

Give Thanks To The Lord

by *Pastor Doug*

November is the month that sometimes gets shortchanged. We finish the rush of all the fall activities with Halloween at the end of October. Then before you blink, Christmas decorations and sales are front and center in most stores we shop. November feels like the preseason month for Christmas. As a result, Thanksgiving seems to get squeezed out of the secular rhythm of life. How sad! As followers of Jesus, may I encourage you to make THANKSGIVING a huge priority. Look over the following passages to help you look up towards the heavens and remember God's faithfulness.

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, *"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."* Did you catch that? Give thanks in **all** circumstances. Thankfulness should be a way of life for us, naturally flowing from our hearts and mouths.

Digging into the Scriptures a little more deeply, we understand why we should be thankful and how to have gratitude in different circumstances. Psalm 136:1 says, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever." Here we have two reasons to be thankful: God's constant goodness and His steadfast love.

We have life in Jesus and that is something to be thankful for as well. "The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus came to give us life – life that is full and meaningful (John 10:10). May we always remember the difference when it comes to the life Jesus invites. May we be grateful for the life change that occurred because of faith.

Psalm 30 gives praise to God for His deliverance. David writes, "I will exalt you, O Lord, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me. O Lord my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me. O Lord, you brought me up from the grave; you spared me from going down into the pit . . . You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever" Psalm 30:1-2. David gives thanks to God following an obviously difficult circumstance. This psalm of thanksgiving not only praises God in the moment but remembers God's past faithfulness. It is a statement of God's character, which is so wonderful that praise is the only appropriate response.

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Worship Schedule

Sundays • 9:30 & 11:00 am

Medina Community Church exists to help people begin and grow in their relationship with God. Our relaxed, contemporary style provides an enjoyable atmosphere where you can investigate the claims of Christ, deepen your faith and meet some great friends along the way.

SERIES: A Better Way

- November 6 —
Your Best Days Are Now
(Communion)
- November 13 —
When You've Given Up On Prayer
- November 20 —
Radical Gratitude

ADVENT SERIES: Waiting In Hope

- November 27 —
The Promise



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The people of God are thankful people, for followers of Jesus realize how much God has blessed them. One of the characteristics of the last days is a lack of thanksgiving, according to II Timothy 3:2. We often experience an attitude of entitlement or ungratefulness with those we rub shoulders with daily. We should be thankful because God is worthy of our thanksgiving. It is only right to credit Him for “every good and perfect gift” He gives (James 1:17) When we are thankful, our focus moves off selfish desires and off the pain of current circumstances. Expressing thankfulness helps us remember that God is in control. Thankfulness, then, is not only appropriate; it is healthy and beneficial to us. It reminds us of the bigger picture, that we belong to God, and that we are blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3). May we make thankfulness to God and an attitude of gratitude a top priority as we transition into the Christmas season.



We are pleased to announce that MCC will be hosting another drive-thru Community meal on **Saturday, November 12h** from 6-7 pm for those in need. Meals will be handed out in a drive thru lane. Volunteers will help guide guests to the meal pickup area. (All guests will be asked to remain in their vehicles.) We can always use drivers for meal deliveries at 5:00 pm and others to help with the drive through ministry. Please consider how you could serve in this ministry.

For more information or to sign up please call or text Emily Winans at (240) 405-4003.

Men and Women's Bible Studies (Thursdays)

The men's Bible study meets on Thursdays at 7:00 pm. Dave Arron leads this study and they are currently studying the book of 1 Peter.

Ladies Bible study meets on Thursday evenings at MCC (6:30 pm). The ladies will regroup and start up again after the first of the year. If you have any thoughts or ideas on a particular study please let Kathy know. Contact Kathy Summers [kathyksummers@gmail.com or (330)461-1081 with any questions].

Operation Homes

Operation Homes is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the homeless of Medina County. By rotational partnering with local churches for shelter, food, and the administration of life skill programs, Operation Homes provides the opportunity for individuals to be independent, both personally and financially.

MCC's next Operation Homes rotation is October 31-November 7. Look for sign up sheets at the information table at church for opportunities where you can serve.



Women's Ministry

November 5 - MCC'S FIRST ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR

Even if you're not a vendor please stop by and also let all of your friends know. We have a big variety of holiday things available (food and crafts). A good time to start your holiday shopping. There should be flyers at the information table to hand out.

November 11 - LADIES ANNUAL HOLIDAY CRAFT NIGHT

This is a great time just to relax and get acquainted and take home a simple holiday craft. Bring a snack to share. It's a Friday night and we start at 7. Sign up at the information table.

December 4 - ANNUAL LADIES CHRISTMAS LUNCH AND GIFT EXCHANGE

This will be at 12:30 pm following second service. The gift this year is a Christmas ornament. Bring one gift wrapped for the exchange. Bring a dessert to share. Lunch will be provided. Watch for the sign up sheet soon.

December 17 - JAIL MINISTRY PARTY

For several years we've purchased Christmas gifts for the children of Medina County Jail inmates. We get forms from the inmates with names, ages, and addresses of where the children live and who their caretakers are. If you want to help there are several ways. You can purchase inexpensive gifts for boys and girls and we will have a day of sorting and wrapping once we get the forms with their information. We'll send out invitations to a party held December 17 at noon at the church. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there to hand out the gifts to those that attend. We'll have pizza and activities for the children. So you can help by purchasing gifts, donating money to the effort, help with the sorting and wrapping (usually on a Saturday), help with the party, or delivering to some families that can't make it on that day. If you would like to find out more about this please contact Kathy Summers, (330) 461-1081 or email kathyksummers@gmail.com.

Looking ahead we'd like to have an all day retreat at the church sometime in the spring. I'm thinking Saturday, **March 18**. If you have any ideas on a theme please let me know.

***For more information on our Ladies Ministry contact Kathy Summers at
(330) 461-1081 or email kathyksummers@gmail.com***



Advent 2022

We would like to encourage you to participate in the advent practice this year in your home and at church. We will have wreaths available as well as an advent devotional. Below is some information on what Advent is all about and why we encourage the tradition.

Advent is the season in most Christian churches of preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming. *"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."* **Isaiah 7:14**

Advent 2022 - Dates for This Year

The season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. **Advent 2022 will begin on Sunday, November 27th, and end on Saturday, December 24th.**

Advent Liturgy and Practice

To balance the two elements of remembrance and anticipation, the first two Sundays in Advent (through December 16) look forward to Christ's second coming, and the last two Sundays (December 17–24) look backward to remember Christ's first coming. Over the course of the four weeks, Scripture readings move from passages about Christ's return in judgment to Old Testament passages about the expectation of the coming Messiah to New Testament passages about the announcements of Christ's arrival by John the Baptist and the Angels.

Advent Wreaths and Candles

The Advent wreath first appeared in Germany in 1839. A **Lutheran** minister working at a mission for children created a wreath out of the wheel of a cart. He placed twenty small red candles and four large white candles inside the ring. The red candles were lit on weekdays, and the four white candles were lit on Sundays.

Eventually, the Advent wreath was created out of evergreens, symbolizing everlasting life in the midst of winter and death. The circle reminds us of God's unending love and the eternal life He makes possible. Advent candles are often nestled in the evergreen wreath. Additional decorations, like holly and berries, are sometimes added. Their red color points ahead to Jesus' sacrifice and death. Pinecones can symbolize the new life that Jesus brings through His **resurrection**. Families begin lighting a candle on the fourth Sunday before Christmas and light another candle each subsequent Sunday. The most common Advent candle tradition, however, involves four candles. A new candle is lit on each of the four Sundays before Christmas. Each candle represents something different, although traditions vary. The four candles traditionally represent hope, faith, joy, and peace.

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