

Old Providence ARP Church

Old Providence News

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Dear Old Providence Family,



As I write this article for the newsletter I am tempted to break my own “No Christmas Music till After Thanksgiving” rule. The temperature has dropped, the view outside my window shows a landscape whitened with ice, tiny snowflakes are falling, and summer seems like a distant memory. All of these things combined with thoughts of the weeks ahead make me want to dust off my old Andy Williams Christmas Album and listen to “It’s The Most Wonderful Time of the Year”.

But as we ponder this season together, is it really all of the cultural trappings expressed in this song and so many others that make Christmas the most wonderful time of the year? Perhaps you find yourself in a different setting this year, facing different circumstances than those of years past. Perhaps you are facing problems that are new or the same problems that have troubled you for some time. Maybe this year you’re just not in a Christmasy (if you’ll allow me that word) kind of mood. If this is where you find yourself then allow me to encourage you.

Concerning my former question, of course it isn’t all of those things in the Christmas songs that make Christmas the most wonderful time of the year. Nor is it even nostalgia from times past or the hope of things to come that makes Christmas so wonderful. What makes Christmas the most wonderful time of the year is the tangible reminder we receive that there was a time when the world was full of darkness and without hope. Yet into that darkness came light, the True Light that gives life to all people—Jesus Christ. It is because of Jesus Christ that we have hope for the future no matter what we face. It is because of Jesus Christ that we can celebrate Christmas with the boldness of those who know the greatest gift ever given wasn’t wrapped and under a tree, but instead, was hung upon a tree so that all those who would trust in Him would have life in abundance, even throughout eternity.

Know that the Lord is with you no matter what you are facing, whether it is the happiest of happy times or a time of sadness, or maybe even somewhere in between. Remember the promise of Christ that He will never leave or forsake His people. This Christmas, focus on the promises of God and Jesus Christ, the greatest gift of all.

Merry Christmas!

Patrick



December 2018 Announcements

Little Lambs and Youth Group



Little Lambs and Youth Group will meet on Sunday, December 2nd, at 5:30 p.m. starting with a light supper. In addition to that day, the Youth Group will meet December 9th. These will be the last meetings until 2019. Everyone is welcome!

Women's Ministry Window

Women's Ministries will meet on Thursday, December 6th, at 7:00 p.m. followed by Bible Study at 7:30 p.m. We will continue our study of *Living in the Gap Between Promise and Reality* by Iain M. Duguid on Chapter 12 "Faith Put to the Test" (Genesis 22). Please join us on the first Thursday of every month.



Young Adults Christmas Party

Young Adults/Couples, join us at the manse on Saturday, December 8th, at 6:00 p.m. for a Christmas party. Bring your favorite finger foods and a gift for our white elephant gift exchange. Also, wear your favorite Christmas attire. Keep the cost for the gift below \$10 and remember, it's just for fun so have fun with the gift. If you have questions, ask Patrick or Amanda.

Christmas Breakfast

On Thursday, December 13th, at 9:00 a.m. the Women's Ministries and Spiritual Care Committee Christmas Breakfast is scheduled at the Hometown Grill & Buffet in Staunton. The buffet cost is \$7.50. This does not include drink, tax or tip. This is Dutch treat. If you would like to donate a gift to be used in our door prize drawing, please bring it with you. Everyone is invited to join us for this time of fellowship. Questions, contact Martha.



Christmas Dinner

The annual congregational Christmas Dinner will be on Wednesday, December 12th, at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited for this covered dish meal and a time of singing carols.

Christmas Program and Cantata

The Christmas Program and Cantata "A Family Christmas" by Dennis and Nan Allen, and Candlelight Service will be held on Sunday, December 16th, at 6:00 p.m. A Christmas reception sponsored by Old Providence Women's Ministries will follow in Providence Hall.

Children are needed to sing in the Christmas Cantata. Little Lambs will be participating in the Choir's Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 16th. We will be singing a song called "Creature Praise". It is a fun and fairly easy song to sing. We need as many children as possible to join in. For more information, please see Amanda and plan to come to practice on Sunday, December 8th, at 5:30pm.

Community Event

The Raphine Volunteer Fire Company will host Santa at the Raphine Christmas tree on Monday, December 24th, at 6:00 p.m.

January Calendar



Jan 1 – Church Office Closed	Jan 13 – Deacons Meeting
Jan 3 – Women's Ministries/Bible Study	Jan 20 – WRE Special Offering
Jan 6 – Session Meeting	- Little Lambs & Youth Group
- Little Lambs & Youth Group	Jan 31 – Women's Ministries visits Beulah Land

Thank You

We had 60 shoeboxes returned for Operation Christmas Child! Thank you to Carol for organizing this project and to everyone who participated.

Officer Election Update

The Elders who were elected on November 4, 2018 are Clay, Johnny, and Rob. We thank those who were willing to serve the Church and allowed their names to go on the ballot.

Annual Congregational Meeting

At the annual Congregational Business Meeting on November 18, 2018 the congregation elected Finley as Congregational Chairman, Glenn as Vice-Chairman, Amanda as Recording Secretary, Terri as Receiving Treasurer, Carrie as Disbursing Treasurer, Kay as Memorial Treasurer, and Robyn as a PreSchool Committee member. The 2019 General Fund Budget was approved.

End of the Year Matters

Treasurers of all church organizations are reminded to submit your yearly reports as early as possible in January so the annual report to Synod and Presbytery can be prepared. Please leave them in the Clerk of Session mailbox.

Anyone who doesn't have offering envelopes but would like to have them, please contact Terri at 885-6409 by December 12th.

Committee Chairman, if you have not already done so, please provide event dates for the 2019 Church Calendar to Stephanie.

December 2018 Calendar of Events

Sunday, December 2 - Communion

10:00 a.m. – Sabbath School

10:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Tina and Emma

11:00 a.m. – Worship

No Children's Church

5:30 p.m. – Children's Fellowship and Youth Group

Wednesday, December 5

6:45 p.m. - Bible Study

Thursday, December 6

7:00 p.m. – Women's Ministries

7:30 p.m. – Women's Bible Study



Sunday, December 9

10:00 a.m. – Sabbath School

10:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Joy and Carrie

11:00 a.m. – Worship

Children's Church Leader: Karen

Noon – Deacons Meeting

5:30 p.m. – Youth Group

Wednesday, December 12

6:30 p.m. – Christmas Dinner

Sunday, December 16

10:00 a.m. – Sabbath School

10:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Karleen and Marvella

11:00 a.m. – Worship

Children's Church Leader: Dana

6:00 p.m. - Christmas Program/Cantata

Wednesday, December 19

6:45 p.m. – Bible Study

Sunday, December 23 – Christmas Sunday

10:00 a.m. – Sabbath School

10:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Vicki and Kayla

11:00 a.m. – Worship

Children's Church Leader: Karleen and Kristin

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, December 25 – Christmas Day

Church Office Closed

Wednesday, December 26

No Bible Study

Sunday, December 30

9:00 a.m. – Breakfast for Young Life

10:00 a.m. – Sabbath School

10:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Lois and Katie

11:00 a.m. – Worship

Children's Church Leader: Laurin or Kristi

Monday, December 31 – New Year's Eve

Church Office Closed