

Dear Friends,

October 29, 2020

Alternative Gift Fair

Because of Covid, we did not do our usual Alternative Gift Fair back in September. As promised, though, we are about to get back to that all-important focus on local missions. This year, we will support three familiar service organizations that are struggling to meet the needs of the people to whom they are committed. On November 1, we will hear from Audrey Jones from Sunset Gap in rural Cocke County. On November 15, we'll hear from Tina Johnson from Safe Passage (a safe house for abused women). And on November 29, we'll hear from Stacy Larsen at The River.

Those of you who would like to support any or all of these outreach ministries are encouraged to mail checks to the church just like you do with regular tithes and offerings. If you send a single check, just let us know to which ministry/ministries you're contributing and how much to each one.

As always, ***Thank You for your support of these vital ministries!***

From the Session

As many of you are aware, the incidence of Covid-19 cases has risen sharply in Washington County. The month of October has seen a 130% increase in the case rate. (We jumped from 18.40 on October 6 to 42.30 this week.) So, we now face our most vulnerable moment yet. After prayerfully considering the most recent ERT recommendations, the session has chosen to continue with a conservative approach and hold off on setting a date for a return to public worship. We understand how disappointing this is for everyone, especially since some churches have already resumed. It also seems clear to us that church, school, sporting event, open restaurants and other such gatherings are contributing to the rise of cases in our area.

The Worship Ministry Team will be working on ways to celebrate Advent and Christmas in ways that will be as meaningful and memorable as possible. We are grateful for everyone who is doing so much to make our online and parking-lot worship experiences go so well. In particular, we've had some wonderful anthems over the last few months. It's been a joy to hear these singers, and it's been encouraging to see how many folks are willing to step up and sing, play, and contribute in other ways. It seems that JPC has a much deeper bench for worship leadership than we've been aware of!

All the ministry teams are adapting and moving forward with their work the best they can under the circumstances, as well.

Thank you all!

An Encouraging Word:

Almost all of us feel discouraged to some extent right now. The “new normal” feels anything but *new* or *normal*. And it feels most unwelcome. Some of us may find ourselves more able to relate to the Israelites in exile whose laments include the psalmist’s cry: “By the rivers of Babylon— there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, ‘Sing us one of the songs of Zion!’ How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” (*Ps. 137:1-4*) We can pour ourselves into such laments.

In addition to laments of weariness and frustration, we may also offer prayers hope. One short prayer to use right now was written by Ted Loder and published in his book *Guerillas of Grace*. It is entitled *Calm Me into a Quietness*, and it may be spoken repeatedly as a way to focus our minds and hearts on God’s whole-making presence even in the midst of brokenness. I pray that it will be a blessing for you.

*Now,
O Lord,
calm me into a quietness
that heals
and listens,
and molds my longings
and passions,
my wounds
and wonderings
into a more holy
and human
shape.
Amen.*

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME STARTS THIS SUNDAY!! When you go to bed on Saturday night, don’t forget to set your clocks back one hour. Enjoy the extra hour of shut-eye!

October Is Stewardship Month: Because JPC is a very generous congregation, the Stewardship/Finance Ministry Team always has a fairly soft approach to stewardship month. Because we are not meeting in person, our approach will be softer still. We hope you have received the letter and pledge sheet that we mentioned in last week’s update. If not, please let Kelli know. And *Please Remember!* The SFMT and the session depend on this

information for setting the yearly budget. Your participation helps us tremendously as we seek to establish a realistic and responsible budget for 2021. Thank you for all that *all of you* do to help make Jonesborough Presbyterian a wonderful place to worship, study, and serve!

JPC Directory: The User ID and Password to get into the Church Directory at www.jpcusa.org have been changed. Our service provider is now requiring stronger passwords, and since some folks have had trouble getting into the directory, we now have a single User ID and Password. Please keep this information somewhere that you can access easily while online.

User ID: jpcdirectory

Password: Dir\$2020 (***NOTE: Password is case-sensitive***)

Laugh a Little:

What's the difference between a hippo and a zippo?
One is really heavy, and the other is a little lighter.

Slim: "What rhymes with orange?"

Jim: "No it doesn't."

Wife says to her programmer husband, "Go to the store and buy a loaf of bread. If they have eggs, buy a dozen."

Husband returns with 12 loaves of bread.

Veteran's Day:

There will be a separate mailing going out in honor of Veteran's Day. If you would like to honor an individual who has served in the armed forces, please submit their name, rank (if known), branch of service, and any wars they fought in (if known) to Kelli in the office by Monday, November 9th.