

God is all about Being life-

giving. And that may seem difficult to see at times when you read through the judgement portions of the Bible. However, God's entire work and overall goal is to provide life and be life for his creation.

During my Family Night class of Junior High students, we've been reviewing some of the basic doctrines of our Christian faith. I don't call it that for their sake. We've actually have been using a video series called "What's in the Bible with Buck Denver" which is basically a bunch of puppets and songs that teach some of these truths. And they seem to enjoy it, even if they roll their eyes at times during the corny jokes. During one of our lessons recently we were told the truth that God created this world because he is a creative God. He is a God who cannot help himself but to create good and loving and positive things. And he created this world to be in relationship with him especially the part of creation that was "made in his image" as humanity is.

But even in the midst of those judgements and harsh stories and teachings in the Bible is the backbone of God providing life. But not just any life because we know that not all lives are lived in the way God desires or promote his purposes and work. And that's not to say one life is greater than another but that it's simply true when a life is lived as fully for God's work and intent as possible, those are the fullest and most fulfilling lives.

And, so, there were times that God chose to remove those lives that didn't match his plan. And though from our modern sensibilities we have a hard time with that sometimes, we also

know that life lived outside of God's plan is not much of a life anyway. And we also know that this physical life isn't all that there is either. And, so, God did things throughout history (and continues to do them) so that the greater life can be lived. Some hard and difficult events and experiences happened so that true and lasting life could be experienced by those who chose to live it. Unfortunately, many don't want to go that path.

During those same Junior High classes at Family Night, one of my rowdier kids asked a very good question when we watched the part where Adam and Eve chose to listen to a serpent rather than God. He wondered, "Why in the world would you listen to a snake?" And all I could say is "Good question!" Why would we listen to that snake? Why would we choose anything or any voice over God's? It's a question we should probably ask ourselves often.

Because when we choose this world or our anxieties or our agenda or path, we choose a different voice. When we fight and bicker and attack, we aren't listening to God. When we complain and accuse, we aren't hearing him. And that's not life. We conservative Christians like to talk about being pro-life when it comes to fetuses but we aren't always very pro-life when it comes to those around us who frustrate or hurt or inconvenience us. We like to fight for life when it's an 'innocent' or someone 'helpless' but we don't always respond with life when it comes to those online or those we see on TV or someone we disagree with living down the street.

My point, and prayer, is that especially as we look to the greatest life-giving experience in history (Easter FYI) we consider how we are giving

life to those around us. We consider how our words and actions and attitudes express that the very nature of God's life-giving spirit is being reflected as clearly as possible into a world that is so filled with death and disorder. And that we choose to listen to his voice rather than any other.

Serving Him and you,
Matthew

Easter Services

There will be a Good Friday service on **Friday, April 3rd at 6:00pm** at Woodland Church of the Brethren. We will have a **Community Sunrise Service at 8am** on Easter **also at Woodland Church** followed by a potluck-style breakfast there. We will then have our **Resurrection service at 10am** (there will be no Sunday School on Easter). We hope to see you at these community events!

concert

We will again be hosting The Padgett's, a father and son duo who have a strong desire to share the gospel through their music. They sing southern and country gospel music. It will be on **Saturday, March 28th at 6:00pm** and a love offering will be taken to support their ministry.

Family Night Easter celebration

On **Wednesday, March 25th** we will be having our Easter Celebration and potluck at Family Night at **6:00pm**. This will include a potluck meal (ham provided) followed by a craft time together and presentation by the kids. It's always a fun time to enjoy and celebrate this season together.

Prayer List

Sam Brandenburg (Jennifer L.'s stepfather) – Parkinsons
Pat Brieland - fell, broke leg, in rehab facility
Shirley Engel (friend of Marion) - diabetes issues
Rita Herren – doing better
Sandra Howell - pneumonia
Klineboughs
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
Mark Stoneking – cancer
David Thome (Sam's cousin) - cancer
Ed Wherley - in hospital
Friend of Russel - kidney transplant

Praises:

Bill and Joyce are great-grandparents again!

Condolences:

Wayne Bollinger family

Beth Johnson family

Beth Price family

Will Vaughn family

February Financials

| | Weekly Actual | Year-to-Date Actual | Year-to-Date Budget |
|--------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Feb 1 | \$1,427.00 | \$6,804.00 | \$4,878.85 |
| Feb 8 | \$1,188.00 | \$7,992.00 | \$5,854.62 |
| Feb 15 | \$744.00 | \$8,736.00 | \$6,830.39 |
| Feb 22 | \$1,342.00 | \$10,078.00 | \$7,806.16 |

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. Mar. 4th** – Family Night @6pm
- Thurs. Mar. 5th** – LCS Camp Kick-off @6pm
- Sat. Mar. 7th** – Mens’ Breakfast, Berean @6pm
- Sun. Mar. 8th** – Board Meeting @6pm
- Tues. Mar. 10th** – Man Up @6:30pm
- Weds. Mar. 11th** – Family Night @6pm
- Mon. Mar. 16th** – Camp Fellowship, Browning @6pm
- Weds. Mar. 18th** – Family Night @6pm
- Thurs. Mar. 19th** – Ladies’ Fellowship @6pm
- Fri. Mar. 20th- Sat. Mar. 21st** – LCSC Pre-Teen Retreat
- Sun. Mar. 22nd-Tues. Mar. 24th** – Bader Revival @6pm
- Weds. Mar. 25th** – Family Night @6pm
- Thurs. Mar. 26th** – VBS mtng. @4pm
- Fri. Mar. 27th- Sat. Mar. 28th** – LCSC JH Retreat
- Sat. Mar. 28th** – Padgett Singers Concert @6pm
- Sun. Mar. 29th** – Youth Offering Sunday Worship & Prayer @6pm

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



“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 1:14