

the

Pulse

of Centerpoint Community Church

November 2020

GIVE THANKS
WITH A

Grateful
Heart

I THESSALONIANS 5:18



Pastor Jim Barstow

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JIM:

I Thessalonians 5:18 says "...give thanks in all circumstances." You may not know this, or you might have forgotten this – but in the Greek, those words are a command. We are literally *commanded* to give thanks. I used to think that was strange – and kind of a waste of a command (as if they have to be limited!) Who needs to be commanded to give thanks?! That is what I thought before COVID... now I get it.

When things were "normal" it was easy to find things to give thanks for... a family gathering, a birthday party, a big church event, an upcoming vacation (or one just taken), a school concert, a trip to the theatre, a trip... so many things that made it easy to give thanks. But in a pandemic where the world shuts down, when every day is "blursday", when trips and travel, gatherings and get-togethers are halted, and everyone is masked and standing apart, when the news is filled with conflict and fighting, where little that is positive is ever mentioned – well maybe we need to be commanded. Because God is good - *He is!* And that means there are good things to be thankful for. So,

GIVE THANKS!!

And if you can't find something, look a little longer and look a little harder. There's always something.

This is a commandment that you really don't want to break.

BUILDING A HOME FOR PASTOR RAY VELAZQUEZ AND FAMILY



Pastor Ray and Careli Velazquez in front of their home



The key presentation is always a special time in a house-build project



Local pastors and friends prayed a blessing on Ray and the new home

Centerpoint was honored to financially support a house-build along with eight other churches for Pastor Ray Velazquez and his family in Ensenada, Baja California. Centerpoint knows Pastor Ray through our partnership with Youth Unlimited Gospel Outreach (YUGO). He has been a full-time staff member since 2016 and currently serves as YUGO's Pastor Relations Leader. Being a local pastor in the community gives Pastor Ray a unique advantage to connect with other pastors in the area. Ray has been married to Careli since 2014. They have three daughters: Sofia (5), Melissa (2), and newborn Gissel. When they were first married, they invested in property that included a small house. The house was in poor condition but they decided it was worth living in a deteriorating house so that they could focus on paying off the property. Their plan was to pay off the land, tear down the old house, and build a new one. As time went on, the condition of the house worsened. They were told that they needed to replace the entire roof. Upon inspection of the damage, the construction leader concluded that the entire house had suffered too much water damage over the years. Several of the interior walls needed to be replaced as well. It was clear that the solution was to build a new home. YUGO had local people to build the house but needed financial help. Centerpoint and eight other churches stepped up to financially support this build, since due to COVID-19 none of the U.S. churches could travel to Ensenada and help with the construction. This financial support given to YUGO and Pastor Ray is such a blessing to Ray and his family. They can continue the kingdom work that the Lord has laid on their hearts from a safe, healthy home.



Pastor Ray with wife Careli and baby Gissel



Little Melissa expressed her excitement about her new home

In Ray's own words: "As a family that is missionally-focused, opening our home to anyone in need has always been part of our ministry. As a pastor in this community, it is important that people be able to find refuge through me, my wife, and my home. This blessing, this house, will allow us to continue to provide a refuge to others. It will also give us the opportunity to recharge in a secure, safe place. It is a confirmation of God's faithfulness. In Careli's words: 'This home is a long-awaited answer to prayer. It is a dream come true... a huge and unexpected surprise. I am so grateful, first to God for providing this blessing but also to everyone who contributed to make this dream a reality.'" The home includes three bedrooms, tile floors, ceiling fans, a kitchen, and a bathroom.

Thank you, Centerpoint, for actively being part of the body of Christ helping Pastor Ray and his family's dream come true. Pastor Ray and family are a part of the Centerpoint family and we look forward to future visits with him in Ensenada.

PRAY.

Please continue to pray for our Mission Partners as they minister during this challenging time:

LOCAL

Acres of Hope

Campus Life

City Impact in SF

Folsom Prison Ministry

The Gathering Inn

Gleanings for the Hungry

Samaritan's Purse

Sierra Pregnancy & Health

William Jessup University

GLOBAL

Catharine Coon/
Hope Alive! in
Uganda

Al & Rosa Castro/
Ensenada

Barry & Ronah
Francolino/EPC
Missions

Schmidt family/
Wycliffe, Nigeria

YUGO Ministries
Ensenada, Mexico

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR BRYAN:



Pastor Bryan delivered LOTS of paper to the Crestmont supply room



Centerpoint collected literal truckloads of items for The Gathering Inn, Acres of Hope, and Crestmont Elementary School

In August and September, Centerpoint collected carloads and truckloads of goods for four mission partners: Military Care Packages, Acres of Hope, The Gathering Inn, and Crestmont Elementary School. While these donation drives are normally spaced throughout the year, we combined a few this year because of timing with COVID restrictions. Wow! Centerpoint, you responded with incredible generosity. Thank you!

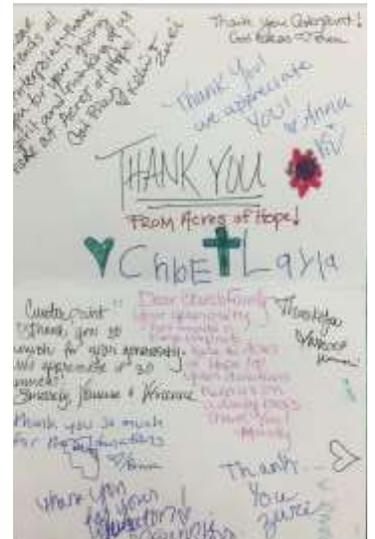
We collected donations for Military Care Packages even before Centerpoint had reopened in September. It was the first collection the church did using the shopping cart outside the office. We collected enough items for 124 Military Care Packages and even a good number of extra items we sent to their next packing party!

For Acres of Hope and The Gathering Inn, we collected literal truckloads! Clothing, school supplies, personal hygiene items, household items – it was tremendous! We received kind “thank you’s” in person and via letter.

And finally, for Crestmont, we collected school supplies and paper to bless the staff and students during a difficult school year. While paper seems pretty mundane, it’s incredibly important this school year since teachers have to send home printed packets of work each week. We collected 80 reams of paper – wow! Check out the Centerpoint Facebook page for a video thank-you from Jeri Farmer, principal of Crestmont Elementary. Well done, Centerpoint!



The Military Care packing party packed 124 care packages!



Sweet “thank you’s” from the moms and kids at Acres of Hope

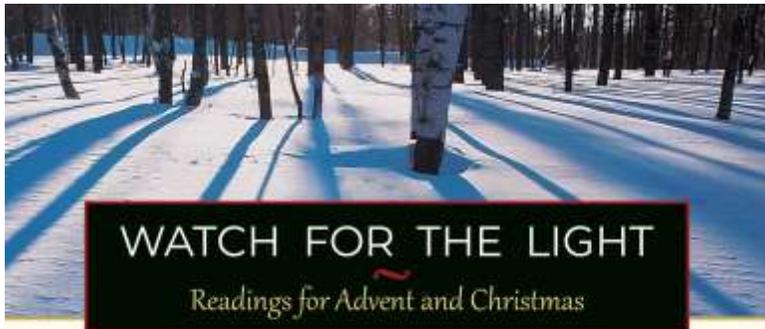


VOLUNTEER MISSIONS OPPORTUNITY

Paradise, CA / November 9 – 11

We will be serving alongside of Maranatha Volunteers International to help build sheds for the community of Paradise, CA that was decimated by fire in 2018. You need to be handy with tools and willing to work hard. You can help on a daily basis (drive up each day) or use your own sleeping accommodations and stay in

the area. One team is planning to take a trailer to stay in during the week. If you are interested, or for more information, contact Mark Janzen at 916-765-1515.



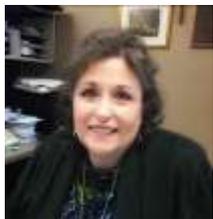
ADVENT STUDY: *Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas*
Sundays, November 29 — December 20 at 1:00pm via Zoom, led by David Tyra



David Tyra

Watch for the Light is a powerful book filled with a variety of beautiful readings. The main purpose of the collection, according to the editors, is to encourage a rediscovery of Advent and point the reader toward a season

of inward preparation. "Advent marks something momentous: God's coming into our midst. That coming is not just something that happened in the past. It is a recurring possibility here and now. And thus, Advent is not merely a commemorative event or an anniversary, but a yearly opportunity for us to consider the future, second Advent — the promised coming of God's kingdom on earth." *Watch for the Light* gives the phrase "holiday preparations" new depth and meaning. Online sign-ups will start the beginning of November or contact Karen Fales in the church office.



FINANCIAL FAITHFULNESS

by Kelly Harder, Business Administrator

2020 is one for the books! As we move into 2021, we look forward to a better year, but first we must look back and say a great big THANK YOU for your support! Our ministries might have looked different this year but, because of all of you, we could continue doing the work our Lord intended His church to do.

Now we would like to ask you to please carry on that support for 2021. In the mail you will receive our annual fall Faith Commitment packet. In there you will find your Faith Commitment card for you to complete and return to the church during the month of November. Please prayerfully consider making a financial commitment to Centerpoint so we can continue to bring the love of Jesus to a world that so desperately needs it.



Sunday services are now being held at the following times/locations:
8:30am—Worship Café
9:40am—Worship Café
10:00am—Worship Center
11:10am—Worship Center
Kids Ministry is available at the 8:30, 9:40, and 10:00am services. There is congregational singing at the 8:30, 9:40, and 10:00am services, but not at 11:10am in order to accommodate those who are not yet comfortable with singing.



Pastor Nancy Duff

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR NANCY:

How do you grow as a believer? Often people assume that happens primarily through study. Study is important, but there is more. We are not only to love the Lord our God with our mind, but also with our heart, soul and strength. Author James Brian Smith points out that we can become stunted in our spiritual growth if we just focus on knowledge, because knowledge doesn't automatically translate into behavior. We also need to attend to our personal habits and cultural practices. If we don't, our behaviors will primarily be shaped by the broader culture around us.

“Jesus helped his disciples reshape habits and practices to reflect God’s kingdom. He did this not by taking them through a multi-year academic course, but by inviting them to do life with him.”
—Nancy Duff

Jesus helped his disciples reshape habits and practices to reflect God’s kingdom. He did this not by taking them through a multi-year academic course, but by inviting them to do life with him. As they traveled with him, they absorbed his teaching while experiencing him living the truths he taught. His truth shaped their minds while his habits and practices shaped their lives. We see the same process happening among the believers in the early church in passages like 1 Thessalonians 1:5-8 and 2:8.

As you grow as a disciple, how are you attending to your habits and practices? Who is God using right now to shape you? Are you in a small group? If your group has stopped meeting for a while, might it be time to consider starting again? If you’re not in a group, might it be time to join – or start – one? If not, might it be time to find one other person to meet with regularly, specifically to encourage one another in your faith? If you’d like to talk more about some of these possibilities, please reach out to me at nduff@centerpointroseville.org.



WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP **Wednesday, November 4, 10:00am** in the Centerpoint Dining Room

All women in the church are invited to join us as we meet together to continue our study of the Psalms. Women are asked to bring a pen and something to write on, as there will not be tables. Water bottles and wrapped snacks will be provided. No other food will be allowed. In keeping with the month of November, we will share the things for which we are most thankful. Come, wear a mask, and remember the social distancing guidelines. Please RSVP to Sharon Moore at 916-784-0581 no later than Sunday, November 1.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: A VIRTUAL WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS GATHERING

Friday, December 4, 6:30-8:00pm via Zoom

Celebrate the Christmas season with Centerpoint ladies! Wear that festive sweater, make yourself a cup of hot chocolate, and enjoy some fellowship while gaining easy holiday tips on recipes, gifts & entertaining. Christmas carols will brighten our spirits and enduring hope will fill our hearts as we rejoice in the birth of our Savior. This is a free Zoom event, perfect for inviting friends and family.

Register online or contact Karen Fales in the church office at kfales@centerpointroseville.org.



VOLUNTEER TO DELIVER THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS

THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS

Saturday, November 14, 10:00-11:00am

Sign up on the app or website to deliver groceries for a Thanksgiving meal to 2-4 families in our community. Our process follows social distancing guidelines. On November 14, from 10:00-11:00am, you will drive into the Centerpoint parking lot. A deacon will come to your car, hand you a sheet with instructions and your preassigned addresses, and put prepacked bags of groceries in your trunk. You will then drive off to deliver to your assigned families! Please sign up no later than Friday, November 6. More details are on the app and website, or contact Carol Yeo at 916-300-1475 or mcyeo1@gmail.com.



The Grief Support Group is now meeting on campus on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday evenings of the month from 6:30-8:00 pm. Please contact Larry Curtis to make a reservation at 916-960-3193 or lcurtis1310@yahoo.com.

Divorce Care is meeting through Zoom on Mondays from 6:30-8:00 pm. Register on the website or app, or contact Phil Kelly for more information at 408-203-4083 or phil@windbow.com.

Other Support Groups: Even though some of our support groups are not yet gathering in person, our leaders are available to talk with you over the phone or by email:

Caregivers Support: Retha Millikan, 916-202-6506, rdean52_52@yahoo.com

Women's Cancer Support: Saundra Tyra, 916-300-6723, tyra5@comcast.net

Families of LGBT: Jennifer Harrington, 916-300-8383, mydaytosing@gmail.com

Meals Ministry is available to help with meals if you have recently been ill, had surgery, had a baby, or lost a loved one. Contact Cassie Johnson in the church office: cjohnson@centerpointroseville.org or 782-3186 x 38.

Home Handyman Help is available for widows, seniors, and others who cannot afford to hire a handyman for minor fix-it jobs. Contact Cassie Johnson in the church office: cjohnson@centerpointroseville.org or 782-3186 x 38.

INTEREST GROUPS

Men's Book Fellowship: Tuesday, November 3 from 10:30am to 12:00pm. We meet monthly via Zoom to discuss books we have been reading individually. For more info contact Dave Shumway at dave@dkshumway.com.

Trap and Skeet Shooting: Saturday, November 7 from 10:00am-12:00pm at the Coon Creek Trap & Skeet Club. For more info contact Lance Mayhofer at mayhofer@yahoo.com or 916-791-5423.

Hands of the Lord Quilters: Monday, November 9, 1:00-3:00pm in the Annex. The quilters meet once a month to make quilts for various organizations and join others in fellowship. Contact Sandy Nelson at sandynelsn@gmail.com or 916-591-9036.

Holy Riders (Motorcycles): Our next ride will be Saturday, November 14. Contact Doug Jacobs at 916-541-8729 or tdouglasjacobs@gmail.com.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Send Good News & Great Joy Around the World!

Boxes are due Sunday, November 15

This annual shoebox ministry sends gift items, and the good news of Jesus, to needy children around the world. Shoeboxes are available for pick-up on Sunday mornings on the courtyard or during the week outside the church office, Monday through Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm. A list of items to put in the box, and packing suggestions, are on the Centerpoint website. A plain, plastic shoebox may also be used. Please return your filled box on Sunday morning or during the week no later than Sunday, November 15. Our goal this year is 350 boxes!



Ken & Vicki Schlitt picked up boxes on a recent Sunday



Jonathan finds connection with God in his backyard zero-gravity chair

HOW I LEARNED HOW TO HAVE COMMUNITY

by Jonathan Shea, Director of High School Ministry

This year has been hard on many of us. Our families, our community, and our church have all been impacted in ways we never expected. Michael Chase, Director of Middle School Ministry, and I went from leading in-person programs at church to doing everything online, and then back to in-person with social distancing. We learned phrases like Zoom fatigue, Netflix party, Among Us, and Tik Tok renegade. But despite all the things that tried to break our spirit, Michael and I have been consistently amazed by our students' desire to stay connected with each other. I must confess, I initially believed we would see a drop-off in

connectivity with our students. Yes, some students did appear to "ghost" us, but others flourished. This experience has taught me three things that I want to share with you about how to live in community during this COVID era:

- **First, God created us to enjoy community.** Here I was racking my brain trying to come up with games and activities for our students to play over social media when, little did I know, our students were already doing this with Zoom parties and online hangouts every day. Our students are so smart — they get community!
- **Second, God made us for community.** In April, during the full lockdown, Pastor Bryan recommended that I call someone I knew every day to check up on them. A great idea I thought! It makes someone's day when they know that someone cares about them when the world seems so lonely. Centerpoint's own staff spent a month making phone calls to our parishioners praying for them and asking how we can help.
- **Lastly, we need to be in communion with Christ more than ever before.** In May, I purchased a zero-gravity chair from Amazon. It now sits in the middle of my backyard lawn waiting for me. And I go there often when I feel stressed, frustrated, or feel out of touch with Jesus. It is a place I long to go to be with Jesus. It is where my soul is touched and filled with the awesome presence of God, who is triune and lives in perfect community with Himself. Maybe there is a spot for you to meet and commune with Christ. If not, I would encourage you to find one, because it will change your whole day. It makes a world of difference to be in community the way God intended.





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centerpointroseville.org

Please Note: If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please contact the church office at info@centerpointroseville.org or 916-782-3186. Thank you.

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**FROM OUR
MEDIA TEAM:**

We are now livestreaming our 8:30am Worship Café services on Sunday mornings. You can watch the service LIVE via the website and app at 8:30am.

Just log on and press PLAY! If you want to watch the service later in the day, it will be recorded and you can watch it anytime after 9:20am.

This will be the next best thing to actually worshipping with us in person!



Julie Battenfield

COMING IN DECEMBER:

**Centerpoint's Online
Christmas Concert:
"A Thrill of Hope"**

One of the best lines in Christmas music comes from

O Holy Night: "A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices." How

appropriate for 2020! The world is indeed weary, but has great reason to hope as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Savior. This year, via our online concert, the music of Christmas will be presented by soloists, ensembles, musicians, and a virtual choir. Enjoy classics like *Joy To The World* and *O Holy Night*, and contemporary music by Francesca Battistelli and Pentatonix. With COVID guidelines, we've had to be creative with our recording process this year, and we think you'll enjoy our musical Christmas offering. It will feature members of the Centerpoint Choir, Emily & Daniel Lockett, Paul & Piper Hightower, Julie, Abigail, & Molly Battenfield, Michael Chase, a piano duet by Suzi and Linda, and more, including some special guest artists. This will be an online concert you'll be able to enjoy over and over throughout the month and share with friends and family members anywhere! We look forward to sharing it with you and celebrating Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us... and the thrill of hope He brings!



—Julie Battenfield, Director of Worship Arts