



THE WITNESS

St. Stephen's Church Newsletter

Volume 29, Issue 11
The Rev. Mark Bradford, Pastor

November 2018
Church Phone (405) 843-5333

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The importance of thanksgiving in the life of the Christian can hardly be overstated. Think about the things that are antithetical to thanksgiving: ingratitude, murmuring, complaining... All of which are sins that need to be confessed.

Scripture is filled with passages that call us to give thanks. When the apostle Paul tells the Philippians not to be anxious about anything but instead to take their concerns to God in prayer, he reminds them to remember to make their prayers and supplications *with thanksgiving*. (Philippians 4:6) In 1 Thessalonians 5:18 he tells the Thessalonians to "give thanks in all circumstances." He then adds that this is part of God's will for us in Christ Jesus.

Indeed, Christians are to be marked by thanksgiving. In many of Paul's letters he begins by giving thanks to God for the recipients of his letters. In Ephesians 5:4, Paul tells us that instead of foolish talk there should be thanksgiving. In Ephesians 5:20 we are told "giving thanks *always* and for *everything*." In writing to the Colossians Paul tells them no less than four times to be thankful. "Abounding in thanksgiving" (2:7), "And be thankful" (3:15), "giving thanks to God the Father" (3:17) and "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving" (4:2).

In the Book of Psalms there are many psalms of thanksgiving. One of my favorites is Psalm 107 which begins "O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever." This Psalm relates different bad situations people find

themselves in, some being a result of their own doing while others are not. In each case the people cry out to God in their distress, and God hears them and delivers them. (We really see God's grace in the examples of those who find themselves in difficult situations through their own rebellion and sin.) As a result of God's deliverance those delivered are called upon to give thanks. The common refrain in each case is "Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man!" (107:8, 15, 21, 31)

There are other great thanksgiving verses in the Psalms. "I give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness." (Psalm 7:17) "O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever". (Psalm 30:12) "It is good to give thanks to the LORD." (Psalm 92:1) "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!" (Psalm 100:4) "I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart." (Psalm 138:1)

The Old Testament, the Gospels, and the Epistles are full of examples of thanksgiving and calls to give thanks to God who is the Giver of every good gift. The fourth Thursday of November is a national day of thanksgiving for those of us who live in the United States. This is a great day if we can remember what the holiday was originally intended for. It was not a day set aside to watch football, go Christmas shopping, or eat pumpkin pie, but a day set aside to give thanks for God's blessings and gracious provision.



For us as Christians a day set aside for thanksgiving is a good thing; however, we need also to remember that we should give thanks

each and every day. Let us be a people who "give thanks in all circumstances."

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Mark*

NOVEMBER SERMON TOPICS

There are two special Sundays in November. November 4 is All Saints Sunday and November 25 is Christ the King Sunday. Hopefully we will finish the book of Philippians on November 4. Stanley Balch will be preaching on November 11. Psalm 16 and Revelation 1:4-8 are the lectionary passages for the Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost and Christ the King Sunday.

- November 4 Philippians 4:10-23
God's Provision
- November 11 Stanley Balch Preaching
- November 18 Psalm 16
The LORD...
- November 22 Thanksgiving Day Joel 2:21-27
Be Glad and Rejoice
- November 25 Revelation 1:4-8
The Ruler of Kings on Earth

SMALL GROUPS

- Bible Study & Prayer – Sunday evening at Pastor Mark & Anne Bradford's – November 4 at 5:30PM.
- Monday Prayer Group – November 5, 19 & 26 at 12:30PM, church library.
- Tuesday Bible Study – November 20 at 2:30PM.
- Men's Prayer Group – Saturday mornings at 7:30AM.



Prayer Requests

If you have missed prayers or would like to be added to the Women's Fellowship prayer chain please call Doris Cornell 605-6172 or Treva Gullett 735-9908.

"A single grateful thought toward heaven is the most complete prayer." *Gotthold Lessing*

October Session Report

FINANCIAL REPORT: The financial report for the new fiscal year was discussed.

FELLOWSHIP: Will begin planning for the Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner. Tentative date is 11/18/18.

NOMINATIONS: Session discussed nominees for deacons and elders. Suggestions were made for potential candidates for each position. The Nominating Committee will have recommendations for Session at the November meeting.

OUTREACH: Fall Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 20. These activities will involve games and trunk or treat.

STEWARDSHIP/MEMORIALS: Several gifts have been donated in Jean Mighton's name.

WORSHIP: Next Communion-November 4. Stanley Balch will be conducting services November 11. Ed Bedrosian will be conducting services December 2.

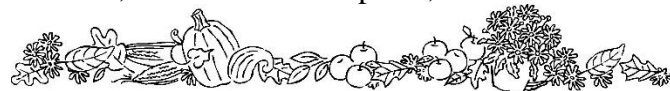
NEW BUSINESS: Kaleb Benda and Laurie Daub have been working on improvements to the church's website. Pastor Mark will be out of town November 8-12 and November 28-December 3.

Worship Schedule

- Every Sunday
- 9:30AM - Adult & Children's Sunday School
- 11:00AM – Worship
- 10:00AM – November 22 - Thanksgiving Worship

Way Day Dates 2018-2019

- November 7, 14 & 28 December 5 & 12
- January 9, 16 & 23 February 6, 13 & 20
- March 6, 13 & 27 April 3, 10 & 17



Ushers/Greeters

- November Greeters:** Jon & Dorothy Powell
- November Ushers:**
- November 4** – Christa & Sumish Charlie, Ashley McCormick, Nancy Spradling
- November 11** – Rebecca & Randy Stateler, Michael Bassett, Nancy Spradling
- November 18** – Sandy Gifford, Pat Robison, Wendy Smith, Nancy Spradling
- November 25** – Youth

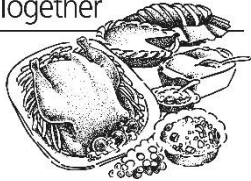
Fellowship Hour Treats

November 4 – Margo Whiting, Laurie Daub
November 11 – Lana Stephens, Lori Pickrell
November 18 – Potluck
November 25 – Doris Cornell, Miss Butch



November 4
*Turn those
clocks back
for an extra
hour of rest.*

We Gather
Together



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18
All are welcome to join us following the worship service at 12:00PM for our annual Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner.

Turkey and rolls will be provided by the Fellowship Committee. Please bring a dish to share. This could be side dishes, desserts, veggies or family favorites of any kind.

THANKSGIVING BAKE SALE

Women's Fellowship is sponsoring a Bake Sale in our church hallways on Sunday morning, November 18, before church and then again after our Thanksgiving Fellowship meal.

We can help each other get ready for the holidays, stock our freezers with delicious goodies, raise some project funds for refurbishing Fellowship Hall and ...**Have a great time enjoying each other's specialties!**

Participation by all is welcomed. We will be receiving and pricing on Saturday, November 17 from 9:00AM until noon.

Contact: Carla Pickrell (525-2901, carlasmithpickrell@gmail.com)



Hanging of the Greens

Please join us here at church for our annual *Hanging of the Greens* on Sunday, November 25 at 4:00PM.



Our special Thanksgiving Offering will be collected on Sundays November 18 and 25. This offering will be given to The *CARE Center* and Wings. The *CARE Center* is an advocacy agency for child abuse victims. Wings provides programs for adults with special needs.

SEQUENCE PLAYERS



Sequence will meet November 27. Any questions, please call Doris Cornell at 605-6172.



Rehearsals will be:

Saturdays: 10:00AM-12:00PM
November 3, 10, 17 & 24 & December 8 & 15

Children's Christmas Program

Saturday, December 15 6:00PM
Sunday, December 16 11:00AM



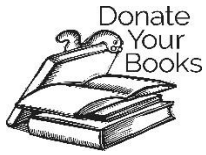
THANK YOU from TREVA & JIM: Pastor Mark and Friends at St. Stephen's:

At this THANKSGIVING SEASON, Jim and I want to express "OUR THANKS" to ALL of you for your PRAYERS, CARDS, PHONE CALLS and MOST of all YOUR LOVE you have shown US these past weeks. We have realized, during these weeks that we take so much for granted. THANKS TO GOD For His GOODNESS EACH DAY. We are SO BLESSED! *Thank you! Treva*

90th BIRTHDAY



Miss Marcia is celebrating the big 90!
All are welcome so mark your calendars for December 1 to help her celebrate.
Place: St. Stephen's
Time: To be announced



Hi everyone! My Girl Scout Gold literacy project is continuing at Oklahoma State with me! I am partnering with Our Daily Bread Food and Resource Center in Stillwater to provide children's books and materials to kids. If you or someone you know is looking to donate children's books, please send them my way! The books have already been a huge hit for the clients of Our Daily Bread. Thank you all so much for your help throughout my project!
Miranda Almen

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

class coming soon!

We have not offered this since 2006. Mark your calendar now to attend the Dave Ramsey class about Cash Flow Planning, Dumping Debt, Insurance, Retirement, College Planning and Real Estate. Dave encourages students to become debt-free and live like no one else so that in the future they can live and give like no one else. Kits can be purchased at www.daveramsey.com; click on Courses, Individual/Family, Financial Peace University. The cost is \$109 per family. Our St. Stephen's class will begin on Wednesday 1/9/19 from 5:30PM to 7:00PM. The link to enroll in this class is <https://www.financialpeace.com/classes/1075696>. For questions contact Susan Almen at susanalmen@gmail.com.

Salvation Army Request

Reminder that we are collecting small soaps like the ones you get at hotels or motels. Please bring them to the church office.

♪♪♪♪Music Notes♪♪♪♪

- Choir meets on Wednesdays at 7:00PM.
- Anyone is welcome to join the choir for the Advent season with no obligation to the rest of the year. Advent rehearsals begin on Wednesday, November 7 at 7:00PM.
- Hand bell choir meets on Thursdays at 7:00PM. Anyone who is interested is welcome to join.
- For more information or questions, contact at Kaleb.B.Benda@gmail.com or (405) 410-9331.



This month's Hymn of the Month is a church member request.

It is "In All Things Give Him Thanks," #789 in our hymnal.

I thought this hymn was a fitting Hymn of the Month for November due to its statement of thanksgiving. This hymn, composed by Andy Cloninger, his mother Claire Cloninger, and Ken Barker, speaks of expressing a heart of gratitude toward the Lord, who has "given all things unto you." There really is not a lot of available information about this hymn, but, luckily, I know Andy. I sent him a Facebook message, and about the hymn he said:

My mother was already an established songwriter when we wrote that song. I was 19 or 20 and a brand-new Christian. We were on our way from our hometown of Mobile, AL to Lafayette, LA where we were born and where our family still gathers for family get-togethers. It was Thanksgiving so we thought we'd write a Thanksgiving song in the car so we could sing it for the family when we got there. We wrote it and sung it and when we got back home Mom sent it to a friend of hers in Nashville (the third writer credited on the song) to arrange it for choir.

Andy Cloninger is a songwriter, author, performer and music producer. He travels the country performing his brand of original acoustic music with richly textured lyrics. He lives with his wife, Jenni and his children in Daphne, Alabama. He spends his summers on the road as a musician with Catholic Heart Work Camp missions. During the rest of the year he runs his record label, Dancing Dog Recording Studio, and performs.

For Hymn of the Month requests, contact Kaleb at Kaleb.B.Benda@gmail.com or (405)-410-9331.

Prescription Drugs Needed

If you have any prescription drugs to donate, please give them to Laurie.

CHURCH OFFICERS

Elders

Class of 2018

Robert Buswell	426-7429	Treasurer
Jon Powell	470-0230	Outreach
Dana Wilson	706-3191	Nurture

Class of 2019

Dwight Daub	618-7497	Clerk/Stewardship & Memorials
Kent Larason	808-3971	Fellowship

Class of 2020

John Hermes	202-9621	President of Corporation/ Nominating
Mark McBride	410-2003	Worship

Deacons

Class of 2018

Lori Pickrell	503-9585	Clerk
Pat Robison	879-2762	Missions

Class of 2019

Jaquelyn Kuhn	424-2123	Church Work Days
Kym Manning	426-7298	Van/Transportation

Class of 2020

Christa Charlie	834-7031	Flowers
Nancy Spradling	206-5828	Ushers/Greeters
Randy Stateler	620-253-6431	Maintenance

WITNESS DEADLINE

November 19 is the deadline to submit articles for the December *Witness*. You may bring items to the church office or e-mail them to: secretary@ststephensokc.org. Thanks! Laurie Daub, St. Stephen's Secretary

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secretary@ststephensokc.org

www.ststephensokc.org

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1	Ruby Ochoa
11	Pat Robison
11	Wanda Meeks
11	Mark McBride
18	Michael Bassett
18	Lana Stephens
23	Randy Stateler
26	David Dawson
27	Rio Ralls



13	Robin & James Page
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***If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office.*

Special Dates

All Saints' Day, November 1

Daylight Saving Time ends, November 4

Veterans Day, November 11

Thanksgiving Day, November 22

Christ the King Sunday, November 25

