



Bethel Baptist

November 2015

Thoughts from Pastor Gene

When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, a man cannot discover anything about his future. (Ecclesiastes 7:14)

Like many of you, I've realized that developing and maintaining a growing faith is a process. I feel up when "times are good." I struggle sometimes to not get down when "times are bad." To complicate matters even more, the ups and downs, highs and lows, are not always predictable. While observation and experience teaches us that life will not always go the way you and I would prefer, we still have to learn how to correctly process and navigate the calm and stormy seas that come our way.

There are two robust and sturdy truths embedded in *Ecclesiastes 7:14* that can direct and safeguard all of us when we encounter unwanted misfortune and unexpected adversity.

- This verse reminds us and gives us the powerful conviction that God is still in control when life is seemingly out of control
- This verse provides us with a philosophical foundation for rational thinking during those times when life is unfolding in irrational ways

I believe that God is the incredible Difference Maker! His love, mercy, and grace are always available. Our faith in His providence can enable our earthly journeys to be more about

composure, hope, and joy instead of agitation, sadness, and despair.

I pray that as you reflect upon this year and remember God's faithfulness and goodness in your life, you will rejoice with Thanksgiving!

November Events



Join us on **Saturday, November 7**, for our Operation Christmas Child packing party from 9-11 am! Come and have fun filling up one box . . . or as many boxes as you'd like! And if you can't make the packing party, just bring your boxes to church with you for our Shoebox Celebration on **Sunday, November 8**.

On **Saturday, November 14**, we'll be doing outreach in the neighborhoods around Bethel. The holidays can be a hard time for many people, so this is an opportunity to invite people to church, lend support, and share God's love. The holidays are also a time to celebrate all of God's blessings, so we hope you'll join us as we offer invitations to visit with us at Bethel. We'll meet at the church at 10 am to team up.



On **Sunday, November 22**, you'll want to plan to join us at for our first **Thanksgiving Dinner and Praise** event! We'll have a delicious Thanksgiving dinner at 5 pm and, once we're full, we'll have an amazing time of praise, prayer, and song. Our friend Zelma Neal will be our special guest that evening!

Copies of the newsletter and monthly calendar are available in the foyer. Both are also available under the **News & Events** tab on our website www.bethelbaptistchurch.net

faith & hope love

Give Thanks

We all know that Thanksgiving is about more than a big meal, time with family and friends, and maybe a football game or two. It's also a time to reflect on a year winding to a close, the things we are praying about, and the things that we are thankful for.

It's also a good time to remember and reflect on those Bible verses that remind us to be thankful for God's presence in each of our lives.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. (1 Chronicles 16:34)

Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. (Psalm 95:2)

Let our hearts overflow with thankfulness... (Colossians 2:7)

I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving. (Psalm 69:30)

In that day you will say: "Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted. (Isaiah 12:4)

Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. (Psalm 100:4)

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. (Colossians 3:15)

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song. (Psalm 28:7)



Brother Hoy's Food Drive

Our annual food drive for Brother Hoy will be held during November. We're once again raising funds to help him purchase rice, corn, and beans to share with those in need in Mexico. Just place your contribution in an offering envelope and indicate "Food Drive" in the "Special" section.



Christmas is Coming!

The holidays are a busy time and the days can fill up fast, so be sure to include our Christmas activities on your calendar in December!



Our annual **Christmas Party** is **Sunday, December 13**, beginning at 5 pm. We'll have a special holiday meal, followed by fun activities, music, and special holiday treats. Our kids will be having their own special meal and fun with Miss Crystal and Miss Samantha, so there's going to be something for the whole family!

More information on the Christmas party will be provided in our Sunday bulletins and the December newsletter.



Our **Christmas Service** will be on **Sunday, December 20** at 11 am. The service will include special performances by the children, the ensemble, and a special Christmas message from Pastor Gene.