



Gulf Breezes

November, 2019

I would like to lead you in a guided meditation for the next several minutes. This meditation is about various aspects of thanksgiving, of gratitude. We will give thanks for things that have always been and things that have never been; we'll give thanks for the past and the future; we'll give thanks to God, who is always showering upon us reasons to be thankful. So I invite you to close your eyes, get as comfortable as you can without falling asleep, and take a few deep breaths.

For the next few moments, I invite you to think of something that you can't remember doing without it can be as basic as breath or your dog's earnest affection. It can be the simple fact that you've always had clean clothes in your drawers or a hot meal on the table. Think of something you've never given thanks for because it has silently endured throughout your life, never calling attention to itself and never failing to make your life better. Give thanks to God for this something-that-has-always-been.

Now we'll take a look at the opposite – thanking God for things that have never been. This type of gratitude is possibly even more difficult than the previous kind because it involves stepping into other people's shoes in order to appreciate your gifts and blessings.

When we stand in another's shoes, we gain the capacity for perspective. Sometimes, it's difficult to see things when you're right up close to them and seeing them from the same angle you always do. To give thanks for something you've never had, you might need to view your life from that other perspective. Perhaps you'll give thanks because diseases that have affected people all over the world for hundreds of years won't affect you because you were inoculated as a baby. Perhaps you'll give thanks because you've never known a time when your stomach was so empty for so long that you forgot how to be hungry. Perhaps you'll give thanks because every time you slept outside in your life, you did so because you chose to – and you always had s'mores as the campfire died down.

For the next few moments, I invite you to think of something you've never experienced, something you don't want to experience because it is unhealthy or degrading or worse. Now, thank God that this thing has never happened to you. But don't stop there. Recognize that the thing-that-has-never-been always is happening somewhere in the world – maybe next door, or a few blocks away, or across an ocean. How can you help make that thing change from an always is to a never again?

Sometimes, blessings are hidden within moments of our past that sure didn't seem like blessings at the time. When we were living through those times, we never expected to give thanks for them one day. But what we forget is that God doesn't comprehend our lives in the limited linear fashion that we do. God, I think, comprehends our lives as a whole – not as a series of events. We view our lives as though flipping through the pages of a magazine, one to the next. God sees our lives as collages, in which all the pages are pasted together.

So for the next few moments, I invite you to give thanks for something in your past that didn't seem like a cause for gratitude at the time. Reflect on how this event fits into the overarching narrative of your life. What did you learn from it?

How did God support you as you went through it? What do you know now that God knew then?

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FYI: For Your Information & Interest

When we take the long view of events in our pasts, we find the ability to thank God for difficult and challenging times that have led our lives in directions we never imagined. This sort of gratitude accomplishes more than simple thanks to God. By acknowledging that we have no idea how our lives are going to turn out, we practice humility in the face of the expansive unknown that we benignly call "future."

So for our final few moments, I invite you to give thanks for the vast expanse of the possibility the future holds. This sort of thanksgiving is the birthplace of hope – which is the willing expectation that the boundaries of possibility are far wider than we perceive. So give thanks to God for possibility, for newness, for adventure. And then take a step with God into the untamed wilderness that is tomorrow, knowing all the while that God has already explored this jungle and will lead you through.

The next time you go to the table at your church to celebrate the Great Thanksgiving – better known by its Greek name "Eucharist" – I invite you to hold onto these things for which you have given thanks. As you receive the presence of Christ in the bread and wine, offer your thanksgivings back to God. And in the exchange, know that God is always and forever giving thanks for you.

Pastor Mike

BAZAAR & BARN SALE

Our Annual Christmas Bazaar and Barn Sale will be held on Friday & Saturday, November 8 & 9; 9am to 3pm.

BAZAAR: Are you ready to get a jump start on your Christmas shopping? The Crafty Ladies will be selling many different craft items like kitchen towels, scrubbies, baked potato bags, baby items, ornaments, plus much more.

BARN SALE

We welcome donations of furniture, household goods, and hardware items, etc. Please, NO computers, No mattresses, old TV's, sofa beds, books or clothing. The Men are at the barn on Thursday mornings if you wish to bring items for the sale. If you need assistance, please contact Al Crosby at 941-697-8373 or Tom Eisele 941-268-4933.



THE ANGEL TREE



Represents the children under our care at the FL United Methodist Children's Home. We are asking for gift cards (in increments of \$10 to \$50) for a store that a child under 18 would like to shop. **Kohl's, Best Buy, Target, Walmart, or pre-paid Visa or Master Cards are ideal.** The gift cards (**please mark the \$ amount on the card and include the receipt**) may then be placed in the box at the Angel Tree. Cash donations are gladly accepted. The deadline to return the cards is **NOON, Dec. 1.** Let's help give these children a wonderful Christmas, showing love to the 'least of these.'



11/09	Bill & Suzanne Collier
11/12	Bob & BetsyMac Donald
11/15	Bob & BettyMiller
11/22	John & Cindy Rowland
11/26	Duff & Edna Duer
11/26	Smitty & Shirley Smith
11/27	Denny & Deb Howell
11/30	Al & Vernetta Crosby
11/30	Ed & Shirley Peterson



11/01	Betty Miller	11/03	Brian Payne
11/03	Crystal DePaolis	11/05	Nancy Treible
11/05	MaryEllen Eisele	11/06	Elaine Inman
11/06	Amber Charbonneau	11/06	Beau Charbonneau
11/15	Jim Graham	11/15	Joyce Burris
11/15	Roy Norell	11/17	Tom Yager
11/17	Jack Stephenson	11/18	Roy Engler
11/18	Nate Reid	11/19	Sandy Norton
11/19	Jimmie Choate	11/20	Joanne Eckinger
11/20	Linda Kennedy	11/21	Linda Ovitz
11/22	Jennifer Guzik	11/23	John Furtado
11/24	Carol Teague	11/25	Barbara Dunfee
11/25	Emma Adkison	11/25	Monica Zinn
11/25	Debbie Ludwick	11/27	David Welch
11/28	Peter Teune Jr.	11/28	Anne Vickery
11/30	Rick Rakestraw		

THANKSGIVING MISSION OUTREACH



DINNER

On Thursday, November 28, Thanksgiving Day, Gulf Cove United Methodist Church will be hosting a Thanksgiving Dinner that will be free to all in the community who wish to attend. Dinner consists of turkey with all the traditional fixings and will be served from 12:00 to 3:00pm.

We will need plenty of volunteers to make this year successful. Volunteers will be needed to roast turkeys, carve turkeys, cut vegetables, deliver meals to those who have requested them, decorate tables, clean tables, make pies, clean pots, wash dishes, and the very many other chores that are required to provide this outreach service to our community, to say nothing of getting the church set up again for worship services.

Sign-up sheets are posted. We are asking folks to sign up for what they can. We hope that you will not hesitate to sign up for more than one day as it takes an enormous effort to provide this very worthwhile service to the community.

they study the scripture text he will be using for the following Sunday's sermon. You can join a study group without having dinner; likewise, eat dinner without joining a study group. Please make Wednesday nights a time you spend with your church family so you can feed your body...and soul!

FINANCES

FUNDING GOD'S MINISTRY for Sept.

YTD		
TOTAL INCOME	\$35,307.82	\$323,240.58
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$11,651.93	\$82,215.46
EDUCATION/ NURTURE	\$813.59	\$9,790.00
APPORTIONMENTS	\$4,499.60	\$35,996.80
STAFF SUPPORT	\$24,338.70	\$225,637.05
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$41,303.82	\$353,639.31
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	(\$5,996.00)	(\$30,398.73)
With Reserve Fund		
TOTAL INCOME	\$43,307.82	\$345,240.58
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$11,651.93	\$82,215.46
EDUCATION/ NURTURE	\$813.59	\$9,790.00
APPORTIONMENTS	\$4,499.60	\$35,996.80
STAFF SUPPORT	\$24,338.70	\$225,637.05
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$41,303.82	\$353,639.31
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	\$2,004.00	(\$8,398.73)

"FOOD FOR THE SOUL"



Please join us on Wednesday nights for a chance to grow closer to God and others in our church family. Dinner is served from 5:30-6:00pm. The weekly cost is \$4/per Adult; \$2.50/per Child under 12; \$12/Family maximum. This month's menu includes

- Nov. 6- Chicken Alfredo
- Nov. 13-Sloppy Joes
- Nov. 20-Stuffed Cabbage
- Nov. 28- No Classes or Dinner

Reservation deadline is the previous Sunday--you can list your reservation on the pew attendance pad on Sunday mornings: Mark "Food" & the number of people.

Clean-up is at 6pm, then there are various activities for ALL ages. Children have Jesus Rocks in #109/110; Youth, gr. 6-12, meet in #D, the After Dinner Group, meets in #102, and a Women's Bible study, "Faithful Ladies," meets in #101. At 6:15pm, Genesis Small Group, another adult Bible Study, meets in #114.

For those who prefer an earlier evening, Pastor Mike leads a Bible study at 4:30pm in the Sanctuary where

SCRIPTURES FOR NOV. 2019

11/3

"The Naked Christian"

Luke 6: 17-26

11/10

Pasor Becky Preaching:

Higher Gifts

1 Corinthians 12-1-11

11/17

"Get the Lead Out"

Luke 19:1-10

11/24

"Stove Top Stuffing"

John 6:25-44

Calendar Highlights

Nov 2	9:30am	Sat	Closet of Hope #C		4pm		Dinner @ P.B. & J's
Nov 3		Sun	Daylight Savings Time Ends	Nov 18	7pm	Mon	Finance #103
Nov 5	8am	Tues	Men's Breakfast	Nov 19	8am	Tue	Men's Breakfast
	3pm		S.M. Peer #102	Nov 20	2:30pm	Wed	Inglenook
	6pm		At Ease, Veterans	Nov 24	1pm	Sun	Hanging of the Greens
Nov 8	9-3pm	Fri	Barn/Bazaar Sale	Nov 25	12pm	Mon	Bulletin Deadline
Nov 9	9-3pm	Sat	Barn/Bazaar Sale		7pm		Church Council
	10am		Stop the Bleed	Nov 27		Wed	Office Closes at noon
Nov 10	12pm	Sun	Ladies Who Lunch				No Classes or Dinner
Nov 11		Mon	Office Closed/Vets Day	Nov 28	12-3pm	Thurs	Thanksgiving Dinner
Nov.12	12pm	Tues	Newsletter Deadline	Nov 29		Fri	Office Closed
Nov 16	9:30am	Sat	Closet of Hope #C				Office Closed
Nov 17	8:30am	Sun	Blood Drive				

Sundays

8am	Traditional Service	
9:30am	Contemporary Service	
	Seekers II Sunday School	#A
	Kids' Church/Sunday School	#109
11am	Traditional Service	
5-7pm	Youth Group	#D
6:15pm	Family Bowling	

Mondays:

7pm	Boy Scouts	#A
	AA Support Group	#109

Tuesdays:

1pm	Friend to Friend	#109
7pm	Al-Anon	#109

Wednesdays:

2pm	Weekly Bulletin Deadline	
	Mid-Week Boost Bible Study	#102
2pm	Disciple I Class	#101
4:30pm	Pastor's Bible Study	Sanctuary
6pm	Jesus Rocks	#109
	Youth Group	#D
	After Dinner Group	#102
	Faithful Ladies	#101
	Praise Team Rehearsal	Sanctuary
6:15pm	Genesis Group	#114

Thursdays:

8am	Grounds Main't Crew @ Barn	
9am	Crafty Ladies	Oak's Cove
4:45pm	Handbells	#B
5pm	Daisy Troop	#108
6:15pm	Choir Rehearsal	#B
6:30pm	NA Recovery Meeting	#109



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