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Tuscola
United
Methodist
Church



From Pastor Terri Haas

Dear Church Family:

I hope all of you are well and blessed as we enter into this holiday season! If you're like me, this is the time of year when you start to think about Thanksgiving and Christmas. Where will I go this year? Who will I invite? Will it be a quiet Christmas or a huge family blow out?

With Covid-19 cases on the rise, this year is different. If you're fortunate, you have some family nearby who is part of your "inner circle", and you will be able to celebrate this season with them. However, I know many of you do not. How can we feel gratitude this year at Thanksgiving when we might be facing the season without our loved ones? How do we give thanks with a grateful heart when we are going through such a difficult time?

In order to do that, we have to look at what giving thanks to God really means. I Thessalonians 5:18 tells us to give thanks in all circumstances. This means that God **knows** we're going to go through hard times, and God **still** wants us to learn to be grateful!

Learning to be grateful in hard times means reaching that point of true, authentic gratitude instead of only being grateful when things are going well. Perhaps God allows us to go through difficult times so that we can learn how to be truly, authentically thankful. When

we experience tragedy, and we continue to walk with God, God shows us how trust and how to find a lasting contentment that will help carry us through some of life's more difficult moments.

How in the world can we truly learn to do that? I think by understanding what real thanksgiving is. Giving thanks with a grateful heart doesn't mean that we are saying that everything is perfect, and that's why we're thankful. I believe that it means we are placing our hope and trust in the God that promises: "all situations work together for those who love God and are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). It's working through the pain and the difficulty because we know that God is faithful. In other words, we're not thankful because of what God has given us. We're thankful because of who God is.

Author Alica Michelle offers these four ways to find gratitude in a difficult circumstances on her Vibrant Christian Living blog (<https://vibrantchristianliving.com>):

1. **Acknowledge That We Don't Want to Give Thanks.** Can I first encourage us to admit to these emotions? Can we be real enough with ourselves to see these places of inauthenticity and choose to desire something more?
2. **Discover Why Giving Thanks Is Hard.** Next, let's do a little digging. Let's

write down everything about the situation and let those real emotions flow—even if they are painful to feel. We've got to be honest about all aspects of the circumstance so that we can identify the areas to bring healing.

3. **Reflect on Current Opportunities to Give Thanks.** What specific parts of the trial here are unenjoyable and difficult? Most important of all, consider which aspects of the situation are blessings. Note that something doesn't have to feel pleasant to be a blessing. Where have you seen God provide, bring hope, offer encouragement—even in this trial? And where do you see room for God to do even more miraculous things? Look to these as the starting point for that flow of authentic thanksgiving to occur.
4. **Ask for God's Ability to Give Thanks in All Circumstances.** Come face to face with those things that are gut-wrenching, unfair and challenging and ask for God to bring you a different perspective. Ask for the ability to choose to be thankful during this trial, trusting that only He can provide the endurance and encouragement through the pain.

During this season of thanks, I encourage you work towards giving authentic thanks with a grateful heart.

God Bless ~ Pastor Terri



November Sermons-The Enemies of Gratitude

We know we're supposed to give thanks with a grateful heart in all circumstances, but most of us are still struggling to do that. This month, we'll look at some of the enemies of gratitude that cause us, instead of being grateful, to feel bitterness, anger, and fear. Join us as we prepare our hearts for Thanksgiving by examining what is standing in our way of being truly grateful.

November 1st – Exodus 17:1-17; Philippians 2:1-13 – Enemy of Gratitude: Nostalgia (**All Saints Sunday**)

November 8th – Philippians 4:1-9, Psalm 23 – Enemy of Gratitude: Worry

November 15th – Matthew 22:1-14; Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23 – Enemy of Gratitude: Entitlement

November 22nd – Deuteronomy 34:1-12; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 – Disappointment

November 29th – Luke 1:26-38; Romans 13:11-14 – Journey to Bethlehem: Mary of Nazareth (**Hanging of the Greens**)



United Methodist Women News by Patty Russell

Tuscola United Methodist Women works during the COVID restrictions. A needy family was assisted; purses, personal care items and clothes were delivered to Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House in E. St. Louis; our Gratitude Calendar Fundraiser provided \$1,065; and in October, socks were collected for LBDNH. We are grateful to God for our blessings and the generosity of our church family who helps us fulfill our mission to support women, children, and youth who are in great need.

Some UMW circles have met with precautions. Rahab met in Sept., and Jan Mann volunteered to be chairperson. Rachel Circle meets the 4th Tues. at 1:30, Rebekah meets the 4th Mon. at 7:00. Judy Schenkel will be the new Membership Coordinator. Other 2021 officers are: President-Georgia Wilkinson; Vice President-Sharon Corum; Secretary/Treasurer-Janet Butler; Spiritual Growth Coordinator-Kathleen Dyer; Social Action Coordinator-Patty Russell.

Please remember our members who are unable to meet for various reasons but would welcome a phone call or card: Barb Wills, Kathryn McCumber, Bev Schweighart, Carol Weemer, Judy Evans, Joann Ward, Leona Steven, Marlene Phillips, Molly Seibold, Mary Smith.

All women (teens and beyond) are welcome to join in a Christian, supportive fellowship, where you can get involved in a passion, learn more about the needs of others worldwide and how to help, get acquainted with a missionary, and make connections with women around the district, conference, and world. Contact any member if you have questions about what we do, where the money is spent, how to become involved, etc. You do not need to be a member of any church to belong. You need a desire to serve God by serving the least, last, and lost of his children by putting faith, hope, and love into action.

September Finance at a Glance:

Balance as of 8/31/20: \$10,791.06

September Income: \$14,748.79

September Expense: \$21,288.81

Balance as of 9/30/20: \$7,251.04

We are still accepting commitment cards for the 2021 budget year. If you have not yet turned one in and would like to, please mail it to Lora Zimmer in the church office at 901 N. Prairie St, Tuscola, IL 61953

Church Office Hours are by appointment only. Please leave a message on the answering machine, 217-253-4232.

Children's Ministry

- Children's Church will be held during Sunday service after the Children's moment.
- First the kids will be introduced to a bible story and verse in the chapel. Then the kids will dig deeper into the story with their bibles. Finally, every lesson is filled with arts and crafts, games, "get to know you" activities (Highs and Lows) along with prayer.
- Sunday Children's Church ages K-5
- On the 2nd and 4th Sunday, 6th grade is welcome to volunteer as Kingdom Leaders
- Bibles in front lobby one per family.
 - This goes with the calendar at home curriculum.
 - All the stories and topics discussed are on the November Word Doc. Stories from Bible
 - If your family needs one, please contact taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com

Youth Ministry

Middle School Youth (5th-8th)

- **Sunday 11/8/2020 after service.**
 - Drivers Needed please contact taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com if you are able.
 - Event: Hiking! Please RSVP email taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com or [signup sheet in front entryway by - Wednesday Nov 4th](#)
 - If there is a forecast for rain, snow or bad temperatures, we will be playing games and doing service projects at the church instead until 11am.
 - It will be posted on the Facebook page on Saturday.
 - Middle School will have its own group (Dependent on numbers) Both Ministries will be attending.
- **Sunday 11/15/2020 after service.**
 - Youth Group after service until 11am.

High School Youth (9th-12th)

- **Sunday 11/8/2020 after service.**
 - Drivers Needed please contact taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com if you are able.
 - Event: Hiking! Please RSVP email taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com or [signup sheet in front entryway by - Wednesday Nov 4th](#)

- If there is a forecast for rain, snow or bad temperatures, we will be playing games and doing service projects at the church instead until 11am.
 - It will be posted on the Facebook page on Saturday.
- High School will have its own group (Dependent on numbers) Both Youth Ministries will be attending.
- **Sunday 11/15/2020**
After Middle School from 11:00am—12:00pm.

Parent Notes

- Children and Middle School Youth Ministry Parent Meeting
 - Time: Nov 5, 2020 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada) Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85993416233>
 - K-8th Parents: I would like to do a Q&A, get to know, and informative meeting. I will be going over registration, what this year will look like etc. I am so excited to talk to everyone and get to know you. Please let me know if you have any questions or cannot make it taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com
- High School Youth Ministry Parent Zoom Meeting
 - Time: Nov 5, 2020 07:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada) Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88671202400>
 - High School Parents: I want to discuss any concerns, questions, or ideas you have. Also, go over the registration and what is planned for the rest of the year. Looking forward to taking to everyone and getting to know you more. Please let me know if you have any questions or cannot attend at taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com
- **There will be no children or youth activities the Sunday after Thanksgiving. 11/29/2020**
- Please register your child and sign paperwork for the 11/8/2020 event.
 - Registration forms will be on the brown stoop on the left-hand side as you go into the education wing.

Congregation Assistance

- December Youth Event – Ding Dong Dinner
 - We will need to start collecting food for the event. Non-perishables. Spaghetti Dinner, Vegetables, etc.
 - The collection bin will be out front.
 - The kids will pick someone they know that could use a dinner in Tuscola and deliver to them as a group. This is a service mission project for the Senior and Junior High.



Hey everyone my name is Taylor Radtke and I am looking forward to meeting/being part of the Tuscola United Methodist Church family. My background is with Family, Children's and Youth ministry, missionary work, an educator as an English Teacher in Poland, outdoor education, environmental education, and working with underprivileged children and teens from the South Side of Chicago. Working with kids and families is my passion. Furthermore, I am currently going to school as a ministry major to expand my knowledge and relationship with Christ. I look forward to meeting everyone and working with you. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at taylorradtke.youth@gmail.com

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Tuscola United Methodist Church
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Our Staff

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Nov. 2020

What's

2
Charge Conference via
Zoom—5:30 pm

3
UMW Board—10:00 am

7
Leadership Team—8:00 am

Happening

9
Finance—6:00 pm
Trustees—7:00 pm

10
Staff Meeting—4:30 pm

Here

12
Handbell Choir—6:00 pm

16
Church Council—7:00 pm

19
Blood Drive—9:30 am
NAMI—7:00 pm