

“It looks like kids live

here!” was the comment of someone who recently went past our house. And I didn’t know exactly how to respond, because I wasn’t sure how to take it, so I just said, “Well, just a few anyway.” And as I processed her words, I knew she didn’t mean anything negative about it but I naturally am more prone to hear criticism when something is unclear (it’s not a healthy trait, I realize). But the more I thought about it, the more I actually began to take pride in her words. All of us put time and effort and sacrifice for the things that are important to us. And looking at a person’s house and yard can be a part of revealing that to us. Some people have the most beautiful yards without a single weed or stray grass blade out of place. It’s obvious they either spend hours on their landscaping or paid a large amount to get it to look that good. They often have the most elaborate and beautiful decorations during holidays. And then there are those whose yard is the opposite. There’s junk piling up all around. The grass isn’t mowed regularly and most of what is the ‘yard’ is actually weeds. Kid’s toys are strewn about and it looks like little to no care is given to the way the exterior of their house looks. Honestly, I tend to lean more toward the second than the first (which bothers my oldest son a fair amount). But I’m a much more practical person and a little lazy, so my yard is mostly weeds, there’s toys and tools strewn across it or piled up in the backyard. But, as the comment made suggests, it does look like kids live there. And part of that might be the toy mess, but I like to think it’s the trampoline, pool and ever-

growing treehouse and slide contraption in the yard. And though they take up a large portion of our yard, those items get quite a bit of use by the kids, too (especially the trampoline that recently ripped beyond repair).

And I finally got to the point that I took the comment about my yard as a really positive comment. I’d love to have an immaculate yard without weeds and clutter, but I’d much rather have a yard that kids play in and we enjoy as a family. And I’d rather have people see that the things I put my time, effort and resources into is having a fun and kid-friendly home.

And that’s not to say anything negative about those houses that are pristine and well cared for at all. It all comes down to priorities and what we find important.

And, ultimately, what our yard looks like is fairly minor when it comes to life. What is important is the relationships we foster in the midst of those priorities. Are we prioritizing time with people, family and friends and our church family over activities in our lives? Are we using those activities as ways to promote those relationships? And, ultimately, are we prioritizing our relationship with God?

Paul writes in Romans 12. 10 *“Love one another warmly as Christians and be eager to show respect for one another.”* This is the highest purpose we have in this world, above whatever options and choices we have available to us. And I pray that we seek after those relationships in the midst of all our activities.

Serving Him and you,
Matthew

Community Thanksgiving Service

On **Sunday, November 12th at 6:00pm** we are hosting our community Thanksgiving service. This will be a service led entirely by congregation members and not the local pastors, which allows them to have a break from planning and running a service. An offering for the “The Shelf” will be taken that evening. We will need to provide some snacks for following the service as well. We hope to see you there to help prepare for Thanksgiving and the holiday season.

Hanging the Greens

On **Sunday, November 26th at 4:00pm** we will be hanging the greens around the church to help make the church more festive for the holidays.

The Shelf

Astoria has a new food pantry to provide food for those living in the Astoria School District! We have been able to stockpile quite a bit of food and had a successful distribution in October and hope to have one each month moving forward. Please check out “The Shelf” on Facebook for the most recent information and contact Matthew if you’d be interested in helping or donating. Our next distribution is **November 3rd from 6-8pm.**

Operation Christmas Child

We will be taking our annual Operation Christmas Child offering as well as packing shoe boxes on **Sunday, November 12th** following the service. Please plan on having supplies for the boxes here by November 5th. The goal is to pack 50 boxes and the more people we have involved, the quicker and more enjoyable the process is.

Prayer List

Kirsta Anderson-colon cancer spread to liver
Rhonda Barfield - seizures
David Cassel - cancer
Anissa Clary – testing
Dorothy Cleavinger – serious health issues
Bill Danner – continued healing, dialysis
Betty Davis - hospice
Jody Dean – treatments
Karen Fredrick – in hospital, not well
Mike Grater – cancer
Eric Hamm – leukemia
Larry Jones – fall, broken elbow but home
Jim Kinzer – cancer, heart attack
Clyde Prater-cancer, experimental treatments
Lori Rodriguez – stage 4 cirrhosis of liver
Debbie Opp – chemo treatment, complications
Sonya Shawgo – 2nd cataract surgery
Tim Stower – pace-maker procedure
Unspoken Prayer Concern

October Financials

	Weekly Actual	Weekly Budget	Annual Budget
Oct 1st	\$902.00	\$32,576.59	\$42,654.00
Oct 8th	\$878.00	\$33,454.59	\$43,720.35
Oct15th	\$823.10	\$34,277.69	\$44,786.70
Oct22nd	\$665.00	\$34,942.69	\$45,853.05
Oct 29th	\$477.00	\$35,419.69	\$46,919.40

Vol. 47 No.11 November 1st, 2023

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

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:

Weds. Nov. 1st – Family Night
@6pm

Weds. Nov. 8th – Family Night
@6pm

Sun. Nov. 12th –

- Operation Christmas Child offering and packing @10:30 a.m.
- Community Thanksgiving service @6pm

Tues, Nov. 14th – Man Up
@6:30pm

Weds., Nov. 15th – Family Night
@6pm

Thurs. Nov. 16th – Ladies' Fellowship @6pm

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

Weds., Nov. 29th – Family Night
@6pm

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



"Only fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things He has done for you."

1 Samuel 12:24