

Thanksgiving 2018

“Eucharisteo—thanksgiving—always precedes the miracle.”

– Ann Voskamp

Dear Members and Friends of Chippawa Presbyterian Church,

Over my years of ministry, I have come to see that gratitude, thanksgiving, is a miracle drug for the soul. There are authors who have leveraged the statement, ‘Gratitude is the antidote to fear.’ and ‘Gratitude is the antidote to anger.’ These statements are true. However, what they have missed, is how much more gratitude can do for the soul. It eases grief. It dissipates resentment. It sparks generosity. It adds momentum to kindness. It multiplies joy and bestows peace. Gratitude reminds us that no matter what our circumstance, God is present, and God is good. Practicing gratitude shows us repeatedly how much God loves us.

As always, we have much for which to give thanks as a church family.

The “Building Legacy” campaign, which culminated in June, was an unqualified success with a memorable and beautiful gala dinner together. In all, \$319,000 was pledged over a period of three years. As of the writing of this letter, \$65,000 has already been submitted. This will allow us to completely pay for the repair of the flat roof, and the replacement of the single door on Willoughby Drive. Both these projects will be underway when you receive this letter. In addition to these projects, an additional \$19,000 was put against the mortgage, and we have now passed the \$300,000 threshold with only \$294,000 owing. Thank you so much for your generosity, commitment and faithfulness!!

Sunday, October 7th will be a good Sunday! We will celebrate The Lord’s Table and Thanksgiving together. It will also be a ‘Sweet Sunday’. Come and thank God for your blessings.

This year, as a special Thanksgiving offering, we will be collecting donations for the Nicaraguan PAN Missions workers who have laboured alongside us in our projects over the years. As you may be aware, Nicaragua as a nation has been undergoing a time of significant civil unrest. It has resulted in massive unemployment. PAN Missions has had to cancel a number of mission trips and projects this year as a result. A typical Nicaraguan worker would earn approximately \$150 – \$200 a month. Many of our friends have not worked now in over six months. When we asked Mauricio, one of our foremen how he and his family were, his answer was ‘thinner, but okay.’ I personally can’t help but think of how we will feast on Thanksgiving weekend, when simply affording rice and beans has become a major challenge for our friends. Please consider a generous donation as your gift of thanksgiving to God this year. Clearly mark your donation “Nicaragua”. Cheques may be made payable to Chippawa Presbyterian Church and need to be submitted on or before

Sunday, October 7. Paula Mann will personally be delivering the funds to these men and their families as she joins a team on October 19.

Chris Vizzari, in her role as Coordinator of Discipleship, continues to facilitate opportunities to worship, serve, learn and connect.

This fall there are three Bible studies underway. A Monday afternoon study meets at the church to consider Old Testament characters. Monday evening Wendy Schonberg is hosting a Bible study for women in her home looking at the minor prophets. Tuesday evenings the Vizzaris are hosting a study on the gospel of John.

Mike and Joan Burnett have again organized an October tour to Lancaster, Pennsylvania and area to see “Jesus” 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.

On Tuesday, October 2, we have two building teams of 12 people working for the day on the Habitat For Humanity 25th Anniversary Welland build. At the writing of this letter they well surpassed the \$2700 goal. Thank you to those who sponsored our builders. Thank you as well to those who contributed to the generous lunch we organized for the celebrity teams working at Habitat on September 18.

On Saturday, October 6 at 8:30 a.m., the Men’s Breakfast invites all of the congregation and friends to come to Betty’s Restaurant, and after a fantastic breakfast, hear Holly Dapp speak. Holly was injured in an accident at the Fort Erie racetrack in 2006. Now paralyzed, she will be competing at the upcoming Paralympics.

On Sunday, October 14, join us for our second ‘Conversation Dinner’. Held in the Lower Hall of Chippawa Presbyterian Church, you will enjoy a simple potluck dinner beginning at 5:30 p.m. At this event you will be paired with one individual, and be given a list of personal, but fun, questions to discuss with one another. You will be amazed at how quickly you will turn a stranger, or a mere acquaintance, into a true friend.

At the end of the month on Wednesday, October 31st, we will welcome the Niagara Presbyterial. These Women’s Missionary Society groups of our Presbyterian Churches in Niagara will be meeting for their semi-annual gathering.

Shoebboxes will be available again this year for Operation Christmas Child. We will once again be a drop off centre for Niagara. Look for opportunities to volunteer. 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.

Our next Yard Day/Open Gym will take place Saturday, November 4th. Bring your yard tools as we get the

facility bedded down for the winter. Bring your children as we have fun and build community together.

Sunday, December 2 will be the date of the Church Family Christmas Dinner. Mark your calendars for a great evening of food, church family and tree decorating.

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. Thank you.

May you have a blessed Thanksgiving.

Yours in Christ,



Doug Schonberg
MINISTER