

# Old Providence ARP Church

## Old Providence News

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Dear Old Providence Family,

My, oh my. I've said it before on this newsletter's front page but I'll say it again now—what a time to be alive! I wonder if you've reached the point at which I find myself? When I turn on the news or glance at headlines, I find myself asking "Well, what will it be today?" I wonder what new plague is coming. Murder hornets? Squirrels with a new form of the Black Death? I wonder what new conflict will have sprouted? What scandal has broken? Who said that inflammatory statement, or who performed that unbelievable political stunt? I'm referring, of course, to the goings on of the secular world which are unfolding around us.

Sadly, however, my sense of shock and disbelief are relatively mild as they relate to what I've seen transpire in the secular world. Psalm 14:1 is true, after all. The fool has said in his heart that there is no God. We should not be surprised when a world that has rejected God acts in a foolish manner. Instead, I'm truly disturbed when I watch what is happening in so much of the visible church. While the church faces many temptations, among its greatest is that of being distracted. And so much of the visible church has fallen to temptation.

I'll say it again—one of the greatest temptations we face in the modern church is that of being distracted. Distracted by whom? The first and most obvious answer to this question is that we are distracted by Satan (of course). Yes, the devil is real. And no, his existence is not dependent upon your belief. As a matter of fact, if you don't believe in Satan's existence, I think he is rather pleased with you. Satan would be quite content for you to continue through life as if he poses no threat. After all, if Satan isn't real then there is no need to resist him (as we are commanded to do in James 4:7). But again, Satan is real and does everything he can to hamper the church's efforts of being the salt and light of the world that Jesus commanded us to be.

So, what are we to do in response to these things? Instead of becoming distracted the church needs to focus on what truly matters—the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are living in a time of great unrest, but also a time of great clarity. "Clarity?", you might find yourself asking. Yes, clarity, for it has never been so clear in my lifetime that the world has no real solutions to its own problems. Its growing unrest, strife,

and discord only reinforce the world's great need for transformation. And the only one that has the power to transform, the only one that can bring hope to the hopeless and life out of death is Jesus Christ. Instead of becoming distracted by politics, social justice causes, secondary matters of doctrine, arbitrary policies and practices, and other matters that inevitably lead to disagreement, let us instead focus on sharing the love and truth of Jesus Christ with the people in our lives. This doesn't have to be complicated. Write a letter. Pick up the phone. Love people enough to tell them what the Lord has done for you. Point them to the truth of God's Word. Share your life and the reason for your hope. It is these conversations that break down barriers and cause the light of the gospel to blaze forth. In the midst of all the world's hopelessness, offer the real hope of the Gospel. And in so doing, you will be filled with hope, as well.

Your Pastor,

Patrick



### **PreSchool Update**

Old Providence PreSchool registration for 2020/2021 is temporarily on hold due to safety concerns regarding COVID-19. Preschool will not start this fall. The Committee will meet in November or December to decide if preschool will resume for the second half of the school year in January 2021.



## August 2020 Calendar of Events

As of publication of this Newsletter, we have two Sunday Worship services, one at 9:00 a.m. and the other at 11:00 a.m. Please choose the time that suits you best. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or believe you have been exposed, please refrain from attending. The services are an abbreviated worship style to minimize the risk of transmission. The Session has decided to keep following the current worship format through Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>. They will have another Session meeting that night at 6:00 to decide how to proceed at that point. The 9:00 a.m. service will be streamed on Facebook and will be available to view on sermonaudio.com, that day, hopefully by 10:30 a.m. We request everyone practice social distancing and we invite you to bring any protective gear you deem necessary for yourself.

All other church activities are cancelled until further notice. If you would like a copy of any Sunday sermons on CD, please call the church office to let us know.

Our pastor's Daily Devotionals will continue at 7:00 each morning, Monday through Friday, for live stream on our church's Facebook page. It will remain available on Facebook to view any time, and it will also be available on sermonaudio.com.

### Sunday, August 2

6:00 p.m. – Session Meeting

### Sunday, August 9

6:00 p.m. - Diaconate Meeting



### Sunday, August 23

Special Offering for WRE

## September 2020



3 Women's Ministries 7:00 p.m.

Women's Bible Study 7:30 p.m.

7 Labor Day – Church Office Closed

13 6:00 p.m. - Session & Diaconate meet separately

7:00 p.m. – Session & Diaconate meet jointly

(Please keep in mind, these dates are tentative and could be cancelled or rescheduled after publication of the Newsletter.)