

Dec 3 Communion



Dec 10 Potluck



Dec 12 Session Meets



Dec 19 - last day online



THE GLEANER

How does God Feel?



I was thinking about one of my sister and her relationship to my Dad. She doesn't call him or write him very often, he seldom gets a birthday card or a Christmas card. His birthday is coming up in a couple weeks, and he'll be 93. I thought I might write a note to her saying, "You know, Dad's going to be 93, it

would be nice if you could send him a card". As I thought about how she might react, I was thinking that it would be REALLY nice if she could just ask him how he's doing, without giving him all kinds of details about what she needs or the troubles she's going through at the time, or ask him for help.

All of a sudden, I had an epiphany.

It occurred to me that God has feelings, and yet we never ask him how he's doing. We come to our Heavenly Father and bring our requests to him: an endless list of requests. We tell him how WE'RE feeling, and engage in what is essentially

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We've spoken a lot over the last few months about God's attributes of love, kindness, goodness, patience, as well as his holiness and wrath. We know he's everywhere present, that he's all powerful, as well as all knowing. There's lots we know about God, but it seems that we leave one part out, and that is, *"God, how are you feeling today about the universe that you've made, about the animals, about the people you've created in your image who are scurrying about on this one planet out of potentially billions that has life?"*

I don't really know the answer to this, it's not as if I can get immediate feedback from my Heavenly Father, but I think it there's some merit in us taking a few moments to meditate on this idea. ***What does God think about what we do, and how does that make him feel?***

As we approach Christmas with all with all of its festivities and busyness, I hope you'll take a moment or two (or three) and think about God a little bit differently. The next time you spend time in prayer and go through a long list of things that you need, or problems that you have, or people that you want to intercede for (and I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that) pause and think about God and his feelings. Perhaps at the end ask,

"O Lord God, how are you feeling today?"

His answer might surprise you, but you have to be listening. Along with everything else you ask him for, pray for a listening, sensitive heart to listen for his voice and to be sensitive to how he feels.

I know that in my Dad's case, he would love to have a simple conversation with my sister without a litany of needs and troubles. He'd love to hear her ask him how he's doing.

Pastor Tony

Celebrations!

Birthdays

Esther 12/3

Lee 12/5

John A 12/12

Steve K 12/19

Tom 12/22

Anniversaries

Chris & Harley

12/20

Peace
On
Earth



Mission Report

Rowdy Rooster/ Winlock Foodbank



It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas at the Rowdy Rooster Thrift store and Bistro. There are new and recycled Christmas stocking stuffers, decorations and more. All proceeds are used to support the Foodbank and as always the cookies and treats are delicious! The Foodbank continues to support more than 100 families in the Winlock /Vader area. As a replacement for the Annual Walk and Knock, the Winlock-Vader Food Bank's Drive and Drop was scheduled for December 2, 2023.

Community Members are encouraged to bring donations to the Food Bank on Saturday and the Boy Scouts and other helpers will unload the cars and sort the donations. This event helps stock the Foodbank well before Christmas.

Toledo Neighbors Program

Individuals accessing food through Neighbors Hall is up almost 50%. The week before Thanksgiving, 124 people came through the Hall. Eighty turkeys had been purchased and 60 of them were given out. Some people did not feel comfortable taking a turkey (too big for their needs), for Christmas whole chickens as well as turkeys will be available. Coats and "warmies" that were collected by the Thursday Market were distributed. There continues to be a need and the Market is continuing to take donations.



Our own Diana and Rebecca attended the Nov. 21 TNP meeting.

On November 21, 2023 at 6 pm Toledo Neighbor's held a public meeting at the Senior's Center. A number of our Congregation was in attendance. Starting in January Food Distribution will be on Saturdays from 11 am to 1pm. Food sorting and stocking will be at 10 am. A schedule for volunteers is being developed. Starting this month Neighbors is having a cleaning day the second Tuesday of the month from 3 pm until done. This should help with the new streamlined schedule.

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There is a news letter posted on our large bulletin board announcing plans for this holiday season. Please take a look. Timberland Bank is acting as the drop off for new pajamas and Bateau Wines is conducting a Toy Drive. These items will be made available at the Christmas Distribution. Santa will be there for pictures. Neighbors are hopeful that each child will be able to choose one gift. Mark your calendars! The Christmas Distribution is scheduled for December 17, 1 to 3 pm. Volunteers are needed to help with the Celebration. More changes are in the works at Neighbor's Hall. The Board has been drawing up plans for a large garden in the field beside the hall. They expect to have community partners in this exciting project. An artist's drawing of the New Garden is posted on our Large Bulletin Board. Mark your calendars! The Christmas Distribution is scheduled for December 17, 1 to 3pm.

Nominating Committee

Last month our Nominating Committee started our annual search for individuals interested in serving on session. This year's Committee members are Kathy Hill, Gary Giester, and me. In January Chris Anderson will be leaving Session after 6 years of continual service on Session. Chris has lead us in developing our Website, Facebook and so much more. We will miss her wisdom and guidance in our meetings. She will continue to head up our media efforts. Also retiring from session in January is Ernie Badger. He has served as our Worship Committee Leader as well as heading up the Manse Project and Co-chairing the Pastor Search Committee. A lot has happened since Joel left. Finding our way through Covid and finding Tony was exhausting. I am happy to get my husband back. Session is responsible for the business of the Church. Each term is a two year commitment. If you are feeling a calling or would like information about session please talk to us. Serving on Session is a rewarding experience.

Acts 20:35 NIV "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive"

Your Sister in Christ, Paulli

Treasurer's Report for November 2023

As is so often the case, the Treasurer's report is a bit difficult to put together this month. Session has instructed me to be less specific with actual dollar amounts on the Gleaner version of the report. It's a security issue and a well-founded concern. That being the case, we'll look at generalities and finance committee activities. If you want numbers, you can find those on the bulletin board by the elevator landing. We did receive a "report card" from Mr. Meilke, the gentleman from Synod who reviews our financial records annually. You'll find it on the aforementioned bulletin board. If it was a letter grade it might be something like a B minus? Also, the Finance Committee met in early November to look at a financial plan for 2024. It's a bit of a moving target but our hope is that at the end of next year we'll see that we got pretty close. Remember that while spending can be a little difficult to predict, income is even more so. Our checking account balance has been far higher than need be and saving accounts don't yield much of an interest rate, so we've used a nice sum from checking and purchased a seven month certificate of deposit from Timberland Bank. Annual yield of 4.7 percent. Work has begun on the bell tower. The first phase is cleaning and disinfecting. If you've ever seen the inside of the bell tower, you'll understand. Work will soon begin to shore up the structure for the coming rainy season. The bell tower fund has enough to cover the first part of the work and then some. Well, for some kind of a number, I'll tell you that our net income for the month of November, as of this writing on November 29, was a little over three thousand dollars. Again, if you want to see the actual numbers, there are financial reports by the session minutes on the bulletin board.

Yours in Christ, Tom