

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

November 2020

Thankful That God Is Always With Us

When I think of the month of

November, the first thought that enters my mind is the beloved American holiday of Thanksgiving.

Another image that comes to mind is a famous illustration portrayed by Norman Rockwell who was able to capture the essence of American life through the medium of oil paint, a canvas, and a brush. That image is that of a family gathered around their grandmother's Thanksgiving table as she brings out a beautiful Turkey fresh from the oven.

I have personal fond memories of Thanksgiving growing up in Brooklyn. Even though we lived in a relatively small tenement

apartment, my father would put a couple of tables together in the living room so as to accommodate our family and several of our relatives.

Mother would begin preparing food items days in advance and the aroma of the various delicacies would draw my brother and me to the kitchen to sneak a piece of stuffing when our mother wasn't looking. I remember the turkey, stuffing, gravy, yams and other delicious trimmings passed around our living room filled with excitement and loud conversations. Oh, don't forget the pumpkin pie. Yes, my memories of Thanksgiving bring a smile to my face.

And yet, as I grew older, I came to realize that as a Christian Thanksgiving had a far greater meaning than good food, laughter and

perhaps watching a football game on T.V. It is a day during the year that is set aside as a reminder of how thankful we should be to God for all of God's provision.

Jeremiah 33:11 states, "Give thanks to the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!" Yes, Thanksgiving Day is a reminder of the goodness of God. However, I believe every day should be filled with thankfulness for all of the blessings we enjoy. That is why I love the phrase, "Thanksgiving is a reminder to give thanks."

Continued on Page 2

WORSHIP IN NOVEMBER

Nov. 1— Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Matthew 23:1-12

Nov. 8—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Matthew 25:1-13

Nov. 15—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Matthew 25:14-30

Nov. 22—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Matthew 25:31-46

Nov. 29—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Mark 13:24-37

All services are COVID-19 compliant limited. Masks required, no choir, no congregation singing, live streamed services available at PatchogueUMC.org.



Circle of Concern

Grieving

Helen Smith and family grieving the loss of Helen's husband, Bill.

Joe Franzosa and family grieving the loss of Joe's wife Cathy.
(Kathy Halliwell)

Healing

Nicholas Grizopolous 7 year old getting treated for brain cancer, currently hospitalized due to low blood counts resulting from treatment.
(Kathy Halliwell)

Ed Klingel recovering from knee surgery.

Bruce Kirschner who is recovering from surgery to have a stimulator implanted to help reduce pain.
(Carol Kirschner)

Helen Smith who is being treated for issues with her kidneys.

Joy

Baby Grace Charlotte for her baptism. (Diane Zimmermann)

Kathy Andreotti who has been cancer free from Multiple Myeloma for 20 years. (Kathy Halliwell)

Concerns

The scientists and researchers who are working on a vaccination and medication to cure and control the spread of Covid 19.

Peace and justice in our nation. May all people learn to live together in Peace and Harmony and may our Lord lead us during these next couple of months.

May all of our churches, regardless of religious affiliation, open so parishioners can gather once again and praise our Lord together.
(Pastor Chuck)

Continued Prayers

Helen, Anita Helfst, Kimberly Helfst, Heather Spagnoli, Trevor Haltalski, Barbara Lyons, Inci Masem, Bruce Bassett, Christine Cabrera, James Forsythe, Joyce Gabrinowitz, Pastor Dwight Wolther, Lee Hollowell, Diane Dain, Linda Coleman, Elizabeth Beekman, Dwayne Scott, John Rocco, Monico Doctor, Suzanne Tierny, Kenneth Krygier, Travis Gentile, Tom King, Kevin Kearns, Angelo DeVito, Cori Mitchell, Bill Morgan, Kathy Kurtz

—Compiled by Kathy Halliwell

Please email Kathy—

keats1002@gmail.com with any additions or deletions.

These in Rehab or Nursing Care

Geri Sheridan, Robert Krawzak in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzola Dr., East Patchogue, NY

A Thanksgiving Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for your amazing power and work in our lives, thank you for your goodness and for your blessings over us.

Thank you for your great love and care. Thank you for your sacrifice so that we might have freedom and life.

Forgive us for when we don't thank you enough, for who you are, for all that you do, for all that you've given.

Help us to set our eyes and our hearts on you afresh. Renew our spirits, fill us with your peace and joy.

We love you and we need you, this day and every day. We give you praise and thanks, for You alone are worthy!

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

—crosswalk.com

Thanksgiving

(From Page 1)

No doubt, 2020 has been a tough year so far. Probably one of the most difficult times this generation has ever experienced. And yet, in the midst of all these challenges, we can still see God's hand of comfort, peace and provision.

May we be thankful in all situations knowing that God is always a prayer away. I leave you with one of my most favorite and cherished Bible verses discovered in Philippians 4:6-7:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Thankfully in His grip,

—Pastor Chuck

November Birthdays

Nov. 2 Elise Jacobs

Nov. 4 Kiley Keeley

Nov. 10 Montana Queen

Nov. 16 Josie Hoag

Nov. 21 George Hoag

Nov. 25 Damon James Callier

Nov. 29 Bryson Schwartz



United Methodist Church of Patchogue

November 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 a.m.— Worship 11:30 a.m.— Pentecostal MF Wesley Hall	2 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	3 10:00 a.m.— Noon —Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA	4	5 7:00 p.m.—AA	6	7
8 10:00 a.m.— Worship 11:30 a.m.— Pentecostal MF Wesley Hall	9 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	10 10:00 a.m.— Noon —Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA	11	12 7:00 p.m.—AA	13	14
15 10:00 a.m.— Worship 11:30 a.m.— Pentecostal MF Wesley Hall	16 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	17 10:00 a.m.— Noon —Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA	18	19 7:00 p.m.—AA	20	21
22 10:00 a.m.— Worship 11:30 a.m.— Pentecostal MF Wesley Hall	23 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	24 10:00 a.m.— Noon —Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA	25	26 7:00 p.m.—AA	27	28
29 10:00 a.m.— Worship 11:30 a.m.— Pentecostal MF Wesley Hall	30 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA					

Dismantling Racism: Voter Suppression

Achieving voting rights for all in the U.S. means pushing “from the ideal to the reality,” says the Rep. Emmanuel Cleaver II, a United Methodist pastor and longtime representative of Missouri’s 5th Congressional District.

For many Americans, that will be a difficult and uncomfortable process, the Democratic congressman points out, a process that means acknowledging and ending the structural racism that hampers the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Key parts of the law were invalidated by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2013 and efforts to reauthorize those have failed.

However, Cleaver is heartened by diverse crowds of young people coming together to march against racism. “That’s the part that provides me with the gasoline to continue to go because they are out, in some instances, putting their lives on the line,” he said.

Cleaver, 75, spoke with Erin Hawkins about his faith and his perspective as a congressman and an African American during The United Methodist Church’s fifth online discussion about eradicating racial injustice. Hawkins, an executive with the California-Pacific Conference, was until recently the top executive of the denomination’s Commission on Religion and Race.

The Oct. 7 discussion is part of “Dismantling Racism,” a multi-agency effort that includes participation from Religion and Race, the Council of Bishops, United Methodist Women, Discipleship

Ministries, the Board of Church and Society and United Methodist Communications. Other agencies and many annual conferences are contributing.

Cleaver, a Texas native, comes from a family of preachers and militants — two cousins were leaders in the Black Panther Party. He was inspired by activist pastors of the 1950s and 1960s, including the Rev. James Lawson — whom Cleaver called “the single most influential civil rights leader in the country that most people don’t even know” — and eventually decided to go to seminary himself.

A successful run for city council in Kansas City, Missouri, eventually led to Cleaver’s election as that city’s first African American mayor in 1991 and to Congress in 2005.

Cleaver can recount instances of voter suppression. He recalled how Waller County officials moved the voting precinct for about 5,000 black students at Prairie View A&M University in Texas — the historically black college where he graduated — from the student union to 27 miles across town to make it difficult to cast a ballot. “This was not just some random official,” he said. “This was organized and deliberate to suppress the Black vote. And it happens all over the country.”

The Q&A that follows is a condensed version the conversation between Hawkins and Cleaver.

Hawkins: We’ve got a pandemic, an election, Black Lives Matter, all kind of working together around who’s in and who’s out, who has power and who doesn’t, who is

disproportionately impacted and who seeks to gain. What’s important about this moment, especially when it comes to the matter of voting and voter suppression?

Cleaver: We are struggling right now as a nation to fulfill who we are. We have said for the world to hear: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with unalienable rights, among them life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.’ The problem is that we’ve not made that actually happen. And so we’re trying to push the country from the ideal to the reality. And it’s a difficult push and it’s uncomfortable to many for the push to be able to take place.

And I think right now it’s different than any other moment that I have ever experienced because I’m watching young people, black and white and brown, coming together saying: Look, we are tired of this boogey man here in the United States: race/racism.

I’ve stood speaking to marchers in Kansas City, Missouri, and I was almost brought to tears because of the diversity of the group (of 7,000 to 8,000 people). And there were more whites than blacks. That’s the part that provides me with the gasoline to continue to go because they are out, in some instances, putting their lives on the line.

One would think that in a democracy that everyone would want everyone to vote. Unfortunately, it’s been the reverse, and it’s been almost since the day after Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act. And in all the years that I’ve been in office

there's been an attempt to stop the impact of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Right now in your cities — anywhere in the country — things can be moved as it relates to the election. Changes can be made. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act said that could not happen until or unless there was an administrative review by the (U.S.) attorney general. That's gone right now. (The U.S. Supreme Court invalidated that requirement in 2013.)

When you say, 'watch people at the polls,' that can be interpreted any number of ways. And the one way that I'm sure to interpret much of this is that that's a point of intimidation. You surround people around the voting precincts. Or you start telling people, 'Look, there's a lot of voter fraud.' All of the studies... the Brennan Center here in Washington, most of the studies, they will tell you that if you have 25 million people voting and ... 19 of the votes are questionable, you essentially don't have a problem. And that's the case in the United States. We have no voter fraud of any significant level.

When they start passing voter ID laws, that hurts us. Let me tell you why. They're saying you've got to have some kind of government ID. So if you're not a driver, if you don't drive a car and have a government-issued driver's license, in Texas and a lot of other places they will sell you a state identification for \$27 or whatever it is. Well, the moment you pay that \$27 to get some ID, you just paid a poll tax.

Hawkins: Are there other communities of color or socio-economic groups that are targeted by these tactics of voter suppression?

Cleaver: Absolutely. Black and brown people are particularly the targets. Latinos, Latinas, you know, are experiencing the same issues that we are as African Americans. They, too, are struggling. The first generation of people here in the country, many of them are afraid to go and get a voter registration because they think that it might have something to do with immigration. Even if they're legal, they are nervous about it.

Hawkins: How do we talk to people who don't believe voter suppression is a matter that requires attention and action?

Cleaver: Well, I think this is as clear as water. But I think you're right. There are some people for whatever reason ... you know, some people may seriously and genuinely believe that anybody can vote. They may want to believe it because they don't want to believe that they are citizens in a country that would try to prevent people from voting. And so it's difficult for them to accept that because they have to accept the fact that this nation does have systemic racist tendencies.

Hawkins: Armed with this awareness ... what would you suggest to us to do as Christians, as United Methodists, as people who are a part of this country?

Cleaver: My suggestion is the same suggestion that (U.S. Rep.) Jim Clyburn is giving to voters in South Carolina. He's saying, "Go vote now." As soon as it's legal for people to vote because of all the things surrounding this election, we're saying go vote now in person.

We have here the freedom of religion that is not offered in some

places around the globe. We also have a God that grants us free will to make decisions. And one of the decisions I think we ought to make is that we're going to participate fully in society, trying to make society something that would be in harmony with God's will.

—Linda Bloom, UMNS

Shrewd Samaritans

Particularly in this time of global pandemic, we want to know how to care for our local and global neighbors in ways that are meaningful and effective. We want to follow the example of the Good Samaritan in loving our neighbors as ourselves. But we also want to make sure we're reaching out to those in need with both our hearts and our smarts.

In other words, Christians should approach COVID-19 not just as Good Samaritans but also as what we—writing as a development economist (Bruce) and an expert on humanitarian disaster intervention (Kent)—like to call Shrewd Samaritans. And what are the distinguishing marks of a Shrewd Samaritan? Perhaps the best place to begin is with a visit to the dentist I (Bruce) have been seeing for years.

Dr. David Yee's modest office is located on the street level below his house, near the corner of 31st Avenue and Clement Street, a few miles from my office at the University of San Francisco. Most people avoid going to the dentist. I never avoid going to the dentist because I get to talk to Dr. Yee.

Continued on Page 7

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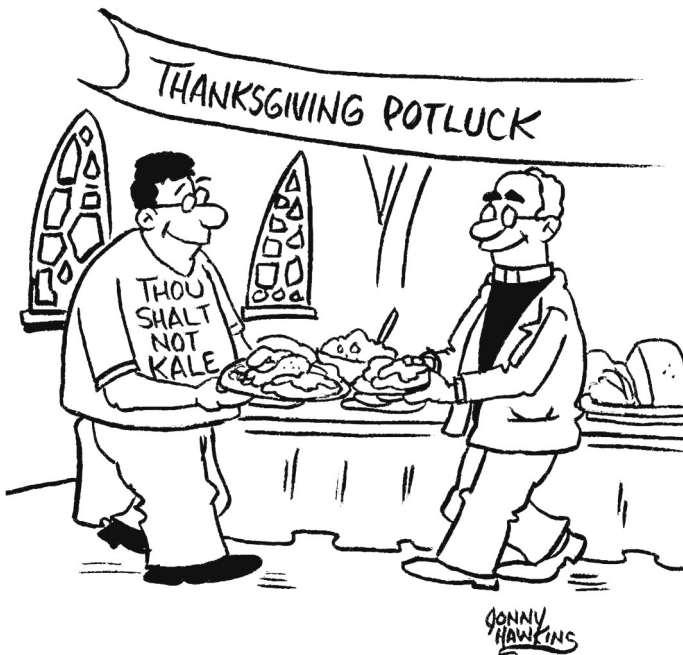
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The deadline for the December issue of **The Link** is November 20.
Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

Samaritans (From Page 5)

Even during the unfortunate visit when oral excavation is required, his calming face, hovering above my open mouth like a smiling moon, has for 20 years offered reassurance during tense episodes of drilling and repair.

Upon learning during my early visits that I was a development economist, Dr. Yee would ask me if I had been to any “crazy new countries” lately. After sharing a few stories about recent travels and research projects, I asked him if he had ever done one of those overseas dental missions. “No, afraid I’m a bit of a homebody,” he would say. “The city is plenty for me.” And so the conversation looped for some years.

But as he was ushering me into the dental chair before a routine cleaning in 2011, he turned to me and announced proudly, “I went on a dental mission last month.”

The dental mission to Jamaica had gone well, just not as anticipated. Dr. Yee had envisioned preparing a vast equipment bag with cleaning instruments: tooth pickers, plaque scrapers, spit suckers, polishers, and bags of brushes and floss.

“You won’t be needing all that,” the missionary dentist had explained. “All we do here are extractions.”

He had arrived in the capital city of Kingston and walked down the steps of the plane onto the tarmac, where the missionary dentist greeted him. “Did you bring your forceps?” Yes, they were somewhere in the suitcase. “Excellent. How many extractions can you do in a day?”

Dr. Yee had never pondered this statistic, much less tested its frontiers on his upper-middle-class San Francisco patients. “Maybe eight?” He paused nervously. “How many do I need to do?”

“Yesterday I did 140.”

Dr. Yee considered this spectacular figure. It sounded inhumane. He imagined something like an assembly line for tooth extraction with dentists wrenching rotten molars out of cringing patients with blood-splattered dental bibs, tossing them out of the chair, and then yelling to the front of the line: “Next!”

But what he learned in Jamaica was quite the opposite. In a place where infections are rampant and immune systems are weak, infected teeth can be deadly. If an upper tooth is infected, bacteria can spread from the alveolar bone through the maxillary sinus, resulting in a sepsis of the brain. If the infection is in a lower tooth, it can spread to the jaw, where an infection in a rear molar may cause severe swelling that blocks airflow through the trachea, resulting in suffocation. The missionary dentist explained that time spent on cosmetic issues, or even maintaining the lofty standards of Western medical care, carries a high opportunity cost in the world of rural missionary dentistry.

As I listened to Dr. Yee, I was impressed with the missionary dentist because she sounded like an economist. She understood the cost of allowing our fuzzy feelings to dictate our actions to people in need

rather than a concern for their health and well-being.

Dr. Yee’s foray into missionary dentistry did not end with the trip to Jamaica. A few years later, as I rose up out of the dental chair, Dr. Yee ushered me toward a corkboard in his office to see pictures of some of his patients grouped by the different countries he had visited. The dental mission trips had clearly transformed him. From them he had developed a deep compassion for those without access to health care. Moreover, joining his new heart for others was a new head for others. He had begun to learn the art of triage, operating with the skill of a MASH medic, prioritizing patients that were likely to receive the greatest benefit from an extraction and treating them as efficiently as possible. He also began to emphasize dental health during his visits. When possible, it was about loving others by preventing pain and suffering in the first place.

My dentist was becoming a Shrewd Samaritan. But how is a Shrewd Samaritan different from others with good intentions toward the needy?

If we want to genuinely help people living in poverty—and a world in the middle of a global pandemic—rather than just feeling good about believing we have helped, we are not merely to be Good Samaritans, like the man commended in the famous parable in Luke 10. We should also be Shrewd Samaritans—shrewd like the manager in the less-famous

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Samaritans (From Page 7)

parable in Luke 16, whom Jesus also points to as an example.

In the original Greek, the word for the manager in the parable is *oikonómon*, which literally means “Econo-Man.” We must be people with big hearts like the Good Samaritan but with minds like the Econo-Man. This means learning to love our global neighbors wisely, one might say even “shrewdly,” by making the best use of our resources—our time, talents, and money—on behalf of those who are victims of injustice, disease, violence, and poverty. Shrewd Samaritans have made progress through what I call the seven I’s. They have moved past ignorance, indifference, and idealism and toward investigation, introspection, and impact. They have even come

to identify with those they seek to serve.

Shrewd Samaritans understand the underlying causes of poverty and need. They can identify interventions that are likely to be effective in different contexts. Their motivation is fueled by the Christian call to love our neighbors, but their means are influenced by an understanding of cause and effect and even by good science. Shrewd Samaritans are wedded to a biblical view of humanity and informed by a desire for human flourishing in all respects: physical, psychological, social, and spiritual. They have discerned their own role in extending a hand to the needy at home and abroad and have learned to identify themselves with the poor.

In the case of COVID-19, Christians must ask, “What does the best

evidence say about how I can help slow the infection rate of the virus as well as help others persevere through it?” We inform our responses with the best available information. We seek the advice of qualified experts. We take the heart of the Good Samaritan and pair it with the head of the Shrewd Manager.

God is not a stranger to crisis, and God is not a stranger to us in crisis. God provides us with Good Samaritans and gives us opportunities to be one to others. God gives us resources and research to shrewdly and effectively steward that which has been given to us. Living as Shrewd Samaritans, we can match our resources and talents to love our local and global neighbors in Christ’s name.

—Bruce Wydick and Kent Annan,
 Christianly Today