

ARCATA FIRST BAPTIST NEWSLETTER



March, 2024 · Spring Quarter

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A Word From The Pastor

2024 Church Theme: EXPECTANT

In my Christmas message in 2023 I spoke about Mary and how the promise of Christmas stretched her in many ways. We talked about how it stretched her:

1. Imagination - "Mary pondered these things in her heart."
2. Faith - "How can it be?"
3. Obedience - "Let it be done to me according to your word"
4. Stretch Marks - People could see Mary's promise grow within her.

Mary was expectant and pregnant with promise. And in a similar way we too should be expectant and pregnant with promise as well. It's in light of this truth that I want to challenge each of us to approach 2024 with a spirit of expectancy.

I am reminded of a story in the Gospel of John CH.11 and how some of Jesus' disciples were experiencing a very deep, dark and disheartening season in their lives.

Jesus came to the rescue as he raised Lazarus from the dead. In the same way Jesus can raise our hopes, dreams and lives as well. After doing so, Jesus said to Martha, "Did I not say to you that if you believe you would see the glory of God?"

Let me ask: Where do you need to see the glory of God today? And what is it that you are willing to believe God for in 2024?

I encourage you to seek the Father's heart and ask Him those two questions. Ask Him for your personal life and ask

Him in regards to the life of this church.

Let us be expectant and believe that we too are going to see the glory of God in 2024.

"Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and mighty things that you do not know." Jeremiah 33:3



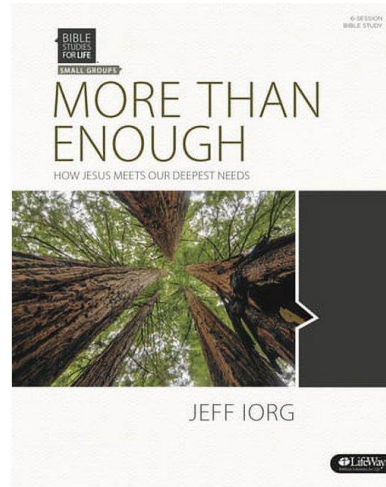
SPRING ALL CHURCH STUDY

This spring we will embark on a six-week all church small group study called "More Than Enough" focusing on the all-sufficiency of Jesus. This study is based out of the Gospel of John and covers the following topics:

1. Our Need for Contentment
2. Our Need for Direction
3. Our need for Protection
4. Our Need for Hope
5. Our Need for Peace
6. Our Need for Purpose

This study includes a short video and a workbook that we can use for personal and small group study. This six-week study will afford us the opportunity to study together, pray together and grow together. If you haven't yet done so, order your book and sign up in the lobby to attend and/or host this exciting study. For

further information you can call Rob Swanson at: 909.648.8961



A Student's Perspective

By Sydney Schwankl

When I first got to Humboldt in 2022, I'll be honest I didn't know what to expect. Especially when it came to Christian community. Not to belittle Humboldt, California, but I knew that I wasn't coming to a place that would be overly welcoming to Christians. And due to that fact, it led me to a natural fear that maybe I wouldn't even find Christian community. However, I can say with much joy and confidence that I was proven very, very wrong.

Growing up I always went to public school. Kindergarten to senior year of high school I was in the same neighborhood, same school district with the same people. But by no means was my school district small. To give you some perspective I graduated with a class of 1,000 students. But this is beside the point. I never attended a Christian school, and growing up Christian I knew that when I got to college, I wanted it to be different. I knew that I wanted to go to a Christian university. In fact, the only

school I applied to that wasn't a Christian university was Humboldt State University, and I applied to it because I thought it was a pretty location and it was small. That was it. It wasn't because of their large, popular, and award-winning film and journalism program, but I genuinely liked the area this school was located.

Months passed, graduation neared, and sooner than later my options for colleges started to dwindle. I visited one Christian university in Minnesota that I got an offer to play soccer at, but let me tell you, Minnesota was not my thing. I

think that was the coldest I've ever been and that's coming from a Colorado girl. So eventually, all I was left with was Humboldt. Looking back now I couldn't be more grateful for God leaving it as my only option.

So, the journey began, not just packing and getting everything ready to move, but the journey of finding Christian community. Finding clubs, churches, studies, and most importantly people. I would further explain how I met my now three housemates, Jasmine, Danielle, and Midalia but that is a whole other testimony to God's goodness.

On my first Sunday at Humboldt Jasmine, my then-roommate and current housemate, told me she wanted to try out a church that was right on campus called Arcata First Baptist. I mean how convenient! A church that's a 5-minute walk away from my dorm? Perfect!

From the moment I walked through those doors to the moment I got back from a 3-year-old's birthday party that Daniel Gent invited me to after service, I couldn't have felt more at home, and that's exactly what I would call it for the time that I've been here.

AFB has provided me and so many other college students with areas to serve and grow in Christ. Solid Rock, Breakfast for a Buck, Dinner and Discipleship, retreats, potlucks, church bible studies, and Solid Rock bible studies are all things that testify to the immense blessings this church and community has showered on us. And I know personally that without them my time throughout college would be a much more difficult place for me to wrestle, grow, and build my relationship with Christ and His word.

In 1 Corinthians 12, the apostle Paul addresses the Church and how we, the members, are the body of Christ. In verses 12-13 he states, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so is it with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-and all were made to drink of one Spirit". As well as verses 25-27, "that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ, individually members of it."

When we are brought into the family of God we are then the body of Christ, and being the body of Christ means exactly what the apostle Paul says. We suffer together. We rejoice together. We do life with one another, because we are called to do such a thing. Our God didn't create us to be independent creatures.

From the moment He created Adam in Genesis 2:18 He states, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." God reminds us continually of our need for

each other. In Hebrews 10:24-25 Paul addresses the Hebrews saying, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

In 1 Peter 4:8-11 he says, “Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. “

We are meant to be in relationship with one another, and as a nervous new freshman first arriving at Humboldt State University, this church was more than an answered prayer. And it has provided me with exactly what God calls us to have. So I want to say thank you to all of you who have made such an impact on my faith, and I pray and hope that not only I but so many others will be the same for everyone who walks through AFB’s doors.

Serving Others: The Food Pantry

In the light of Matthew 5, let the church be like a city on a hill. We are commanded to show others hospitality and be generous with our giving (Matthew 25, Proverbs 21, 22, Hebrews 13), so let us show the love of Christ to our community and the students in

college. Arcata First Baptist, sitting on the edge of the Cal Poly Humboldt campus, is poised to serve the many students passing by each day. Many of these students are also connected to the larger Arcata community, who could also be served.

The church will be gradually ramping up its food ministry to serve more of these students and community members, sharing with them the gospel and God’s love in the process.

Putting on display Christ’s love for us, we can serve people in need at the pantry and share with them how God has transformed our hearts and lives. The ministry will be looking for members of the congregation to make committed regular donations to keep our shelves stocked for any who are in need. If you are able to make food donations (nonperishable) or would like to serve in this ministry please contact myself, Paul Stiles at my phone (909-553-9939) or email pauljstiles1@gmail.com.

Prayer and Fasting

By Bruce Campbell



Drawing on the wisdom of Isaiah 58:6, which teaches fasting is “to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke,” Arcata First Baptist kicked off the new year with a three- day period of prayer and fasting,

seeking God's direction for our church and our nation. Joined in force by Solid Rock, we gathered daily on January 18-20 in the Fireplace Room to worship, share from the Bible, and pray for the many needs of our church, community, and the world.

A major focal point of the fast was to seek the Lord for ways to further the church's outreach to the campus of Cal Poly Humboldt, maximizing our strategic location adjoining the university. To break the fast, a wonderful (and highly anticipated!) meal of delicious homemade soups and breads was enjoyed by those gathered, celebrating God's goodness and His provision. Look for this time of fasting to become an annual event at AFB!

Arcata Christian School News



By Ron Wunner, Principal

Lots of news to report regarding ACS. The school had a wonderful Christmas program in the gymnasium with over 200 in attendance and all of our 104 students singing with such power and praise to the Lord. Thank you to our Teacher Emeritus, Vickie Childress for preparing our students for this special program. In the area of team sports we are proud of our girls' volleyball team who captured the North Coast Athletic League

Varsity Division B Championship. Our boys' team captured the 2023-23 NCAL Championship (last year) and is undefeated in NCAL league play this season with an overall 6-1 won-loss record. The team recently took second place in the Freshwater Classic Tourney. We also have an excellent cheer girl's cheer team made up of girls in grades 4-8.

The school participated in the Food for People Canned Food drive submitting 300 food items. We also participated in the Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box program.

Upcoming events are an all-school Variety Show on March 8, Dinner Auction on April 27 and school play (Based on Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory) on May 22 & 23 (Wednesday and Thursday this year). Another wonderful play written and directed by ACS teacher Betty Packer.

Please pray for the ACS School Board and staff as we plan for the 2024-25 school year. We have new families desiring to place their children in the school, grade grouping decisions and room use considerations plus staffing needs. The school is accepting resumes from prospective teachers for the upcoming school year. Contact the school for additional information.

Blessings to all and thank you for your prayers and longtime support of the Arcata Christian School ministry. We are so blessed to partner with AFBC as we share the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

WOMEN'S TEA



Fill our cups! AFBC Women's Ministry will be hosting a Women's Tea on Saturday, March 2nd up in the Lighthouse Room. Last year's event was well attended and had many ladies of different ages participate. This cross-generational event was one of the highlights of our Women's Ministry last year and all women are encouraged to attend.

The teatime is free and will start at 10 am and will include a testimony or two, as well as a special presentation by one of the college students. For more information, please talk to Patricia Gent or Linda McGuire.