



CHURCH MESSENGER

MONTHLY CHURCH NEWSLETTER

● Sunday School: 9:30am ● Worship Service: 10:30am ● Wednesday Bible Study: 5:00pm



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As we enter the month of November, our hearts naturally turn toward thanksgiving and gratitude. This is a special time to pause and reflect on the countless blessings God has poured into our lives—both big and small. Scripture reminds us in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” As the days grow shorter, may our hearts grow warmer with praise and thankfulness. Let us take time this month to express our gratitude not only to God, but also to those around us who bless our lives daily. Together let’s celebrate God’s abundant grace and share the joy of thanksgiving in word, deed, and worship. May this season remind us that every day is a gift, and every breath is a reason to give thanks.

Seeking Wisdom & Understanding-

As we move through November, let us focus our hearts on seeking wisdom and understanding from God’s Word. Proverbs 2:6 reminds us, “For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.” In this season of reflection and gratitude, may we look beyond earthly knowledge and open our minds to the divine wisdom that guides our steps and strengthens our faith.

Giving Generously-

In a season of gratitude and reflection, we are reminded of the call to give generously from hearts filled with thankfulness. Scripture teaches in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “God loves a cheerful giver,” reminding us that generosity is both an act of worship and a reflection of God’s abundant love. This month, may we share our blessings freely—with our church, our neighbors, and those in need—spreading God’s goodness through every act of giving.





Rejoicing In God's Name



A Message from Our Minister

Dear Beloved Church Family and Friends,

As we gather in this season of gratitude, my heart is filled with thanksgiving for each of you. This is a time to pause and reflect on the goodness of God, who provides for us, sustains us, and surrounds us with His unfailing love. In every blessing—big or small—we are reminded that all we have comes from His gracious hand.

Scripture reminds us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (NIV): “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” True thanksgiving isn’t limited to a single day on the calendar—it’s a way of living that flows from a heart that recognizes God’s presence and provision in every season.

I am especially thankful for our church family—for your faithfulness, your love for one another, and your commitment to serve the Lord. Each act of kindness, each prayer lifted, and each word of encouragement reflects the heart of Christ among us. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus” (1 Corinthians 1:4, NIV).

This Thanksgiving, may we take time to express our gratitude not only in words but also in deeds—sharing with those in need, comforting the lonely, and spreading the hope of Christ wherever we go. Let us remember that every breath we take is a gift and every day is an opportunity to give thanks.

From my heart to yours, may your homes be filled with peace, your tables with abundance, and your hearts with joy that comes from knowing the Lord.

With Thanksgiving and Love in Christ,

Keith

Thanksgiving is not just about counting blessings—it’s about rejoicing in the One who gives them. The psalmist writes, “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24). Each new day is a gift and an opportunity to praise God with our words, actions, and attitudes. Even in seasons of difficulty, joy can be found when we fix our hearts on the Lord’s faithfulness. Rejoicing lifts our spirits and reminds us that gratitude is not dependent on our circumstances but on God’s unchanging goodness. As a church family, let’s make this November a month of joyful praise—thanking God for His blessings, celebrating His grace, and sharing His love with others.

During this season of thanksgiving—our hearts are reminded of the importance of rejoicing in the name of the Lord. Gratitude and joy are deeply connected in the life of a believer. True thanksgiving doesn’t come only when everything is going well; it springs from a heart that recognizes God’s presence and faithfulness in every season. Scripture calls us to live with this joyful spirit. “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4, NIV).

To rejoice in God’s name means to lift our hearts in praise, not because of our circumstances, but because of who He is. The Lord is good, His love endures forever, and His faithfulness continues through all generations (Psalm 100:5, NIV). When we focus our minds on God’s goodness instead of life’s challenges, our perspective shifts from worry to worship. We begin to see that every blessing—great or small—is a reflection of His grace.

David, in the Psalms, often rejoiced in God even in times of hardship. He wrote, “I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High” (Psalm 9:2, NIV). His joy was not dependent on ease or comfort but on his confidence that God was sovereign and near. Like David, we are invited to find joy not in what we have, but in who holds us—our loving, faithful Father.

As we reflect on thanksgiving this month, let us remember that rejoicing is both an attitude and an act of faith. When we choose joy, we testify to the world that our hope is anchored in Christ. Rejoicing strengthens our spirit, draws us closer to God, and encourages those around us. Even small acts of gratitude—a prayer whispered in the morning, a song of praise during a quiet moment, a word of kindness shared with a neighbor—become powerful ways to glorify His name.

In this season, take time each day to rejoice intentionally. Thank God for the blessings you see and trust Him for the ones still unseen. Let your heart echo the words of Psalm 118:24 (NIV): “The Lord has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad.” May we, as a church family, lift our voices together in praise, rejoicing in God’s name with thankful hearts and renewed faith.



Community Events

Community events are crucial for churches as they foster a stronger sense of belonging, build relationships, and extend the church's reach into the wider community. May these events provide opportunities for fellowship, outreach, and spiritual growth, both for existing members and those who may be exploring faith.

SAT
8

Soup Bean Dinner

Help raise money for the youth of Old Orchard Christian Church to attend Christ in Youth. Donations only. 3-7pm
OOCC: 3600 Blackburn Ave.

FRI
21

Festival of Trees and Trains

Paramount Art's Center Annual display of trees and trains. Open until November 30th.
www.pacftt.org

MON
17

WWOL Opening Ceremony

The Christmas lights will be lit with 60 magical displays. Central Park Bandstand. 6pm.
www.winterwonderlandoflights.org

TUE
25

Annual Christmas Parade

Ashland's annual Christmas parade. 7pm. Downtown Ashland.
www.winterwonderlandoflights.org



A Lesson in Thankfulness from Paul

One of the most powerful lessons on thankfulness in the Bible comes from the Apostle Paul. Through his letters, Paul reminds us that gratitude is not dependent on our circumstances—it is rooted in our faith in God's goodness and sovereignty. His example teaches that we are to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV). Notice that Paul does not tell us to give thanks for all things, but in all things. True thankfulness is an expression of trust—trust that God is present, that His purpose is good, and that His grace is sufficient, even when life is difficult.

Thankfulness Is a Matter of Faith, Not Feeling

Paul's command to "give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:18) challenges us to choose gratitude, even when we don't feel it. This kind of thankfulness requires faith—believing that God is working behind the scenes and that His plans are greater than our understanding. Gratitude rooted in faith strengthens our spirit and helps us see God's hand in every moment.

Gratitude Is Centered on God, Not Circumstances

Paul's thankfulness was never based on comfort or success. It flowed from his relationship with a faithful and loving

God. He knew that while circumstances change, God's character does not. As James 1:17 (NIV) reminds us, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." Gratitude keeps our focus on God's unchanging goodness, not life's unpredictable challenges.

Gratitude Is a Constant Posture

Paul modeled a life of continual thanksgiving. In his letters, he repeatedly encourages believers to "always give thanks to God the Father for everything" (Ephesians 5:20, NIV) and to "rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, NIV). Thankfulness was not an occasional response for Paul—it was a daily discipline, a constant posture of the heart.

Suffering Can Be a Source of Thanks

Paul understood that hardship often serves a greater purpose. Even from prison, he wrote words of joy and encouragement. In Philippians 1:12–14 (NIV), he explained that his imprisonment actually helped advance the gospel and gave others courage to speak about Christ. Paul saw his trials as opportunities for God's glory to shine brighter.

Thanksgiving Is a Spiritual Discipline

In Romans 1: 21 (NIV), Paul warns against the danger of an ungrateful heart;

"although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened". Choosing thankfulness, even in pain, helps us resist bitterness and strengthens our faith. Gratitude realigns our focus—away from what's wrong and back toward what God is doing. It's a discipline that opens our eyes to the "bigger picture" of His plan.

Thankfulness Should Be Expressed for Others

Paul also practiced gratitude in his relationships. In Philippians 1:3–5 (NIV), he writes, "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel." His example reminds us to thank God not only for what He's done for us, but also for the people He's placed in our lives—those who encourage, support, and strengthen our faith.

Paul's life teaches that gratitude is far more than a polite response—it's a spiritual lifestyle. It's the overflow of a heart anchored in trust, sustained by grace, and centered on the unchanging goodness of God. When we, like Paul, learn to give thanks in every circumstance, we experience the deep and lasting joy that only comes from walking closely with Christ.

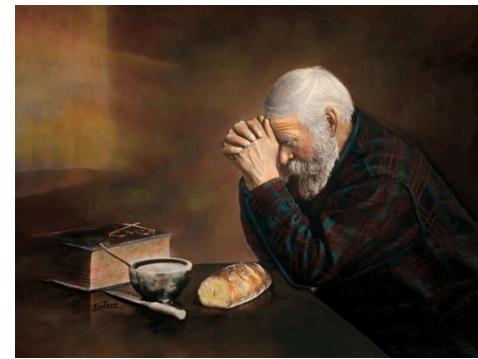


Thankful for Our Christian Friends and Church Family

As we reflect on gratitude this November, let us give special thanks for one of God's greatest blessings—our Christian friends, church family. Through fellowship, prayer, and encouragement, God surrounds us with people who strengthen our faith, share in both our joys and struggles, and protect the freedoms we hold dear. Proverbs 27:17 (NIV) reminds us, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

Our church family is a reflection of God's love in action—showing compassion, offering support, and helping us grow closer to Christ. In every handshake, smile, and prayer shared, we experience His presence among us. The Apostle Paul expressed this beautifully when he wrote, "I thank my God every time I remember you" (Philippians 1:3, NIV).

This Thanksgiving season, let's take time to thank God for the people He has placed in our spiritual journey—the brothers and sisters in Christ who walk beside us, pray for us, and lift us up in faith. Together, we are the body of Christ, united in His love, and for that, we have every reason to give thanks.



THANKGIVING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
We come before You with hearts
full of gratitude for Your endless
love and faithfulness. Thank You
for the blessings that fill our days
—the beauty of creation, the
comfort of family and friends,
and the hope we find in Your
Word. Even in times of challenge,
You remain our strength and
provider. Teach us, Lord, to give
thanks in all circumstances and
to recognize Your hand at work in
every season of life. May our
hearts overflow with praise, and
may our words and actions
reflect Your goodness to others.
We rejoice in Your name, giving
You all glory and thanks—today
and always.

In Jesus's name, Amen.



A Season of Thanksgiving: A Heart of Gratitude

As we move closer to the end of the month, our thoughts often turn to thanksgiving—both the holiday and the deeper spiritual call to gratitude that it represents. But thankfulness is more than a once-a-year expression; it's a way of life rooted in our relationship with God. Scripture reminds us in Colossians 3:17 (NIV), "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Every blessing, every challenge, and every breath is a reason to thank Him. When we practice daily gratitude, our hearts grow lighter, our faith deepens, and we begin to see God's hand in all things. This month, take a moment each day to thank God—not only for what He has done, but for who He is. A thankful heart is truly a joyful heart.

True thankfulness flows from trust—trust that God is good, that His plans are perfect, and that even when we don't understand His ways, His love never fails. Gratitude lifts our eyes from our circumstances and fixes them on His faithfulness. The Apostle Paul reminds us to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV). Notice that Paul says "in all circumstances," not "for all circumstances." We are not thankful for pain, loss, or hardship themselves, but we are thankful that God's grace is present and His purpose is at work—even in those moments.

Gratitude transforms our outlook. When we choose to focus on what God has given instead of what we lack, we begin to live with renewed peace and joy. Psalm 107:1 (NIV) proclaims, "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever." The more we reflect on His goodness, the more we realize that thankfulness is not dependent on life's circumstances—it is anchored in the character of a loving, faithful God.

As we gather with loved ones this Thanksgiving season, let us remember that gratitude is not confined to the table or the holiday. It is meant to shape our daily living, our prayers, and our relationships. A thankful heart opens the door to contentment, generosity, and deeper fellowship with God and others.

So this November, let us choose to cultivate a heart of continual thanksgiving. Let us give thanks in every situation, rejoice in every blessing, and rest in the assurance that our God is always good. As Psalm 9:1 (NIV) declares, "I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds." May our lives be a reflection of that same spirit—overflowing with gratitude, grounded in faith, and filled with joy.