

ARDEN FOCUS

Following Christ, proclaiming his praises,
and engaging our community with his grace. **JANUARY 2024**

The Fear of the Lord

How's your "FEAR" level for 2024? Some people are saying, "The 2024 election could be the end of democracy as we know it." (William Becker) and others, "The greatest economic collapse in our life-time will occur in 2024." (Harry Dent) What elicits fear in your heart?

Scripture tells us that **"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"** Psalm 27:1

But the Bible also tells us there is **ONE** to be feared and that is a good thing to **"fear" HIM**. And this good **"fear"** should be our normal experience every day for every year and not just 2024.

But what does it mean to **"fear the Lord"**? For a comprehensive overview, I highly recommend listening to Michael Reeves (Ligonier Ministries - 8 part series, part 1 is free) - <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/the-fear-of-the-lord>

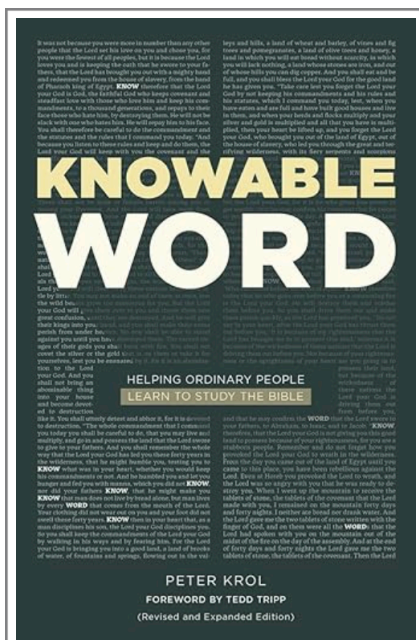
We learn from Proverbs that the "fear of the Lord" is the beginning of wisdom, knowledge and understanding. In the Psalms, we are invited to sing: **"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding."** Psalm 111:10 and again in Psalm 25:14 **"The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant."**

"You who fear the Lord, praise him!" Psalm 22:23 This song of praise is not exclusively for Arden Presbyterian but for the entire world. **"Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!"** Psalm 33:8 And one last, lyric of heart felt praise: **"Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways!"** Psalm 128:1,

Yes, it is an election year in the USA. Yes, there is worldwide chaos. And yes, the "great rebellion" against King Jesus continues. But, **"He has put a new song in our mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord."** Psalm 40:3

Together fearing the Lord in 2024,

Pastor James



Midweek Study for Adults

THE WORD OF GOD

At the heart of all good Bible study are three simple concepts....

OBSERVE > INTERPRET > APPLY

Learn the basics in a few minutes, gain skills for a lifetime.

The spiritual payoff is huge. Are you ready to get started?

IS LIVING AND ACTIVE

Books will be distributed on January 10, as we gather too sharpen our Bible study skills and pray. Wednesdays 6:30-7:30 PM Multipurpose Room.

Prison Fellowship Angel Tree

Prison Fellowship Angel Tree expresses its heartfelt gratitude for giving 15 families with 35 children a Christmas gift of love. As a church we have reached out to share God's love through your prayers, donations, the giving of gifts and food, and extending the hand of fellowship and Christian love in the delivery visits. Thank you to each one of you who participated in any way. Such a rich experience for both the givers and the receivers. Wishing you a blessed and Christ-filled New Year.



Pastoral Search Committee

As Christmas approached, our team was in a position to take a much-needed break, so we took the last weeks of December off, spent time with our families, and celebrated the coming of our Lord and Savior with all of you! With the start of a New Year, we are back at our task, praying to the Lord, seeking His will, and evaluating sermons and pastors as He leads us. We so much appreciate all of the encouragement and support we always receive from all of you, and to know that you're praying with us is truly a huge blessing! As we dig into our work, we humbly ask all of you to daily pray with us, using our [Prayer Prompts For the Church, Search Committee, and Senior Pastor](#). Copies are available in the Narthex if you need a new one. The prompt for the 29th day is that "a burden for deep and urgent prayer permeates the church not only as you seek God's will for a pastor, but also as you seek God's vision for the church." That is our prayer; please join us daily!

Your Senior Pastor Search Team,
Jim Aldrich, Jack Brinkley, Kathy Clark, Kenneth Dupee,

Women's Ministry

Fellowship Lunch!

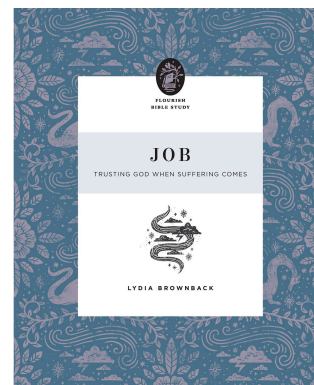
Thursday, January 25 - 11:30 AM
Piazza (74-A, Reynolds Community)

Winter Ladies Bible Study

Job--Trusting God When Suffering Comes

- Tuesday morning class begins February 6
- Monday evening class begins February 12

Lydia Brownback's excellent study guide will be available for \$10 in the welcome center in mid January or in class.





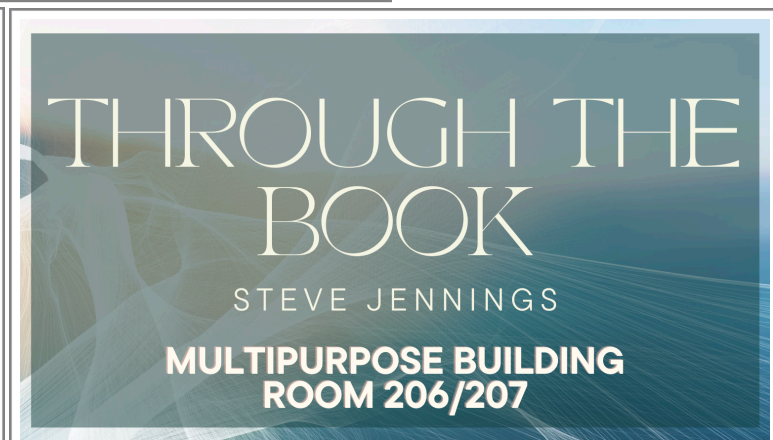
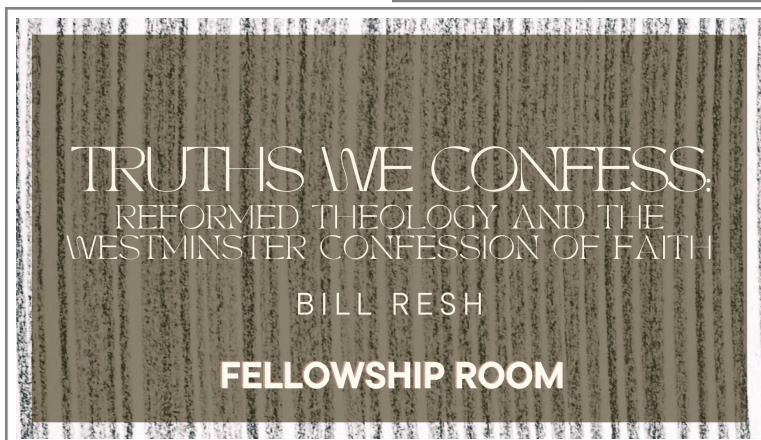
This is a great way to fellowship with friends and make new relationships in the church.

5:45 p.m. - Dinner

In Multipurpose Room; Each week's menu will be posted in the announcements, the weekly email, and on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (X).

6:30 p.m. - Breakouts

- Children's Catechism Classes, Nursery
- Middle & High School Students
- Adults: *Knowable Word Study & Prayer* (see front page)
- Sanctuary choir rehearsal



MS & HS Students

(youth room; lower level
Sanctuary Building)

New series beginning January 14





There's nothing that compares to a ride in the church van - especially with our super driver Harold Ivey!🙌



The preschool recently celebrated with a Happy Birthday Jesus Party. The families donated baby items that we gave to "The Storehouse" in Hendersonville who was distributing to families in need in the area.🙌



A few pictures from our carol sing and bell ringing at Trinity View. When asked, the residents wanted to sing and talk to the children instead of making a craft. 😊 We also enjoyed cookies and hot chocolate! Thank you to Lynn Turlington who was our accompanist. Thank you also to all who helped make it happen! New friends were made!🙌



Call to Prayer: Prayer for 2024

Thank you, Lord, for calling us into Your kingdom and family. Two of our responsibilities as family are to restore with humility those who have been caught in sin's web, and to help carry one another's burdens. In such actions, we fulfill the royal law of Christ, which is distilled in the principle of love. We recognize that all the moral duties Your law sets forth are precisely the same virtues that arise out of authentic love. May we be faithful vessels of the love Your Spirit sheds abroad in our hearts. May we never be guilty of hiding the light of Your love under a bushel.

Your Word often reminds us of the inexorable law of sowing and reaping. Whatever we sow we reap, spiritually as well as physically. May we always sow to the Spirit and not to the flesh! We confess that we cannot do that without Your gracious enablement, and so we seek the aid of Your Spirit.

You have also taught us that the one who sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will reap bountifully. May we always be liberal and open-handed in the sowing of good things. We're reminded especially of our duty to share in all good things with those who have taught us the Word. Fill us with gratitude and with generosity; then open our hearts to be channels of blessing, especially to those who have so wonderfully blessed us.

Help us to be both wise and aggressive in taking advantage of the opportunities we have to do good to all, especially our own dear brothers and sisters in Christ. Harness our gifts and abilities—along with all our human faculties—and employ them for Your glory. Empower us to work harder, serve more faithfully, labor more diligently, and still press on—even when the trials and distractions of this life seem to offer compelling motives to turn away from the needs of others. Energize us by Your Spirit and keep us faithful to our calling.

You know, dear Lord, that our lives here on earth are full of burdens, heartaches, and disappointments. You permit those things to use them for our benefit. May we bear them with grace and courage. We thank You for the grace that sustains us in the midst of all our troubles. We pray that through the trials You send our way You will keep our hearts filled with that peace which surpasses all comprehension and guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Thank You that when we falter or fail, You always restore us. You give us grace upon grace without measure. You abundantly supply every need we have.

But we confess, Lord, that one of our greatest needs is for holiness. We are prone to sin, predisposed to folly, given to stubbornness, and easily confounded by our own self-will. Guide, guard, and sustain us to keep our feet from slipping, and keep us ever mindful of—and firmly anchored to—the solid foundation You have given us in Christ.

Give us a greater love for Him, so that all our service flows from hearts of gladness. Give us a holy longing to be free from sin in both mind and action. Whether Your plan for our immediate future entails prosperity or adversity, blessing or suffering, joy or sorrow—or a loving mixture of all those things—prepare us to respond with uprightness of heart and Christlike holiness. Your grace is sufficient for all these things, and Your truth strengthens us for all things.

We bow our hearts to worship You in Your Son's blessed name. Amen.

John MacArthur

At the Throne of Grace



January 2024 Prayer Calendar

01. 2024
02. Commitment
03. Prayerfulness
04. Repentance
05. Sanctification
06. Wisdom
07. Pastor Paul Hurst
08. Endurance
09. Other minded
10. Pastor Search Committee
11. Forgiveness
12. Grace
13. Patience
14. Pastor James Buckner
15. Joy
16. Peace
17. Kindness
18. Deacon/Session Meet
19. Mind
20. Body
21. Sanctity of Life
22. Soul
23. Faithfulness
24. Love
25. Goodness
26. Gentleness
27. Self-control
28. APC
29. Hope
30. Godliness
31. Quiet Life

January 2024 Prayer Calendar

Arden Ministry Partners

01. Bill & Suzanne Scott - Atlanta / Global Frontier Missions
02. Andrew & Trish Shank - Western Carolina University / RUF
03. Andrew Sheppard - Ukraine / MTW
04. Third Millennium - Global
05. Jeff & Caroline Thompson - University of Georgia / RUF
06. Tial & Annie Thanga - Southeast Asia / MTW
07. Dr. Apam Vashum - India / Trinity School of Theology
08. Danny & Carissa Waller - Appalachian State University / RUF
09. David & Bridget Walls - WNC / New Direction Mustard Seed
10. Gary & Lois Watanabe - Japan / MTW
11. West Africa Reformed Mission - West Africa
12. Donnie & Kara - West Africa / MTW
13. Tom & Lucy Wright - Africa/Haiti/USA - MTW
14. Pastor Yavuz - Middle East / Asia Minor Partnership
15. Philip & Sandy Baron - Cru
16. Jack & Diana Brinkley - WNC / Sports Outreach
17. Kristi Brown / Sandy Mahar - WNC / Mountain Area Pregnancy Services
18. Brooks & Riva Cain - Japan / MTW
19. Bill & Susan Carr - North America / MTW
20. Garry & Anita Chambers - Caribbean / MTW
21. Alec & Riley Cotton - Appalachian State University / RUF
22. Charles & Bonita Davidson - Mexico / MTW
23. Michelle DeLeon - Philippines / MTW
24. Kate Anderson Donnell - Western Carolina University / RUF
25. Roger & Laura Dye - Latin America - Cru / Family Life
26. Esaie & Natacha Etienne - Haiti / MTW
27. Nathan & Lori Francis - Hope Community Church, SC / MNA
28. Jim & Carin - USA / MTW
29. Ed & Vicki Germann - International Students, Inc. / USA
30. Scott & Ruth Hill - Cherokee / MTW
31. Joel & Cindy Hylton - USA / Serge