

Yucca Breeze

November 2020

THE UNITED CHURCHES OF HOT SPRINGS

PASTOR'S PULPIT:

During these struggling times, it is just good to take to heart and to keep in mind what we really can be thankful for. The following are the 12 “Praises” of Thanksgiving! They are kind of like the 12 Days of Christmas — just a little different take on it!

12 Praises of Thanksgiving

T. Truth. The very first thing that we all can be thankful for and praise God for is “truth”. The truth of who we are—God’s chosen and cherished. The truth of who Jesus is—our beloved Savior, blessed Lord and ever faithful and trusted Friend. The truth that Jesus is the very hope of the world—after all He did say, “I am the Way, the TRUTH, and the Life, no one comes to the Father but through Me.” (John 14:6)

H. Heaven. The second thing we can truly be thankful and praise-filled for is the assurance that someday, when our time here on earth is at its end, we will be welcomed into heaven; the place where family and saved friends and loved ones already are. The place where Jesus said he was going to prepare a place for us. A place where the writer of the Revelation promised, “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Rev. 21:4)

A. Adoption. I never cease to wonder at the awesomeness of the God and Father who has laid claim on those of us who hear and believe, trust and receive His Son as our Savior and Friend. At that moment, adoption papers are drawn up as stated in Ephesians 1:5: “In love He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will . . .”

N. New Birth. When Jesus was talking to Nicodemus and stated that one had to be born again, or born from above, He was not only stating a fact concerning the need to be saved, but also revealing the proof that we have of actually being saved. Think about the wondrous third person of the Holy Trinity who is: the indwelling life-giver; the agent of conversion; the God-sent converter of God-saved souls; the Holiest of Ghosts. He is indeed the very Person of God come to abide in the abode of you and me. I love the way Paul describes Him: “Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

K. Kin. We sing a lot about being in the family of God. And the truth is, we are! God sets us both in our time ordained biological families as well as our timeless and eternal spiritual families. Every time we come to church it’s a family gathering. Every man or boy who comes to know Jesus is our true brother. Every woman or girl becomes our dear sister. Lots of people say we are all children of God. But that simply isn’t true: we all are God’s image bearers, we all are God’s beloved creatures. But becoming a child in God’s family involves a second act, a second birth, a second family to be a part of and with.

(Continued on Next Page)

S. Sight and sound. Have you thanked God lately for the new life He has given you with the new eyes that allow you to see the world through God's eyes, and the new ears that allow you to hear the very voice of God speaking to you through the avenues of others, His Word, and circumstances? Christians not only walk to the beat of a different drummer, but they view life on a different level.

The last six letters actually spell out what we should be the most thankful and praiseful to God for ... our lives. We are the recipients of His giving us not only His Son to be our Savior, not only His Spirit to be our Comforter, but He has allowed *us* to be His givers — as those who have the privilege of sharing with others what God has shared with us. Think about it, He says: share the joy of **G.I.V.I.N.G.** Share with others what I want them to have, to hold, to find, and discover. And, of course, that is the gift of salvation. What does the gift of salvation include? Truth, Heaven, Adoption, Kin . . . you get the idea. All the things that we're thankful for. God is in the never-ending story business. As He gives to us, we give to others, who in turn give of themselves to God and God gives of Himself to them. The quality of Giving may indeed be one of the most holy of all qualities, and God invites us to share in His giving.

**G.
I.
V.
I.
N.
G.**

Still trying to find something to be thankful for in these struggling times? You might begin with the realization that you still are able to actually read this newsletter . . . and read it knowing that the person who wrote it is thankful and thank-filled and praiseful and praise-filled for *you*.

Blessings,

Pastor David

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

We still have Shoe Boxes available that need to be filled! These are located in the Bethany Room and in the Fellowship Hall for you to pick up on a Sunday, or any weekday during office hours, 8:30 am-12:30 pm. Each colorful box contains information and boy/girl labels to help you pack yours with suggested items (list enclosed in box). To help you ... a "starter kit" has been placed in each box. ***November 15th is our deadline, and our goal this year is to fill 100 shoe boxes!*** *If you are staying home these days, and still wish to participate in this good missions project, The United Churches will offer delivery and pick-up service so you can join in this fun activity. Just call the church office to make arrangements.*

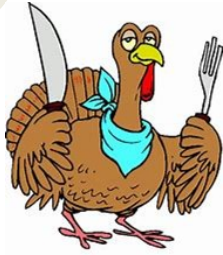
There are two ways to have someone else pack your box!!

- **Build Your Shoebox Online! - Operation Christmas Child**
Bless Children Around the World Without Leaving Home. Now more than ever, children need great joy! You can give boys and girls in need a tangible expression of God's love through a gift-filled shoebox packed from your computer or handheld device.

<https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/www.samaritanspurse.org>

- You can donate \$25.00 and Cora will fill it.





Everything but the Bird
Help the Hot Springs Food Pantry
prepare for Thanksgiving.

This year, we're asking you to contribute food items that help make a holiday dinner complete.

Below is a list of items currently
 needed to prepare Thanksgiving bags.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| ✓ Stuffing Mix | ✓ Turkey Gravy |
| ✓ Instant Mashed Potatoes | ✓ Cranberry Sauce |
| ✓ French Fried Onions | ✓ Canned Pumpkin |

You may drop items off at the church during office hours (8:30 am—12:30 pm)
 Or bring them on Sunday — there is a collection bin outside the Fellowship Hall.
 Or drop off at the Food Pantry
 (107 N. Chicago)
 during regular business hours.

BY: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Church Finances at a Glance: 2020 YTD – 3rd Quarter

The Stewardship/Budget Team, in partnership with the Board of Trustees, has made a commitment of reporting our financial standing to the congregation on a quarterly basis. The statistics below are reflective of January-September 2020 (YTD) accounting of the general fund.

YTD Income	\$119,740
<u>YTD Expense*</u>	<u>\$131,339</u>
Net (Loss) Year to Date	(\$11,599)
YTD Projected Income	\$116,250
<u>YTD Projected Expense</u>	<u>\$128,575</u>

Our reserve and Capital funds total \$93,756 at the end of September 2020.

*Our YTD Expense includes several Covid-related expenses that were obviously not budgeted for: office expense for required communications during pandemic shut-down, extra sanitizing supplies, face masks, signage, etc.

We as a church continue to both give faithfully and live within our means. Thank you to our committees! If you have any questions about this information, please contact one of the BOT.

Thanks!

Board of Trustees Members:

Jerry Wyatt, Don De Vries, Gerald Collogan, Dean Cape, Larry Bourne, Carla Richmond

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

NOVEMBER 17 — 6:30-8:00 PM

BGEA (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association)

Will Graham's "Black Hills Celebration"

Organizational Meeting — In the Fellowship Hall

More details coming soon!

NOVEMBER Birthdays:

- 2 Cathy Olstad
- 2 Todd Wynia
- 10 Owen Meadows
- 11 Florence Jost
- 12 Bob Puffer
- 13 Mystic Dorian (b 2006)
- 14 Barb Beery
- 16 Jennifer Campbell
- 16 Jayden White Face (b 2007)



NOVEMBER Anniversaries:

- 25 Adam/Anna Swift
- 25 Bob/Mary Puffer



If your name is not included on the Birthdays and Anniversaries list and you would like it to be added, please contact the church office by email: uc@gwtc.net or call 745-5640.

THIS AND THAT:

DECEMBER YUCCA BREEZE DEADLINE:

Because of the Thanksgiving Holiday, the **FINAL DEADLINE** for December Yucca Breeze articles is **Wednesday, November 18. THANK YOU!!**

USHERS NEEDED:

Ushers are still needed for Sunday worship services. If you can help, contact Jerry directly. His cell phone number is: (605) 440-2738.

ONLINE GIVING:

Just a reminder: For your convenience, “e-giving” is always available through the link on the church’s website, www.theunitedchurcheshotsprings.org Just look near the bottom on the Home page. It is a pretty user-friendly system, but do let us know if you have any questions.

NOVEMBER MISSION EMPHASIS:

Our Mission emphasis for the Month of November will be the Black Hills Bridges by Abbott House. Our November loose change offering will be donated to this mission. Funds will be used to help construct two new therapeutic foster homes (for children ages 10-17) and four independent living apartments (18-23 year-olds). Please see Adair Speer if you have any questions.

BARELY USED AND BASID NEEDS BOUTIQUES:

The Barely Used Boutique and the Basic Needs Boutique will be discontinued to walk-ins until further notice. For emergency needs, please call the church office.

EMERGENCY TEXT NOTIFICATION SERVICE



The United Churches is in the process of setting up an emergency text notification system. This system would be used to notify people in the event of an emergency, cancelling church due to inclement weather, and such. ***You have to opt in to be a part of this system of notifications.*** If you wish to receive these texts, please provide with your name and cell phone number by calling the church office, or by sending an email to ucassist@gwtc.net. *You may also write your information on a piece of paper and leave in the offering plate on Sundays.* More details will be provided once the system is fully operational.

The Board of Trustees has approved continuing our Sunday Worship Services to the Fellowship Hall for the time being – with **MASKS REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES IN THE BUILDING. The chairs have been set up for Social Distancing as before.**

Note: provisions are being made to limit other activities in the Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary and provide extra sanitizing when needed.

Pastor and the BOT will be monitoring Covid activity in the community regarding resuming worshipping in the Sanctuary.

HYMN HISTORY DOXOLOGY

Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify Your name forever. (Psalm 86:12)

The lines of the “Doxology” have been the most frequently sung words of any known song for more than 300 years. Even today nearly every English-speaking Protestant congregation unites at least once each Sunday in this noble overture of praise. It has been said that the “Doxology” has done more to teach the doctrine of the Trinity than all the theology books ever written.

Instead of being merely a perfunctory hymn that is sung each week, the “Doxology” should be regarded by Christians as an offering or sacrifice of praise to God for all of His blessings in the past week (Hebrews 13:15). True worship always involves an offering. In the Old Testament period, Levitical priests offered blood sacrifices to God on behalf of their people. In this New Testament era God wants our sacrifice of praise. Other sacrifices desired by God of New Testament believer-priests included: Our bodies (Roman 12:1); the service of our faith (Philippians 2:17); our material gifts (Philippians 4:18); our good works and communication (Hebrews 13:16).

The author of this text was a bold, outspoken 17th century Anglican bishop named Thomas Ken. Ken’s illustrious career in the ministry was stormy and colorful. He served for a time as the English chaplain at the Royal court in the Hague, Holland. He was so outspoken, however; in denouncing the corrupt lives of those in authority at the Dutch capital that he was compelled to leave after a short stay.

Upon his return to England, he was appointed by King Charles II to be one of his chaplains. Ken continued to reveal the same spirit of boldness in rebuking the moral sins of his dissolute English monarch. Despite this, Charles always admired his courageous chaplain, calling him “the good little man.” The king rewarded Thomas Ken by appointing him to the bishopric of the Bath and Wales area. This historian Macaulay gave this tribute to Bishop Ken: “He came as near to the ideal of Christian perfection as human weakness permits.”

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
praise Him, all creatures here below:
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen***

Bible References: Psalm 97:1; 100; 150-6

It has been said that a Christian’s theology must become his doxology. As a believer-priest, are you offering to God the sacrifices that He desires? Give Him your praise even how as you sing the “Doxology.”

A Thanksgiving Prayer

Father, We Thank Thee

For flowers that bloom about our feet, Father, we thank Thee. For tender grass so fresh, so sweet, Father, we thank Thee. For the song of bird and hum of bee, for all things fair we hear or see, Father in heaven, we thank Thee. For blue of stream and blue of sky, Father, we thank Thee. For pleasant shade of branches high, Father, we thank Thee. For fragrant air and cooling breeze, for beauty of the blooming trees, Father in heaven, we thank Thee. For this new morning with its light, Father, we thank Thee. For rest and shelter of the night, Father, we thank Thee. For health and food, for love and friends, for everything Thy goodness sends, Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Creeds and Confession Corner Our Song of Hope (Reformed Churches in America)

The Reformed Church in America is a confessional church.

This means that, as a denomination, we affirm specific statements of belief called creeds and confessions. (Read more about the significance of confessions here.)



Along with most Christian churches, the Reformed Church accepts three creeds that were written in the first few centuries after Jesus' death: The Apostles' Creed; The Nicene Creed; The Athanasian Creed.

In addition, four "standards of unity" tell what the Reformed Church believes: The Heidelberg Catechism; The Belgic Confession; The Canons of Dort; The Confession of Belhar.

In 1978 the Reformed Church approved Our Song of Hope as a contemporary statement of faith.

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