



Dear Harvesters-

November is a month of many things: football, time changes, Christmas sales, falling leaves, cooler temperatures, gathering with family, eating turkey and pumpkin pie, the World Series. But mostly it is a month of giving thanks.

In 1621, the Plymouth colonists and Wampanoag Indians shared an autumn harvest feast that is acknowledged today as one of the first Thanksgiving celebrations in the colonies. For more than two centuries, days of thanksgiving were celebrated by individual colonies and states. It wasn't until 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, that President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day to be held each November.

The Bible has much to say about giving thanks. "Thanks" or "thanksgiving" appear 110 times in the Bible. Of those, 42 are the command to "give thanks to the Lord."

In Philippians 4, the Apostle Paul has much to say about gratitude. Arrested for preaching Christ, he found himself in a Roman prison cell, that he had to pay for! He had to pay for his own meals, his own clothes, his own heat. The churches he had planted were in need of help and encouragement, and he was in prison. He has little to be thankful for, it seems, and yet he wrote these words:



4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Isn't that wonderful? Worry about nothing. Pray about everything. With thanksgiving. Ah, a grateful heart is a blessing to others. Even modern psychology is discovering the benefits of gratitude.

Consider some of these points from last year's article in Forbes magazine. (11/23/14)

1. Gratitude opens the door to more relationships. Not only does saying "thank you" constitute good manners, but showing appreciation can help you win new friends, according to a 2104 study published in Emotion. The study found that thanking a new acquaintance makes them more likely to seek an ongoing relationship. So whether you thank a stranger for holding the door or you send a quick thank-you note to that co-worker who helped you with a project, acknowledging other people's contributions can lead to new opportunities.
2. Gratitude improves physical health. Grateful people experience fewer aches and pains and they report feeling healthier than other people, according to a 2012 study published in Personality and Individual Differences. Not surprisingly, grateful people are also more likely to take care

of their health. They exercise more often and are more likely to attend regular check-ups with their doctors, which is likely to contribute to further longevity.

3. Gratitude improves psychological health. Gratitude reduces a multitude of toxic emotions, ranging from envy and resentment to frustration and regret. Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D., a leading gratitude researcher, has conducted multiple studies on the link between gratitude and well-being. His research confirms that gratitude effectively increases happiness and reduces depression.
4. Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression. Grateful people are more likely to behave in a prosocial manner, even when others behave less kind, according to a 2012 study by the University of Kentucky. Study participants who ranked higher on gratitude scales were less likely to retaliate against others, even when given negative feedback. They experienced more sensitivity and empathy toward other people and a decreased desire to seek revenge.
5. Grateful people sleep better. Writing in a gratitude journal improves sleep, according to a 2011 study published in *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*. Spend just 15 minutes jotting down a few grateful sentiments before bed, and you may sleep better and longer.
6. Gratitude improves self-esteem. A 2014 study published in the *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* found that gratitude increased athlete's self-esteem, which is an essential component to optimal performance. Other studies have shown that gratitude reduces social comparisons. Rather than becoming resentful toward people who have more money or better jobs – which is a major factor in reduced self-esteem- grateful people are able to appreciate other people's accomplishments.
7. Gratitude increases mental strength. For years, research has shown gratitude not only reduces stress, but it may also play a major role in overcoming trauma. A 2006 study published in *Behavior Research and Therapy* found that Vietnam War Veterans with higher levels of gratitude experienced lower rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. A 2003 study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that gratitude was a major contributor to resilience following the terrorist attacks on September 11. Recognizing all you have to be thankful for – even during the worst times of your life – fosters resilience.

Let's really practice giving thanks to God this month, even in the midst of trials, and see what a difference it makes in our own lives. I am grateful for you. Thanks for allowing me to serve you here at Harvest.

SDG

Pastor Jim



# NOVEMBER 2015



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>1 10:30 a.m.— Communion</p> 	<p>2  6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>3  </p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 9:30 a.m.— Alpha Circle  5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice  6:30 p.m.— Choir</p>	<p>6 10:00 a.m.— Bible Study at Kuglin's</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 10:30 a.m.— Worship</p>	<p>9  6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11   VETERANS DAY</p>	<p>12  5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice  6:30 p.m.— Choir</p>	<p>13 10:00 a.m.— Bible Study at Kuglin's  12:00 p.m.— Deacon's Meeting</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15 10:30 a.m.— Worship (SHOEBOX Collection)</p> 	<p>16   National Button Day <small>Daily Holiday Blog</small> 6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 1:30 p.m.— Session, Youth Room</p>	<p>19 5:30 p.m.— Praise Practice  6:00 p.m.— Parks HOA Board Meeting  6:30 p.m.— Choir</p>	<p>20 10:00 a.m.— Bible Study at Kuglin's  6:00 p.m.— Mariners Thanksgiving Dinner</p>	<p>21   NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY <small>Celebrating a Family for Every Child</small></p>
<p>22 10:30 a.m.— Worship</p>	<p>23  6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 <b>Happy Thanksgiving</b> </p>	<p>27 10:00 a.m.— Bible Study at Kuglin's   NATIONAL DAY OF LISTENING</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 10:30 a.m.— Worship</p>  <p>First Sunday of Advent</p>	<p>30  6:00 p.m.— Church Prayer Meeting</p>					

## Mariners' Thanksgiving Dinner, November 20th

Harvest Mariners will be hosting their annual traditional Thanksgiving Dinner on Friday, November 20th at 6:00pm. We will be serving Turkey & Dressing, Ham, Mashed Potatoes & gravy, Vegetables, Sweet Potatoes, Jell-O Salad, Pie, Rolls and Cranberry Sauce. The cost of this delicious meal is only \$5.00. We would love to have you and your family/friends join us for good food and great company. So we can get an approximate count, there will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex on November 1st, 8th and 15th. This is our annual fundraiser so please come out and help us to support our Mission projects.



## Attention Harvest Mariners!



Our year is coming to an end and it is time to think about officers for 2016. If you are interested in holding an office or you know of someone that is interested, please let one of our officers know. We are looking for officers that want to help our group grow and continue to support our endeavors to help our missions to reach out to the needy in our community. Please consider being an officer and pray that we can have a full slate of officers for the coming year. In order for any group to continue to grow and thrive, we need to have all members give a helping hand when needed. Thank you for stepping in when needed and helping to make 2015 a successful year! (Nawatha Reed)

## Congregational Meeting is November 15th

The Session has set our Annual Congregational Meeting for November 15th for the purpose of electing new church officers (elders and deacons). This meeting is traditionally quite short, so please stay for it. And please pray for the Nominating Committee and those who they have been led to ask to serve.

## What's Happening Around Harvest?

1. A few weeks ago, we had a Work Day to trim the mistletoe out of the trees, clean out the gutters, and do general cleaning of the church grounds. Thanks to all who helped!
2. The Plexiglas on the church sign (the north side) has been replaced. The sign company wanted about \$1,700 for the repairs. Tom and Susan Bennett found a local guy who charged us \$250!
3. Pastor Jim has been meeting with Pastor Aurelio from the Emmanuel congregation. They are a church plant from the Christian Reformed denomination. They have reached the point where they can become a full-fledged congregation. Sometime in February, they will invite representatives of all the churches in their Classis to celebration and commissioning!
4. Brandy Meyer and Rachel Stochl are working to start a Youth Group, but the startup has been slow going. Please pray!

# How to Pack a Shoebox

## Find a Shoebox

Start with an average-size cardboard or plastic shoebox. If you want to wrap it, cover the box and lid separately.



## Girl or Boy?

Decide whether you will pack a box for a girl or a boy, and the age category: 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14.

## Fill with Gifts

Select a quality “wow” toy such as a doll, soccer ball with pump, or stuffed animal. Then add other fun toys, hygiene items, and school supplies.

## Pray

Most importantly, pray for the child who will receive your gift. You can also include a personal note and photo.

## \$7 Tracking Labels

Donate \$7 online and receive a tracking label to Follow Your Box and discover the destination of your shoebox gift.

## Drop-Off

Take your shoebox gift to a local drop-off location during National Collection Week, November 16-23. Harvest’s collection will be November 15th.

# What Goes in My Shoebox?

## “Wow” Item

Delight a kid! Start with a medium to large item that will capture the child’s attention the instant he or she opens the box.

Ideas include: Soccer ball with pump, Stuffed animal, Toys (puppets, trucks, etc.), Doll (baby, Barbie, etc.), Musical instrument, Outfit, Shoes



## Other Suggestions

Toys: Include items that children will immediately embrace such as toy cars, yo-yos, jump ropes, balls, toys that light up and make noise (with extra batteries), etc.

School Supplies: pens, pencils and sharpeners, crayons, markers, notebooks, paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books, etc.

Non-liquid Hygiene Items: toothbrushes, bar soap, combs, washcloths, etc.

Accessories: T-shirts, socks, hats, sunglasses, hair clips, jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries), etc.

Crafts: Make your own items such as hair bows, finger puppets, and friendship bracelets.

A Personal Note: You may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family. If you include your name and address, the child may be able to write back.

### **Do Not Include**

Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives, or military figures; chocolate or food; out-of-date candy; liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans.

## **Hymn History: We Gather Together**

The hymn, “We Gather Together,” is actually of Dutch origin and speaks of religious persecution that predates the first Thanksgiving. The melody can be traced back to 1597. It began as a folk song but was transformed into a hymn dealing with overcoming religious persecution on 24 January 1597. That was the date of the Battle of Turnhout, in which Prince Maurice of Orange defeated the Spanish occupiers of a town in what is now the Netherlands. At this point, the Dutch Protestants, who were prohibited from worshipping under the Spanish king, Phillip II, celebrated the victory by borrowing the familiar folk melody and giving it new words. “We Gather Together” connoted a heretofore forbidden act—Dutch Protestants gathering together for worship. It first appeared in print in a 1626 collection of Dutch patriotic songs.



How did this Dutch patriotic song get from a Dutch songbook to the American hymnbook? Dutch settlers brought the hymn with them to the New World, as early as the 1620s. Dutch Calvinists, like most Calvinists, rarely sang anything in their church services that was not directly from the Bible. Indeed, they normally put the Psalms to music. But in 1937, the Christian Reformed Church made the controversial decision to permit hymns to be sung at church and “We Gather Together” was chosen as the opening hymn of the hymnal. Furthermore, Theodore Baker, an American scholar studying in Leipzig, where the choirmaster had published an arrangement of the hymn, translated it into English in 1894 as a thanksgiving “prayer” to be sung by a choir. According to the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, which maintains a database of popular hymns, “We Gather Together” first appeared in an American hymnal in 1903. Over the next three decades it appeared in an assortment of hymnals in the Northeast and the Midwest and in school songbooks. In 1935 it was added to the national hymnal of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, then the largest denomination in the US.

It is one of the most memorable of Thanksgiving hymns and fits with the American religious culture, for it ends with the fitting and uplifting conclusion, “O, Lord, make us free!”

By Dr. Jim Eckman, Nov 26th, 2011, <https://graceuniversity.edu/iip/2011/11/11-11-26-1/>



3—Larry Lew  
 4—Gregg Edwards  
 10—Isabel McKay  
 15—Terry Arias  
 25—Tom Bennett



07—Warren &  
 Cyndy Cawley  
 14—Kenneth &  
 Martha McNamara

*If your birthday or anniversary has not been listed, please call the office and let us know.*

## Regular Prayer List

### *Assisted Living:*

Mildred Vine— *Paramount Court*  
 Donna McRae— *Golden Age Home Care, (memory care)*  
 Mabel Cronan— *The Stratford Place*

### *Health Issues:*

Virginia Irons  
 Roger Morrow  
 Dorothy Nelson  
 Bill Sperry  
 Margaret Kuglin (eye)  
 Patti Arbizu (knee)  
 Cyndy Cawley (ankle)  
 Alice Visser (English Oaks)



## **Stockton Presbytery Prayer List for November 2015**

November 1—First Presbyterian Church  
 Turlock, CA  
 Pastor: Craig Wright  
 Wendy Warner, HR

November 8—Committee on Ministry  
 Stockton Presbytery  
 George Shahbaz, HR

November 15—Vietnamese Evangelistic  
 Outreach  
 Stockton, CA  
 CRE: Tim Nguyen  
 Russell Chandler, HR

November 22—Stockton Presbytery

November 29—The Mission and Ministries of  
 the PC(USA)



## **Ceres School's Prayer List for November 2015**

November 1—Mae Hensley Jr. High  
 Principal: Carol Lubinsky

November 8—Mae Hensley Jr. High  
 Assistant Principal: Jesse Campbell

November 15—Sam Vaughn Elementary  
 Principal: Dallas Plaa

November 22—Sinclear Elementary  
 Principal: Connie Stark

November 29—Virginia Parks Elementary  
 Principal: Jennifer Backman



Mission Statement ~ With God in control, the mission of the Harvest Presbyterian Church is to proclaim and bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and nurture the faith of our church family.

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**POSTAGE**