



The Elim Waterfall

November - December 2021

From the Pastor:

“Thermostat Thanks”

In the Jacobs’ home, colder weather means thermostat wars! I don’t know why, but in the summer, the house can never be too cool for me. Yet, in the winter, it can never be too warm! Unfortunately, that’s what leads to our thermostat wars. While I crank the thermostat up to get warm, the guys complain they’re cooking! So... when I’m not looking, down goes the thermostat! Then, when the temperature drops and they’re not looking, up goes the thermostat! And that battle continues until that glorious day when the furnace finally gives way to the air conditioner.

That’s the function of a thermostat. It serves at our command. If it’s colder than we like, the thermostat says to the furnace, “we need more heat so light ‘er up!” Conversely, if it’s warmer than we’d like, the thermostat says to the furnace, “shut ‘er down, take some time off, we’ll call you when we need you.”

I wonder sometimes if we’re not guilty of having thermostats connected to our furnaces of gratitude. That is, if everything’s “cool” in our life and we’re just chillin’, our thermostat sends the message, “light it up. Let the flames of our gratitude rise up to warm God’s heart. Conversely, if we’re feeling some heat because our circumstances are difficult, then our thermostat might say, “shut ‘er down. Take some time off. Not feeling the need for gratitude right this minute. If things change, however, we’ll crank it up again.”

I call that “thermostat thanks” and it’s not a good way to good way to go through life. A much better approach is the one Paul talks about in his letter to the Philippians, chapter 4, verses 11b-13. He writes, *“I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”*

Ahhhh! The secret of contentment. It’s not based on circumstances at all. It’s based on a relationship. Think about the importance of thermostat placement. If you’re installing a thermostat in your house, where are you going to put it? On an inside wall, right? That’s because temperatures fluctuate on an outside wall and that can adversely affect the demand for heat. On the other hand, the temperature

on an inside wall is much more consistent thus providing much better results. So why should locating our gratitude thermostat be any different? Paul has learned the secret of contentment because Paul's gratitude thermostat is in the right location. It's not on the outside reading the temperature of our circumstances. It's on the inside reading the temperature of our salvation and our relationship with Christ. That's what Paul is saying when he writes in verse 13, *"I can do this because of Christ who gives me strength."* It's that relationship that keeps us Paul and all of us content and grateful no matter what our circumstances are.

Of course, that doesn't mean we shouldn't care about others who are facing difficult circumstances! In fact, that's another beautiful advantage of having our gratitude thermostat on the inside wall of our heart. It calls us to care. Which is why we're making November a month for giving. The holidays can be tough on families, but with our help, we can ease their burden. On Sunday, November 8, my message is going to be a call to compassion, highlighting the importance of sharing what we have with those who have not. Then, throughout the month of November, we are asking you to donate both food items and financial support for the work of the Rochelle Food Bank. Food items should be limited to canned goods and non-perishables. Financial gifts can be placed in the offering box designated for that purpose. Praise God for your thermostats...the one working in your house and the one working in your heart! May God bless you for being a blessing to others! Happy Holidays!

NEWS About MEMBERS



Joyce Bennett passed away on Sunday, September 26, 2021. She leaves behind daughters; Sue (James) Calveard; Patty (Jason) Crane, and Sandy (Ryan) Wild as well four beloved grandchildren. The funeral service was on October 5. A memorial fund for Joyce was established to the Michael J. Fox foundation for Parkinson's Disease, Grand Central Station, P.O. Box 4777, New York, NY 10163-4777.

There will be an **OPEN HOUSE** celebrating the retirement of Warren Ippen on Sunday, November 14 from 3 – 5 p.m. at the Double-O Saloon (5555 N. Clark St, Monroe Center). Food will be provided. Please RSVP by November 6 to ippenwarren@gmail.com or call/text 815-218-8303.

Worship **SCHEDULE**

**November 7, “Horn of Plenty or Hoard the Plenty?”
2 Kings 7:3-11**

**November 14, “A Shared Victory”
1 Samuel 30:1-24**

**November 21 (Thanksgiving Sunday), “What a Bunch of Turkeys!”
Luke 17:11-19**

**November 28 (Advent 1), “Our Christmas Guest List: Mary”
Luke 1:39-45**

**December 5 (Advent 2), “Our Christmas Guest List: Joseph”
Matthew 1:18-25**

**December 12 (Advent 3), “Our Christmas Guest List: Shepherds”
Luke 2:8-20**

December 19 (Advent 4), “Our Christmas Guest List: Herod”

**December 24 (Christmas Eve), “Our Christmas Guest List:
The Innkeeper”
Luke 2:1-7**

**December 26, “Our Christmas Guest List: The Magi”
Matthew 2:1-12**

✧ **CHURCH NEWS** ✧

During the month of November, we will be collecting food items and taking monetary donations for the Rochelle Christian Food Pantry.

The food pantry has noted that they could especially use ketchup, cans of kidney beans and diced tomatoes, and personal care products. And as a reminder, for every \$1.00 that is given to them, they are able to purchase \$8.00 of food through the Northern Illinois Food Bank.

Look for a marked donation box.

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Sunday, November 21 is going to be our
THANKSGIVING SUNDAY!!

After our service of praise and gratitude, we invite
EVERYONE to join us in the fellowship hall for a
THANKSGIVING POTLUCK.

It will be held immediately after church, and everyone is
asked to bring a dish to share. Meat casseroles,
rolls and drinks will be provided.

Speak to Cyndy Hayenga if you have any questions.



Then on Saturday, November 27 at 6 p.m. we will be
DECORATING THE CHURCH for **CHRISTMAS.**
Many hands will make the job easier and quicker and it's
a great way to get in the holiday spirit.
A light supper of BBQ sandwiches will be served.
If you can, bring a finger food (like chips, veggies,
brownies/cookies, etc.) for all to enjoy.

The deadline for **END OF YEAR REPORTS** from the Church Committees
and Groups will be Thursday, December 2. Please turn in your
information to the church office or email to fhayenga@aol.com by this
date. Report packets should be available on Sunday, December 5.

The **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** will be held on
Sunday, December 12 following the worship service. We will go
through committee reports and approve new budgets for 2022.
We will also vote for the approval of Julie Mann to the office of Elder and
Sue Tasso to the office of Deacon for three-year terms (2022-2024).



Our **CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**
will be on Friday, December 24 at 4 p.m.

Join us as we sing carols and hear the Christmas story.
Pastor Marv will be offering a "first person" message from the
perspective of the Innkeeper. We hope you invite your family and friends
to celebrate the birthday of our Savior. Let Pastor Marv know if you
would be willing to be a reader that night. (Five are needed).

dates to Remember

November

- 2 – Classis
- 7 – DAYLIGHT SAVING ENDS (turn clocks back 1 hour)
- 11 – VETERANS DAY
- 16 – Consistory at 6:30 p.m.
- 21 – Thanksgiving Worship Service & POTLUCK at 10 a.m.
- 25 – THANKSGIVING
- 27 – Christmas Decorating of Church at 6 p.m.



December

- 2 – End of Year Committee Reports DUE To CHURCH OFFICE
- 12 – ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING (follows worship service)
- 22 – NEWSLETTER DEADLINE for January/February issue
- 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 4 p.m.
- 25 – CHRISTMAS
- 31 – NEW YEAR'S EVE



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES (A)

November

- 2 – David Alderks
- 3 – Norma Swanson
- 10 – Harold Langeland
- 19 – Luke Calbeck
- 20 – Gary Nefstead
- 22 – Deb Maas
Pastor Gerry Dykstra
Denny & Sharon Alderks (A)
- 24 – Micah Somers

December

- 7 – Marilyn Remmers
- 9 – Mairin Meyers
- 13 – Jamie Alderks
- 14 – Tricia Mueller
- 17 – Audrey Brink
- 18 – Pastor Cary & Betsy Winn (A)
- 19 – Pastor Cary Winn
- 28 – Bob & Jan Maas (A)
- 31 – John Swanson