

# Old Providence ARP Church

## Old Providence News

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Dear Old Providence Family,

Though I have already announced it in other ways, I'm so pleased to announce in this newsletter that worship services resume at Old Providence on Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>! Hopefully this newsletter arrives in plenty of time for those of you who are local to make plans to worship with us. And if you do not worship with us, it is my profound hope that you will worship in a Bible believing church, and furthermore, that you are a regular part of the life in that church. If you have recently been tuning into online worship, you may remember that I began a new series on I John. In the opening section of I John 1, John indicated that the source of complete joy is union with Christ and those who are in Christ.

It should come as no surprise that John would write these things. After all, in John's Gospel (chapter 17) he included what is referred to as "The High Priestly Prayer of Christ", in which Jesus prays not only for his disciples there, at that present time, but also for all those who would believe on His name. In other words, in John chapter 17 Jesus prays for you, if you're trusting in Him alone for your salvation, and for me. And of all the things Jesus could pray for, in John 17:21 Jesus prayed "that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me." In verse 23b Jesus also prayed "May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

I don't know about you, but as I read these verses I am simultaneously encouraged, humbled, and convicted. I am encouraged that God has seen fit to use Christian unity as evidence of Christ's authenticity and to point to His love for the world. What a lofty calling we have received! Yet, at the same time, I am humbled that God would show us such favor, and I am convicted by the fact that God's people are often anything but united. So, what shall we do? Certainly, we can encourage other believers to unite under the name of Christ. We can commit ourselves to loving service. But most importantly, we should commit ourselves to being a regular part of a Bible believing church.

As I wrote previously, it is my profound hope that you are a regular part of a Bible believing church. This may seem a bit obvious, but being a regular part of a church means actually going to church...regularly. Yet in this time of Covid when attending services may not be an option for everyone, it's important to remember that fostering unity requires more than mere attendance. Love one another. Share meals together. Encourage one another. As God's Word says in Galatians 6:2, look for ways to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Pray for your fellow believers. Please, pray for me. Ask God to show you other ways to unite to fellow Christians. Our testimony is defined by our unity with one another. Keep these things in mind.

Your Pastor, Patrick

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Greetings Old Providence family!

As I write, I am settling into my new role as chaplain for the 1-40<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion here in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. My unit is an Initial Military Training (IMT) unit with 5 batteries of basic trainees. At full capacity, we are home to over 1200 young men and women who have just begun their military careers. As you can imagine, the opportunities to minister to these young Soldiers are plentiful! Much of my hands-on ministry is done in counseling and assisting with ceremonies such as graduations. I even got the chance to help cook breakfast for a group of Drill Sergeants who were on break from their duties. I have also been visiting the post chapels over the past few weeks and hope to be granted the opportunity to preach soon. God has put some amazing people in my path who have helped me tremendously in my transition to this assignment.

The weather here has been extreme, to say the least. Over the past few days, we have had temperatures below zero with wind chills in the -20s. That's cold no matter how tough you are. I used to think Raphine was the windiest place on the planet until I moved to Oklahoma! The song is correct – Oklahoma is definitely “where the wind goes sweeping o’er the plains.” Aside from the cold, we have had several inches of snow with several more forecast in the next couple of days. All this makes for some brutal conditions, but it also reminds us of God’s power and majesty.

On the home front, the Sutton family remains apart from one another. Dylan and I have been in Oklahoma since mid-January, while the girls have travelled back and forth from our home in Virginia to North Carolina. Thankfully, that divide will soon be erased. Next week, we will be flying to Charlotte, NC to travel back to Greenville to collect the remainder of our belongings. Then we will drive back out to Oklahoma as a complete family unit! This time apart has been hard, but has perhaps been good training for things to come. Everyone remains healthy and well. Callie Mae is growing more each day. Harper Grace is honing her babysitting skills and being a big helper for her mother. Dylan is knee-deep in schoolwork as he continues to pursue an Associate’s Degree in Military History. He was also a tremendous help in loading and unloading the U-Haul! Holly is pulling double duty as she plays the role of both mom and dad to the girls, but her shoulders are broad. Please continue to pray for them as we all strive to follow God’s calling for the Sutton family.

In closing, I want to say “thank you” once again for all those who have sent cards, encouraging notes, and prayers. They mean more to me than I could ever put into words (there is nothing like a letter from home!). Please continue to pray for the men and women who serve this country...they face challenges that are not found on any Army recruiting brochure. I send my love to all. May God continue to bless the leadership, congregation, and ministry of Old Providence Church.

Yours in Christ,

H (1LT) Mitchell A. Sutton, United States Army





## March 2021 Calendar of Events

As of publication of this Newsletter, worship services will return in the abbreviated format as before on Sunday morning, March 7, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Youth Group will resume on March 7th at 5:30 p.m.

Pastor Malphrus will continue broadcasting his sermons on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. through our church's Facebook page, and will post the audio version of those sermons on [sermonaudio.com/oldprovidence](http://sermonaudio.com/oldprovidence). 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](http://sermonaudio.com).



### March 2021

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| 7  | 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. Worship<br>5:30 p.m. Youth Group<br>6:30 p.m. Diaconate Meeting  | 21 | 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. Worship<br>5:30 p.m. Youth Group              |
| 13 | 7:30 a.m. Session Vision Breakfast  | 28 | Palm Sunday<br>9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. Worship                        |
| 14 | Daylight Savings Time Begins<br>9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. Worship<br>5:30 p.m. Youth Group |    | Spring Special Offering<br>for Synod Causes<br>5:30 p.m. Youth Group |



### April 2021

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|---|---|----|--|----|-----------------------|
| 2 | Good Friday   | 11 | Youth Group 5:30 p.m.                                | 25 | Youth Group 5:30 p.m. |
| 4 | <b>RESURRECTION SUNDAY</b><br>Sunrise Service 7:00 a.m. - TBD | 18 | Youth Group 5:30 p.m.<br>Diaconate Meeting 6:30 p.m. |    |                       |

\*Please keep in mind, calendar dates are tentative and could change or cancel after publication of this newsletter.

### 2021 Calendar and Bulletin Back Updates

Officers and Committee members, please provide updates for the bulletin backs if you have not done so already, and any 2021 Calendar dates you may have by March 31, 2021.