



# The GoodNewsletter

## First Baptist Church, Littleton

“Journeying to God’s Sacred Beat”

November 2010

## G r a t i t u d e

**A**rt

**B**irdsong, books, beauty

**C**hildren, Chihuly, color, creativity

**D**ay, dance, dreams

**E**arth, enlightenment

**F**un, faith

**G**od, generosity

**H**ope, halleluia

**I**nspiration, imagination

**J**oy, jubilation

**K**nowledge, kindness

**L**ove, light

**M**usic, Monet, meditation

**N**ight

**O**mnipotence

**P**rayer, poetry, painting, passion

**Q**uiet

**R**everence, rain, rejoicing

**S**ong, sunshine

**T**olerance

**U**nderstanding

**V**an Gogh, vision

**W**riting

**X, Y** chromosomes

**Z**est for life



*by Dawn Gravin*



## From the Pastor's Desk

*The following is a portion of my Thanksgiving sermon from Sunday, November 20, 2005. It was called Five Kernels of Corn and my prayer is that your November is filled with gratitude.*

### Five Kernels of Corn

It was with great interest that I heard about a Thanksgiving table tradition called the Five Kernels of Corn. It is a little known tradition that is practiced by some households before the Thanksgiving meal is eaten. Five small kernels of corn are placed on everybody's plate before the food is brought into the



room and becomes the center of attention. Everyone sits down and a cup or basket is passed around. When the cup comes to you, you take one of the kernels of corn, say something you are thankful for and place it in the cup. It goes around the table five times, giving people a chance to really think and verbalize

what they are thankful for. Then the prayer follows and the meal begins. It is a fun tradition designed to make **gratitude** and not consumption the focus of the day.

The legend of the five kernels of parched corn can be traced back to the first thanksgiving. I understand that it is a legend but it is a good practice to follow. We remember from our history that the early Pilgrims celebrated a harvest meal of fowl, wild turkey, deer, and Indian corn which was recorded in the diary accounts of Edward Winslow and William Bradford. The abundance of the meal did not accurately reflect the times because life was hard, food and supplies were scarce, many people died and the needs were great. William Bradford, in his diary, referred to this time as

the starving time and it was he who wrote that the Pilgrims had to live on only a few grains of corn a day.

There is a little poem called *Five Kernels of Corn* which talks about the Pilgrims first winter and assigns each kernel something to be thankful for.

The first kernel reminded them of the autumn beauty.

The second kernel reminded them of their love for each other.

The third kernel reminded them of their family's love.

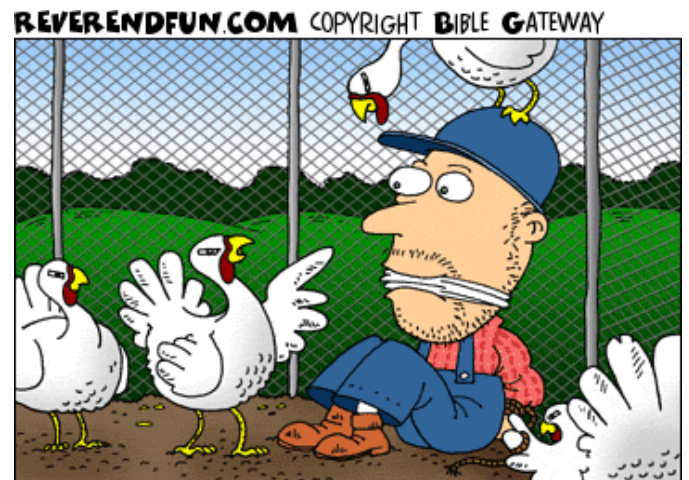
The fourth kernel reminded them of their friends... especially their Indian brothers.

The fifth kernel reminded them of their freedom.

This Thanksgiving, let us all remember the blessings of our lives.

**Count the kernels, count your blessings.**

Pastor Debbie



Thanks to Ivan Privalov

11-27-2002

**THIS YEAR WE'RE GOING TO BE THANKFUL  
THAT ALL THE TURKEYS ARE STILL GOING TO  
BE AROUND NEXT YEAR**

## Upcoming Thanksgiving Services

God is so good that we will have two services on  
November 20.

### Sunday Morning at 10:00am

Service of Thanksgiving with march forward offering for Loaves and Fishes.

#### Thanksgiving Offerings

On Thanksgiving Sunday, we have the opportunity to donate to two different and important places:

1. The usual Thanksgiving offering to the Church itself
2. A Thanksgiving money gift to Loaves and Fishes.

Your offering to the church will help pay our usual church expenses, such as heating and other ongoing needs; the offering for Loaves and Fishes will be directed to our local food pantry to help pay for the necessary items which have to be purchased by this organization and are not covered by the food donations. Please make sure your check in the Thanksgiving envelope intended for the Church is made out to **The First Baptist Church**.

Your check for Loaves and Fishes should be made out to **Loaves and Fishes** and put into the Loaves and Fishes box during the March Forward Thanksgiving Offering time, when canned or boxed goods are brought up to the chancel area. Thank You!

### Thanksgiving Interfaith Service

Sunday Evening, November 20, 7:00pm  
At First Baptist Church

All are invited to this service of Thanksgiving sponsored by the Littleton Council of Churches. The theme this year is *Gratitude and Giving Thanks*. The combined choirs of all the churches will sing two anthems led by Steve & Cindy Hudson, an offering will be received for Loaves and Fishes and Jeff Guerra will speak on our behalf.

*I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup>I can do everything through him who gives me strength. Philippians 4: 12-13*

## Thanksgiving Sunday March Forward

We ask the Lord's blessing once again on our Thanksgiving tradition to *March Forward* with donations for the Loaves and Fishes ministry, collecting food for neighbors in need. Please bring contributions to church on Sunday, November 20 and join the witness as we place a portion of our bounty on the chancel area. Following is a suggested shopping list:



- Turkey or Canned Ham
- Stuffing Mix and Gravy
- Cranberry Sauce
- Instant Potatoes
- Canned Vegetables  
(Corn, Carrots, Green Beans, Peas and Yams)
- Assorted Pickles
- Black/Green Olives
- Cake Mix and Frosting
- Pie Crust Shells
- Canned Pie Fillings:  
Apple, Blueberry, Cherry and Pumpkin
- And Bags – paper is preferred, but plastic helps

### Church Supper



## Don't Forget the Ham and Bean Suppers

November 6, 2010 – prepared by the Board of Christian Education  
December 4, 2010 – prepared by the Board of Trustees

## Boy to the World!

By Caroline Poser

### I love you, man

*“...since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” ~ 1 John 4:11-12 NIV*

My older two were bickering and wrestling in the kitchen and they had started to kick and get rowdy. Even as I inserted my presence between them, they continued to flail at each other and hurl insults. I told them, as I separated them, one boy in each headlock,



“You know, I read about a mom who had her kids sit down across from each other and write down five nice things about each other if they were arguing like you two are.”

They didn't ask me where I read this tidbit; I'm glad I didn't need to disclose the fact that I regularly peruse parenting experts' websites and books for guidance, as well as frequently poll other moms.

I could tell by the exaggerated pained expression on his face that my oldest thought the idea was ridiculous. My middle son, however, slithered out of my grasp and sat down at the kitchen table. He immediately started writing on the mini whiteboard that we use to leave notes to each other, such as “I am on a conference call” (for my oldest who gets home from school at 2:35 or so a couple of days a week) or as a math homework scratch pad (rather than loose leaf notebook paper that ends up crumpled into balls, and thrown God only knows where, like any other ball in the house).

My youngest joined his brother at the table and watched silently, as he wrote without hesitation.

I had relaxed my grip on my oldest and now held him in a firm hug. “You can't think of anything nice to say about your brother?”

“Nope.”

“C'mon...look at all the nice things he has to say about you! He loves you!”

My middle son was writing fast and furiously.

“No, he doesn't.”

“Of course he does! Just last night I heard him tell you, ‘I love you man,’ at the dinner table.”

“HMMMMPH!” My oldest wouldn't budge.

His brother, on the other hand, didn't miss a beat. His “love tank” must have been pretty full. He continued writing steadily until he had filled the white board with the requisite five items (“you're cool,” “you're sometimes nice,” “you're awesome,” “you're smart,” “you're sometimes kind”) and he didn't even get mad at me when I corrected his grammar from “your” to “you're.”

Because his older brother wasn't doing it, my youngest and I began singing my middle son's praises.

“He has a loving heart,” I said.

My youngest looked at me as I continued, “He's quick to forgive.”

“Yeah, he's awesome,” my youngest joined in.

“He's a good athlete.”

“Yeah, he's awe some.”

“He has really good handwriting, too.

“Yeah, his writing is...awe SOME!”

My oldest started making grumbling noises, so my youngest and I tossed a couple of compliments his way.

“You're good at sports.”

“Yeah, you're a really awesome football player!”

“You're an excellent student, too.”

“Yeah...”

For his grand finale, my middle son summed up our last two comments about his brother, and wrote, “you're good at both” for a total of six compliments – 20% more than the requirement.

“I have to do my homework,” my oldest said, and disappeared into the living room.

Later, I asked my middle son, “How did you go from fighting mad at your brother to being so nice? It was like you flipped a switch and your love tank was full again.”

“It got full because you and my brother were standing there saying nice things to me.”

“Hmmm...” I wasn’t so sure that’s all there was to it. I thought about when I have nothing but fumes in my own love tank, and how those are the times that it seems my boys are the most demanding. Because I usually don’t have anyone ‘standing there saying nice things to me,’ I can’t think of any other explanation than the simple act of being loving towards others is a way to fill one’s own love tank.

Until my kids realize that fact for themselves, I’ll continue cheering them on (even though I’m already their biggest fan).

## A Women’s Retreat

January 28, 29 and 30<sup>th</sup>

The women of our congregation have been cordially invited to join the Congregational Church Women’s Retreat. This is a wonderful opportunity for Women of the Spirit to gather together to be renewed. The Rev.



Barbara Keast will lead the retreat, which will be held at St. Benedict Abby, in Harvard, MA. You have the option of coming either Friday evening, which is a relaxed and social time,

and staying through the closing worship service on Sunday, or Saturday-only, which will be a day of discussions, study, prayer, laughter and inspiration.

If you come for the one-day, the cost will be \$55 – that will include lunch and dinner. The activities will run from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. If you need a ride we will have

car pools. If you would like to come for the weekend – you can arrive any time after 6 p.m. on Friday and leave any time by 11 a.m. on Sunday. The cost will be \$125, which will include three meals on Saturday, and breakfast on Sunday and overnight accommodations.

The accommodations are small rooms with bedding and towels included, and shared bathrooms. The brothers at the Abby are very hospitable and the meals are excellent. If you have any questions, email/call Gretchen Webster at [gretchen.Webster@verizon.net/978-486-9801](mailto:gretchen.Webster@verizon.net/978-486-9801) or Connie Turner, 978-486-8614; [conniejturner@hotmail.com](mailto:conniejturner@hotmail.com).

A deposit of \$25 is required at sign-up, and final payment is due by January 10<sup>th</sup>. You may send in small amounts, or one whole payment. Checks should be made out to Connie Turner, and mailed to 19 Porter Rd., Littleton.

## Grace Bags

God calls us to **GO Serve** and on Sunday, November 21 we will be assembling **150 Grace Bags** for the Lowell Transitional Center for their Thanksgiving meal. We need 150 each of the following. Please keep an eye out for good bargains. We will be collecting items from now until that Sunday. We have *already* received 150 tissues, breakfast bars and crackers.



During November we need:

Packages of gum

Chef Boy-R-Dee meal, small microwavable  
Chapstick

Warm socks

Toothpaste (travel size)

Toothbrush

Small Grace note with words of encouragement

Small bottle of Hand sanitizer

Handmade soap – *Caroline is making these*

**Thank you** for your ministry of care and service

## Something to be Thankful For

At the October Loaves & Fishes annual meeting and volunteer appreciation night which Larry and I attended, we were particularly impressed with the number of people present who have volunteered to help this local food pantry. Food pantry! That, and much more. L&F supplies food, yes, but also clothes and counseling for their clients. These items are extended to local people in need of a helping hand in a caring, concerned manner which is received by the recipients with heartfelt thanks.

As I enjoyed the casual buffet supper donated by some of the local volunteer food merchants, I reflected back many years ago to when Larry started volunteering for L&F by delivering donations of food from FBC. All the food was stored at the Federated Church in Ayer



and had to be transported to St. Andrew's Church, also in Ayer, for distribution to the clients, so Larry soon began transporting the food, as well as delivering FBC food. Soon this awkward procedure was replaced with a move to

Vicksburg Square, located in a basement of a building on the old Ft. Devens grounds. Larry took me there once so that I could see the whole operation, and I remarked on how inconvenient it was for some clients to maneuver down the stairs and then up again to their waiting vehicles, laden down with shopping bags filled with much-needed food. Many volunteers helped to carry those bags to clients' cars. In time, after an extended fund drive, an existing Devens building was renovated for L&F use, complete with a truck unloading area to receive goods and special rooms dedicated to clothes for the clients, and offices for the administrative help, which now includes some paid professionals, to fill out the roles of the office volunteers. Larry's collection efforts have expanded to include, not just FBC, but Donelan's in Acton and Groton, Shaw's in Groton, and some area banks.

Patty Stern, L&F Director, welcomed everyone and introduced some volunteers who spoke on their experiences of working at various tasks for L&F. One speaker talked about the many times that as L&F grew, creating a new need for a special person to fill a

vacancy (i.e., building new shelves, organizing the Postal Service food drive, coordinating the back-to-school backpack program), someone would opportunely walk through the door and offer his/her services, saying, "I'll do whatever needs to be done, and my expertise is . . ." Just what was needed by L&F at that moment! Just like that. The need was filled. The speaker offered the explanation: "I believe it was the Divine Spirit working for us (L&F), or, if you care to believe in pixie dust, whatever works for you. I was thinking to myself, "That's not just coincidence, that's God at work."

So many volunteers spoke to the thought that as they were working to unload the food from volunteers' cars, or stocking the shelves, or distributing filled bags to the clients, they felt that "they" were receiving a blessing, and I thought that was the way Larry and I feel when we leave a hospital or nursing home with Mosby, our Therapy Dog for the Ministry, and he has given someone his love, and we saw the happiness shining in their eyes. One of us would turn to the other and say, "Do you feel God blessing us?"

Each speaker talked, with emotions choking some voices, on the joy they felt knowing that L&F has made a difference in so many lives, and that they are a part of it. One exclaimed, "This is what it's all about – neighbor helping neighbor." They talked about laughing and joking as they worked together, and someone mentioned the songs they sometimes sing. "So – this is work? No, this is the joy we receive by helping others."

Then a client, voice also shaking with emotion, spoke about her life, with its ups and downs, and how L&F was there offering help and support when her family desperately needed it. There was the caring concern and love she felt which meant as much to her as the physical food, clothing, and counseling she and her family received.

Littleton's own Judy and Ray Grande received the Volunteer Award, to nobody's surprise. They've spent many hours giving their time, not only for Loaves & Fishes, but, surprisingly, and you might not know this, for FBC! Larry has crossed paths with Judy at our transfer station when she's been sorting bottles and trash to benefit one of the town

organizations - the town library, the children's playground, as well as L&F. When Larry was particularly busy in July, Judy pitched in and helped him – for our church!

And so we're grateful for so many volunteer people who selflessly give of their time, talents, and hard work to help out others who are in need.

Director Patty Stern, in closing, announced that there were caramel apples available for folks to take home, provided by Littleton's First Baptist Church, and I thought, "Well, there's MY donation to L&F, because, for a short time, I helped volunteer Anne Lee wrap each individual apple in cellophane, tied with a ribbon and a card announcing, "You're the Apple of My Eye" in cheerful autumn colors. I thought how insignificant my hour's worth of time was, compared to the many, many hours spent by most of those people sitting in that room, and asked for God's blessing on them, even though they might not need it, because each and every person there knew they had already been blessed many times over. Thank you, God, for volunteers!

Lynda Fisher, grateful spouse of a L&F volunteer

## Fall Holiday Fair

Sat., Nov. 20 will be our 2nd annual Fall Holiday Fair and I need help. Last year we held a fall and a spring fair which were successful for the church, in that we raised almost \$4000.00, but not so much for the vendors. Our vendors are not going to return if they



have another unsuccessful fair. I need an advertising team that will help make and distribute posters and fliers. I need someone to help get the

word out through the newspapers and television. We're hoping to have another Supper with Santa that evening. We have Santa all lined up. Can you help put on a child friendly meal, a spaghetti dinner or hot dogs and mac & cheese? We need a group to take charge of the kitchen for breakfast and another group for lunch? This is a fund raiser for OUR church. Many hands make light work. Please let Anne Lee know at 978-486-4075 or [charlieandannelee@gmail.com](mailto:charlieandannelee@gmail.com), if you can help out in any way.

**Tuesday, November 30, 2010**

Help out at First Baptist's turn at providing a nourishing meal at **Neighborhood Supper** at the Congregational Church. We start setting up and preparing the meal at 3:00 PM, serve at 5:30 with clean up following. Please let Anne Lee know if you are able to help.

## Upcoming Events

**Save the Dates** for these important church gatherings concerning our visioning process with the Alban Institute. The Guiding Team is Lynn Vesey, Willow DiLuzio, John Court, Caroline Poser, Pastor Debbie.

**Congregational Meeting #1: Sunday November 7**  
4 pm with potluck dinner & meeting, led by Alice Mann

**Congregational Meeting #2: Sunday January 30**  
4-7pm - dinner & meeting, led by Alice Mann

**Congregational Meeting #3: Sunday February 27**  
4-7 pm dinner & meeting, led by Alice Mann

## Reminder

– Don't forget to change your clocks and Fall Back! Move your clock back one hour when you go to bed on November 6 or 7 (depending on how long you stay up) Daylight savings time ends on November 7 at 2AM.



## Church Trash

Littleton is now on a pay-as-you-throw trash system. The church uses 2 or 3 bags a week and each bag cost's us \$2. If anyone can donate 33 gallon bags (purple town bags) it is greatly appreciated. Also, any paper shopping bags you can donate are greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Larry Fisher T.D.S.



