



VOL. XLIII NO. 11

NOVEMBER 2019

It's that time of year again. The holidays are upon us. Halloween. Thanksgiving. Christmas. Time to decorate our homes, write our shopping lists and make plans with family. We all have our own traditions built around this seasonal time of year, but in the church we have a few seasons of our own.

Halloween—or **All Hallow's Eve**—is the night before All Saints' Day. While mostly a secular holiday, Halloween's roots are a mixture of Christian and pagan traditions. In medieval times, people believed that the veil between life and death was thinnest on this night, and so both good and evil spirits might be able to cross from the world of the dead into the world of the living. The practice of dressing up on Halloween was originally designed to fool the spirits so that they would do you no harm. Trick-or-treating has its origin in the practice of the poor knocking on doors to offer prayers for the dead in exchange for food.

All Saints' Day dates back to 609 when a day was set aside to pray for the souls of those who have died. In the church, we light candles and pray for our loved ones who have passed on. Although All Saints' Day is officially Nov. 1, we'll be remembering our own "saints" and loved ones from our church on the first Sunday of November—this year, it's Nov. 3. Even though we miss them dearly, we give thanks to the Lord that they now live in heaven and we rest secured in the hope that we will see them again one day.

The other church "holiday" at this time of year is

Reformation Sunday, which is remembered on the last Sunday of October. It commemorates the beginning event of the Protestant Reformation when Martin Luther nailed 95 theses on the door of his church as points of debate concerning reforms he wanted to see in the Church. We didn't commemorate it in worship this year. Nevertheless, it is an important day in our church history and a witness to the faith of those who have gone before us.

Thanksgiving, of course, is not exactly a church holiday, but it's surely an important day that is dedicated to remembering and giving thanks for our blessings, especially the harvest. Although it didn't become an official national holiday until 1941, every school child learns its origins in American history when the pilgrims gave thanks to God for their survival in the new world back in the 1600's. The strong Christian faith of America's pilgrims caused them to recognize the provident hand of the Lord in everything which they experienced, and reminded them that their lives were in God's hands. This cultivated a sense of daily gratitude—something that is good to remember and practice ourselves. Perhaps you may want to join the challenge many have undertaken in recent years (begun on Facebook) to write down one specific thing for which you are grateful and offer a prayer of thanks to the Lord every day in November. By the end of the month, you'll have a long list of blessings to count.

Gratitude is a way of life that is tied to **stewardship**.



FROM OUR PASTOR

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF EAST SYRACUSE

PASTOR: REV. DEBRA L. THOMAS SECRETARY: LINDA HORTON

PHONE NUMBERS: CHURCH: 315-463-6833 FAX: 315-463-0612

COPY PREPARATION—LINDA HORTON, DEBRA THOMAS, DALE GREABELL, ANNE COUGHENOUR, RICH GREABELL & OTHERS

CONTACT PRODUCTION—BILL JACQUES, <WJACQUES@VERIZON.NET>

Most of us think of stewardship as it relates to giving money in support of the church. While that is necessary and important, stewardship, however, encompasses a wide variety of taking care of what we have and is related to every aspect of our lives. When we realize that everything we have comes by way of God's grace, we want to live lives of thankfulness. We do that in the way we take care of ourselves, our homes, our families, our environment, each other, and, yes, the church. All of us are stewards—caretakers of what has been given to us by the Lord. Although the fall stewardship financial campaign concluded in October, our stewardship of all that God has given to us, like thanksgiving, is a daily practice.

And so I give thanks for YOU, the members and friends of First United Church, for the many ways you serve God and one another. You continue to be a blessing to me in so many ways. May you, too, be blessed both in your giving and in your receiving.

Happy Holidays everyone!

—Rev. Deb

Present tense

After “turkey day” came and went last year, a pastor challenged church members to ask one another not “How was your Thanksgiving?” but “How is your Thanksgiving?” After all, giving thanks should be an ongoing act.

That doesn't always need to be profoundly deep, either. A.J. Jacobs, author of *Thanks a Thousand*, once asked a philosophy-professor friend what he was grateful for. The shockingly simple reply? “Sometimes I'm just grateful I have arms.” That odd but spot-on answer shows the importance, Jacobs says, of being “thankful for things so omnipresent that they can escape our notice.”

So ... how is your Thanksgiving?

Attention Amazon users

As the holidays approach and you begin Christmas shopping, please consider supporting the church by using smile.amazon.com and choose First United Church of East Syracuse.

It doesn't add anything to the cost of your purchase, but it does give 0.5% of your purchase price to the church as a donation.

Thanks!

A much-needed message

National Bible Week, now observed every Thanksgiving week, got its start on a turbulent day. Founders of the National Bible Association were reading Scripture over the NBC radio network on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked. Because of the traumatic events, the network asked that the Bible-reading continue all day, in between news updates. Radio stations throughout America picked up the programming, allowing countless listeners to receive words from God — “who comforts you” (Isaiah 51:12) — when they needed it most.

“Thanks to God”

Thanks for prayers that thou hast answered,
Thanks for what thou dost deny.
Thanks for storms that I have weathered,
Thanks for all thou dost supply.
Thanks for pain, and thanks for pleasure.
Thanks for comfort in despair.
Thanks for grace that none can measure,
Thanks for love beyond compare.

Thanks for roses by the wayside,
Thanks for thorns their stems contain.
Thanks for home and thanks for fireside,
Thanks for hope, that sweet refrain.
Thanks for joy and thanks for sorrow,
Thanks for heav'nly peace with thee.
Thanks for hope in the tomorrow,
Thanks through all eternity!

—August Storm, 1891

Special dates

- All Saints' Day, November 1, 2019
- Daylight-Saving Time ends, November 3, 2019
- Veterans Day, November 11, 2019
- Christ the King Sunday, November 24, 2019
- Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 2019



The first season after July 4th, as the summer days begin to fade, seems to be the Halloween season. The stores fill up with costumes and candy. Item after item appears that is made from pumpkins and pumpkin flavors: whether it is your coffee, Cheerios or Oreos! And more and more people put out more and more decorations. Labor Day and the beauty of fall often times gets lost in the process.

Now I am not trying to grouse about the glories of good old capitalism at its best/worst(??) but... Whatever happened to our interest in and concern with our souls? Attendance at many religious institutions is down. Manners, etiquette, and proper respect are dismayingly absent in too many situations. Our moral decadence is often noted and at times even counted on for popularity in the media. How many comedians can make up a joke anymore without resorting to using words that Lenny Bruce would have hesitated to use.

I am not trying to eliminate Halloween from our schedules at the end of October. Certainly in central New York, as we face the prospect of another long, cold, snowy winter, having fun is a good thing. However what I am suggesting is, that this time of the year should kindle a renewal of our efforts to put our ‘yards, houses, and spirits’ in order; both literally and figuratively. Thanksgiving is fast upon us and all too often we let a great opportunity to appreciate God’s gifts slide on by. When we become aware of and focused on our spiritual development, we tend to not only improve our dispositions, but those of the people around us. A grateful heart and attitude can become contagious and brighten up our world as the days get shorter.

So our young disciples decided to help a little by creating a gift for the Heifer Fund. Won't you join us as we deliberate on God's bounty and share some with

those who are not as fortunate. We will be collecting donations throughout the month of November. Trust in the Lord and our gracious God will pour out the holy spirit upon us. As the book of Zechariah states in chapter 12:10: “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication.” Between the pumpkin carvings, the skeletons, and the black cats, may we be fortunate enough to relocate the God who loves us and cares for us. And in so doing, find our own ability to share the spirit with others. Who knows what we can accomplish if we all try together. The results could truly be scary! For that we can indeed be truly thankful Amen!

November Notes












10 - Worshipping with our Young Disciples presentation
and Heifer fund collection

24 - Thanksgiving service

Use the food key to complete Acts 14:17, NIV.

THANK YOU, LORD



“ _ e _ _ s s _ _ w _ _ i _ _ _ e s s b _
          

givi_g _ _ _ _ _ i _ f _ _ m _ e _ ve _

_ _ _ c _ _ ps i _ _ _ ei _ se _ s _ _ s;
         

_e p _ _ vi _ es _ _ wi _ _ ple _ _ _

_ f f _ _ d fi _ _ s _ _ _ _
          

— e — — — s wi — — j — — .”

ACTS 14:17, NIV

(answers on Calendar page)



Finance Update

Our annual Financial Stewardship Campaign began October 6th. Giving Intention Cards were mailed to church members along with a return envelope. As of Sunday, October 27th, 53 cards have been returned totaling pledges of \$119,119.96 to support our 2020 budget.

As the cards are returned, your Finance Committee uses the information to determine the extent to which financial support will be available for our planned budget expenses. Early return of Giving Intention Cards provides the committee reliable information needed to determine any necessary adjustments to the preliminary budget. If you did not receive a card or misplaced yours, please contact Cheryl Fox at 315-656-4625 or cafox@gmail.com.

Your pledge amounts are confidential. Our Assistant Treasurer, Cheryl Fox, receives the cards and maintains the records of financial giving. In the event your financial circumstances change during the year, please notify Cheryl of any necessary adjustments to your contributions.

—Anne Coughenour for your Finance Committee

Our church's annual Cranberry Pork Dinner and Silent Auction were held Saturday, October 19th in the Fellowship Hall.

A delicious meal and wonderful fellowship were enjoyed by many.

Net proceeds from the event, totals \$1,337.44, as income for our 2019 budget.

The numerous hours of work by many, as well as the donations of all the food served, provided a very successful outcome. This is a true example of Time, Talent and Treasure Stewardship.

The sacred in the everyday

All of the places of our lives are sanctuaries; some of them just happen to have steeples.

And all of the people in our lives are saints; it is just that some of them have day jobs and most will never have feast days named for them.

—Robert Benson, *Between the Dreaming and the Coming True*



Council Notes

At the October meeting, the Council approved the following motions:

To authorize the purchase of a communion set
To establish a Council of Deacons to do the traditional duties of deacons in assisting the pastor with pastoral care, serving the congregation by providing for the needs of the members and reaching out to welcome visitors, as well as other duties as assigned by the pastor and Parish Council pending approval by the congregation at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

To authorize Sue Spero to organize a nut sale to begin during the Fall (Sue has organized this event for the past several years.)

To authorize Anne Coughenour and/or Bill Jacques to donate or sell the hearing devices the church no longer uses. If sold, the proceeds to be added to the Building Fund.

Documented closure of the following items:

Cheryl Fox to purchase a cross-cut shredder

Rev. Thomas to mentor minister at Jamesville United Church

Sexual Harassment training was provided for the staff as required by New York State

Replaced the numbers for the hymnal boards

Organized and delivered school supplies

Collected donations for hurricane Dorian relief (collected \$850)

Noted the painting of the stainless steel island in the kitchen by Paul Spero.

Moved responsibility for selecting a substitute organist to the Worship Committee
Established Fundraising and Events as a subcommittee of Finance

The Parish Council noted the passing of Linda Polcaro, long-time member and performed many roles for the benefit of the church.

God is in control, and therefore in everything
I can give thanks — not because of the situation
but because of the One who directs and rules over it.

—Kay Arthur



In November

1. Peter Boldt,
Christy Knowlton,
Donna Dow & Steve Shorey anniversary
9. Olivia Marie Green
10. Linda Baker
11. Vivian Holburn (in memoriam 2018)
Johnny Vu Tran
12. James Weyer
16. Muriel Salmonsens (in memoriam 2018)
18. Cheryl & Tim Fox's anniversary
20. Leah Sweeney
24. Danica (Spero) Blincoe
29. Kathryn Gerri Kalmbach

The Adult Christian Education Class

meets each week at 8:45 – 9:30 am. The class is led by Rev. Thomas. All are welcome.

Sunday School

is at 10:15 following the Children's message.

Junior' Church Time

with Rev. Thomas is at 11:15 in the chapel.



Diana Law has secured a group of seats at Syracuse Stage for Sunday, November 24th for the 2:00pm performance of "Beauty and the Beast".

The discounted price for our church is \$29.00 for adults and \$26 for all students (including college students).

Contact Diana at 315-656-9550 for tickets if you are interested in attending.

Prayer and Personal Concerns



In Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living

Nancy Bregard – Morning Star Care Center - Oswego

Juanita Coleman – Elderwood – Diane Shafer's mother

At Home

Chuck Baker

Kari Briggs – Sandy & Bob Briggs daughter

Daniel Camp – friend of Christy Knowlton

Jean Troy & Debbie Kelly – Shancy Gorman's cousins

Betty Hickox – Lynn Jacques' mother

Chuck & Madeline Kieb – Horton family friends

Mary Pat Lavigne – Chuck & Marsha Provo's daughter

Barbara Manley

Heather Miles – friend of the Provos

Christine Opera – Shancy Gorman's niece

Chuck Provo

Mark Radley

David Shafer

Bob Stanton – Terri LaVergne's uncle

Sandra Van Auken- Don Snyder's sister

Shirley Venterea – Shancy Gorman's aunt

Judy Walters

Barbara Weyer

Serving in the Armed Forces:

Tina Bearup - US Navy -Joan O'Donnell's niece

Bret Gratien - US Air Force – son-in-law of Cindy Jackson

Andrew Metz – US Air Force -California

Austin Miller – US Navy – Linda Graves grandson

Beth and Nate Roczen – US Army - Horton family friends

Eric Spero – US Navy

*Please notify the office of any changes so this list
t may be kept current*

Food Collection

Please bring to church non-perishable food for our pantry. Please note dates on any items. Items with expired dates **cannot** be used.

A basket for donations is in the narthex every Sunday.

Please be generous as we have many people in need in this community. Food will be used for our holiday basket distribution.

November 2019

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

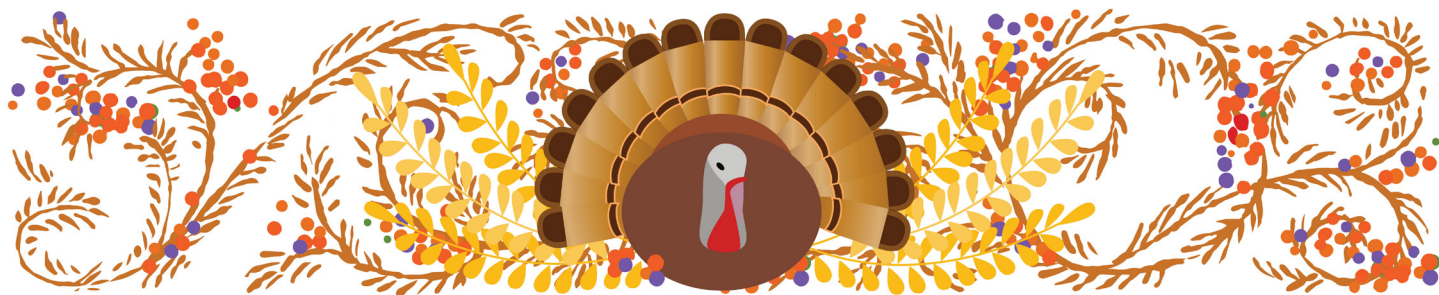
Thu

Fri

Sat

<p>Answer: "He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." Acts 14:17, NIV</p>					1	2 8:00 AM Scrapbooking Workshop (FH 'til 5) 10:00 AM TT's (Lounge until Noon)
3 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed.	4	5 1:00 PM Red Cross Blood Drive (FH 'til 6)	6	7	8	9
10 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed.	11 Veterans Day 7:00 PM Girl Scout Service Unit (Lounge)	12 6:30 PM Parish Council (Lounge)	13	14	15	16
17 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed. 11:15 AM Sandwich Making 3:00 PM Mission Comm. @ Onondaga Center	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 10:00 AM Worship & Christian Ed.	25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving	29	30

First United Church of East Syracuse Events



GRATITUDE game

Start a fun tradition by playing this game on Thanksgiving.



What you need:

- M&M's or other colored candies
- A bowl
- The list below (adapt the colors, as needed)

Red: a need God has provided for

Orange: a gift you've received

Yellow: something you've recently learned

Green: something in nature

Blue: a special memory

Brown: someone you love

What you do:

1. One at a time, people pick a candy and share what they're thankful for (according to the color).
2. Pass the bowl around and continue reflecting on God's goodness until all the candy is gone!



A feast of praise

Throughout the Bible, God's people give thanks and praise for his goodness.



Directions: Draw lines to match the scriptures (all NIV) with the correct speaker.

"I thank my God every time
I remember you." Philippians 1:3

Hannah

"My soul glorifies the Lord and
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."
Luke 1:46-47

David

"He is my God, and I will praise
him, my father's God, and I will
exalt him." Exodus 15:2

Mary

"My heart rejoices in the LORD."
1 Samuel 2:1

Paul

"I will praise God's name in song
and glorify him with thanksgiving."
Psalm 69:30

Moses

Answers: Philippians 1:3, Paul; Luke 1:46-47, Mary; Exodus 15:2, Moses;
1 Samuel 2:1, Hannah; Psalm 69:30, David

*First United Church of East Syracuse
823 Franklin Park Drive
East Syracuse, New York 13057*



PECAN AND NUT SALE 2019

Calling all bakers and snackers! The 2019 Pecan and Nut Sale Church fundraiser is here. We offer FRESH harvest nuts directly from a southern USA Pecan company.

Pecans come in 16 ounce packages and
walnuts, almonds and pistachios in 12 ounce packages.
Pecans are \$14 for large halves or \$12.50 for pecan pieces;
almonds (raw whole, blanched slivered, or natural sliced) \$7.50,
walnuts \$7.50, and
pistachios (roasted and salted in shell) \$8.50.

If you would like to order, have questions, or can help sell some of these delicious nuts please see Susan Spero, or email (sperops@aol.com), or call (315-656-2058).

Orders will be taken through November 11th.

Thank you!!
