more grace, after having some more time and information? And my point is this: we all have regrets for how we treat people down the road. We all wish we wouldn't have said something or done something or not had a certain attitude at times. And that's why an early church theologian wrote, "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity (love)." (Meldenius) Often we use that mentality when it comes to disagreements about the Bible or in the church, but the application for this is much wider, especially that last line: in all things charity, rather, love. I wonder if we went back a year and a half ago and really put love at the forefront of our minds if we would have the same regrets now. I wonder if certain relationships would be strained. If we had loved well from the beginning, I wonder if our world would look a little brighter. Paul writes at the end of his 'love' chapter in 1 Corinthians 13.13, "So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Loving first and loving last is the only way to live without regret and to maintain and grow our relationships, including our relationship with God. I pray that love abides in all of us well. Serving Him and you,
Matthew

Annual Meeting

We have our annual meeting scheduled for after the Sunday morning service on **Sunday, January 16th**. Everyone is invited to attend while members of the church can vote on decisions being made. Please contact a board member if you have thoughts to bring up during this meeting.

Thank You

The Thiner family is humbled and incredibly grateful for the wonderful Christmas gifts given this year. We feel so loved and appreciated when we receive from such warm giving hearts including the significant amount given from the church. Thank you so much!

Worship and Prayer

The Ministerial Alliance has decided to continue our monthly worship and prayer nights on the **last Sunday of every month**. At this time, we hope to continue to use the old Oak Ridge Café, but that location is pending. We will update as soon as we have more information. We look forward to this continued ministry to be a blessing for our community.

Adult Sunday School

We will resume our adult Sunday School class on **January 23rd** following the morning service. We will be using a new curriculum that is more discussion based. Our fellowship time will resume on this Sunday as well.

Prayer List

Jerry Armbruster – serious health issues
Bobby Blickenstaff – cancer treatments
Tammy Bowman – kidney failure, not well
Becky Crossman – cancer treatments
Haiti – earthquake, tropical storm, government unrest (Blessing Hearts mission)
Gary Hulett – heart failure
Danny Jones – bone scan
Sharon Jones – cancer tests
Mary & Leland Lowery – accident, surgeries
Noah Mummert – continued heart concerns
Tony & Shirley Roberts – hospitalized due to Covid
Eric Robertson – health issues
Lori Rodriguez – stage 4 cirrhosis of liver
Zach Rogers – transplant list
Todd Stambaugh – stage 4 glioblastoma
Condolences:
Kyle Easley family
Larry Mummert family
Carol Danner family
Praise:
Haiti Missionaries Escaped

December Financials

	Weekly Actual	Yearly Actual	Yearly Budget
Dec 5th	\$2,208.00	\$51,760.31	\$65,233.21
Dec 12th	\$951.00	\$52,711.31	\$66,564.50
Dec 19th	\$656.00	\$53,367.31	\$67,895.79
Dec 26th	\$408.00	\$53,775.31	\$69,227.08

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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:

Wed, Jan. 12th, 19th & 26th- Youth Group
6:30-7:30 pm

Sun, Jan. 9th- Board meeting 6 pm

Tues, Jan 11th- Man Up 6:30 pm

Sun, Jan. 16th- Annual Meeting @ 10:30 am

Sun, Jan 23rd - Adult Sunday School Resumes
at 10:30am

Sun, Jan. 30th- Youth Offering

Sun, Jan 30th-Worship & Prayer @ 6 pm

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



Astoria Christian Church

