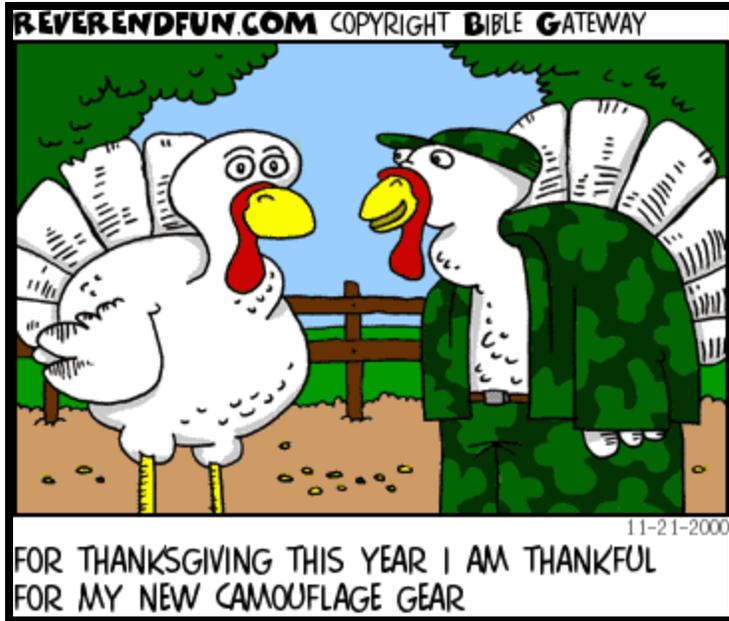


GOOD SHEPHERD NEWS

November 2012

WHAT ARE YOU THANKFUL FOR?



Turkey Day! “Don’t forget, we have to leave immediately after church today – we’ve already missed part of the game!”
“Church? You don’t go to church on Thanksgiving, do you?”

In the early days of our country, the colonists designated special days for thanksgiving to God, and in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November be set aside “as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent

Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.” Thanksgiving Day has now become an annual holiday in the United States. But most Americans have lost the focus of giving thanks. Instead they concentrate on team loyalties and huge dinners. Turkey and dressing, sweet potatoes and pumpkin pie are just a few of our culinary delights. After stuffing ourselves, we feel satisfied. But sooner or later, we are hungry again.

The psalmist suggests a different kind of nourishment. He recommends that we feed on God’s Word for spiritual sustenance. “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!” (Psalm 34:8). God’s Word fills us with understanding and wisdom. Thru His Word, we learn of God’s ultimate love in providing His Son as the all-sufficient payment for sin. We learn that His mercy is everlasting and that His truth endures forever. For these, we are thankful.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving,
Pastor Dan

The Value of a Day

Days come and go, some faster it seems than others. When I was a kid, days seemed to last forever, and weeks, months, or years were insanely long periods of time. When I look at the calendar today, I'm shocked to see the year nearly spent, and wondering how I will do all I need to do in the remaining couple months before New Year's Day. There's something about age and maturity, that grows our appreciation of the value of a day... and of course, that same age and maturity, can make us leap way beyond the day we're in, and focus on days either long before us, or long gone behind us.

This enigma was not unknown in the ancient world, either. St. Paul writes about the value of a day in his letter to the Hebrews—and not just any day, but TODAY. Today, the Apostle writes, if you will hear the voice of Jesus Christ and believe His Gospel of salvation for you, you will live in Him by grace through faith. Today...

There's a mystery at work in creation, and St. Paul puts his finger on it in a very inspired way, never having studied advanced physics or cosmology. Time is a peculiar construct of God, and one of great grace and mercy for us. In the beginning He created us to be infinite beings in perfect communion with Him, but after the Fall, we suffer with the consequence of our sin and death in ways that are ugly painful.

Most of us have things in our past that we would rather forget, and wish had never happened. Imagine the pain of having such a past, and knowing that it was always accessible, and always before your eyes—not just in the sense of remembering it, but as if it was always present. Likewise, many of us worry about the future, and the thousands upon thousands of variables that can either help or harm our endeavors—imagine if all of those future days and moments were present to you, and you had to grapple with them all at once. It would be a horrible burden to bear, never escaping the past nor the future, as all time pressed upon us in a single moment.

We should remember, however, that for God, this is exactly how time is. For Him, all time is eternally present. Everything we perceive as past, present, and future, God perceives immediately as present. That means, that when He bears your burdens in this present moment, He is really bearing them right now. And for all those past moments, where your sin and evil broke forth into the world, demanding the sacrifice of His Son to save you... those moments are all present to Him, too. And all your future moments, those that are both good and ill, He perceives in His eternal present, preserving you in and through them, though from your perspective, they

haven't happened yet. Our loving God chooses to bear the burden of our sin, death, and suffering across all time and all space, while He grants a blessed rest to His people: to us, He gives the gift of Today.

Today, you can hear His voice of love from the Cross of His Son, speaking forgiveness and life to you forever. Today, you can repent of the evil you have done, turning from your darkness by the power of His Word, toward the Light of Jesus Christ. Today, you can be unburdened from your sin, receiving grace from the Son of God, who in His flesh nailed your sins and mine to His Holy Cross. Today, you can believe and live forever. Today becomes your first and never-ending day of eternal communion with your Creator, an infinite life of joy and blessedness, found in your Savior, Jesus Christ. While God bears your burden, you are eternally free, Today... for Today, the love of God in Christ Jesus comes to you, that you might live in Him by grace through faith forever. Give thanks to God for the blessing of Today! For Today, the Kingdom of God comes near to you, and this eternal Today shall never end. Glory be to God on High—The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who have worked for us so great a salvation, which comes to us Today. Amen.

Pastor Brad

The Psalms: God's Hymnal

One of the immeasurably rich blessings that our LORD has given to us in scripture is what many commentators refer to as "God's Hymnal;" namely, the Book of Psalms.

This collection of poetry and hymns (The name "Psalms" means "songs," and is taken from Septuagint, the early Greek translation of the Old Testament) is filled with many beautiful texts penned by many different authors for many different occasions.

Authors include Moses, Solomon, David, Asaph, and Ethan the Ezrahite along with several Psalms that are not attributed to an author.

Many of the Psalms reference specific historic events from the time of Moses to the trials and failures of David's life to the sorrows of the Captivity of the Jews in Babylon.

What is remarkable about the Psalms is the incredible breadth of both human and divine experience that they contain. They include praise and lamentation. They include songs of thanksgiving and songs of hope and faith. There are also Psalms that prophecy the coming of Jesus as our Messiah

and Psalms that foreshadow the "Wisdom" literature of the Proverbs in counseling the pursuit of goodness over evil.

Given that the Psalms were, *literally*, the Hymnal of the Temple and the Synagogue, it is instructive to note the balance that they achieve in theology, emotion and focus and compare that balance with the Hymns and Songs we choose to use in our worship today.

Individually and collectively, the Psalms never announce that "We will Praise God!" without actually doing so. The Psalms never praise God without proclaiming the "why." The Psalms never offer lamentation without offering faith and hope and the Psalms never focus solely on the singer without turning everything back around to God, the original author of our faith and our salvation.

Given this astounding wealth, it is a shame that we do not read this Book (*at 150 chapters, 2461 verses, and 43,743 words, the longest by far in the Bible*) more often. Many of our churches have fallen into the habit of only occasionally using the little

snippets of Psalms for Introits or cherry-picking the three "happy verses" of a Psalm for a Praise Song. We have forgotten that the Lectionary for Readings every Sunday actually includes not just THREE but FOUR texts: An Old Testament Reading, a New Testament Reading, a Gospel Reading and (*drum roll please...*) a Psalm appointed for the day.

Here at Good Shepherd we have been endeavoring to incorporate the Psalms more widely into our worship. We have been making the choice to use responsive readings, Cantor-led chanting, hymn settings and Choral Anthems. I hope that you will find this a blessing and that you will happily sing:

I give you thanks, O LORD,
with my whole heart; before the
gods I sing your praise; I bow
down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name
for your steadfast love and your
faithfulness, for you have
exalted above all things your
name and your word.

Psalm 138:1-2

DVP (Denes Van Parys)



Preschool News

www.littlelambstacoma.com

God continues to bless our preschool with students. Currently we have nineteen students between both classes. We still have room in our Tuesday / Thursday class and are praying for more.

Please remember our cookie sale is coming up on November 11th. We will be accepting donations of cookies to sell on that day.

This year we will also be selling a 2013 calendar, created with some photography selections of our members here at Good Shepherd. A preview of the calendar will be available on November 11th. Orders will be taken and your calendar will be available in December.

Our preschool / Sunday School safety glass windows are have been installed by Larson Glass of Puyallup. Thank you to everyone who has donated money for this project!

Please continue to pray for our preschool students, staff, and board as we move forward in ministry.

Thank you,

Bonnie Jean Huset
Director / Teacher

Lunch Bunch News

Some time ago the group known as PRIMETIMERS was re-organized and is now known as THE LUNCH BUNCH. Our gatherings are held on the first Tuesday of each month. The opening devotion by Pastor Gerken and our shared meal are usually the way we begin our time together. After the meal we have a short business session to discuss upcoming activities and that is followed by a program. We

would just love to have you join us - details of the coming meeting are usually in Sunday bulletins 2 times before we meet. Our next meeting is Tuesday, November 6 (election day). The program will be a viewing of one of Myron Schmidt's videos. See you there!

Pastor Ken Boetcher

Men's Breakfast / Bible Study November 17th

Join us **Saturday, November 17th at 8 am** for a delicious breakfast, wonderful fellowship, and in-depth Bible Study. We are going through the series "Stuff They Didn't Teach Me in Sunday School." This month our topic is: "What Is It?" (Exodus 16). *Pastor Dan*

Stewardship Sunday November 11th

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Thanks to Shirley Ostrander

01-15-2004

HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?

Mirrors and Windows

Most homes have both windows and mirrors. Both are made of glass, but each one is used for a very different purpose. Mirrors are used to let us see ourselves, while windows help us to see others.

Whenever you look into a mirror for even a second, you're guaranteed to see something you don't like. I know I do. It may be that you need to lose weight, which is a difficult fix. Or it may be that a hair is out of place, which is an easy fix. The way we look is important to us.

Windows are different. As we look thru a window we see the world around us. And if we look long enough, we will begin to see someone or something that needs help. It may be the lawn

of a sick neighbor that needs mowing. It may be the new neighbor we could invite to church. Maybe it's a wind-blown piece of paper we could pick up and put into the garbage. The question is: Do we actually do these things?

If we spend more time looking thru windows instead of mirrors, we could make the world a much better place.

November 11th is Stewardship Sunday. During our worship service you will have the opportunity to re-commit your life and money and talents to the Lord.

Prayerfully consider what God would have you do regarding your commitment in Time, Talents and Treasure for 2013. A commitment card will be available soon and we will lay our sealed pledges on the altar as part of Stewardship Sunday, November 11th.

1. **WORSHIP** I will attend worship at least _____ times this year
2. **HOLY COMMUNION** I will attend Holy communion at least _____ times this year.
3. **SPIRITUAL GIFTS** I will use my spiritual gifts in the service of Jesus.
4. **FELLOWSHIP** I will participate in some form of congregational fellowship at least _____ times this year.
5. **EVANGELISM** and **OUTREACH** I will bring at least _____ visitors to church with me this year.
6. **BIBLE STUDIES** I will participate in at least _____ weekly congregational Bible studies this year.
7. **TITHING** I will commit to the Lord at least 10% of my gross income or will increase my giving by 1% per year until I reach the 10% level.

MY COMMITMENT FOR 2013 IS: \$ _____ each week, or \$ _____ each month.



Operation Thanks-Giving's Thanksgiving Dinner



will be **Tuesday, November 20th** at **6 pm**. The sign up sheets for food items is available in the narthex. You may also call the office to sign up for items you wish to donate. We appreciate your help! Your donations should be brought to the church by November 18th. Turkeys should be thawed. All are invited to attend!



Women in Mission

Please join us for our activities in September!

Weekly Bible Study on Tuesdays at 9:15 am.

Weekly Quilting on Tuesdays at 10 am.

Mites Collected – November 11

Seafarers Auxiliary – November 27th

Pack Seafarers' Boxes – November 10th

Dear Friends at Good Shepherd,

The mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is to assist each woman of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

In accordance with this we have: 1) Weekly Bible Study, 2) Make available the LWML Quarterlies and 3) encourage fellowship and outreach.

Our Good Shepherd LWML outreach is in making quilts for Lutheran World Relief (57 sent this year with \$160 to cover shipping costs) and preparing

150 Christmas boxes for distribution through the Tacoma Seafarers' Center.

Would you consider helping with monetary donations for the Christmas boxes? Any amount would help! Just mark it: "LWML Seafarers' Christmas Boxes."

You are invited to come and join the FUN of filling and wrapping 150 Christmas boxes on Saturday, November 10th at 10 am in the Church Fellowship Hall. You will be amazed and really put in the holiday mood.

All things with prayer and thanksgiving-
Serving the Lord With Gladness,

Jane Oberg



Project Christmas 2012 Coming Soon!

We will once again have the opportunity to share with those in need. We will be "adopting" children and adults this year. Names and gift suggestions will be available in November. We are still gathering the information and will make it available as soon as possible.