



# 'Till We Meet Again!

Week of November 28 and November 29, 2020



## REFLECTION FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020

### SHOUT OUT TO OUR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

<sup>2</sup>*We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly.* <sup>3</sup>*As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ.* <sup>4</sup>*We know, dear brothers and sisters, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people.* <sup>5</sup>*For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance that what we said was true.*

### 1 Thessalonians 1:2-5a

Greetings and peace my friends!

You may have heard the term “Shout out!” Today, I would love to share some “shout outs” with all of you!

On Tuesday Pastor Suzanne wrote wonderfully about being grateful. As I thought and prayed over her message to us all and then experienced life this week within the midst of our community of faith, I felt truly moved by the Spirit.

I would like to give a “Shout out!” to our congregational councils of the UPG and St. John’s Windish. Trust me when I tell you that it is extremely difficult dealing with “real world” concerns of our community of faith via the internet and “Zoom!” In fact, some might say it is

easier to herd 40 cats into one room, than to faithfully discharge the important duties of our councils via “Zoom.” Think about this for a moment, these wonderful sisters and brothers in Christ volunteered to help lead, direct, and guide our communities. In “normal” times this task can be daunting as emotions and thoughts can run high, but during the pandemic, incredibly important and difficult decisions have had to be reached in order to keep our community of faith heading in God inspired directions.

Each month we faithfully talk about and discern our decisions regarding “in person” worship. Each month with longing hearts to return to regular worship these faithful people set aside their personal preferences and truly are looking out for the best interests of the people who comprise our community of faith.

During this pandemic, when many communities of faith have been in an almost “hibernation” our community of faith has been constantly looking to grow and expand our ministries in previously unthought of ways. Our “Bringing it Home” ministry is allowing our sisters and brothers in Christ who may not be familiar with available technologies to have access to and be able to participate in our “online worship celebrations.” For many of these family members it has not been months of being away from worship, but rather years! The joy on their faces is precious as they watch these worship celebrations! The capital investment for this ministry was wonderfully received and supported by our congregational councils because of the realization that our Lord is calling us to share worship with as many sisters and brothers within our community of faith as possible! This bold action

shares the power of God's love to people who otherwise would continue to be separated from the strength of our community of faith and the hope that is shared among our family of faith.

Of course early on in this pandemic we noted how truly the Spirit moved us in the direction of allowing for "on line" worship celebrations and a hefty investment of \$500 was made in order that we would purchase a low end camera that could "live stream" worship celebrations. That camera arrived in our hands literally a week before the pandemic struck and forced us to close off our buildings. Amazing? Inspiring? I think so too! Through this experience the leadership of our community of faith realized the importance, but perhaps even more importantly the potential that having an on-line worship presence can create. Weekly we receive people from across the country and on some occasions even across the world, who join us for our weekly worship celebrations. The leadership of our community of faith seized this opportunity to advance the gospel during this time and supported our community purchasing much more sophisticated and professional equipment that will ultimately allow people to experience new and exciting ways of experiencing worship. Our leadership did not hesitate when they could see the potential such a ministry could bring to advancing God's love within the world in which we live.

So, on this day, I just wanted to send out a special "Shout out!" to our congregational councils! People who stepped forward to help lead and direct our ministries. People who continue to allow the Spirit of God and God's calling to us all to share God's love with the world one heart at a time. People who are courageous and bold enough to embrace the realities that this pandemic has brought us but instead of trying simply to secure our well being are seeking ways in which our ministries and the proclamation of the love of God can grow and flourish. As Pastor Suzanne said on Tuesday, "I

pray that you too would accept with gratitude the gifts that are given to us by God and by each other. Our hope and prayer are that we, as one community of faith, would join together in gratitude and love toward each other and with each other."

Thank you, my sisters, and brothers, in Christ! Thank you! For through your words and more importantly your actions, you allow God's Word to flourish in a world that absolutely, positively needs to hear of the great love, mercy, and hope that can only come from our Lord!

Until next time,

Trust God, keep washing those hands,



and be at peace with one another!

PJ

**REFLECTION FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2020**

### **THE ART OF LISTENING**

***"The first duty of love is to listen." Paul Tillich***

Here we are on the verge of the Thanksgiving holiday and it promises to be anything but ordinary. For many we will not be gathering in person for the traditional dinner and fellowship, perhaps you will gather via zoom or even a phone call. Whatever way you can safely gather with your loved ones, I invite you to listen. Listen intently to what each family or friend is saying. Check in with your loved ones to see how they are managing during the pandemic. Check in and listen carefully, do they need anything?

So often I think we struggle to really listen to each other. Sometimes we think we know what will come next and sometimes we

are absolutely right and other times we are surprised. I think the art of truly listening to each other has been lost in our fast paced, on the move every second of every hour society in which we live. I was reminded the other day, that it is hard to hate someone when you know their story.

How often do we really listen to someone when they are speaking? How often do we take the time to listen to a person's story when we encounter them? How many times have we been frustrated with a stranger's actions and assumed the worst? How many times have we assumed things about a person based on physical looks or actions?

Margaret Wheatley in her book, *A Simpler Way*, she tells a story about a teacher and a student. Often, the student was disruptive in class and the teacher decided to sit and listen to the student's story. She did not give advice or try to fix the problems, she just sat by the student and listened. As he was talking, the student was working out his life and what he really needed was to be heard. The teacher gave the student an incredible gift, she listened. It really is hard to hate someone when you know their story.

I invite you as you gather with loved ones, whether in person or using technology, listen. Really listen to what they are saying. Really listen to their story. And then continue the act of listening with those you do not know. People you encounter every day or just randomly. Get in the habit of listening to people's stories. Perhaps, too, you can share your story.

My prayer for each of us this week is that we would really listen to each other. That we would listen to the stranger's we meet along our journey this week. That we would develop our listening skills. For in learning each other's stories we grow a community of love and acceptance. It is truly hard to hate someone when you know their story.

In Peace,  
Pastor Suzanne



### SUNDAY SCHOOL TRIP

Sunday School is sponsoring a trip to Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm in Stroudsburg on December 6<sup>th</sup>. We will meet there at 1:45 PM to view their Live Nativity with barnyard animals, tour the farm, view their Christmas Putz and beautifully decorated Christmas trees. This is an all outdoor event with mask wearing required. There is no cost to attend but a reservation is required by contacting Lynn Terry at 610-554-4090 or [lynnjt680@verizon.net](mailto:lynnjt680@verizon.net). It is our hope and prayer that by participating in this event all children young and old will develop a clear understanding of Jesus' birth.



### MAT MINISTRY

During the weekend worship service at Light of Christ, Pastor Jerry blessed 25 sleeping mats that were made from the plastic bags that have been so kindly donated. Our UPG mat makers plan to continue their work until 50 mats are finished. Thank you to all those who have made this ministry possible.



**CALLS OF COMPASSION & CARING "CCC"  
MINISTRY: MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**



Calls of Compassion and Caring "CCC" Ministry – This exciting ministry was formed during the

2020 pandemic. A faithful group of volunteers regularly call all members of the UPG/St. John's Windish congregations simply to "check in" with their sisters and brothers in Christ and to see if there is anyway that the community may be of assistance. If you would like to participate in this rewarding ministry, please call one of the church offices.

**FROM THE MAILROOM**

Thank you for your thoughtful gift of \$333.75 received in the KidsPeace Foundation on 11/2/2020. Since no goods or services were exchanged, your gift is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. You should retain this letter for tax purposes.

The children, families and communities we serve are able to make enormous strides in the quest to find hope, help and healing thanks to your support!

Knowing that someone cares about them — that someone values them — our children succeed. You are helping KidsPeace to make that difference.

Again, thank you for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Ann McCauley

Vice President of Development

President, KidsPeace Foundation



Turning Point  
of Lehigh Valley

Thank you so much for making your first gift of \$333.75 to Turning Point of Lehigh Valley on 10/30/2020. We realize that when it comes to charitable giving you have many options. That is why we are humbled by your decision to support our mission to end domestic and intimate partner abuse in the Lehigh Valley.

It is because of your support that Turning Point is able to empower, educate, and engage our clients and community. Over the last 42 years, Turning Point has evolved from a volunteer helpline to a comprehensive trauma-informed agency that includes a professionally trained staff, a 24-hour helpline, emergency safe housing, empowerment counseling for adults and children, legal advocacy, medical advocacy, prevention and education programs, and so much more.

If you have not already provided us with your email address please consider signing up for our monthly newsletters. This way, you can stay up-to-date on how your donation is making a difference in the life of survivors and their families. We also encourage you to follow us on social media, where you can learn about our latest programs and events. If you have any questions, would like to provide us with feedback, or want to learn more about how you can get involved with us, please contact our Director of Advancement, Andrea Search at [andreas@turningpointlv.org](mailto:andreas@turningpointlv.org).

In peace,

Lori Sywensky

Executive Director



KidsPeace

We were so thrilled when I opened another envelope to find another \$500 contribution from Light of Christ! Thank you so much! I find myself having to apologize again for the delay in both my response and processing your check, but that doesn't make it less heartfelt! I held the check for quite a while because we were hoping to purchase a freezer with it and I wanted to make sure it went to the right place at Second Harvest to make that possible, but in the end they were able to give the food pantry a freezer through a grant! We just received the



### Feeding the Community

freezer on the 2nd.

As always, we are tremendously grateful for both this financial support and the support of your indomitable volunteers! While some have been unable to serve due to COVID risks, those who have been able to continue serving have been incredible! Nothing has kept them from being there to help out.

Thank you again for this contribution.  
Sincerely,  
Joyce Mante  
Co-coordinator Calvary Baptist Food Pantry

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## THIS WEEK IN THE UPG NOVEMBER 28—DECEMBER 6

### Saturday November 28

4:45 PM      Worship (LiveStream Facebook LoC)

### Sunday November 29

Worship available on YouTube

### Monday November 30

7:00 PM      Coffee & Conversation (Zoom)

### Tuesday December 1

9:00 AM      Staff Meeting (Zoom)

### Wednesday December 2

7:00 AM      Fellowship Meeting

### Thursday December 3

6:30 PM      Bible Study (Zoom)

### Friday December 4

### Saturday December 5

4:45 PM      Worship (LiveStream Facebook St. JW)

### Sunday December 6

Worship available on YouTube

