

# Crossroads Baptist Church Newsletter

2001 S. Starr Road, Apache Junction, AZ 85119 480-982-9120

NOVEMBER 2023



Crossroads is now a registered Point-of-Distribution (POD) partner for Grand Canyon University – CityServe!

- What is GCU-CityServe?
- Is that a big deal?
- What does that have to do with being a Great Commission church?
- Do I have a part to play?

Fair questions.

Let's start with:

- **What is GCU-CityServe?**

Grand Canyon University has partnered with CityServe USA, a Christian Outreach Ministry. Its goal is to mobilize the local church to transform their communities by meeting their real-time needs.

CityServe is designed to help the local church to be a “hero” by meeting the needs of the vulnerable: the poor, the widow, the exploited, the addicted, the prisoner, and the unreached.

GCU-CityServe maintains and stocks a 95,000 square foot warehouse on the GCU Campus. They have agreements with large box companies like Costco, Amazon, Walmart, etc., which enable them to receive truckloads of merchandise for distribution. The merchandise they receive is new excess stock and will not be offered for sale to the public.

Crossroads POD partnership with GCU-CityServe gives us access to the warehouse and all it contains. There is no cost for whatever we receive. Our commitment is to pick up and deliver our requested products to a needy family in the name of Jesus.

- **Is that a big deal?**

A church's resources often determine their ability to meet the needs of their community. But a POD partnership with GCU-CityServe creates vastly improved resources and opportunities. We have access to millions of dollars of household merchandise without expanding our missionary budget. We can now better meet local needs and still attend to our international missionaries. We now have some “outreach muscle.”

“A man's gift opens doors for him....” Proverbs 18:16.

There is something about a gift that helps make way for the building of relationships and softens hearts for ministry opportunities. The goal of GCU-CityServe is to help us impact our community by meeting practical needs, seeking the restoration of dignity amongst the broken, and allow for the sharing of the Gospel message to the lost. The resources we receive as a CityServe POD can bolster existing outreach ministries (like Women's Hope Center, Casa de Amor, etc.) and empower church members to give to their neighbors in need and help your church serve our city.

- **What does that have to do with being a Great Commission church?**

Everything! Going to people with a gift in hand is a wonderful opportunity to show love and compassion. It positions us to have relationships where we can have meaningful discussions about Jesus, eternal security, the joys of belonging to a church family, and much more. In short—we are empowered to go out and give! We can do more than talk about needs, we can meet needs.

- **Do I have a part to play?**

Yes. Start by looking for community needs. Think about the merchandise that is in each room of a house. Do you know someone who needs a mattress? A kitchen table? Cookware? Clothing? Maybe a college student who doesn't have a desk or chairs, or

(continued-page 2)



*(continued from page 1)*

a single mother who needs infant or children's toys or kitchen utensils. Start thinking and start asking. Use your imagination. Then contact the Missions Committee. More direction to come on that.

Next — do you have access to a pickup truck, van, or passenger vehicle to help pick up and distribute? Are you willing to help? Make that known. Maybe you can be a ride-along to offer moral support, help with follow-up, or to witness for Jesus and tell them about Crossroads.

We have just finished our Business Meeting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2023. The meeting was informative, and it provided us with an opportunity for great fellowship. Hats off to the families that brought finger food for our meeting. There was an abundant selection and great quality. It may not seem like an important thing; but seeing our folks participate in a business meeting, and then sitting together to enjoy a wonderful meal afterwards encourages your pastor. It is wonderful to see us working together, taking ownership of our success as a Church, and enjoying one another!

Thank you to the office staff for organizing us; for collecting reports, and for collating and reporting operational and financial data. Also, thank you committees for your work and showing us your accountability through reports.

Of course, our A/V and hospitality teams always put forth great effort and are much appreciated.

Forgive me if I did not specifically mention your contribution. My absent-mindedness has nothing to do with the value of your contribution. I am grateful that the Lord knows, the Lord never forgets, and it is the Lord who rewards!

***Please know that God Loves you and so do !!!!***

***Pastor Rick***





# NOTICES & EVENTS

## Of Casseroles and Cupboards

The church freezer is filling with casseroles and our cupboards (pantry) are filling!  
Do you know someone that needs a bit of help? Someone that is ill and a visit with a meal and/or some groceries would show them God's love? You can minister to them in the name of Jesus through your church. Come by the church during office hours or call to set up another time.

**Saturday, December 2**

## Church Work Day

**Please plan to come help tidy your church! We need dusters, sweepers, wipers, etc.!**

The new Ladies' Life Group is held on Tuesdays at 11:15am right after the Ladies' Bible Study at 10am.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

#### NEW SANCTUARY SECURITY SYSTEM

##### **To the Crossroads Baptist Congregation:**

Please note: Due to the break-in and vandalism of the kitchen and sanctuary on July 22, we had an alarm system installed the first week of August.

Any member with a key to the sanctuary and/or kitchen, needs to **register** as a user **OR** return the key to the office if you don't want to use the alarm system.

Be aware: Entering the sanctuary without a passcode when the alarm is armed, will set off a very loud alarm that also goes to the security company and police.  
(Yikes!)

Thank you for your cooperation!  
You are loved by God and your church staff!

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

#### NEW! CHURCH APP FOR PHONES AND OPTION FOR ONLINE GIVING

**Our church now has a new phone app and is about to launch an updated website!**

**Both the app and the current website have the new online giving option.**

When giving online, there is a fee (a percentage) charged as well. You can choose to pay the fee or not. If you do, the church receives your full gift and the fee you paid is deemed tax deductible for you. If you choose not to pay the fee, the fee is taken out of your gift amount prior to deposit to the church's bank account.

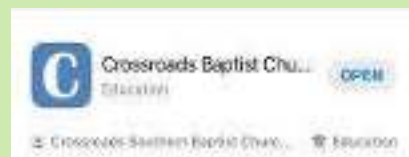
You will find the Crossroads Baptist Church app in the Google Play Store and in the Apple App Store for both Android and iPhone.

**\*\*Search for Crossroads Baptist Church AZ**

Then download the app to your phone.\*\*

*Look for the blue square with a white 'C' in the middle.*

*(This picture below is from the Apple Store)*



**For assistance, please feel free to call the office to schedule an in-person training.**

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

#### NEW CHURCH EMAIL ADDRESS!

##### **To the Crossroads Baptist Congregation:**

Please note: Our church now has a new email address.

Please add it to your contacts for the church.

It is now:

**[Info@CrossroadsBaptistAZ.com](mailto:Info@CrossroadsBaptistAZ.com)**

For a while, emails to the old yahoo.com address will be forwarded to the new email address.





## Live Nativity Walk-Through Event 2023 Mountain View Lutheran Church

### Public Walk-Thru Live Nativity Event:

As you may know, Crossroads donated our old 'Live Nativity' costumes and props to Mountain View Lutheran Church in 2022 for their first Live Nativity event as they were interested in having one if Crossroads was not.

That event was a success and now, in 2023, they are once again holding a free 'Live Nativity' community-outreach event. The legacy of Crossroads' Live Nativity events is living on just next door!

This event is an excellent opportunity for our combined faith communities to reach out together to the local area. It is truly a wonderful evangelistic event to invite your friends, family, kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids to experience. See and experience real people and animals set in live Biblical scenes.

If you are interested in being a part of it, please see Mary and Terry Courtney. They are currently involved and would love to have you join them. (*Mary's dream to play Mary, the mother of Jesus, has come true this year!*)

The current volunteer schedule is:

\*Planning meeting: Tue., Nov. 14 at 5pm in the Mountain View Family Life Center.

\*Dress rehearsal: Fri, Dec 15

\*Refreshments will be available after guests walk through the Bible-based village.

Their church event contact is Lisa Blue at 480-982-8266.

If you are unable to physically take part in the Live Nativity, but would like to support it financially, please place your offering in an envelope marked 'Live Nativity' or write that in the memo section of a check made out to Crossroads Baptist Church.

Flyers will be available soon.




### The Lonely Ember



A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination.

 As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail."

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting.

Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.



As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."



# Missions News

- News off/from missions supported by Crossroads Baptist Church

Matthew 25:40

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

## Missions Focus

### Through November 12

**We are collecting canned goods and non-perishable food**

The missions committee is collecting very-needed items for local missions Hope Women's Center and The Genesis Project. There is a collection area near the media booth in the west-side alcove. Assistance is available if you need help getting items from your car.

If you are unable to shop for these items, you can make a check out to Crossroads Baptist Church and write 'November Mission Focus' in the memo area. Place it in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. We will make sure the missions get the donations.

### Through December 10

**Angel Tree**

Watch for the 'Angel Tree' coming November 26th!

### December 10 through December 31

**Lottie Moon Christmas Offering**

What is the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering?

Lottie Moon was sent as a Southern Baptist missionary to China from 1873 to 1912. She saw firsthand the world's greatest problem — LOSTNESS. Meeting so many people who had never heard the gospel compelled her to write letters to American churches describing the need for a greater missionary presence. She pleaded for increased prayer and financial support to send and sustain more missionaries. This challenge became known as the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering®. 100% of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering enables gospel transformation among the unreached.

Thank you for your heart to help those less fortunate.

**Acts 20:35> "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"**

Missions Committee: George Dodge, Wes Ehlers, Lora Kimsey, Judy Mittlestaedt, Linda Moody, Hector Palma  
(Your name could be here too!)



# Missions News (continued)

**3,072 PEOPLE GROUPS**

*No one is engaging them.*

**UNTIL NOW.**

Your financial gifts to the Lottie Moon offering will send 300 missionary explorers.

 **IMB** | **LOTTIE MOON**  
CHRISTMAS OFFERING



[imb.org/lottiemoon](http://imb.org/lottiemoon)

Scan the QR code to give to the Lottie Moon offering. 100% of your gifts supports missionary presence around the world.



## LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Growing up in Virginia, Lottie Moon and her siblings chose to rebel against Christianity. At 18, Lottie followed Christ and was baptized. When she was 33, she sailed to China as a Southern Baptist missionary. She saw firsthand the world's greatest problem

**- LOSTNESS.**

In letters to Southern Baptists in America, she pleaded for increasing prayer and giving. Her letters raised more support for missionaries to be sent to China.

Every year, Southern Baptists collect the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering\*, where **100% of the gifts collected send and support missionaries.**



**LOTTIE MOON**  
CHRISTMAS OFFERING

 **IMB**

Your financial gifts to the Lottie Moon offering support pioneering efforts to take the gospel to unengaged, unreached people groups.

\*Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is a registered trademark of IMB.



# Scriptures for the Month

## November Thanksgiving & Praise

- Day 1: Psalm 100:4-5
- Day 2: Psalm 26:7-8
- Day 3: Psalm 105:1
- Day 4: Psalm 69:30
- Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- Day 6: Psalm 107:1-2
- Day 7: Hebrews 13:15
- Day 8: Psalm 116:17
- Day 9: Jonah 2:9
- Day 10: Psalm 50:23
- Day 11: Colossians 3:17
- Day 12: Psalm 136:1-2
- Day 13: Psalm 107:21-22
- Day 14: Psalm 95:1-2
- Day 15: 2 Corinthians 2:14
- Day 16: Psalms 30:11-12
- Day 17: Jeremiah 33:11
- Day 18: Ezra 3:11
- Day 19: 2 Corinthians 4:15
- Day 20: 2 Corinthians 9:11
- Day 21: Philippians 4:6-7
- Day 22: Colossians 3:15
- Day 23: Luke 17:17-18
- Day 24: Colossians 2:6-7
- Day 25: Colossians 4:2
- Day 26: Psalm 106:47
- Day 27: Psalms 28:7
- Day 28: 2 Chronicles 20:21
- Day 29: Ephesians 5:19-20
- Day 30: Revelation 4:8-9
- Day 31: Revelation 7:12

*"God is in control and therefore  
in everything I can give thanks."*

*Kay Arthur*

*susandavis.com*





# 2023 Monthly Bible Reading Plan

## Start Now! It's never too late!

### TURNING POINT'S

# 365 - DAY

## BIBLE READING PLAN



One of the best ways to know God is to become acquainted with the full counsel of His written Word. This reading plan will guide you through all 66 books of the Bible in the coming year.

#### NOVEMBER

1. John 1 - 2	11. Acts 1 - 3	21. Acts 22 - 23
2. John 3 - 4	12. Acts 4 - 5	22. Acts 24 - 26
3. John 5 - 6	13. Acts 6 - 7	23. Acts 27 - 28
4. John 7 - 8	14. Acts 8 - 9	24. Romans 1 - 3
5. John 9 - 10	15. Acts 10 - 11	25. Romans 4 - 7
6. John 11 - 12	16. Acts 12 - 13	26. Romans 8 - 10
7. John 13 - 15	17. Acts 14 - 15	27. Romans 11 - 14
8. John 16 - 17	18. Acts 16 - 17	28. Romans 15 - 16
9. John 18 - 19	19. Acts 18 - 19	29. 1 Corinthians 1 - 4
10. John 20 - 21	20. Acts 20 - 21	30. 1 Corinthians 5 - 9





# Veterans Day

is a U.S. legal holiday dedicated to American veterans of all wars, and **Veterans Day 2023 will occur on Saturday, November 11.** In 1918, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, was declared between the Allied nations and Germany in World War I, then known as “the Great War.”

Commemorated in many countries as Armistice Day the following year, November 11th became a federal holiday in the United States in 1938. In the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, Armistice Day became known as Veterans Day.

The Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, marking the official end of World War I. Nonetheless, the armistice date of November 11, 1918, remained in the public imagination as the date that marked the end of the conflict.

One year later, in November 1919, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day. The day’s observation included parades and public gatherings, as well as a brief pause in business and school activities at 11 a.m.

On November 11, 1921, an unidentified American soldier killed in the war was buried at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. On the same day the previous year, unidentified soldiers were laid to rest at Westminster Abbey in London and at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

On June 4, 1926, Congress passed a resolution that the “recurring anniversary of [November 11, 1918] should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations,” and that the president should issue an annual proclamation calling for the observance of Armistice Day.

American effort during World War II saw the greatest mobilization of the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force in the nation’s history (more than 16 million people); some 5.7 million more served in the Korean War.



In 1954, after lobbying efforts by veterans’ service organizations, the 83rd U.S. Congress amended the 1938 act that had made Armistice Day a holiday, striking the word “Armistice” in favor of “Veterans.” President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the legislation on June 1, 1954. From then on, November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

The next development in the story of Veterans Day unfolded in 1968, when Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which sought to ensure three-day weekends for federal employees—and encourage tourism and travel—by celebrating four national holidays (Washington’s Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Columbus Day) on Mondays.

The observation of Veterans Day was set as the fourth Monday in October. The first Veterans Day under the new law was Monday, October 25, 1971; confusion ensued, as many states disapproved of this change, and continued to observe the holiday on its original date.

In 1975, after it became evident that the actual date of Veterans Day carried historical and patriotic significance to many Americans, President Gerald Ford signed a new law returning the observation of Veterans Day to November 11th beginning in 1978. If November 11 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the federal government observes the holiday on the previous Friday or following Monday, respectively. Government offices are closed on Veterans Day.

## Remembrance Day

Great Britain, France, Australia and Canada also commemorate the veterans of World War I and II on or near November 11th: Canada has Remembrance Day, while Britain has Remembrance Sunday (the second Sunday of November). In Europe, Great Britain and the Commonwealth countries it is common to observe two minutes of silence at 11 a.m. every November 11.

## Veterans Day Traditions

In the United States, an official wreath-laying ceremony is held each Veterans Day at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, while parades and other celebrations are held in states around the country.

Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.

*(<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/history-of-veterans-day>)*



AND YET...

STILL A SUPER MAN.



FINKE...  
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AND ILLUSTRATORS  
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## October Average Monthly Attendance

## Actual Attendance

Sunday Worship: .....53  
 Sunday School: .....36  
 Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study: ..... 14  
**Ladies' Bible Study:.....7**  
**Ladies' Life Group: ..... 6**

**Ladies' Breakfast: .....5**  
**Aspire: .....8**



There are several yummy casseroles in the church's freezer for our members who need a hand with meals. They are hand-made by members of our own

Hospitality Committee.

If you know of a member who has a need, please check out casseroles through the office during the week and through Rita or other member of the committee on Sundays.



If you or someone you know needs prayer immediately, contact our Prayer Chain Chair, April Inman.

## Need a Handyman/ Painter?

The church has been utilizing Richard Elizondo for two years for many projects inside and outside of the church (our sanctuary is one of them). A few members have also hired him for things at their homes.

Richard is dependable and honest. His fees are reasonable.

Reach him at 480-255-4698



- **Sunday Fellowship** - coffee & donuts 9:00 am.
- **Sunday School** at 9:30 am.
- **Worship Service** at 10:45 am.
- **Tuesday Ladies' Bible Study** at 10:00 am. **AND (new) Ladies' Life Group at 11:15 am.**
- **Wednesday Prayer Meeting & Bible Study** at 3:00 pm.
- **The Ladies' Breakfast—Monthly:** third Friday at 8:30 am.
- **Volunteering Your Time:** The church needs your gifts and talents. See a need? Want to help somehow? Contact the office.



# REFLECTIONS

GOD WILL  
ENSURE MY  
SUCCESS  
IN ACCORDANCE  
*with his plan*  
NOT MINE

Francis Chan

ChristianQuotes.com

When the whole world is running towards a cliff, he who is running in the opposite direction appears to have lost his mind.

C.S. Lewis

When the trumpet  
of the Lord shall sound,  
And time shall  
be no more,  
And the morning breaks,  
eternal, bright and fair,  
When the saved  
of earth shall gather  
Over on the other shore,  
And the roll is  
called up yonder,  
I'll be there.



MANY PEOPLE REJECT JESUS  
BECAUSE OF BAD EXPERIENCES  
WITH RELIGIOUS PEOPLE.

BUT, HERE'S THE THING... JESUS  
HAD BAD EXPERIENCES WITH  
RELIGIOUS PEOPLE, TOO.

IN FACT, THEY KILLED HIM.  
PEOPLE WILL LET YOU DOWN.

JESUS WON'T. ✝



Charles Spurgeon



When you speak of heaven, let your face light up; let it be irradiated by a heavenly gleam; let your eyes shine with reflected glory. But when you speak of hell, your ordinary expression will do.

AZ QUOTES



# FDA Warns Consumers Not To Purchase or Use Certain Eye Drops From Several Major Brands Due to Risk of Eye Infection

**October 30, 2023** -- FDA is updating the list of over-the-counter eye drop products consumers should not purchase or use to include Equate Hydration PF Lubricant Eye Drop 10 mL sold by Walmart in stores and online. Walmart is removing the product from their store shelves and website.

October 27, 2023 -- FDA is warning consumers not to purchase and to immediately stop using 26 over-the-counter eye drop products due to the potential risk of eye infections that could result in partial vision loss or blindness. Patients who have signs or symptoms of an eye infection after using these products should talk to their health care provider or seek medical care immediately. These products are marketed under the following brands:

**CVS Health, Leader (Cardinal Health), Rugby (Cardinal Health), Rite Aid, Target Up & Up, Velocity Pharma**

These products are intended to be sterile. Ophthalmic drug products pose a potential heightened risk of harm to users because drugs applied to the eyes bypass some of the body's natural defenses.

FDA recommended the manufacturer of these products recall all lots on October 25, 2023, after agency investigators found insanitary conditions in the manufacturing facility and positive bacterial test results from environmental sampling of critical drug production areas in the facility. FDA also recommends consumers properly discard these products.

CVS, Rite Aid and Target are removing the products from their store shelves and websites. Products branded as Leader, Rugby and Velocity may still be available to purchase in stores and online and should not be purchased.

FDA has not received any adverse event reports of eye infection associated with these products at this time. FDA encourages health care professionals and patients to report adverse events or quality problems with any medicine to FDA's MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program:

Complete and submit the report online at Medwatch; or  
Download and complete the form, then submit it via fax at 1-800-FDA-0178.

## Eye Drop Retailers and Product Information

### Retailer/ Label, Product

**CVS Health**, Lubricant Eye Drops 15 ml (single & twin pack), Lubricant Gel Drops 15 ml (single & twin pack), Multi-Action Relief Drops 15 ml, Lubricating Gel drops 10 ml, Lubricant Eye Drops 10 ml (single & twin pack), Mild Moderate Lubricating Eye Drops 15 ml (single pack)

**Rugby (Cardinal Health)**, Lubricating Tears Eye Drops 15 ml, Polyvinyl Alcohol 1.4% Lubricating Eye Drops 15 ml

**Leader (Cardinal Health)**, Dry Eye Relief 10 ml, Lubricant Eye Drops 15 ml (single & twin pack), Dry Eye Relief 15 ml, Eye Irritation Relief 15 ml

**Rite Aid**, Lubricant Eye Drops 15 ml (twin pack), Lubricant Eye Drops 10 ml (twin pack), Gentle Lubricant Gel Eye Drops 15 ml, Lubricant Gel Drops 15 ml, Lubricating Gel Drops 10 ml, Multi-Action Relief Drops 15 ml

**Target**, Up&Up Dry Eye Relief Lubricant Eye Drops 30 ml, Up&Up Extreme Relief Dry Eye 15 ml (single pack), Up&Up Extreme Relief Dry Eye 30 ml (twin pack)

**Velocity Pharma LLC**, Lubricant Eye Drop 10 ml (triple pack)

**Walmart**, Equate Hydration PF Lubricant Eye Drop 10 ml

(Selected info from <https://www.drugs.com/fda/fda-warns-consumers-not-purchase-certain-eye-drops-several-major-brands-due-risk-eye-infection-14624.html>?)

hash2=5c4872987a6242897ac82bffafd6b93c&utm\_source=ddc&utm\_medium=email&utm\_campaign=FDA+Safety+Alert++FDA+Warns+Consumers+Not+To+Purchase+or+Use+Certain+Eye+Drops+From+Several+Major+Brands+Due+to+Risk+of+Eye+Infection)

Why did the gym  
close down?

It just didn't  
work out.

My boss told me  
to have a good day..

..so I went home.

I have a fear of  
speed bumps.

But, I am slowly  
getting over it.



I don't have a train of thought I have seven trains on 4 tracks that narrowly avoid each other when the paths cross and all the conductors are screaming

Procrastination is totally a good thing. You always have something to do tomorrow, plus you have nothing to do today.

Me: (sobbing my heart out, eyes swollen, nose red)...I can't see you anymore... I am not going to let you hurt me like this again!

Trainer: It was a sit up. You did one sit up.





# 7 Ways to Uncover a Christian Meaning in Thanksgiving

By [Jessica Brodie](#), Award-winning Christian Novelist and Journalist

November 01, 2023, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/7-ways-to-uncover-a-christian-meaning-in-thanksgiving.html>

From family and friends decked out in autumn hues gathered around the table, to a hearty spread of roasted turkey, pumpkin pies, and mashed potatoes galore, the American holiday known as Thanksgiving is often a great excuse for a party.

But there's a deeper meaning to the festivities, one of unity and gratitude. And for Christians, there are a number of ways Thanksgiving ties in with faith in God and acknowledgments of the many blessings God bestows.

Here are seven ways to uncover a Christian meaning in Thanksgiving:

## **What Is Thanksgiving Really About?**

I was taught as a young child in school that the first Thanksgiving was an exercise in relationship-building, when indigenous people native to what is today Massachusetts gathered with pilgrim settlers who had come from across the ocean seeking refuge. I thought the gathering was about the pilgrims thanking the Native Americans for teaching them so many important ways to survive in this land.

But the feast was far more than this. History tells us the pilgrims, ignorant of this new land and which crops to grow, had endured a bitter first winter of illness and near-starvation. But between grain swapped through an unexpected trading ship and the kindness of the natives, who taught them how to grow food and establish an alliance with another local tribe, God provided. After their first successful harvest, Gov. William Bradford organized a celebration and invited native allies to join. For three days, they devoted themselves to feasting, prayer and gratitude to the Lord who had provided for them all.

The celebration continued each year, and in 1863, President Lincoln established Thanksgiving as a national holiday. Usually the holiday involved a fast and prayer followed by a grand feast in celebration of the harvest and in thanks to the abundant blessings provided by God.

Over the years, the holiday became less religious and more secular, with a focus on family, turkey, parades, football games, and other festivities, including a number of "turkey day" races.

## **How Can We Uncover Thanksgiving's Christian Meaning?**

Many Christians are surprised to learn how much of the original concept of Thanksgiving was spiritual, as well as how many Bible stories echo the need for thanksgiving-type celebrations among the people when they can express gratitude and humility for all they have.

The first step is taking a look at the spiritual aspects of the holiday as a whole, and the ideas evolve from there.

In the Bible the Hebrew word *todah*, originating from the Hebrew *yadah*, expresses our concept of thanksgiving, both the act and the meaning behind the holiday. *Todah* refers to the giving of thanks, including confession, hymns, praise, and other offerings. *Yadah* further means to cast or throw down, or confess, a posture of humility acknowledging the Lord God Almighty as sovereign over all. The Greek word is *eucharistéo*, meaning to be grateful or to express gratitude.

For example, [Psalm 107:1](#) urges us, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever" and verse 22 tells us to "sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy."

[1 Thessalonians 5:18](#) tells us to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

### **1. Look to God First**

The most important thing we can do to uncover a Christian meaning in Thanksgiving is to look first to the Lord. God is the source of all things: life, land, and all that sustains us. Throughout his earthly ministry, Jesus constantly pointed to the Father and publicly expressed thanks for God's provision and care. He gave thanks before he fed the multitudes in [John 6:11](#), [Matthew 15:36](#) and [Mark 8:6](#). When he cried before God and then raised Lazarus from the dead, he thanked God for hearing him. "I knew that you always hear me," Jesus said, "but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me" ([John 11:41-42](#)).

When God chose to reveal his glory to little children rather than the wise and learned, Jesus also thanked him, saying, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do" ([Matthew 11:25-26](#)).

God is at the root of everything we experience. When good things happen, they happen because God provided for our needs. When bad things happen, we know God walks beside us and ultimately causes good things to happen from these situations.

[Psalm 9:1](#), a psalm of David, proclaims, "I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds."

### **2. Focus on Gratitude**

Focusing on gratitude is another critical thing we can do to uncover a Christian meaning in Thanksgiving. When times are difficult and we experience illness, death, poverty, or oppression, sometimes it's hard to count our blessings.

But [Psalm 136:1](#) tells us to "give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever." And [James 1:17](#) 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."

Even amid difficulty, train your mind to notice good things and be appreciative. Express your gratitude aloud, or make a

(Continued)

list. In my family, we create a gratitude pumpkin each year and write on the pumpkin the many things we are thankful for, from our pets and our health to a simple s'mores night around the campfire.

You can do something similar in the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving or even as part of the day's Thanksgiving celebration. Consider placing a large pumpkin on the table at your Thanksgiving meal and asking each guest to list things to thank God for upon it.

### 3. Read Thanksgiving Stories in the Bible

Sometimes it can be helpful to read about the way God's people thanked God throughout history, even during times of trouble. For instance, [Deuteronomy 26:1-19](#) describes the Israelites' first Thanksgiving in the Promised Land. The prophet [Jonah](#) gave thanks to the Lord in the belly of a whale after he realized he couldn't escape from God's commands ([Jonah 2:8-9](#)). The apostle Paul gave thanks to God in the middle of a storm, just before their shipwreck ([Acts 27:35](#)). During the [Last Supper](#), Jesus thanked God three times for the bread and wine, which represented his body sacrificially broken and his blood spilled out for us all ([Luke 22:15-20](#)).

Reading these stories helps us understand how good and right it is to express thanks to the Lord for taking care of us in spite of the many ways we go astray.

### 4. Sing Songs of Grace and Thanksgiving to God

The Bible tells us over and over how much God loves singing. [Psalm 7:17](#) talks about how the psalmist will "sing the praises of the name of the Lord Most High." [Psalm 100:1-3](#) urges, "Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture."

[Hebrews 13:15](#) tells us to "continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that openly profess his name."

And [Colossians 3:16](#) says we are to "let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."

We can sing songs today as well. While carols and festive songs are popular at Christmastime, sometimes we forget there are thanksgiving songs, too — hymns of gratitude, modern-day anthems of praise and thankfulness, and Holy Spirit-inspired songs that burst from our lips even with no musical accompaniment at all.

Singing is a great way, both individually and as a group, to thank God.

### 5. Pray

The Bible is chock-full of examples of people lifting hearts, minds, and souls to Father God. "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign," the Bible tells us in [Revelation 11:17](#).

[Philippians 4:6](#) urges us not to be anxious but, instead, "In every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Giving thanks through prayer is so important. Prayer is intended to be conversation with God, not a list of requests. Part of that conversation should be understanding God's goodness and expressing gratitude for this. We're not owed anything by God. We don't deserve the blessings we experience. These are gifts. Thanking God helps us remember this.

### 6. Serve Others

Serving others is another thing we can do to uncover the Christian meaning in Thanksgiving.

In [Matthew 22:36-40](#), Jesus tells us the two greatest commandments are to love God with all our heart, mind, and soul and, second, to love our neighbor as yourself. "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments," he says.

Loving others is a way of loving God. We cannot do anything to earn God's love, but we can show our appreciation by loving others generously and extravagantly, like the good Samaritan cared for the wounded stranger in [Luke 25:25-37](#).

Many people choose to serve others on Thanksgiving, whether that means cooking a meal for family and friends or helping to host a community Thanksgiving, providing a free meal and other items, such as coats, warm clothing, or services, in the name of Jesus.

When we meditate on the blessings God has given us and feel thankful, we often overflow that gratitude upon others.

### 7. Honor Relationships

A final thing we can do to uncover the Christian meaning in Thanksgiving is to obey God by following his commandments. In [Exodus 20:12](#), he commands us, "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you." Today, many of us have difficult, tense, or even estranged relationships with our family members, including our parents. Perhaps our parents wronged us in deep, cutting, painful ways. Getting together with them for a holiday meal might seem like the last thing we wish to do.

But choosing to honor our parents is important to the Lord. So is forgiving others.

[Ephesians 4:32](#) urges us to "be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

This is an example of true thankfulness in our heart: understanding how generous a gift it is that we wretched, undeserving sinners are forgiven, and in our gratitude, bestowing that same forgiveness and agape love onto others in the same manner.

It's fine to enjoy turkey, football games, parades, and other secular activities on Thanksgiving. But be sure to seek the deeper, Christ-centered meaning in the holiday. It will bless you beyond measure.



# November 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>This month's Bible reading plan is:</i> <u><a href="#">Jhn1—1 Cor 9</a></u> <i>The daily plan is in the monthly newsletter.</i></p>			1 3pm-Prayer Meeting & Bible Study	2 6pm Choir Practice	3	4
	<i>Canned &amp; Non-perishables through Nov 12</i>					
5 9am-Fellowship 9:30am-Bible Study 10:45am-Worship & The Lord's Supper	6	7 10am-Ladies' Bible Study 11:15am-Ladies' Life Group	8 3pm-Prayer Meeting & Bible Study	9 6pm Choir Practice	10 Veterans Day (Observed)  1775: The United States Marine Corps was created.	11 Veterans Day (Actual)
<i>Canned &amp; Non-perishables through Nov 12</i>						
12 9am-Fellowship 9:30am-Bible Study 10:45am-Worship	13	14 10am-Ladies' Bible Study 11:15am-Ladies' Life Group	15 9am-Property Comm Mtg  3pm-Prayer Meeting & Bible Study	16 6pm-Choir Practice	17 8:30am-Ladies' Breakfast @ iHop  Evening: Aspire Women's Event	18
<i>Angel Tree through Dec 10</i>						
19 9am-Fellowship 9:30am-Bible Study 10:45am-Worship	20	21 10am-Ladies' Bible Study 11:15am-Ladies' Life Group	22 3pm-Prayer Meeting & Bible Study	23 Thanksgiving Day HOLIDAY-OFFICE CLOSED  No Choir Practice	24 HOLIDAY-OFFICE CLOSED	25 9am-Decorating and Decorations Comm Mtg
<i>Angel Tree through Dec 10</i>						
26 9am-Fellowship 9:30am-Bible Study 10:45am-Worship	27	28 10am-Ladies' Bible Study 11:15am-Ladies' Life Group	29 3pm-Prayer Meeting & Bible Study	30 6pm-Choir Practice		
<i>Angel Tree through Dec 10</i>						

***"Always be humble and gentle.  
Be patient with each other."  
Eph 4:2 (NLT)***

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**Deacons**

Wes Ehlers, Hector Palma, Mike Tacker, Robert Wisner



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