The Bethlehem Star

“When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.” Matthew 2:10

November 2017

**“**For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, **ungrateful**, unholy….”

**2 Timothy 3:2**



The Scripture Lessons for November:

**All Saints’ Sunday**

First Reading: Rev. 7:9-17

Epistle: 1 John 3:1-3

Gospel Matthew 5:1-12

**Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost**

OT: Amos 5:18-24

Epistle: 1 Thess. 4:13-18

Gospel Matt. 25:1-13

**Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost**

OT: Zephaniah 1:7-16

Epistle: 1 Thess: 5:1-11

Gospel Matt. 25:14-30

**Last Sunday of the Church Year**

OT: Ezek. 34:11-16, 20-24

Epistle: 1 Cor. 15:20-28

Gospel Matt. 25:31-46

**Take For Granted**

Are there things in your life you take for granted? Perhaps there are people you take for granted. Dictionary.com defines this idiomatic phrase as “failure to properly appreciate (someone or something), especially as a result of overfamiliarity.” Wow! Does that hit home.

As Christians we walk a narrow road between two ditches. On one side is the ditch of idolatry. Here is where we love and appreciate things more than God Himself. In this ditch we turn the good things God has given us, like our spouse, children, job, house, etc., into “god things.” If these people and things become more important to us than God, then we have created an idol.

On the other side of the road, is a ditch just as sinful and deadly, the ditch of ungratefulness. In this ditch we just assume that all the good things God has given us will always be there. What is even worse is we may even demand that God must give us these things. We cannot take God’s good gifts for granted, we must thank Him. There is an old saying that drives this point home: “What if you wake up today with only the things you thanked God for yesterday?” I think we all would be quite poor and miserable.

For the rest of the newsletter I want to focus on that which can help us appreciate God’s good gifts and truly live a life of thanks-living.

**Salvation: Christ died for you!**

Romans 5:8 says: “But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” This powerful truth tells us that while we had absolutely nothing to offer God He sent His Son to die for us so that all of our sins could be erased and we could have a relationship with God.

Continued on the next page……….

Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church 202 W. Jefferson St. Morris, IL 60450

[www.blcmorris.org](http://www.blcmorris.org) Church office: 815-942-1145 Pastor Patrick Lohse 815-584-7122

**November Birthdays and Anniversaries:**

1 Jon Smyk

4 Carol Day

6 James Skinner

 Jim LeFevers

10 Dean Jacobson

Russel & Dona Grieff

13 Logan Daggett

 Adam Thompson

14 Allison Skinner

15 Becky Togliatti

17 Brad Jacobson

18 Ron Varland

19 Doug & Laura Holman

21 Albert & Dorothy Pilch

22 Orin Cooper

23 Heidi Lawton

24 Austin Stump

25 Cathy Nelson

27 Merle McTague

 Allan & Jill Lunde

28 Holly Daggett

29 Devin Narwick



The Apostle Paul also says when we are saved our lives are changed for the better. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

**God has given us His Word:**

Not only has God died for us, but He has given us His Word that tells us all about His love. His Word also teaches us how to live. As a Christian you can open up your Bible anytime and God’s Word will transform the way you think and live. Here is the power to live a thankful life. 2 Timothy 3:16 says: “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”

**We have the Holy Spirit:**

Jesus says in John 16:5-16 that He must leave so that God can give the Holy Spirit. He goes on to list some of the things the Holy Spirit does in our lives. The Holy Spirit leads us in the truth (John 16:8); reveals Christ to us (John 16:14,15); sanctifies us (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:12); teaches us to pray (Rom. 8:26,27); produces spiritual fruit (Gal. 5:22,23). This is really just a small sampling of the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

**We are part of a fellowship:**

It is easy to take the local congregation for granted. Let us thank God for His Church! He puts us in a community of believers to do life with. Acts 2:42-47 is a beautiful picture of what this community looks like. Here we see the early Christians were devoted to the Word of God, to fellowship, to praying for one another, and to receiving the Lord’s Supper.

As we approach our Thanksgiving Holiday all of us have something to thank God for. May we start by thanking Him for our salvation, His Word, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and His Church. If these gifts remain in the forefront of our lives, than I truly believe we will thank Him for all the other gifts, like family, home, car, career, friends, the Minnesota Vikings, etc.

From my family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving!

Pastor Lohse

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If you would like to “ask the Pastor” a question you can write it down on piece of paper and hand it to me or email me at (lohs0016@umn.edu). Your name will not be printed with your question.

“*Pastor, how did people in the Bible, like Noah, live to be so old?”*

The Bible says Noah lived to be 950 years old (Genesis 9:29). In Genesis chapter 5 we read that Adam lived to be 930 years old, his son Seth lived to be 912 years old. Seth’s son, Enoch, lived to be 905 years old. All of the Patriarchs in chapter 5, Enoch being the exception, lived to be at least 777 years old. The average life span was 912 years old. How is this possible?

Part of the answer to that question is found in looking at the average life span after the Flood in Genesis chapter 7. What one notices is that it goes down dramatically. Shem, who was Noah’s son, lived only to be 600 (Gen. 11:10,11). Nine generations later, you get to Abraham. The Bible records that Abraham lived to be 175 (Gen. 25:7).

The Flood changed everything. We know that it was God’s chosen means for punishment because the “wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (Gen. 6:5). The Apostle Paul reminds us that “the wages of sin is death.” (Rom. 6:23). So in one sense, sin does not allow us to live as long as those before the Flood.

If you would like to read more about this, I recommend the article *“Did People like Adam and Noah Really Live Over 900 Years of Age?”* by Dr. David Menton & Dr .Georgia Purdom in The New Answers Book 2 by Answers in Genesis. Their conclusion is that the Flood led to a “genetic bottleneck” that led to a significant loss in access to other people’s genes. It is well worth the read.

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“Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:40

**FFHM Orphanage Mission Project**

Items needed for **November/December** are:

**Kids’ running shoes (sizes 5-9)**

 **Crayola color) crayons, glue guns, glue**

 **sticks, balloons, stickers, & backpack sticks, balloons, stickers, backparkers (Sharpie permanent; Crayola color) crayons, glue guns, glue sticks, balloons, stickers, backp** Socks Underwear (boys & girls size 3-5)

There is a collection box at in the fireside room.

**Operation Christmas Child** shoe boxes are available in the fireside room. Shipping is $9/box. They are due back at church on November 12th.

**Mark your calendar for the following Sunday School/Youth Group Activities in November:**

* **We will be packing shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child on after Sunday school on November 5th. Lunch will be provided.**
* **Do you want to be part of our live Nativity float for the Home for the Holidays Lighted Parade on Friday, November 24th? Please let Pastor Lohse know.**

 



Holy Humor

“A time to laugh” Ecclesiastes 3:4



**Some fun facts about Thanksgiving**

* The first Thanksgiving was celebrated in November 1621. This feast was in honor of God’s provisions and for the help the Pilgrims received from the Wampanoag Indian tribe.
* The first Thanksgiving feast consisted of venison, goose, duck, turkey, fish, and cornbread.
* Thanksgiving became a national holiday when President Abraham Lincoln declared the 4th Thursday of November to be a day of:"*Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens*".

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**Financial Update for the Month of October**

General Fund Missions

Needed to meet monthly budget: $16,613.00 $1108

Offerings Received: $15,913.00 $970

Net difference needed: $700.00 $138

***Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.* 2 Corinthians 9:7**





|  | **November 2017** |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sun** | **Mon** | **Tue** | **Wed** | **Thu** | **Fri** | **Sat** |
|  |  |  | 1 **Jr. Confirmation 4:30 pm****Sr. Confirmation****5:30 pm****Choir 6:30 pm** | 2  | 3  | 4 **Men’s Bible Study (Sherwood Oaks) 7:30 am** |
| 5 **All Saints’ Sunday** **Worship 9 am****Sunday School 10:15 am****Packing shoe boxes: 11:30 am** | 6  | 7 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am****Deacons Meeting 6:30 pm** | 8 **Jr. Confirmation 4:30 pm****Sr. Confirmation****5:30 pm****Choir 6:30 pm** | 9  | 10 **BLC Mom Squad 9:45-11:15 am** | 11 **Men’s Bible Study (kitchen): 7:30 am****Gospel of Mark** |
| 12 **Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost****Worship 9 am****Sunday School 10:15 am** | 13  | 14 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am****Bethlehem Women’s Fellowship 5:30 pm** | 15 **Jr. Confirmation 4:30 pm****Sr. Confirmation****5:30 pm****Choir 6:30 pm** | 16  | 17  | 18 **Men’s Bible Study (kitchen): 7:30 am****Gospel of Mark** |
| 19 **Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost****Worship 9 am****Sunday School 10:15 am****Youth group: Thanksgiving baskets 2 pm** | 20  | 21 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am** | 22 **Thanksgiving Eve Worship 6:30 pm.** | 23 **Happy Thanksgiving!** | 24 **Home for the Holiday’s Lighted Parade Meet at church at 4:30 pm.** | 25 **Men’s Bible Study (kitchen): 7:30 am****Gospel of Mark** |
| 26 **Last Sunday of the Church Year****Worship 9 am****Sunday School 10:15 am** | 27  | 28 **Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am** | 29 **Jr. Confirmation 4:30 pm****Sr. Confirmation****5:30 pm****Choir 6:30 pm** | 30  |  |