



Merry Christmas CommUNITY Church family!

Count your blessings name them one by one! Wow, has that been a song that has resonated in our hearts in 2020! God has truly brought us through this difficult year with so many blessings to be thankful for and taught us, as a couple, so many lessons. We wanted to share with our church family the things that we are thankful for as we reflect on 2020!

First and foremost – A loving God that is there for us during the happy times as well as the most difficult and trying times. This year has been one of the most difficult we have ever faced with health concerns and personal struggles that we never envisioned having to endure. But our Lord has been there every step of the way, using people to help us through.

Second – The family the Lord has blessed us with. We are so grateful for a family that loves us and a Lord that leads and guides us as we maneuver in the unknown waters that come with adult children. We thankfully have not been alone in this endeavor as parents, for the Lord has blessed us with a strong Christian role model in mom (Martha Armstrong), who helps us and guides us as newly found empty nesters.

Third- We are so grateful for a loving church family; one that loves us with our faults and supports us physically and spiritually. The cards and calls throughout Tom's medical sabbatical were both touching and appreciated. CommUNITY Church is truly the most loving group of people that we have ever had the privilege of knowing!!

Fourth – We are thankful for the many lessons we have learned in 2020! We have been challenged like never before about what we believe as Christ followers and what the Bible teaches us as God's children. We have learned to be more patient than we ever thought possible. We have learned what is truly important as we have re-examined life through the COVID-19 pandemic. Life is short and unpredictable!

So church family, we encourage each of you during this Christmas season to reach out and give the most valuable gift in person or virtually; the gift of the gospel to those you love, to your neighbors, and to those you meet! Do not compromise your convictions as the culture in our country changes and turns away from our Lord. The Bible is still the standard to which we are expected to live. May all of us as a church family put Christ first and love those the Lord has put in our paths.

With that being said, we would like to start new small groups in our church this year that minister to people where they are. The first one the Lord has laid on our hearts as we continue to traverse through this pandemic is a virtual Bible study for anyone who has an immediate family member that struggles with gender identity. With our culture becoming more and more confused about gender identity, we feel it important to offer support and love through a biblical perspective. We will pray about future small groups, but will begin this new year, if there is enough interest, with a Bible study focusing on loving our family members as Christ loves us. Please reach out to us if you feel this is a small group in which you would like to participate.

Merry Christmas CommUNITY Church! May the Lord bless us collectively and individually as we serve Him in 2021!

Love,

Pastor Tom and Laurie

