

From Pastor Karen's Desk

November 2009

Thanks. Giving.

These are the two pillars of the month of November for us. Thanks. And Giving.

The secular world promotes both this time of year. The government proclaimed holiday on the fourth Thursday reminds us to be thankful for our family and our food, and promotes many turkey-oriented ways for us to celebrate what we are thankful for, if not always, who we are thankful to.

And the giving? Well, that's easy to spot. Long before Halloween, the toy flyer from Fleet Farm's toy kingdom arrived in our mailbox, and I wouldn't be surprised if you found a lot of glossy red and green next to this newsletter in your mailbox. The advertisers don't miss a chance to remind you to give (read: "buy") gifts for your family and friends and co-workers and neighbors and paper carriers and babysitters and dog walkers. The more the better! I'm sure this year our giving will be called virtuous and patriotic as it stimulates the economy.

But in the faith community; we try to do what the rest of the world often neglects to do: connect Thanks and Giving with more than a hyphen. We give because we are thankful. We are thankful through our giving. And the connecting link is God.

It is God who has given us so many gifts. And it is out of God's goodness that we have something to giveback and give to others. In a year where we have gotten into the habit of noticing what we lack, and there fore holding all the more tightly to what we have remaining, remember to open your fingers enough to see those gifts you are gripping so tightly so that you can say thank you for them. And once your fingers are loosened by gratitude, you will find it easier to extend your hands to give.