NOVEMBER 2026 PEW ECHO

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God's Way to Not Worry

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

~1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Do you remember the song from several years ago, "Don't Worry, Be Happy"? Well, now you might be thinking, "Great, thanks, now I'm going to have that song in my head the rest of the day." You're welcome. What I'd like to do is put a bit of a spin on that song title as we head into the month of November: don't worry, be joyful.



Now this might sound great, and be what we want when we're worried, but it's not just what we want—it's what God wants for us. When it comes to discovering God's will, there are certain things that He prepares for each of us, and then there is the guidance that He provides for all of us: be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thess. 5:16-18). There is a similar passage in Philippians 4:4-7 which also contains each of these three elements: joy/rejoice, prayer, and thanksgiving. And in Philippians 4, there is the added connection of the result—peace in anxiety. This is God's will for worry; this is God's way to not worry.

It is by God's design that joy and gratitude are intertwined, and are meant to be the two bookends of prayer. When rejoicing and remembering to be thankful are where we start and end when we pray, we will learn to worry less and trust more. A pastor friend of mine recently shared about a sign he has in his office, which says, "Pray about it as much as you think about it." It's amazing how much time we can spend thinking about something, worrying about it, imagining worst-case scenarios, or trying to figure out how everything is going to work out. And yet, how much of that time do we actually spend praying about it? Whatever the "it" is, it's not as though Paul is telling us to pretend that it doesn't exist. Instead, as the old hymn reminds us, we are to take "it" to the Lord in prayer. And when we do, the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.

Joy and gratitude. What a great focus for prayer, and to help us get our focus off of other things. And, what a great time of the year to focus on joy and gratitude, as we draw near to Thanksgiving and the start of the upcoming holiday season. Yes, it can be a hectic and stressful time, and a time that might cause us to worry about all sorts of things. That's why we can rejoice and give thanks for what God wants for us: don't worry, be joyful.

Grace and Peace in Christ,
Pastor Brad



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Rachel Houwers
4 Quinn Gumm
Nolan Gulig
7 Anna Cleveland
9 Joy Cleveland
Ashley Huibregtse
11 Jim Kuplic
16 Pat Boge
19 Ning Zhang
20 Gail Huibregtse
22 Joseph Fabian
27 Kristine Fritsch
29 Arlene Maxey



NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

1	Jesse & Evie Frausto	(57)
2	Ken & Amy Van Wyk	(41)
4	Dale & Joan Hoffmann	(38)
9	James & Betty Ten Pas	(8)

A Reason to Give Thanks

After Eddie Rickenbacker and his companions were rescued after more than three weeks adrift in life rafts in the Pacific, he was asked what lesson he had learned from the ordeal.

He answered that anyone with plenty of fresh water to drink and enough food to eat should never complain.

His words still speak clearly today. Many blessings can become so familiar that we barely notice them. This Thanksgiving, pause to give thanks for clean water, nourishing food, a safe place to rest and the people God has placed in your life. Let gratitude continue long after the holiday table is cleared.





A Mission Field of Prayer

Missionary Cynthia Sundman shares the story of a woman in her 80s who is battling cancer and confined to bed. Though she can no longer leave home, she keeps a list of missionaries around the world and prays for them each day.

Cynthia says, “This woman travels the globe every day serving the Lord. Her mission is to pray for all the missionaries on her list.”

Her story reminds us that faithful service does not always require travel or public recognition. Sometimes ministry happens quietly, from a bedside, through prayers lifted to God.Missionary Cynthia Sundman shares the story of a woman in her 80s who is battling cancer and confined to bed. Though she can no longer leave home, she keeps a list of missionaries around the world and prays for them each day.

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“I have never understood why anyone would roast the turkey and shuck the clams and crisp the croutons and shell the peas and candy the sweet potatoes and compote the cranberries and bake the pies and clear the table and wash the dishes and fall into bed exhausted when they could just as easily sit back and enjoy a hamburger or a pork sandwich.”



—The Turkey

HOW'S YOUR INVENTORY?

In Daniel Defoe's classic Robinson Crusoe, the shipwrecked protagonist begins keeping a tally of his life. He lists his problems as well as a corresponding inventory of things for which to give thanks.

Crusoe's pros and cons surprise him. For every evil, a good is present to even it out. For example, the castaway doesn't have any clothes — but the weather's so warm he doesn't need any. He lost all his provisions at sea — but has access to water and fresh fruit.

Under the "evil" category, Crusoe writes: "I am singled out and separated, as it were, from all the world to be miserable." Yet the corresponding "good" puts things into perspective: "But I am singled out too from all the ship's crew to be spared from death; and he that miraculously saved me from death can deliver me from this condition."

When you're tempted to hold a pity party, step back and thank God, your Rescuer, for all the blessings he provides.



As I approached a brightly lit, vertical floor plan at a mall, I noticed a woman standing in front of it for quite a while. "Can I help you find something?" I offered. As people scurried around us, she replied, "No, thanks. I'm just pausing for a moment." Then, pointing to the arrow that announced, "You are here," she said, "I need to be reminded sometimes."

Don't we all! When life gets crazy, perhaps we need to stop, like the wise woman at the mall, and remind ourselves that we don't have to try to be everywhere at once. We're "here," and that's the only place we can be.

Better still, we can imagine a bright arrow pointing to where we are in life, proclaiming, "God is here!"

FORGIVE AND LET GO



Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, was said to never hold grudges. One day someone reminded her of an offense that another person had committed against her. "Don't you remember?" the friend pressed. "No," Barton replied. "I distinctly remember forgetting that."

Forgiving and forgetting are not precisely the same. While God declares that he'll "remember [our] sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:34), it's tough for humans to completely forget harm done to us, even when we want to forgive.

On the other hand, like Barton, we can consciously choose not to ruminate on an offense, as a cow does its cud. We can opt not to bring up past hurts during present disagreements, and we can intentionally not recount someone's sin to a third party, hoping they'll take our side. In the process of "choosing to forget" the wrong done to us, surely we'll also find it easier to forgive.

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS — HARP



This multi-stringed musical instrument is associated with David, who played to soothe King Saul and later wrote many Psalms. The harp also represents praise music in general, as well as all the instruments people use to glorify God (see Psalm 71:22). The idea that angels play harps comes from Revelation 14:2 ("And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of … harpists playing on their harps").

USHERS FOR NOVEMBER

Dennis Beach
Curt Teunissen



GREETERS FOR NOVEMBER





Nov. 1
Steve & Sharon Crivello

Nov. 8
Jim & Betty TenPas

Nov. 15
Marty & Sherri Halverson

Nov. 22
Ning Zhang & Tong Wang

Nov. 29
Marion Herman, Sue Wisse





Dear Friends,



Şilan got baptized today! We are so proud of our single nurse friend. Şilan has a strong walk with Christ.

A few weeks ago, **Zehra** (pictured below, right) came to faith in the Savior! Jesus' peace is quickly transforming Zehra's once troubled heart. Praise God.

Dana will be in America for the next three weeks (during October) visiting our two boys and her aging parents.

Please continue to pray for us. Thank you.



Love,

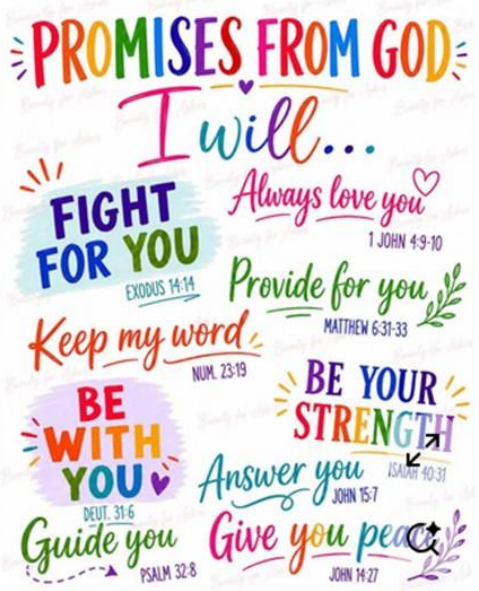
Brian and Dana

Avant

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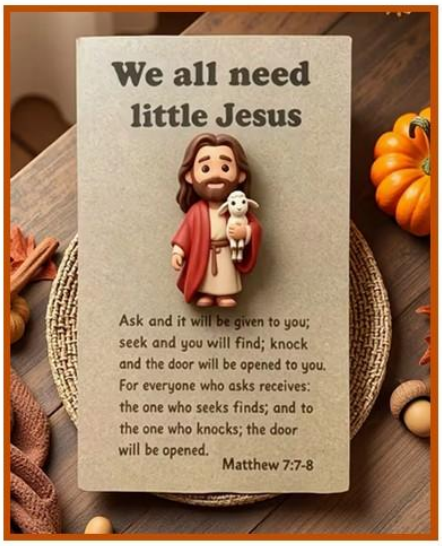
KID'S PAGE





What kind of music did Pilgrims listen to?
Plymouth Rock

What smells the best at a Thanksgiving dinner?
Your nose



WOULD YOU RATHER?
THANKSGIVING EDITION

Eat only turkey	Eat only mashed potatoes
Have pumpkin pie every day	Have apple pie every day
Eat Thanksgiving Dinner with your hands	Eat Thanksgiving Dinner with chopsticks
Eat burnt pie	Eat undercooked stuffing
Have Thanksgiving lunch	Have Thanksgiving dinner
No dessert	No side dishes
Cranberry sauce on everything	Gravy on everything
Cook the whole meal	Do all of the dishes
Eat at the kids' table	Eat at the grown-ups' table
Eat a giant turkey leg	Eat a mountain of mashed potatoes





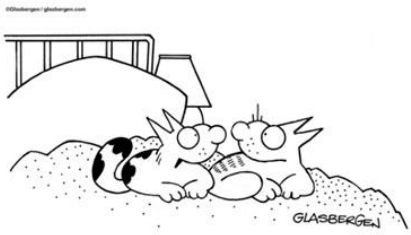


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 *9:30am Worship* *10:45am SS*	*2* 6:30pm Men's Bible Study	3 1pm Dorcas Society 7pm Elders	4 1:30pm Living Bible Study 6:30pm Youth Night	*5*	*6*	7 6pm Harvest Supper
8 *9:30am Worship* *10:45am SS / POW45*	*9*	10 7pm Consistory	11 6:30pm CrossCenter	*12* 2:30pm Women's Bible Study 6:15pm Women's Bible Study	*13*	*14*
15 *9:30am Worship* *10:45am SS*	16 6:30pm Men's Bible Study	17	18 6:30pm CrossCenter	*19*	*20*	*21*
22 *9:30am Worship* *10:45am SS / POW45* _____ *29* *9:30am Worship*	*23*	24	25 6:30pm Thanksgiving Worship No CrossCenter	*26*  	*27*	*28* 

A father was reading Bible stories to his young son. He read, "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned to salt."

His son asked, "What happened to the flea?"





"Personally, I wouldn't mind at all if God sent a plague of mice to rain down upon the sinners of the modern world."



And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. – Ephesians 6:18 NIV



(See Genesis 2:18-25) 12-10-2002

WHO YOU CALLIN' CHICKEN?



Thanks to Greg Ballos 12-06-2006

HEY LOOK, THE GRASS REALLY IS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE!