

The Vine

I am the vine; you are the branches...John 15:5

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

November 2013

THANKSGIVING THOUGHTS

This month we will all pause and observe a day our nation sets aside as a holiday. It is "Thanksgiving Day." Hopefully all Americans will pause to remember just how grateful they should be for the privileges and blessings afforded us. It is doubtful that will happen because of the decided turn toward secular humanism our government and society has taken. It hasn't always been that way. In 1863, a noble statesman from Kentucky wrote the following Thanksgiving Proclamation. Abraham Lincoln wrote:

It is the duty of nations as well as of man to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord. We know that by His divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God.

We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us. It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people, I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November, a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father Who dwelleth in the heavens.—A. Lincoln, 1863

What a pity that men who guide our government and men who greatly influence the morality of our society today do not have the sentiments expressed by one of the greatest leaders this nation ever produced.

Let us be thankful every day, and especially this season of the year. When we gather as families on Thanksgiving Day, let us be truly thankful for the benevolence God has lavishly poured out on us.



Mixed Signals

My eyes hurt. It's all that pink.

Pink shoes, pink socks, pink wrist bands, pink towels – there is pink everywhere. I can't get the theme from the Pink Panther out of my head. Da dum... da dum,...da dum, da dum, da dum, da, da, da, dummmm... (Admit it, you are humming it to yourself!)

And where, you ask, do I see all this pink? (If you aren't asking, you should be!) Every time I watch that manly game of NFL football.

OK, I get it. October is for breast cancer awareness month and the NFL is doing their part, thus the pink. I would love to find a cure for this disease as much as anyone and I applaud the NFL for bringing attention to the cause. But do we really need this much pink? Even the officials' penalty flags were pink the first week of the month. That, however, caused a problem.

The players' towels that often get tucked into their pants are also pink. Often during the course of the game, those towels will fall out or get yanked out. Combine that with a pink penalty flag that the refs throw for every infraction, and you might see where the players were getting mixed signals. The play is over but the players see a pink penalty flag on the ground so they wait for the call. As precious seconds tick away, they find out it was merely someone's towel – also pink.

It caused enough confusion that the NFL promptly went back to the yellow flags for the next week's games.

Sometimes we give mixed signals in the church as well. It is why we must always be vigilant and stay in the Word to make sure everything that is taught is true to the Scriptures.

Mixed signals can cause division. There are many issues that are near and dear to the heart of different people, but are really a matter of freedom for the believer. Halloween could be one such issue. My feeling is that Halloween is a holiday that glorifies and has its origin in evil. It can also diminish the reality of evil by making it seem cartoonish. My family doesn't celebrate it.

There are those who would argue that there is no harm in dressing up in non-scary costumes and having fun going door to door with their friends or family getting candy. The Bible does not say, 'Thou shall not trick-or-

treating.' As a pastor, I certainly don't endorse it, but I also don't condemn those who participate in it. We definitely wouldn't want to divide over it as a church.

Other issues that mixed signals might be sent out about would be alcohol (the Bible does not forbid it, only drunkenness, but I have seen it destroy too many families for my taste), the way we celebrate Christmas or the type of entertainment we engage in. When we condemn actions that the Bible doesn't, or when we condemn each other for taking positions on non-essential teaching, we send out mixed signals about what a loving church is supposed to be and our freedom in Christ.

There are other areas where the bible is very clear about our actions. So how could mixed signals be sent out in those situations? False teaching. **2 Timothy 4:3-4** *For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.*

There is a bad end for false teachers, but they can bring a lot of destruction into a church in the meantime. **2 Peter 2:1** *... there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.*

What do we do? We must be vigilant. Just because someone is on TV or the radio doesn't make them a good teacher of God's word. Just because they have a degree or a mega-ministry doesn't make them true teachers of the Bible. There are many on TV who teach a prosperity gospel – that it is God's will that His followers are healthy, wealthy and wise and if you aren't, you just don't have enough faith. There are false teachers who claim that the Bible places no restraints on our sexuality; do what you want, how you want and as long as you are sincere in your commitment, God is OK with it. Others claim there is no Trinity. These (and many others) are destructive doctrines and when someone brings them into the church because they heard Pastor so and so teaching it on TBN or any of the other religious broadcasts, then it can send a mixed signal about the truth to those who hear it.

(continued on back page)

Recipe Swap

PUMPKIN SQUARES

4 eggs
1 c. vegetable oil
2 c. sugar
15 oz. pumpkin puree
2 c. flour
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
½ tsp. ground cloves
½ tsp. ground ginger
½ tsp. ground nutmeg
1 tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 9x13 baking pan. In a medium mixing bowl, mix together the eggs, oil, sugar and pumpkin until smooth. Sift together the flour, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Stir into pumpkin mixture. Spread evenly into prepared pan and bake for 25-30 minutes. The bars should spring back to the touch when done. Allow to cool before frosting. You can just sprinkle powdered sugar on these or put cream cheese icing on them.

PRAYER REQUESTS

OUR SOLDIERS: Jacob Mitchell, Curtis Mitchell, Brandon Miller, Ryan Myers, Luke Cummings, Greg Morales, Ryan Kirby, Zach Stiffler, Josh Lackey, Dan Cook, Rick Huertz, Steve Heinen, Ammin Spencer, Gates Kobuszewski, Leslie Bolz, Steve Grove, Austin Everhart, Noe Garza, Brandon Hammons, Ruth Churchill

June Dedeke needs prayers.
Melissa Scrivner- home resting with many monitors
Matthew and Nik Branam's grandpa-infection needs to clear up so he can have a necessary surgery.

TIME CHANGE: Don't forget to set your clocks back on Nov. 3rd. Spring ahead Fall back!

COPIES OF THE SERMONS ARE AVAILABLE ON CD UPON REQUEST: If you would like a copy please see Mike. You can also listen to them online at www.valleyfallscc.org.

POCKET CHANGE FOR PROGRESS: This will be a special offering every 3rd Sunday during church. The money will be split between Mission Lake Camp and the School Supply Giveaway Fund

RECYCLING: We have a recycling box beside the copier in the office.

COLLECTING FOR ALPHA: Alpha Christian Children's Home can use Campbell soup UPC labels and lids, Best Choice UPC labels and General Mills Box Top Symbols coupons (Box Tops for Education.) We will have a box in the hallway outside the nursery under the mailboxes.

SISTERS OF STRENGTH (S.O.S.)-
(Mission Statement: We are a lifeline to glorify God through service to the church and community and to build personal relationships with our Christian Sisters.)
We will be meeting on Nov. 9th at 9:00 AM.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

2 Grace (Arnold) Farwell
4 Nolan Reich
9 Cylus Tichenor
12 Eli Farr
13 Kati Haybarker
15 Joan Hosler
17 Heidi Hawk
18 Libby Phillips
20 Doris Bixler
21 Sheila Farr
23 Leota Bolz
27 Linda Trotter
29 Laikyn Hawk

(Names in CAPS in Mission Field)

Serving in NOVEMBER

Congregational Prayer:

Wayne Arnold

Scripture Readers:

3- Jarret Mitchell- Matt. 13:3-9

10- Tichenor- Luke 15:11-32

17-Christy Arnold- Luke 12:13-21

24- Thomas- 1 Chron. 16:34-36

Nursery:

3-Debbie Gerstner/Caitlyn Thomas

10-Jo Tichenor/Jarret Mitchell

17-Sarah Hollis/Nik Branam

24-Laura Reich

Greeters/Ushers:

3-Linda Durand

10-Tichenors

17- Arnold

24-Thomas

Lord's Supper Preparation:

3-Linda Durand

10-Tichenor

17-Arnold

24- Thomas

Communion Table:

3-Stan, Jay

Dennis Turner, Andy Arnold

10- Jay, Stan

David Grove, Matt Branam

17- Stan, Jay

Steve Carson, Jarret Mitchell

24- Jay, Stan

Dennis Tichenor, Andy Arnold

Musicians

Worship Team: David Grove, Stan Farr,
Jay Welborn

Organ: Leah Brown

Piano: Donetta Farr

Guitar: Mike Kirby, Clint Thomas, Sarah
Ochs

Mandolin: Erin Thomas

Church Offerings

Sept. 29-\$917.25

Oct. 6-\$3564.93

Oct. 13-\$1235.05

Oct. 20-\$1382.00

Our expenses average \$1500 a week.

Valley Falls Christian Church has a website!!

www.valleyfallsc.org

MEN'S BREAKFAST: The men's breakfast will be on Nov. 9th at 8:00 AM. Stan Farr will be hosting.

CHURCH FAMILY THANKSGIVING DINNER: The church dinner will be Sunday, Nov. 24th after church. Please mark your calendars and plan to stay. Afterwards we will be decorating the church for Christmas so please plan on staying and helping, this is a lot of fun and all hands are needed.

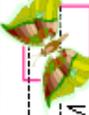
HOLIDAY SEASON: I know it seems like Christmas is a long way away, but it will be here before you know it. It is time to be thinking about the Dec. activities. I don't want to panic you, but we need to get the dates on the calendar so everyone can plan ahead to participate. If you are heading up any of the activities we've had before (caroling, cookie bake, ladies Christmas party, church Christmas dinner, food boxes, Christmas program) let Donetta and Christy know the date and your plans soon. We are open to any other ideas or activities too. If you are willing to host the ladies Christmas party please let us know.

CHRISTMAS BOXES: We need to bring all shoeboxes, preferably wrapped but if not wrapped, the sooner the better. Also if anyone has extra wrapping paper that would be very much appreciated also. Please leave it in the foyer.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE: The community service will be Nov. 24th at the Methodist Church at 7:00 PM. We need to furnish 2 pies. The offering will be split between Jan's Kids and the VF Food Pantry.

MEN'S RETREAT: The men's retreat at Mission Lake Camp will be Nov. 1 & 2nd for more details see the flyer in the foyer.

BOARD NEWS: Your board is organizing a new building committee to decide what kind of structure to put up on the lot north of the church. If you are interested see Steve Carson.

2013		NOVEMBER					2013	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
							1	
3 Time change 5:00 PM Youth Group	4	5	6 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Elders	7	8	 Men's Breakfast 8:00  SOS 9:00AM	9	
10	11	12	13 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Board Meeting	14	15	16		
17 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress 5:00 PM Youth Group	18	19	20 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study	21	22	23		
24 Church Thanksgivg Dinner and Decorating for Christmas 5:00 PM Youth Group 7:00 PM Community Thanksgiving Service	25	26	27		28	29	30	

Valley Falls Christian Church

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Email: office@valleyfallsc.org
On the web: www.valleyfallsc.org
Find us on Facebook!

Mike Kirby, Pastor

You are welcome to join us!

Sunday Service times:

Bible Study (all ages) – 9:00 AM
Worship – 10:00 AM
Youth Group – 5:00 PM

Midweek Bible Study:

Wednesday 7:00 PM

(Mixed Signals continued)

We must continue to search the scriptures. Be Bereans! **Acts 17:11** *Now these [Berean] Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.* As pastor, I expect you to check up on me. I expect you to make sure what I teach coincides with scripture. If you don't think it does, then you have a responsibility to gently bring it to my attention with scriptures to back up the claim. We can talk about it, pray about it, and if the Lord shows me I am in error, I will admit it openly and correct it. Any good teacher of God's word should have this attitude.

If some of us are legalists on issues that the scriptures are not definitive about, we will put off a signal of division. In issues of freedom, we can discuss and debate, but we should never divide.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

When we allow false teaching to creep into the church, we allow the culture to interpret God's word instead of God's word interpreting culture on issues that the Bible is clear about. We will put off a signal that anything goes. When taken to its logical conclusion, that 'anything goes' doctrine that violates God's word will lead to eternal destruction.

In the end, we must be like Christ. Full of grace and truth. Grace on issues of liberty. Grace for those struggling as they search for truth. Truth to call out false teaching and sin. Truth to gently correct those who stray. It's all about Christ and His word. When we learn it and obey it we bring Him glory. Let nothing distract from Jesus. Remember, Jesus said "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me." That, brothers and sisters, is no mixed signal.

Mike