

The Gleaner

November/December 2025 Edition

November...

Christmas Eve 2024

My goodness, how the calendar has run swiftly to this point. Our year is 5/6 over, and as busy as October was for most of us, November promises to be even busier, especially for our little church family! Halloween is over, and ballots are due Tuesday the 4th. Can Thanksgiving be that far away? Well, actually not. Just four weeks away, and then Christ the King Sunday and after that the beginning of Advent. There are also community events at the area senior centers and holiday bazaars upcoming to usher in the Season.



What I want for all of us is to try to focus on the joy that is ours as Christians, a joy which we can have every day, but to also focus on the joy of the coming season of Thanksgiving through Christmas. I don't know about you, but the weeks seem to fly all too quickly. Just as soon as the lights and decorations are put up, they need to be taken down. The anticipation of holiday feasts dance through our minds and especially our noses, and then it's just leftovers, the guests are gone.

That's why I want all of us, myself included, to focus on the joy set before us. As I write this, my devotional reading was in John Chapter 16 this morning. Jesus is trying to prepare his disciple for his departure, something that he knows will bring much sorrow to them, He assures them that if he DOESN'T go, the Holy Spirit cannot come:

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"But now I am going away to the one who sent me, and not one of you is asking where I am going. Instead, you grieve because of what I've told you. But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you." He then tells them, "In a little while you won't see me anymore. But a little while after that, you will see me again."

But the disciples began to question amongst themselves what he means, and knowing that, he offers them further explanation. He says, *"I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn over what is going to happen to me, but the world will rejoice. You will grieve, but your grief will suddenly turn to wonderful joy. It will be like a woman suffering the pains of labor. When her child is born, her anguish gives way to joy because she has brought a new baby into the world. So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again; then you will rejoice, and no one can rob you of that joy."*

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In my meditation on those verses, 16:21-22, I thought of it like this: In a way, Jesus compares his passion to giving birth. In a sense the plan of salvation to that point had been through a very long pregnancy. Jesus' humiliation, torture and crucifixion will be like the pains of childbirth. The resurrection will be like the birth itself. God in Christ gives birth to salvation through the sacrifice and resurrection of his one and only Son. At that point the disciples' sorrow will be changed to joy, like a husband rejoices at the birth of a child after his wife's labor.

So in this Season, my prayer is that we can focus on God's over-arching plan of salvation, a plan that was NOT set in motion when Adam and Eve rebelled, passing their sinful rebellion to all who would come after, but which actually began before even time began, in the mind of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, something that is indeed hard for us to grasp. As we anticipate the first coming of Christ as a tiny Baby, let us seek to grasp what it means that God would be so generous and loving to desire our salvation. In turn let us desire Christ. Let him bring us Joy.

Amen, Pastor Tony



Birthdays and Anniversaries November & December

Birthdays

Mike M 11/7
Pat 11/12
Larry 11/13
Sandy B 11/29
Juanita 11/29
Esther 12/3
Lee 12/5
Tom 12/22
James C 12/23
Merlyn L 12/25

Anniversaries

Gary & Diane 11/11
Merlyn & Marie 12/4
Mike & Gerilynn 12/19
Chris & Harley 12/20

It's Bazaar Time

There's a Holiday Bazaar in Toledo on the 13th of December which TPC is participating in. Items ready for Christmas would be ever so nice. I will have a sign up sheet on the 1st of December for the Bazaar.

Your contributions are so joyfully accepted and blessed.

If you would like to also man the table please let Karen or Sandi M. know so we can expect your happy presence.

Thank you and blessings for the holiday season.

Sandi



Thank you Karen and Sandi for reaching out to the Toledo Senior Center.

Thankfulness & Grace

As some of you may know, we had a tree come down across our drive last weekend. I didn't know what to do. Tom offered help, but it needed some equipment like a backhoe. That morning I had been trying to remember all the things that I was grateful for and they are considerable, past, present and future. I am thankful for my family and my church family, and for a great friend. I am thankful to have meaningful work, for dogs (and horses), travel when I was younger and for people I have met along the way. I am thankful for help in unexpected places and to God for giving me a rich life. Which brings me back to the tree incident. I really didn't know what to do. Harley was sick with COPD related pneumonia and could not do anything. He suggested we call our neighbor; since I could not find his phone number, I walked up to the travel trailer knowing someone lived there, a total stranger. Long story short, that kind man got me the help I needed in a few minutes and the tree was moved in about an hour. He made me promise I would let him know if I needed anything. God finds us help if only we can humble ourselves to accept that grace. Grace works for the giver and the receiver, as Tony pointed out. Chris

Treasurer's Report for September/October 2025

The Finance Committee is scheduled to convene in November to establish the budget for 2026. This process is more accurately described as developing a spending or financial plan, as it is challenging to forecast income with certainty and the upcoming year may present unforeseen expenses. Typically, we begin by reviewing the current year's expenditures and assessing the likelihood of increases—for example, the waste disposal company has already informed us of a rate increase, and insurance premiums continue to rise annually. We also seek input from committee chairs and other individuals who manage church funds to gather estimates of anticipated spending, which assists us in formulating a comprehensive financial plan. In addition, we evaluate the current year's income to determine whether a significant decrease should be anticipated. We appreciate your prayers as we undertake this important work. The "Receipts, Expenditures, and Net Income" report for January through October 2025 indicates a very encouraging financial outlook. While specific figures cannot be shared here, the overall results are positive and reassuring. We are nearing the transition to the online version of our bookkeeping software; a milestone achieved through Rebecca's dedication and hard work. Our professional bookkeeper, Glenda Holbrook, continues to reconcile monthly bank statements and proactively address any issues that arise, ensuring the accuracy and integrity of our financial records. The Reader Board Committee is actively gathering information regarding the proposed new sign, including requirements, budget constraints, and potential installers. Your prayers for their efforts are greatly appreciated. Despite being a small and aging congregation, we remain in a strong financial position, supported by innovative and energetic leadership. Above all, we are grateful for the steadfast guidance and blessings of the Almighty. Yours in Christ, Tom



Social Media

Facebook 189 followers

Reactions 220

Comments 22

Shares 29

Views 4,603 up 26%

Followers Gained 7 & lost 1

Instagram

(Sept 24 - October 24)

Followers 103 + 3.8% Views 308

In a nutshell, these numbers are hard to compare but what I am pleased about is the increase in **Shares**. Sharing takes our pages to places where we usually don't get seen.

Keep it up!

"Do what you are called to do, even if no one understands it" is my moto. I may not understand it either, make mis. Wishing our wonderful fellow followers of Jesus wherever you may be a blessed holiday season. And remember you are always welcome here. And a few prayers for our Social Media team is always welcome.

They are Tana, Kathy, Tony and Me. Thanks to all of you for your faithful help and contributions. Chris

Getting Ready

"Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God." 2 Peter 3:11-12 Your teenage daughter is scheduled to attend a weekend youth retreat, and her ride is coming at 1:00 o'clock on Friday afternoon. At 12:45, you find her relaxing on her bed scrolling her phone. You ask, "Shouldn't you be getting ready for the retreat? You know Pastor Rick is always on time." Living in light of an approaching deadline is not just a problem for teenagers. The New Testament mentions it in light of the return of Christ. The apostle Peter calls end-time events "the day of God," and he asks a most important question: "What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness" in light of the imminent return of Christ? Imminent means something could happen at any moment; it is the very next thing on the calendar. Prophetically speaking, the Rapture of the Church is imminent; it could happen today. If you knew you would see Christ face-to-face later today, how would your life change? Live today as if the next person you see will be Jesus Himself. Turning Point How many Christians live their lives packed up and ready to go? J. I. Packer (Taken from the October Turning Point Magazine & Devotional--(published by Dr. David Jeremiah) COPYRIGHT 2000-2025 DR. DAVID JEREMIAH / TURNING POINT FOR GOG ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Thank you Becky for your submission

I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.

Psalm 34:4 NIV

Operation Christmas Child - Shoeboxes

As you read this our 84 physical Operation Christmas Child boxes will have been packed. What a privilege it is to be able to participate in this mission outreach event. Many thanks to Franklin Graham and his team for starting this program years ago in response to a request to do something for the children in war torn Bosnia. How God has blessed this program as it continues to grow each year reaching children who have not heard of The Greatest Gift—receiving salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. I have been your project leader for many years and you are an inspiration to me as you have caught the vision more each year.

November 9th we will be participating in the online shoeboxes. These boxes are so very important as they go where no one else has gone. [Star Wars] The children who receive these boxes live in the dark countries where the power of evil is very strong. Christians in these countries are constantly subjected to persecution and must be very careful and yet God in His mighty power continues to provide the way for the Gospel to spread.

Getting boxes through customs in these countries requires a huge amount of prayer but God always provides a way. These children will also be able to participate in The Greatest Journey program so please include that cost to the cost of the shoebox.

C.S. Lewis once said that we are never too old to dream, never too old to set new goals. I'll be 86 years this month so guess that means Jesus and I are not too old to set new goals. This year our online goal is 84—same as our physical boxes.

Meeting this goal calls for some creative ways, like getting your neighbors and family involved, asking for an online shoebox for Christmas or as a birthday gift. I know for a fact that 40 of those boxes are already done. My dentist asked for information about the program so am praying that God will supply more boxes through his family and maybe spread through the entire office.

Before I close this I want to add a special THANK YOU to Marilyn for her help in packing the physical boxes. She was a wonderful help with putting the rubber bands on, checking each box for a card and supplying the missing cards and making sure each box was full. What a thrill to see how she has grown in her desire to help with this outreach. My prayer is that she will continue to be involved in this program for many years. We pray that God will continue to bless and protect her.

Thank you to all of you for your prayers, for supplying the needed items, for catching the vision of the spiritual impact of these shoeboxes.

May the peace and joy of Jesus always be with you. Pray for the shoeboxes. Dedication will be held on November 16th.

Love and prayers, Sandy B.

Gleaner For November 2025

Worship

Georgia is back!

Georgia was our Psalmist on Sunday October 26th. Georgia walked up to the podium without assistance and delivered the psalm. She is a living testament to the power of prayer and the grace of our Holy Father.

Kathy continues to search for help with live music. Marie continues to play for us twice per month. It is always a pleasure to welcome Marie and her husband to our Sunday Worship. Kathy is also playing. Thank you Kathy for all you do! Food Shortages Food insecurity is a growing problem. We are experiencing difficult economic times. The Federal Government shutdown has impacted the SNAP program that a number of our neighbors rely on to help them make it through the month. We are anticipating an increase in the number of individuals using the food banks and pantries during this difficult time. We have yet to see this occur in Winlock or Toledo. In preparation Timberland Bank has launched a food gathering drive and the Art Gallery is holding a raffle of 4 paintings and a bowl to benefit Toledo Neighbors. Please take a look at the flier posted on the bulletin board. Rebecca and I have tickets. Tickets are \$5.00 each.

Food Shortages

Food insecurity is a growing problem. We are experiencing difficult economic times. The Federal Government shutdown has impacted the SNAP program that a number of our neighbors rely on to help them make it through the month. We are anticipating an increase in the number of individuals using the food banks and pantries during this difficult time. We have yet to see this occur in Winlock or Toledo. In preparation Timberland Bank has launched a food gathering drive and the Art Gallery is holding a raffle of 4 paintings and a bowl to benefit Toledo Neighbors. Please take a look at the flier posted on the bulletin board. Rebecca and I have tickets. Tickets are \$5.00 each. Toledo Neighbors This growing season the garden is producing a bounty of fresh organic produce. A team of volunteers prepared planted, weeded, and harvested an amazing variety of food for our community. Each Friday morning over the summer a dedicated group led by Brooke harvested produce for the Saturday Food Distribution. Work continues too at the garden right for winter. Work parties are being planned and will be announced on Facebook. The 3rd Annual Apple Cider Press party was hosted on September 27th. With two presses in operation approximately 80 gallons of cider was produced and shared with the community. Our potluck was well attended with an assortment of delicious salads, main courses and deserts. The weather is perfect. It was a great day of fellowship and an opportunity to get to know our neighbors. Neighbors has secured a 3 year grant for capital improvements. The roof and kitchen wall has been replaced. We expect to have the industrial sink installed before the end of the year. There is still much to be done.

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Our own Rebecca has taken on the responsibility of coordinating home prepared soups, sweets, and other food to be shared during Food Distribution on Saturdays from 11 am to 12:30pm. We are utilizing the community space adjacent to the distribution area. It is a pleasure to serve our neighbors and an opportunity to build relationships. It is in community that we can minister to others and share our faith. Our Community space is also being utilized to deliver classes. We are half way through the classes planned for October through November. Our next class will be on using dry beans. This is just another great way to come and find out what is going on at the Hall.

Winlock Foodbank and Rowdy Rooster

The Foodbank continues to serve over 80 families 3 Wednesdays every month. The Foodbank is well stocked with pantry staples, frozen protein, and frozen ready meals. The back deck is open to all Tuesday through Thursday. The community has rallied around the Foodbank and many are donating cash and food items to help.

God bless Paulli and all she does to help others.

Things That Ail Us

There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries---Daniel 2:28 NIV
Nicholas Byfield, a seventeenth-century English preacher and Puritan, opened his book on the promises of God by making two points: "[First,] that though we have gotten the assurance of God's favor and freedom from the power and guilt of our sins, yet many things will still ail us ... [Second,] there can be no such discouragement, difficulty, or affliction, but in the Word of God we may have a sure consolation or direction for it, which is able in every way to abundantly sustain us." When heroes of the faith like Daniel were in trouble, they would cling to the promises of God. Daniel knew there was a God in Heaven who reveals secrets to His children through the promises He has given. Even today we can count on all the promises of God to come true. We can have faith that He will keep His Word. Take time today to find and read a promise in Scripture that applies to your situation. Claim that promise by faith and thank God for His goodness in fulfilling it. Turning Point [The promises of God] will drive away grief, discouragement, or fears, that at anytime may seize us. They will sweeten all our afflictions. They will exceedingly build up ... our faith.

(Nicholas Byfield, "The promises of God", eds. C. Matthew McMahon and Theresa McMahon (Puritan Publications, 2013) 19 (Taken from the November Turning Point Magazine & Devotional--(published by Dr. David Jeremiah)
Thank you, Becky for another submission. Truly appreciated.