



Now Is The Time

News From Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage

Fall, 2019



ARPP-31: Christ Was There!

"God was definitely at this Pilgrimage," said Debbi Buckalew, Moderator for ARPP-31. "Fourteen participants joined Arkansas 4th Day! Plus, three of the volunteer staff, who helped make the Weekend possible, were themselves participants, over 15 years ago, at ARPC-01!"

Over the course of the Weekend, the four table groups became small "communities." One table-group member was so excited about her new-found friends that she almost shouted (with a smile), "Our group didn't just 'meld' together, we MELTED together!"

Talks given by lay members and by Spiritual Advisors brought active discussion

at tables, and when singing times rolled around, Holy Spirit's presence was just everywhere.

Even the Spiritual Advisors were energized. Several times they jumped up and joined the musicians in singing sessions.

"Our worship sessions in the chapel were great, too," said Debbi. "The services were truly 'worship.' The music was so spiritual."

After Friday's all-day gentle rain, fall sunshine sprang to life, and everyone enjoyed Ferncliff. Whether strolling to the chapel or the dining hall, relaxing in a rocking chair on the back porch, or sitting beside the lake, people were talking and enjoying God's creation together.

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Annual ARPP Fundraiser: Your Giving Tuesday Donations Doubled

Right on the heels of two of America's largest "shopping" days (Black Friday and Cyber-Monday) comes the nation's largest "giving" day: Giving Tuesday (December 3rd).

"This is ARPP's only fund-raiser all year, so it's especially important," said Ron Mullikin, ARPP Chair. "This is how we make sure participants can attend, whether or not they can afford the housing cost. And it's how we have funds to buy specially-needed equipment."

Donations Matched 100%

"If ever there were a time to give to Pilgrimage, this is it. This year, on Giving Tuesday, gifts to ARPP will be doubled, up to \$2,500," Mullikin added.

So, in the midst of the approaching holiday hustle, please stop to pray, and then follow the Lord's guidance about GIVING to Pilgrimage before midnight, December 3rd.

As always, donations are tax-deductible.

Special Needs At This Time

ARPP has important needs right now, in order to continue conducting Pilgrimages. Please study the list at right, to see if one (or more) of these needs say to you, "Yes! I can help with that!"

How Will It Work?

A group of donors have pledged to match dollar-for-dollar all Giving Tuesday donations to ARPP, up to \$2,500.

This means that if you donate \$50, Pilgrimage receives \$100! Likewise, if you donate \$100, Pilgrimage receives \$200!

On the ARPP website's "giving" page, you will be able to choose HOW you can help.

Share the Opportunity

Keep in mind: your friends and family can help, too. Their donations, can also be matched.

Remember: every bit helps!

Special Needs This Year

- **Participant Lodging:** for participants who don't have funds to pay room and board costs for their Pilgrimage
- **Microphones:** we need new lapel mikes and Mu-Cha mikes for sound that keeps the Spirit going.
- **Staff Support:** for volunteer staff room/board
- **Printed Materials:** many important items



He Sees Christ Through Her -- And It Shows

A few weeks ago, we saw first-hand how one person had changed another's life, by demonstrating constant glimpses of Christ's way of life, and His love.

My wife and I had gone to a Vince Gill concert. Gill has been a big name in the country music scene for many years now. Contrary to what I expected, the "fruits of the Holy Spirit" were literally hanging from him. He seemed filled with humility and joy, patience, love and all the rest.

He chuckled to the audience, talking about his decades-long career. "You know, it's almost as much fun on the way down as it was on the way up."

Not exactly what we would expect from a national-name country star.

We could sense the pure joy he felt from just being able to sing his songs to us -- in fact, he played and sang non-stop for over three hours. After two hours, we marveled that his voice could continue!

A relationship changed him?

Near the end of his concert, we began to understand why we saw so many "fruits of the spirit" displayed.

He explained he had been married for twenty years to Christian singer Amy Grant,

who he said "had been in church every time it was open, all her life."

"But me, not so much," he continued. He described how his own upbringing did not include faith. In fact, he said, he'd preferred "bars and pool halls."

But we saw his Christian heart now. He then dedicated his next song to "my Amy." He explained it was a song he has recently written and recorded.

As he sung, we cried.

We cried because right in front of our very eyes was a person re-formed. Someone who walked daily beside Jesus Christ, and who had projected that Christ-like love into her relationship, had shown him Christ's love. He was re-formed.



"When My Amy Prays"

by Vince Gill

All my life I've known of Jesus
But that connection never came.
And when my world was torn to pieces,
I still couldn't call His name.
*But when my Amy prays,
That's when I see His face.*

She gave me my first Bible;
It sits right beside my bed.
On the nights my hands are rattled,
I turn the pages, but it's seldom read.
*But when my Amy prays,
That's when I feel grace.*

She's got my back, and she don't judge me;
She gives my heart some time to change.
Even at my worst, I know she loves me:
She's my shelter from the rain.
*When my Amy prays,
That's when my hands raise!*

From the ARPP Chair...

Ron Mullikin, ARPP Chair

WOW!! I feel so blessed! I had the privilege of staffing at ARPP #31! And for the first time since ARPP #16 I was a table guide. I pray the participants received some of the amazing Grace which I received.

Do you remember the way you felt when you received your first bag of Palanca? The looks on the faces, tears running down their cheeks, quiver of their voices, so much heart-felt love the participants felt? As I looked around the room, I saw those same reactions at all the tables.

We're growing!

We have added an average of 23 new fourth day members each of the past three years! ARPP is strong and growing.

We talked with the participants of ARPP # 31 about the gift of Palanca. It comes from people they had often never met -- people who offer their unconditional love thru Christ. It comes in the form of prayer, fudge and cookies. It comes in the Serenade and

Agape table, the party and closing ceremonies. All these gifts are given unconditionally from 4th day!

Your Help Needed...

Having said all of that, I feel guilty with what I'm about to ask. So many do so much for this organization! But we have many 4th Day members that don't participate in the many things that can be done. Truly, you are missing out on an opportunity to show Christ's love.

We sincerely thank those of you that already write Palanca, help staff, help with the Serenade, bake cookies and fudge, and do all of the other things that it takes to put on a Weekend. Or maybe you help financially. Please know you are a window to Christ's love!

Here is what I'm asking all members to do: Reach out to the members of the Weekend at which you were an ARPP participant! If you attended your Weekend in another organization, then reach out to those who you met at the first Weekend which you

staffed at ARPP.

(If you don't know the names or the phone numbers of those people that are in your group, you can go to our ARPP website, log in, then click on the 4th Day directory. Then just click on the "list by three-day Weekends" tab. That will give you a list of the participants for each Weekend.)

The next step is the fun part: reconnect with the participants from your past Weekend! Remember together the various events and what they meant to each of you.

My prayer then would be that you would talk together about how each of you can become more active in ARPP 4th Day. Maybe it will be attending Renewal Groups in your area, signing up for the Prayer Banner, or attending the Serenade. Maybe staffing the next Weekend.

My prayer for each of you is you reconnect and enjoy the blessings and encouragement from your 4th Day "family."

Grace and Blessings To You ALL!

Too Noisy For God?

...by Clay Parton

In Pilgrimage, we talk about "practicing the presence of God" (Piety). We talk about practices aimed at bringing us into the presence of God (study, prayer, worship, scripture, etc.).

I love and cherish each of these practices. But lately I realized I was hungry for more.

Like most of us, I am bombarded all day every day with tasks, breaking-news, phone calls, and constant noise from traffic, the vacuum, a saw...you name it.

Busy, busy, busy. Noise, noise, noise.

A Sabbath for the Soul

I realized I couldn't hear God over the world. I was hungry for God's whisper, so something needed to change.

Jesus so often "went off to himself in a private place." There, he could hear his Father in the silence. There he could be with his God, be comforted, be led, be strengthened, be loved.

I needed to follow His example.

Christian authors Richard Foster, John Ortberg and Dallas Willard all told me solitude and total silence are crucial to being "truly present" with God.

If I were to satisfy my hunger for Christ's

voice, I must simply do nothing in total silence, in complete solitude.

Solitude, Silence and Listening

I checked into a guest room at a monastery for a 3-night, 2-day stay. Instructions on the table were simple: please observe total silence.

There was no wi-fi, nor was there any cell signal or outside media whatsoever. Just a twin bed, a desk and a glider rocker in front of a sunny window. I had brought with me three Bibles and a commentary. I planned to spend these next nights and days intermittently reading scripture and then just "listening" for long periods, to hear God's whispers. Listening without the distraction of "doing something" -- or even the sound of a refrigerator.

Scripture Came Alive

The first day, I became drowsy every two hours, so allowed myself wonderful, peaceful naps. To just rest. Each time, when I returned to scripture, the words grasped me.

The second day, I awoke full of energy, feeling "light." After worship and a silent breakfast, the joy of total silence, and the freedom to just "sit with God" felt like a gift. Again, scripture came to life, with power.

My soul was getting a needed rest, and

now I could hear better.

Now I better understood why Jesus sought out "lonely places" early in the morning: He could hear the Father's whisper more clearly!

Departing...

The third morning, as I departed the Abbey, I realized I was "at peace" for the first time in a long time. I was rested. God was whispering in my ear as I quietly closed the door.

I hadn't "done anything" specific: that was the point, I realized -- to do nothing in silence and solitude.

It had been very much a "Sabbath" for my soul.

I had heard God's whisper.

Should anyone desire a retreat, Abbeys are scattered throughout our region, and welcome retreatants:

- Assumption Abbey (Ava, MO) 417-683-5110
- Subiaco Abbey (Russellville, AR area) 479-934-1001
- St. Joseph Abbey (Louisiana) 985-892-1800
- St. Mary & St. Moses Abbey (Texas) 361-547-3257

Arkansas Presbyterian Pilgrimage

309 North Third Street
Rogers, AR 72756



News enclosed!

Crock Pot Crack Chicken

(from Jami Hemund)

"We had this at the Serenade Potluck and it was a huge hit," Jami said.

Ingredients

- 4 Quart or Larger Crock Pot
- 4 lbs. boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 1 oz. packet ranch seasoning mix
- 16 oz. cream cheese
- 8 slices bacon (sliced, cooked and drained)
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions



Preparation

- Add the chicken thighs to the crock pot. Sprinkle over the ranch seasoning mix. Place the cream cheese on top of the chicken.
- Cover and cook on LOW for 7 hours.

- Shred the chicken with 2 forks in the crock pot. Stir the cream cheese into the shredded chicken and also stir in the bacon. Spread out into an even layer. Sprinkle over the cheese. Cover for 10 minutes to allow the cheese to melt.
- Serve over rice and sprinkle over the green onions. It is also good over baked potatoes or on rolls.
- If you like spice, add a chopped jalapeno at the beginning of cooking time.

NEA Renewal Brings Community & Encouragement

"I need the comradery," says Patty Minga, as she explains why the Northeast Arkansas Renewal (NEAR) Group is so important to her.

The group, which includes members from the Walnut Ridge, Pocahontas and Jonesboro areas, has been re-activated for almost a year now.

NEAR meets monthly for Christian Community, accountability and encouragement. "We have food," says Minga, "but we also discuss important things together."

John Arnold explains, "The discussion focuses on questions which help us each

evaluate our progress in our faith walks."

"It's important to just shine the love of Christ," Minga added.

Regular members include Patty Minga, John Arnold, Susan Arnold, Vicky Davis, Lee Bennett, Freda Dixon, Sylvia Tate, Becky Bennett and Mary Ditto.

In general, the group alternates between meeting in Jonesboro or Walnut Ridge, but nothing is set in stone. If you are interested in details for the next meeting, contact either:

- Patty Minga (22003parrot@gmail.com)
- John Arnold (revjohn1@gmail.com)

