

Give Thanks To The Lord, For He Is Good!

I thank God that we have been able to pay our bills. I thank God that we have been able to eat three healthy meals a day. I thank God that our 2005 and 2008 vehicles are still running. I thank God that we were able to move back into our house! I thank God that we have been able to worship God with His people every Sunday, either in person or online. I thank God that my computer is still working and we have a good internet connection. I thank God for our cell phones as a way to stay in touch with family and friends. I thank God for the measure of good health we enjoy. I thank God for a nice bed to sleep on and warm blankets to snuggle under. I thank God for being our faithful provider.



Please join me in giving thanks to God for your pastor. These are difficult and discouraging days for many pastors. They are feeling the weight and the responsibility for making decisions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. I heard one pastor say, "My brain hurts from all the articles I have read about it." No matter what they decide to do or not do, there are people in their church that criticize them and take them to task for it.

I heard one pastor say there are three types of pastors dealing with COVID-19. First, there are pastors who are concerned with people's physical wellbeing. They take flack from the side that wants to gather for worship in person. Second, there are pastors who are concerned about people's spiritual and mental wellbeing. They take flack from the other side who believes it is dangerous and irresponsible to gather in person. Third, are the pastors who try to balance out both concerns. They take flack from both sides.

Pastors are under pressure from people in their churches regarding politics and the election. They believe their pastor said too much, didn't say enough, or said the wrong things. People's reactions may intensify as the uncertainty and questions about the election continues.

Jeremiah 10:23 *I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps. (ESV)*

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13 *Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, ¹² and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, ¹³ so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. (ESV)*

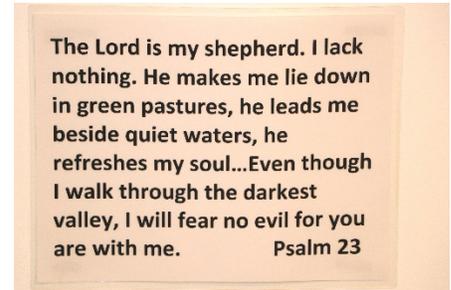
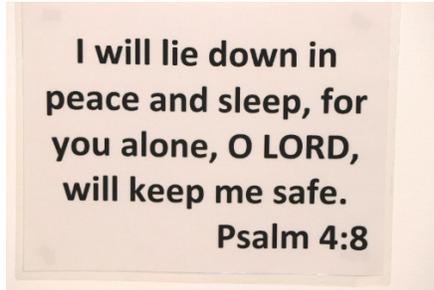
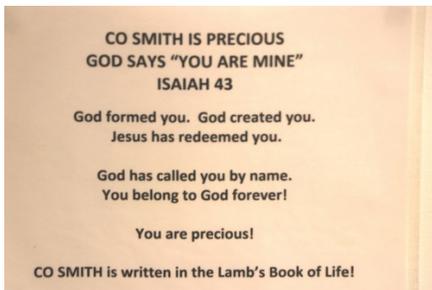
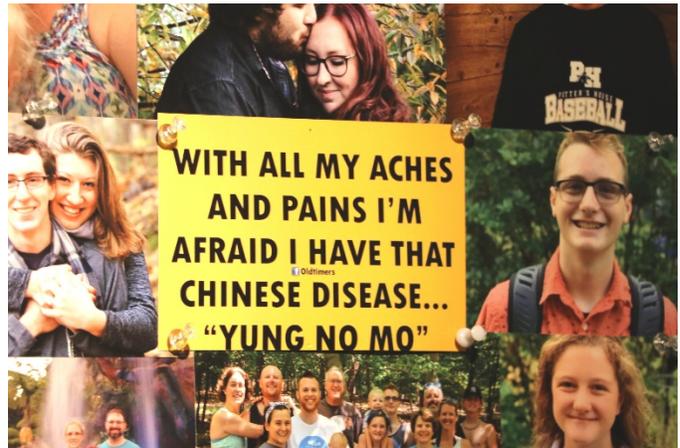
In the midst of the COVID-19 restrictions in Michigan, we hit the perfect window of time to be able to gather as an immediate family to celebrate our parents 74th wedding anniversary on Friday evening November 6. Mom has dementia and we are so thankful for the wonderful loving care she receives every day at Bethesda Ranch in Portage, MI. We were able to bring in dinner and celebrate as a family around the large table. We wore our masks and social distanced except while we were eating and for photos.





Co & Wes Smith
Amy & Jeff Smith, Linda Joy, Annette & Jim Smith, Sue & John Smith

My sister Linda did a fantastic job decorating the walls of our Mom's room with family photos of all her kids, grandkids, and great grandkids, along with plaques of some of her favorite Scripture verses. Every night before she goes to sleep they look at all the family photos and read out loud all of the Scripture verses. It calms her spirit and helps her sleep more peacefully. It is a beautiful witness to Mom's legacy of faith in Jesus, trust in God, and love of God's Word.



Family is a gift from God to be treasured and enjoyed. We may not be able to celebrate this Thanksgiving the way we would like to, but we still have so much to be thankful for. Make the best of your situation and choose to give thanks to God because He is so good to us.



Dad VanderBroek & Sue



Andrew & Liam (3rd Birthday)



Grandpa John & Nolan

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The stresses of life and ministry can become overwhelming, leaving shepherds and sheep discouraged, cast down, or burned out. We walk alongside you to encourage you and help you flourish and thrive as a beacon of hope in your community.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Pastor John and Sue Smith