

The Peace Visitor



“Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good.”

— Maya Angelou, Celebrations: Rituals of Peace and Prayer

In our Church, November is a very busy month. We have Totenfest, Thanksgiving and the beginning of Advent all happening while the regular projects and activities of the church happen. There is only a smattering of days on my Calendar that are not already filled. On top of that, my list of Holiday ideas and projects grow daily. In the midst of all this blur of activity it is important to remind ourselves to pause and be grateful for all that we have. Gratitude is a not just a good idea it can be a spiritual discipline.

The earliest written version of the communion meal is probably found in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. That meal, that moment, that sacrament was framed with the words “And When he had given Thanks”. Before anything else was to occur, Jesus gave thanks. I am aware that this year has been filled with challenges for many of us. I have sat with the grieving and the anxious just has often as I have among the jubilant and happy. I have given words of hope at funerals, words of commitment at weddings and words of welcome at baptism. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to be there at each occasion.

God can use every one of us to reflect love and grace. I have watched as you nurture and care for each other. I am grateful for these times you offer a word to fellow travelers. I am humbled and deeply touched at the generosity of spirit in our community. I believe that if you look hard enough you will start seeing it too. We have given hundreds of cups of coffee, milk and juice to those gathered to wash clothes at laundry love. Soap and quarters from you have washed the grime from those in great need. We have provided compassion to a mother from Anoka who needed gas money to visit her sick child here in the city. We helped another mother who needed a bed for her children and provided her with grocery money. We have put shoes, mittens and coats on countless needy people. We have met hundreds of school-supplies needs through our giving and partnerships. Our mission and our efforts continue to expand.

So, no matter how busy your November becomes, pause and give thanks. Remember all the lives that are touched by our hands and hearts. Let us look at how much more we might be able to do and become. But look too at those who have touched your heart and let it make you glad. Once you start looking, gratitude becomes our everyday way of praying and worshipping... and let us all lift the great Amen.

Pastor John

November 2016

Pastor John's Theology Word of the Month:

dox·ol·o·gy [däk' säləjē] **NOUN**

A **doxology** is a short hymn of praises to God in various forms of Christian worship, often added to the end of canticles, psalms, and hymns. The tradition derives from a similar practice in the Jewish synagogue, where some version of the Kaddish serves to terminate each section of the service.



He passed the Ecclesiastical Council and now...

YOU are invited to Tony Romaine's

Ordination!

November 19

2:00 PM

A reception with light refreshments will follow the service. Clergy are invited to robe and wear their preferred stole. Tony has been called to serve First Congregational UCC in Staples. Please join us in this festive celebration of Tony's journey with us!

What Does It Mean to Really Listen? John Hester / August 8, 2013

I believe that the ability to truly listen is one of the most important skills we can develop in this life—as leaders, as husbands and wives, as friends and coworkers. Here's a question I have asked in numerous workshops over the past few months: *How many of you have had formal training in listening?*

It never fails to stun me when only about 10 percent of the attendees raise their hands. Listening is such a critical skill—and yet so few have been trained in how to do it. Here is a short course.

What does it mean to really listen?

Dictionary.com defines the word *listen* as follows:

lis·ten [lis-uhn] **verb**

1. To give attention with the ear; attend closely for the purpose of hearing
2. To pay attention; heed

Yes, it means to hear; but it also means to pay attention—with our ears, our eyes, and our hearts.

Listen to more than the words

True listeners look beyond the words themselves—they search for meaning in the speaker’s tone and body language. This is especially important when the communication has an emotional component.

A study done by Dr. Albert Mehrabian at UCLA looked at the degrees to which emotional messages are sent through words, tone, and body language. Regarding the true meaning of an emotional message, Dr. Mehrabian found:

- 7 percent of meaning is in the words that are spoken
- 38 percent of meaning is in the tone of voice—the way the words are said
- 55 percent of meaning is in facial expression

If what we are hearing is different from what we are sensing from the tone or the facial expression, guess which one is correct!

Show You Are Listening

Part of really listening is responding in a way that shows the other person we are paying attention. We can demonstrate we are truly listening in four different ways. For example, if a coworker comes to you and complains about their micromanaging boss, you could show you are listening by:

- Reflecting back the content Example: *As you see it, your boss is micromanaging you...*
- Reflecting back the feeling Example: *So you feel frustrated because...*
- Reflecting both content and feeling Example: *You feel frustrated because your boss is micromanaging you...*
- Being silent and attentive

A helpful phrase to show you are listening might be: So you feel _____ because _____ . Other helpful phrases might include:

- You seem...
- You sound...
- What I’m hearing is...
- As you see it...
- Tell me more...
- Is there anything else...

Not only is listening to others a key life skill, it can also have a tremendous impact on building trust in a relationship. When we take the time to listen, we show the other person that we care—that we are interested in understanding their perspective. That can go a long way toward building, or rebuilding, a relationship.

“The purpose of life is to listen – to yourself, to your neighbor, to your world and to God and, when the time comes, to respond in as helpful a way as you can find ... from within and without.”

~ Fred Rogers

“A good listener is not only popular everywhere, but after a while he knows something.”

~ Wilson Mizner

About the author

John Hester is a senior consulting partner with The Ken Blanchard Companies who specializes in performance and self-leadership.

FAITH FORMATION—Thanksgiving

1. **Take a Walk.** Pick an enjoyable destination. All you need to bring are your sneakers and conversation! Or you could join a Thanksgiving road race or road walk.
 2. **Play Touch Football.** Or soccer, tag, hide-n-seek, etc. Just get outside with the gang and do something that involves running around and taking in some nice fresh air.
 3. **Boardgames!** Get out those games you have in the closet since last Christmas and haven't played yet. Scrabble, Life, Yahtzee, Cranium, Trivial Pursuit, Trouble, Chutes & Ladders, whatever! Have some silly fun!
 5. **Sing-a-Long.** Karaoke. Get out the instruments, guitars, piano. Dust off that accordion. Bring out the tambourines, spoons, etc. Put on a holiday radio station and sing along. Make up a contest. You can really have fun with this.
 6. **Memory Sharing.** Share stories. You can pick a theme such as:
The greatest day of my life. * The best thing that happened in my life this year. * My favorite memory from childhood. * The funniest thing that ever happened to me. * Have someone scribe the stories or videotape the event.
 10. **I Love My Family because....** Gather round as a family and have each person share what they love about the family.
 11. **Share the Love.** Have the family all in one room and have each person tell why they admire the person next to him/her. And then that person says why they admire the person next to him/her, and so on. "I Admire _____ because..."
 12. **Treasure Hunt.** Create a simple treasure map and "prizes." There can be one prize or multiple prizes, like an egg-hunt. Ideas for prizes: chocolate turkeys (is there such a thing?) or a packet of coins or a gift certificate wrapped up in a box.
 15. **The Craziest Thing** (that I saw or experienced this year). As a family tell stories that can be true or made up. It can be a little bit like "To Tell the Truth." Everyone tells a crazy story that is either true or made up and everyone has to guess if it is true or not. And the story doesn't have to be something that they actually experienced.
 16. **Our Family Tree.** Have everyone imprint a fingerpaint handprint on a big sheet of paper with their name underneath. You can have it framed or take a picture of it to share with everyone.
 17. **Start a Thanksgiving Day Banner.** Starting this year create a banner that can hang in your living room that will have a picture of the whole family from each year. It can become an heirloom for future generations. You could also create a similar item electronically say with a website.
 19. **Family Thanksgiving Journal.** Grab a blank notebook. It doesn't have to be fancy. Write down everyone's thanks for this year. And then next year do the same so that over time you build a treasured family book of thanks as well as a sort of family history.
 20. **Make Me Laugh.** Tell jokes. You can make it into a game to see if you can get someone to laugh. Can be done as individuals, round-robin, or as teams.
- Happy Thanksgiving all! Enjoy!**

<http://www.dumblittleman.com/2008/11/20-fun-things-you-can-do-with-family-on.html>
Originally written for Dumb Little Man by K. Stone in 2007. She is the author of Life Learning Today, a blog about daily life improvements.

FAITH FORMATION—Our Civility Project

I've been a bit out of touch with the church this month due to Mom's health issues. I haven't stopped learning, though! I've been practicing other kinds of civility. It's interesting to watch how different people respond to the stressful environment of a hospital. I met many unfailingly kind and wonderful staff people. I saw some who seemed at the end of their nerves after long days or nights of caring for ill and injured patients. It was a microcosm of the real world, shaken up like a snow globe, a flurry of busyness and stress.

Sometimes in the pressure of such a situation, civility is the last thing on our minds. We want answers, NOW. We have to run these tests, NOW. I want my Mom to feel better, NOW. It's time for meds, NOW. However, I tried to always say thanks to those participating in the care. From the lady who came for the food orders to the cleaning staff to the nursing staff, I hope I made each feel valuable. I am grateful to those who made Mom and me feel like it was their honor to help us too. Treating each other as the wonderful creations we are made a stressful situation more bearable.

My dad always said that the most important thing a person could learn at work was the names of the janitors, the food service workers, and others who often pass by unnoticed. When I was a kid, there was always a special treat for us in the lunchroom at Dad's work because the staff knew Dad and knew us through his stories. I bet he knew their kids, too.

Not taking for granted those who are working for and with us is civility in action.

How did last month's challenge go? What examples of civility or incivility did YOU find along your way? Faith Formation is not just Sunday School classes or a moment of the service. It's the day-to-day wrestling with how to be God's people, doing God's will in the world. I share this book to start conversations. Try on these suggestions for a week or so. One suggestion is below. Another four (of the book's 365) are printed on the Fridays of the calendar. Then discuss your experiences. Was it obvious? Easy? Hard? Ridiculous? Did trying a particular suggestion lead to a different or interesting experience? **Talk, share,**

wrestle, discuss. Discuss them with neighbors in your pew the following Sunday. Start your own list. November is all about gratitude and thanks, so list people and things you want to give thanks for.

Let me know how it goes. —Michelle Dettmann, Faith Formation Chair

Make the World More Civil, Idea #10 Let people who've had a positive impact on your life know what they've done for you. —Even if it's been years since you talked to someone and you feel guilty about having been out of touch, bite the bullet and contact them.



Transgender Day of Remembrance Sunday, November 20

It's an opportunity for our ONA congregation to honor our trans neighbors - here and abroad - who lost their lives in the past year to violence and suicide. Our congregation will help send a clear message to our community: yes, there are churches where trans people are wanted, valued, and safe. We are organizing an **ecumenical** service of remembrance. Please join us at 2 PM on Sunday, November 20.

In Flanders Fields

By Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

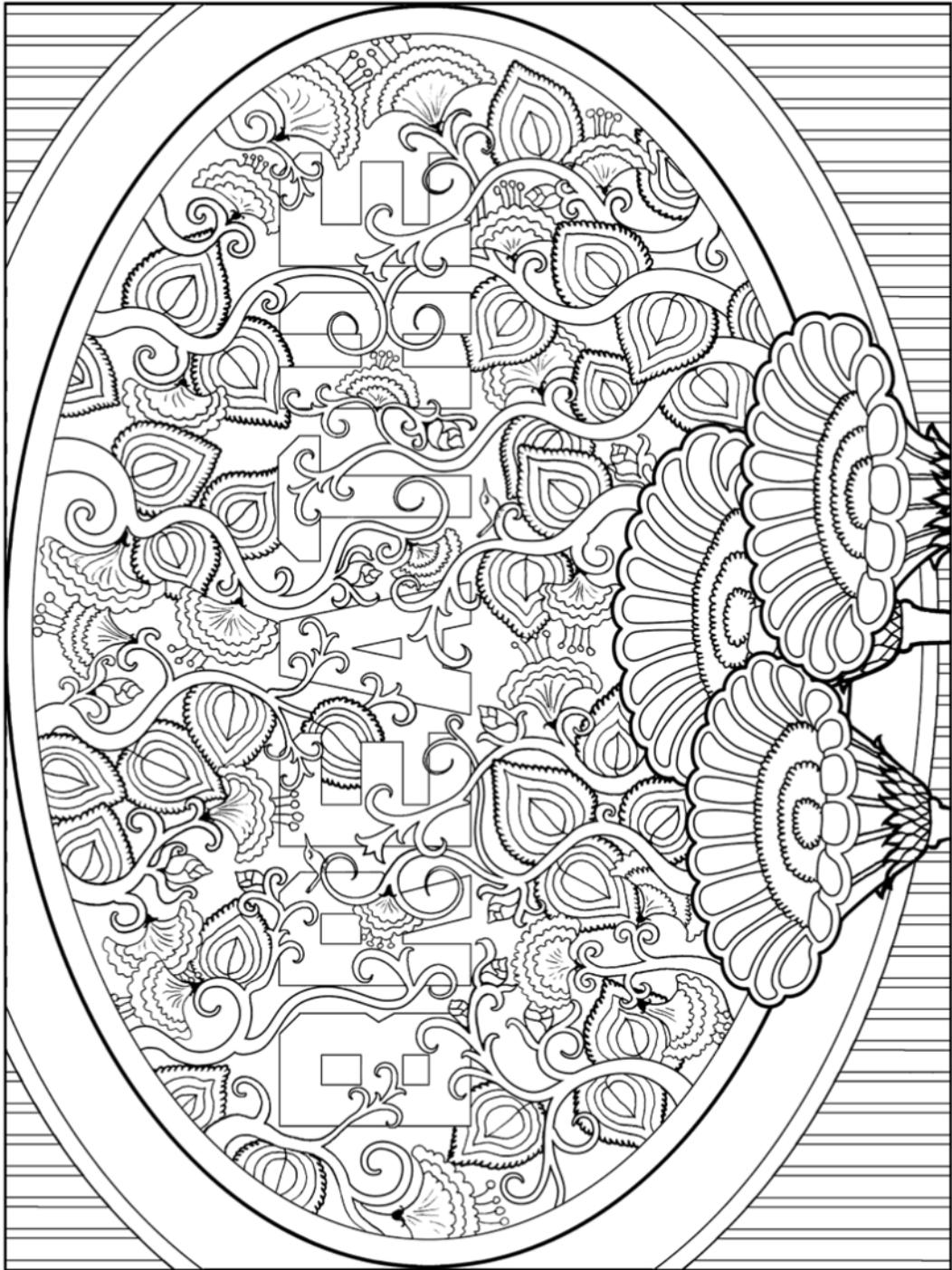
*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks still bravely singing fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the dead: Short days ago,
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved: and now we lie
In Flanders fields!*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe
To you, from failing hands, we throw
The torch: be yours to hold it high
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields*

Composed at the battlefront on May 3, 1915 during the second battle of Ypres, Belgium





www.new-synapse.com

"Breathe" - a coloring page by Heidi Hanson

Calm Down and Color!



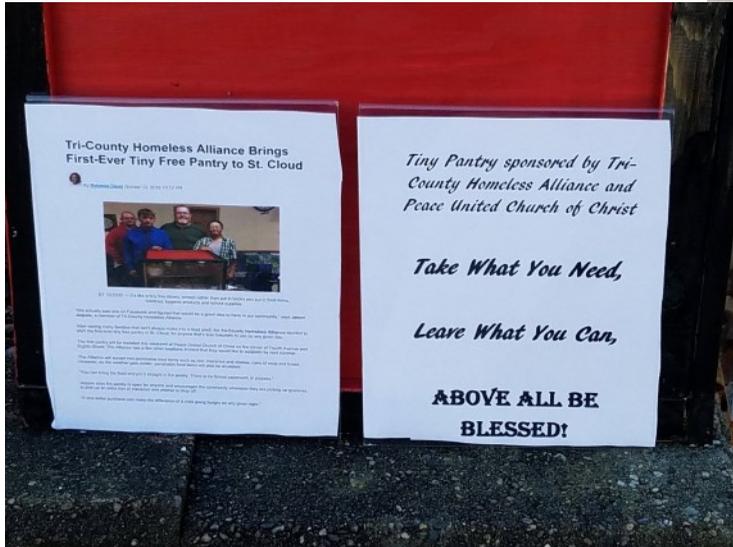
Our Little Free Pantry is up and being used!

Like the Little Free Libraries that have popped up all over, there is a movement to place and stock Little Free Pantries — accessible boxes where people in need can find some of the basics, like toilet paper, socks, peanut butter, crackers, feminine hygiene products, etc.

As the seasons change, we'll keep the box stocked with appropriate items. If you have things to donate, feel free!

Pass the word that we have the first (of many, we hope) Little Free Pantry in the St. Cloud area.

*Take What You Need
Leave What You Can
Above All Be Blessed*



Remember to keep us up-to-date on your address and other contact info.

Did we miss your birthday on the calendar? Let us know!

Thought of the Month

What is something that most people consider a modern-day convenience that you consider a pain in the neck?

From *The Conversation Piece: Creative Questions to Tickle the Mind*

Remember to let us know if you are ill or hospitalized. The hospital can't let us know you are there, due to HIPAA and other privacy concerns. The only way we know to put you on the prayer list and come visit is if you call the office and leave us the information.

Also, let us know if you **wish** to be put on the prayer chain or the prayer list in the bulletin. We want to know how much information you are comfortable sharing.

Thanks so much!



Are you able to visit or send a note to members who are homebound or living in long-term care?

They would love to hear from you.

Marlys Burke

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Leif Larsen

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Paynesville, MN 56362

Dolores Honl

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St. Cloud, MN 56304

Dorothy Matakis

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Gary Naegeli

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12450 Cloud Dr NE, #128
Blaine, MN 55449
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"Let us exercise our freedom of speech to preach a gospel of love. Let us arm ourselves, not with weapons, but with all that our faith has taught us and all that has made this country strong: justice, tolerance, diversity, the audacious belief that we can embody God's highest hopes for our world."

— Rev. Amy Butler

#WeStandWithLove

The Sunshine Report—Joys and Concerns

Dorothy Matakis—get well after hospitalization for back issues

Norma Dettmann—get well after colon cancer surgery

PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Church Council

Moderator: Jon Tufte moderatorpucc@gmail.com
Vice Moderator: Rick Fine
Treasurer: Lisa Hanson
Financial Secretary: Michelle Dettmann
Council Secretary: Val Broste Members at Large: Brad Hanson, Curt Hutchens

Trustees: Brad Hanson, Bruce Michaels, Jim Thares, Linda Vierkant, **OPEN, OPEN**
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Pastor Parish: Michelle Dettmann, Ann Grunke, Bruce Michaels, Liz Thares, Linda Vierkant
Time, Talent & Treas.: Mark Hoff, Curt Hutchens, **OPEN, OPEN, OPEN**, treasurer *ex officio*, financial secretary *ex officio*
ROSE (Reach Out/Special Events): Val Broste, Rick Fine, Ann Grunke, Bev Tallent, **OPEN**
Faith Formation: Michelle Dettmann, Sue Towler, **OPEN, OPEN, OPEN**
Mission: Eleanor Conrad, Brad Hanson, Shirley Hoff, Becky Nieland, Mary Stamps