

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Practicing Gratitude

Do you ever struggle to be grateful for the many good things in your life? It is hard to admit to you that I do. I don't have the answer to grateful living. Although, I wish I did.

A few years ago it was popular to post on Facebook one thing you were thankful for in your life each day in November. I never did it, but read many of my friends Facebook posts about all they were grateful for. This year ONE friend is continuing this tradition. I am not sure that my Facebook observation means that we are not a grateful culture. I just think we sometimes forget to be grateful. Not on purpose. Not in a bad way. We just forget.

The family calendar I bought to keep track of the many events of life has a box for gratitude for EVERY DAY. I rarely fill it in. It isn't that I am ungrateful, but taking the time to record it is challenging while raising three young boys. I have heard and read that gratitude is key to a joyful life. Apparently, research even says so.

I have spent much of my life being a grass is always greener type of person. Just ask Dan! I taught a variety of grade levels during my 13 years of teaching. I was only asked to make a change in grade levels once. The rest of the changes were ones I chose to make. In my mind, the next grade level I taught would be the one that would make me happy and most fulfilled and bring me joy. The changes never made me happy for very long. I always thought I was just a restless person, always ready for a new challenge. But, I am not sure that is what it was.

Last year I turned 40 and thought if I am half way through my life that I had better get this grass is greener stuff figured out. I have spent the last year reading as many self-help books as I could put my hands on regarding everything from saying no in a kind way, to setting boundaries, to organization. All in hopes that I would find the answer to my grass is greener predicament. Currently, I am listening to "Braving the Wilderness" by Brene Brown and reading a book I found in Eastminster's collection of adult education resources called "The Power of Now" by Eckhart Tolle. I first heard Tolle on Oprah's Super Soul Sunday Podcast a couple of weeks ago. Then, when I was moving the adult education resources into room 204, I came across his book and thought it was God trying to tell me something. The gist of the book is to live in the "NOW" or the present moment and realize that life is good in this moment. It is when we start thinking about the past or the future too much we lose the beauty of the current moment in our lives.

This month in my Sunday School class we are talking about being Thankful. This first week we learned about being thankful for Jesus and read the story of Simeon and Anna's reactions when Jesus was presented in the temple in Luke 2. Both Simeon and Anna were rejoicing at the presence of Jesus in the temple. Rejoicing that He was born and were grateful for God fulfilling His promises in their own lives. I think that is definitely part of this journey of practicing gratitude, don't you? Do you want to join us in practicing gratitude and being thankful this month?

Advent Lunch

The Christian Education Committee would like to invite you to attend our annual Advent Lunch on Sunday, December 3, 2017 immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. We will provide sandwiches, drinks and dessert. Could you bring a crockpot of soup? If you would be able to bring soup, please let Cheryl Ison, Erin Tipton or the church office know. As is our tradition, we will make a small ornament and also have our Advent devotion books available for your families. This is such a special time for our church family as we gather together to prepare our hearts and minds for the Advent Season.



The students and teachers of Hogwarts visited Eastminster two weeks ago.

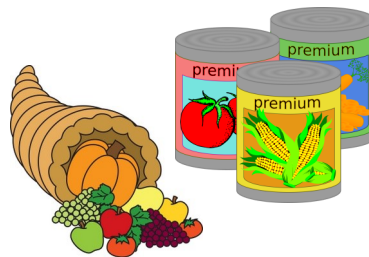
Upcoming Events

Nov. 19—Children and Youth Thanksgiving Processional

Dec. 3—Advent Lunch



Does anyone see what these adorable Eastminster cuties have in common?



Thanksgiving Processional

On Sunday, November 19, 2017, the children and youth will process during the first hymn of the 10:30 a.m. worship service to fill the cornucopia and food basket. We are continuing the tradition that began last year and we ask that the children bring one canned good with a 2018 expiration date to carry during the processional. In one hand they will carry their canned food item and in the other hand they will carry their item to fill the cornucopia. Please meet Cheryl Ison and Erin Tipton at 10:15 a.m. in the gallery to prepare for the processional.

