
TIMBER RIDGE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

October 2019

TURKEY AND OYSTER DINNER

Our annual Turkey and Oyster dinner will be held on Saturday, October 26th, beginning at 3:30 pm. As usual, we will need to have items donated in advance and people to help on both the 25th for preparing food and the 26th for cooking, serving and clean up. A donation sign-up sheet will be available at church each Sunday until October 20th.

CHURCH YARD/BAKE SALE

Once again, this year the Yard/Bake sale was a great success, generating approximately \$1,358.00 in net proceeds. We wish to thank everyone who contributed to this worthwhile event.

FALL FESTIVAL CELEBRATION

The annual Fall Festival will be held on Friday, October 11th, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the Sunday School building. There will be games, refreshments, including a hot dog roast and a hayride. Please invite a friend and join us for an evening of fun and fellowship. It would be helpful for Jeanie to know how many will be attending, so please let her know your plans. If you would like to help, or have any questions, please contact Jeanie Spaid. We look forward to seeing you there.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

The Sunday School will once again be collecting shoe box gifts in association with Samaritans Purse. These gifts are distributed to children in need in this country as well as remote areas around the world. The Mission Committee will be paying for the postage again this year. For more information contact Harry Spaid.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCT 4 -	DWAIN AND JANET FRIES 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
OCT 6 -	SUNDAY SCHOOL 10 AM WORSHIP SERVICE 11 AM WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY LADIES FELLOWSHIP MEETING CHASE ALAN BRILL'S 10TH BIRTHDAY
OCT 10 -	GRACE VANDERLINDEN'S BIRTHDAY
OCT 11 -	HARVEST PARTY 6:30 PM (SEE ARTICLE)
OCT 13 -	SUNDAY SCHOOL 10 AM WORSHIP SERVICE 11 AM
OCT 15 -	LUCY ORNDORFF'S BIRTHDAY
OCT 17 -	OWEN GAVER BRILL'S 5TH BIRTHDAY
OCT 20 -	SUNDAY SCHOOL 10 AM WORSHIP SERVICE 11 AM
OCT 22 -	SUZANNE REID'S BIRTHDAY
OCT 26 -	ANNUAL TURKEY & OYSTER DINNER 3:30 PM (SEE ARTICLE)
OCT 27 -	SUNDAY SCHOOL 10 AM WORSHIP SERVICE 11 AM
OCT 28 -	TOM & NANCY PUGH'S ANNIVERSARY ABIGAIL SMITH'S BIRTHDAY

We welcome any comments and suggestions.

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PASTOR'S PEN

The long journey home – after the Exile

We are beginning a new sermon series in the book of Ezra. I thought it would be helpful to describe something of the history surrounding Israel's return from exile. Knowing the history of what took place, the people involved, and how Israel fits within the landscape will set the book of Ezra in the proper context. Hopefully, this will help us learn not only what happened but why it happened and what it means for us today.

The book of Ezra covers the timeframe from 539 B.C. to 445 B.C. It will seem strange at first to see the numbers going down as the years pass by. To be clear, 445 B.C. happens after 538 B.C., I mention this because it's something we will have to pay attention to as dates get mentioned in the text or the sermon. As an example, when you add up the years covered by the book of Ezra, it comes to 94. Thirty-nine years from 539 to 500 and fifty-five years from 500 to 445. Like I said it's strange to work on this B.C. time-scale.

The significant players in Ezra are Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Artaxerxes, Darius, Ezra, and the Jewish people who returned. Cyrus was the Persian king who had just defeated Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Zerubbabel was a Jewish leader who is later called the governor of Judah. Jeshua, also called Joshua, is the Jewish high priest at the time. Artaxerxes and Darius are Persian kings who succeed Cyrus. We are introduced to Ezra, the author, who was a priest and scribe in chapter 7.

The people return from exile and vow to rebuild the Temple and Jerusalem. However, not everyone is happy with the rebuilding effort, and God's daily protection will be needed. The return to Jerusalem is such an important milestone in the history of God's people because it marks out God's faithfulness despite sin and failure. God had told Israel they would be sent into exile if they continued to forsake Him. They refused to listen, and God sent them into exile, where they spent 70 years waiting for God to bring them home. The expulsion took place after the reign of Solomon came to an end. At that time the nation of Israel was divided in two – Judah being the southern kingdom consisted of only two tribes Judah & Benjamin. The northern kingdom, Israel, comprised of the other ten tribes. The northern kingdom was conquered first. However, even after seeing the destruction of the other ten tribes, Judah still didn't listen. In 586 B.C. they too were captured and taken into captivity.

The destruction brought to Jerusalem, and the exile which followed were God's chastisement. God's chosen people had failed to uphold the covenant and suffered the consequences. In Isaiah 44:21-28, which we read in worship last week, God also promised that He would not forget them. Instead, He would use Cyrus to bring them back to Jerusalem to rebuild the destroyed temple and city. The story is about God's power and grace working together on behalf of His people. It's a message that we need to be reminded of today as well.

The world has drastically changed in many ways since 539 B.C. But not everything is different. There are still two kingdoms at war on the earth – the kingdom of God and the kingdom of man. God continues to use rulers from each side to further His kingdom and bless His people. God's people still struggle with sin. They still struggle to do what is right in a world that promotes evil at every turn. God's people continue to face opposition to the spreading of the gospel and the building of the kingdom here on earth. Ezra is an excellent reminder of God's faithfulness to men and women despite their failures. May we each find encouragement in Ezra to serve the king who reigns over all earthly kings.

~ Pastor Mike