

CHRISTCHURCH PRESBYTERIAN
GOOD NEWS

Volume 11, Issue 10

November 2011



Giving Thanks!



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How Should We Pray?

The Apostle Paul put it in this perspective. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6). Notice the phrase "with thanksgiving" tucked in there with "present your requests to God." It's essential to keep prayer God-centered rather than self-centered. It's also the key to praying with real faith.

So when you pray, remember that your food doesn't deserve a blessing nearly so much as God who gave it. You can bless like Jesus did, "Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the world, who has caused bread to come forth out of the earth." Or offer a simple prayer of thanks to God for the food. Next time, don't "ask the blessing," but offer one to your Father.

by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

<http://www.joyfulheart.com/thanksgiving/offer-blessing.htm>

**Newsletter Deadline
December 15**

Vision Statement:
*Trusting in God's guidance,
ChristChurch Presbyterian
invites all to join us as we
Gather joyfully,
Grow spiritually and
Give passionately
in service to Christ,
each other and our
community.*

Adult Ministry

Wednesday Night Dinner

Join us each Wednesday evening for dinner in the Fellowship Hall. Enjoy an evening meal with your church family and friends.

Ladies' Book Club

The Ladies' Book Club meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7pm. Stay tuned for upcoming books and dates. If you have any questions, please contact Lucy Seward at lucyseward@msn.com or Mylene Bole at mbole@swbell.net.

Friday Night Bridge

Join us Friday, November 18th 7:00pm at the home of Betty Janicek, 5424 Braeburn. Contact Sue for more information.

TGIF

The adults meet on the first Friday for fellowship and refreshment. We will meet at the home of Amy Gremillion and Coby Scher at 4911 LochLomond along with Co-host, Julie and Rachel Gremillion on November 4th at 7pm.

Better Bunch

On Monday, November 21, we will have a guided tour of several museums and other points of interest in Wharton, Texas. Several of the stops are the 20th Century Technological Museum, Wharton Courthouse (newly refurbished), and Wharton Country Historical Museum. Cost for the trip is \$5.00 plus lunch. Lunch will be at Hinze's. The bus will leave from 3rd Street at 8:30 am. ALL 50+ are welcome to join us.

Sign-up sheet is in the Gathering Space. Or call 281.498.0483 or email wtbuckley@juno.com.

Dates for 2012 are Thursday, Jan. 19; Wednesday, Feb. 1, and Wednesday, March 7.

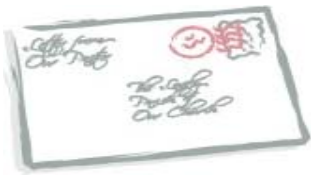
Mark your calendars!!

Men's Breakfast

The men will gather in the Fellowship Hall on Sat., November 12th at 8am for breakfast.

CONGRATULATIONS TIDELANDERS!!!





John's Musings



Thanks- Giving

There are two professions which are the butt of more jokes than any other professions and it has been my privilege to pursue one or the other of these professions most of my adult life – which is to say, I've probably heard more lawyer jokes and more preacher jokes than anybody has a right to hear. That doesn't bother me. Most of the jokes are pretty good. The lawyer jokes tend to be about ethics – or rather the lack thereof. The preacher jokes tend to be about money or sex, which only seems fair since a whole lot of scripture concerns sex or money. There's one about a preacher who stepped into the pulpit: "I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that we have enough money to build the new sanctuary. The bad news is that it is still in your pockets."

Someone turned the tables. In David Letterman style they came up with the top ten things pastors like to hear their parishioners:

- Number 10: Hey, it's my turn to sit in the front pew.
- Number 9: I was so impressed by your sermon that I never noticed that the service went over by 20 minutes.
- Number 8: Personally I would rather serve on a committee than play golf.
- Number 7: Pastor, I have decided to give our church that \$500 a month I have been sending to the TV evangelists.
- Number 6: I volunteer to be the permanent Sunday School teacher for the junior high class.
- Number 5: I love it when we sing those hymns we've never sung before.
- Number 4: Since we are all here, let's go ahead and start church early.
- Number 3: Pastor, we'd love to send you to that preaching seminar in the Bahamas.
- Number 2: Nothing inspires me and strengthens me more than an every member canvas.

And the Number 1 thing pastors would like to hear from their parishioners: (drum roll): Would you please preach that stewardship sermon again next week?

Talk about stewardship rankles some folks – especially talk about financial stewardship. In fact, it might be said that financial stewardship is not a laughing matter. My niece, to hear her tell it, left her church because they asked for money too often. Let me let you in on a little secret. I don't like talking about money. And let's be up front. A big part of why I don't like talking about money is that feels kind of self-serving. After all, no giving – no paycheck – no brainer. But of course, money is important for other reasons. Just like in the home, money keeps the gas and electric running, the phones on, pays for routine and not so routine maintenance. Just like in a business, money pays staff salaries, purchases equipment, and pays for services. In some ways, money is even more important in the church than in the home or a business because the church really isn't the church unless it is doing something in and for the world – by way of mission and outreach.

It's a struggle for me to approach financial stewardship. Part of my struggle is that I don't ever want to compromise good theology for an effective message. For instance, Tony Robbins, the self-improvement guru, suggests that everything anyone does is motivated by one of two factors – avoiding pain or receiving pleasure. Everything we do, we do because, on balance, the pleasure outweighs the pain. So a smoker will keep smoking until the pain of smoking is greater than the pain of quitting. Now Hell, it has been reported, is not pleasant. So following Tony's logic, if I could convince you that giving gets you a get an 'out of Hell free' card, that might be an effective approach. What do you think? Or conversely, that giving will put stars in your crown and good seat at the banquet table. Big problem though – stinky theology. God doesn't operate that way. Giving might put a spring in your step, but the seat at the table is Jesus' doing. Yet, there are a number of ways this topic can be addressed and still be responsible. And rather than choosing only one, I have decided to take a page or two from Carl Schenk and offer a multiple choice. You can choose a, b, c, d, or all the above. Choice (a) is the practical, pragmatic approach. Just like your family and just like a business, your church has to live within its means. The primary source a church has is its members and their generosity. As we plan for the next year, there are many things that we want to do together as a church. Those who serve are already making plans and budget-ing for the next year, and while we always make room for faith, we don't want to budget to spend more money than we have a realistic expectation we will receive. We attempt every year to be responsible, not making promises that we cannot fulfill. Many people think churches operate for a few hours on Sunday morning and that is all. But the truth is that much of the physical plant in use almost every day. So, we have utility bills to pay and we have staff to compensate, cleaning crews, IT support, pest control – on and on it goes—the practical, ordinary, everyday things that we simply must do. We'd like to be doing more. Even the sanctuary needs to be maintained within temperature limits around the clock because of the pipe organ. There are people who are not very interested in the everyday events. They say, "I only come to church on Sun-day." Fair enough. Or they may be among those people who only come at high moments of their lives. They come for their wedding. They come for the baptism of their children. They come for the funeral service of their loved ones. They expect the church to be here when needed. In that respect, the church is like the fire department. We can't have the fire department just on the day when the fire breaks out. The trucks have to be ready and fueled – the hoses well maintained and the personnel there and ready to go – or the day will come when they are needed and they won't be ready.

Continued on page 4

The fire department is a 24-7 effort and so is the church of Jesus Christ. From a very practical, down-to-earth point of view, we simply cannot be here unless we can establish sensible, responsible, defensible, achievable spending and re-ceiving goals. Option (b) is inspirational. The church is about transforming lives. The church is about the families bringing children for baptism and nurturing their growth. The church is about individuals seeking to make a good, holy life. If you ever think I'm holding up a dollar sign — please look behind it to Sunday School Classes and Confirmation Classes, to the music program, to Presbyterian Children's Homes, to CCSC, to scholarships and mission trips, to members in hospitals, to corporate worship. See the faces of those who receive a hand up at Church Under the Bridge and all over the world who hear of the love of Jesus Christ through the mission of the church. Be inspired. Be inspired not about money, but by the positive impact on people's lives.

Those motivated by responsibility should choose (c). Or perhaps that should be pronounced response-ability — how able we are to respond. Every once in a while, someone asks me how much they should give. When asked I suggest the guiding principle should be gratitude, rather than budget. A very good way to measure gratitude is the Biblical principle of proportional giving. The Biblical understanding of proportional giving is giving in proportion to what you have received. If you received a little, give a little. If you have received a lot, give a lot. Ways of looking at this might be to ask ourselves, "What percentage of my income would make me feel really good to give? What percentage of my income really reflects how I've been blessed? What would help me feel responsible and responsive? What

percentage of income would make me feel really connected to the ministry of Christ? Is it two percent or five percent or ten percent or twenty-five percent?" Whatever that amount is, so be it.

The final option — is option (d). We give for the maintenance and growth of our souls. We contribute to make practical, substantial and tangible our thanks-giving. We give in gratitude for the gift of life, for the gift of this day, for the gift of health and strength and prosperity and family and friends. Here it is — a spiritual act.

We live in a society that pressures us to believe that our lives are inadequate or less than they ought to be and we can never be complete and whole unless we have more and more. It doesn't matter what how much you have. Our culture tells you it is not enough. When the church invites you to give what we really say is "there is another world — another way of living." It's not that the church hates things, or wants you to deny the blessings of life. It's simply that things don't make us happy — at least not for long. Healthy relationships — with God, with one another, with strangers; helping others; being of use in ways that matter; those are what make for happiness. Giving is a spiritual matter that makes us bigger, that makes us whole, that sets us free.

Practical, inspirational, proportional, spiritual. Or . . . all of the above. Take your pick. It is multiple-choice November. When your opportunity to make a commitment comes, I invite you to exercise your right to choose.

Grace & peace
John

November Birthdays



| | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|-------------------------|
| 2 | Janette Hearne | 14 | Melinda Marsh |
| 3 | Claire Fricke | 15 | Burnette Boyett |
| 3 | Wendell Hearne | 16 | Doug Kennedy |
| 4 | Claire Cook | 17 | Mary Helen Needham |
| 4 | Leonard Tchikou | 17 | Frank Spence |
| 5 | Charlotte Kerr | 17 | Katherine Watson |
| 5 | Susan Morris | 19 | Vernon Whitney |
| 8 | Nick Aring | 22 | Elizabeth Anane-Sekyere |
| 8 | Ron Clettenberg | 22 | Mary Plail Risley |
| 8 | Ella Mae Hibbs | 23 | Rebecca McMahan |
| 8 | Jeff Rowe | 26 | Bill & Kim Gribble |
| 8 | Gretchen Sparks | 26 | Lois Setzer |
| 9 | Jamie Townsend | 26 | Carol Whitney |
| 9 | Clara Welsh | 27 | Godwin Oji |
| 11 | Karen Persely | | |
| 13 | Mylene Bole | | |



Giving

There are many ways to participate in giving at ChristChurch Presbyterian.

The Giving Committee is proud to announce projects for 2011. If you would like to give, participate in the committee or simply have questions, please contact Karen Persley at krp111154@sbcglobal.net.

November

4. Star of Hope Mission- Warm clothing, adult and child, jackets, sweaters, blankets.
5. Cuba Water Trip- List of needed school items on the back table.

December

6. Adopt-A-Family- Details to be announced.

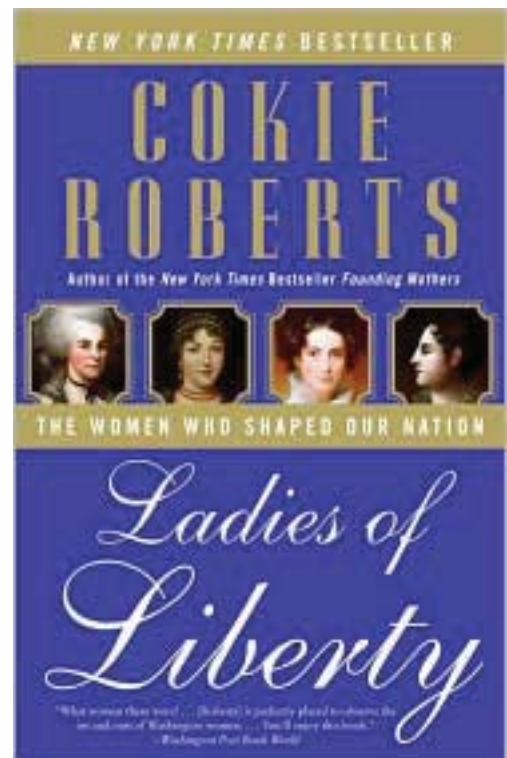
Holly Hall Book Review

Tuesday, November 1, 2011

**Ladies of Liberty : The Women Who Shaped Our Nation
by Cokie Roberts**

Reviewer: Nancy Ashley

Cokie Roberts uses her expertise in storytelling to relate the inside stories of our “founding ladies.” From first ladies to free thinkers, educators to explorers, this exceptional group includes Abigail Adams, Margaret Bayard Smith, Martha Jefferson, Dolley Madison, Elizabeth Monroe, Louisa Catherine Adams, Eliza Hamilton, Theodosia Burr, Rebecca Gratz, Louisa Livingston, Rosalie Calvert, Sacajawea, and others. You are sure to be inspired!



2011 Session

ChristChurch Presbyterian

Class of 2011

John Becker, Amy Gremillion,
Priscilla Kennedy, Woody Speer,
Roger Tucker, Craig Wooten

Class of 2012

Homer Borgstedte, Sue Cox,
Brad Eaves, Aileen Fleming, Karen
Persely

Class of 2013

Richard Bell, Mylene Bole, Fred
Cook, Anne Reed, Gretchen Sparks
Youth Elders: Matthew Bole,
Lubna Obou

Clerk of Session

Janice Schessler

Moderator

Rev. John Hirling

CCP Good News Contributors

Barbara Buckley, Brittany Clay,
Sue Cox, Karen Persely,
Fred & Julia Cook, John Hirling, Jen
Mitchell

Editors:

Brittany Clay

Christian Education

Pre-school to High School Sunday School

Pre-school to 5th Grade

Where: Education Bldg. Room 205

Middle School

Where: Education Bldg. Room 222

High School

Where: Education Bldg. Room 211

Adult Sunday School

Wired Word

Where: Library

When: Every Sunday at 9am

Teacher: Fred Cook

Women's Bible Study.

Where: West Wing, Room 5

When: Every Sunday at 9am

Teacher: Burnette Boyett

Mental Gymnastics

The Voice New Testament and annotated Bible

Where: West Wing, Room 1

When: Every Sunday at 9am

Teacher: Homer Borgstedte

Youth Happenings!



CCP Youth have had a busy and fun year thus far! Our latest adventure was the Youth Costume Party on October 23. The Youth came dressed in the best costumes including their adult sponsors and youth director. They had fun carving pumpkins, eating lots and lots of candy, and playing games. We had a best pumpkin carving award and a best costume award. We had a great turn out with 17 youth! I invite anyone who would like to be involved with the Youth to come talk to me or e-mail me. We would love to have you! Upcoming events include Youth Sunday on November 20th. The Youth are working hard to put together a service of worship for the congregation that is both energetic and Youthful. I hope to have all hands on deck from the Youth in order to have a spectacular service of worship. As the year progresses I am hopeful that the Youth group will become a more cohesive whole. I thank the Youth, Fred and Julia, and the Congregation for the support of your Youth. Keep it up by buying FORK INSURANCE to help sponsor the Youth for their Mission trip and Conclaves.

Peace on Ya,
Den Mitchell



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USPS #105.

All articles for submission should be sent to church-admin@ccpres.org. Issue deadlines are the 20th of the month.

All material is subject to editing for space and content; every effort will be made to include all articles.

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Website

www.ccpres.org

Presbytery of New Covenant

713-526-2585
www.pbyofnewcovenant.org

Harvest Time

Many thanks to the members of CCP and other helping hands who contributed fresh fruits and vegetables to the Harvest Table Sunday, October 30. St. Giles and CCSC were blessed and excited to receive the harvest sown into families in need for this holiday.

Many Blessings!



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Join us on Sunday!
Christian Education 9:00 am
Worship 10:15 am

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