



the Belltower

Jan
2012

"To grow as disciples in Christ, prayerfully opening our hearts and minds to joy and service."

My dear Christ Church family,

If the only prayer you ever say is "Thank you," it is enough. -Meister Eckhart

A few years ago, our Lenten Study was focused on Forgiveness. During that study, we found that forgiveness has become a topic of scientific research, the focus of scholarly books and university courses.

The same is also true of gratitude. University of California, Davis professor Dr. Robert Emmons recently published a best-selling book entitled: "Thanks! How The New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier." In his research, Dr. Emmons reports that grateful people have higher levels of well-being; they are more empathetic, generous, and helpful; they are more likely to acknowledge a belief in the interconnectedness of all life and a commitment to and responsibility to others; they place less importance on material goods; they are less likely to judge their own and others' success in terms of possessions accumulated. (<http://gratitudepower.net/science.htm>)

January is the month of our Annual Parish Meeting, and as such, it is a good time to reflect back and to look forward. As I do this, I am aware of how much I have to be grateful for.

When I slow down and catch my breath, the tidal wave of God's blessings seems to sweep me off my feet, and I am overwhelmed. Everything seems so good: good people, good health, good family, good friends. Home, work, Church, community, nature, weather, kindnesses, thoughtfulness, struggles, success, failure, opportunity, reconciliation, relationship: everywhere I look, I see the goodness of God. I can identify with the psalmist, who addressed God: *Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make the grave my bed, you are there also. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.* (Psalm 139:7-12)

This is not to say that there have not been times of discouragement, disappointment, pain and suffering; we all have our share of such times when things look and feel bleak. (Dr. Emmons reports: "Grateful people do not deny or ignore the negative aspects of life.") But when I stop and take a deep breath, open the eyes of my heart and look - God has been there in the midst of it, sustaining, encouraging, blessing. Jesus tells us: "If you, with all your failings, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give good gifts to you who ask!" (Matthew 7:11; my own paraphrase) We have all just finished giving good gifts to our children, our family, our friends; we have all just received gifts from them in turn. *How much more* do we receive from God! Most of the time, I don't even give God so much as the time of day, and yet the bountiful gifts *still* come, tangible or intangible, noticed or unnoticed. The ocean of God's blessings rolls over us.

A story came to my e-mail a while back which hit me as very true, for I have had similar experiences. Fred Lloyd Cochran writes: "Yesterday I watched a huge flight of geese winging their way south through one of those panoramic sunsets that color the entire sky for a few moments. I saw them as I leaned against the lion statue in front of the Chicago Art Institute, where I was watching the Christmas shoppers hurry along Michigan Avenue. When I lowered my gaze, I noticed that a bag lady, standing a few feet away, had also been watching the geese. Our eyes met and we smiled -- silently acknowledging the fact that we had shared a marvelous sight, a symbol of the mystery of the struggle to survive. I overheard the lady talking to herself as she shuffled away. Her words, 'God spoils me,' were startling..." (© 1999, from *Chicken Soup for the Unsinkable Soul* by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Heather McNamara)

If God spoils that woman living on the cold streets of Chicago, how much more does God spoil me?!
Thank you, God! I am overwhelmed by your blessings!

Yours in Christ's love and service,

Mark[†]

Rector: The Rev. Mark D. Meyer
Deacon: The Rev. Merle Harrison
Senior Warden: John Merriam
Junior Warden: Steve Keim
Treasurer: Walter Roche
Vestry

Rachel Alexander
Robert Barnhill
Donna Cooper
Bryan Fredrickson
Jerry Gill
Linda Keim
Sally Merriam
Mary Olson

Acolyte Director: Marnie Chapman
Centering Prayer: pb Walsh, Nancy Kovalcik

Child Care Attendant: Michelle Cook

Choir Director: Barbara Kohl
Christian Education: Shirleen Sabatino

Coffee Hour: Bob & Earline Barnhill

Columbarium: Vestry
Daughters of the King: Shirleen Sabatino

Episcopal Church Women (ECW):
Ann Roche

ECW Thrift House: Lois Kitchell
Eucharistic Visitors: Merle Harrison
Hospitality: Sally Merriam

Lectors: Mary Olson
Library: pb Walsh

New Child Montessori School
Carol Ann Gentry
Judy Weyenberg
Michelle Cook

Operation Christmas Child: Ann Roche

Organist: Barbara Kohl
Parish Administrator: Becky Jamison
Pastoral Care: Linda Tipton
Photography: Jerry Gill

Prayer Center: John Rohde
Prayer Chain: Donna Cooper
Public Affairs: Rachel Alexander
Risk Management: John Merriam
Sangre de Cristo Region Rep: Lois Kitchell

Sexton: Larry Jamison
St. Gabriel's Guild: Shirley Finger
Stewardship: Vestry
SWEEPS Council: Mary Olson
United Thank Offering: Audrey DeBekker

Ushers: John Merriam
Worship: Fr. Mark Meyer

New Candlesticks

Six beautiful new candlesticks and oil candles grace the Christ Church altar. They are dedicated for the service of God in memory of Nina Newton, a long-time member of Christ Church and Altar Guild director; and Maxine Holland, mother of Sally Merriam, who was actively involved for many years at St. James Episcopal Church in Meeker, Colorado.

With the exception of the communion vessels, few objects at the altar receive as much use as the six candles surrounding the tabernacle. After 45 years of service, the former candlesticks have been retired except for special occasions as needed.

Fresh Expressions of Church

The Fresh Expressions of Church group is opening their next meeting for us to join in personally or via webex. This group explores ideas and offers encouragement to experiment with new ways to be the Church in today's world. The group is composed of both clergy and lay who are part of Fresh Expressions or those who have a desire to start something new and need a place to bounce the idea around. Ideas range from a meditation group, to starting a community of young adults in a restaurant, to creative mid-week worship opportunities, to starting a business with a ministry focus, etc., etc., etc. The webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11th in the Parish Hall from 1:00 - 3:00PM. If you are interested in joining others in the search for creative and innovative ideas, please join us.

Consecration Sunday Report

To all of you who submitted your financial Commitment (Pledge) Form for 2012, thank you! It makes the work of your Christ Church Finance Committee and Vestry so much easier when we can develop a budget based on pledges of financial commitment which you make.

If you have yet to submit a financial Commitment (Pledge) Form, would you please consider doing so? It would help your church family, and it is a powerful, positive spiritual discipline. Forms may be downloaded from <http://www.christchurchcanoncity.org/Downloads.dsp> or obtained from the office (simply call Becky at 275-2028).

We are aware that times are difficult for some people. Some are suffering from the economy, or have suffered a financial setback; if so, we pray that God grant you His peace and support during this difficult time. If you need to talk with someone, or be prayed for, please let Fr. Mark know!

Annual Parish Meeting and Potluck

11:45 am Sunday, January 29, 2012

One service only that weekend

Holy Eucharist Rite II at 10:00 am Sunday



Fr. Mark has New Phone Number

719-557-9086

Fr. Mark has discontinued his "land-line" phone service and is using his cell phone only. Please delete the number 275-4259 from your directories and replace it with **719-557-9086**.

Christ Episcopal Church

*"To grow as disciples in Christ, prayerfully opening
our hearts and minds to joy and service."*

816 Harrison Avenue
Cañon City, CO 81212

Return Service Requested

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Let us remember in our prayers

Rectory: The Rev. Mark D. Meyer	New Child Montessori School
Deacon: The Rev. Merle Harrison	Carol Ann Gentry
Senior Warden: John Merriam	Judy Weyenberg
Junior Warden: Steve Keim	Michelle Cook
Treasurer: Walter Roche	
Vestry	Op Christmas Child: Ann Roche
Rachel Alexander	Organist: Barbara Kohl
Robert Barnhill	Parish Admin: Becky Jamison
Donna Cooper	Pastoral Care: Linda Tipton
Bryan Fredrickson	Photography: Jerry Gill
Jerry Gill	Prayer Center: John Rohde
Linda Keim	Prayer Chain: Donna Cooper
Sally Merriam	Public Affairs: Rachel Alexander
Mary Olson	Risk Mgmt: John Merriam
Acolyte Director: Marnie Chapman	Sangre de Cristo Region Rep.
Centering Prayer: pb Walsh, Nancy	Lois Kitchell
Kovalcik	Sexton: Larry Jamison
Child Care Atten.: Michelle Cook	St. Gabriel's Guild: Shirley Finger
Choir Director: Barbara Kohl	Stewardship: Vestry
Christian Ed: Shirleen Sabatino	SWEEPS Council: Mary Olson
Coffee Hr: Bob & Earline Barnhill	Ushers: John Merriam
Daughters of the King: Shirleen	Welcoming: Linda Keim
Sabatino	
ECW: Ann Roche	
ECW Thrift House: Lois Kitchell	
Eucharistic Visitors: Deacon Merle	
Hospitality: Sally Merriam	
Lectors: Mary Olson	
Library: pb Walsh	

People Serving our
Country
Christopher G. Abbott
Robert Abbott
Lt. Col. Mark Crossman
Joshua Eck
Lt. Col. Mark Gruber
Andrew Hoffman
Lt. JG Ethan Jayson
Spec. Zach Jayson
SFC Chris Thomas
Travis Tipton
Maj. Brian Weyenberg
Capt. Benjamin
Nichols
Spec 2 Jesse Painter
Jared Pollock
Rob & Joel Sears
GSgt. Paul Spaulding
SSgt. Michael
Paulding
Spec. Christopher
Sainsbury
LCpl Shiloh Wilson
Lt. Col. Andrew
Kerkman
Yale Blake King
Maj. Sean Michael
MacDermott
Ellen McCormick

Please pray for Christ's love to engulf our Parish,
Diocese and our National Church; Bishop
Christ Church family, Deacon Merle, Fr. Mark

- Prisoners: Those in prison and those who care for them; Robert
- Nursing Home/Assisted Living: Flo, Thelma, Coeta, Glen, Herb

HEALING, COMFORT, PATIENCE &
HOPE: JC, Ann, Judy, Ralph+, Bob, Leo,
Raquel, Brenda, Britany, Scott+, Sue, Cyril,
Kris, Carol, Ron

GOD'S PRESENCE IN TIME OF SPECIAL
NEED: Lindsay, Bonnie & Joel, Alan

RECONCILIATION/LOVE: Michelle

WORK IN THE LORD/FINANCIAL
STABILITY: Fred, Jacob, Brogan