

I am Pretty excited, though slightly nervous, about the opportunity to preach at Woodland Church of the Brethren. I'm a little nervous because it will add a little extra time and thought onto my plate moving forward, plus I'm anxious about how it'll go overall. Though I know and appreciate most of the folks out there, I still want to make a good impression on them with my messages.

However, I'm also super excited. I think it will allow God's Kingdom to grow and work more effectively in our community. I look forward to the additional people I'll get to interact with regularly and grow together with as we move forward.

But I'm also anxious about how it will impact my relationships here at ACC. Because I'll have to leave our church fairly quickly after our service means that I won't get to stay for Sunday School (for now) and won't be able to fellowship following our services as long, so I worry it'll feel like I'm running out on you all. And, again, it causes me a fair bit of anxiety when I consider that. But that's also why I'll need some feedback, too. If it feels like I'm neglecting or failing to do what you expect, please let me know so we can figure it out and this can be a positive endeavor for everyone.

But, more than that, this is exactly the opportunity that I am constantly looking for. I strongly believe in working together with other Christians and other churches so that we can have the most positive and dynamic impact in our community as possible. And any time someone brings something that could possibly help grow God's Kingdom and is something I can support, I want to do whatever I can to help. I believe this is what Jesus is praying for in John 17 when he says, *"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through*

their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." (vs. 20-21) Our work together, and our love and care for one another, is what Jesus says will cause our world to believe that he was sent by God.

And that's the core of my faith. Conservative churches, historically, have focused on a lot of other things in this world: from what we wear to what we say to what we do and don't do and how to do certain things the 'right way' that we sometimes miss the bigger picture things. And, to me, that goes down to how we love others but especially how we love one another as followers of Jesus. And I'm so glad I live in a community that is willing (more and more) to step outside of our church walls to embrace others who love and follow Jesus even if their practices and traditions look a little different. As long as we hold to the same core truths of our faith, we need to work well together.

Paul writes in Galatians 6.10, *"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."* Our 'household of faith' isn't just the people we see on Sunday mornings but those in our community who have a shared faith in Jesus. And we do that pretty well as long as it's not too inconvenient for us or causes us to change too many of our habits or traditions. My prayer is, moving forward, we embrace a little bit more what God is doing not just at ACC but in Astoria as a whole as well as our surrounding community and even to the ends of the earth. Serving Him and you, Matthew

THANK YOU!

The Thiner family wants to thank the entire church and the individuals who gave generously for our Christmas gift this year, as well as being able to have time away for the holidays! We are truly blessed to serve together with such a wonderful group of people.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, January 19th** following our church service. This is a time to vote for board members and consider other business of the church. Please bring any items needing discussion to Steve Trone to be put on the agenda.

Family Night

We will resume regularly scheduled Family Night on **Wednesday, January 15th at 6pm**. We had a great group come to our Christmas celebration and we look forward to what God will do in the next several months. We do have an adult class if you'd be interested in joining us.

Preaching

Matthew was asked to help fill the pulpit at Woodland Church of the Brethren for 3 weeks each month and the board supports this endeavor. It will be on a trial basis for now, but please let a board member know if you see or experience issues with this as we move forward. We are excited to see how this will lead to more ways we can work together.

Prayer List

Kirsta Anderson-colon cancer spread to liver
 Roy Atwood (Angela Thomas' dad) - health issues
 Steve Bailey - pancreatic cancer
 Tina Batterton – shoulder surgery this week
 Denny Belville – in Springfield
 Randy Bollinger - cancer
 Pat Breiland - congestive heart failure
 Cooper Davis – cancer treatments
 Steve Derry - leg surgery, in hospital
 Rita Herren – breast cancer
 Larry Jennings (friend of Brandon) - hospice
 Wendy Kaler – doing better
 Anthony Klinebough - masses found, more tests
 Butch Maloney
 Sally McQuellon (Amy's mom) - tumors, radiation
 Rosemary Prather - knee surgery
 Kathy Redshaw – procedure
 Joyce Robertson (Sandy's friend) - medical issues
 Pam Shaw - blood disorder
 Tom Stevens – cancer treatments
 Tom Stine - open heart surgery, not doing well
 Mark Stoneking – cancer
 Terry Stower – cellulitis
 Becky Watson – cancer treatments
 Travel During Holidays
Condolences
 Dean Malott family
 Todd Pope family
 Larry Jennings family

December Financials

	Actual Offering	Actual Year-to-Date	Yearly Year-to-Date
Dec 1st	\$655.00	\$43,598.39	\$44,713.92
Dec 8th	\$1,158.00	\$44,756.39	\$45,645.46
Dec 15th	\$555.00	\$45,311.39	\$46,577.00
Dec 22nd	\$962.00	\$46,273.39	\$47,508.54
Dec 29th	\$1,010.00	\$47,283.39	\$48,440.08

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.

Vol. 42 No.1 January 8th , 2025

The Astoria Christian (USPS 352-870) is published monthly by Astoria Christian Church, 219 W. State St, PO Box 677, Astoria, IL 61501. Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, IL.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Astoria Christian, PO Box 677, Astoria, IL 61501

Events:

Sat. Jan. 11th – Trone Retirement Party @11-3

Sun. Jan. 12th – Board Meeting @6pm

Weds. Jan. 15th – Family Night @6pm

Sun. Jan. 19th – Annual Meeting @10:15am

Weds. Jan. 22nd – Family Night @6pm

Sun. Jan. 26th – Worship & Prayer @6pm

Weds. Jan. 29th – Family Night @6pm

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



*“I will not leave you as orphans;
I am coming to you. In a little while the world
will see Me no longer, but you will see Me.
Because I live, you will live too.”
John 14:18-19*