

The Bell



205 MT PARK BLVD SW

ISSAQUAH WA 98027

The monthly newsletter of The Community Church of Issaquah November 2011

Getting Ready for Thanksgiving

“O come, let us sing to the Lord;

Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving.”

-Psalms 95:1-2 (NRSV)

Our two most celebrated holidays, Christmas and Easter, both have a time of preparation leading up to them, so that people can truly appreciate what the holiday is all about. Easter has Lent, and Christmas has Advent. Why doesn't Thanksgiving have a season of preparation? In fact, Thanksgiving sometimes seems to get swallowed up in preparation for Christmas these days. Of course the short answer to this question is that Thanksgiving is a national observance and not an international church holiday. But still, the same benefit we get from a season of preparation for Christmas, we could also get if we had a season of preparation for Thanksgiving – we could appreciate it all the more when it comes, and we could even enjoy it a little more ahead of time.

So, I say let's just declare our own season of preparation. We don't need the Church or the U.S. Congress to decide it for us (a good thing, seeing how the Congress works these days!) On a recent Sunday, we sang “Count Your Blessings” as our final hymn, and that can be the theme song for our season of preparation. Let's spend the time leading up to Thanksgiving counting all the things we have to be thankful for before God. Start off making a list. There are 23 days in November before Thanksgiving. Can we think of 23 things we have to be thankful for? I would think that most of us would have no trouble at all thinking of 23 things to be thankful for. I would think that most of us would have more trouble *paring the list down* to the 23 most important things we are thankful for! Let's make our lists as

significant and varied as possible. (It's probably more helpful to list general categories like “my home”, “my family”, “my health” than to list a lot of specifics within one category, like “my favorite chair”, “my nice lawn”, “my comfortable bed”, etc.) Take a day to thank God for each item on your list.

Our time of preparation should also include ways of *expressing* our thanks. I can think of two ways. One would be by sharing our plenty. The Deacons and Women's Mission Fellowship are sponsoring a food drive for the Seattle Union Gospel Mission during November. They are looking for non-perishable food donations to be placed in our narthex. That would be a good way to thank God for all the material blessings he has given us!

Another thing I would propose is something I have encouraged at each church I have pastored: think of all the PEOPLE God has sent your way who have added something special to your life. Maybe it was a teacher, maybe a special friend who came by just at the time you needed them most. Have you thanked them? I would like each person in our church family to think of five persons who they would really like to thank for something they have done, and write a letter to them. It doesn't need to be long – a few sentences will do. If the person you would like to thank has died, you could even write to their child or grandchild. Write the letter; address and stamp the letter, but do not mail it yourself. Bring your letters to church on Sunday, November 20th. We will bring them up to the Communion table and dedicate them to God. In so doing, we will be acknowledging that all of these special people have been a gift to us from God. Then we will mail the letters en masse. It will be a very special Thanksgiving offering to God.

-Pastor Keith Madsen

FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

The holiday season is fast approaching. Thanksgiving is a time of thinking of people less fortunate than we. Recently disasters have struck all over the world and our church family has generously donated to some of these disasters. However, we have hungry people right here in the northwest. The Deacons and Women's Mission Fellowship are sponsoring a food drive for the Seattle Union Gospel Mission during November. We are inviting our church family to join us in this project.

You may bring your non-perishable food donations and place them in the basket in the nathex during November. Some grateful people will have a better Thanksgiving because of your generosity.

Save The Date

There will be a Christmas Potluck after church on December 18th!!

World Mission Offering

Thanks to all who donated and the total to date is
\$650.

Special Dates for November

- All Saints' Day, November 1, 2011
- Daylight-Saving Time ends, November 6, 2011
- Veterans Day, November 11, 2011
- Christ the King Sunday, November 20, 2011
- National Bible Week, November 20-27, 2011
- Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 2011
- First Sunday of Advent, November 27, 2011

Women's Mission Fellowship

Next meeting will be held November 1, 2011
1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall

LONG TERM PRAYER LIST

Perhaps you would like to add these church family members
to your prayer concerns:

1. Marge Armstrong, Lake Hills Family Home
2. Rose Matthai, Aegis Assisted Living
3. Robert (Bob) Pusch, Group Home, Burien
4. Ken Schmelzer, at home
5. Dorothy Swearson, Issaquah Care Center
6. Florence Watkins, 240 S Silke Rd Apt 105 Colville, WA 99114
7. Martha Nordhagen Adams House, Oregon
8. Geri Hardesty
9. Roger Frye, 6200 123rd Ave SE Bellevue, WA 98006

November 2011 at CCI:

- WMF Meeting - Tuesday 11/1..... at 1:00 pm
- Deacons Meeting - Thursday 11/4 -----at 3:00 pm
- Trustees Meeting– Thursday 11/6 ----- at 12:30 pm
- Council Meeting - Sunday 11/13----- at 12:30 pm
- Bell Deadline - Monday 11/28

Happy November Birthday to.....



- 2 Dee Schirmer
- 4 Ruth Hunter
- 13 Andy Tweeddale
- 15 Karyn Akishin
- 21 Velma Walker
- 26 Merry Ross
- 28 Susi Wiegant
- 29 Nancy Perry



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