



CURRENTS

**NOVEMBER 2020
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - OXNARD, CA**

And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD. Ezra 3:11a

HOW TO BE TRULY THANKFUL

Gary W. Henricksen, Parish Administrator



There is a tradition in the United States in which the President pardons a turkey each year at the time of Thanksgiving. Out of the 46+ million turkeys eaten each Thanksgiving, at least this one gets a new chance at life when it is sent to live at a zoo. It is true that President Lincoln spared a turkey who had become a pet at the White House. It is also true that since President Grant, turkeys were given to the President each Thanksgiving. However, the official tradition did not start until President George H. W. Bush in 1989.

The Bible says: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [1 John 1:9]. Also, Paul reminds us: There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus [Romans 8:1].

We who are in Christ, have been pardoned! We have been given the hope of freedom and a new life – eternal life. This is truly a cause to stop, remember what Christ has done for us, and truly give thanks.

Yes, it is important to remember all the blessings that Our Lord has poured into our lives this Thanksgiving. It is my hope, that at the top of your thanksgiving prayers will be gratefulness for Christ's free gift of salvation. Paul puts it this way: For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord [Romans 6:23]. Realization of this fact makes us truly thankful.

MARTIN LUTHER ON “THANKSGIVING”

Martin Luther [1483 – 1546] wrote bluntly about our need to thank the Lord. Below, in his explanation of “I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth”, we hear his resounding words that still touch our hearts, almost 500 years after they were written.

The Explanation of the First Article of the Apostles Creed By Rev. Dr. Martin Luther



animals, grain, and all sorts of produce.

I hold and believe that I am God's creature, that is, that He has given me and constantly sustains my body, soul, and life, my members great and small, all my senses, my reason and understanding, and the like; my food and drink, clothing, nourishment, spouse and children, servants, house and farm, etc. Besides, He makes all creation help provide the benefits and necessities of life—sun, moon, and stars in the heavens; day and night; air, fire, water, the earth and all that it yields and brings forth; birds, fish,

Moreover, He gives all physical and temporal blessings—good government, peace, security. Thus we learn from this article that none of us has life—or anything else that has been mentioned here or can be mentioned—from ourselves, nor can we by ourselves preserve any of them, however small and unimportant. All this is comprehended in the word —Creator.

Moreover, we also confess that God the Father has given us not only all that we have and what we see before our eyes, but also that He daily guards and defends us against every evil and misfortune, warding off all sorts of danger and disaster. All this He does out of pure love and goodness, without our merit, as a kind father who cares for us so that no evil may befall us.

Hence, because everything we possess, and everything in heaven and on earth besides, is daily given, sustained, and protected by God, it inevitably follows that we are duty bound to love, praise, and thank Him without ceasing, and, in short, to devote all these things to His service, as He has required and enjoined in the Ten Commandments.

Here much could be said if we were to describe how few people believe this article. We all pass over it; we hear it and recite it, but we neither see nor think about what the words command us to do. For if we believed it with our whole heart, we would also act accordingly, and not swagger about and boast and brag as if we had life, riches, power, honor, and such things of ourselves, as if we ourselves were to be feared and served.

This is the way the wretched, perverse world acts, drowned in its blindness, misusing all the blessings and gifts of God solely for its own pride, greed, pleasure, and enjoyment, and never once turning to God to thank Him or acknowledge Him as Lord or Creator. Therefore, if we believe it, this article should humble and terrify all of us. For we sin daily with eyes, ears, hands, body and soul, money and property, and with all that we have, especially those who even fight against the Word of God. Yet Christians have this advantage, that they acknowledge that they owe it to God to serve and obey Him for all these things.

For this reason we ought daily to practice this article, impress it upon our minds, and remember it in everything we see and in every blessing that comes our way. Whenever we escape distress or danger, we should recognize how God gives and does all of this so that we may sense and see in them His fatherly heart and His boundless love toward us. Thus our hearts will be warmed and kindled with gratitude to God and a desire to use all these blessings to His glory and praise.



**FROM THE CONGREGATION
PRESIDENT - David Chavez**

Anniversary Thanks



Sunday, October 25 was a beautiful day of celebration for 120 years of ministry. If you have not seen the 120 Years

“Grace for Tomorrow” video, please check it out on our website at: stjohnsoxnard.com

We give grateful thanks for these contributors:

- Rev. Mark E. Beyer
- Kirk Bolt
- Sara Gonzales
- Peter and Carol Halvorson
- Lorie and Robert Hochberg
- Heather Jensen
- Rev. Gary Krumdieck
- Cathy Perkins
- Kent Schlichtmeier

We also are thankful for reception organizers and presenters:

- Christie Allmen
- Rev. Mark Beyer
- Tara Bradshaw
- Rachel Beyer

- Board of Elders
- Rogina Clarke
- Sara Gonzales
- Joyce Gregory and RFKC friends
- Marilyn Gregory and the Monday Bible Study
- Gary and Barbara Henricksen
- Scott Meier
- Sierra Moore
- Marilyn Valenzuela
- Tobi Zook

Voters Meeting Coming Up



Also, there will be a zoom Voters' Meeting on Monday, November 23, 2020 at 7pm. Look for agenda and zoom info coming to you soon. If you're not a voter and want to be active in congregation governance, please contact the church office at 805.983.0330, and we'll make sure you get the zoom information for the

meeting! All members 18 years old and upward are welcome to join us.

**FROM THE BOARD
FOR MISSIONS
Cindy Terrell, Chair**



This month, we bring you three areas of mission service for your consideration. Please pray about your involvement in any or all of these mission efforts.

The Food Pantry

Each year, at this time, we celebrate the great bounty that the Lord has given us by contributing to a food pantry and a collection of Christmas gifts. Both of these efforts benefit our brothers and sisters at Centro Cristiano Redwoods (Oxnard), ministry to local Mixteco friends, and others in need in our community.

Will you help? We will continue this drive through Sunday, December 20 but we will need food items also for Thanksgiving. Drop off boxes will be placed **at the welcome table** on Sundays. Here is what we need:

FOOD (non-perishable):

- Bags of rice – any size
- Bags of pinto beans - any size

- Pasta
- Canned tomatoes
- Tomato sauce
- Bags of flour
- Maseca
- Cooking oil
- Sugar
- Salt.
- Knorr seasoning (chicken or beef)
- Fruit juices
- Cereal
- Oatmeal
- Canned or dried fruit
- Cans of tuna
- Peanut butter
- Coffee
- Gift cards to help purchase chicken, milk, eggs, tortillas.



**Operation
Christmas Child**

Please participate in this wonderful mission outreach.

Pick up information

and an empty box to fill from the welcome table. Each year our congregation participates in the Samaritan's Purse distribution of Christmas gift boxes and Gospel proclamation to children in Third World countries. Boxes due by Wednesday, November 18, 12pm.

Christmas Gifts

We would like to gather 10 gifts for each of these three age categories:

- Children: small stuffed animal, book, dried fruit treats, other treats
- Middle age kids: small balls or frisbees, warm beanies, stickers, dried fruit, other treats

- Teens/Twenties/Adults: warm scarf, gloves, socks, skin lotion, manly spray like axe, soap, dried fruit/nuts

Thanks to St. John's ahead of time! – for your awesome generosity.

**FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS –
Ernie Moore, Chair**

Fire Up at the Fire Pit – UPDATE!



Fire up at the Fire Pit for Scripture and prayer – **now EVERY TUESDAY** evening beginning at 7:30 pm and lasting until about

8:00 pm. Bring a Scripture verse, a psalm, or a prayer – or just come, sit, be silent, and soak in the Spirit of Christ during this evening devotional time. It's peaceful. It's powerful. It's for you.

Pie Social



Please join us after 9:30 a.m. worship on Sunday, November 22 for our Thanksgiving pie social! There is no contest entry this year

but you will still be able to choose from a variety of pies. Pie slices will be individually wrapped and COVID-safe. Enjoy this decade-old St. John's tradition with us!

Christmas Church Decorating



All are invited to a Christmas decorating party in the church on Saturday, November 28, 2020 at 9:00 am.

Please join us for setting up the Christmas trees, putting up lights and wreaths, and the list goes

on! We'll have Christmas music playing and some treats available. Please wear masks for this event.

COMMUNICATIONS – Sara Gonzales



Please help us bring our website to the top of a Google search. All you have to do is rate our website. Here's how:

1. Google search St. John's Lutheran Oxnard
2. On the far right sidebar, click on Google reviews (by the stars)
3. Write your own review - and make sure to give us 5 stars!

PUPPET THEATER MINISTRY

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, the Lord has done great things for them [Psalm 126:2].



In 1984, St. John's began a puppet ministry lead by a group of children and adult volunteers called His Hands. His Hands dedicated about 50

performances a year to preschools, street fairs, VBS, children's church, and private parties. His Hands puppet ministry ended in 1992 as people moved

on or launched out into other areas of service to the church.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, a few St. John's members felt lead to resurrect the puppet ministry to reach out to all ages of our church family and the community with hope and laughter. Being a part of His Hands in the past, we wanted to evolve with the times by not only live performances but also full theatrical, recorded and edited productions. We hope to not only expand with puppets but all areas of theater.

We invite you to join and enhance this growing ministry with:

- Puppeteering
- Acting
- Singing
- Dance
- Puppet making, costumes
- Set design
- Video and Audio tech
- Video editing
- Song writing
- Skit writing
- LAUGHTER!

If you feel called to participate and serve in this way, please contact Sara Gonzales for more details. Let us shine His light through laughter and joy.

Sarabpk20@gmail.com
805-479-2279

**FROM THE PACIFIC SOUTHWEST
DISTRICT – LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD**

Joining Jesus as a Family Webinar

With Greg and Susan Finke

Tuesday, November 10

11:00 am – Noon



Register now for a webinar that will unpack:

- What discipleship really is.
- What it is that is already happening in your family.
- How fun it can be to intentionally disciple your kids to be life-long followers of Jesus by joining Him on His mission every day.

The Webinar Cost of \$19.00 includes:

- Invaluable insights into how discipleship works
- A simple outline for how to disciple you family
- A recording of the webinar so you can review it on demand
- The first chapter of Greg and Susan's upcoming book: ***Joining Jesus as a Family.***

Can't make it on November 10? No worries! Register anyway and receive the webinar recording immediately after November 10. For more information and registration, go to:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2hRLxCKzQpSre4UgYf4sxx

THRIVENT MEMBERS CHOICE \$\$\$



If you are a Thrivent Member, and shopping between now and Christmas, you can direct choice dollars to help St. John's. Details are listed below.

Eligible clients with membership can recommend where Thrivent distributes some of its charitable grant funds. These recommendations are shared by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches.

To be eligible to direct Choice Dollars as part of Thrivent Choice®, you must be a client with benefit membership. Individual eligibility is also based on at least one of the following:

- Having \$750 or more in annual billed premiums of qualifying life and health insurance products.
- Having \$20,000 or more in contract value of qualifying life insurance and annuity products.

Eligibility is determined monthly and reevaluated on an annual basis. Minimum and maximum Choice Dollars designations: Eligible clients will be designated a minimum of 25 Choice Dollars and a maximum of 5,000 Choice Dollars per eligibility period (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31). Choice Dollars designated

during the calendar year can be directed until March 31 of the following year.

How do you direct Thrivent Choice Dollars?

Call 800-847-4836 and when prompted, say "**Thrivent Choice®.**" Press 5 to **direct Choice Dollars.** (If prompted, say or enter your phone number and date of birth.) A representative will work with you to **direct Choice Dollars.**



Nov. 7: Men's Breakfast 8:00 am
Nov. 10: Fire Pit Passages and Prayer 7:30 pm
Nov. 17: Fire Pit Passages and Prayer 7:30 pm
Nov. 18: Operation Christmas Child due 12 pm
Nov. 22: Pie Social – after Church
Nov. 23: Voters Assembly 7:00 pm Zoom
Nov. 24: Fire Pit Passages and Prayer 7:30 pm
Nov. 28: Church Christmas Decorating 9:00 am
Nov. 29: First Sunday in Advent

ON THE SIDELINES



A LITTLE LUTHERAN LAUGHTER

MOSES:

Moses was walking down the street when he bumped into George W. Bush. "Hello," Bush said. "Nice weather we're having, huh?" Moses took one look at the President, turned, and ran in the other direction.

The next day Moses was walking down the same street and there was Bush. Again he tried to initiate a conversation. Again Moses turned and ran away.

Bush was tired of this bizarre treatment, so the next time Moses ran away from him, Bush followed. When he caught up, he asked Moses what was wrong.

Moses said, "The last time I talked to a bush I spent 40 years in the desert."

RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

Deliciously Sweet Sour Cream Cake



- loaf pan – greased
- 2 eggs
- ½ pint sour cream
- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom
- Pinch of salt

1. Mix eggs and sour cream together.
2. In another bowl combine flour, sugar, baking soda, and cardamom.
3. Fold in first mixture with a pinch of salt.
4. Pour into loaf pan; bake for 1 hour at 325 degrees.
5. Serve warm, possibly with butter and fruit

HOW TO CONTACT US



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805.983.0330; stjohnsoxnard.com

Gary Henricksen, Parish Administrator: extension 15; ghenricksen@stjohnsoxnard.com
Vivian Moore, Office Manager: extension 10; vmoore@stjohnsoxnard.com

OFFICERS AND BOARD CHAIRS

David Chavez - President
William Speitel - Vice-President
Joyce Gregory - Treasurer
Marilyn Valenzuela - Secretary
Ernie Moore - Board of Elders
Art Terrell - Board of Trustees
Christie Allmen - Board for Parish Education
Cindy Terrell - Board for Missions

THE FINAL WORD



Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;
for His steadfast love endures forever! [Psalm 118:1]