



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

November 2023

What is a Blessing?

By Kathy Hawkins

What is a blessing, we ask this time of year
It is something we hold in our heart so dear

A horse running across the meadow free
A child's silly smile and laughing with glee

Holding a new born baby in your arms
The smell of fresh mown hay out on the farm

The sun shining brightly on a cool crisp day
Traveling to see family with good roads all the way

A table filled with food for our tummy's delight
Holding your grandmother's hand so tight

A home with a roof and walls around us warm
Gives us a place to withstand any storm

Those who left us from this Earth we remember
Whether years ago or just this November

Laughter by family and those around us
Sharing a secret with a friend you trust

A prayer of thankfulness for all we have been given
Knowing the one we worship has already forgiven

On this Thanksgiving be grateful for what you have and
treasure

Each day is a gift we have been given without measure



**Sunday Worship:
In Sanctuary at 11:00am
&
Sumner Center UMC Facebook
Page**

Visit our Church Website at:
<http://www.sumnercenter.com>

**Donations may be sent to our mailing
address:**

**25378 151st Ave
Spring Valley, Mn 55975**

Pastoral Support Team

Pastor Bridget Sheely

Email: bridget@countrywidecarriers.com
Cell # 507-438-1352

Pastor Jon Marburger

Email: marburgerjon@gmail.com
Cell #507-227-6711

Pastor Abigail Ozanne

Email: pastorabigailo@gmail.com
Cell #507-607-0779



Grace and Peace in the name of Jesus Christ:

*If you have items you would like to be
published in the newsletter, please contact
Pastor Bridget, by the 3rd Thursday of the
preceding month by emailing your
information*

*to(bridget@countrywidecarriers.com) Or by bringing your
information to Worship on Sunday mornings)*

Calendar of Events

(Subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

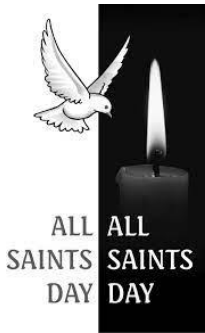
November 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Confirmation 6:30pm	2	3	4 
5 11 am Worship ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY	6	7	8	9	10	11 Council Meeting 10:30 am at Church 
12 11 am Worship 10:30 AM CHILDREN'S CHURCH STORYTIME	13  World Kindness Day	14	15 Confirmation 6:30pm	16	17	18
19 11 am Worship	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Eve Worship service opportunities Wykoff 6pm or Sargeant 7pm	23 	24	25
26 11 am Worship Hanging of the Greens after worship followed by a Potluck lunch	27	28 Advent In person Bible Study @ Grand Meadow 2pm	29	30 Advent Bible Study Zoom 6:30pm		

November Worship Schedule

November 5, 2023

Pastor Bridget Leading



All Saints Day is one of those moments where we celebrate and remember those who have made the journey or who have taken the next step. We remember them because they are still a part of us, shaping us, mentoring us – maybe not in a direct way, but in a real way. John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, enjoyed and celebrated All Saints Day. In a journal entry from November 1, 1767, Wesley calls it "a festival I truly love." On All Saints Day, we recognize that we are part of a giant choir singing the same song. It is the song Jesus taught his disciples; a tune that has resonated for more than 2,000 years; a melody sung in glory and on the earth. Our great privilege is to add our voices to this chorus.

24th Sunday of Pentecost

November 12, 2023

Jeremy Girard Leading



There is no entry fee to the kin-dom. Your net worth has nothing to do with your eternal value. This is our proclamation for today. This is our invitation to all the people of God. You were chosen not for your ability to earn, but because you are loved. And because you are loved, you have an ever-increasing capacity to love in return. That's what expands; that's what multiplies as we continue our journey to become disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. And then we find ourselves making disciples, even as we are being made disciples.

25th Sunday of Pentecost

November 19, 2023

Pastor Jon Leading



OUR HYMN OF GRATEFUL PRAISE
WORSHIP SERIES ON GRATITUDE

This is Thanksgiving week, so as we gather today it is an appropriate time to reflect on the pervasiveness of the life of gratitude that the gospel suggests. Today we will turn to that familiar passage from Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). Here, we find that gratitude and joy are woven together and that it is sometimes hard to tell one from the other. It also reveals that our consideration of a life of gratitude should be exuberant, marked by the joy of being a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving Eve Worship Services

Wykoff UMC 6:00pm – Pastor Bridget Leading

**Sargeant UMC 7:00pm – Pastor Jon & Pastor Jackie Leading
Ecumenical service joint with Evanger Lutheran Church**



First Sunday of Advent

November 26, 2023

Pastor Jon Leading



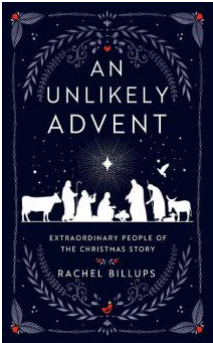
If you are watching our Christian calendar, you will notice we are starting Advent a week early. We are doing so because this year Christmas Eve falls on what would be our 4th Sunday of Advent. You see, no matter how much we follow the development of the Christian year, we are always surprised when Advent comes. But ultimately this is a time of year when we cherish those precious moments with family and friends.

November Announcements

Prairieland Parish

Is joining Together for a 4-week book study titled:

“An Unlikely Advent”



This four-week Advent study focuses on the experiences of four sets of often overlooked characters in the Nativity story. During this Advent season, Rachel Billups guides readers through the themes of hope, love, joy, and peace by sharing the stories of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, the Magi, and the shepherds. Each set of unexpected characters has something to teach about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas.

You may purchase this book at www.cokesbury.com or from Pastor Bridget for \$13.50

This is a wonderful way to journey through our advent season!

Pastor Jon and Pastor Bridget will be offering in-person study & zoom study or you may use this as your own individual advent study.

The Book study will begin the first week of Advent.

Group 1 – will meet in-person Tuesday’s @ 2pm

Led by Pastor Jon @ Grand Meadow UMC

November 28th –December 5th – December 12th – December 19th

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Group 2–will meet via zoom Thursday’s @6:30pm

Led by Pastor Bridget

November 30th – December 7th – December 14th – December 21st

Meeting ID – 202 817 7179 Or 821 484 9826

November 1st... Confirmation Class 6:30pm

November 5th...All Saints Sunday

Honoring Joyce Christianson

November 15th.....Confirmation Class 6:30pm

November 21st...Thanksgiving Eve Service

Wykoff UMC @ 6pm Led by Pastor Bridget

Sargeant UMC @ 7pm Led by Pastors Jon & Jackie - Ecumenical service

joint with Evanger Lutheran and Prairieland Parish

November 26th.....First Sunday of Advent

November 29th...6:30 pm @ Grand Meadow United – Prairieland Parish Leadership Committee Meeting

Christmas Eve Worship Service Opportunities to fit your schedule.

Racine @ 8:30 am

Sargeant @ 9:00 am

Brownsdale @ 10:30 am

Grand Meadow @ 4:00 pm

Dexter @ 5:30 pm

Sumner Center @ 7:00pm

Wykoff @ 7:00 pm.

Bishop's Pastoral Letter on Violence in Israel and Palestine



In light of the eruption of war in Israel and the Gaza Strip over the past week, Bishop Lanette Plambeck wrote a pastoral letter urging Dakotas and Minnesota United Methodists to learn about what is happening, pray for all involved, and reaffirm their commitment to nonviolent responses and the inclusion of all voices in seeking peace. The full letter is below.

Dear Siblings in Christ, I don't know about you, but I have struggled these past weeks. I have struggled to find the words—words that need to be spoken—and words that need to be heard. Like many, I have grappled to make sense of the Hamas attack against Israel, Israel's build up along the border of Gaza, missiles raining down, war being declared, and my own deep conviction that as people of faith we should not sit in idle privilege and do nothing in times such as these. I have pressed and pleaded with myself to not turn away— disciplining myself to look at images coming out of Israel and Gaza. Images that are hard. Images that reveal the incredible evil that has been done. Images that bear witness to the magnitude of death and destruction that is nearly unfathomable. Each day, I have given myself grace and space as I learned more about the atrocities perpetrated against civilian young adults, children, babies, seniors, Holocaust survivors, and families whose entire villages were systematically wiped out. Grace and space mixed with the privilege of time. Time marked with sighs too deep for words. Space that gave birth to familiar scriptures stepping into this time of confusion and disbelief: “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more...” (Matthew 2:18). It has been important for me to listen to the stories of those being remembered and memorialized. I have granted myself permission to study Hamas—I knew a little, but not enough. I have reminded myself that when we talk about Hamas and the Palestinian people, we must remember they are not one and the same. Palestinians are an ethnically and culturally diverse group of people, including Muslims, Christians, and other minorities. Many live in refugee camps located in Gaza and the West Bank. Hamas is considered a political and militant terroristic organization by the U.S., Israel, and many other western countries. It has been sobering to consider the enormity and barbarity of the Hamas attack and Israel's retaliatory response that will undoubtedly change both Palestine and Israel forever.

I have also invited myself into the practices of my faith—including prayer and action. (I especially like this prayer for peace in Israel and Palestine.)

The sacred scripture reminds us that, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9). It is our divine calling to actively seek and promote peace. This includes praying for those affected by violence and for the perpetrators to find a path of peace and reconciliation. Our faith calls us to engage in dialogues that promote understanding and respect for all people. We stand against violence and any form of injustice that leads to conflict. Instead, we advocate for a world where conflicts are resolved through peaceful means, where love and compassion triumph over injustice, hatred, and hostility. Amid these challenging times, we as United Methodists must reaffirm our commitment to nonviolent responses and the inclusion of all voices harmed by the conflict— including Muslim, Christian, and Jewish—in seeking a just and durable peace. We pray for the victims and their families, for the healing of communities and nations torn apart by violence, for humanitarian efforts to enter in, and for the wisdom and guidance of world leaders to pursue peaceful solutions. As we reflect on the Hamas attack and its implications, let us hold fast to the hope that one day, God's promise of a world without war will be fulfilled. In our prayers and actions, let us work toward a future where swords are turned into plowshares, and nations learn war no more (Isaiah 2:4). Indeed, the events of the past week serve as a somber reminder of the ongoing conflicts and violence that persist in various regions of the world. It brings to the forefront the deep-rooted issues that continue to divide communities and nations. As United Methodists, we believe in the transformative power of prayer, and we come together in prayerful solidarity for a world where violence and war no longer hold sway.

May we as Dakotas and Minnesota United Methodists stand as a beacon of hope, compassion, and peace in a world often marked by conflict, terror, and hate. Together, in faith and unity, may we continue to pray fervently for the day when the words of the hymn “Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me” become a reality for all humanity. And may our prayers be extended through our acts of justice, service, advocacy, and education.

Alongside you on the journey,

Bishop Lanette Plambeck



In This month of November let our hearts and minds be centered on...THE MEANING OF THANKFULNESS

Thankfulness is an important subject in the Word of God as a whole. Thankfulness is a mental and/or verbal expression of one's acknowledgement and appreciation of God's person, His grace, blessings, and sovereign work in one's life and the world. Some key ideas related to thankfulness are: biblical understanding, trust, humility and grace, the right focus and values, and joy. It is through the possession and function of these qualities that we become thankful. So, why should we be thankful?

SOME GENERAL REASONS WHY WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL

- 1. Because it honors God.** When we are thankful, we recognize that God exists, and we are acting on the reality of His life as the very source and means of ours. True thankfulness recognizes our total dependence on God and stems from realizing that everything going on in our lives and all we have is the product of God's sovereign control, infinite wisdom, purposes, grace, and activity (2 Cor. 4:15).
- 2. Because it is commanded in Scripture.** First, the Psalms are filled with the call to give thanks. An example is Ps. 100:4 which says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." Then Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything keep on giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you". In Colossians, he twice gives the command to be thankful (3:15, 17).
- 3. Because of the dangerous consequences of thanklessness:** Thanklessness is dangerous to self and others. It dishonors God and leads to proud humanism or dependence on man rather than God (Rom. 1:21). In addition, it leads to bitterness, complaining, and a joyless life (Heb. 12:15). Since thankfulness is a response to the grace of God, its opposite, bitterness with its companions, complaining and grumbling, are the product of an unthankful heart that fails to properly respond to God in faith to His person, infinite wisdom, grace and purposes. Thanklessness promotes pettiness and occupation with self, people, and problems. That in turn creates depression and feelings of hopelessness because we become focused on our problems rather than on the Lord.

But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and who makes known through us the fragrance that consists of the knowledge of him in every place (2 Cor. 2:14).

This verse in 2 Corinthians demonstrates that a thankful and God-focused person counts on God and His triumph and will manifests the sweet fragrance of a life filled with the knowledge of Christ rather than the spirit of bitterness and complaining. Thankfulness, then, becomes a spiritual barometer; it is an evidence of the condition of our spiritual life and value system, which should give us a warning if we have ears to hear.

THE TIME FOR THANKSGIVING (THE WHEN AND WHERE)

We should give thanks whenever we pray. Scripture teaches us, both by illustration (Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:3-4; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2) and by direct admonition (Phil. 4:6f; Col. 4:2), that prayer should generally be accompanied by or offered in a context of thanksgiving. The reason is perhaps found in the very nature of thanksgiving! Thanksgiving turns our eyes from our problems and ourselves to the Lord that we might focus on Him and His sovereign grace. It helps us to see life through the perspective of God's person, principles, promises, plan, provisions, and purposes. Then, as this happens, this upward focus promotes faith and courage in the face of the trying and painful situations that we all eventually face to one degree or another.

SOME OBJECTS OF THANKSGIVING (THE WHAT)

We should give thanks for God Himself and for His sovereign activity and control over the universe. What a hopeless world this world would be if all things had no purpose and were merely the product of time plus chance. As we see in Colossians 1:12-14, we should give thanks for our salvation through Christ and for the unfathomable riches that are ours in Him (Eph. 3:8). After all, we are blessed with every spiritual blessing, and we are complete in Him (Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10). As illustrated so often by Paul in the salutation of his epistles, we should give thanks for others who know the Savior and are growing and serving the Lord.

Thanksgiving Word Search

R M T B A H P L M E N O B H S I W J D J E K A B
 A A L W U D R U E D H O L I D A Y Q F C A Y M M
 C H E J T A E F C H C T H U R S D A Y B N V X A
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 F Y U C I N Z U T U R K E Y M N A K Q C O R S O

England
 third
 Wampanoag Indians
 thankful
 turkey
 November
 harvest
 football
 cornucopia
 New World
 acorn

maize
 Abraham Lincoln
 voyage
 tablecloth
 Pecan pie
 Native American
 gravy
 feast
 cornbread
 bread

celery
 Sarah Hale
 vegetables
 sweet potato
 pumpkin pie
 Mayflower
 grateful
 Squanto
 Colonists
 beans

symbol
 yams
 customs
 settlers
 Plymouth
 Massachusetts Bay Colony
 gobble
 family
 celebrate
 bake

Thursday
 wishbone
 tradition
 ham
 Pilgrim
 holiday
 friends
 cranberries
 casserole
 autumn