

THE SPIRE

Love God! Love Others!



Upland Baptist Church, 1851

November 2017

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Gratitude

November is a month dominated by Thanksgiving. What is interesting to me is that when we say *Thanksgiving*, we think about large turkey dinners instead of being grateful. Thanksgiving has become for us a day, the fourth Thursday in November. It is a day where we gather with friends and family, often watch a football game or two and eat a large meal, most often with turkey as the centerpiece. But thanksgiving is so much more than a meal or a day.

Instead of thinking about thanksgiving, I want to challenge us to focus on **gratitude** this month. Gratitude is the quality of being thankful, the readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. *Robert Emmons, perhaps the world's leading scientific expert on gratitude, argues that gratitude has two key components, which he describes in a Greater Good essay, "[Why Gratitude Is Good](#)."*

"First," he writes, "it's an affirmation of goodness. We affirm that there are good things in the world, gifts and benefits we've received."

In the second part of gratitude, he explains, "we recognize that the sources of this goodness are outside of ourselves. ... We acknowledge that other people—or even higher powers, if you're of a spiritual mindset—gave us many gifts, big and small, to help us achieve the goodness in our lives."¹

Of course, I believe in a higher power, and know Him as God, Almighty, Lord, Father, Creator. I also feel confident that God has given to me and to each of us good in our lives. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. (James 1:17) There is much to be grateful for, as God has given much to us.

There are days, I look around our world that I wonder what good there is. There are days when I feel overwhelmed by sadness as I hear the stories of people in my life who are struggling, as I listen to the news of shootings, hurricanes, fires, and devastation. There are times when I find myself asking, is there good anywhere?

Then I talk a moment, take a deep breath and look around. Then I see a stranger hold the door for someone, I watch a video of people lined up to pick up the wash of the utility workers who have traveled a distance to restore power to storm devastated regions, I open the door and receive a bag of groceries for the food bank. There is good all around us, if we will only take the time to look for it.

Just like any other muscle, we must exercise it, if we want it to strengthen. If we want to be grateful people, we must exercise gratitude. I want to challenge you this month to look for things for which to be grateful. This will mean being intentional, looking around and being aware of the blessings in our lives.

¹ <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/gratitude/definition>

I will have gratitude journals available for you to use for the month of November. You can use anything, but I will have a journal to give you that can help you remember to write down the things you are grateful for each day or each week. Journals can help us be intentional about being thankful; they can also remind us of the gifts in our lives.

Here are some tips for keeping a gratitude journal.

- Decide if you are going to write once a week, or every day. Make a commitment.
- Have a goal in mind. 5-10 things a day is a great place to start. Don't be upset if you can't get there one day. Spend the time reading some of the other days.
- You don't have to write long, detailed sentences. You can write words, draw pictures, or write more details.

Here are some suggestions of things that could be written in gratitude journals.

- The sunrise
- Being able to get out of bed
- Phone call from a friend
- A tasty meal
- Money to pay the bills
- A comfortable place to sit
- The sound of rain
- Clean sheets (and the person who washed them)

Your list will reflect you. Every list will be different. There is nothing right or wrong about what should be on your list. Just make a list and give thanks to God for the blessings in your life.

We have worked at developing our gratitude muscle in church as we have written what we are thankful for here at Upland Baptist Church. We know that God is working, that God is doing great things. We want to be a part of what God is doing. We want to be aware of his work. We want to be grateful.

Consider bringing your change to fill our gratitude jar in worship each Sunday. Also, consider using your Thanksgiving Offering envelop to be a gratitude offering.

Let's make November Gratitude Month! And give thanks for all that God gives to us.

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Pastor Brenda

CHAIRPERSON ~ Linda Cook



CHILDREN AND TEEN NEWS



- **Katie Boyer-Mason and Sara Mason** will be helping to serve at the Upland Seniors Dinner on November 4th.
- **Tom Geveke** medaled at the Six Flags Wild Safari Invitational cross country meet.
- **Matthew Shaw** is reading books to us on Raz Kids. He is enjoying attending VBS Night.
- **Stephen Shaw** has read over 1,000,000 words for the Million Word challenge at school. He is enjoying playing goalie in soccer.
- **Stephen and Matthew Shaw** are grateful for everyone who supported their Cub Scout Pack through donations and popcorn sales. They both made their goal and are looking forward to the Pack camping trip.
- **VBS Night on Mondays** has had some fluctuations in attendance this year, but, throughout the fall, we have had some children who have been our “core group” and have been very faithful attending either every week, or only missing one Monday night. We would like to recognize the following children for their faithful attendance.
 - **Jordan Mitchell**
 - **Darren Scott**
 - **Joyce Scott**
 - **Precious Scott**
 - **Matthew Shaw**

PASTOR APPRECIATION

Thank you to everyone who participated in the worship service on Sunday, October 15th for Pastor Appreciation – **Katie Boyer-Mason, Linda Cook, Joan Decker, Dave Geveke, Frank Kulp, Sue Kulp, Dawn Rafalski, and Pastor Brenda**, who we recognized and was part of the *Litany of Thanksgiving*, and who helped recognize our Regional Pastors.



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Budget Committee Meeting (October 11)

- Prepared the first draft of the 2018 Preliminary Budget.
- ### **Legal Corporation Highlights (October 24)**
- Reviewed and discussed the finances of the Church,
 - Approved the Stewardship Letter,
 - Discussed the repairs that have been completed and those that still need to be done,
 - Noted that our bushes and trees have been trimmed,
 - Noted that **Dan Miller** has patched the parking lot – THANKS!
 - Approved repairing headstones in the cemetery, and
 - Approved the distribution of moneys for the Advent Offering and Christmas Cards.
- ### **Ministry Council Highlights (October 24)**
- Reported that the Bake Sale for our Area Ministers raised over \$238.00. Thank you for your generosity!
 - Discussed appointing a nominating committee, and
 - Each Team Leader discussed upcoming events and activities.



CHRISTMAS CARD FUND



Are you sending Christmas cards this year? Be sure to include your friends at Upland Baptist Church by adding a card to the Church's Christmas tree. By giving one card, you can send Christmas wishes to the entire congregation and provide funds to one of our children's programs. You can bring in your cards starting **November 26th**.

Please put your card and donation in the boxes at the back and front of the Church by **December 17th** so your name appears in the Christmas Eve Day and Night Church Bulletins. Your name will also appear in the January *Spire*. All donations will go to our Summer VBS Activities and Lunch Program. Donations will be used to purchase more books for our lending library, craft supplies, and some additional board games. Your donations will be appreciated.

ADVENT ENVELOPES

This year, the congregation's Advent Offering will be split between two of our church's ministries- Sunday School and Main Street.

Half of the money from the Advent Offering will go to our children's programming which reaches children in the Church and the community. This includes Sunday School during worship service and our Monday Night VBS program. Materials are expensive. The other half of the offering will go to our work with Main Street Elementary School. This includes recognizing students with awards and treats, stocking the Friday Recognition Cart, providing refreshments for parent gatherings and student programs.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Plan Ahead . . .

- November 12 Pledge Sunday
- November 19 Bells Play during Worship
Giving Tree Begins
- November 26 Christmas Cards Begin
Fellowship Lunch and Craft
- December 2 Decorating the Church
- December 17 Last Day for Christmas Cards
- December 18 *Night of Music*
- December 24 Christmas Eve Service
- December 25 No VBS Night
- January 1 No VBS Night
- January 8 VBS Night
- January 15 No VBS Night
- January 22 VBS Night

WORSHIP – Sue Kulp

Please be sure to read Pastor Brenda's article as we make November Gratitude Month.

Looking ahead for the Night of Music on Monday, December 18 at 6:30 pm. Please be sure to invite friends, family and neighbors to this very special holiday event.

MINISTRY TO MEMBERS – Dawn Rafalski

There will be a Sunday Social on November 26th following worship. We will be having a Taco lunch and making a Christmas craft for the residents at Belvedere. Come join in a fun activity.

We are having a cakeless baby shower for our song leader, Brigid and her husband Jim, in November. Watch the church bulletin and look for the gift container in the back of the church. It's a boy!

MEN'S NEWS

The next Riverside Men's breakfast will be at 8:15 am on November 18th at Springfield Baptist.

DISCIPLESHIP – Jane Kofroth

Sunday School

Sunday School class for children meets on Sunday mornings during the worship service.

Our class is small in number, but full of enthusiasm for Jesus!

Please encourage the children in your life to join us. If you would like to volunteer teacher, please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the back of the sanctuary.

Bible Study meets on Thursdays, at 10:00 AM.

Join us as we continue to study the book of Romans and consider how God's Word can--- and does---guide and direct our lives. There's always good company and a lively exchange of ideas.

Small Groups

Small Groups started its' new season on Tuesday, October 3.

We are reading "Why Did This Happen? Learning to trust God when you don't have all the answers" by Bob Yandian.

The daytime group gets together from noon till 2PM. Bring your lunch.

The evening group meets from 7:00 until 8:30.

It is an inspiring read. Everyone enjoys an interesting exchange of ideas and good fellowship.

Here is the schedule:

November 7, 21; December 5.

Monday Night VBS

VBS is off to a good start! Many of our old friends and several new kids from the neighborhood have been joining us for dinner on Monday nights at 6:00. After dinner, the kids are getting to know King David through an engaging Bible lesson and some pretty rousing activities!

Dinner is at 6:00 PM. They have a Bible lesson and creative activity from 6:30-7:00.

Thanks to the volunteer cooks!

We are blessed to be able to offer hospitality and friendship to the kids in our community. Please continue to keep this program in your prayers.

OUTREACH – Joan Decker

Trunk-or-Treat

Thank you to everyone who participated in Trunk-or-Treat. It is a great way to share the love of God with our community.

Food Bank

Pray for the food bank and the workers who give their time in helping the community. The food bank continues to need can goods.

Everyone in church on November 5, 2017 will be given a plastic bag to fill for the Food Bank. We are grateful that we can continue to love our neighbors through the Food Bank each week.

Here are some suggestions to put in your bag:

1. Cereal
2. Chili – can
3. Sloppy Joe – can
4. Peanut Butter
5. Jelly
6. Baked Beans
7. Soup
8. Rice

Christmas Tree Giving Gifts

Our Christmas tree giving gifts once again will be with the residents of Belvedere. Tags will be available on Sunday, November 19th to be returned on Sunday, December 10th.

Thank You Luncheon

We are planning a Thank You Luncheon, which will be held on Thursday, November 9 at 12 pm. The luncheon is our way to say thank you to the Upland Public Works Department for they do. We appreciate their willingness to lend a hand around the church from time to time. Please RSVP to the Church Office if you are interested in joining us.

Worship

Please pray for our outreach programs and come join us on Sunday morning for church at 10:00 AM.

HOME AND INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES FOR NOVEMBER

Ms. Jennifer T. Pedzinski 11/2
PO Box 29
Chiang Mai 50000 Thailand

Email: jeni.pedzinski@internationalministries.org

Rev. Dr. Stanley Slade 11/16
2 Lenape Circle
Royersford, PA 19468

Email: stan.slade@internationalministries.org

Mrs. Ruth Fox 11/24
PO Box 64 – A Muang
Chiang Mai 5700 Thailand

Email: ruth.fos@internationalministries.org

November Birthdays

13 Dawn Rafalski
18 Patricia Irace
22 Brian Klimek
23 Sara Mason
27 Helen Rhoads

November Anniversaries

None



IT'S TIME TO ORDER YOUR CHRISTMAS POINTSETTIAS!

Please use the order form below. The order deadline is **Sunday, November 19, 2017**. Turn in your order by placing this form and payment in the offering plate, or by dropping your order off at the church office. Payment must be received at time of order. Please make all checks payable to Upland Baptist Church.

If you have any questions, call Lori in the church office 610-874-7474. (Note: Miller Greenhouse's prices have not changed in seven years.)

Name: _____

_____ Small Red (6" size, 4 to 6 blooms, \$7.30)

_____ Large Red (7" size, 10 to 14 blooms, \$13.25)

_____ Large White (7" size, 10 to 14 blooms, \$13.25)

In Memory of: _____

Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

Given by: _____