

Eastminster Eagle

Volume 40, Issue 11

November 2023

Dear Members and Friends of Eastminster,

I remember telling a coaching client who was taking a grand trip to Europe, “I know you are going on a vacation, but don’t be surprised if God meets you there.” How true



this became for me on my recent trip to Scotland. We were walking back to our hotel from visiting the stunningly beautiful Glasgow Cathedral. We felt like maybe we had taken the wrong route. We had turned into a rough neighborhood and there was nothing much of historical value to see. As we hurried through the dodgy environs, I looked up from the GPS on my phone and a mural on the side of an apartment building stopped me in my tracks.

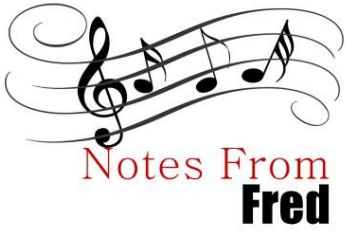
I don’t know what other people see when viewing this art or what the artist intended, but what I saw made me immediately think of the classic song lyrics, “His eye is on the sparrow and I know he watches me.” God in this mural is not kingly or stunningly beautiful, he looks like a homeless man. His love and care for this tiny creature is clearly evident. As impressed as I was by the

grand cathedral, standing before this painting is where God met me on my vacation. I knew in that moment that God was with me, watching over me, caring for me, loving me—just like he does for the sparrows and everyone else.

Jesus taught, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?” (Matt. 6:25-26) How much energy and time have I wasted worrying about my life and hurrying through the uncomfortable moments? And yet, God has me perched on his finger feeding me with what I need. You will see that the same is true for you if you just look up from your concerns for a moment.

With gratitude,

Pastor Paul



Of the many hymns I sang and heard growing up in our family's East Texas version of Southern Baptist, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (*Glory To God* #306) still touches me when we sing it. It has so many meanings for each of us. In my growing up it was sung at the end of communion services, and other times as the congregation went back into the world from worship and even at some funerals.

It was written by John Fawcett (1739-1817), a clergyman in the English dissenting Baptist movement.

Soon after Rev. Fawcett was ordained, he was asked to try to start a parish in Wainsgate (described by the hymnologist Albert Bailey as "a straggling group of houses on the top of a barren hill.") Wainsgate was probably typical for most rural pastors in the 18th century.

Fawcett was orphaned at age 12 and was "bound out" to a tailor in Bradford where he worked long hours, as there were no child labor laws. During this time, he learned to read and eventually mastered *Pilgrim's Progress* the devotional classic by John Bunyan.

Fawcett attended a revival along with 20,000 other people in an open field. They came to hear the powerful preaching of the famous evangelist George Whitefield. After the service, John somehow managed to talk with Whitefield and told the evangelist he wanted to preach and according to tradition, Whitefield gave Fawcett his blessing. As soon as he finished his ordination, he was asked to go to Wainsgate.

Mr. Bailey describes the Wainsgate congregation this way: "The people were all farmers and shepherds, Poor as Job's turkey; an uncouth lot whose speech one could hardly understand, most were unable to read or write; many were non-

believers, and the town was cursed with vice, ignorance, and wild tempers. The mainstream churches had never ever tried to reach them; only the humble Baptists had sent an itinerant preacher there and he had made a good beginning."

At first there was no salary for the pastor, but people brought donations of wool and potatoes to help. Fawcett went house to house engaging families, and the congregation grew. The small meeting House had to be expanded. His family also grew, and the congregation began to pay a modest salary, and continued supplementing with their donations from their livestock and farms.

A prestigious parish with more financial resources in London, Carter's Lane Baptist Church, extended a call to Rev. Fawcett, and here hymnologist Dr. Harold Hawn says, "It is at this point it becomes difficult to separate fact from apocryphal imagination." As the Fawcett family made ready to leave, selling some larger pieces of furniture and older books, the parishioners came to say goodbye. They were despondent and in tears. Mary Fawcett in tears is quoted as saying, "I can't stand it, John! I know not how to go." John responded, "Lord help me, Mary, nor can I stand it!" They decided to stay and did so for 54 years.

"Blest be the tie that binds..." was not written for this occasion. It was

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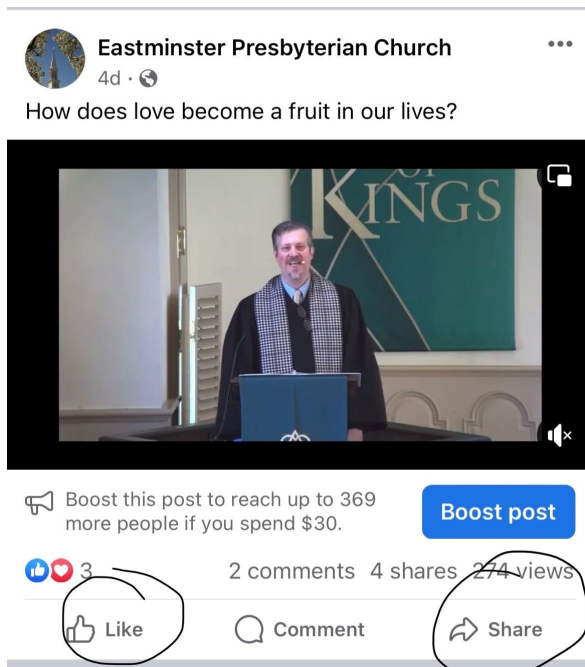
the custom in those days for the Pastor to write hymns to be spoken as poetry or sung after their sermons. But Fawcett wrote it sometime later and probably had the leaving event in mind.

In my lifetime, it was sung many tearful times. Today, when we sing it, I am reminded of our church family, the Christian love, the fellowship of kindred minds, and compassion that is so strong in this congregation and part of why the Watkins family has been here going on 43 years now.

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

You may have noticed that we are posting clips of Pastor Paul's sermons as well as information about church events on our Facebook page. The

purpose of this is not so much to let members know, but an easy way for members to share with their friends and neighbors. Hitting the "like" button is nice, but hitting the "share" button is what we would like you to do. It will be the easiest evangelism you can do!



Take time to recharge

“Then Jesus said, ‘Let’s go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.’ He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn’t even have time to eat” (Mark 6:31, NLT). Can you relate? Especially during the holidays, we’re “coming and going” so much that we often run out of steam.

As an introvert, I learned an important lesson while navigating a busy graduation season for my son. I was happy to host a celebration for family and friends, but about 20 minutes into the party, fatigue clouded my spirit. My social battery was empty and desperately needed charging.

I sought out my cousin — who “gets” me — and admitted I needed a break. He kindly replied, “Then go into another room and just be. We’ve got things covered.” I was heard and assured that it was okay to press pause. Even Jesus and his disciples sought privacy and rest.

In what ways do you need a break today? Even if you’re an extrovert, how can you care for your whole self during the holiday rush? Pay attention and give yourself permission to proactively recharge your battery.

—Janna Firestone

January Cluster Event

Outreach is trying something new this year: Cluster Community Mission Seminar.

What is it? We are inviting all the Cluster churches to participate on a Saturday morning event in January. We think that by meeting as a group and talking about what's working and what's not working in each individual church's mission efforts, we can help each other and learn from each other.

All are invited to attend Saturday Morning Breakfast. The seminar will start at 10:30 a.m. Each individual church will give a short presentation about what's working, what's not, plans for the immediate future, and how the Cluster can help. Then we'll have lunch (provided by Eastminster). During lunch, we'll have a panel discussion of successful mission determinants, East Dallas needs, cooperating with other churches and government, and creating long term funding stability.

All are invited, particularly ministers, mission committee chairpersons and members, and any other church member.

We'll keep you posted as planning occurs.

Saturday Morning Breakfast

As the weather begins to change, our numbers stay consistent. We are seeing many of the same people every week. A lot of the same families are making us part of their Saturday morning routine. We're also having new individuals come in for breakfast. A warm meal, lots of juice and coffee, and a listening ear seems to be just what's needed on a Saturday morning. We are also giving out a lot of "to go" boxes. The number of people served ranges from the 60s to the 90s. The Meals served (people served, plus "to go" meals) have been regularly exceeding 100. Sometimes as high as 120.

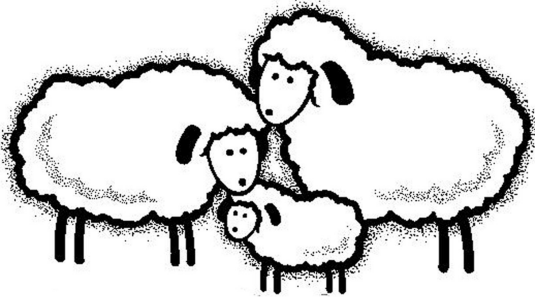
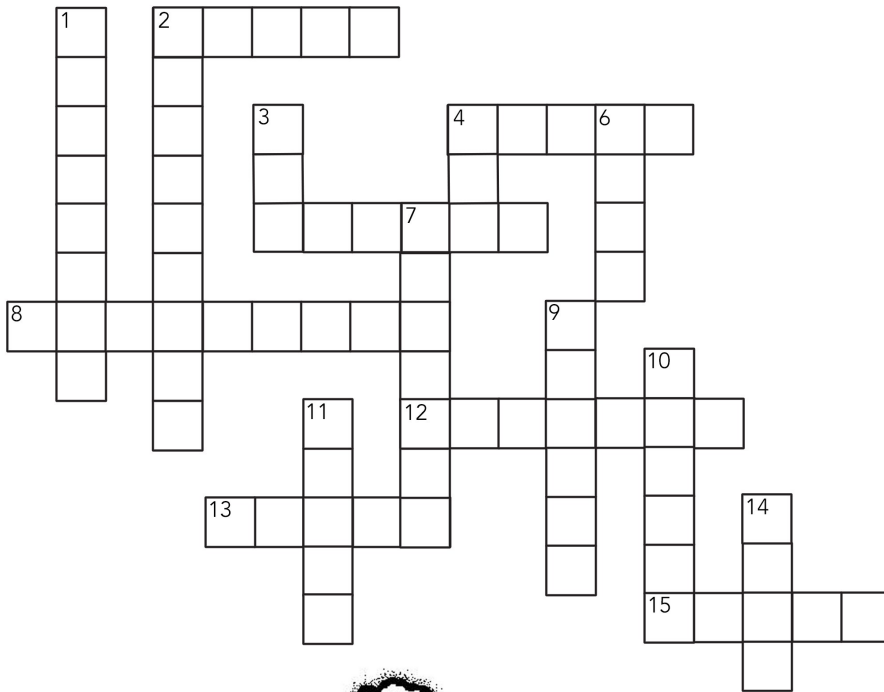
Also, the clothes rack gets nearly cleaned out every Saturday. I'm not sure we understand how nice it is to have a fresh clean change of clothes.

Please come visit and see what's going on. We're open from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Typically we work from 7:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. We can use volunteers for even 10 to 15 minutes. If you're not sure you want to work, at least come and have breakfast.

Also, a special shout out to those who show up to help: Ivan the Terrible and his friends (yes, we've all learned how to pronounce "Monongahela"), Kenison, Greater Life Church, and Christian Stronghold Church.

	Total People	Total Meals To Go
October 14	72	112
October 7	84	140
September 30	84	119
September 23	91	149
September 16	97	140

Puzzle!



ACROSS

2. cause of Job's trouble
4. twinkling, heavenly lights
6. the Shuhite, a friend (2:11)
8. creature of the deep (41:1)
12. the Temanite, a friend (2:11)
13. sores
15. Job had 7,000

DOWN

1. the One who ever lives (19:25)
2. affliction
3. had seven sons
4. ocean
5. precipitation
7. Job had 500
9. the Naamathite, a friend (2:11)
10. Job had 3,000
11. Job's fourth friend (32:2)
12. Job had 500 yoke

“Give thanks for unknown blessings already on their way.”

—Native American saying

“On Thanksgiving Day we acknowledge our dependence.”

—William Jennings Bryan

“People will accept your ideas much more readily if you tell them Benjamin Franklin said it first.” —David H. Comins

“A rose is not its thorns, a peach is not its fuzz, and a human being is not his or her crankiness.” —Lisa Kogan

Three Thanksgiving prayers

Dear Lord, we beg but one boon more: peace in the hearts of all men living, peace in the whole world this Thanksgiving.

—Joseph Auslander

For what I have received may the Lord make me truly thankful. And more truly for what I have not received.

—Storm Jameson

O Lord that lends me life, lend me a heart replete with thankfulness.

—William Shakespeare

Answers: Across 2. Satan, 4. stars, 6. Bildad, 8. Levathian, 12. Eliphaz, 13. boils, 15. sheep; Down 1. Redeemer, 2. suffering, 3. Job, 4. sea, 5. rain, 7. donkeys, 9. Zophar, 10. camels, 11. Elihu, 12. oxen



Step Out of Your Boat!

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" Matthew 14:31

As people of faith, we understand that stewardship is not about a season, or dates blocked out on our calendars, or a pledge card. Stewardship is a way of living every single day. Stewardship is believing in one omniscient and omnipotent creator of the universe and all that is within it, also believing that God has entrusted the care of all creation to humanity with the breath of divine air pulsing through us. And yet, part of being wise stewards is visioning, planning, preparing and giving attention to how we can offer our resources in thanksgiving for God's purpose and plan. Thus, we do actually have a season, some dates, monetary pledge cards, gifts and skills commitment forms, and we call this a Stewardship Campaign. This year, we turn our hearts to Matthew 14:31 as a reminder that not only are we to follow the words and ways of our Lord, we are with those words and ways called to overcome our doubts with faith. Whatever we give (money, time, care, mercy, energy, skills) we give out of gratitude, not compulsion or coercion. We step out of our proverbial boats and trust that our Triune God will be further glorified through the limitless faith God has provided each of us.

The Sunday worship sermons have emphasized ways in which ordinary people like us have faithfully lived Jesus' words and ways, stepping out of our comfort zones to offer our many resources as witness to the never-ending, unfathomable and generous love and care of

God for us, all creatures, and His creation. On November 5th, all are invited to the Stewardship Luncheon for a time of fellowship and celebration for Christ's ministries at Eastminster and giving attention to the direction of the Spirit for Christ's future holy work of our congregation as we present the 2024 budget. At the Stewardship luncheon we will offer the gifts of our hearts, lives and resources as we dedicate them all to the glory of God by completing the time & talent form. Members who do not attend the luncheon can pick up their form at church on November 12th, all remaining forms will be mailed out afterward.

May the Spirit bring to us the joy of giving, the gift of laughter and faithful hearts because we are responding to God's will through the words and ways of Jesus, "... why did you doubt?"

A cornerstone of inheritance

In Matthew 21:33-46, Jesus tells a parable in which vineyard tenants plot to kill the landowner's son and thereby to "get his inheritance." Of course, that's not how life works: Unless the owner of wealth gives it away freely, the recipients aren't heirs — they're thieves!



We are all tenants entrusted with the cultivation and harvest of God's worldly vineyard. As such, we are to turn the fruits of the vineyard back over to God. We have no need to hoard them because the divine Landowner provides all our needs. What's more, we already have an inheritance of life and love, brought to us by the Son. May we not see Jesus as a threat to our way of life but welcome him among us. May we not hoard what he brings but share it. And remembering these words of Scripture — "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" (v. 42) — may we not reject Jesus but let him be the cornerstone of our lives.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

What's your November?

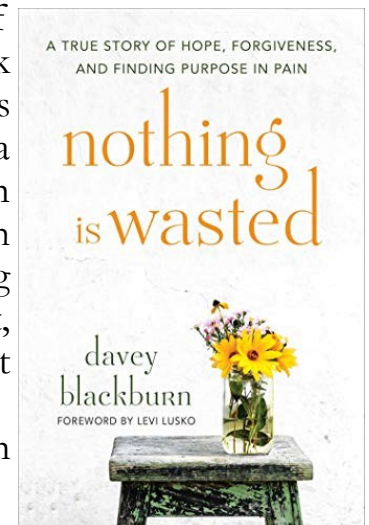
For Davey Blackburn, a pastor in Indiana, one particular month has brought "the highest of highs and the lowest of lows." He was born in November, moved to a new church in November 2011 and learned he'd be a father in November 2013. But two years later, in November 2015, Blackburn's wife and unborn second child were murdered during a home invasion.

Despite that painful tragedy, the pastor determined not to "let the enemy have a claim over November" or "steal the many beautiful memories I once held" about it. Since then, his church's worship team recorded an album one November, he proposed to his second wife another November, launched a new ministry one November and welcomed another child the following November.

That journey, Blackburn says, is evidence of God's faithfulness to replace a spirit of despair with a garment of praise (see Isaiah 61:3). And it's an important reminder for the holiday season, with all its memories and traditions. Just as God wants to heal and restore, Blackburn writes, "Your [deceased] loved one would not want your 'November' to haunt your memory forever."

Blackburn, author of the forthcoming book *Nothing Is Wasted*, says everyone has a November but can choose what to do with it. Instead of letting your November haunt, you can let God use it to heal.

—Stephanie Martin





Fill in the blank: “Rejoice always, pray continually, give _____ in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

- A. alms
- B. praise
- C. thanks
- D. offerings

(Answer: C (See 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV))



Dr. Sheldon takes advantage of his congregation’s lack of knowledge of the Greek language.

Why did the turkey decline dessert?
Because it was stuffed.

Why did the turkey cross the road twice?

To prove he wasn’t a chicken.

What smells the best at Thanksgiving dinner?

Your nose.

Why didn’t the chef season the turkey?
There wasn’t enough thyme.

Why did the turkey leave the band?
People were fighting over the drumsticks.

Scripture Readings for November

1 Pss. 96; 147:1–11	11 Pss. 104; 149	21 Pss. 54; 146
2 Pss. 116; 147:12–20	12 Pss. 19; 150	22 Pss. 65; 147:1–11
3 Pss. 84; 148	13 Pss. 135; 145	23 Pss. 143; 147:12–20
4 Pss. 63; 149	14 Pss. 123; 146	24 Pss. 88; 148
5 Pss. 103; 150	15 Pss. 15; 147:1–11	25 Pss. 122; 149
6 Pss. 5; 145	16 Pss. 36; 147:12–20	26 Pss. 108; 150
7 Pss. 42; 146	17 Pss. 130; 148	27 Pss. 62; 145
8 Pss. 89:1–18; 147:1–11	18 Pss. 56; 149	28 Pss. 12; 146
9 Pss. 97; 147:12–20	19 Pss. 67; 150	29 Pss. 96; 147:1–11
10 Pss. 51; 148	20 Pss. 57; 145	30 Pss. 116; 147:12–20

A powerful witness

St. Ignatius of Antioch was a bishop and martyr in the early years of Christianity, well known for his extensive writing about Christ and the church. On his journey to martyrdom in the early second century, he wrote letters to the Christian communities of the time that are still instructive today.

On November 1 we celebrate All Saints' Day, remembering all who have died in faith, as well as particular models of strong faith whom the church has named "saints." Especially inspiring — and challenging — are these words of Ignatius, written near the end of his life: "I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. He who died in place of us is the one object of my quest. He who rose for our sakes is my one desire."



Ascending thanks

Thy mighty hand o'er all the land
hath still been open to bestow
those blessings which our wants
demand
from heaven, whence all blessings flow.

Thou hast, with ever watchful eye,
looked down on us with holy care,
and from thy storehouse in the sky
hast scattered plenty everywhere.

Then lift we up our songs of praise
to thee, O Father, good and kind;
to thee we consecrate our days;
be thine the temple of each mind.

With incense sweet our thanks ascend;
before thy works our powers pall;
though we should strive years without
end,
we could not thank thee for them all.

—Excerpts from *A Thanksgiving Poem*,
Paul Laurence Dunbar

Grateful for grace

In this oneness, Jesus Christ is the Mediator, the Reconciler, between God and man. Thus he comes forward to man on behalf of God, calling for and awakening faith, love and hope, and to God on behalf of man, representing man, making satisfaction and interceding. Thus he attests and guarantees to God's free grace and at the same time attests and guarantees to God man's free gratitude.

KARL BARTH THE HUMANITY OF GOD

Karl Barth,
The Humanity of God

Bounty of thanks

We thank thee, Lord, for the glory of the late days and the excellent face of thy sun. We thank thee for good news received. We thank thee for the pleasures we have enjoyed and for those we have been able to confer.



And now, when the clouds gather and the rain impends over the forest and our house, permit us not to be cast down; let us not lose the savor of past mercies and past pleasures; but, like the voice of a bird singing in the rain, let grateful memory survive in the hour of darkness. If there be in front of us any painful duty, strengthen us with the grace of courage; if any act of mercy, teach us tenderness and patience.

—Robert Louis Stevenson



Pleasant Grove Food Pantry for month of September



<i>Date</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Adults</i>	<i>Seniors</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Pounds</i>
9/11	176	306	105	265	676	9135
9/12	255	477	140	381	998	13003
9/18	190	331	117	263	711	9710
9/19	229	451	118	392	961	11820
9/25	156	249	110	198	557	7930
9/26	234	451	138	344	933	12193
	1240	2265	728	1843	4836	63791



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Jim Fielding	11/2
Vicki Cook	11/3
Miatta Wilson	11/8
Kevin Karlen	11/10
Patience Uche	11/10
Lorna Almas	11/11
Cindy Garrett	11/11
Harry Karlen	11/13
Lilly Pappas	11/15
Charlotte Turner	11/20
Cheryl Wood	11/20
Helen Randolph	11/27
Jezzi Whitley	11/27
Kathryn D. Kreger	11/30



Eastminster Session

- Chandra Anderson
- Betty Crabtree
- Blair Garrett
- Philis Knox
- Dick Knox
- Jim Lee
- Tom Pappas
- Charlotte Turner
- Sean Turner
- Fred Watkins



Pastor	Rev. Dr. Paul Burns
Director of Music	Fred P. Watkins
Organist	Melody S. Davis
Administrative Assistant	Chandra Anderson
Hostess/Housekeeper	Minerva Hernandez
Child Care Provider	Betty Crabtree



HIGHLIGHTS from the STATED SESSION MEETING

October 15, 2023

At the October 15 Stated Meeting, the Session

- ◆ Heard a report from the Treasurer that Eastminster's financial position for September is still good, despite a downturn in market returns.
- ◆ Discussed the 2024 Budget, accepted it, and moved to present it to the Congregation on November 5.
- ◆ Heard a report from the Nominating Committee Chair regarding new Officers for 2024. Officers Elect are
 - ◆ Elders: Melody Davis, Patience Uche, and Darlene West
 - ◆ Trustee: Jo Byrd
 - ◆ Nominating Committee members at-large: Christine Blair, Tony Bennett, Kathy Kreger, and Judy Moreland.
- ◆ Formally dissolved the Interim Pastor Search Committee.



Special dates

- ◆ All Saints' Day, November 1, 2023
- ◆ Daylight saving time ends, November 5, 2023
- ◆ Veterans Day, November 11, 2023
- ◆ Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 2023
- ◆ Christ the King Sunday, November 26, 2023