

November

From the Pastor's Pen

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(Carrots in Israel; photo by Oren Peles)

“Sing praises to the Lord, O you faithful ones, and give thanks to Gods holy name!” -Psalm 30:4

Giving thanks happens pretty frequently in the Bible – more than 150 times! It probably won't surprise you to learn that just about half of those are in the book of Psalms. But giving thanks pops up in places where we'd hardly expect it. When the people are feeling lost and despairing in exile and Babylon, God promises, "Out of them shall come thanksgiving, and the sound of merrymakers. I will make them many, and they shall not be few; I will make them honored, and they shall not be disdained." Even in the book of Revelation, angels, saints, and four holy creatures sing praise: "singing, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen!'" God's majesty is so overwhelming, being in God's presence causes all creatures to sing out their thanks. We find thanks and praise to the Father, Lord of heaven and earth; to God's glory; to God who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ; for the Lord the God of our ancestors; even thanks for God's holy name!

Back in Old Testament days, they brought thank offerings and sacrifices of thanksgiving. These were totally voluntary to express gratitude. On top of that, they celebrated the Festival of Booths (or Sukkot) to remember how they had lived in booths during their wilderness wanderings. This was celebrated at harvest time so that they could always see the fruit of God's blessing in times

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of wilderness and in times of home!

Pastor's Pen cont.

Later, when they returned from exile and were rebuilding Jerusalem and the Temple, we find out that they had thank choirs offering praise! In Nehemiah 12:27 it says, "...they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with rejoicing, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres." Did I say thank choir? More like thank band!

The word most commonly used for "thanks" in the Old Testament is "yadah." It's the same word that they used for praise. Makes sense, right? How can you praise if you cannot thank? How can you thank if you cannot praise? The word is connected to the word for "hand" so it leads us to think about extending our hands – reaching out for God in confession, in adoration, in love.

Well, what about the New Testament, I hear you wondering? There are two different words for "thanks" there, but the more common one by far is "eucharisteo." Look familiar? It's exactly where we get the word "Eucharist" from – the Lord's supper! This word literally means "good grace." Any time we remember how good God's grace is, we are surely giving thanks! And this eucharist shows up more places than the celebration of the Lord's supper. It comes in the miracle of feeding the multitudes of people and when Paul says grace before he shares a meal with soon to be shipwrecked sailors in Acts 27.

One of the most interesting things about looking at giving thanks in the Bible is seeing how few people do it: David, Hezekiah, Daniel, Jesus, one out of ten lepers, a Pharisee, and Paul. [Though, the Pharisee is giving thanks that he's not as bad as other sinners (Lk 18:11).] We can be sure that others gave thanks (Moses, Abraham, Peter, Mary, etc.), but it is interesting to see who the Bible lifts up for us.

Paul is a big thanker and, like most other thankers in the Bible, he almost always thanks God directly. Like in Philippians 1:3, he says, "I thank my God every time I remember you." In Philemon 1:4, "When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God." Paul doesn't say, "Thank you, Philemon." He thanks God for the gift of Philemon and his life – or the gift of the churches their ministries.

It's certainly important to thank people for their kindnesses to us, but Paul is pretty insistent that we always, always, always remember to thank God, too. In Ephesians 5:18b,20, he writes, "be filled with the Spirit...giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Like those in exile, we can remember that when times are hard, God will restore a song of thanks to us. Like those enjoying the bounty of harvest, we can lift our joy up to the Lord, rejoicing in God's abundance. Like those who have been healed and never saw Jesus coming, we can join that one leper out of ten in returning to say thanks. As we look forward to our eternal home and the coming of the kingdom of heaven we can hold fast to these words from Hebrews 12:28, "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks. Not only thankful, but brimming with worship, with reverence and awe before God." Amen, amen.

-Pastor Elana

Announcements

Micah Alexander Spencer

Parents: John & Carrie Spencer

Tuesday, October 23rd

Weight: 6lbs. 10oz.

Height: 21 inches

Proud grandparents: Millie & Richard Spencer



4th Annual



Pumpkin
Day

"We Gather Together - A Spiritual Journey into Thanksgiving"

Republished from November 2013

Erik Collins, Director of Music

Ever since I was a young child, I have always had a distinct fascination with the autumn season. I think that this connection could easily be attributed to the crisp breezes, the leaves that change colors or the very important time of remembrance that takes place during the end of November. Yes, the combination of weather that almost seems mystical, yet deeply spiritual, in collaboration with the chance to slow down and reflect on the thoughts of all the people that come into our lives spreading grace and love is a true miracle.

Around this time of year in 2012, I spent about a week in Richland Center, a small town located in the southwest corner of Wisconsin. With a population of just under 5000, I spent my days taking long walks, visiting the local Oakwood Apple Orchard, and observed many quiet hours of sitting in the woods that were located directly behind my aunt's home. The sight of orange and red trees, colorless skies and wild geese gently gliding gave me a sense of peace. It was as though time had completely stopped and I was the only person among endless miles of sacred woodland. During those moments of spiritual tranquility, the delicate words of Rachel Field became a precise reflection of the surrounding scenery:

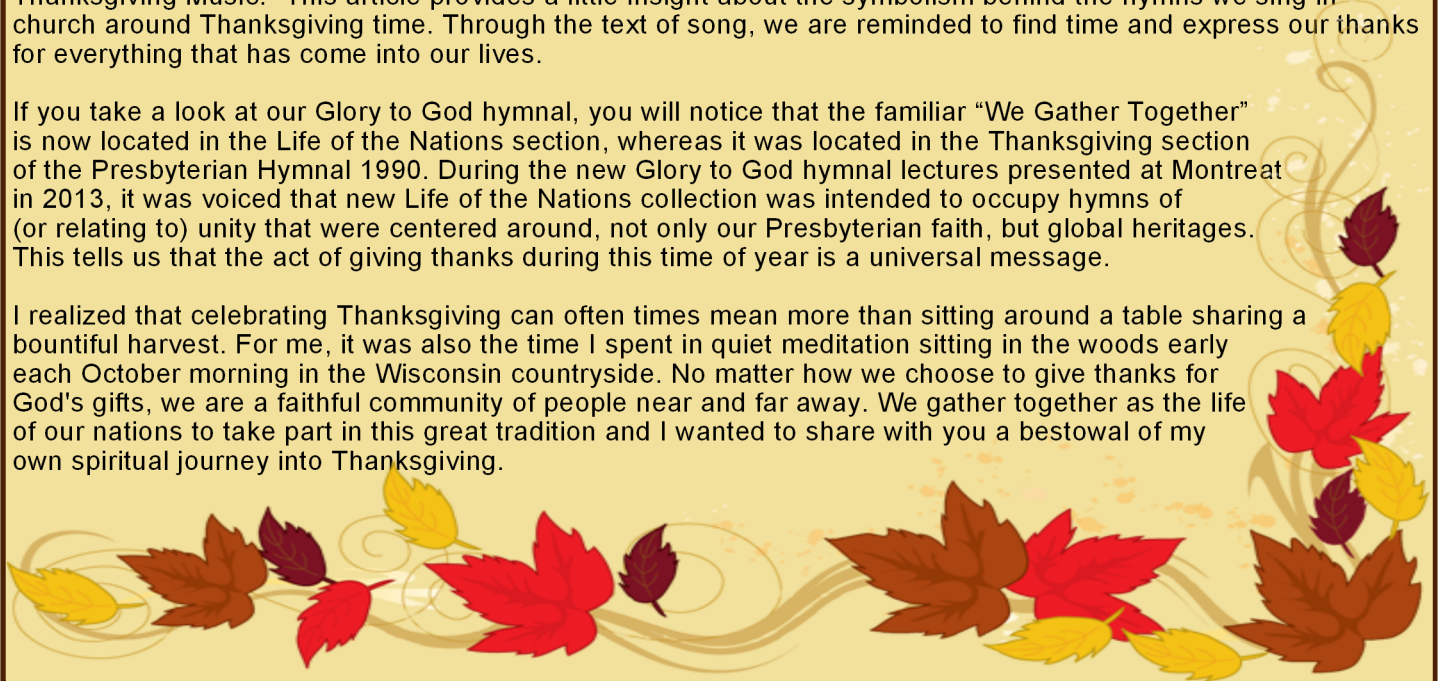
*Something told the wild geese it was time to go,
Though the fields lay golden something whispered, "snow."
Leaves were green and stirring, berries, luster-glossed,
But beneath warm feathers something cautioned, "frost."*

*All the sagging orchards steamed with amber spice,
But each wild breast stiffened at remembered ice.
Something told the wild geese it was time to fly,
Summer sun was on their wings, winter in their cry.*

It was at that moment that I realized the spiritual connection between nature and God's presence. The imagery of text in its purist moments can be overwhelmingly enchanting - whether the text be sacred in direct relationship to God or sacred in metaphoric description of God's natural creations. Throughout the remainder of my time in Wisconsin, I started my day by going into those woods early in the morning and reflecting on all the things that were most important in my life. This is what inspired me to write a subsequent article: "A Sacred History of Thanksgiving Music." This article provides a little insight about the symbolism behind the hymns we sing in church around Thanksgiving time. Through the text of song, we are reminded to find time and express our thanks for everything that has come into our lives.

If you take a look at our Glory to God hymnal, you will notice that the familiar "We Gather Together" is now located in the Life of the Nations section, whereas it was located in the Thanksgiving section of the Presbyterian Hymnal 1990. During the new Glory to God hymnal lectures presented at Montreat in 2013, it was voiced that new Life of the Nations collection was intended to occupy hymns of (or relating to) unity that were centered around, not only our Presbyterian faith, but global heritages. This tells us that the act of giving thanks during this time of year is a universal message.

I realized that celebrating Thanksgiving can often times mean more than sitting around a table sharing a bountiful harvest. For me, it was also the time I spent in quiet meditation sitting in the woods early each October morning in the Wisconsin countryside. No matter how we choose to give thanks for God's gifts, we are a faithful community of people near and far away. We gather together as the life of our nations to take part in this great tradition and I wanted to share with you a bestowal of my own spiritual journey into Thanksgiving.



Christian Education

Sue Chancellor



- To be grateful for what is, instead of underscoring what is not.
- To find good amid the unwanted aspects of life, without denying the presence of the unwanted.
- To focus on beauty in the little things of life, as well as being deliberate about the great beauties of art, literature, music, and nature.
- To be present to one's own small space of life, while stretching to the wide world beyond it.
- To find something to laugh about in every day, even when there seems to be nothing to laugh about.
- To search for and see good in others rather than remembering their faults and weaknesses.
- To be thankful for each loving deeds done by another, no matter how insignificant it might appear.
- To taste life to the fullest, and not take any part of it for granted.
- To seek to forgive others for their wrongdoings, even immense ones and put the past behind.
- To find ways to reach out and help the disenfranchised, while also preserving their dignity and self worth.

To be as loving and caring as possible, in a culture that consistently challenges these virtues.

To remember to say or send "thank you" for whatever comes as a gift from another.

To be at peace with what cannot be changed. *-Joyce Rupp*

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

Colossians 3:16

May we all Praise God and serve one another this November with...grateful loving hearts!

Sunday Morning Opportunities (Sunday School is 9:15-10:15)

All infants to Pre-Kindergarten are most welcome to join Donna in the childcare room of the children's Sunday School wing (next to library.) Donna Bridenstine offers a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment with a wide range of age-appropriate activities for our youngest folks. She is available from 9:00 a.m. through the close of worship each Sunday and additional child-support is always on hand when needed.

Donna is also available for childcare at 8:10 a.m. for parents of young ones who attend choir practice early Sunday morning;. She's also available the second Wednesday evening of each month from at 6:30 for childcare. Please let Donna or Sue know a week in advance if childcare is needed for either of these events.

Multi-grade Sunday School (pre-k through fourth grade)

Kids, please join us each Sunday morning at 9:15 before pageant practice in the children's Sunday School wing for fun hands-on experience centered on a different bible story each week. As we continue the theme, "Embraced by Grace," be ready to engage all your senses as we actively discover wonderful stories and words from the bible.

Nov. 4	Valerie Wagner	"Forever Friends"
Nov. 11	Melinda & Sarah	"A Generous Offering"
Nov. 18	Sue Chancellor	"A Certain God in Uncertain Times"
Nov. 25	Katy Orrell	"Reign of Christ Sunday"
Dec. 2	Millie Spencer	"Getting Ready"



Adult Sunday School Class

The DVD series/conversation, Living the Questions 2, led by Richard Spencer, continues this November in the classroom off of Churchill Hall every Sunday. Richard consistently creates intriguing and thought provoking questions focused on excerpts from the DVD. A few of the marvelous questions you'll be exploring are: "Would you say embracing uncertainty/mystery is a virtue to cultivate?" and "This week I was able to consider McKenna's notion, '...that the more people are different from you, the more wisdom and knowledge they offer you.' If that is really true, then why do we as a species often fear and even hate those who are different than us?" If you aren't already a part of this friendly accepting group, please consider coming any upcoming Sunday you are able!

The Tween/Youth Class (fifth through twelfth grade)

All youth are invited any Sunday morning they are able, to participate in lively, relevant discussions and engaging activities. The teen's teaching team is using Rob Bell's Nooma DVD series and are excited to share it with all wonderful Trinity youth and any visitors who are able to join the group in the youth lounge.

Nov. 4	John Clawson	"Kickball"
Nov. 11	Liz Powell	"Store"
Nov. 18	Royce Chancellor	"Rich"
Nov. 25	Liz Powell	"Sunday"
Dec. 2	Stephanie Smith	"Open"



YOUTH/KIDS/FAMILY NEWS

What a delightful October we shared as we celebrated with our "Gathering Place Excursion" and our fourth annual "Pumpkin Day!" Both experiences were a blast and thanks to everyone who participated! Also, a huge thanks goes out to the parents, teens, and volunteers who shared their time, energy, talent and love with our kids!



This Sunday, November 4, all teens and families are welcome to meet in the narthex following worship before we caravan to Sky Zone, 8306 E 61st St, Tulsa, 74133. Wear your favorite "jumping for joy" attire and bring your sky zone socks. You can also buy some there if you don't already have their special skid free socks. We'll grab some lunch there whenever we feel like we're ready for some tasty, energizing fuel! Be ready for fun, fellowship, and exercise!



And back by popular demand, on Sunday, November 18, the teens and Sue are hosting another "Beautifying Trinity" afternoon. Teens and kids will have the opportunity to paint a chair, for the some of the Trinity rooms used by teens and children. Young children can paints small items to brighten the classrooms, too. Wear or bring your favorite painting clothes. Lunch will be provided.



And... Coming on a Friday in December, Parents' Night Out at 5:30. More details to come.



Pageant rehearsal is off to a beautiful start upstairs in the first room off the stairway! Children and teens of all ages are still invited to jump in and join Lynette Kraft-Lindsey and the wondrous kids as she leads the joyful songs for this year's pageant, "The Sweetest Story." Practices are every Sunday following Sunday School from 10:00 a.m. until 10:30. The four narrators, Sidney Schwendemann, Matthew, Mitchell, and Maverick Sanstra, will meet with Sue at 10:00 a.m. in the youth Sunday School room upstairs for ten minutes before joining the rest of the pageant participants.

Mark Your Calendars: Sunday, December 23 at 10:30



Trinity Christmas Pageant:
"The Sweetest Story"
Bring Family and Friends to Our
Uplifting Celebration of Jesus' Birth



Midweek Book Study:

Midweek Book Study will embark on a stimulating book on spiritual formation, *Naked Spirituality, A Life with God, in 12 Simple Words*, by Brian D. McLaren. Cindy, Sue, and Pastors Elana and Lucus will take turns leading the group's weekly conversations. The fun begins on November 7 at 11:00 a.m. in the Trinity Cafe, following 10:30 backpacking in Churchill Hall. Shane Claiborne, author of the *Irresistible Revolution* declares: "This is one of McLaren's greatest hits. It is a book that strips down to the bare essentials, cutting through stale debates, old ideologies, and ethereal theology to unveil a simple love for God and neighbor that is worth devoting your life to....You will find something on these pages that will help you breathe again."

Fellowship News

Dwayne Strasheim

The Fellowship Team is happily looking forward to two events that will provide good food and facilitate good companionship among Trinity members during the holiday season. First, we will host a soup-and- sandwich potluck meal after the Hanging of the Greens, following the worship service Sunday afternoon, November 25. The sign-up sheet will invite participants to share soup, sandwich, or dessert items, or to help in the kitchen.



Second, Fellowship will host a Christmas Brunch at 9:15, prior to the worship service Sunday morning, December 23. I anticipate that we will also assist the Christian Education Team with a reception celebrating the participants in the annual Christmas Pageant that same Sunday. The reception will follow the worship service. There will be more on December activities in next month's newsletter.

Finally this month, I want to underscore a sentence from the October 29-November 4 issue of *This Week at Trinity*: "We are specifically in need of folks to volunteer to provide Sunday morning snacks!" We are indeed blessed with about seven or eight dedicated individuals and families who regularly provide these treats on Sunday mornings, and we shall be eternally grateful for their loyalty, but we'd love to have additional members join us in the Café before worship on Sunday mornings. It's fun, and it's good fellowship.

Mission

John Clawson

Mission Trip

The Mission Team is very excited to announce that we have arranged for a Service Ministry/Mission Trip to Dwight Mission in the Spring of 2019. I know that is a ways away, but thought it would be good for everyone to get the dates on their calendar. We will be going to Dwight Mission on April 26 – 28, 2019. Trinity's team of volunteers will complete seasonal work projects (such as painting and clearing brush from walking paths) that help defer maintenance costs at Dwight Mission. Adults and Youth will be able to participate. Lodging at Dwight Mission will be free of charge and meals for the weekend at Dwight Mission will cost \$50 per person. The Mission team is really looking forward to this Service opportunity and we will provide more information in upcoming months.

Recycling

Our recycling program continues to be very successful. Folks from Trinity and the surrounding community are filling our bins and recyclables are picked up every two weeks. As a reminder, items that can be recycled by this service include: aluminum cans, plastic bottles, Styrofoam, paper, newspaper, magazines, and cardboard. No need to sort what you recycle, just place it in the bin.

Backpacks 4 Bixby (B4B):

Our Backpacks 4 Bixby program is operating efficiently with the help of all the volunteers that are shopping, packing, and delivering food bags to children at four Bixby schools every week.

Donations of food are always welcome. The goal of the program is to provide healthy breakfast and lunch items to help feed children in need over the weekend. Food donations that we can always use include:

Peanut butter & Jelly - Canned Tuna - Spaghetti/Ravioli - Canned chicken - Juice boxes, fruit cups, individually wrapped snack packs, & small cereal boxes.

Submitted by John Clawson

Worship

Erik Collins, Director of Music

NOVEMBER MUSIC NOTES

November 2018

The choir will present a beautiful mixture of original music and well-known favorites in worship this month. As the Thanksgiving season is quickly approaching, I believe it to be of utmost importance to remember the symbolic significance of the traditions that surround this time of the year. That being said, the music for the month of November is centered around love, offerings, and togetherness.

I Choose Love reflects our deepest hopes and prayers for our time. Written at the Presbyterian Worship and Music Conference in Montreat, NC in response to the tragic event in Charleston in June 2015, this piece offers our solidarity to love in the midst.

*In the midst of pain, I choose love. In the midst of pain,
sorrow falling down like rain, I await the sun again, I choose love.*

*In the midst of war, I choose peace. In the midst of war, hate and anger keeping score,
I will seek the good once more, I choose peace.*

*When my world falls down, I will rise. When my world falls down,
explanations can't be found, I will climb to holy ground, I will rise.*

*In the midst of pain, I choose love. In the midst of pain,
sorrow falling down like rain, I await the sun again, I choose love.*



The introduction to Cochran's **Simple Gifts** is, in a word, gorgeous. When one hears the title, the jaunty dance tune comes to mind. Instead, this arrangement opens with an unexpected mixed-meter section reminiscent of the soaring moments from Copland's original score. Simple American folk elements combine with new-age sounds as the beloved melody weaves its way through this arrangement that features an eclectic, flowing piano part.

*'Tis the gift to be simple 'Tis the gift to be free 'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be.
And when we find ourselves in the place just right, it will be in the valley of love and delight.*

*When true simplicity is gained To bow and to bend, we will not be ashamed To turn, turn,
will be our delight 'Til by turning, turning, we come round right.*

We Gather Together is a Christian hymn of Dutch origin written in 1597 by Adrianus Valerius as "Wilt heden nu treden" to celebrate the Dutch victory over Spanish forces in the Battle of Turnhout. It was originally set to a Dutch folk tune. In the United States, it is popularly associated with Thanksgiving Day and is often sung at family meals and at religious services on that day. At the time the hymn was written, the Dutch were engaged in a war of national liberation against the Catholic King Philip II of Spain. "Wilt heden nu treden," "We gather together" resonated because under the Spanish King, Dutch Protestants were forbidden to gather for worship. Although this particular arrangement by John Carter is now permanently out of print, the choir enjoys singing this rendition every other year.

*We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing; He chastens and hastens His will to make known.
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing. Sing praises to His Name; He forgets not His own.*

*Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining, Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning; Thou, Lord, were at our side, all glory be Thine!*

*We all do extol Thee, Thou Leader triumphant, And pray that Thou still our Defender will be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation; Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free! Amen.*

Evangelism

Cindy Strasheim

The Evangelism Team would like to thank everyone for their support of the Washington Irving Festival. The candy that you so graciously provided brought many smiles and thank you's from the children, and a few parents! The rain did not dampen their smiles. We had the opportunity to talk to parents and children about our upcoming Trinity Christmas pageant.



The team sends out birthday cards and thank you for visiting cards. We are recruiting new members of the team. Please think about joining us!

-Cindy Strasheim

Congregational Care

Brenda Cunningham

November CC News

So many people have lent a helping hand to do whatever was needed for the families of Howard Fenton and Barbara Higgins, both before and after their passing. The Congregational Team members that were able, pitched in to do anything that was asked of them, but luckily so did many, many others. A big thanks to Cathy Hanson, Katie Hanson, Emily Hanson, and Debbie Straabe who went above and beyond.

We are so thankful to have such wonderful people at Trinity that are willing to sacrifice of themselves for others.

Respectfully, Brenda Cunningham



Many Thanks

To the Trinity Congregation,

Wow! Thank you all so much! College has been really tough on my wallet and I'm only a little over a month into it! I'll make sure this gift is well spent. Much love and best wishes to you all!

-Alec



Thank you so much for your love and support! I really appreciate your gift. Hope to see you soon
Love, Logan Wagner

TRINITY PHOTO ALBUM



Personnel

Brenda Cunningham

We hope to have our Shepherding Programs begin during November with Trinity members, friends of the church, and frequent visitors all being assigned to a Session Member.

We are also starting our end of the year process with Staff Reviews and Budget number submission.

Respectively, Brenda Cunningham



Monthly Liturgy

24th Sunday after Pentecost– November 4th

Ruth 1:1-18
Psalm 146
Hebrews 9:11-14
Mark 12:28-34

25th Sunday after Pentecost—November 11th

Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17
Psalm 127
Hebrews 9:24-28
Mark 12:38-44

26th Sunday after Pentecost—November 18th

1 Samuel 1:4-20
1 Samuel 2:1-10
Hebrews 10:11-14 (15-18), 19-25
Mark 13:1-8

Christ the King/Reign of Christ—November 25th

2 Samuel 23:1-7
Psalm 132:1-12 (13-18)
Revelation 1:4b-8
John 18:33-37




NOVEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

Valerie Wagner	11/06
Ames Righter	11/10
Zane Adams	11/16
Robert Block	11/20
Beth Nelson	11/20
Jonathan Wigton	11/20
Luke Wigton	11/20
Deanna Jolly	11/22
Lisette Wigton	11/24
Ron Carver	11/25

November

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			Join us at 12:30 on Wednesdays for Sack Lunch Fellowship!	1	2	3
4 All Saints' Sunday Family Activity to Sky Zone	5	6	7 Pack Backpacks at 10:30 am Book Study at 11:00am	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Presbyterian Women @ 9:45 in cafe Book Study at 11:00am Team Meetings	15	16	17
18	19	20 Session at 6:30	21 Book Study at 11:00am Thanksgiving Service	22  Trinity office closed	23	24
25	26	27	28 Pack Backpacks at 10:30am Book Study at 11:00am	29	30	
					**save the date December 3, 2018 Retirement Celebration for Rev. Dr. Gregory Coulter	