



"If the only prayer you say in your life is 'thank you,' that would suffice."

These words from Meister Eckhart sum up the essence of stewardship. It's about our offering of thanksgiving to God for the beautiful gift of life.

Eckhart's words also reminded me of a recent hospital visit. I was sitting with someone that had a few near-death experiences within the past month. And now he was going home to be with his family. He said to me, "I requested that you visit me because I just wanted to know if there's more that I can do to give thanks. I'm still here and I know who the Source of life is. I'm not sure if I've adequately given thanks." We explored his concerns further and blessed our time with prayer.

The next day, I continued to think about him. I began to wonder about my own life and if I've adequately given thanks. I asked myself, "How do I give thanks? Is my thanksgiving a blessing to others? Are there other ways that I can give thanks?"

The truth is, I don't adequately give thanks. I get caught up in the concerns, worries, and busyness of life. I allow them to interfere with Eckhart's perspective on gratitude and the necessity of expressing it throughout all of life. I need to be intentional about gratitude every day or my perspective on life changes, and not for the better.

Church is similar. We often treat stewardship as "one more thing to do" or even a necessity for survival. We put Stewardship Sunday on our calendars and the committee puts a plan into action. That's not bad, in and of itself. It takes hard work and dedication from committed people. However, the routine of it can interfere with the essence of stewardship- our offering of thanksgiving to God for the beautiful gift of life.

As we approach Stewardship Sunday, I encourage us all to consider how we express gratitude in our own lives. How do we give thanks? Is our gratitude a blessing to others?

Let us also consider gratitude within the church. How do we, at First Church, embody and express the essence of stewardship? How are we a continuous blessing to our community and beyond?

As we ponder these questions, let us also pause, sit in the Presence, and give thanks from the depths of our hearts. Amen.

Peace and blessings,
Joe



Election Day is November 2nd. Bayard Rustin said: "If we desire a society of peace, then we cannot achieve such a society through violence. If we desire a society without discrimination, then we must not discriminate against anyone in the process of building this society. If we desire a society that is democratic, then democracy must become a means as well as an end."

As followers of Jesus, we can live out our call to care for our neighbors as ourselves by engaging in the public square through voting. By faithfully committing to vote, we make a pledge not just to ourselves, but also to our community. These are difficult and challenging times for our local communities, our country, and the world. Divisive and heated rhetoric dominate the public dialogue. More and more people are withdrawing from engagement in the political process out of a growing sense of cynicism and mistrust.

Now, more than ever, your voice and your efforts are needed. Voting is a commitment we make to each other. In our democracy, it is the vehicle by which we express our love of neighbor. If you haven't voted early, make sure to vote on November 2nd!

NOVEMBER WORSHIP CALENDAR Sundays at 11:00 AM

November 7 **Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost**
Sacrament of Holy Communion
Reception of New Members
Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17; Psalm 127;
Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44



Remember: Daylight Savings Time ends.
Set your clocks back so you arrive on time!

November 14 **Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost**
Stewardship Sunday
1 Samuel 1:4-20; 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Hebrews 10:11-14, (15-18), 19-25;
Mark 13:1-8

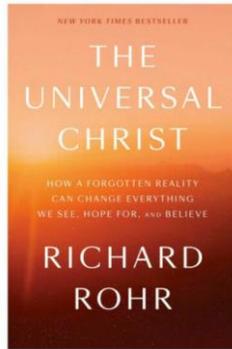
November 21 **Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost**
2 Samuel 23:1-7; Psalm 132:1-12,(13-18); Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

November 28 **First Sunday of Advent**
Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10;
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36



Adult Faith Formation

For the next several weeks we will be finishing up our discussion of "Christians Against Christianity." For our Advent study, starting Nov. 28th, we will be reading Richard Rohr's "The Universal Christ." This would be a great time to jump in and join us – 9:30 AM on Sunday mornings.



Meditation & Prayer



All are welcome! Contact Denise Alexander-Helm to be added to the list for the Zoom link. zndrD62@gmail.com

November Birthdays



11/01	Lorie Rajput
11/01	Rhoda Blocker
11/11	Jeff Beatman
11/13	Conor Clancy
11/15	Jacob Bussard
11/25	Mark Griffith



Along with all of "Metro Richmond at Prayer," during November let's pray for the families of Metropolitan Richmond.



Come help us decorate the sanctuary for the holiday season. Our hanging of the greens will begin at 10 AM on Sat Nov 27.



RISC COMMUNITY PROBLEMS ASSEMBLY Tuesday, November 9, 2020 at 7 PM

This is the first big Justice Ministry Assembly of the RISC year. At this gathering we will review where we are with each of our current issue campaigns (Affordable Housing and Gun Violence) and choose the area in which our Care for Creation initiative will be focused. Based on the input from house meetings, we will be selecting one of the following general categories:

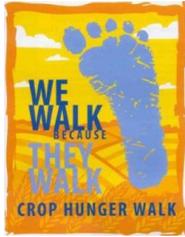
1. Storms & Flooding
2. Heat & Utility Bills
3. Healthy Homes & Schools

This year the Community Problems Assembly will be held via a "satellite" format. Our congregation's Network Members will gather together at the church, and then we will Zoom together, with other groups also gathered at their individual meeting places, into one large Zoom meeting. This allows us to be with the other members of our congregation's Network in one space physically, and to easily caucus by congregation to decide how we will be casting our votes to select the specific "Care for Creation" focus for this coming year. Our RISC Network Members have made a commitment to attend this meeting, but all interested parties are more than welcome.



CCHASM Thanksgiving Food Basket Program

Money collected in the special Thanksgiving offering on November 21st will be donated to CCHASM to support the purchase of food and gift certificates for Thanksgiving baskets. Special donations for this program are also welcome; please designate Thanksgiving on the memo line of your check or use one of the special envelopes available at church.



CROP HUNGER WALK

Nov 7 – 2 PM
(or virtual Nov 7-14)

Thanks to those who have registered to walk as part of our team this year: Jeff & Patty Beatman, Rhoda Blocker, Gail Christie, Herschell Emery, the Medlin family, Art & Amanda Moody. And many thanks to those of you who have already donated to support the 1stUCC CROP Hunger Walk Team. There is still plenty of time to support one or more of our walkers – or our team as a whole. You can make a secure online donation [here](#). It is also not too late to join our walk team and do some fundraising of your own. Please join this congregation-wide effort to fight hunger and support self-help development projects here and around the world. Walk registration is at 1:30 PM on Nov 7th with step-off at 2 PM; the 3 mile route will start and end at the Shalom Farms Northside Farm site at 1313 Westwood Ave., Richmond. There is also the option to walk virtually (choose your date and your distance) any time between Nov 7th and 14th).

If you need more information or wish to donate by check rather than online, the check should be made out to CWS/CROP (NOT to the church) and given to Gail Christie.

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship met via Zoom on Oct 23 to plan for the next few months. They will donate grocery gift cards to the Christmas Mother families - \$75 to the senior and \$150 to the family. November's "meeting" will be helping with the Holiday Bazaar. They will forgo the traditional Christmas luncheon in December due to Covid-19 concerns, but some kind of in-person social gathering is planned in conjunction with the "unhanging of the greens" on Jan 8th.

Holiday Bazaar



Saturday, Nov 13 9 AM – 2 PM

Be sure not to miss the return of this annual event, which helps to fund our Missions and Outreach projects! Come and help out, and do your holiday shopping while supporting our vendors and the church.

We have a few spaces still available; if you know of a crafter you would like to invite please contact Gail Christie for registration materials or have them email the church.

Bake sale items are needed and can be brought first thing Saturday morning.

Donations of **gently used gift items** and **handmade craft items** are also needed, for the Women's Fellowship "Olde Curiosity Shoppe" and craft table. These items can be brought to church at any time up until, and including, the day of the sale. Please price items yourself.

Lots of volunteer help will be needed for a variety of tasks on the day of the sale, including staffing the bake sale and food sales as well as the "Olde Curiosity" table, craft table, and the quilt raffle. We will also need help Thursday for set-up and Saturday afternoon for clean-up. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. For questions, contact Joy Hoyle, June Conner, Helen Parry, or Gail Christie.

Finally, be sure to invite your friends to come and shop! There is an event page on Facebook that can be shared through social media.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/556682018918736>

There is also a flyer attached to the end of this newsletter that can be shared with friends and posted in community locations. Thanks!!

Chesterfield - Colonial Heights Christmas Mother



Christmas Mother has resumed the Adopt-A-Family program, and, as in previous years, we are again sponsoring a family and a senior citizen. This year's family includes a senior as well (a grandmother raising grandchildren) so she also has a gift list.

They request a new outfit for each child (slacks, shirt, underwear and socks), a minimum of one large item from the wish list, and several small items.

Olita (family # 3015) is 67. Requests are for shirt/blouse (size L), pants (size M), tennis shoes (size 8), underwear (size 7). Her gift requests are cooking pans and a vacuum cleaner.

Family # 3014 has 3 children.

Trevell is 10. He wears a men's M/L shirt, men's S pants (would like sweatpants), men's size 7 ½ shoes. Gift suggestions are video games for PS4, books on Pokemon, and educational board/card games.

Jakari is 9. He wears boys 14/16 jeans and top (shirt request is for brown/black/beige) and size 6 shoes. Gift requests are action figures, board games, Dragon Ball Z books.

Kamari is 5 ½. She wears a girl's 6/6X top and pants, and girl's size 12 shoes. Gift requests are a Barbie doll (black), Barbie dress-up items, "girlie" books (princesses, etc.).

Their grandmother, **Diane**, is 66. Clothing requests are a shirt/blouse size L, red/blue and 14/16 jeans. Gift requests are a king size comforter (taupe), king size blanket (cream), 2 bath towels (cream/beige) and yarn for crochet.

There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex, with more details. **All items should be new and marked with the name of the recipient and the family number.** Gifts should be wrapped. Save receipts as well; these will go in a separate envelope in case exchanges of clothing are needed. Paper/household products and nonperishable food may also be donated.

All donations of gifts and money should be brought to church no later than Sunday, November 28th. There will be boxes in the narthex for these items starting November 14th.

Many thanks to the Women's Fellowship for coordinating this project again this year!

If you are not presently coming to church for in-person worship but would like to contribute, you can send gift cards to the church or drop gifts off during office or Fall Line Farms hours on Thursdays. If you want to purchase gifts, please call Joy Hoyle 804 310-4790 and she will check the sign-up board at church and let you know what is still available.

Holiday Bazaar

Saturday Nov 13

9 AM – 2 PM

First Congregational Christian
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
4310 Courthouse Rd, Chesterfield

(1/4 mi S of Hull St) 

Masks required

UNIQUE
GIFTS



LOCAL
CRAFTS

HOLIDAY
DECOR

BAKE
SALE

QUILT
RAFFLE

1stchurch.ucc@gmail.com; 804 276-5338

Proceeds benefit our outreach ministries