



## **Pastor Ray Cameron—“Give Thanks to God!”**

**T**hanksgiving is assuredly the earliest of American holidays. The first Thanksgiving is recorded as taking place in October 1621, a feast that lasted three days. Thanksgiving became a national holiday by proclamation of President George Washington in 1789. It is marked today with feasting, family gatherings, football and parades. But the name of the holiday expresses what it is intended to be, and we have so many reasons to celebrate, a time of Thanksgiving to God for all His benefits to us. (Psalm 103, 107).

Reading Eric Metaxas' biography, *Martin Luther – The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World*, has been a great delight. Metaxas is a wonderful writer. Considering again the roots of The Reformation, the recovering of the doctrines of grace, and the freedoms which we enjoy (and take for granted) that are rooted in God's redeeming grace and set forth in the Holy Scriptures, has been most refreshing.

When our sight is focused primarily on the things and times in which we live, we can easily lose heart, become discouraged and even disgruntled. Thanksgiving then becomes limited to the food, gatherings, parades and football. But as Christians we have so much more! Our Thanksgiving is to the living God who has expressed a love for us in the giving of the eternal Son of God that changes everything for us in this life and the life to come!

In his book *By Grace Alone*, Sinclair Ferguson identifies four major "fiery darts" Satan uses to unsettle believers and rob us of our assurance and peace in the gospel:

Fiery Dart 1: "God is against you," Satan says. "He is not really for you. How can you believe he is for you when you see the things that are happening in your life?"

Fiery Dart 2: "I have accusations I will bring against you because of your sins," Satan argues. "What can you say in defense? Nothing."

Fiery Dart 3: "You can say you are forgiven, but there is a payback day coming—a condemnation day," Satan insinuates. "How will you defend yourself then?"

Fiery Dart 4: "Given your track record, what hope is there that you will persevere to the end?" Satan asks.

The gospel recovery of the Reformation gives us a clear, Biblical response to quench each of these fiery darts, and more that our enemy will send.

*"If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:31-32)*

*"Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died – more than that, who was raised ... who indeed is interceding for us." (Romans 8:33-34)*

*"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1)*

*"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? ... For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35-39)*

I would commend the reading of Romans 8 in preparation for Thanksgiving this year. When our life is centered on Jesus Christ, and built on the foundation of the doctrines of grace found in the Word of God, we have every reason for Thanksgiving, even in the midst of chaos. And we are reminded that the Gospel is the hope of help and peace and sanity, in a world that lacks the same.

*"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:57) - Pastor Ray*



BY BARBARA THAYER



Barbara Thayer

## Surely Goodness and Mercy....

One of the advantages to growing older is the ability to look back across our lives and see all the places where God has intervened for our benefit and His glory. At the time we are in the midst of a crisis, we often miss the superb timing, the loving touch, and the grace that allows us to emerge from a fiery trial unscathed. David, the Psalmist and Shepherd King of Israel, knew the comfort of God's unending care and memorialized it for us in Psalm 23. This is a Psalm well known to most of us if not memorized when we were young. In fact, I learned this Psalm in French during high school language class, and in any context, it brings comfort to the speaker and hearer alike.

As we approach Thanksgiving, we need to stop and think about the message of this simple Psalm. God is likened to a shepherd who makes provision for us on a daily basis. He cares for us, leads us and takes us to places of rest. The opening verse tell us: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." We need to pause and think about all the ways that God keeps us and cares for us. Unfortunately, we often take daily blessings for granted such as food on the table, a place to sleep, a job, and our family. Instead, the enemy wants us to concentrate on all the things we don't have. To Psalm 27:35, I add my "amen": "I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread." Though times may look difficult, the Lord walks with us even as He did with the children of Israel when they wandered for forty years in the wilderness. Their clothes did not even wear out!

Secondly, not only is the Lord with us during the good times, but He walks with us even in the valley of the shadow of death. How well, I remember that there was an eleven year span where I lost my 39 year old aunt, my grandparents and my father who died much too young. Then,

came a long struggle in keeping watch for ten years as my mother went through Alzheimer's Disease. Never did we think we would lose a grandson in 2014 at age six, but again, the Lord provided His extraordinary grace to us. No family in this world is spared from the walk in this valley, but when we have Jesus Christ, we have comfort, solace and strength to make it to the other side. Of course, we all know that one day we will walk in this valley as we prepare to go home to the Lord, but we can say "I will fear no evil" as David declared because Jesus will usher us into His presence. What we must remember is that a valley may have shadows, but they also can be very fruitful in comfort. I love what Matthew Henry has to say about this section of the Psalm: "Death is a king of terrors, but not to the sheep of Christ. When they come to die, God will rebuke the enemy; he will guide them with his rod, and sustain them with his staff. There is enough in the gospel to comfort the saints when dying, and underneath them are the everlasting arms."

Finally, we must remember that goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life. (vs 6). God has made this a promise to us. Goodness walks along side of us each day in the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide and teach us. Mercy guards our rear flank and keeps us from stumbling over the roadblocks of life. Oh, I know. It may seem like neither is there at times, but if you live long enough and look back over all you have been through, you will see the tracks of mercy and goodness behind you. God doesn't always let us see all the dangers He has kept us from until a later time or until we see Him face to face. Yet, His promises are certain and His tender care unequaled.

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving this year, we need to take time to go around the dinner table and ask everyone to share one thing for which they are thankful. Then, read Psalm 23 and think about God's total care and provision for each one of us. May our hearts be filled with His praise for we are the sheep of His pasture. Selah!



# Music Ministry-- by Joshua Klatt

## Unity and Hope: The Church's One Foundation

Few other hymns can rival "The Church's One Foundation" for popularity. Along with "All People That on Earth Do Dwell," the grand Puritan setting of Psalm 100, and "Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above," it is one of the three hymns we sing most often and came in fifteenth in a poll of favorite hymns we conducted back in 2017. Perhaps the main reason it is so greatly beloved is for its beautiful picture of the Church as the bride of Christ, united through Him to saints on earth and those who have passed on to eternal rest in glory. Few people, however, realize that this serene, majestic text was born as a defense of orthodox doctrine in the midst of terrible contention and controversy.

The author, Samuel Stone (1839-1900), was one of a number of English clergy who were shocked and horrified when an overseas bishop published a book questioning the authority of Scripture, and of Genesis in particular, in 1866. At the time, Stone was a 27-year-old assistant pastor in the parish of Windsor, the small village that is more famously the site of the royal family's Windsor Castle. The bishops of the Church of England strongly rebuked their offending counterpart for his views, but controversy continued to rage. In the midst of this situation, the young Stone published a booklet of twelve hymns based on the Apostles Creed, of which "The Church's One Foundation" was the ninth.

In the face of the ongoing controversy over the Scripture, Stone made a special point to remind worshippers of the biblical teaching that the Church is Christ's *new creation*/By *water and the word*. This was a reference to Paul's teaching in Ephesians 5:25-26, "*Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.*" By so doing, Stone emphasized the teaching we find in our Reformed *Belgic Confession*, that the true, universal Church "*is a holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit . . . spread and dispersed over the whole world; and yet is joined and united with heart and will, by the power of faith, in one and the same Spirit*" (Article

XXVII). He recognized that the foundation of the unity that bound the Church together was not organizational or local, or even a shared liturgy, but saving faith in Christ and acceptance of His word and its authority.

Modern hymnals often omit two of Stone's most powerful verses, verses highlighting the struggle of the Church in difficult days and the apparent incongruity between the promises of Scripture and the Church as we see her today. This is unfortunate as much of the Western Church faces parallel crises in the contemporary era and needs the assurance that *the Church shall never perish/Her dear Lord to adore*, even as Christ promised, "*I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,*" (Matthew 16:18).

The tune AURELIA is similarly one of the most popular tunes in American and British hymnals, and was written by Charles Wesley's grandson Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876) in 1864. The name *Aurelia* means "golden," and derives from the tune's original association with the classic hymn, "Jerusalem the Golden," which appears in most major Protestant hymnals in conjunction with the tune EWING. Like many of Wesley's choral works, the AURELIA tune features a simple, accessible melody characterized by repeated notes and stepwise motion, undergirded by lush, colorful harmonies, and a discreet, Victorian approach to dissonance. Its grand, dignified aspect has made it a popular choice for processions, and lends appropriate dignity to Stone's powerful text.

"The Church's One Foundation" seems an especially appropriate hymn to examine this month. At our Psalm-sing on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, we gathered together with brothers and sisters from other ARP churches to celebrate our unity across the miles in God's word. On November 24<sup>th</sup>, we will have another opportunity to give testimony to the unity of all who trust in Christ alone for salvation as we gather for a joint Community Thanksgiving Service at St. Francis Episcopal Church at 7:00 p.m. Throughout the whole month, as we give thanks to God for His blessings, let's especially remember to be grateful for His true, eternally enduring Church of which He makes us members by grace through faith, "*Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!*" (II Corinthians 9:15).



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### *Music Notes*

#### **Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>**

*Union Psalm-sing in Avon Park*—Watch Facebook (FPCLP Music Ministry) and the December newsletter for pictures and a report on this special bi-annual program with our sister churches.

#### **Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup>—Veterans' Day Double-Header**

*DeVane Park, 12:00 noon*—Veterans' recognition with special music by soloist Emily Finke and a short address by Rev. David Waite, a retired minister from Sebring who served as a cryptologic linguist with the U. S. Air Force from 1970-1974.

*Genesis Center, 7:00 p.m.*—The Heartland Pops, one of the county's premier concert bands, will present a program saluting our veterans and military personnel. The concert will feature numerous well-loved patriotic pieces and marches.

#### **Sunday, November 24<sup>th</sup>**

*St. Francis Anglican Episcopal Church, 7:00 p.m.*—Join us for the annual Community Thanksgiving Service as our choir and music ministry join with churches from around Lake Placid to celebrate the season and give thanks for the ministry of retiring St. Francis pastor Elizabeth Nelson.

#### **Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Genesis Center, 7:00 p.m.*—Highlands County Concert Band's Christmas concert is an engaging program of contemporary and traditional holiday music, including Mannheim Steamroller selections and a Christmas favorites sing-along.

#### **Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**

*Genesis Center, 6:00 p.m.*—Lake Placid Elementary's choir and handbell choir will present a concert with the theme "One Small Child" in conjunction with the children's choir, teen bells, and Praise Ringers of First Presbyterian Church.

#### **Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**

*Sanctuary, 6:00 p.m.*—The choir, orchestra, and bell ministries of First Presbyterian Church of Lake Placid will present a service of lessons and carols in celebration Jesus' birth and the salvation that He gives to all who receive Him. Join us for this special holiday program beloved by millions worldwide.

### **FPC Church Wedding Anniversaries**

<b>James &amp; Janet Mitchell</b>	November 1, 1975	Years Married: <b>44</b>
<b>Robert &amp; Sandra Graper</b>	November 7, 1958	Years Married: <b>61</b>
<b>Ivan and Peggie McNeely</b>	November 9, 2001	Years Married <b>18</b>
<b>Peter &amp; Susann King</b>	November 17, 1991	Years Married: <b>28</b>
<b>Anthony &amp; MaryLou West</b>	November 17, 1973	Years Married: <b>46</b>
<b>James &amp; Jan Barney</b>	November 26, 1960	Years Married: <b>59</b>
<b>Tony &amp; Adriana Caruso</b>	November 30, 1996	Years Married: <b>23</b>







# Foreign Missions

## News from MP3

Sept 10, 2019

Dear Friends and Family,

I got back from Africa on Sunday afternoon. This is the first time I was able to combine two countries in my travels. In fact, over the three weeks I taught in four different locations.

The first week I taught at Common Ground Theological Institute in Nairobi, Kenya, where I have been teaching since 2006. I invited Pip (Philip), a Westminster Seminary student who is considering the possibility of this kind of work in the future. His wife Bekah came along as well. I taught 34 students! "Preaching Christ from the Old Testament", while Pip observed. The biggest challenge was the class size. I also had a wide range of abilities among the students --one or two scoring almost perfectly on quizzes and assignments, while a few others were barely passing. One ended up failing the course while several others scored in the high nineties.

The following weekend we traveled to Loitokitok, down near the Kenya-Tanzania border, where on a clear day you can get a good view of Mt. Kilimanjaro. There Pip and I taught a seminar on the pastor's responsibility in leading in prayer and worship. The highlight for all of us was when I had the students divide into groups and compose a song based on an assigned psalm. I only gave them 30 minutes to prepare. The results astounded me.

Then back to Nairobi, where I observed and mentored Pip, who taught a course on Ezekiel to a group of 36 students. He did a great job, and everyone kept talking about "when he comes back next year."

I



would love to see him do that, but this was purely an exploratory trip while he finishes his M.Div. and considers his options. We would, however, welcome him to join our team.

On Saturday it was off to Kigali, Rwanda, while Pip and Bekah headed home to resume studies and work. In Rwanda I work with Benjamin Musuhukye, an Erskine Seminary graduate and International Missionary Associate with World Witness, who has become such a good friend and brother. I preached the next day (surprise!), which went surprisingly well. The text was Hosea 6 (true vs. false repentance), and the pastor proceeded to declare September a month of repentance and forgiveness in the church.

For the next couple of days I taught on biblical preaching to a group of 20+ pastors in Kigali, and then traveled to Nyabihu, in the western province and repeated the same. I then got to meet a young boy that Annelies and I will sponsor, visited a museum, and planned a little for the next visit. And I graded some papers from my April courses in Uganda that are all past due!!! About 100 more to go. Some of them are long. Pray for me.

Next trip? Pakistan, early November.

Serving Gladly,  
David Galletta



## A BIG THANK YOU FROM NAOMI'S HEART MISSION

We wanted to say thank you for your generous donations that started us on our way to replacing our Academy school vehicle. We were able to purchase a truck last week. It is in very good shape and will be able to handle the awful roads around the mission. We will add a canopy top and seats in the next three weeks. Also a door on the back with a couple steps so the kids can get in and out more easily. We are truly blessed by your ongoing support of Marty and I, our mission and all our students.

Thanks to all those individuals at First Presbyterian and the wonderful monetary donation made toward the purchase of this truck through the Christmas in July ministry. You are all a blessing!



## Congregational Family Thanksgiving Dinner

On Wednesday, November 20th, at 6 PM in the Genesis Center, FPC will be serving its annual Congregational Family Thanksgiving Dinner. The menu will include turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, sweet potato casserole, green beans, tossed salad, harvest pies, and drinks. A love offering will be received. Net proceeds from the dinner will benefit Iglesia en Movimiento, the Spanish church plant. Sign up's for the dinner are through the church bulletin insert, the church website, and the church office. The nursery and children's ministry will be available at 6:30 PM. During the dinner, we will have the opportunity to view display tables and talk with representatives from thirteen local ministries that FPC financially supports. The local ministries will include: Camp Joy, Choices Family Resource Center, Crafty Sowers, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Grace Ministry, Habitat for Humanity, Little Lambs, Manna Ministry, Iglesia en Movimiento, New Testament Mission, Samaritan's Touch Care Center, Reformed University Fellowship, and Youth for Christ. Come enjoy yummy food and rich fellowship, plus learn about several local gospel ministries.

## Community Thanksgiving Worship Service

On Sunday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, at 7 PM at the St. Francis of Assisi Anglican Episcopal Church, the Lake Placid Christian Ministerial Association will host a Community Thanksgiving Worship Service. Several local pastors will participate in the service. In honor of her retirement at the end of 2019, Pastor Elizabeth Nelson will deliver the sermon. Our own Joshua Klatt will be helping to lead a Community Choir. A love offering will be collected to benefit Manna Ministries and New Testament Mission. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Come worship with brothers and sisters in Christ as we together thank the Lord for His goodness and faithfulness.



## Iglesia En Movimiento-Pastor Tim Sewell

### Sunday Worship On Reformation Day

Happy Reformation Day! This October, we began having weekly Sunday services. Last Sunday, we had 47 adults and 15 children to celebrate Reformation Day! It was a beautiful scene last Sunday to share the reformation truths found in Ephesians 2: 1-10 and see many of our people for the first time understand the Gospel. We also announced we would be partaking in the Lords Supper (communion) the Sunday before. One person, in particular, called and asked what they needed to bring to the "Lords Supper." My heart broke. She did not want to come to the Lords table empty-handed. Barbara, after explaining to her what the Lords Supper was said, 'just bring yourself and your beautiful children, that's all the Lord wants.' It is a privilege to share the truths with people who are hearing the Gospel clearly for the first time. Come worship with us, (English translation system and sermon notes provided) .



### Equipment

God is good! Thanks to your generosity and donations from our core group, we were able to raise the ten thousand dollars needed for the worship equipment. The below picture is that of the worship equipment arriving last week. (pictures of it set up coming soon). This essential equipment will allow more singers, musicians, and a/v techs to participate in leading worship on Sundays and help us provide a better atmosphere for worship in song and during the message time. But that was only stage one! If you would like to give a gift to our audio/video team, it would be a tremendous blessing. We hope to live-stream our service on social media beginning this Advent season. Thank you again for your prayers and generosity.



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