

Weekly Connector: Happy Thanksgiving!

November 17, 2017

Hello, Church!

Tonight is another big night for Global Missions! Tonight at 6pm in the Church Fellowship (Schaffter) Hall, **kids of all ages will pack up the "Operation Christmas Child" shoeboxes** that will be sent to other children somewhere in the world. Please come join us as we pack 200 shoeboxes. It will be a night of fun and fellowship as we think about and pray over each item that we send to these special children of God. I have personally met those who have received these and they are eagerly received and appreciated.

Believe it or not, the holidays are nearly upon us! **Here are some of the highlights of the season!**



- November 22 - no Wednesday Night activities.
- November 23-24 - Happy Thanksgiving! Office will be closed.
- December 3-24 - Advent Sundays. One of my favorite times of the year as we look at the Christmas story while looking ahead to when Jesus will return. In this sermon series, "What Child is this?", we will look at who the prophet believed the Messiah to be when he wrote, "Unto us a child is born!" This is a GREAT time to invite your friends to learn more about the reason for this incredible season.
- December 8 - The LIVE Nativity at Red Star Veterinary Clinic. For the last few years, we have partnered with the Red Star team and sang carols, provided the Christmas story, and more. Mark your calendar and stay tuned for more information soon.
- December 13 - Wednesday Praise Night. We'll close up our Wednesday Night activities for the year with an opportunity to sing praises and carols together. Come eat at 5:30 and we'll start singing at 6:30.
- December 24 - On Christmas Eve, we'll have two services: one at 10am, the other at 6pm. I hope that you will be present for both as we wrap-up our celebration of the birth of our Savior and King, Jesus!



This Sunday, we look closely at a particular component of God's armor He offers us: **The Shield of Faith**. Why is it SO important? Come Sunday - EARLY - and find out. Be sure to bring a friend, too.

After the service, we will meet with those interested in our next trip to Uganda - to potentially go or support. If you are feeling a tug to find out more, please plan to stay a little longer and come prepared with questions that can help you understand how God may be leading you to participate in this important God-ordained adventure!

I'm thankful for our benevolence team that collected food from the church and the school to provide thanksgiving baskets for many throughout the community. I'm so amazed

to be a part of such a giving church!

As we prepare for Thanksgiving here in the United States, **times of thanksgiving have been offered for a very long time**. In the Bible, we can read of specific times of thanksgiving where men and women purposely set stones of remembrance to mark the help and providence of God. A thankful people must precede a faithful people. This continued throughout the centuries and continues today.

But, I wonder if we are thankful as a people should be. For with thanksgiving much more is required. By way of example, please read this **proclamation of Thanksgiving by then President Abraham Lincoln**, in October, 1863.

I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States...to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union.

President Lincoln clearly understood that **in order for us to be thankful, we also must have Someone to Whom we are thankful** who he names as “our beneficent Father who dwells in the Heavens.” To Him alone are our thanks to be given.

Moreover, **with thanksgiving comes repentance** or, as the President called it: “humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience”. Along with repentance come prayers for those in need and a request for His direct hand in the healing required for the nation. We may not be in a civil war and suffering the staggering loss as they did.

Would this approach not be appropriate for us today? We, too, can repent of our perverseness and disobedience. We, too, require His “interposition” or intervention. Families are being torn apart from the loss of life, mind, and body that comes from war, drugs, trafficking, poverty, and other oppression and heartache. The lack of unity in our land is staggering and its outcome sobering.

This thanksgiving, let’s continue to give thanks to the One true God. Let us also offer our repentance and pray for those who are impacted by our disobedience as a nation, seeking God’s healing and wisdom in how we return to obedience and serve Him along the way.

I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the Name of the Lord. Ps 116:17

I love you, Church!

Pastor greg