

# The Sower

The Lord's Day

December 17, 2017

## Arthur Church of Christ

415 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Arthur, IL 61911-1303

**Minister:** Ron Bartanen



**Welcome** to today's Bible Class or Worship assembly! If you are a **VISITOR** we really appreciate your decision to meet with us. It is our hope that you will return at every opportunity.

**Have you checked out our website lately? ([www.arthurcoc.com](http://www.arthurcoc.com))**

Be sure to visit the "Website Favorites" link for a variety of information on many topics.

**Bible Classes -----9:30 a.m.**  
**Morning Worship-----10:30 a.m.**

**Wednesday Bible Study-----1:30 P.M.**

## A World Without Hope

Can you imagine a world that had never heard of Jesus Christ? What if He had never been born? Old Testament prophecies gave God's people, Israel, hope in the coming of a Messiah (Christ). Even Gentiles were "not without witness" (Acts 14:17), as seen in the visit of the wise men from the East (Matt. 2). God's word to all the world was: A King and Redeemer will be born who will die for man's sins.

Without the coming of Christ into the world the world would be without hope. We would not have the abundant life, for He said, "I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The world is declared to be "guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19b), for "all have sinned..." (3:23). The whole world would then be under condemnation, for "The wages of sin is death..." (Rom. 6:23a). If He had not come, there would not have been an acceptable offering for our sins, but Isaiah had prophesied of the Christ: "Thou shalt make His soul (life) an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10). Heb. 9:22 says, "Without the shedding of blood (His blood) is no remission of sins" But Jesus Christ has come, died for us, is risen, and one day will return.

Dare we to live as though He had never been born? Have you availed yourself of the hope that is in Christ?

--Ron, Article in Arthur Graphic

## THE LIFE OF EDGAR ALLEN POE

The life of Edgar Allen Poe is one of the most tragic of all American writers. Within a brief span of forty years he literally went from riches to rags. Raised by foster parents who loved him deeply, he was provided with an education that matched his genius in his field of interest. He attended private schools in England. He was schooled in Richmond at the University of Virginia. He even spent a period of time as a cadet at West Point.

Poe, in his heyday, was unparalleled as a literary critic, editor, poet and author of short stories. Most of us have probably had our spines tingled by *The Pit* and *the Pendulum* or *The Tell-Tale Heart* or *The Raven*. His works have indeed left their mark.

But the mark left by his life is another story. Poe lost his young bride through a bitter case of tuberculosis. By that time, alcohol and drug abuse, along with involvement in the occult and Satanism, had proved to be his undoing. Depression and insanity plagued his short life, eventually leaving him unconscious in the gutter of a windswept street in Baltimore. Four days later he died, having never regained consciousness.

-From the Internet

**“The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. Good understanding giveth favor: but the way of transgressors is hard” (Proverbs 13:14, 15).**

## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT—

“We have little control over our looks, but we can control the expression thereupon!”

I have never seen a face yet that does not look better with a smile on it. And I have yet to see a face that a frown improves it! “A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken” -Proverbs 15:13

--Submitted by Bill Williams

## CHRISTIANITY IS A RELATIONSHIP, NOT A TRADITION

The Christian faith is not essentially about a building, a denomination, or an institution hoary with tradition. At its heart, Christianity is not a set of rules or a religious structure. The Christian faith is essentially about a “now”-relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The essence of Christianity is not about the past, but about right now.

Of course, faith has an important component that remembers the past. We recall God's saving acts on the cross, for example. We remember what God has done for us in the past. But faith is only alive when it impels us to continue to live out our faith in the present, in the now.

Christianity is about our coming to God as He instructs. It is about obedience. "Faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:26)

-David Ferguson, Mattoon, IL

## THE BETTER WAY

Life offers us many choices, some more important than others. The most important choice you can make in life is to follow Christ rather than to live life without Him. There is a "way" that seems right, but ends in eternal death (Prov. 14:12), but the better way is Christ, who said, "I am the way... No man cometh to the Father but by me (John 14:6).

Christ is the better way because His way is the way to salvation. He said, "I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9).

He is the better way because He can work within the Christians to "do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

He is the better way for both time and eternity. We urge all to put their trust in the Savior who died for you and rose again, repenting of sins, confessing Him and being baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38). You will never regret it, for Christ is the better way.

--Ron, The Arthur Graphic, 12-10-'14

UPDATE: Doris and I appreciate your prayers. Doris is now seeing a spinal-specialist. She is finding it difficult to get around. I will probably make an appointment this week to arrange surgery—possibly in January.