

The COMMUNITY MESSENGER

A Message from Pastor Ed

In the rush of everyday life, it's easy to overlook the simple act of giving thanks. Yet, expressing gratitude is one of the most powerful ways to uplift both ourselves and those around us. It's a gesture that transcends cultures, religions, and backgrounds—uniting people across the globe in a common human experience. Whether it's Thanksgiving Day in North America or daily moments of quiet reflection, gratitude enriches our lives and builds stronger connections.

For Christians, the act of giving thanks is not merely a polite gesture but a fundamental part of faith and a reflection of our relationship with God. Gratitude is woven into the very fabric of Christianity, from the teachings of Jesus to the writings of the apostles. It is both an acknowledgment of God's providence and an expression of trust in His sovereignty. Through thanksgiving, we not only reflect on the blessings we receive but also deepen our walk with the Lord, acknowledging His goodness in all circumstances.

In conclusion, giving thanks is at the heart of our Christian faith and practice. It acknowledges God's goodness, deepens our trust in His plan, and strengthens our relationships with others. Whether in moments of joy or in times of trial, We are called to cultivate a heart of gratitude, knowing that God is always at work in our lives. Through thanksgiving, we align ourselves with God's will, celebrate His faithfulness, and share His love with the world around us. You might even say it is contagious! 😊

Love in Christ,
Pastor Ed



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Faith, Food, Fellowship



FELLOWSHIP
LUNCHEON
OCTOBER 6th



ODYSSEA: A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

A Season of Drought

By Art Schmidt

“If you’re walking through the valley and there are shadows all around you, do not fear, He will guide you; He will keep you safe and sound. He has promised to never leave of forsake you, and His Word is true.” - God Is Good All The Time

In a recent sermon, Pastor Allen told us, “God uses our circumstances of life to change our way of looking at Him. There is at least a partial answer to the question when we ask God, ‘Why do you let bad things happen?’ My guess is that almost everybody here has asked God that question—Why?”

I had been concerned with my mom’s condition so I convinced her to see a geriatric specialist. When the doctor asked her a few basic questions, I was astounded when she wasn’t able to answer. Mom held a tight-lipped smile as the doctor told her she had advanced dementia and that he would have to revoke her driver’s license and that it was no longer safe for her to live alone. At the age of 89, the independent lifestyle my mom had maintained for most of her life was over—*the time for difficult decisions had finally come.*

Two days later, I called Mom three times and she didn’t answer, so I rushed to her home and found her laying on the kitchen floor—she called out to me but couldn’t move her right side. Once hospitalized, the test results indicated she had a stroke the night before and was paralyzed as a result. I prayed and asked God, “**Why?**” After a week in the hospital and one month in rehab, she came to live with me. I promised Mom on her 80th birthday that she would never live in a nursing home—*I had to keep that promise.*

I started to empty Mom’s house and midway through the process I began to have back pain. The pain persisted and my doctor felt that my symptoms were consistent with a pinched sciatica. My condition quickly worsened and the pain became so great that I could no longer work or function normally. My doctor referred me to a neurologist who ordered a full MRI which showed a tumor in my right hip. I asked God, “**Why?**” I went to Johns Hopkins and they ran tests with a harsh result—*I had a rare lymphoma cancer.*

My oncologist ordered a 6-cycle chemo treatment plan and my prognosis was good, but I was scared. I was so angry with God for allowing me to be ill at a time when my mom needed me. I was confined to bed and not able to spend time with Mom during much of the time when she was still coherent. I could hear her downstairs asking the nurse, “Where’s my son?” After the 2nd treatment, I developed a neutropenic fever and spent a week at Johns Hopkins. I asked God in my prayers to change the situation and heal me so I could care for my mom. My fear was neutralized by the Grace of God—*God answered my prayers.*

After the 4th treatment, the pet scan showed I was cancer-free. I returned to work after a 6-month journey from being bed ridden, to wheelchair bound, to walking with a cane, and finally to being restored to good health. Mom lived for almost four years after the stroke to the age of 93 and I was able to maintain her homecare for the duration—*God made it possible for me to keep my promise.*

I’m sure many of you have experienced a season of drought at some point, but all our experiences are woven into our life’s tapestry with the common threads of God’s mercy, grace, and love that unifies us together in one fellowship—*one community of faith.*

✠ *Oh God, whether we face the gloom of a storm or the despair of a drought, your everlasting arms reach out to us bringing comfort, courage, and caring. Empower us Lord to share our witness with those around us in gratitude and faithfulness. Amen.*

Autumn—a Time of Harvest

By Sandie Wysocki

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself, it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.” John 15:4

As the leaves of green turn into the bright vibrant colors of red, orange, and gold, so shall we become a changing spirit in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the vine whose roots spread over the earth looking for places to spring up and become a strong tree that does not wither in the wind. As the tree’s branches reach out and grow, the tree’s life flourishes bringing forth lush leaves.

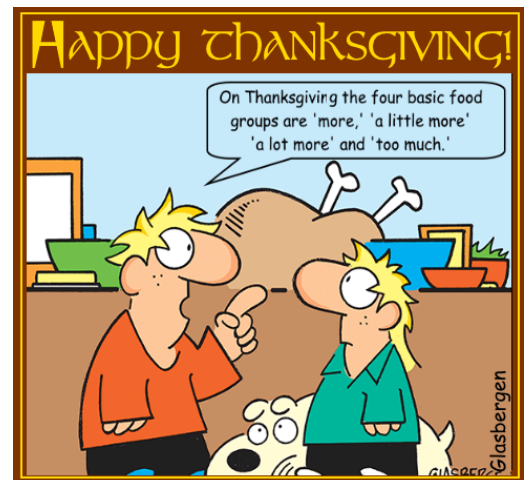
When Jesus is invited into your life, He places his Holy Spirit into your spirit so He can feed you with never-ending fertilizer. This fertilizer, called love, will make you flourish.

As you, the branch, strengthens in your faith, your love for Jesus will become stronger and you will be able to testify of him to all you come in contact with in your daily life. You will plant seeds of faith that will bring forth a never-ending harvest of believers who can spread the good news of the Gospel. As seeds blow in the wind, fall and flourish, so shall the word of God fall and be harvested.

Note from the writer:

I wrote this piece on September 23 while I was in the hospital emergency room waiting for test results. Lenny, my husband, fell that morning and bumped his head on the molding. Thank God there was no bleeding. He had been diagnosed with lung cancer and had pretty much stopped eating or drinking, so it’s no wonder he’s so weak.

◆ Later that week, Lenny was under hospice care. The family gathered at his bedside and God called him home on Thursday, September 26.



CONTAGIOUS FAITH

This month's Contagious Faith spotlight is on Ruth Norbeck. I asked her to give us a bit of history.

◆ I was brought up Presbyterian and as a child my parents sent us kids to Sunday School, even though they only attended occasionally. I had great Sunday school teachers and mentors, and pastors along the way, most have all graduated; I sang in the kid's choir and later in the adult choir, I loved to sing the hymns as far back as I can remember, especially when I could go up in the balcony of the church where the choir loft was before they remodeled the church. Most girl were Girl Scouts, but I became a Sunbeam which was with the Salvation Army church in Darby, PA. Let me tell you a little story about my camping trip with them: One of the girls got sick after we went to bed and our counselor had to take her to call home, so we were in our cabin alone, and some of the girls got very scared and started crying. I got up and told them not be afraid because I saw Jesus watching us from the window. I'm not sure if that scared them more but I felt safe, and I really saw His face. Looking back at that now I realize I was part of God's family back then.



I became a deacon and elder, as well as clerk of session at Tully Memorial Church. I taught Sunday school and helped with the VBS programs, and it was there that I found a passion to work more with kids. I wasn't one of the cool kids in school, I just didn't fit in, and in fact looking back I would have considered myself bullied. When things got me down or upset, I'd ask myself what would Jesus do? I even believed I had the power to help people in Jesus' name, with my touch because I had Jesus living inside me.

I feel I found my faith in God as a child going to Sunday School and being a Sunbeam. Did I struggle? Yes. Did I do things trying to fit in? Yes. Did I go against the Ten Commandments with mind or deeds? Yes. Does God still love me? Yes. I know that more than ever since I have been part of this church. We started coming to this church in 2002-2003. Now that is another story (a God Moment). My brother wanted us to look in Ocean Pines, but it was too expensive and it wasn't what Rob wanted. Rob didn't want to live his entire life where we were in Pa., so I took a map and pencil—if God wants us to move, we will move right here...I put the pencil down on the map and it landed on the Longneck area. I was looking to make him happy, and God showed me where he wanted us to be.

I was and still am a person that wants to help people and make them happy. God has used and blessed me more than I ever thought possible with a great church full of wonderful people who have become family— I love you all! I even went to Costa Rica on a mission trip. During the past 20 plus years, not only have I been a caregiver for a various number of people, but I have also been a Sunday School teacher, the director of AGAPE, and involved with the VBS program (directing and writing it). I never wrote a VBS program before, but God would wake me up from a sound sleep and told me what to type and I was able to put it together. At first, I felt very overwhelmed because of the voices in my head—Fruit of the Spirit, the 10 Commandments, Beatitudes, Armor of God, Parables, (Women of the Bible, Men of the Bible which I co-wrote with Shirley Stranz). I wasn't sure what I was supposed to do with all this, but the Holy Spirit led me and used me as his instrument. I also volunteer at the Boys and Girls club teaching the Growing Tree Pre-School bible stories and songs with the hope of Proverb 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go and even when he is old, he will not depart from it." The world is a scary place and hopefully these kids will carry these stories and songs with them. The seeds being planted now hopefully will grow and they will become followers of Jesus. ◆

—Ruth Norbeck

Thank you, Ruthie for sharing with us. And thank you for being CONTAGIOUS!



Church Night Out at Yellowfins



October 1



Pizza Party



A SLICE OF GRATITUDE



October 13



Thanks to all the
volunteers at VBS
& Community Day!

"And so, when the events were over, the disciples feasted on pizza for 40 days and 40 nights and then they raised a slice to heaven in gratitude."
Domino 10:13



Think healing thoughts everyday of your life...

When you feel anger or resentment, ask God to help you feel it, learn from it. And then release it. Ask Him to bless those who you feel anger toward. Ask Him to bless you too.

When you feel fear, ask God to take it from you.

When you feel misery, force gratitude.

When you feel deprived, know that there is enough.

When you feel ashamed, reassure yourself that who you are is okay. You are good enough.

When you doubt your timing or your present position in life, assure yourself that all is well; you are right where you're meant to be. Reassure yourself that others are too.

When you ponder the future, tell yourself that it will be good. When you look back at the past, relinquish regrets.

When you notice problems, affirm there will be a timely solution and a gift from the problem.

When you resist feelings or thoughts, practice acceptance. When you feel discomfort, know it will pass. When you identify a want or need, tell yourself it will be met.

When you worry about those you love, ask God to protect and care for them. When you worry about yourself, ask Him to do the same for you.

When you think about others, think about love. When you think about yourself, think about love.

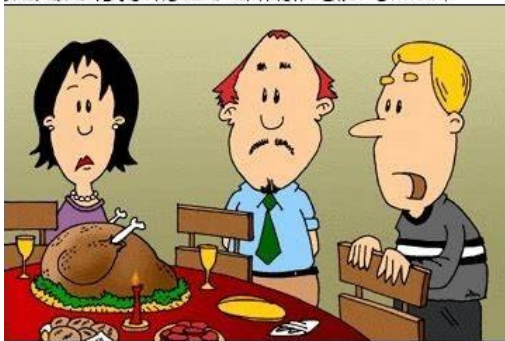
...then watch your thoughts transform reality.

The Language of Letting Go
Melody Beattie, page 233





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HAS IT ALREADY BEEN A YEAR SINCE WE WERE THANKFUL?



BEFORE THE FIRST THANKSGIVING

THAT'S ENOUGH

Mind if I tell you a secret
A few simple truths about me
Might be hard to believe
Guess I'm just trying to come clean
Sometimes I don't know where I'm going
It's hard to admit where I've been

When I come to the end of myself
This is where I begin, again

I am here; I am loved
God is good; And that's enough

I don't know your situation
What kind of story you're in
If you're high on that mountain
Or down in the valley again

You might be holding your baby
You might be holding a drink
You might be holding a secret
That's getting harder to keep

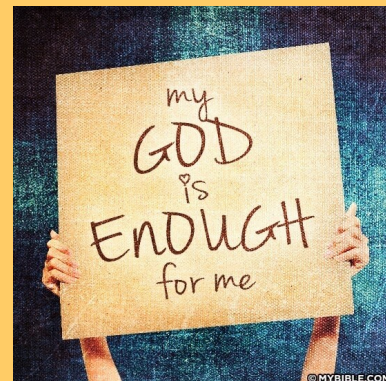
But you are here; You are loved
God is good; And that's enough

It's okay if I don't have the answers
It's okay to be right where you are
It was patience and kindness and love
That got us this far

You are here; And you are loved
God is good

And I am here; I am loved
God is good; And that's enough

He is here; He is love
God is good; And that's enough



Songwriters: Brandon Heath / Mallory Hope / Molly Reed Grayson

Ministry in Motion!

Ministry NECESSITIES & Updates

Our Church is growing. PRAISE THE LORD! As this is happening, we need help! I could sugarcoat this request, but I won't! The Lord says there is a COST of discipleship and ministry work, but the rewards are out of this world!!!

Maintenance- we need volunteers to help with church building and grounds maintenance. No experience necessary. Contact Elder Kurt Hepler. kurthepler@yahoo.com 484-857-7130

Home Care Ministry- We need more volunteers who are willing to bring a little cheer to those who are temporarily or permanently homebound. We love each other too much to let anyone be lonely!
Contact Linda Mansker for details lpmansker1120@gmail.com 302-448-1004

Teaching a Bible Study or Sunday Elective Class
Contact Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

Women's Ministry- those interested in participating as well as leading the ministry at church.
Contact Kayla McDonald kayla@oakorchardchurch.com 302-945-0633

Men's Ministry- those interested in participating as well as leading the ministry at church.
Contact Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

Community Evangelism- We need ideas that will draw our community to church .
Contact Elder Steve Miller are_all_the_good_ids_taken@yahoo.com 302-258-7499

Kids Sunday Ministry- We are in desperate need of class teachers and helpers for different age groups from infants- 14 yrs old on Sundays from 11am-12:15pm
Contact Mike Koly dmkoly@verizon.net 610-350-8025
Or contact Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

Youth Group Ministry- we are looking to create a team who is willing to participate in youth activities on a regular basis. The first activity we are planning will be held on is Dec. 30th and we will need many helpers.
Contact Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

Parking Attendant- we need help to assist with parking at the 11am service on Sundays.
Contact Elder Kurt Hepler kurthepler@yahoo.com 484-857-7130

Thank you in advance, because I have FAITH that you are more than a pew sitter! If you are not physically able to volunteer then it is your duty to now assume the higher calling of prayer warrior.

Love in Christ, Pastor Ed

November 3





PUMPKIN PAINTING



October 16



Participants~

Pastor Ed Vidzicki, Kayla McDonald, Tommy McDonald, Debbie Hammond, Tara Somers, Mabel Vansant, Barbara Sapp, Kristin Hoelzle, Joyce Peteah, Sue Flaherty, Amelia Conley, Pat Conley and Kaitlyn Conley.

DID YOU KNOW



- No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver, or purple.
- Clans of long ago that wanted to get rid of their unwanted people without killing them would burn their houses down—hence the expression “to get fired”.
- “I am” is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.
- The word “Samba” means “to rub navels together.”
- The glue on Israeli postage stamps is certified Kosher.
- Mel Blanc, the voice of the cartoon character Bugs Bunny, was allergic to carrots.
- Sherlock Holmes never said, “Elementary, my dear Watson.”
- The expression, “In a jiffy” is an actual time measurement—1/100 of a second.
- Hershey’s Kisses are called that because the machine that makes them looks like it’s kissing the conveyor belt.
- Nothing ever becomes real until it is experienced. Even a proverb is not a proverb to you until your life has illustrated it. (John Keats)
- Money isn’t made out of paper, it’s made out of a cotton blend.
- Every time you lick a stamp, you’re consuming 1/10 of a calorie.
- The phrase, “rule of thumb”, is derived from an old English law which stated that you couldn’t beat your wife with anything wider than your thumb.
- Miserliness in all forms—monetary and emotional—diminishes us. The more we keep the less we have and the less we are.
- It’s not about what you want—it’s about being happy and grateful for what you have.
- One of the most difficult things in life is to know which bridge to cross and which bridge to burn.
- If you always do what you’ve always done then you’ll always get what you’ve always gotten.
- Doubts don’t separate doubters from God’s love.



Kids Korner



Leisurely walking around Nana and Papa's front yard on a Sunday afternoon, Joshua spotted a small red leaf on the ground. He excitedly picked it up and said, "Look, a red leaf! I'm going to make a book with this!" Walking a few more steps, he spotted more red leaves. He dropped the first leaf and said, "I don't need this." Realizing he has more to pick from. After a while, he proceeded to gather handfuls of pine straws to make his own "hay bale" for his small scarecrow.

Fall is Joshua's favorite season. The excitement of Halloween, the changing color of trees, and the cooling temperature that he calls "fresh air" (regardless of the actual air quality). There is nothing he doesn't love about the Fall. He has accumulated a number of Fall themed decorations and wants more every time he walks into a Dollar Tree. In celebration of the Fall, he visited a pumpkin patch, an apple orchard, and a local farm. But there is still so much more to look forward to!

At home, we pray every night before he goes to sleep. "What should we pray for?" he asked. Pausing for a second, he said, "I know, my playdate! Dear God, thank you for my playdate at Cherry Crest Farms." He held out his fingers and started counting down the number of days until the next farm visit with his friends. "*Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.*" Psalm 96:12 – Connie Miller

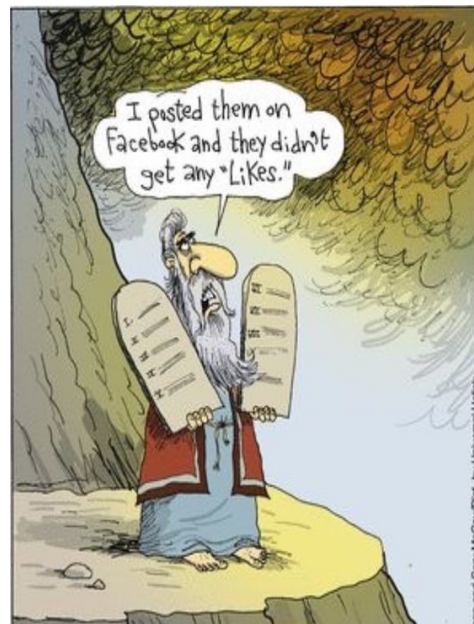


Joshua Miller



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Kathy Moore
- 5 Pastor Allen Miller
- 17 Brian Hubbs
- 17 Rob Norbeck
- 20 Linda Piercy-Mansker
- 24 Joanne Hammond





Community Church of Oak Orchard

Where Friends Become Family!

32615 Oak Orchard Road, Millsboro, DE 19966



NEWSLETTER STAFF

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Scroll down to the
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mission and for your
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to visit our website.



UPCOMING EVENTS

11/3 *Fellowship Luncheon*
Following the 11am Service

11/3 *Sunday Elective Class 3 —*
Discipleship 9:30-10:30am
with Pastor Ed.

11/5 *Church Friends Night Out*
at the Outback in Rehoboth,
RSVP to Kayla.

11/14 *Praise & Worship Night*
6-8pm with snacks & Ice cream

11/15 *Board Meeting* 5pm

11/17 *Sunday Elective Class 4*
—Discipleship 9:30-10:30am
with Pastor Ed.

11/18 *Dinner & Discussion:*
Countering The Culture 5:45-
8pm; Session 4 "now we live"

11/23 *Free Movie Matinee*
2pm at church; pizza & popcorn
provided.

11/24 *Sunday Elective Class 5*
—Discipleship 9:30-10:30am
with Pastor Ed.

11/28 *Free Community*
Thanksgiving Dinner 1-4pm



CHURCH BOARD of ELDERS

Pastor Allen Miller
Chair: Ted Brown
V/Chair: Steve Miller
Assoc. Pastor: Ed Vidzicki
Dave Hammer
Kurt Hepler
Mike Koly



SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:00 or 11:00 AM
in person or online.

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Prayer 6:00 PM

Watch our services on:
Facebook—
[@oakorhardchurch](https://www.facebook.com/oakorhardchurch)

YouTube—
[@CCOakOrchard/streams](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOOakOrchard/streams)

BIBLE STUDY
Tuesdays 6:30 PM
Zoom Bible Study

Wednesdays 9:30-11 AM
AGAPE Bible Study

ACTIVITIES

Tuesdays @ 10:00 AM
T.O.P.S. Meeting
(Take off Pounds Sensibly)

Wednesdays 8 PM C.D.A.

Fellowship Luncheon
1st Sunday of the Month
at 12:30