



NEWSLETTER

November 2015

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From the Pastor

Always Reason For Thanks Philippians 4:4,6

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

The Thanksgiving table was set. The turkey was a golden brown. Mashed potatoes and gravy, cranberries, and creamed corn surrounded the main entrée. Before the residents of this small boarding house ate, they held hands and gave thanks.

“I thank You for each friend who shares this house with me,” spoke one woman. Another said, “I thank You for all Your blessings, dear Lord, especially the salvation through Jesus Christ.”

Each shared his or her thanksgiving, and finally at the very end, one of the more elderly ladies gave her thanks: “I thank You, Lord, for two perfectly good teeth, one in my upper jaw and another in my lower jaw, that match so I can chew that delicious turkey in front of me. Amen.”

St. Paul was in prison when he spoke the words of Philippians 4:4,6, and yet he gave thanks. He reminds us that we, too, have reason to give thanks, no matter what our circumstance or situation. In fact, he says, “Rejoice in the Lord

always.”

St. Paul tells us to “rejoice” as well! Rejoice because through faith in Jesus Christ we’re friends with God! Through Jesus’ life, death, resurrection the wall of sin that once separated us has been broken down. We have a mediator-Jesus Christ. We can talk to God about anything and everything, with thanksgiving, knowing that He’s working all things out for our good because we are family.

Lord God, we rejoice in knowing that we can bring “everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving” before You. May Your peace be ours. Amen.

From the President

I think the month of November and Thanksgiving in particular are my favorite times of the year. Thanksgiving Day congers up thoughts of family gatherings, football games and most of all plates piled high with roasted turkey, cranberries and slices of pumpkin pie. But there is certainly much more to it than just that. This is the time of the year we gather and hopefully take a long look hard look at how God has blessed us beyond measure. By most any standard, Americans have much to be thankful for and very little reason to complain. Unfortunately most of us spend considerable time counting our desires rather than our blessings. We concentrate on what we want and not so much on

what we have been given. You would think that by now we would realize that we can't count on anything material in this sin cursed life to give us the lasting joy and peace we long for. Instead of running after "all these things" we need to pause and realize that I am just a sinner who needs not only God's help but also God's salvation. There is so much more to it than just gratitude for what we have and can see. We also have blessings we cannot see. As believers who look daily to God for his mercy and forgiveness, we have an endless list of spiritual reasons to express our gratitude to the Lord. Not only has Christ given us every earthly blessing, but he has rescued us from our sins. When we daily stumble, he doesn't stay angry with us. He cares about the details of our lives and listens to our every prayer. He guides and directs us through His word. We know and trust that he is preparing a place for us when our work is finished here. And he has promised to come back and get us and take us to our heavenly home. God does not count a single one of our sins against us. He charged his Holy Son with every sin counted against us and put him to death on the cross for them. He did that because he loves us. He did that so we can say with confidence "thanks" every single day. Heaven will be the ultimate day of Thanksgiving. That day will usher in an eternity of giving thanks for every blessing that we'll never fully be able to list. Enjoy this coming Thanksgiving and praise God every single day.

All God's blessings,
Greg Wendorf

Who's Who at Open Bible



Just when I think Open Bible has reached the epitome of being Blessed and after having met two of our newest members,

Joan and Feg Henkel I find I'm proven wrong again. Joan and Feg came to the Villages nine years ago from Pennsylvania, although they have lived in Michigan and Illinois.. They have been married thirty-eight years and have two daughters, both of whom live in Iowa. Joan and Feg are the proud grandparents of three boys, ages seven, five and two.

Joan had an interesting career as an Administrative Assistant with several different governmental agencies. The one from which she retired was with the Lancaster, Pennsylvania Communications System which oversaw the 911 operations for that county.

Feg's first career of thirteen years was spent with the United States Navy. After leaving the Navy, Feg entered the nuclear energy field, and had a three year stint at Three Mile Island

Joan's hobbies are machine embroidery, Mah Jongg, playing cards, particularly Triple Play and has recently taken up playing Samba.

Feg enjoys his gun collection and belongs to the Ocala Sportsmen Association and joins the Open Bible Defenders when there is no conflict with his schedule. Feg also is a stamp collector and enjoys taking road trips. Not so much Joan, as she is more of a homebody, wanting to sleep in her own bed. Joan expressed to me that after leaving their past church and walking into Open Bible she felt as if her soul was fed. Well put; as this sentiment has been expressed by so many members of Open Bible.

So to be redundant..... Aren't we at Open Bible ever so Blessed!!
By Jan Britton

Advent

What is the Season of Advent? by Pastor Schulz

December is the month of Advent for Christians. The word 'Advent' comes from the Latin language and is a verb form with the meaning of "coming

towards, approaching," or "he comes." The "He" who is coming is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Our Emmanuel- which means: "God is with us."

How does Jesus come to us today? The first way which Jesus comes to us today is in His Word. He tells us He is "with us" when we gather together around His Holy Word. In His Word, Jesus comes to us and blesses us with the comfort that He is our God; that He has died and risen again as He had promised; that our sins are forgiven and that Heaven has been opened for us.

The second coming which we celebrate this season is His Coming again in the future as His Word proclaims. On the Last Day, Jesus will come and raise all the dead. Those who believe in Him as their Savior and LORD will be brought to live with Him in the mansions prepared for us in Heaven. Those who rejected Him as their Savior and King will be rejected by and cast out of His Presence into the darkness of hell. There the Bible says: "will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The Last coming which we celebrate this Advent Season is His Coming at Christmas, "Galatians 4:4-5 (NIV84) But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons." The Bible is full of promises concerning this coming of Jesus the Christ, these promises all totally came true. The unusual circumstances of his birth (of a virgin, in Bethlehem) and even His death and resurrection show this child is indeed the very Son of God!

The length of Advent is a little different every year, since it is officially celebrated as the 4 Sundays before Christmas Day. This year, the first Sunday of Advent is November 29th. In the past, (around the 4th century) Advent was celebrated with fasting, or abstaining from some foods so that we might concentrate on Christ's coming with repentance and prayer.



Advent by Candlelight

Sunday, December 6th at 6:00pm. The Women of Open Bible

Feel the excitement of the coming of our Savior as we celebrate His birth with "Blessings on the Tree". Fellowship, dessert and devotion!

Hostess Table Sign-up in narthex (Host a table of 8), see Hostess description on the sign-up table.

Invitations will be available starting the week of November 8th.

Starting Sunday, November 8th an Advent table will be on display so you can sign-up to sit at a Hostess' table. Invitations will be available; also.

Small Group Ministry

Wednesday in the Word: Topic: The People in David's Life and in Yours Location: Open Bible Lutheran Church

Date: November 4th – 18th

Time: 5:00 PM

Facilitator: Pastor Schulz

Nov. 4th: Friends For Hard Times

Nov. 11th - 18th : Joab-The most Complex Person in David's Life (Parts One & Two).

Book Club: Topic: A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23 by W. Philip Keller Location: Open Bible Lutheran Church

Date: November 24th, 2015

Time: 10:00 AM

Facilitator: Pastor Schulz

It's been thirty five years and two million copies since W. Phillip Keller gave us A Shepherd Looks at

Psalm 23, and it continues to encourage and inspire Christians with its classic insights into the heart of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. Page by page, Keller reveals new facets of the Shepherd of Psalm 23 and his tireless, devoted care of His sheep. In these pages you will discover an uplifting expression of Christ's love for those that trust him as their protector, guide, provider and faithful keeper.

466A Group- Topic: I Need to Change Location:
Meeting at home of Jim & Sandy Fehlhaber Date: November 17th
Time: 2:00-4:00 PM
Facilitator: Pastor Mark Schulz
A Video Driven Study led by Pastor Mark Jeske, from Time of Grace Ministries. Each session will begin with a 20 minute message by Pastor Jeske on the specific topic mentioned. The Group will spend time in discussion and application:
November 2015: Less Critical, More Encouraging: I Thessalonians 5:1-11

Defenders: (Led by Ken Wells and Bill Sigurdson)
Meets on Thursday November 19th 11:00 AM at the Gun Range on SR44 in Leesburg. Usually the group shoots from 100-150 rounds. The cost is \$10.00 if you have your own ammunition and targets. Once the group completes their shooting, they have a time for prayer as they bring requests to God to protect our soldiers, and to continue to bless America. Then, they head off for lunch or to the local pawn shop. Ladies are welcome to join this group!

Sunday Morning Bible Study (Led by Pastor Schulz) Job: Compassion in Calamity-Study of the Book of Job-God's Word for Today
Why do the just suffer? Where is God in the midst of loss, illness, ridicule and defeat? Those questions probe deeply into the heart of every person, and all too often demand ready answers in our uniquely human, and sometimes painful, experience. Job's true story of God's grace in the midst of his profound suffering will teach you:
•the purpose of adversity in the lives of the faithful;

- the role of Satan regarding our relationship with God;
 - the hope and strength we have through the promise of our Redeemer.
- Nov. 1st: Words of Wisdom from Elihu
Nov. 8th: God Answers From the Storm

Sunday Morning Bible Study continued: Mark Bible Study-Lifelight: Dig into the book of Mark and follow Jesus on his earthly ministry. Learn practical truths for your life today.
November 15th :Jesus Begins His Ministry To Defeat Sin and Evil
November 22nd : Jesus Heals Those Broken by Sin and Evil
November 29th :Jesus Reveals God's Truth

SPLASH

Our next meeting is November 9th at 1:00 pm. for more planning of events, etc.. The group will be traveling to Silver Springs on Tuesday, November 10th for a tour and boat ride on the glass bottom boat. We will be leaving church at 11:00am. We will have lunch before the tour (restaurant to be decided.) The tour is ½ hr. long and the cost is \$10.00, plus parking. Please sign up at the pass-thru window near the kitchen.



Fellowship Group: (led by Joe & Paula Malec, Dan & Karen Pearson)
What a great time we all had at the October Movie Comedy Night. Fred Hainen was able to show old comedy films on his 8mm projector. It was fun to see Laurel & Hardy, Abbott and Costello and Charlie Chaplin. In between he showed a few cartoons.

November we will be going to the Orange Blossom Opry in Weirsdale, Fl. (the corner of CR42 & CR25). The show is: The Sweeney Family Band. Saturday, November 14th at 7:30pm.

The Sweeney Family Band is a Country Comedy/Music Act that travels all over the USA bringing their downhome-backwoods comedy and music to fans everywhere.

Please sign-up in the kitchen-pass thru so we can order reserved seats and be able to sit together. If you'd like to go out for dinner before the show, please indicate that also.

Men of Leisure: (Led by Dennis Duessler.) Enjoy 19 Minutes Bible Study: Take a look at the parables and some special stories of the Bible. Meeting at Perkins Restaurant on Friday, November 13th at 8:00 A.M.

Grief Share: Program will continue Thursdays during November (no meeting on Thanksgiving) from 6:30 – 8:00pm. This will be a 13 session video-based small group to help those who have lost a loved one in death.

North County Group: (Led by Alan Johnson) Topic: I John Bible Study. If you live in the Ocala area or would like to join this group Bible Study, please contact Alan. Meetings are the 2nd & 4th Sundays from 6:30-8:30pm at the home of Alan & Pam Johnson.

Fore-Giving Friday Golfers: This group meets once a week on **Fridays** to golf the Executive courses in The Villages. Teams are determined by the Sunday prior to the golf date. Each golfer is equipped with a small plastic bag with extra- long tees and a business card from Open Bible to hand out to unchurched golfers. Contact: Leslie Nelson or Sandy Fehlhaber for more information.

Happy Hearts-Happy Hands Handiwork Meeting Friday, November 6th from 9-12:00pm. This group creates quilts for those in need in our community. Also if you have knitting, crochet or embroidery you are working on, join the group for fellowship as you work on your project!

Women of Open Bible

Next Meeting will be Wednesday, November 11th at 1:00pm for service, spiritual growth, fellowship,

and recreation. Following the meeting there will be a demonstration on folding napkins, and a Thanksgiving Trivia contest with prizes.

Council Highlights

October Council Highlights

The church council met on October 15th. Following are the highlights from the meeting:

- September expenses were \$3,706 more than income. Year to date income was \$23,048 more than expenses. The mortgage balance as of 9/30/15 was \$388,816.
- The following were accepted into membership by transfer:
 - Frank Selvey
 - Genie Selvey
- The following were released from membership:
 - Sharon Sanner
 - Gerald Mucci
- 100 copies of the new video produced by the WELS titled My Son, My Savior will be purchased for use as an evangelism tool.
- The following members have agreed to serve on the Long Range Planning Committee for Ministry:
 - Dan Pearson (Chairman)
 - Alan Johnson
 - Sandy Fehlhaber
 - Pastor Schulz (Ad hoc member)
- The following times were approved for this year's holiday services:
 - Christmas Eve – 5:30pm
 - Christmas Day – 9:30am
 - New Years Eve – 5:30pm
- The recommendation of the Women of Open Bible regarding serving of meals for funerals was approved.

Worship Committee

Participation of the Congregation in the Worship Service

Since our worship services are patterned after the historical and liturgical style of worship we have ample opportunity for the worshiper to participate in response to the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. In order for this to happen, there must be opportunity for dialogue. The congregation and the pastor must be involved in activity. If there is to be meaningful and understandable dialogue, the language and music of worship must in some way belong to the people.

The Dialogue of Worship:

The service of the congregation is the second part of the interaction between Christ and the believers. As stated earlier, the liturgical styles of worship that we use lend themselves to this dialogue. Next time you worship look for this dialogue.

The pastor, as the spokesperson, for Christ invites the congregation to confession, the congregation confesses its sin, and the pastor then absolves. The pastor reads the first lesson, the congregation sings the Psalm of the Day. The pastor reads the second lesson, and the congregation or choir speaks or sings the Verse for that Service. The pastor then reads the Gospel and the congregation sings the Hymn of the Day. After the sermon, the congregation responds with a confession of faith with one of the creeds. The pastor offers prayers for the church and the congregation responds with Amen (so shall it be). So you can definitely see that our liturgies and services are rich in dialogue.

Next time you worship think about the dialogue

and what it all means. Starting in January we will be looking more closely to each part of the liturgy. This will be done verbally in the service or with an explanation in the worship folder.

Respond to God's great blessings this month by worshipping on Thanksgiving Day. Excerpts from the manual for Christian Worship.

Submitted by: Ron Brutlag

Did you know?

Can Collection: Bring your “crushed” & “rinsed” cans to church on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Put your cans in the back of the red car parked out in front of church. Thank you from the Women of Open Bible.

Coffee Host/Hostesses: Please sign-up to help with the coffee/fellowship hour. The sign-up sheet is located in the Kitchen pass-thru. Thank you.

Thanksgiving Day Dinner



Last year after our 10:30 AM Thanksgiving Service, a meal was served that fed 55 people. It

was a great way to gather with our Open Bible family, if you had no family plans. Consider joining us again this year. The meal will follow the Thanksgiving service on November 26th. There is a need of help for the setup and clean-up. A sign-up sheet is located at the kitchen entry. If you have no family plans for Thanksgiving Day, please consider signing up to join us for a great meal and fellowship.

Happy Anniversary

Gordon & Shirley Robeck – 9
Ed & Lorraine Birk – 14
Ron & Mary Helen Schultz – 16
Richard & Diane Kuhlman – 18
Ron & Karen Dahm – 19
Mike & Carol Benrud – 25
Feg & Joan Henkel – 25
Ken & Norma Phillips – 26
Bill & Sally Stocks – 26

Happy Birthday

James Fehlhaber – 2
Dave Gonja – 5
Robin Otto - 7
Janis Liermann – 11
Jean Marshall - 12
Jeri Leeper – 13
John Liermann – 14
Kathy Griffin – 18
Earl Schlicht – 19
Pat Kramer – 20
Jackie Rouselo – 20
Pat Kramer - 20
Ron Stuedemann – 22
Jerry Yahn – 22
Pastor Schulz – 23
Fred Rathgeber – 24
Claudette Tharp -25
Roger Otto - 28
Linda Gustrowsky – 29
Jack Affeldt – 29

Advent Services

This year there will be three mid-Week Advent Services. The first one starting Wednesday December 2nd at 5:30pm, with a lite supper from 4:30 – 5:15pm.

