

An Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike for November 23, 2022

This past Tuesday we began our Advent Study with Prepare the Way of the Lord by Adam Hamilton. There is still time to join if you would like. The book can be found on Amazon. This is a Zoom Study. If you are interested, please let Jennifer in the office know.

Christmas 2022 Memorials – Would you like to remember or honor a loved one this Christmas? You may do so by purchasing a poinsettia to decorate the church; or, instead, you may prefer to donate to the general fund or to the trustees' fund. To honor or remember family members or friends, please complete the form attached to this email and return it to the church. (Forms can also be picked up at the church as well) The deadline is December 7th.

Our Holiday Bazaar benefitting both the Child Care Development Center and our Church will be on Saturday, December 10th 9-2. You won't want to miss it!! Lots of Vendors, Food and Activities for the kiddos! **Also, we will be having a bake table.** There is a sign-up sheet in the hall on the bulletin board. The bake table was a HUGE success at the Harvest Festival. Let's make it an even bigger success at the Bazaar! Please don't wait to sign up!! Or contact Cathy Jones 443-848-8015.

If you are visiting the church during the week, please be careful of the children at the school. We ask that if you are driving in during drop-off or pick-up hours that you wait behind the cars as to not endanger any of the children getting in and out of the cars. These lines move rather quickly. Morning hours are typically 8:15-9:15 and then afternoon is usually 11:30-12:30. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

It is already time for Outreach to roll out projects for the holiday season. We are doing things a little differently this year. We do not need to prepare the Thanksgiving Fixing bags for our friends at the soup kitchen this year. Those items are being provided by the Food Bank. However, with the cost of groceries, more people are coming to the soup kitchen for help. The shelves are as empty as I've seen them. **For the months of November and December our food collection will benefit the Pasadena Soup Kitchen with shelf-stable items that stretch a meal like pasta, mac & cheese, rice and instant mash potatoes.** We are completely out of those items. The Child Development Center will be helping us with this project. Regular size items are needed, not the super-sized items found in the big-box stores. **For Christmas we will be receiving names from the county for the Holiday Sharing program.** We have requested the names of 5 small families and 5 seniors in our area. We will be asking members and friends to help by providing help with the cost of a Christmas meal and presents for the children. This is the program we have been helping for many years. We should be receiving those names from the county in the next few weeks. We thank everyone for their continued support during this holiday season. -Thanks. The Outreach Committee

Regular Sunday School has begun for children between 3 years old and students in the 5th grade. Also, we are still looking for a volunteer teacher for the 4th Sunday of the month. If you feel young at heart, we are looking for you. You can talk to Leslie Fauconnet, Sarah Jenkins, Donna Helowicz, or myself to find out just how much fun you can have one hour a month. -Deb McMurtrey, Sunday School Coordinator.

We want to remind you that we are still using Zoom for our Sunday Services. Zoom allows you to join us from wherever you may be!! (Join us in your pj's with a morning cup of coffee) As most of you who Zoom our worship services know, I greet Zoom attendees as they sign on, take Zoom

attendance, and assign names to phone numbers as phone callers sign on. I open the Zoom meeting at 9 a.m. to give people time to sign on. I encourage you to sign on early to avoid the crush of people signing on at the last minute. The earlier you sign on the easier it is for me to attend to the greeting responsibilities. It also gives us a chance to chat and share prayer requests. **If you should have any problems logging in, please alert Jennifer in the office.**

If anyone is interested in volunteering to staff our nursery on Sunday mornings, please let me know. We may not be able to staff every Sunday morning, but we can let our young families know those Sundays when nursery will be available.

If you have prayer requests, even if you plan to share them at Sunday worship, you may forward them ahead of time to Jen at the church office and she will compile a list to be used on Sunday morning.

The Announcements and Bulletin for Sunday's service are included as attachments to this encouraging word. Please feel free to print them out and either bring them with you to the service or to use them as your guide as you Zoom the service.

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A Thanksgiving Prayer

Loving God our Creator and Redeemer,

you are the source of life and all blessing.

Today we give thanks to you for an abundance of blessings

poured out into our lives to overflowing.

We thank you for the gift of family and friends,

laughter shared and memories cherished.

We thank you for your constant presence,

your comfort in times of sorrow and distress;

your strength in the times we are weak,

your wisdom in times when we are confused.

We thank you for the loving fellowship

within which we hold one-another,

for where we are gathered you also are there.

We thank you for each breath we are able to take,

for our world and our place in it,

for the gifts and abilities with which we are blessed,

and the opportunities to use them to glorify you.

Lord all your blessings are too numerous to mention.

Help us to recognize and cherish them all,

to acknowledge You as the source,

and to never cease to give you thanks and praise. Amen

Blessings & Peace, Mike