

Old Providence ARP Church

Old Providence News

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Dear Old Providence Friends and Family,

Have you ever heard the saying “growing up isn’t easy”? My guess is that you have. One popular song uses this very line for its title. Movies have been made with the same name. Do you remember what growing up was like? Can you remember saying goodbye to your parents in the morning before heading off to school? What about the challenges of added responsibilities? How about the first time you thought about relationships, dating, and even marriage? Talk about a whole new world! Do you remember the challenges of starting a new school year? Maybe you recall wondering about friendships lasting or trying to understand new teachers, or maybe even trying to understand new subject material. I don’t know who said it first, but growing up really isn’t easy.

If you can’t remember growing up, at least give it a try. The reason I want you to try to remember is that I’m going to make a statement right now that is completely contrary to what many adults say, and what I’ve even been guilty of saying. Are you ready? Here it is: Growing up has never been more difficult. Really and truly, the current generation of children and young people face more challenges than any generation in recent history, including yours and mine.

Ok. I’m ready for it. 3...2...1.... “WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!?!?” Please keep reading. I’m not saying that children and young people face more difficult work than you faced. I’m not saying children have more responsibilities than you had. After all, kids aren’t walking to and from school...in 6 feet of snow... uphill...both ways...like they used to. I hope you catch the fact that I am having a little bit of fun with this. But all joking aside, consider the world that children are facing.

We live in a world that laughs at things that should make it weep, and which weeps over things that ought to bring joy. We live in a time where truth has been reduced to popularity contests and the only mention of God is to mock His name or present a picture of Him so contrary to Scripture that it reeks of Hell’s own smoke. Our children are given the choice of embracing the world’s ideology of supposed tolerance (that is really rather intolerant) or being labeled as hateful, homophobic, xenophobic bigots. Young people today are encouraged to take part in sexual sin of any and all varieties at an alarming rate. I even saw that the main character in one of the Disney Channel’s new cartoons is a bi-sexual child. That’s not even to mention the fact that this cartoon is about witchcraft in the first place. Even so, this article isn’t about the evils of Disney or popular cultural. After all, Disney is just another company trying to sell a product. They’re producing what they believe will sell. And guess what? It is selling.

Very well, in fact. And this is just one example of many that point to the current state of a world that is morally bankrupt. While you may have had all sorts of responsibilities and faced challenges that children and young people today couldn't dream of, think about the world they're entering. Think about the darkness and confusion. Think about the world's wonderings and wanderings. If you'll do that then you'll understand how this current generation faces more challenges than you and I faced.

If you still don't believe me, forget about my opinion. Look, instead, to what is happening in churches everywhere. Never before has the church in the United States seen such a large attrition rate for 18-35 year-olds. Simply put, teenagers leave high school, and along with it, the church. They leave and never come back. Why is this the case? While there are reasons too numerous to put in this article, let us start with the obvious. Why are teenagers leaving and never coming back? We need look no further than ourselves. What is your attitude about the church? Are you committed to being a regular part of a Bible believing church? Certainly, during the COVID-19 pandemic some are at high risk and either cannot or should not be in any large public gathering. Others also face medical situations or other issues that prevent them from being a regular part of church, in terms of physical attendance. But these factors aside, are you committed to church? Some might say "Well there's a difference between being a Christian and being a regular part of church. You don't have to go to church to be a Christian." Granted, church attendance is not listed as a prerequisite for being a follower of Christ according to God's Word. Even so, I would challenge the idea that church is not necessary in two ways.

First, while the Bible doesn't explicitly command church membership and regular activity in church, it does everything but. Jesus died for the Church. You can't love Jesus and, at the same time, not Love the Church. God has given his people gifts to use within the Church. It is assumed in Scripture that you are participating in the Lord's Supper. How can this be done properly outside of a Bible believing church? And finally, almost all of the New Testament is written to churches and is filled with instructions on how to be the Church. These are just a few of so many examples of where the Bible absolutely points to the importance of being a regular part of a Bible believing church.

The second reason I would dispute arguments against commitment to church is that our society is a dismal example of what an unchurched people looks like. We are witnessing the collapse of western civilization on a daily basis. Why? I contend that things are falling apart because people have turned away from the Lord. Time and again our nation, and so many others, have declared through our actions that we have no need for God. I personally believe God has obliged us and we are reaping a bitter harvest as a result.

So, what are we to do? Is it too late for the United States? What about the rest of the world? The answer is no. It is absolutely not too late. Remember that God has intervened throughout history and has redeemed the seemingly unredeemable. God has brought change to situations that seemed as though they could not be changed. Instead of losing hope we need to pray. Pray that God would bring revival and that he would use us to bring it. But in addition, all of us need to make sure we are committed to serving the Lord.

Also, take the time to invest in young people. They're going into a crazy world that, like Nineveh, doesn't know it's right hand from its left. Youth Group started back on August 23rd at the church and will continue at 5:30 on Sunday nights, as long as it is safe to do so dependent upon the development of COVID. If you have children aged middle through high school, send them. Yes, you read that right. Send your children. Don't ask them about their plans. Don't suggest that they maybe consider checking their schedules and consider attending youth group. Help them make church a priority. Help them for their own good and for God's glory. I will be teaching our youth group this year. We're going to be discussing real life issues and what God's Word reveals about how to please and honor Him. We're going to wade through the nonsense of the world's faulty religion and instead see the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In short, we at Old Providence are committed to do all we can to equip your children to face a scary and messed up world. Please join us in this commitment. And if you don't have children or if your children are grown please don't stop praying. And don't stop interacting with our youth.

Your Pastor,

Patrick

WRE Update

We are so excited that we are able to get back in the classroom again this year! Obviously, things will be different with the COVID-19 virus among us. Ms. Cash is working diligently to set up her classroom to keep the children as safe as possible, while still be able to give her message when school starts! This means more individual supplies, not shared supplies. We were hoping to have a Praise Night in September to raise some money for these items, however, it was decided not to proceed with it at this time (a Christmas sing along may occur if things are looking better!). With all that being said, if you would like to contribute to our program and to keep His word being told, you may send a check to Riverheads WRE, P.O. Box 352, Greenville, VA 24440. Thank you for all your wonderful support through the new building and the pandemic! God Bless You!

Carol for the WRE Committee

Youth Group

Youth Group for Middle through High School has started meeting on Sunday nights at 5:30. It is an excellent time of learning from God's Word and enjoying food, fun, and fellowship. We aren't having meals yet but snacks are provided. We are excited about the 2020-21 school year and the opportunity to serve the Lord, our community, and to grow in relationship with Him. In addition, Youth Group is hitting the road on September 13th at 5:30 p.m. with a trip to Willy's Ice Cream and the park in Waynesboro. For information, please see Kristi , Carrie or Patrick.



September 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 Wednesday, September 2nd. 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 except Youth Group 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.

Wednesday, September 2
7:00 p.m. – Session Meeting



Sunday, September 20
5:30 p.m. – Youth Group

Monday, September 7
Labor Day
Church Office Closed

Sunday, September 13
5:30 p.m. – Youth Group Outing
6:00 p.m. - Diaconate Meeting

Sunday, September 27
5:30 p.m. – Youth Group



October 2020

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| 1 Women's Ministries 7:00 p.m. | 24 Women's Ministries Annual VA Pres. |
| Women's Bible Study 7:30 p.m. | Meeting at Lauderdale Church |
| 4 World Wide Communion Sunday | 25 Reformation Sunday |
| Special Offering Rebekah Carson | Trunk or Treat |
| 11 Diaconate Budget Meeting | 30 & 31 Women's Weekend at Camp |
| 17 Virginia Presbytery Wellsprings Church | Bethel in Fincastle, VA |

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