Pulpit Panic: Half of Protestant clerics looking for exits, survey reports.

Recent reporting from a reputable and respected survey firm (The Barna Group) in the religious field indicates more than half of all the Protestant Pastors in America are seriously considering leaving the ministry. Fifty-four percent of pastors are under such serious strain and struggle in their ministries that they are seriously thinking about throwing in the towel. Grasp that for a minute. It’s a sobering statistic.

Reasons given as to why pastors are feeling such strain in their calling include issues and concerns arising out of the Covid Pandemic. The Pandemic has wreaked havoc upon churches. Attendance has been cut in half. Finances have been severely reduced. Even previously full time Pastors are having to go part time because congregations simply don’t have enough money to pay all the bills. It’s been noted that the Pandemic accelerated changes and dynamics in the church that were already taking place. It’s true. Church attendance is down, finances are down, people willing to do all the wonderful work that enables congregations to provide ministry are fewer and fewer. The list goes on and on.

According to the survey from Barna, whether it’s the pandemic, burnout or a feeling of loneliness and isolation pastors are under pressure. Too many people expect the same level of ministry services and programs that megachurches have or they had before the Pandemic changed everything. It’s impossible to provide the same kind of services a megachurch provides when attendance is fifty instead of a thousand. Conflicting opinions about covid mandates and what the church should be or should not be doing put additional pressure on pastors. Other reasons given for seriously pondering leaving the church by pastors include the way “consumer mentality” has infiltrated into the local congregation. This means people aren’t asking “what can I do” as much as they are asking “what can you do for me.” True Discipleship is based not what others can do for me but what I can do for others. Additionally, pastors have had to ramp up big time their knowledge and ability to provide on-line services and audio-visual programming skills. Pastors are most often people persons and having to isolate and become technical experts diminishes what they enjoy in the ministry in the first place.

I have experienced most of these concerns myself. During the first year of the Pandemic, I had to learn how to provide our Worship Services online, get new equipment (with limited money available), record, upload and show our Services on You Tube. It has been rewarding on the other hand to see a small number of people step up and help during the last two years and as we are slowly rebuilding attendance I maintain great hope and positive feelings for the future.

What can you do to help our church rekindle the great ministries and programs we have become used to? Can you step it up with time and financial commitment? Are you getting back into the habit of being in church on Sunday mornings? The future is in our hands, all of our hands. What’s your response? Together, along with relying on guidance and help from the Lord we can and I believe will face a new future with bright promise and on-going commitment.
NEWS AMONG OUR CHURCH FAMILY

PRAYER LIST

Please let us know if you know of someone who is sick or is a shut-in. Thank you.

Dolores Wachtman – Keep in your prayers.

Wauneta Wine – Please keep in your prayers.

Al Abraham – Recovering at daughter’s home in Kansas. Call the church office if you would like Al’s address while in Kansas.

Edwina Meheux – Back at Daughter’s home. Please keep in your prayers.

Patty Clark – Please keep Patty in your prayers.

There are always others—keep all in your prayers, named or unnamed.


BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

1 Edwina Meheux
1 Nicolas Lastre
2 Catherine Wright
5 Pam Canova-Force
7 Norm Laine
9 Jeff Price
16 Sandy Boyd
17 Pam & Bob Force
23 Marjorie Flaherty
26 Gwen Mott
29 Donald & Holly Brooks

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PLEASE LET THE CHURCH OFFICE KNOW IF YOUR BIRTHDATE AND/OR ANNIVERSARY DATE IS WRONG OR MISSING, SO WE MAY CORRECT IT.

Worship With Us In Person !!!!
11:00AM Sunday

Worship service will continue to be offered online as soon as we can get it posted. Keep checking www.aspenhillcc.org, click on Online Services, choose the date you want.
FELLOWSHIP…Amy Buckingham/Mary Chance

We all have been enjoying the recent fellowship events. The Thanksgiving dinner was wonderful and yummy! Won’t you join us this month? There are many to choose or attend all of them! Remember- 1 Corinthians 1:9, “You were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” Each Sunday in December we will be laying the beautiful Nativity pieces and lighting the Advent wreath.

Dec. 14th: Christmas Caroling at the Church. Dec. 22nd: Dr. Chance will conduct a service at Bethany House. Dec 24th: Christmas Eve candlelight service. Hope to see you soon.

PROPERTY…Jeff Price

Greetings from the Property Ministry! We are getting ready for winter which is right around the corner. Snow removal equipment and supplies are being checked and stocked. Hopefully we will have a mild winter this year. Everyone stay safe!

OUTREACH…Connie Spoon

Our Thanksgiving Basket project was a tremendous success thanks to the generous members of the congregation. We were able to bless 31 local families with a lovely Thanksgiving meal. As the Christmas season approaches, we will collect new unwrapped toys for the Georgian Forest Elementary School children. Please consider a donation to place under the tree.

WORSHIP…Gwen Mott via Carol Knott

We are entering a very important time in our Christian faith. November 28th is the first Sunday of Advent. It is the season marking the preparation for and the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas. During the Sundays of Advent we will be building the Nativity scene and participating in the lighting of candles on the Advent wreath. A Christmas Eve candlelight service is also being planned. This is a time for us to step away from the busyness of shopping and parties and to truly think about and keep in memory the birth of Jesus.

STEWARDSHIP…John Small - OUR GIVING TREE

One of the best ways to prepare our hearts for the celebration of the Birth of the Savior is to share the many blessings he has given each of us.

A great way to accomplish this is by helping us decorate our giving tree in the Narthex with beautiful hand-painted ornaments. The contributions received will help fund the many programs supported by our church. Please consider your church this Christmas season by purchasing an ornament.

To order an ornament please fill in the form at the end of the newsletter and include it with your payment marked “Giving Tree”. You can place your check with the form in the offering plate on Sunday or mail them to the Church Office. At the end of the Christmas season, you get to take and keep your ornament! Children’s ornaments will have their names on them so don’t forget to include their name on the form.
Some of the highlights from the Board Meeting

The Board met in person at the church on October 13, 2021. Among the items discussed and actions are:

• Reports from the Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Ministry Chairs, Elders & Deacons, Pastor, and other leaders.
• Received an update on the status of the Betty Williams estate gift. Still in process. Dr. Chance talked with the Personal Representative and there are still some outstanding items to be completed.
• Set the date for the Budget Draft Meeting.
• Discussed Staff positions.
• Reviewed the Calendar and the upcoming Fall season.

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Submit Your Articles, Updates, & Information we might like to include in future Newsletters to Karen for possible inclusion in the future.

Please keep your giving up both faithfully and regularly. These are challenging times. Even keeping our budget to absolute minimum, our expenses will exceed our income and we need each other to be faithful.

... Give “Online”... Mail your offerings in... OR
You can drop your offerings by the office

We have a substantial budgetary challenge, and we need to all reach up and beyond if we want the beautiful ministries of our church to continue! Please give generously.

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Worship in person at 11:00 every Sunday & Live on our YouTube Channel

We are doing our best to get people back in person, but we do understand that some people are reluctant or immunocompromised.

To view online click www.aspenhillcc.org, then click on the Watch Us Live On You Tube icon. Once at our You Tube Page be sure to click the thumbs-up icon and subscribe to our channel. You can also make any nice comments you want to. That helps drive our visibility to others up. Share the links for our weekly worship with your friends and neighbors.

Congregational Meeting

Our Annual Meeting will be held on December 5 immediately following the Worship Service. We will begin the meeting about 12:15 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All active members are invited and encouraged to attend.
**FACTS & FIGURES**

Worship Attendance in September (Includes both in person and online)

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. Average</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>YTD Average</td>
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In Memoriam…With Great Sadness and Continuing Loss

It is with great sadness that we have lost three of our members, Mrs. Marge Skucas, Mrs. Pat Laine and Mr. Jim Wine.

Marge’s life was celebrated at our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner on November 21.

Pat’s life will be celebrated in a Memorial Service on Saturday, December 18 at 11:00 a.m.

No date has yet been set for a celebration or remembrance of Jim’s life.

**GIVING TREE ORDER FORM**

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<th>Ornament</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ornament:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Ornament:</td>
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<td>Silver Ornament:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gold Ornament:</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4-6 Bloom $12.00 if ordered by Nov 30th

Red___Pink___White___

Amount paid_______

Deadline for ordering is November 30th for discount

Price after Nov. 30th is $20.00

We need to order early to guarantee we get what we want!

They sell out very fast. Please place your order today with the church office.

NAME__________________________________________________________

In Memory of_____________________________________________________

In Honor of_______________________________________________________