

I've Been thinking a lot

about helping lately. I always appreciate people who step in to take care of things that are difficult for me, tasks that require more than one person, or simply those who take a few chores off my shoulders. And, sometimes, simply taking care of things without asking or being asked is a great blessing. If my kids decided to wash all the dishes and put them away without being asked (or sternly told), that'd be such a blessing. However, there are times when simply taking over a task feels a little less helpful to me.

And there have been times where I feel like I've been helpful or at least my goal was to be helpful and loving when it wasn't appreciated much. And sometimes that's because I didn't do it right or it was done poorly. This can be a little subjective, but I'm sure all of us have felt like someone was less than grateful for what we tried to help with for those reasons. Sometimes it is because the person we tried to help is a bit of a control freak and because we didn't fold the towels exactly like they wanted, our 'help' wasn't as helpful as we'd hoped. Or if we didn't put things back exactly where someone else thought they should go and it's frustrating for them because they can't find the mug to have their morning coffee. (These are both hypothetical, by the way).

And I can be that person at times. When my parents come to visit, my mom will just take care of some basic things around the house (dishes, folding laundry, tidying up). And I don't want her to stop or to even change because I know she's doing it to be helpful and kind even if she might fold my undershirts a little different than I do. It's not wrong, just different and because I have a bit of OCD, I notice the difference. But I know there are people who would throw a fit because they weren't folded the 'proper' way. I'm just grateful that she's willing to come visit, help as she's able and simply enjoys being around the family.

But, then, there are situations where things need to be done a certain way because of regulations or functionality. I personally have trouble giving things up for people to help with because, again, I'm a little OCD but also because I know how things are supposed to go and because of the system I have to do them. And, so, if I sound a little short or annoyed because you've tried to help and do something kind and helpful, know that there's a reason behind it more than likely but also that I'm trying to learn to let certain things go, too.

This is especially true when it comes to Family Night and The Shelf for me. At The Shelf we have government regulations that we have to follow as well as best practices that are necessary to keep that functional and flowing. And, so, there are things that I need to keep on top of and ways that things must be done (or we'll lose a large amount of free food that we rely on). And, so, there are times I feel like a control freak due to having to keep these guidelines. However, there are things there that I want done a certain way just because it's easier for me. And I will push for some of those things because my life needs a certain amount of order for my schedule and sanity.

And, so, I love it when people come up and ask how they can help. I love when people are willing to further the cause and the purpose of what we're trying to do and are flexible. And I want to let people have ownership to take care of things and I am working on letting certain things go. And, for me, it's a tension and balance between requirements, schedule and freedom.

My point is this: God calls us to serve and love but he's also a God of order and justice. If we simply try to serve and love in our way and by our schedule and with regard only to ourselves, I believe we fall short of that calling. However, if we (me mostly) try to control too much of what others are doing, it can get in the way of the generous love God calls us to. My prayer is that we are outrageously generous and loving people and willing to do what is

genuinely helpful and loving to show God's love to this world. And we find ways to selflessly love. Serving Him and you, Matthew

Lenten Service

There is a tentative Lenten Service planned for **later in February (the 15th or 22nd probably)**. The location and other details are still being planned out but you can pencil in that date on your calendar.

LCSC Date Nights

LaMoine Christian Camp is hosting Date Nights this winter with the next one planned for **February 22nd** where they plan on hosting comedian Jonnie W., with another date night following in March.

Kid's Retreats

LaMoine Christian Camp is hosting multiple retreats for kids from 4th grade through high school seniors. Each is \$50 per kid but the church can help with any costs if that's an issue.

High School Retreat: February 27th-28th
Preteen (4th-6th Grade) Retreat: March 20th-21st
Junior High (6th-8th Grade) Retreat: March 27th-28th
We also plan to go to a kid's conference in Canton on Saturday, March 7th. The cost for that is \$29. Contact Matthew with more questions.

Adult Night Out

We will be going to Los Charros in Rushville for another Adult Night Out on **Thursday, February 26th at 6:00pm**. There will be a signup sheet in the sanctuary so we can let them know how many are coming.

Prayer List

Sam Brandenburg (Jennifer L.'s stepfather) – Parkinsons
Rita Herren – doing better
Amber Lawson – lung cancer
Rose Lowe (friend of Marion) - blurred vision, swollen optic nerve
Judy Lynn (sister of Jody) - cancer
Bambi Markley (Bonnie Clark's daughter) – leukemia
Sally McQuellon (Amy's mom) - stomach cancer, possible spreading
Joe Stambaugh - procedure, more tests coming
Mark Stoneking – cancer
Kallie Stutsman – tests results were okay
David Thome (Sam's cousin) - cancer
Sam Thome – heart and back issues

Praises:
Owen Shaw born January 13! All are doing well.
Marion Trone's procedure went very well
Ashton Milo Protsman born January 4!

Condolences:
Bobby Adkins family
Sydney Williams family
Addie Lascelles family
John Henderson (Dusti's bro-in-law) family

January Financials

	Weekly Actual	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Budget
January 4	\$2,347.00	\$2,347.00	\$975.77
January 11	\$749.00	\$3,096.00	\$1,951.54
January 18	\$1,266.00	\$4,362.00	\$2,927.31
January 25	\$1,015.00	\$5,377.00	\$3,903.08

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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:

Weds. Feb. 4th – Family Night @6pm

Sat. Feb. 7th – LCSC Date Night @5pm

Sun. Feb 8th – Soup-er Bowl, Woodland @12pm

Board Meeting @6pm

Weds. Feb. 11th – Family Night @6pm

Tues. Feb 17th – VBS Meeting @4pm

Weds. Feb. 18th - Family Night @6pm

Sun. Feb. 22nd – LCSC Date Night @6pm

Weds. Feb. 25th – Family Night @6pm

Thurs. Feb. 26th – Adult Night Out, Los Charros @6pm

Fri. Feb. 27th – Sat. 28th – LCSC HS Retreat

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



Astoria Christian Church



“Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.”

Ephesians 5:2