

The brave who focus on all things good
and all things beautiful
and all things true,
even in the small,
who give thanks for it
and discover joy even in the here and now,
they are the change agents
who bring fullest light to all the world.

ANN VOSKAMP

One Thousand Gifts: A Dare To Live Fully Right Where You Are

Thanksgiving 2017

Dear Members and Friends of Chippawa Presbyterian Church,

In the past year, Wendy and I have taken time to read Ann Voskamp's *One Thousand Gifts* devotional together. We are still working our way through it. I discovered I have a new 'top ten' favourite author. Ann Voskamp repeatedly and consistently speaks to something I have come to understand as foundational to the life of faith, to what can help life heal, to what brings joy. It is gratitude. Over the years, I have seen the difference gratitude to God makes in a person's life, whether it be in grief, in anxiety, in ill health, or in good times. Gratitude engenders joy and brings peace. It reminds us that no matter what our circumstance, God is present, and God is good. The practice of gratitude, and in Ann Voskamp's challenge, to name a thousand gifts, shows us repeatedly how much God loves us.

We have much for which to give thanks as a church family.

We are building connections and community. As well as providing lunch to the Habitat for Humanity build team on Sept. 27th and October 24th. On **September 30 from 10 to 2 p.m.**, we will be at the **Spirit of Chippawa** near the Chippawa Foodland on Dock St. with a sale table, but also visiting with our neighbours.

Sunday, October 1st will be a full Sunday! We will celebrate the **Lord's Table** together. Following worship, we will enjoy a **potluck lunch** together in the Lower Hall. All are welcome. On this Sunday, we invite you to use the brown envelopes in the pew to make a donation to build up our Benevolent Fund again. This fund is used to purchase food vouchers to assist those who come to our doors in need. We will also continue to accept food donations to forward to Project Share.

Also on October 1st we will **launch our Care Ministries ministry**. Arising out of a renewal of the former

Care Team work, Mary Ellen White will be commissioned into the volunteer role of Coordinator of Care Ministries. These ministries will show our care in Contact, Continuing, Crisis, and Connecting ways.

You are invited to come give thanks at the **Thanksgiving service on Sunday, October 8 at 10:00 a.m.** This will be a special thanksgiving service as the **Nicaragua team** report to us and give thanks for the work that happened in Nicaragua this summer. Come and be encouraged at the simply remarkable difference we have made together.

Chris Vizzari, in her role as Coordinator of Discipleship continues to facilitate opportunities to worship, serve, learn and connect. On **Saturday, October 14 from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** come meet at the church for a **spiritual gift workshop** where you can learn what your spiritual gift is. A new **book exchange library** has been established. Give a Christian book, take a Christian book and start to strengthen your knowledge of the Christian faith. Master classes on prayer and knitting/crocheting are being planned.

Mike and Joan Burnett have again organized a tour to Lancaster, Pennsylvania and area to see Jonah at the **Sight and Sound Theatre**. The momentum for this trip grows every year, not only is the bus full but there was a waiting list.

Operation Christmas Child – shoeboxes will be available again this year. If you wish, you can take a shoebox, fill it with needed items and gifts. These shoeboxes are then distributed to children who are living in poverty around the world.

Mark **December 1 and 2** into your calendars as we begin preparing for a **Christmas production. Sunday, December 10** will be the date of the **Church Family Christmas Dinner**.

We have much to be grateful for when it comes to the financial health of our congregation. Offerings are significantly ahead of what was given by this last time last year. We have already made strong payments into some of our larger commitments such as Presbytery dues and Presbyterians Sharing which, in other years, we have left until later in the year. Thank you for faithfully giving to your church and ensuring that our ministry and witness remain strong. Continued, strong giving will allow us to finish the year well. The Board of Managers are beginning to do research on redoing the flat roof portion of our facility. This roof has served us well for over 30 years, but it is likely that this work will need to happen in 2018.

We are continuing to successfully and quickly pay down the principle of our **mortgage**. In August of 2016 our mortgage stood at \$403,000. We are now down to \$347,000. This continues to be an amazing achievement and a testament to your generosity. Prepaying principle significantly reduces the length and amount of the mortgage. This year, as a Thanksgiving gift to God, I would invite you to consider using the envelope provided to help the congregation take advantage of that principle repayment.

Chippawa Presbyterian church is a resilient, generous, gracious and faith-filled congregation. Your desire

to grow in faith, to become like Christ, to see others find life in Jesus' has made this a healing, helpful and healthy place. So this Thanksgiving, along with Session, the Board of Managers and staff, I am giving thanks for you, your participation in ministry, your generosity, your commitment to worship God and your enthusiasm for your church.

May you have a blessed Thanksgiving. May it be a season filled with family, friends, food, and hearts filled with gratitude for God's goodness to you.

Yours in Christ,



Doug Schonberg
MINISTER