

The City Centre Scroll Thanksgiving 2020

City Centre Church
The Scroll



From Pastor Gabriel's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

A harvest. What makes it so special? Why is it celebrated and revered the world over and throughout all human history? There are the obvious reasons. A harvest meant and still means that there is something to eat. Also, that the labour of those working the fields were not in vain. We can take a breath. We can rest. But let us go deeper....

A harvest embraced spiritually is not a celebration of our efforts and hard work, virtuous as that might have been. If one thinks of the tilling, sowing, planting and reaping involved in harvesting, one must acknowledge that there is a whole lot more needed to produce a harvest than we can offer. The precipitation, the temperatures outside, the seasonal consistency, lack of pests and the abundance of good organisms in the soil...these are all outside factors we have little to no control over. As a people of faith we believe that the bulk of this is made up and provided by a loving, relational being called God.

A harvest seen in this way then is not only more that we could produce through our efforts: it is more than we deserve. A harvest, and us sharing in it, is a gift of grace.

This all does not just apply to the food on our tables but to so many other aspects of our lives. We tend to get all wrapped up in our part and end up overlooking the lion's share of grace in the good results we strive for and enjoy.

Thanksgiving is a time to pause and acknowledge that.

We are droplets,

God is a Fountain

We are spots:

God is a Leopard

We are notes;

God is a Symphony

What is a man that you are mindful of him;

The son of man that you care for him?

Happy Thanksgiving!

In Christ, Gabriel J. Snyman

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City Centre Church (www.citycentrechurch.org)

13062—104th Avenue, Surrey, B.C., tel: 604-581-4833 email: connect@citycentrechurch.org

PRAYER AND PRAISE

Praise God For...

- Regular online Zoom Church Services, every Sunday <https://zoom.us/j/435172943> and Facebook Live services.
- Frontline workers in hospitals, care homes, supermarkets, and other essential services.
- Increased scientific wisdom in knowing how to deal with Covid19.
- Soap, water and hand sanitizer to keep us all safe.
- All the hands helping with sandwich making and packing bags. After six months its still getting done.
- New folks attending our Facebook Live and Zoom services. Welcome! We look forward to seeing you when we are able.
- The baptism of Reagan Jesse Alexander Nelson. Gabriel's first baptism in Canada.

Prayer For...

- Homes, stability, and relief from addiction for those living around the church that are homeless.
- For peace for those who are experiencing anxiety and uncertainty.
- Our seniors in care facilities.
- That God will use this hard situation to draw people to Himself.
- People to be reached through our Friday night "Celebration Recovery" services.
- More Board of Manager members
- Containment of Covid19 around the world and an effective and safe vaccine to be made and distributed very soon.

Prayer for acceptance in uncertain times.

Father, we are challenged these days as we try to make sense of a tumbling world; Covid has ushered in uncertainty, fear, financial hardships and an end to daily life as we knew it. We don't like change, disruption or new directions. It's not comfortable and like Jacob, we wrestle with You for control of this life— You are. Teach us how to enter Your rest, to put our trust and confidence in You. Your word reminds us that all things work together for good— open our eyes to see Your goodness in the changes we are experiencing. Help us to put our trust and confidence in You.

In Jesus name, Amen.

*thanks to Linda Littlejohn



Should a Christian Celebrate Halloween?

Halloween or “All Hallow’s eve” is a feast that was celebrated as “All Saints Day” on November 1. It was a festival to celebrate all the saints who died in and for their faith. We have evidence of this from as early as the fourth century. There was a pagan group, known as the druids, that had a festival at the end of the harvest that involved sacrifices to appease their ‘god of death and evil spirits’ known as Samhain. They somehow hijacked All Saints Day.

To some the legacy of that is that Halloween devolved into an empty obsession with blood, gore and death. There are Christians that feel they want to distance themselves from this and choose not to partake in Halloween at all. I respect this stance but do not share it. I think Halloween gives Christians an opportunity to reflect and celebrate some of the content of our faith as well as an opportunity to engage with the culture (especially in North America.).

Here is why I celebrate Halloween:

1. The origin of Halloween is not pagan and even if it were the argument of origins doesn't convince me to disengage. On the contrary...Halloween's roots lies in All Saints Day, not in the feast of Samhain. But even if this feast originated in something pagan, it wouldn't have convinced me to disengage. Both Christmas and Easter started out as pagan feasts. Christians utilized the energy and excitement around it to celebrate and point to Jesus. Over time what started out as pagan feasts are now more commonly viewed as Christian feasts.

Rather than attacking Santa, I explain to my children why Jesus is so much more special than Santa and any gift he could bring. Rather than trying to make a nice stew out of the Easter bunny, I make every hollow chocolate Easter bunny proclaim the wonderful news of Jesus' resurrection. The relationship between Christ and culture has always been a tricky one. When it comes to feasts, I choose a “Christ transforming culture” over and above a “Christ against culture” approach. Our job is not to critique culture and insulate ourselves from it. Our job is to redemptively transform culture by making it's symbols point to Christ.

2. It is an opportunity to honour the legacy of people that have sacrificed for their faith.

In our culture of comfort and convenience, it is a good thing to remind ourselves that the journey of faith could lead us on a difficult road that involves sacrifice and suffering. Looking back to those who have come before us in faith shows us that sacrifice and suffering isn't the exception in Christian life, but the rule. We should gladly recognize that our walk of faith asks of us much less suffering today.

[Continued on page 7](#)

HALLOWEEN

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

-Colossians, 2:6-7

As I Have Aged

As I've aged, I've become kinder to myself, and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend.

I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon; before they understood the great freedom that comes with aging.

Whose business is it, if I choose to read, or play, or sit on the computer until 4am or sleep until noon? I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the 50's, 60's and 70's, and if I at the same time, wish to weep over a lost love, I will.

I will walk the beach in a swim suit that is stretched over a bulging body, and will dive into the waves with abandon, if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the jet set. They too will get old.

I know I am sometimes forgetful. But there again, some of life is just as well forgotten. And, I eventually remember the important things.

Sure, over the years, my heart has been broken. How can your heart not be broken when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when somebody's beloved pet passes on? But broken hearts are what gives us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being imperfect.

I am so blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turning gray, and to have my youthful laughs be forever etched into deep grooves on my face.

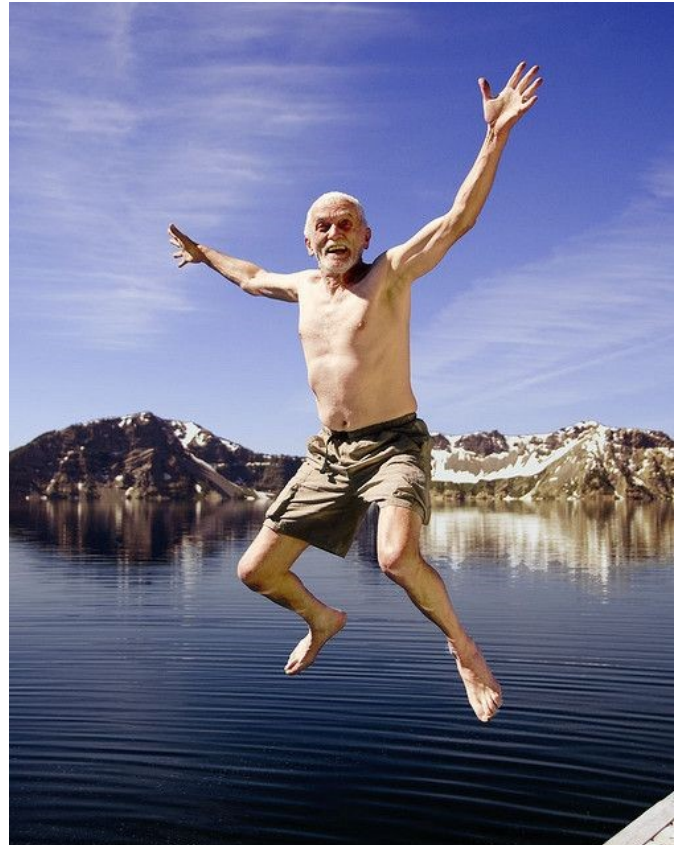
So many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver.

As you get older, it is easier to be positive. You are less about what other people think. I don't question myself anymore. I've even earned the right to be wrong.

So, to answer your question, I like being old. It has set me free like the person I have become. I am not going to live forever, but while I am still here I will not waste time lamenting what could have been or worrying about what will be.

Signed,

A Senior in My Senior Years.



Announcements and Affirmations

- * If you have a key fob and alarm access to church please notify Jane Kyle at janeKyle@telus.net as the Board of Managers is updating their security access inventory list and policies. As of November 25th, all users of the alarm will require a unique code so if you do not have one you will need to arrange to set one up.
- * As we are talking of Board of Managers, here is an announcement from John Santic, our new Board of Managers chair;
- * “The Board of Managers invite you to join us for a COVID safe fall clean up day on Saturday October 17. We will have groups working outside and safely inside and a bagged lunch will be provided. We will meet from 9am to 1:30 and are looking for volunteers to participate in the cleaning if you are able, or to help with the bagged lunches. Bring your own gloves and tools. Please contact John Santic at 604-365-4429 to sign up!”
- * And now, an introduction to Dave Daoust’s group of musician friends who have been playing and/or singing with us intermittently. When Dave is away, we are graced by Dianna Wallis who plays guitar and sings in her rich alto voice. Twice a month or so we see Anthony (Tony) Craddock in the background playing bass guitar. And lastly, every couple of weeks we see and hear Sonia Lagarle treating us with her piano skills. Sonia has a wonderful voice and leads us in some of the praise songs. Welcome to you all: we are happy you have shared your talents with us!
- * Operation Christmas Child is a go this year. For further information on any changes this year please see samaritanspurse.ca. If physically purchasing the items is difficult for you, Sandy Gaudette can take \$20 and make it into a shoebox! This is a great activity and learning experience to do with your children or grandchildren. Alternatively you can order your shoebox online at occ@samaritan.ca Don’t forget to enclose \$10 minimum with each box and pray for it as it goes to a needy child. They will be due November 15.
- * We’ve had some really God-inspired moments and connections while doing the sandwiches as we have served over 20 000 bagged lunches since Covid began. One story involves a connection with Fleetwood’s Christian Reformed Church here in Surrey. First of all, the youth came in for two mornings in early August to help out, which was very fortuitous as a load of boxes came in from an airline that needed to be deconstructed. At the same time, half of the youth were at their own church making muffins for us from our freezer full of frozen bananas. A few weeks later, we got another load of bananas that could not all be used in time and connected with the youth leader again to ask if some seniors or other folk would be interested in more baking. And the answer was yes! And so for the last few weeks, their church has been delivering banana muffins for the breakfasts in our bagged lunches. As well they have generously donated a small freezer for our use.



“From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.” -Psalm 113: 3.

COOK'S CORNER

Cook that Pumpkin!

We have to start with a pumpkin recipe because its approaching that time of year for the white pumpkins, the sweetie pies (great for baking),etc. (See the pumpkin page on page 9.)

Brussel Sprouts, Pumpkin and Apple Hash.

2 slices bacon
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 shallot (or onion)
2 cups chopped pumpkin (or butternut squash)
One pound brussel sprouts. Ends chopped and sprouts sliced
Salt and pepper
2 cups chpd apples
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1 tbsp chpd sage
1 1/2 tbsp balsamic blend seasoned rice vinegar (or sweetened white vinegar with a bit of balsamic)

Preheat large frypan. Cook bacon until crispy, leaving fat in pan.

Add olive oil and cook shallots for 1 min. Add sprouts & pumpkin, season with s/p. Stir and cook 10-15 min. until softened and brown on bottom. Toss and cook for 3 min. Or could roast in hot oven.

Turn off heat and add vinegar and toss to mix. Crumble bacon on top and enjoy!



Keeping on the pumpkin theme...try these Healthy Marbled Chocolate Pumpkin Muffins.

1 cup pumpkin puree
1/2 cup maple syrup or brown sugar
2 large eggs
1/4 cup milk
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 1/2 c. whole wheat flour or white
1 tsp bkg soda
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg
1/2 tsp ground ginger
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 cup oil
1/4 c. cocoa pwd

1/2 c. choc. chips, divided . Oven set to 350. line muffin tins or spray. Mix together first five ingredients. In another bowl, whisk together dry ingredients. Add dry ingredients. to wet and mix only until combined. Stir in oil. Divide batter in 1/2; adding 1/2 of batter to a separate medium bowl. Stir in cocoa pwd and 1/4 c. chips into one of batters. First spoon a little less than 1 tbsp pumpkin into each muffin liner and then 1 tbsp chocolate batter on top. Repeat until all of your muffin batter is gone.

Swirl batters together with a knife about 3-4 times only. Gently shake muffin pan back and forth to even out batter. Top batter with remaining chips. Bake for 20-25 min. Cool in pan for 10 min. then to wire rack.

For Halloween, we dressed up as almonds. Everyone could tell we were nuts.

Continued from [page 3](#). “Should a Christian Celebrate Halloween?”

3. *It is an opportunity to laugh at death and protest injustice.*

Because of Jesus’s victory over it, death does not have the sting of finality to us. Jesus killed death. Death is still experienced as a great loss and a journey into the unknown, but ultimately it is not something to be afraid of. That is why we can face all the blood and gore once a year with a sense of lightness and hope. In some traditions, children used to dress up in ways that depicted the struggles their parents faced for justice, like factory workers treated badly, or poor and destitute people. It was a way to say that these injustices don’t belong in the world but also that they did not manage to crush the hope of those affected by it. This year I plan to dress up as the Joker as a prophetic protest and urging to attend to the injustice of inequality in our world.

4. *It is an opportunity to thank God for the harvest*

Many of us city dwellers have lost a connection with the soil that feed us. When I first started dating my wife, who was a farmer’s daughter, I was struck by how harvests were to a very large extent dependent on conditions humans have no control over. A farmer in South Africa once exclaimed to me, “You cannot farm without faith.” I don’t think we should ever wane in our gratitude for the simple and essential things in our life like the food on our table. The pumpkins might have a niche way bigger than posing as ghosts after all. God has created a wonderful integrity and consistency in nature that enables us to produce food, to tend and to keep creation as God’s sub-creators.

Happy All Hallows Eve!

Trick or treat?

Gabriel J. Snyman,

October 1, 2020.

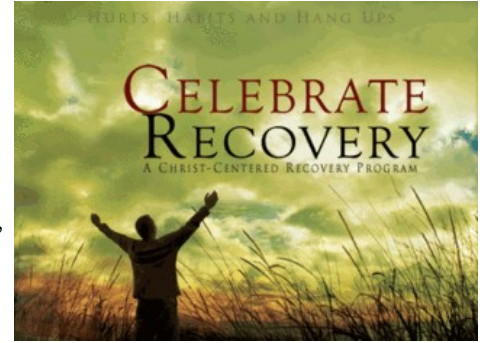


If all your prayers were answered would it change the world, or just your world?

Celebrate Recovery

Celebrate Recovery is a Christian based 12 step program using both the twelve steps of AA and the biblical foundations from which these steps are inspired. Most of them are drawn from the beatitudes in Matthew. Its purpose is to help people draw closer to Christ and Christian living by breaking the bonds of any “hurt, habit or hangup” that gets in the way of our relationship with Christ and negatively affects our lives. This can be drugs or alcohol addiction; but just as easily can be due to grief recovery, pornography addictions, codependency, depression, anger issues or a myriad of issues that ultimately separate us from a deep relationship with Christ and our best living. It takes one year to go through all the steps of recovery but people come into the program at any point and can stay over many years. There is always a time of worship, prayer and teaching (or a personal testimony of recovery). Fellowship usually follows, but not at this time.

-thanks to Susan Daoust



DID YOU KNOW?

- That you are needed in the spring to help out with gardening in our community garden? See John Santic.
- The Board of Managers is in real need of another members? The meetings are only once a month. Consider joining!
- That the Celebration Recovery group now meets at our church every Friday at 7pm. See article above for further details.
- That we are following fairly stringent rules at church due to Covid19. Your name and details (if you are new) are record-



- ed, masks are worn and surfaces sprayed down. And we limit the number to 40. If more than forty come, the elders will watch the service downstairs on their devices.
- That all services are permanently in print and video on the church’s facebook site? Pass the word on to others, show friends, and/or look up the sermon again.
- Unfortunately, Sisters Closet

is cancelled this year due to Covid restrictions.

- That we have now made over 20 000 sandwiches and bagged lunches since mid March? Donations come from all over including Surry Urban Missions, personal donations, grants and even a partnership with another church. See page 5 to read about this partnership!
- A hearty welcome to the two new South African families who have been attending our services. Welcome to Canada!

“...and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”. Phil.4:7

The Perfect Pumpkin

Welcome to the large family of pumpkins, the *cucurbita*. This relatively unknown word actually encompasses the family of pumpkins, squashes and some gourds. Gourds are the sometimes edible and ornamental fruits of the autumnal season. There are far more varieties of plain orange pumpkins than you would think. There are small, very large, blue to grey coloured, white, knobbly/warty varieties and sweet sugar pie pumpkins that are recommended for pies and baking.

The Jarrahdale pumpkin is very distinctive due to its dusty grey to slight greenish blue colouring. It is known to be very flavourful, stringless and striking in its unusual hues.

As seen on many Thanksgiving tables, the jack-be-little pumpkins are edible and palm sized. As they ripen they become more orange and are the perfect cute size for decorating a living space in the fall.

There are other distinctive pumpkins such as the fairytale pumpkin. Its also known as musquee de Provence. They have unique heavy lobed pastel coloured look and tend to be popular. Cooks enjoy the sweet and creamy flavouring of this one.

A uniquely named pumpkin, the Long Island Cheese is so named for its pale coloring, resembling cheese. It's a medium sized pumpkin weighing in around ten pounds. It has light ribbing and is sweet in flavor. Dating back to the 19th century, this is a classic pumpkin.

If you've ever seen a pale pumpkin with barnacle like bumps on it, you've set your eyes on galeux d'Eysines. This is a french heirloom variety that has peach coloured skin. The knobby protrusions on this variety are caused by a build up of sugar underneath the skin.

Cotton candy is the white pumpkin that is sometimes seen in pumpkin patches or large outdoor farm markets. It's a pumpkin that can grow quite large with a sturdy handle. The flesh is surprisingly white underneath the shockingly white shells. Average weight of these are 5-12 pounds.

Chinas grows the most pumpkins around the globe, then India, Russia, Ukraine and the US.



Jesus was always busy but never in a hurry.

THE LAST PAGE

The wife of an old preacher in Kansas was afraid to fly, but finally summoned the courage to take a flight to Florida to visit her daughter. At the airport she handed her husband a letter. On the envelope she had written, "Open only in case of a crash."

When he returned home, the old preacher couldn't resist the temptation and opened the letter. The letter said: "If there is a crash, look under our bed. You'll find a box. Open the box."

He looked under the bed, opened the box, and found three eggs and a large stack of \$100 bills.

He was mystified. When his wife returned intact from Florida, the old preacher confessed that curiosity had gotten the best of him and he had opened both the envelope and the box. "But honey, I don't understand," he said. "Why the three eggs and the \$100 bills?"

"Well, honey," she replied. "When you first started preaching, every time you laid an egg and preached a poor sermon, I'd put an egg in the box."

"All these years I've preached and I got only three eggs!" he said. "That's not too bad. But I will don't understand the stack of \$100 bills."

"When you get a dozen, you gotta sell," she said.

-via Rev. Warren Keating

First Presbyterian Church Derby, K.S.

-taken from Holy Humor by Cal and Rose Samra

And...finally a word about pumpkins, lights and smiles.....

"You can cut open a pumpkin and put a candle in it to shed some light, and people will smile. But heaven forbid if they will smile at a stranger. Isn't it time for more people to open up, be more friendly to strangers, and be a light to the world? Wouldn't it be nice to see pumpkin-sized smiles on human beings?" -Craig E. Galik, Dequesne, PA, "Our Sunday Visitor."



Mirth is like a flash of lightning that breaks through a gloom of clouds and glitters for the moment. Cheerfulness keeps up a daylight in the mind, filling it with steady and perpetual serenity."

-Samuel Johnson, taken from Holy Humor by Cal and Rose Samra