

Connections

Calendar of Special Events:

- October 12-20
Feast of Tabernacles
- October 26 6-8 PM
Family Fun Night
- November 20
The Lord's Supper
- December 4, 6 PM
Choir Christmas Special

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Volume 1, Issue 3

Fall 2011

Signs of the Season

Fall is my favorite season. I've always loved the arrival of autumn; the cooling from summer's heat; the crispness of the morning air; the changing of the color of the leaves; and of course the holidays. Face it, fall is a time of celebration and thanksgiving.

The LORD has given us many reasons for thanksgiving. He has also provided numerous festivals and celebrations to memorialize key events in His calendar and plan for mankind.

It is difficult to decide which of God's celebrations is the greatest. There's Passover which celebrates the salvation found in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Passover is the

first festival and celebrates the start of God's yearly calendar. The sacrifice of the Lamb of God is center stage at Passover and reveals God's plan of redemption for mankind.

Don't forget Pentecost when God fulfilled His promise of the Holy Spirit to give birth to and empower His children—His Church—His Body—His Bride... and usher in the summer months of His calendar. But my favorite of all of God's festivals is in the fall.

The Feast of Tabernacles is the last of the festivals and closes out the fall season in God's yearly calendar. This celebration commemorates God returning to live with man. So you could say that

Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles memorialize the two greatest events in God's plan for mankind.

So, this October during the Feast of Tabernacles remember the hope of a future that God has for you (Jer 29:11). Remember that Jesus has promised to return so that where He is, we will also be (John 14:1-3). Let this autumn be a turning point for you in your faith that brings into a closer walk with Jesus as you look with expectation for His return. Let this fall be truly a time of thanksgiving for all of God's promises.



Feast of Tabernacles— סוכות (Sukkot)

The Feast of Tabernacles also known as the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16) is celebrated for seven days beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Tishri) in the biblical (Hebrew) calendar.

This year, the Feast of Tabernacles is celebrated from sundown on October 12 to sundown on October 20. While this feast remembers God's presence with the Hebrews as they journeyed to the promised land from Egypt, the holiday is

very prophetic as it looks forward in time to Christ's return. In fact, of all the biblical holidays, none has a greater significance for end-times prophecy than this final festival on the biblical calendar.

The LORD through the prophet Zechariah confirms the significance of this festival by placing it at the center of the coming celebration of the Kingdom of God (Zech 14). The significance of the

Feast of Ingathering illustrates that it has always been God's plan to gather people from all nations into a special relationship with Him. The imagery of this festival is described in Revelation 7:9-17. The Feast of Tabernacles commemorates Jesus' restoration of creation as He wipes away every tear.





Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (Deut 11:18-19)

Writing God's Word upon Your Heart

In 2011 we are writing God's Word upon our hearts as we memorize chapter 12 from the book of Romans. Romans provides a great overview of the Christian life and guidance of how to live as one of Jesus' disciples. We are 3/4 way through memorizing chapter 12. I hope that you have written the first 16 verses upon your heart so far this year. Here are the verses for the rest of the year.

October: Romans 12:17-18 (NIV)

¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

November: Romans 12:19 (NIV)

¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

December: Romans 12:20-21 (NIV)

²⁰ On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



Extra Choir REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

October 1, 9:00 AM
 October 22, 9:00 AM
 November 5, 9:00 AM
 November 19, 9:00 AM
 November 29, 6:00 PM
 December 1, 6:00 PM
 December 3, TBA

December 4



Christmas Celebration

Worship/Music Ministry - An Audience of One

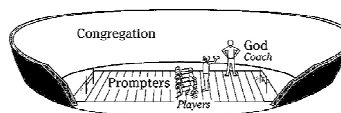
A common misconception in churches today (and has been for a long time) is that the "up front people"—the worship leaders (including pastor, singers, choir, soloists, instrumentalists, drama team, Bible readers, etc.) are the performers of worship and the congregation is the audience. Do you see that attitude every Sunday? Are there those that like to sit back in their seats, fold their arms, and say, "Entertain me. Bless me. Give me a great song and an inspiring sermon" - a common attitude for our entertainment-driven culture. What should we call these folk? "Pew potatoes?" "Observational Christians?"

Many people view the roles of worship like this:

- The worship leaders are the performers of worship.
- The congregation is the audience.

- God is the prompter of worship, i.e. He tells the worship leaders what to do.

To further illustrate this misconception, Barry Liesch, in his book, *The New Worship*, uses the illustration of a football stadium:



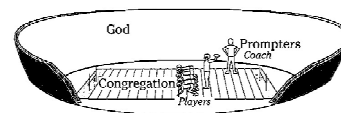
The worship leaders are the players, God is the coach, and the congregation is the audience in the stands watching it all play out.

Søren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher, theologian, writer and psychologist states that in corporate worship:

- The people should be the performers of worship
- The worship leaders are the prompters of worship
- God is the audience.

Using Liesch's illustration, the worship leaders (coaches)

prompt the congregation (players) to "perform" worship for God (audience).



When we fully understand that worship is not something done for us, but we are active participants in the journey, it can truly transform worship in our churches. Getting our roles straight is an important first piece in seeing worship renewal in our churches.

We worship the Audience of One. Will you get out of the pew and do something new?

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Outreach Ministry - Family Fun Night



Every October our church has a great privilege and honor to host an evening of fun, excitement, and hospitality for the AM-PO community. Many look upon this event as a substitute for Halloween. However, God has given us His own holiday in October. Therefore we should consider our Family Fun Night as part of the LORD's Feast of Tabernacles. Even

though the Feast of Tabernacles ends at 6 PM on October 20 this year, we can extend our celebration of looking forward to Jesus' return by using Family Fun Night to reach out to the community in His name.

Ask Jesus what part He wants you to fill in His plan for our church as we reach out to the AM-PO community. You can host a game room. You can help prepare the food. You can help serve the food. You can mingle with our guests and build relationships. You can help with the clean-up afterwards. You can help get the

word out by distributing pamphlets door-to-door and giving our neighbors a personal invitation. Everyone has a place and a part, be sure to do your part.

Let's make this year's event a celebration of Jesus' return. Make your plans to invite your neighbors, friends, family members and co-workers to come on October 26. Begin now by telling them of the fun time and the great food that awaits them. Be earnest in your daily prayers that we will be found faithful; and that we will use this event to introduce all who come to Jesus.

Children's Ministry

Serve Jesus!

Matthew 19:14 (NIV)
Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."



MEN: Do you long to be where Jesus is working? Then join the Children's

ministry and work among the children of AM-PO. Jesus will meet you there and direct your work. These children need to see men co-laboring with Christ. You don't have to be a gifted teacher. You don't need to be good with children. Your comfort is not required. Let Jesus use you for His glory. Venture where few men have gone before... into the Children's wing of the church and be a faith hero.

Give Praise

Solve this puzzle to read a Bible verse about praising God for all his blessings.

Directions: In each group, underline the word that doesn't belong. Then write the underlined words on the lines below.

1. Give Take Grab	2. peanut praise pear	3. temple house LORD	4. proclaim past present	5. name boy lad	6. ruin destroy make
7. pine acorn known	8. train nations bus	9. done donut muffin	10. Sing Sleep Yawn	11. she him girl	12. sun praise moon
13. tell fast slow	14. red all blue	15. horrible dreadful wonderful	16. acts sisters aunts		

" _____ to the _____, _____ his _____ ;
 _____ among the _____ what he has _____ .
 _____ to _____, sing _____ to him; _____ of _____ his
 _____ . " PSALM 105:1-2, NIV

Answers: 1. Give, 2. praise, 3. LORD, 4. proclaim, 5. name, 6. make, 7. known, 8. nations, 9. done, 10. Sing, 11. him, 12. praise, 13. tell, 14. all, 15. wonderful, 16. acts
 Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. (Psalm 105:1-2, NIV)

A COOKIE SMILE

Make these cheerful lollipop cookies to share.

What you need:

- An adult to help
- 1 roll of sugar cookie dough
- Knife
- Cookie sheet
- Wooden craft sticks
- Frosting
- Sprinkles
- Cellophane treat bags
- Ribbon



What you do:

1. Freeze the roll of dough.
2. Cut dough into 1/4-inch slices.
3. Place slices 2 inches apart on cookie sheet.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for five minutes.
5. Remove cookies from oven and place a stick into the bottom of each cookie (about 1 inch into the dough).
6. Return cookies to the oven until done, three to five more minutes.
7. After cookies are cool, make a "face" on each one, using frosting and sprinkles.
8. Put cookies into bags and tie with a ribbon. Then give away these edible smiles!

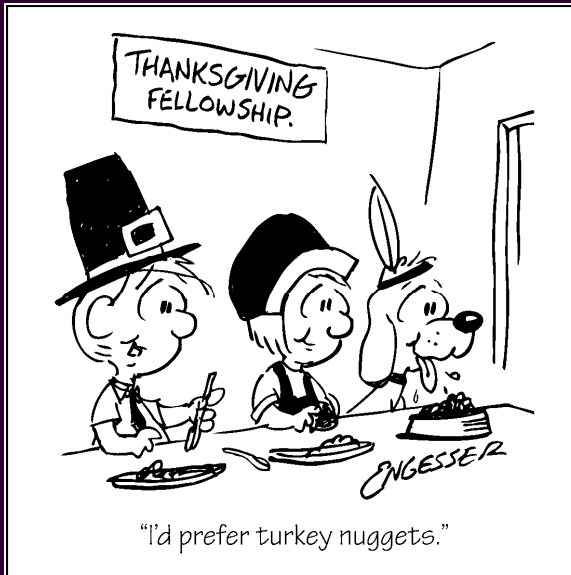
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Cultivate an attitude of thanksgiving!



A Note from the Pastor

Can you imagine working to put a full Thanksgiving Turkey dinner together for your family, complete with a whole turkey just waiting to be carved only to hear; "I'd prefer a hamburger."

Face it, we all have our own personal preferences. There are times when I would prefer something other than the lovingly and carefully prepared gift that I've been given. In fact, I have even stated my preference to the giver at times. As those sisters in Christ who lovingly prepare our Wednesday evening meals can testify to my preferences regarding macaroni and cheese (yuk!).

Although, I would never prefer a hamburger over a roasted turkey at Thanksgiving... at other times of the year I probably would like hamburger instead of turkey. And hidden within that preference for something other than the gift given lies the seed of sin... covetousness.

Covetousness is looking at what you have; then looking at what someone else has; then desiring what the other person has to the point that you are no longer thankful (or grateful) for what you have. The gifts you have been given become diminished in your sight to the point of being despised as you gaze upon what another has been given.

The Bible tells us that God is the giver of good gifts. Scripture tells each of us that God created our inmost being; He knit each of us together in our mother's womb... that we each are fearfully and wonderfully made... that all of

God's works are wonderful (Psalm 139:13-14). We are told that The LORD has assigned each of us a position in life and that we should be content in the situation that He has given (1 Cor 7:17-24). So when we look at others and wish we had what they had instead of what we have—whether it be possessions, position, relationships, or innate abilities—to the point where we lose thankfulness for what God has given... this is when we commit the sin of covetousness.

This does not mean we should not aspire to improve our situation (1 Cor 7:21). However, we should be content with what God has given us (Philippians 4:8-13). And the secret to being content is to dwell upon "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things" (Philippians 4:8)... especially when it comes to the good gifts God has given to you.

When we reach the point where we are content with the wonderful gifts God has given to each of us; we will overflow with thanksgiving to God. So remember the freedom you have in Christ. For "in him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence" (Ephesians 3:12). "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness" (Colossians 2:6-7).

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:1-4).

This Thanksgiving season, let's cultivate a year round attitude of thankfulness for all that our Lord and God has given to each of us and everything that He has done for all of us.