

THIS THANKSGIVING COULD BE YOUR TIME

The very word, "Thanksgiving," conjures up joyful memories from a lifetime of family feasts around the big dining room tables of our past. It is also the one day when all Canada gives thanks by saying a prayer of thanksgiving and by asking for God's continuing blessings. On ordinary days families might skip the table grace but never on Thanksgiving Day.

Let us all take Thanksgiving as a signal to begin to pray and put away our anxiety. Instead of fretting, pray. Let petitions, praises and thanksgiving shape our worries into hope, letting God calm our fears. As the Hawaiians say, "Hang loose!" With the Californians, "Mellow out!" Or join Generation X in "chilling." It is terrific what can transpire when thanksgiving begins to temper our terrors.

With that same spirit of thanksgiving become bold in "presenting your requests to God." People often ask, "Why do I have to ask God for things? Doesn't He already know what I need?" Sure God knows already, but it helps us to think through the process of asking. Asking requires that we plan and brainstorm. Making out a priority list of needs forces us to confront our sometimes selfish motivations in the things we ask for.

After all, we require our children to make out a list for Santa Claus. We already know what they really need, and many of those things are what they will get, but perhaps there appears a gift on the list that we feel moved to allow our child to have under the tree. Every kid in Christendom makes out a Christmas list. They put a lot of thought and work into it by scanning catalogues, hitting web sites and reading newspaper toy advertisements. We all remember how carefully we made our Christmas wish list known to Santa, our parents, and especially our grandparents. Our Heavenly Father wants to hear our prayer requests.

As we become adults, and as our faith develops in Christian Discipleship, it is natural that our wish list to God will become more focused on things of more significant meaning. Instead of shiny new bicycles, and shiny new automobiles, we begin to pray for a life that matters, that has meaning and direction. In the process of praying we reassess priorities and vocational choices. Often we dream of a different career and long for a sense of calling in our vocation and leisure time. This is what leads people to decide to become a volunteer in helping others and perhaps becoming a professional in a helping profession.

Gratitude to God means that we are acknowledging that God is the source of blessings and that we believe that He is able to grant us even greater opportunities than we already have. Theologically, we are submitting to God's power when we enter into a spirit of thanksgiving. We are saying that we believe that God can indeed do all things and that through reliance on His Grace we can be used by Him to climb any mountain and ford every stream. In other words, a true thanksgiving prayer means that we are willing to join hands with Him in making a difference in our little corner of the world. Thanksgiving is living by faith, trusting in His guidance, and being willing to boldly be used for His purpose.

God has a way of calming our fears and giving us a new vision for a life that is so much more than we have ever dreamed possible. This Thanksgiving could indeed be your time!

Michael

While some Trinity folk pick up their copies of *TODAY* from the church entrance table from time to time, we should all know that “*Words of Hope*” is the organization which provides them. Although most of the world’s people live in countries “closed” to gospel missionaries, most people can access a radio, and *Words of Hope* broadcasts gospel programs in dozens of languages worldwide. For a look at their activities, see <http://woh.org> and remember to pray for the editor of *TODAY* Dr. Bob Heerspink, who has recently been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

A boy was watching his pastor-father write his Sunday sermon. "How do you know what to say?" he asked. "Why, God tells me." "Oh, then why do you keep crossing things out?"

TIME TO PRAY

The pastor asked a little boy if he said his prayers every night.
“Yes sir” answered the lad brightly.
“And do you always say them in the morning too?” the pastor continued.
“No sir” the boy replied. “I ain’t scared in the daytime.
Never tell God how big your storm is. Tell the storm how big your God is!



Barbara Smith has been in and out of hospital for many months, coping with leukemia treatments, facial cancer and operations, broken pelvis and the never ending pain. However she was extremely happy to be able to attend her grandson Brian’s wedding to Heidi Hirschfield which took place on the Smith’s acreage in Central Saanich on August 27th. Barbara is resting at home again and while she has enjoyed her visitors and phone calls, would for the time being appreciate only your cards with the assurance our continued prayers.

Other marriages of note this summer: The Gartshore’s grand daughter Meghan became Mrs. Isaiah Pinilla in July and moved to New Hampshire (just in time for Hurricane Irene!) while our own Christa McCowan became Mrs. Yannick Stevens on September 17th. Our very sincere congratulations and best wishes to them all!

I don’t mind Jesus; it’s his friends that drive me crazy!

What would we ever do without Rob Bada? He can fix just about anything, find parts by magic for old sinks, etc. and build anything that is needed, usually supplying the wood for it. There is now a storage shed beneath the ramp for our Trinity tools and we do thank "Mr. Fixit" for all his applied skills.

Search Committee Update

Our Search Committee reports good progress on finding a new minister for Trinity! They have been dealing with no fewer than 14 applications which they have short listed down to 7, but they expect more before the cutoff deadline arrives.! They will check references, call for sample sermons and then interview them. We thank our committee which consists of Randy Brown, Whitney Hanna, Glenda Hunt, Michael Kellogg (Convener), Ian MacPherson, Jeanne Spinelli and Betsy Wicks.

Catholic Horses

One day, while at the race track playing the ponies and all but losing his shirt, Mitch noticed an old priest who stepped onto the race track and blessed the forehead of one of the horses lining up for the fourth race. Lo and behold, that horse - a long shot - won the race!

Before the next race, as the horses began lining up, Mitch watched with interest as the priest stepped onto the track. Sure enough, as the horses came to the starting gate, the priest made a blessing on the forehead of one of the horses. Mitch made a beeline for the betting window and placed his bet and, even though it was a long shot, his horse won!

As the day wore on, Mitch watched the priest closely, betting on every blessed horse. By this time, he was pulling in some serious money and before the last race, he went to the ATM, withdrew his life savings, then watched as the priest blessed, not only the forehead, but the eyes, ears and hooves of the old nag. But Mitch knew he had a winner, bet every cent he owned on it, then watched in total disbelief as the old horse, on which rode his life savings, came in dead last.

Confronting the priest, he demanded "Father! what happened? All day long you blessed horses and they all won. Then in the last race, the horse you blessed lost by a country mile. Now, thanks to you, I've lost every cent of my savings - all of it!"

The priest nodded wisely and with some sympathy. "Son," he said, "that's the problem with you Protestants. You can't tell the difference between a simple blessing and the last rites!"

After searching all over southern England for more than a year, Sandra Carslaw has purchased a townhouse across the Mersey from Liverpool. Her "stuff" will arrive from Victoria sometime in October, giving her time to clean and organize. Her new address is 14 Queen Mary Drive, Port Sunlight, Wirral CH62 5DS, UK for those wanting to write. Both she and Harry (her golden retriever and constant companion) are looking forward to being settled at long last!

Gartshores have sold their house and bought a small condo in Oak Bay. While undergoing renovations, they plan to move into their little trailer parked at the West Bay Marina & RV Park before leaving for Desert Hot Springs around Christmas. On returning after February, daughter Jennifer expects to have their "new" condo all ready to live in. Address when the dust settles will be #103 - 1140 Beach Drive.

The Land Grab

At a large conference in France, Prime Minister Steven Harper was asked by an high official if Canadian involvement in Afghanistan was just another example of "empire building".

Mr. Harper answered by saying, 'Over the years, Canada has sent many of its fine young men and women into great peril to fight for freedom beyond our borders. The only amount of land we have ever asked for in return is enough to bury those that did not return.'

You could have heard a pin drop!

Get ready! Shoe Boxes will be coming on Thanksgiving Sunday and needed items to fill them are new items such as: shoes, socks, t-shirts, black shoes, school supplies (pens, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, crayons, scribblers), toys and gifts (stuffed animals, kid's jewelry) and individually wrapped hard candies or hand soaps in sealed bags. Mark the parcel with age and sex of child. Also, there will be a clothing drive on Saturday, October 29th for the street people so mark your calendars.

Catching Up With Our Church Family

Bev Andrew's husband Bill and Keith Jamieson have just returned from an enjoyable Alaska cruise. Glenda's sister Gerry requires aggressive treatment requiring frequent hospital visits. Betty Gillies has suffered a week long stay at the RJH where she was the recipient of two pints of blood and more and more of us seem to be leaking at the seams! June and Robbie's daughter Suzy brought her active son Kael home for a three week visit. We continue to miss Phyllis Andrews and Edna Lawrence who feel they are no longer able to worship with us, as well as Roberta Adlam, Bill and Myrna Francis, and Jee Wan Hee who are constrained by distance. But we look forward to the return of our winter snowbirds Peggy Burton and Ken and Judy Matthews.

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on interminably. Finally, she whispered to her mother, "Mommy, if we give him our money now, will he let us go?"

The Bibles for Mission Thrift Store (north end of Government Street) is a great place to shop for or donate serviceable household items and clothing, and they desperately need more helpers. Each year their volunteers select a destination for the Bibles bought with their "profits" and **so far this year, they boast to having sent 280,000 Bibles to Indonesia!!!** A very worthwhile cause indeed! Please support them with donations and your offer to help.

Why don't we ever the see the headline "PSYCHIC WINS LOTTERY" ????

While we all know that China is home to one fifth of the world's population with 1.3 billion citizens, the Canadian Bible Society reports that China is on the very brink of an amazing transformation. Last year, with the largest Bible printing press in the world and the fastest growing church on this planet also in China, **the Bible Society produced an astounding 12 million Bibles for China** for the **15,000 people there who are becoming Christians every day!**

Nice to see Jim Andres back from Cranbrook after helping his brother Tom while Tom battled cancer. Although we were fully expecting Jim to be away until Christmas, we are all pleased that his brother is well enough to resume his construction work, allowing Jim to return in time to organize our pot luck supper which has just taken place.

It's again time to renew your subscription to "*Glad Tidings*," the very informative magazine of the Women's Missionary Society (WMS). It's a great way to keep up to date about our Presbyterian Church's mission outreach both here in Canada and abroad. Cost is a very reasonable \$15.12 per year (including tax). Phone Glenda Hunt at 727-0214 or see her at church.

Did you know that VIHA employs staff chaplains to provide spiritual care at Royal Jubilee, Vic General, Saanich Peninsula, Cowichan District and Nanaimo Regional Hospitals? The RJH chaplain also provides services to Aberdeen, Glengarry, Mt. Tolmie and the Priory and of course we all know that Ruth McCowan provides chaplaincy services at the Oak Bay Lodge! Patients must give their consent before the hospital can provide information about its faith community. And a patient (or their friend or relative) has to ask the nurse to request a visit from a chaplain. They can also ask the chaplain to arrange for you to visit them, and if you are not able to visit someone in hospital, you can ask the chaplain to visit the person on your behalf. Please let chaplains know that the patient is "Presbyterian," not simply "Protestant."

We are aware that our church sign has been vandalized and are looking into necessary repairs. Several have sent in cute sayings to put on it including this one:
"We welcome all denominations - fives, tens, twenties fifties and hundreds."

Just asking: Why is lemon juice made with artificial flavour, while dishwashing soap is made with real lemons?
Why do we have drive-in ATM machines with Braille lettering?
And why do we in North America sell hot dogs in packages of ten and buns in packages of eight?

FROM HERE AND NOWHERE

Well, we seem to have gotten past the book sorting without open warfare, but that is because we are both rather surreptitious (ie: “sneaky”). He went through one large bookcase and I did the other, both of us piling vast numbers of books on the floor. Then, when he wasn’t looking, I sifted through what he had discarded and quietly slipped a few back on the shelves. He did the same to my end of the room; of course when I wasn’t looking. It looks as though we will have to have some bookshelves built into the condo if we don’t want to live with piles of books on the floor. He doesn’t know it yet, but I’m taking the encyclopedias. I know, I know! One can find it all on the internet, but I like the feel of a real book in my hands.

But I did draw the line in the sand the day he started pawing through the kitchen cupboards; if he didn’t recognize it, then he thought it should be disposed of. No sweat though, as he knows to retreat when my hackles rise. I suggested quietly that if he was going to discard stuff from the kitchen, then it goes without saying that I will do the same from his office. Since I haven’t a clue what most of the stuff is, he’d soon have had no need of an office in the condo. All this without raising my voice or even underlying anger. Amusement on my part. Not sure what was going through his head. He is a very patient man.

Amazing what one can part with when push comes to shove. Bob is giving up all his office desks etc. in favour of space saving built-ins. And I, with some sadness, sold my piano. It was simply too big for the space we will have, and since I play the thing rather badly, it makes sense to buy an electronic one that allows me to plug my ears into it, thereby precluding an armed delegation arriving at the door. There is some trepidation on my part though. As no doubt at some point, I will sing, thereby causing a mass evacuation from the three floors above us. The good part is that there is a chance they won’t be able to figure out where the racket is coming from, and since I’m pretty sure that the average age in Oak Bay hovers around 85, a good many of them will be deaf anyway.

Last year when we were down south, I bought a tape with instructions on how to yodel. Now, as I am pretty sure that will not slip by them, it seems evident I’ll have to take my portable CD player and sit on the bench across the road to practice. I’m equally sure that I’ll need to change benches a lot.

We had a good look at the Senior’s Center in Oak Bay when they had an open house, and I was very taken with the idea of ukelele lessons. I think that would be perfect. I can learn to play the thing, then yodel along with it. Bob didn’t appear overly enthusiastic with that idea either, but he won’t mind all the money I’m going to make. I’ll just dress in old rags, put a hat on the ground, and make frequent moves so the cops don’t follow too closely.

Parting with things can be difficult, but really when one thinks about it, it is people that matter, not things. And God has been very good to us all our lives. I give thanks for our family, our church family, our country and our lovely little city. We all need to give thanks that we live in a country that is free to do most anything we want as long as it isn’t illegal. We have libraries, health care, stable politics, funding for the poor and needy, freedom of religion and an endless list of privileges most people in the world do not enjoy. How blessed we are to be Canadians.

I don’t know about you but my cup is overflowing and I’m drinking from the saucer. Do have a very thankful Thanksgiving Day. Joy