



News From Holland

Holland First United Methodist Church

November 2011

Dr Phil Shuler, Pastor

Web Site: www.hollandum.org

FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN

“Happy Thanksgiving!” is a phrase many of us will be hearing and saying during November. I wonder, though, how many of us will be able to be in a state of authentic thankfulness this year.

Reason? This has truly been a tough year in our nation. The wars drag on and the economy seems to be taking its time in recovery. Unemployment is rampant and many who have jobs have had to settle for part-time work. Retailers are looking forward to the Christmas holiday season in hopes of more sounds of ringing cash registers. E.g., I notice that Wal-Mart has reinstated its “lay-a-way” program, a way of telling us we can afford our Christmas purchases. Banks are instigating more foreclosures on homes and intend to do so in the future. Our government seems paralyzed, if not politically deadlocked, when it comes to solutions. There is little consolation in the fact that our circumstances are shared worldwide! The fact is that people are hurting! Food banks are busy, as food prices are rising! And, to make matters even worse, drought has significantly curtailed farming in our area communities and elsewhere worldwide.

The scenario could be expanded even more and there are many people who feel hopeless about tomorrow. “Happy Thanksgiving?” Some will perhaps say, “preacher, is this your idea of a cruel joke?”

No, I believe we CAN say “happy Thanksgiving” to one another. It’s easy to list all of the problems and identify everything that we don’t like or agree with. Negativity is everywhere, and it’s easy for us to be inundated with darkness. Even so, we need not see a totally “black” future.

I suggest we try something else. Let’s work on another kind of list, one that is filled with all of the good that surrounds us. Maybe I can make some suggestions by beginning one of my own. At the top of my list I would place my family, both past and present. I am thankful for the family into which I was born, and the way I was reared. I’m thankful for my wife, children, and my grandchildren. I am grateful I was born in a country that not only permits but insures the basic freedoms of speech, independence, and worship. I would list friends the support they offer. I include the joy of work and the freedom to seek true happiness. I am thankful I can see, touch, hear, smell, and taste. I love to feel the breeze against my face and I love to see the stars in the heavens. I’m thankful for life, and for God who authored and continues to nourish that life. I’m sure all of you can also make a list, probably larger than mine!

The fact is that we all have more to be thankful for than not. In spite of all of the problems – even the bleakest of pictures – we can give thanks to God for His loving presence. His presence is our real hope; our only hope as individuals, as a people, as a nation, as a global community. In the words of Tiny Tim that we will hear again this coming Christmas season: “God bless us every one!”

See you in church Phil Shuler, Pastor

Community Thanksgiving Service

The Annual Community Thanksgiving Service will be held on November 20th at the Holland ISD Cafeteria. If participation in The Shoe Box Ministry is confirmed additional information will be shared. Don’t forget to bring a dish to share.

Community Breakfast

The free Pancake Breakfast/Church Service will be held on Nov 6th at the Kuhlmann Center 7:30-9:00am. Regular church service will follow at 9:00 am. Come and enjoy the food and fellowship!

Cowboy Church

November's Cowboy Church is set for November 20th at 5:00 pm Pastor Randy Evans is bringing the message and Brandon Spinn the music. Don't forget those yummy treats! The October service was a wonderful way to begin Cowboy Church. The message, music and food were great! We had 50-60 in attendance and everyone enjoyed the service and the socializing.

Judy's News

Granger Community Food Pantry

Help! 60 Families came through this month to receive groceries to put on their table! Our vegetables are depleted plus we have to get ready for Thanksgiving with dressing, cranberry sauce, gravy, etc.....Any help you can give us will be so appreciated! We will have to plan on at least 60 families coming through. Please be in prayer for this ministry.

Our trip

Charley Mack and I just returned from our trip to Florida. Our grandson Mackenzie is majoring in Opera at Clearwater Christian College and we attended his Senior Concert. What a gift our Lord has given him. He is a Tenor and his voice is phenomenal! He finishes in December and will be going to Graduate School in the fall of 2012. Rice University is a possibility. He is applying to 4 Major Colleges, specializing in Opera. Prayerfully in a couple months I will have a CD to share.

UMM

The United Methodist Men will meet on November 12th at 8:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Come join the fellowship and worship.

UMW

Our trip to the Painted Churches was cancelled due to several illnesses. We will reschedule for 2012. Our next meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the Church on Nov 15th at 1:00 pm. Everyone is welcome!