

Another Word November 24, 2020

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

I would like to thank the Elders, our congregation, and especially Brian for stepping up, in the midst of our changing times and confusion, to do all that is needed so that we may worship together in safety each Sunday. I believe that this will be the first time ever that we will worship the Advent and Christmas seasons in a virtual setting. Please know that our goal is to bring you heartfelt and meaningful worship, and to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

During this season, each Sunday's service will be shown in our sanctuary on the following Tuesday at 1 o'clock, for anyone who does not have access to a computer or is unable to view on our website or YouTube.

The proposed budget and slate of officers for 2021 can be viewed on a separate blog on the website. All questions and concerns you may have should be directed to the office to be answered. Then simply voice your acceptance or rejection by calling the office between December 1, and December 9. (No need to leave your name) That way, we can announce the results during our December 13<sup>th</sup> service.

Our study, "Because of Bethlehem" begins Dec. 1, and will continue each Tuesday in December at 10:30am and 6pm. Hope to see you then.

We have installed a new locking mail box at the “office” entrance of the building. You may securely leave your offerings, notes, and nursing home cards when there is no one in the building.

Speaking of nursing home cards, the last batch were delivered to Good Shepherd yesterday afternoon. The next will go to Crystal Care. This is a good time to switch to Christmas card greetings.

Our scriptures for this coming First Sunday of Advent are, Isaiah 64:1-9, and Mark 13: 24-37. “We wait and prepare.”

I don’t know if you noticed it, but I really stressed Paul’s exhorting us to “be joyful and thankful IN all circumstances” last Sunday. Sometimes, in the hard or dark times of our lives we can forget that we are not alone. The Spirit is in us, God watches over us, and Jesus gave His life for us. So as we enter into prayer, may we remember to be thankful; to give love and support to those in pain and despair, and pass on our joy to a world that needs a reminder to be thankful. Please remember in your prayers, Barb Schaeg’s family at the loss of her sister Joan, Bill Hastings, John Myers, Arlene Whitmer, David Franklin, Joyce Bradley, and the family and friends of Bill Fox, a friend and class mate. May we be in prayer.

Almighty and loving God; You have richly blessed us and our country with unlimited goodness. You love and care for us in wonderful ways. As an expression of our gratitude, we will pass on your love to others. We are grateful of your many blessings, and rejoice in your love that draws us all together, despite our differences. In the midst of our fears and uncertainties, may we draw on your strength to help those less

fortunate than us. Guide us to help those in sickness, poverty, and those who feel isolated and alone. May we all draw together in praise and adoration, and teach one another to be grateful for our lives, in all circumstances. In Christ's loving name we pray, Amen

A few years ago I saw a video that I would like to tell you about. It had everything to do with being grateful and thankful. Considering that it is a couple of days before Thanksgiving, I think it will be appropriate.

A blind man sat on the sidewalk of a major city with an upside down hat at his feet. He held a sign that said, "I am blind, please help." The hat contained only a few coins; spare change dropped in by folks as they rushed past.

A passerby slowly walked up to the blind man. He stopped, pulled out all his change and placed it into the hat. He then took the blind man's sign, turned it over, and wrote something on the back and returned it. He then made sure the new words could be read by everyone who passed by.

Soon, the hat began to fill. Many more people were stopping, exchanging pleasantries, and filling the hat with coins and dollars. A few hours later, the blind man recognized the footsteps of the person earlier that morning. "You were the person who changed my sign," he said. "What did you write?"

The person said, "I didn't really change much. I just wrote what you said, but in a little different way." He wrote, "Today is a beautiful day, but I cannot see it."

Both signs spoke the truth. One said the man was blind, but the other reminded those walking by, how grateful they are to be able to see!

When your life seems full of troubles, it is hard to keep an attitude of gratefulness. We only see our problems swirling like a storm passing through our lives. Conversely, when things are going too smoothly, we have a tendency to take these moments for granted. When we do, we often forget to be thankful.

We need to be grateful, joyful, and thankful, as Paul wrote, "In all circumstances." (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-17) If we do, we will find that our lives become more at peace. And we will begin attracting even more things in our lives to be thankful for.

Have a Joyful, Grateful, and Thankful, Thanksgiving Day!

In His Peace,

*Rich*