

Shiloh Notes & News November 2025

A Word From the Pastor

It's something I think we all do, at least once, maybe twice a day. We give thanks. But it's usually just before a meal, mostly because it's what we're supposed to do. But is there more to giving thanks?

Gratitude is more than polite manners or seasonal niceties—it's a posture of the heart. True thanksgiving does not simply arise from abundance but from awareness: the awareness that every breath, every moment, and every mercy is a gift from God.

When we learn to see through the lens of gratitude, we begin to notice God's fingerprints everywhere. The sunrise no longer becomes routine but a reminder that His mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22–23). The laughter of loved ones becomes a hymn of joy. Even the trials—especially the trials—become soil in which faith grows deeper roots.

Gratitude is not merely *feeling thankful* when things go right; it's *choosing* to thank God even when we don't understand.

Paul's command in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 can seem almost impossible: "*Give thanks in all circumstances.*" How can we thank God in pain, loss, or confusion? The key is in the little word "in," not "for."

God never asks us to pretend that suffering is pleasant or that evil is good. He does, however, call us to give thanks *in* every circumstance because He remains good even when life is not. Gratitude doesn't deny the darkness—it declares that light still shines in it.

When Paul and Silas sang hymns in prison (Acts 16:25), they weren't rejoicing *for* their chains, but *in spite of* them. Their praise became an act of rebellion against despair, a declaration that no circumstance could imprison their joy in Christ.

So too, we give thanks *in* the cancer diagnosis, *in* the unemployment, *in* the grief—not because we like those seasons, but because we trust the One who never wastes them.

Gratitude is a compass that always points us back to God's faithfulness. When we complain, our focus narrows—we see only what's missing. When we give thanks, our vision widens - we see the abundance that's been there all along.

In Luke 17:11–19, ten lepers were healed by Jesus, yet only one returned to give thanks. The others received their physical healing, but only the thankful one received a deeper blessing: "*Your faith has made you well.*" Gratitude didn't just acknowledge a miracle—it drew him closer to the Miracle Worker.

Every time we thank God, we're not just listing blessings; we're turning our gaze back to the Blessor Himself. Gratitude shifts us from scarcity to sufficiency, from fear to trust, from self-focus to God-focus.

Joy is not the fruit of a perfect life—it's the fruit of a grateful heart. When we choose gratitude, even in small things, joy begins to bloom like wildflowers in unexpected places.

Ann Voskamp wrote, *"The only way to live abundantly is to give thanks continually."* Gratitude doesn't change what we have; it changes how we see what we have.

Try this: pause and breathe deeply. List three simple things you're thankful for right now. Maybe it's a warm cup of coffee, the sound of rain, or the steady presence of someone who loves you. In naming them, you train your heart to see God's goodness in the ordinary—and that's where joy often hides.

A thankful heart naturally becomes a giving heart. When we recognize all that God has done for us, it frees us to give without fear of lack.

Paul reminded the Corinthians that *"God loves a cheerful giver"* (2 Corinthians 9:7). Gratitude fuels that cheerfulness because it remembers how much we've already received. When we live thankful lives, generosity flows not out of obligation but out of overflow.

At Thanksgiving and beyond, this means our gratitude should not end at the table - it should flow into the streets. Every act of kindness, every moment of service, every shared meal becomes an echo of our thanks to God.

Ultimately, gratitude is not just a feeling or a discipline—it's worship. When we give thanks, we join the heavenly chorus that cries out, *"Worthy is the Lamb!"*

Psalms 100 invites us to *"Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise."* Gratitude is the doorway into deeper intimacy with God. It draws us into His presence, not because we bring Him something He lacks, but because we bring Him the honor He deserves.

When we thank God, we are proclaiming: "You are good, and You are enough."

Happy Thanksgiving
God Bless,
Pastor Fred



Activities and Announcements

Saturday 11/1 – 9:30am-2:00pm Blood Drive at Shiloh

Saturday 11/29 – Decorate the church for the holidays

Please join us for:

Sunday School - 9:45 am

Worship Service – 11:00am

Bible Study – Tuesday's 7:00pm

Methodist Men's Breakfast – 2nd Sunday of each month

Mission Minutes: Thanks to everyone for the continued donations to the Julian Food Pantry. This is greatly appreciated! For the **November** distribution we are collecting **Baking Items - small bags or containers of flour, sugar, oil, and seasonings.**

There is a box provided at church for these items.

There is also a box to collect used Sunday School literature and Upper Rooms to send to a ministry organization that will distribute to areas that need them.

Giving Thanks for All Things

It's easy to list the blessings in life: good health, family, a satisfying career, a comfortable home. We might even be thankful for things others take for granted such as freedom and clean drinking water, reliable transportation and food enough to eat. Then there are the little things, such as gardens, sunrises, pets and coffee.

But what about life's storms or unanswered prayers? Should we be thankful for these? Loss and hardship remind us of our dependence on God. He uses trials to draw us closer to him, to show us that He is our rock and refuge. In misfortune and grief, we discover God's comfort and strength. Should we not, then, be thankful for the storms, too?

Gratitude Shift

When we look at what we want, and then compare that with what we have, we shall be unhappy.

When we think about what we really deserve, and then compare that with what we actually have, we shall thank God.

A Day to Honor Our Veterans

On November 11, 1918, the Germans and the Allied Nations, which included the United States, signed a document to initiate an armistice (cessation of hostilities), thus ending World War I. A year later, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation designating November 11 as Armistice Day. It was to be a day of reflection — a day to remember those who died in the country's service and to offer Americans the opportunity "to show sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nation."

Wanting to recognize more specifically America's veterans, Congress passed a bill changing the name of the day from Armistice Day to Veterans Day. The change was made in May 1954.

On this national holiday, churches around the nation hold services of prayers and praise. Followers of the Prince of Peace pray for peace among the nations of Earth and for the day when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4, NRSV).

A Thanksgiving Prayer

Gracious God,
thank you for every good gift—
for the food before us,
the people around us,
and the love that surrounds us.
Help us to pause, reflect, and rejoice
in Your constant goodness and grace.
May our hearts overflow with gratitude,
not just today, but every day.
Amen.

