

From the Pastor's Desk...

THANKSGIVING

“...give thanks in all circumstances” (1 Thess 5:18).

Giving thanks is a basic tenant to all people who have faith in God. Of course we give thanks for good things! One of the first prayers we teach our children is to give thanks. Most of us parents have put in good time listening each night at our children's beds as they run through a litany of things for which they are thankful as well as the people they want God to bless. Thanksgiving is basic to our lives.



Or is it? Surely we give thanks to God for the good things God gives us. As we move into the autumn season and the harvest time and the soon-to-be Thanksgiving Holiday, we are reminded more and more of God's blessing on us. The colors of the season cause us to rejoice at the wonders of God's world and the many blessings we receive daily. The welcomed coolness, after our hot, humid summer is some of the loveliest in the year. The harvests are good; we rejoice and give thanks to God. We look at our children and our homes and give thanks for God's blessings. If we sit down and begin to number the many blessings that we receive everyday, we will be quickly reminded that there's no way we could possibly count all our blessings. There are far too many every day.

So we do give thanks to God for our blessings. But St. Paul reminds us that there is more to thanksgiving than being thankful for our blessings. Paul is telling us to reach beyond our comfort zone of what is obviously good and desirous when we give thanks. Paul tells us that we must also be thankful in every circumstance. EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE! And some circumstances are far from the sort we naturally want to give thanks for.

How can we be thankful when we are in need? Or when we're facing danger? Or when we are fearful of health or safety? How can we be thankful when what we're facing is a great obstacle or, maybe, even the greatest trouble in our lives? How can we be thankful then? Why should we be thankful then?



Those questions bring us into focus on the real dynamic of our faith in God. It's easy to be thankful for the good in our lives. (Even the gentiles (!) are thankful for good things.) But when we are thankful to God in the adverse times in our lives, when the going is scary or tough, that is when we need to be focused on God who is present with us in those times and sees us through those times. when we are thankful even when times are tough, we find that somehow the burden has been lightened. Somehow, God's presence in our troubles gives us the measure of strength we need for the time ahead. Somehow we grow closer to God in those times of trial and grow in our faith.

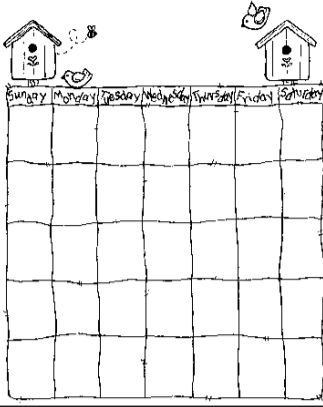
Times of trial are not to be desired, yet those times are the moments that help us to grow the best. We can look back on trial and give thanks for the good work that God has done in us, drawing us closer to Him. Thanks be to God!

Happy Thanksgiving! Pastor Marjorie

Stewardship Report:	Yesterday's pledges returned have shown us this:			
	#	Gave this year	Gave last year	Change
Increased offering	12	\$ 47,344	\$41,300	\$6,044
Decreased offering	3	\$ 8,160	\$ 8,860	\$ 700
Renewed same offering	10	\$ 18,472	\$ 18,472	(no change)
Subtotal:	25	\$ 73,976	\$ 68,632	+ \$ 5,344

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Calendar Items Coming Up:



Nov. 30 Advent 1

**Special Guest Preacher: Rev. Bob Murray,
(Executive Director of Camp Sumatanga)**

December 7

Hanging of the Greens

December 14

Fellowship Supper

December 21

Choir Cantata

December 24 (5:30)

Carols, Candles, & Communion

Hold Me Close, Lord.

Hold me close Lord,
While I go through the toughest time of my life.
Walk with me down my path that,
Even though it twists and turns,
Will someday lead me into the Kingdom Of Heaven.
Take my hand, Lord,
Because I need you. When I have to make decisions that will
lead me
Toward you.
Walk beside me, Lord,
When I'm not sure what to do.
When I need a guide to help me follow in your footsteps into
the
Kingdom of Heaven.
So please, Lord,
Be with me, Near me, and let your spirit live in me.
So that someday, I will live with you,
Eternally.
By Niki Lorentzen, 11/12/08, age 12
(Pastor Marjorie's niece)

We are praying for:

Virginia Piner
Gordon & Pat Cottrell
The Hamrick family
Tim & Jeannie Hardin
Jim Patton
Millie Whalen
Ken Kavanaugh
Will Bazemore
George Weldon
Helen Barhydt (Fred's
mother)
Kay Weiss
Faye and Bozie Harris
John and Mollie McColpin
Crystal Vann



**HIGHLANDS' MEN'S
MONTHLY
BREAKFAST
DECEMBER 7TH!
8:00 A..M.**



Advent wreath-
Making afternoon
November 30
Highlands UMC
3:30 p.m.



Tell Pastor Marjorie
If you'd like to attend.

The Need is Still There!

Huntsville Assistance Program (HAP)
continues to need food for many fami-
lies in need. Thanks for the drop offs
you've left in the church; If you can,
please keep them coming! Nothing is going to waste!



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