



NIXON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Pastor Jim's Thoughts and Prayers – September 2014

Dear Friends,

Have you said Thank You lately?

For the last few weeks I've started each morning by reading Psalm 100 from the Bible while I'm drinking a cup of coffee. Then I sit for 5 to 10 minutes and think about all the things I'm thankful for in my life, and all the aspects of my life that bring me joy. Finally, I try to sit quietly and hear what God is trying to tell me about what it means to be thankful and grateful for the blessings and joy in my life.

*During those 5 to 10 minutes I think about my family and friends. I see their faces and find myself smiling and feel a sense of warmth and joy in my heart. I remember times we've been together and things we've done. I can't begin to put into words how much I love and appreciate my family and friends. At the same time, there are times when a sense of sadness comes over me, and I realize at times I've taken my friends and family for granted... and I say to myself, "I'll call them or visit tomorrow" Then I remember those dear loved ones who've gone on to Heaven, who I never got around to calling or visiting. Now, I'm trying to do better and write myself a note when I finish praying, to remind myself to send an email or make a "just calling to say Hello phone call" before the day's over. **How about you? Do you spend time each day giving God "Thanks" for the gift of family and friends? Do you find yourself thinking "there's always tomorrow to make that call or send that note or email?"***

Each time I drive past the "Wings of Peace" monument at the intersection of Airport Road and Three Degree Road here in Penn Township, I say a prayer and thank God for the blessings of health, home, food, and resources that He gives me as I'm blessed to live in this great nation. One day I stopped at the monument and read the inscriptions on the two monuments, and then I sat on a bench for a time and prayed. The first plaque says the monument was dedicated on June 15, 1957. The second plaque says that the "Wings of Peace" is a "monument that honors war veterans of Penn Township", it was dedicated on August 17, 1986. As I sat there I thanked God for the blessings and freedoms I often take for granted. Each time I read the heroic stories of the brave men and women who are our veterans, I realize anew "Freedom Isn't Free". Now when I see someone wearing a ball cap that says "World War II Veteran", "Viet Nam Veteran", "Korean War Veteran", "Gulf War Veteran", or "Iraqi War Veteran" I try to take a moment to stop and greet the person and say "Thank you for your service and sacrifices, and the freedom we enjoy today in this great nation."

How about you, how do you give God thanks for the blessings and joys that you have in your life? How do you share those blessings with others, just as God shared His Son Jesus with you? How do you live your life so that you are a blessing to others? My friends, as we move towards autumn, and we begin to make our Thanksgiving Dinner plans with our families, I hope you will "stop and smell the roses". I pray you will allow your heart and spirit to feel the joy of family and friends that God has shared with you!

SEE YOU IN CHURCH!!!



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
The people of the United Methodist Church