

Another Word November 16, 2023

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

Well, we are back from Alabama (without a banjo by the way), but now have a handsome new grandson, Samuel born on Tuesday Nov. 7th. Betsy, André, and Sammy are doing great! We thank you all for your prayers.

Did you know that also last Tuesday, Mitch and Jenny Hastings became grandparents, and Linda and Bill Gardner became great grandparents when Ryann and Trent had a beautiful baby girl, Berkely.

Our congregational meeting to approve the slate of officers and budget for 2024 will be held this Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup>, immediately after our service. We hope you all can be there.

After our service on November 26<sup>th</sup>, we will begin decorating the building for Advent and Christmas. We hope you can be here for this fun event. And if you have a tree that you no longer are using, let us know. We can always add a tree to our forest.

Our next Jazz concert series will be December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, spotlighting Kelly Knowlton and the "Jazz All Stars."

We again will be participating with Fostering Families, adopting a child and providing a needed and a fun gift for Christmas. We should be receiving our list of kiddos in the next few days.

Our scriptures for the next few weeks are as follows:

Nov. 19: Psalm 100 and 1Thessalonians 5:14- 18. Linda Gardner is our serving Elder. "Be thankful always?! Seriously?!"

Nov. 26: Psalm 95: 1-7a. Matthew 25: 31- 46. Lana Bell is our serving Elder. "When did we do all that?"

Advent starts December 3<sup>rd</sup>, and our scriptures for all four weeks will be from the book of Luke. We will take an in depth look at Luke 1: 1-80 and selected verses from Mark 13 and Matthew 1. I am also looking for scripture readers and Advent candle lighters for all four weeks. See me if you would like to help during this season of anticipation and hope.

As we go to prayer, please continue to pray for Ralph Wertz who is now home and has started rehab, for Jan Robinson as she travels to New Jersey, for Samuel, and for Berkely, and their first time parents.

Eternal God, we come to you with love in our hearts, and a song of Thanksgiving on our lips. At times, life tumbles in on us, overwhelming us with burdens that distract us and weigh us down. But then we realize, that these are the times when we look to You for strength and courage. What a wonderful feeling to know that You are always there to guide and support us with Your word, and to comfort us with Your love. As we enter this season of hope, may we reach out to a neighbor and pass on Your compassion, grace, and love that You have blessed us with. In Jesus' Holy name we offer this prayer, Amen.

Ah, Thanksgiving! The time to remember people in funny hats and funny buckled shoes. It's also time to try and stuff ourselves more than the turkey, and watch copious amounts of football. I'll try to bring us back to a simpler time this Sunday. But in the meantime, I read a devotion this morning by Pastor Chuck Swindoll, that was based on President Lincoln's proclamation calling for the entire country to pause, in the midst of war, and thank God for the bounty He has provided.

Up to that point, the nation celebrated a thanksgiving holiday at different times and at different places throughout the year. But Sarah Hale wrote to Lincoln many times expressing the need for a National day of Thanksgiving. As the Civil War raged across the land, he saw a way to possibly begin to bring the nation back to God, and back

together. I highly recommend you look up these proclamations and discover the heart and brilliance of Lincoln, a true man of God.

Pastor Chuck summarized Lincoln's words in such a wonderful way that I thought they would give us all comfort, hope, and strength. Especially since conflict and war again rages in our nation and around the world.

Chuck begins by saying, "Look up. We thank You, our Father, for Your controls over our lives...for Your Son who saved us...for Your Word that lights our paths... for Your love that holds us close."

He continues, "Look around. We thank You, our Father, for our nation that is so blessed, beautiful, and bountiful...for family that is so valuable...for responsibilities that are so meaningful...for the comforts of home...for the encouragement of friends...for the enrichment of worship."

And he ends by saying, "Look within. We thank You our Farther, for the gift of life...for hands to work and play with...for legs to walk and run with...for a sense of humor, a tender spirit, and a positive attitude... for victories that uplift us, and heartaches that humble us... and for the warmth from those who help us, should our faculties fail us."

I hope you can take these words to heart. Maybe use them before you begin your bountiful feast this Thursday. But whatever you do, don't forget the one who gives life, in abundance! Have a wonderful and heartfelt Thanksgiving! In His Peace,

*Rich*