

# The Hilltop News



## Remembering and Giving Thanks!

*Once you entered the land that GOD, your God, gave you as an inheritance and took it over and settled down, you were to take some of all the first fruits of what you grow in the land that GOD, your God, gave you, put them in a basket and take it to the place GOD, your God, set apart for you to worship...Then place it in the Presence of GOD, your God. Prostrate yourselves in the Presence of GOD, your God. And rejoice! Celebrate all the good things that GOD, your God, has given you and your family; you and the foreigners who reside among you shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to all your houses.*

*- Deuteronomy 26:1-11 The Message (selected and adapted passages)*

Do you remember how your family came to be here? What hazards and trials did your ancestor face so that you could be where you are today? When I think about what my ancestors had to do to get here, it gives me the chills.

This passage from Deuteronomy is a common choice for Thanksgiving even though it seems to be more about remembering than thanking. It is about remembering, but it is also about giving from what you have out of thanks for what has been given to you. The remembering what God had done for them is a common theme in all the stories of the Israelites. However, in this passage it seems as though they may have forgotten to remember. After all, remembering is often a conscious act, it is something we choose or choose not to do.

George Santayana, the Spanish philosopher, essayist, poet, and novelist said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." I personally believe there is great wisdom in his words. However, I believe that remembering what God has done for us in the past is also closely tied to our level of gratitude and sharing today.

If we forget how we managed to miraculously get to this point, and the gifts that were shared with us and our ancestors and the help that was given to us and our ancestors along the way, then it is easy for us to forget to express our gratitude. If we forget the gifts shared and given that helped us along the path it is easier to think that we did it all by ourselves. It is easy for us to self-righteously take the generosity of

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NOVEMBER 2017

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*Pastor*

Rev. Margaret Diz Philip

*Council*

Kelly Day, pres.

Neil Glaser, treas.

Kari Winchester, sec.

Dale Konneman, grounds

Janet Moehsmer, bldg. fund

*Music Director*

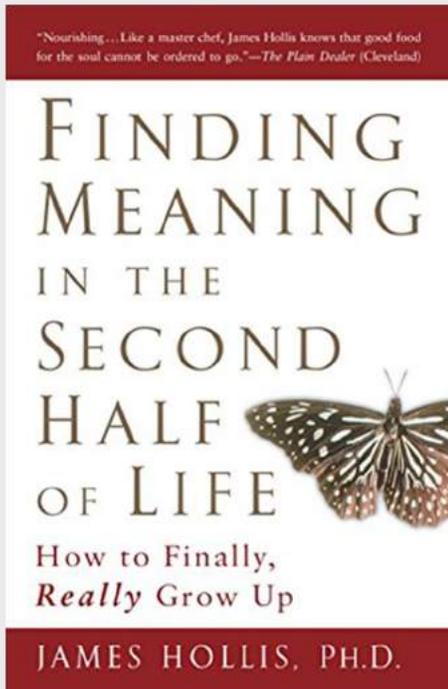
June Jones

*Custodian*

Neil Glaser

*Office Admin.*

Gail Schneider



## Next Book Club selection:

“Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life: How to Finally, Really Grow Up” by James Hollis

What does it really mean to be a grown up in today’s world? We assume that once we “get it together” with the right job, marry the right person, have children, and buy a home, all is settled and well. In “Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life,” Hollis explores the ways we can grow and evolve to fully become ourselves when the traditional roles of adulthood aren’t quite working for us, revealing a new way of uncovering and embracing our authentic selves. Offering wisdom to anyone facing a career that no longer seems fulfilling, a long-term relationship that has shifted, or family transitions that raise issues of aging and mortality, “Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life” provides a reassuring message and a crucial bridge across this critical passage of adult development.

Note: Book Club will not meet in November, but resumes with this selection in December.

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God out of the picture, and wonder why others cannot do the same for themselves. Memory is the basis of our gratitude, and when we remember what gifts and help has been given us, we are thankful and give from what we have received.

In this Thanksgiving month:  
What memories make you thankful?

What gifts do you pass forward as you remember and are grateful?



*Peace,  
Margaret*

## THANK YOU VETERANS!

On Veterans Day, we honor men and women who’ve served and sacrificed in one of America’s armed services.

On November 11, 1918, America and her allies signed a truce with German leaders, ending World War I. In 1919, President Wilson decided the United States should remember with gratitude the end of that war and honor military members by marking Armistice Day, or “truce” day. In 1954, Congress changed the name to Veterans Day, honoring veterans of every era.

Veterans Day highlights our country’s quest for peace, justice and freedom throughout the world. Followers of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, pray for unity among all nations and for the day when “nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.”

(Isaiah 2:4 NIV)



## Holiday Food Drive 2017

In addition to the regular groceries we provide to our client families each month, Circle Of Concern provides a Thanksgiving Basket to all of our clients and their families for Thanksgiving dinner. Your gifts of food and funds help us offer Thanksgiving dinner to 550 families plus share food with nearly 2,000 people each month.

### Thanksgiving Items:

Cornbread Mix/Biscuit Mix  
Stuffing  
Cranberry Sauce • Canned Fruit  
Dessert Mix (cake/cobbler mix, canned pumpkin or pie filling)  
Turkey Gravy (Canned)  
Macaroni & Cheese • Rice Mixes  
Canned Vegetables (peas, carrots, mixed veggies)  
Jello Gelatin  
Yams/Canned Sweet Potatoes  
Broth or Cream Soup  
Canned Milk (evaporated or sweetened condensed)  
Large Foil Roasting Pans

Your **Cash Donation** helps us purchase turkeys!



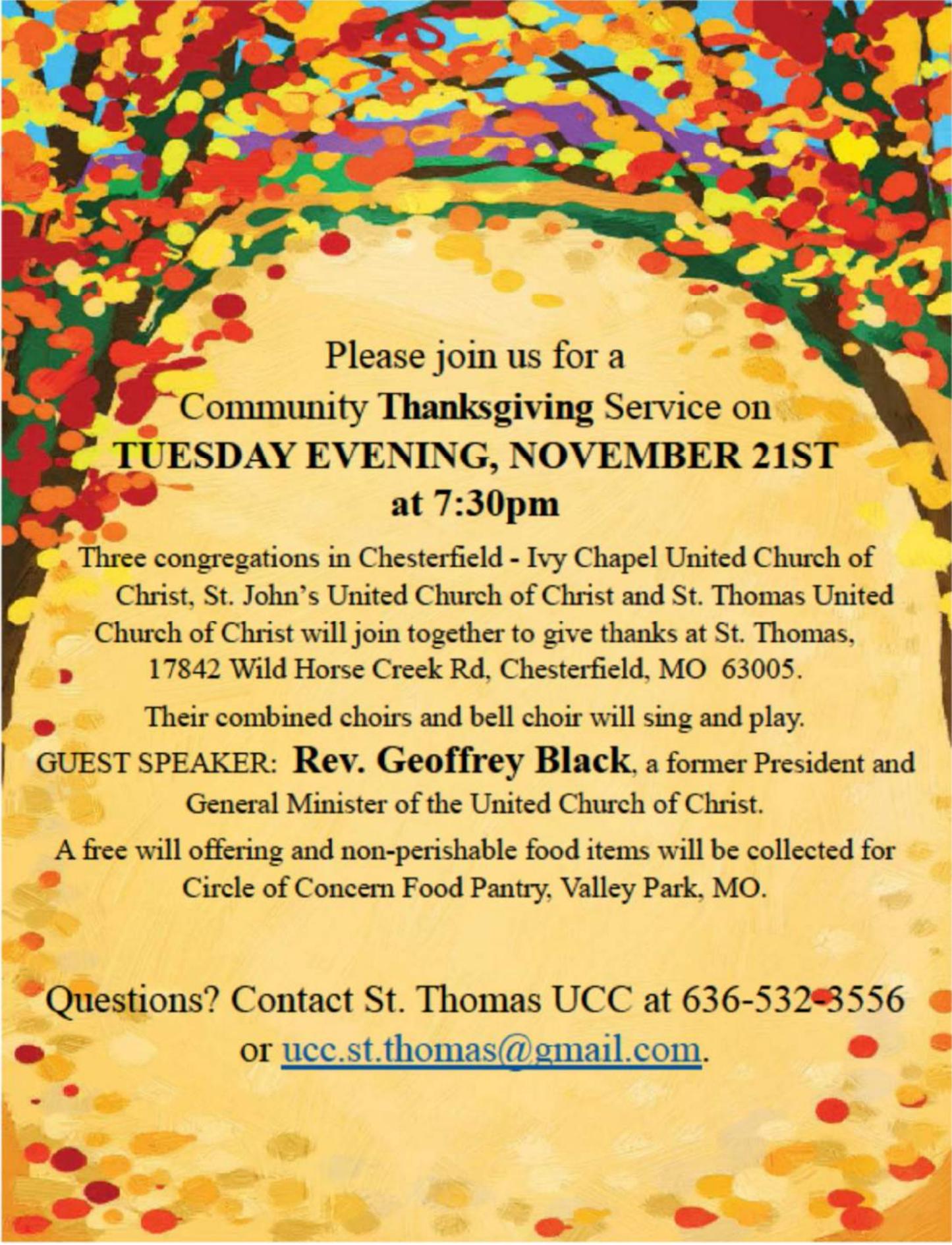
### Everyday Needs:

Peanut Butter • Jelly and Jam  
Canned Meals (chili, chicken, stew)  
Dinner "Helpers" • Cereal  
Canned Fish, Meat  
Canned Pasta, Pasta Sauce

*Drop off food at Circle by  
Friday, November 17, 3 p.m.  
112 St. Louis Avenue in Valley Park*



3 Make checks payable to Circle of Concern. Checks & food items will be delivered to St. John's UCC, Chesterfield on Thursday, Nov. 16.



Please join us for a  
Community **Thanksgiving** Service on  
**TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 21ST**  
at **7:30pm**

Three congregations in Chesterfield - Ivy Chapel United Church of Christ, St. John's United Church of Christ and St. Thomas United Church of Christ will join together to give thanks at St. Thomas, 17842 Wild Horse Creek Rd, Chesterfield, MO 63005.

Their combined choirs and bell choir will sing and play.

**GUEST SPEAKER: Rev. Geoffrey Black**, a former President and General Minister of the United Church of Christ.

A free will offering and non-perishable food items will be collected for Circle of Concern Food Pantry, Valley Park, MO.

Questions? Contact St. Thomas UCC at 636-532-3556  
or [ucc.st.thomas@gmail.com](mailto:ucc.st.thomas@gmail.com).

## Blessed are the Broken

*"My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise." - Psalm 51:17*

I walked into a bar eager to go to a storytelling event, where people volunteer to tell their most personal stories to strangers.

This wasn't just any storytelling event. This was a storytelling church service.

Next to the doorway there was an invitation to write mini-stories that emcees would read during the program. The white slivers of paper read, "I still have scars from when...", prompting people to complete the sentence.

I submitted my mini-story, "I still have scars from when my dad disappeared for ten years," and took a seat.

I watched two storytellers talk about the things that scared them and the things that scarred them.

Then, the final storyteller took the stage. He just happened to be a pastor and friend who was preaching about the power in his brokenness.

His sermon was an offering for those of us who felt as if the scars of life are still fresh enough to become reopened wounds.

He encouraged us not to devalue ourselves because of the brokenness that is still a part of our lives.

He said our wounds and our scars don't make us too broken for anything—for love, for healing, or for closure.

I thought about the pain I still have from the father who was absent for most of my childhood and I realized that still wrestling with it didn't make me weak—it made me human.

This storytelling church wasn't church done differently. It was just church. And finding the beauty within the broken was pure scripture.

Minutes later, I sang "I Will Survive" at the top of my lungs, as I danced with 50 other people who suddenly knew that scars mark us but don't make us.

**Prayer:** *Thank You for the stories in our scars.*



### **About the Author**

Marchaé Grair is the Digital Content Manager at the United Church of Christ and editor of the UCC blog, "New Sacred" at <http://newsacred.org/>.



*Wedding  
 Congratulations to  
 Jennifer Schott  
 &  
 Eric Tague  
 October 7, 2017*



- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Tomato Products
- Canned Chicken
- Canned Mixed Vegetables
- Razors
- Bar Soap
- Body Wash
- Conditioner

**The following item is CRITICAL**

Snacks (granola bars, pudding cups, crackers, veggie chips etc.)



*If you have knowledge of someone on the Prayer List who no longer needs our prayers, please let us know.*

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### COUNCIL CONTACTS

President	Kelly Day	314-307-7890 kmday44@gmail.com
Treasurer	Neil Glaser	636-391-0279 njglaser@att.net
Secretary	Liz Konneman	636-458-5643 enkonneman@live.com
Buildings & Grounds	Dale Konneman	636-458-5643 dalekonneman@hotmail.com
Building Fund	Janet Moehsmer	636-458-1058 jmoehsmer@gmail.com

# November 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 10am Ladies Guild-Shaw Nature Reserve All Saints Day	2	3	4
5	6	7 1:30pm Centering Prayer	8	9	10	11* Tammy Kilburn Veterans Day
12	13	14	15	16 No Book Club this month	17	18* Tyler Wainman
19	20	21 1:30pm Centering Prayer 7:30pm Thanksgiving Service	22	23 *Virgil Moehsmer Thanksgiving	24	25
26 Christ the King Sunday	27	28	29	30		

St. Thomas UCC  
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www.stthomasucc.org

Phone: 636-532-3556

E-mail: ucc.st.thomas@gmail.com

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE



Worship: 8:30 (summer) & 10:00 am (all year)

11:00 am Fellowship Time

We are ADA Accessible.

Childcare is provided during Worship.

Office Hours: 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Please call first if you need to stop by!

Office Phone: 636.532.3556

## About Us

### Mission Statement

We are St. Thomas UCC, a caring faith community welcoming all to share with us. You will find us supportive, nurturing, and encouraging. Our worship is traditional yet contemporary, applying scripture and Christ's teachings to everyday life. Accepting all who come as family, we are St. Thomas UCC.

### Value Statement

We are a close-knit welcoming community. We cherish and honor the traditions of our 100 years past. With respect and compassion we work together. We strive to grow in our faith by serving the community. We embrace and celebrate our youth and the promise of each new generation of God's children. We seek God's blessings and wisdom in the joys and challenges of our daily lives. We grow in our understanding of Christ's teachings while being respectful of our differences.

### Vision Statement

We seek to :

- Invite others to join in our faith journey
- Explore worship opportunities
- Enhance our fellowship and service outreach
- Expand our use of technology
- Increase our community involvement