Focus on Christ

Vol. 34.6 Nov 2026



Focus on Christ is published monthly by Christ Lutheran Church, Second & Walnut Streets, P.O. Box 549, Stover, Missouri for the purpose of informing members and friends of news and activities within our church and community. Information for and questions about this publication should be directed to Tracey Durant, Church Secretary. Deadline for information to be included is the Wednesday following the monthly church council meeting unless otherwise posted. Copyright © 2000 by Christ Lutheran Church.

This tradition is widely recognized in the United States as beginning in 1621 with the Pilgrims and Native Americans at Plymouth. Following a deadly first winter in the "New World," the Pilgrims had a good harvest, and they celebrated with a harvest festival, thanking God for His blessings. On December 11, 1621, Edward Winslow wrote the following description of the festival (text has been modernized):

> Our corn did prove well, and God be praised, we had a good increase of Indian corn, and our barley indifferent good, but our peas not worth the gathering, for we feared they were too late sown, they came up very well, and blossomed, but the sun parched them in the blossom.
>
> Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after … a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors; they four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week, at which time amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest King Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain, and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty.

Although the original Thanksgiving was basically a harvest festival and not yet an official holiday, Edward Winslow clearly gave glory to God and attributed to Him the blessings they enjoyed. Even though the Pilgrims worked very hard and were thankful to the Indians who helped them in the New World, they recognized that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (*James 1:17*). Despite how hard we work or how many blessings we receive from others, we must realize where all blessings ultimately come from—God our Provider.

Thanksgiving Made a National Event

Thanksgiving was made a national event when President George Washington made the following proclamation on October 3, 1789:

> Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God . . .
> Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be . . . .
> And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions.

President Washington recognized the need to praise God for His many blessings given to us and therefore he set up a national reminder to everyone that we should give thanks to God. In an attempt to minimize or remove Christianity's influences on this nation, some have declared that President Washington was a deist (someone who believes in a god who does not interfere with the affairs of mankind), but from reading his proclamation it is clear that he was *not* a deist.

Thanksgiving Made an Annual Event

Thanksgiving was made an annual event during the Civil War on October 3, 1863, by President Lincoln. Much of the credit is attributed to Sarah J. Hale who sent a letter to President Lincoln asking him "to put forth his Proclamation, appointing the last Thursday in November (which falls this year on the 23rd) as the National Thanksgiving." Here is a portion of President Lincoln's proclamation of Thanksgiving:

> 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 next as a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union.

As can be clearly seen in the above statement, the Christian influences remained strong 74 years after President Washington. Even amidst the Civil War, the president encouraged Americans to thank God and send requests to Him, recognizing that He is our Provider.

Thanking God During Trials and Sufferings

Praising and thanking God is vital even during trials and sufferings, whether they be wars, financial difficulties, loss of loved ones, or other struggles. Even though the Apostle Paul suffered much, he wrote, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (*1 Thessalonians 5:18*). Also consider the following passage from Paul:

> Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (*Philippians 4:11–13*).

Rather than blaming God for our problems, we need to recognize that mankind's sin in Adam is the reason for our present sufferings. But all is not lost: God foretold to Adam and Eve that through the Seed of the woman (Jesus Christ, God's Son), the deceiving serpent would be conquered (Genesis 3:15). Years later, the Lord Jesus Christ, born of the virgin named Mary, stepped into history to destroy sin and death once and for all. Jesus fulfilled that prophecy in Genesis, so that "whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (*John 3:16*).

As believers, we praise God for this spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. Furthermore God has provided believers with the Holy Spirit who is our source of strength. God has given us all that we truly need, and that should cause us to worship Him for the abundant riches of grace that He has lovingly bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ. In *2 Corinthians 9:15*, Paul states, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" These truths are the foundation for Thanksgiving. Without this understanding Thanksgiving Day is an empty holiday and there is no reason to give thanks.

Has Commercialism Affected Thanksgiving and Christmas?

You may have noticed that President Lincoln made Thanksgiving Day to be on the last Thursday of November, but we now have Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of the month. What happened? In 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt changed it to the fourth Thursday due to the urging of a retail association and out of concern for the economy. The purpose of this change was to extend the shopping days between Thanksgiving and Christmas, with the goal of stimulating the economy as they tried to recover from the Great Depression. It is noteworthy that President Roosevelt also did not neglect the Christian roots of Thanksgiving in his proclamation and reiterated that they should also thank God. However, the date change resulted in confusion across the nation with states coming to different conclusions on when Thanksgiving Day should be held.

This mix-up has since been fixed, and the holiday is now held on the fourth Thursday of November. However the focus of Thanksgiving Day has significantly declined through the years, and this event did nothing to help in that regard. What would the originators of Thanksgiving think if they saw that this day had apparently become an obstacle to remove for the retail

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NOVEMBER

Sun	*Mon*	*Tue*	*Wed*
Altar Care **Joyce Bauer** **Emily Nolting**			
1 - Bring a Friend Sunday 9:00 - Confirmation † Youth Sunday School † Adult Bible Study 10:15 - Worship/Communion 11:30 - Communion Instruction	**2**	**3**	**4** Wed Bible Stu 6:00-8:00 pm
8 9:00 - Confirmation † Youth Sunday School † Adult Bible Study 10:15 - Worship/Communion 6:30 pm - Youth Meeting	**9**	**10**	**11** Wed Bible Stu 6:00-8:00 pm
15 - Acolyte Training 9:00 - Confirmation † Youth Sunday School † Adult Bible Study 10:15 - Worship 11:30 - Council Meeting	**16**	**17**	**18** Wed Bible Stu 6:00-8:00 pm
22 9:00 - Confirmation † Youth Sunday School † Adult Bible Study 10:15 - Worship 6:30 pm - Youth Meeting	**23**	**24**	**25** Wed Bible Stu 6:00-8:00 pm
29 5th Sunday/Advent/ Decorate the Church 9:00 - Confirmation † Youth Sunday School † Adult Bible Study 10:15 - Worship		Pastor Paul and Scott	Bauer will be le

2026

d	Thu	Fri	Sat
udy	**5**	**6**	**7**
udy	**12**	**13**	**14**
udy	**19**	**20**	**21** 
udy	**26**  Thanksgiving	**27**	**28**

eaving for a mission trip with Jonathon Unverzagt, and returning December 11th.

What's Happening?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 1 - Bring a Friend
Nov 29 - 1st Sunday in Advent/Decorate the Church
Dec 12 - CLC/Stover Churches Open House



Women's Workday Group Update

The group is always hard at work cutting, sewing, and tying quilts. Days and hours vary, see Jo Warnke for a schedule of work times.



Secretary's Corner

Happy November CLC! The month of giving thanks. We have so much to be thankful for at our church this year. Just to name a few... A Women's group that is bringing back fellowship and fun to our congregation. A group of young adults who have stepped up into positions of leadership and are mentoring the youth. A Committee dedicated in helping us navigate the future of technology safely. And our new Pastor, who preaches messages each week that stick with you for days afterwards, who takes time to visit with his flock, who shows up for ball games and golf tournaments, who preps, plans, and dreams big, and who answers his phone every, single time. We are a thankful church. *The Lord has blessed us and kept us, the Lord has made His face shine upon us, the Lord has been gracious to us and has given us peace.*

Thank you, Lord. Amen. Tracey D.

Cont...

ers and the economy? Let us be careful not to be influenced in the ways of the world rather than the ways of God. The moral of this story is that we must be wary to not let anyone or anything hinder our attention on God, and we should strive to keep reminders like Thanksgiving Day focused on Him.

Thanksgiving Day was instituted as a reminder to give thanks to God for His provisions, but sadly many have forgotten the true meaning of Thanksgiving. Forgetting what God has done for His people is a common theme throughout the Old Testament. For example, God stressed the importance of remembering God's provision when He told Joshua to set up twelve stones as a sign for the people:

That this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, "What do these stones mean to you?" Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever. (Joshua 4:6–7)

But what did happen? The children of Israel eventually forgot. The same thing is happening in America right now. Is there anything we can do to help stop it? Well, it starts with each and every believer. We encourage you to share the real reason to give thanks—the gospel of Jesus Christ—to anyone that may listen, and the next time someone asks you, "What is Thanksgiving?" you can also share your testimony and tell them what God has done in your life.



1	Joe Viebrock
	London Meyer
2	Gage Burnam
5	Aiden Denker
	Jared Bellis
6	Alexa Durant
	Chris LeClair Sr.
8	Austin Menning
9	Cheryl Nolting
10	Hannah Bauer
13	Kyle Burnam
15	Emily Nolting
16	Jim Williams
20	Sharon James
	Anthony Blacksten, Jr.
21	Dakota Kroeschen
27	Kim Decker
	Jo Warnke
28	Rhonda Burnam
29	Amelia Heimsoth



2	Gregg Sidebottom
	Joey Heman
3	William Bauer
5	Benton Davis
6	Joseph Holsten
9	Tracey Durant
	Gabriell Sidebottom
	Abby Holsten
11	Dietrick Warnke
	Hollie Viebrock
12	Camryn Propst
	Teather Bellis
13	Rita Nolting
	Tom Propst
15	Braeleigh Kroeschen
17	Grant Fischer
18	Scott Denker
19	Kipplyn Kroeschen
21	Brett Rowland
25	Garrett Goetze
26	John Menning
27	Matthew Siegel
29	Andin Chinn
	Allie Mae Denker
31	Brad Bauer

Address Corrections
Please check your mailing label to be sure your name and address are correct. If you have changes, please leave a message at 573-377-2819

Parish Newsletter of
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