

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of January 22, 2023 -

Sunday Morning Service	-----	37
Sunday Evening Service	-----	31
Wednesday Eve.,01/25/23 Service	-----	18

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of January 22, 2023 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,469.35
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/22/23:	\$	1,469.35

- Week of January 15, 2023 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,643.02
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/15/23:	\$	1,643.02

- Week of January 8, 2023 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 2,713.06
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/08/23:	\$	2,713.06

- Week of January 1, 2023 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 2,122.48
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 01/01/23:	\$	2,122.48

- Week of December 25, 2022 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 2,685.00
Love Offering, Pastor & Family	-----	\$ 350.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 12/25/22:	\$	3,035.00

- Week of December 18, 2022 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,037.22
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 12/18/22:	\$	1,037.22

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed for church operating expenses EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,600.00



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.



THANK YOU For Your Continued Faithfulness In Giving!

During the early part this pandemic, we were unable to meet in the church-house. But - that did not mean that the expenses of having a church-house were suspended. We still had bills to pay - electricity, gas, water, trash pickup, phone, internet, facility insurance, copier lease, office supplies, etc., and, praise the Lord, His people kept praying, watching online, & supporting their church with their giving.

Sadly, some people only give when they are in attendance at church - sort of like paying for "services rendered" - but the truth is that they are robbing **THEMSELVES** of God's blessings when they withhold their tithes and offerings and only give when they are here (see Malachi 3:10). Thankfully, most of our people have remained faithful, in so many ways, during this crisis, including financially.

WE HAVE 3 WAYS YOU CAN GIVE:

1. **By mail** - 23 East Wells Blvd., Sapulpa, OK 74066
2. **Drop it off** - call the Church Office to arrange it. 224-1924
3. **Online** - Go to the link below and give electronically:

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=433047>

**WE ARE GLAD WE CAN NOW GATHER TOGETHER TO PRAISE GOD & STUDY HIS WORD TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH-HOUSE!
YOUR FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS GIFTS WILL HELP US KEEP UP WITH THE BILLS AND CONTINUE OUR RENEWED OUTREACH EFFORTS!**

Church Directory

Todd W. White	-----	Pastor
Debra Carlton	-----	Pianist
Mickie Shatwell	-----	Evening Pianist
Derek Quinnelly	-----	Greeter
Larry & Mary Byars	-----	Outreach
Bertha Segebarr	-----	Custodian
GinaMarie Shufelt	-----	Flowers
Seth White	-----	Sound/Video
Larry Byars, David Smith, Derek Quinnelly	-----	Trustees

REMINDER



"Amazing Grace" at 250 Years Old

January 1, 2023 is the anniversary of a significant moment in church history. On January 1, 1773, the hymn that we know as "Amazing Grace" was sung for the first time in Olney, England.

For the last 250 years, it has been sung in churches, played at funerals, served as a unifying thread through the Civil Rights Movement in 1960's America, and recorded thousands of times by everyone from Mahalia Jackson to Elvis Presley to the Lemonheads. Johnny Cash, who often sang the song in his prison concerts, described it, "For the three minutes that song is going on, everybody is free. It just frees the spirit and frees the person."

The hymn writer, John Newton, could never have known just how many people would be encouraged, strengthened, and pointed to Jesus through his lyrics.

John Newton's Early Life -

Newton was born in 1725 to Captain John Newton and his pious wife, Elizabeth. Elizabeth recognized her son's intelligence and set him to intense studies even as a toddler. As a young boy, he was influenced by a friendship with Isaac Watts, the lyricist who wrote *When I survey the Wondrous Cross* and *Joy to the World*.

Newton's studious childhood was cut short. In 1732, when Newton was just seven years old, his mother died of tuberculosis. By the age of 11, he went to sea, and demonstrated daily the sinfulness of his heart. For the next 15 years, he lived the life of a profligate sailor:

"I was exceedingly vile indeed, little, if anything, short of the animated description of an already irrecoverable state, which we have in II Peter 2:14, 'With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed - and accursed brood!' I not only sinned with a high hand myself—but made it my study to tempt and seduce others upon every occasion."

On March 21, 1748, Newton's ship was caught in a catastrophic storm. As the ship seemed to be sinking, Newton cried out: "Lord, have mercy on us." The Lord did have mercy, and Newton later remembered, "I began to know that this is a God who answers prayer."

Between 1748-1754, Newton made four voyages to Africa, three of them as a slave-ship captain. While his heart was opening to the mercy of God, his conscience regarding slavery was untouched. Newton pursued commercialism and materialism, seeking to advance his social standing for the sake of marrying Polly, a lovely upper middle-class lady. During these days, Newton later observed that his verbal sin abated, but morally, he was still perverse.

John Newton as Pastor -

The more he studied the Scriptures, however, the closer Newton followed Christ. As his desire to serve as a minister grew, he found himself rejected by the Church of England for his "enthusiasm" and focus on evangelism. To make matters worse, he was friends with Methodists, including Whitfield and Wesley, with independents, and Baptists.

Six years passed in his pursuit of a pastorate, but finally in 1764, Newton was ordained as a favor to Earl of Dartmouth who

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granted Newton a curacy in Olney. The population of the quaint town was 2000. Newton wrote that “The people are mostly poor, the country low and dirty.” Olney was described by a contemporary of Newton as “the half-starved and ragged of the earth.” More than 1200 mostly non-literate poor women populated the towns chief industry, lacemaking

Newton’s immediate neighbor in Olney was the famous poet, William Cowper. Their proximity formed one of the most significant friendships of either man’s life. The little lane between the vicarage and Cowper’s house allowed the households to share a garden as they shared life together.

Newton preached and loved his rag-tag people. The church grew to 600, and people even came from London some 60 miles and a 9-hour carriage ride away to hear him preach.

William Wilberforce, a wealthy London politician was one of those who would come to hear and meet with Newton. Significantly influenced by Newton’s discipleship, Wilberforce threw his personal and professional political life into the effort to outlaw the slave trade in England.

Newton’s as Hymn Writer, Correspondent and Friend -

Newton loved people well, as demonstrated in his correspondence and in his hymn writing. Newton wrote hundreds of letters to friends, family, politicians and parishioners. Of the letters that remain for us to enjoy, we read accounts of Newton’s testimony, apologetic arguments for the doubters, and practical admonitions to follow Christ closely.

Newton’s warmth and affection for people was evident in his letters. After one visit with a friend, he wrote:

“I brought home with me a thankful sense of the kindness and friendship I am favored with from you and all yours. I account this connection one of the great comforts of my life.”

And in another letter reflecting on friendship, we find this:

“If two hearts are truly united to the Heavenly Magnet, their mutual attraction will be permanent in time and to eternity. Blessed be the Lord for a good hope, that it is thus between you and me. I could not love you better if I saw you or heard from you every day.”

Newton’s affection for Christ and people was demonstrated further his hymn writing. The majority of this poor congregation in Olney was non-literate. As these women would tie the lace knots, Newton would hear them recite silly poems, called “tells” together to keep pace: Something like this: “Cinderella, Cinderella, Went up stairs to kiss a fella, made a mistake, kissed a snake, How many doctors did it take. . .” You get the idea. Newton thought that if these women could memorize the tells, they could learn to meditate on poetry that spoke the truths of the Gospel.

And so, Newton began to write hymns to accompany his weekly sermons.

On Sunday, January 1, 1773, John Newton preached a message on I Chronicles 17, accompanied by a hymn he entitled **Faith’s Review and Expectation**. This passage recounts the Lord’s reiteration of His covenant with David.

Look Back: The Lord reminded David what he had been, **I took thee ... from following the sheep** (verse 7) and David marvels that God has brought him from such a lowly position, **Who am I, O Lord God?**

Like David, Newton acknowledged his background, and even wrote a book about his participation with the slave trade. He never forgot where grace found him:

“My delight and habitual practice was wickedness. I was a rebel made a son. The sinner is dragged before God like a slave and comes away like a thief.”

**Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.**

**I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.**

**T’was Grace that taught my heart to fear.
And Grace, my fears relieved.**

**How precious did that Grace appear
The hour I first believed.**

“We cannot be so evil as He is good. His power is a good match for our weakness; his riches for our poverty; his mercy for our misery. We are vile in ourselves; but we are complete in him.”

As he preached, Newton demonstrated that he understood depravity: his own, and mankind’s. He recounted two chief lessons in looking back. First, he could not wallow in his sin. God had saved him!

“When we burden ourselves with our many sins, we are apt to overlook the very greatest of them – unbelief; for what can be a greater proof of stubbornness and pride than to dare to contradict the express Word of God, to say that He will not pardon, when he declares that He will; to persist in it that He will make differences when He has assured us that He will make none?”

And second, Newton proclaimed that understanding the work of Christ and His beautiful righteousness will begin to transform the Christian’s thinking.

“Though the believer is nothing in himself, yet having all in Jesus, he may rejoice in his name all the day.”

Look Around: Continuing in the sermon, Newton admonished believers to look around them to see what the Lord was doing in their lives. Newton preached that the Lord tells David, *“I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and cut off all thine enemies from before thee...”* (verse 8). David considers how the Lord hast brought me hitherto.

“It is good to have one eye upon ourselves, but the other should ever be fixed on him who stands in the relation of Saviour, Husband, Head, and Shepherd...”

Newton could look around at this life and see much difficulty. He suffered from poor health, antagonistic critics, backslidden parishioners, poverty, infertility, his wife’s death, his own blindness, and encroaching dementia. Through all of this, Newton recognized that these hardships were part of his God’s good plan.

“Seriously, the times look dark and stormy, and call for much

circumspection and prayer; but let us not forget that we have an infallible Pilot, and that the power, and wisdom, and honor of God, are embarked with us.”

“Let us suppose the thing we are most afraid of actually to happen. Can it come a moment sooner, or in any other way, than by his appointment? Is He not gracious, and faithful, to support us under the stroke? Is He not rich enough to give us something better than ever He will take away? Is not the light of his countenance better than life and all its most valued enjoyments?”

As he looked around, Newton desired to love Christ more:

“For the light of God’s countenance, and an open cheerfulness of spirit in walking with him in private, is our chief joy; and we must be already greatly hurt, if anything can be pursued, allowed, or rested in, as a tolerable substitute for it.”

As he looked around, Newton desired to be less attracted to the world.

“Why are we so apt to be captivated by the gewgaws of the world, but because we are so faintly impressed with a real sense of the excellence of Jesus? We say indeed that his loving kindness is better than life, but if we really and fully thought so, hard things would be easy, and bittersweet, and there would be no room for impatience or discontent in our hearts.”

**Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;**

**‘Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far
and Grace will lead me home.**

Look Forward: Newton preached that The Lord promised David that *“He will build thee a house... I will raise up thy seed... I will establish his throne forever”* (verses 10-12). David is overawed that God has *“spoken of thy servant’s house for a great while to come... thou... hast promised this goodness unto thy servant”* (verses 17, 26). So Newton looks forward and rejoices:

“When we awake into that glorious world, we shall in an instant be satisfied with his likeness. One sight of Jesus as He is, will fill our hearts, and dry up all our tears.”

**The Lord has promised good to me.
His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.**

**Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.**

The sermon John Newton preached that January 1st has largely been forgotten, and the hymn was hardly an instant hit. As a matter of fact, while it was published a few years later in the 1779 Olney Hymn collection, it was not included in the Church of England hymn books until 1900. The Americans were early adopters, though, and Faith’s Review was published in America in 1790.

When John Newton’s time on earth was drawing to a close, and a visitor wrote of being with him just hours before his death.

“I saw Mr. Newton near the closing scene. He was hardly able to talk and all I find I had noted down upon my leaving him was this ‘My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Saviour.’”

John Newton left this life at 82 years old, but not before he penned what was to be chiseled on his tombstone:

“John Newton, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy!”

The final verse we most often sing of Amazing Grace, the one with the key change and the swelling choir: *“When we’ve been there 10,000 years”* was not actually written by John Newton. That verse was published in 1852 by Harriet Beecher Stowe in the novel **Uncle Tom’s Cabin** where she commented that slaves in America had been singing it for more than 50 years.

When we’ve been there 10,000 years

Bright shining as the sun,

We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise

Than when we’ve first begun.

Praise God for the ministry of John Newton. The sermon he preached 250 years ago is largely forgotten, but the Gospel is well woven through each verse of this amazing song. As we look forward to Christmas, a time of such Amazing Grace, may we say with John Newton:

“I am a sinner, believing in the name of Jesus. I am silly sheep, but I have a gracious, watchful Shepherd. I am a dull scholar, but I have a Master who can make the dullest learn. He still bears with me, He still employs me, He still enables me, He still owns me. Oh for a coal of heavenly fire to warm my heart, that I might praise him as I ought!”

