

THE BURR RIDGE MESSENGER

The monthly publication of Burr Ridge Community Church



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Gospel Gab

with PASTOR ALICIA



HOW TO GIVE THANKS IN A SCREWED-UP WORLD

"LOSS AND LOVE WILL ALWAYS BELONG TO EACH OTHER...SORROW HAS ALWAYS BEEN JOY'S QUIET TWIN."

-- MARGARET RENKL

"How to Give Thanks in a Screwed-Up World" was the title of a New York Times article written last year and it felt like a title that still resonated now. November is typically a month when we focus on gratitude and giving thanks, yet, if you're like me, we look around at the world and wonder how do we give thanks while wars rage, gunman open fire in public spaces, and the gap between rich and poor continues to grow.

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Amazingly, the Psalmist asks similar questions in Psalm 13. He looks around his world and asks "Have you forgotten about me, God? How long will I see only sorrow and evil around me?" Maybe you have asked these questions too, I know I have.

- 1 *How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?*
- 2 *How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?*
- 3 *Look on me and answer, Lord my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,*
- 4 *and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.*
- 5 *But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.*
- 6 *I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me.*

But the Psalmist also knew how to give thanks in a screwed-up world and he know it was the key to cultivating hope in difficult times. Psalm 13 ends with a declaration of trust and a statement of gratitude. Margaret Renkl, the author of the NYT article mentioned above, tells a story about how her father, no matter the circumstance, would always answer the question "How are you?" with "Fantastic!" Even on his death bed, this was his answer. As she looks around the world despairing, Ms. Renkl declares "I will let my whole heart fill up with gratitude for what is still breathtakingly beautiful about this weary, ragged world." Why? While she acknowledges there are many very bad things happening in the world outside of her control, Ms. Renkl states:

But I can pull out my mother's recipe box and make a Thanksgiving feast. I can remember the loved ones who once shared this table and fill their seats with people whose loved ones are distant or otherwise missing. And I can be grateful for every single fantastic moment we have together.

While gratitude doesn't and shouldn't minimize pain and suffering, it can help us to cultivate hope in the midst of a screwed-up world. I think the Psalmist knew this and it's why so many psalms of lament end in thanksgiving. Not because giving thanks makes everything that is messed up instantly better, but because, as Melody Beattie says, "gratitude unlocks the fullness of life" and reminds us that even in the midst of difficulty and trouble, there is always something to be grateful for – a God who loves us and the people around our Thanksgiving tables.

In Gratitude,
Pastor Alicia

To read the article referenced above, go to: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/21/opinion/thanksgiving-gratitude-turmoil.html>



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Ann & Tom Fong

How long have you been a part of the BRCC family? 37+ years

What initially drew you to Burr Ridge Community Church, and what keeps you coming back?

Ann: We were looking for a church to accommodate our growing family. Having kids, it was important they have a Christian foundation that connects them to faith, trust, and understanding of God. We already came from a Catholic background. Our home base was the St. Therese Catholic Mission in Chicago, Chinatown. Weekly travels to the city were becoming harder so we searched and attending the local Catholic churches. However, we couldn't make a connection. We think we never felt we belonged, not even at St. Therese. We grew up doing everything Catholic, but it felt forced. We were tired of the Catholic rituals, which were ridged and offered no freedom of worship. The most noticeable effect was feeling disconnected from everyday life, and no one took an interest in us as parishioners. Tom noticed BRCC. We decided to give the church on the corner a try, because it said All Are Welcome! The rest is history.

Tom: We love the families of the BRCC church. People are very hospitable. Ever since the first day our family walked through the church doors, we felt the presence of warmth and inclusiveness. We were able to worship God the way we felt comfortable and no judgement. Members took the time to introduce the many activities of the church and engaged our family. We appreciate the multi generation of families who took us under their wings. Because we felt at home and connected we became family!

Are you involved with any committees, events, or other volunteer opportunities at BRCC?

Ann: Throughout the decades at BRCC, I have been on a couple of boards and have adopted various leadership roles. I've chaired the same boards as well. I started on the Board of Education as a member. Took leadership with Susann Pedersen on the various youth outings and activities, as well as activities to connect families; eventually chairing the department. I was part of the Women's group and participated in their many fundraising events. In the course of time, I chaired them. I was also secretary to the church council for many years. Now I am co-chair on the Board of Stewart. Having this position carries great responsibilities fundraising for the church. I hope I am improving on every event. Mostly, I am proud and appreciative of all the committee members and church members who support the various events and causes; I love that they know I am doing my best.

Tom: Our family has always been heavily invested in all the BRCC events, from Chili Fest to the Spring Fair, to Fall Fest, to the Holiday Cookie sale encouraging food, fun, and family. We are always front and center to help anyway we can. I have been a committee member in the Board of Trustees for about 10 years. I've been an usher since the beginning of our BRCC journey. I participate as one of the Worship Assistant team. The Fong family also performs the 3rd Sunday coffee minutes. We love to eat!

Do you have a favorite memory from your time at BRCC?

Ann: Wow! There are so many favorite events. I can't choose. I miss having family bowling night. Those times were fun watching all the kids and adults strike up fun and unleash conversations into the night, cause that's how we roll! Pizzas & sides were also a tantalizing welcome!

Tom: The beauty of the Christmas tree and the symbolism of the Nativity creche. We usually capture the warmth of the season with our annual photo in front of the decorated tree.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Favorite BRCC event? Ann: The most beautiful event was BRCC's 2022 Jazz concert. The event provided the community with some beautiful holiday music and decorations. The talented Mark Malak orchestrated a team to decorate the church for Christmas and really brought out the beauty of the holiday. This is pure joy! Also, my daughter's wedding... The ceremony and reception was held at BRCC in November 2022. It was themed Alice in Wonderland. I loved it because Nothing like this ever happens in a church. The bride and groom were a sight to behold and so in love. The decorations were colorful, and entertaining. The all you can eat food was amazing. Pastor Alicia transformed herself into The Queen of Heart! Our grand kids did an enormous job with their lines all while in whimsical and personalized costumes. Our guests also dressed the part and had a ball. It was an amazing journey!

Tom: Having worked 90% of all the church events, it's rare I get to enjoy any one favorite. I've always loved the comradery between our members during the start and through the conclusion of all our projects. It is an amazing journey with all the extraordinary efforts everyone put into all our events.

Do you have a favorite bible verse/story?

Ann: 1st Corinthian 13: Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.

Tom: The Affirmation of Faith. Says it all!

Favorite song?

Ann: Wind Beneath My Wings

Tom: Hallelujah!

Favorite dessert?

Ann: Who doesn't love cake!?!

Tom: Love them all! But must have coffee...

Fun fact about you?

Ann: I was born in Guangzhou, China. I have no birth certificate.

Tom: Love cruising; from motorcycles to ocean liners.



BRCC UPDATES AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

November Sunday Volunteers

Week	Greeter/Opener	Usher	Worship Assistant	Counter	Coffee Minute
11/5	1. Thom Parrott-Sheffer 2. TBD	1. Susann Pedersen 2. TBD 3. TBD 4. TBD	Mary Troyer	TBD	Vicky Panos
11/12	1. Joan Parrott-Sheffer 2. TBD	1. Joan Parrott-Sheffer 2. TBD 3. TBD 4. TBD	Thom Parrott-Sheffer	Tom Fong	Kathy Alvisu
11/19	1. Carole Beck 2. Russ Beck	1. TBD 2. TBD 3. TBD 4. TBD	Tom Fong	TBD	Tom & Ann Fong
11/26	1. Susann Pedersen 2. TBD	1. TBD 2. TBD 3. TBD 4. TBD	BRCC Kids	TBD	Debbie Sanford

MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

Month of October 2023

Income \$ 36,813.99

Expenses 11,872.97

Over \$24,941.02

Year-to-Date as of 10/31/2023

Income \$ 184,024.17

Expenses 129,434.91

Over \$ 54,589.26

The high income numbers reflect continued giving to our "Electrical Giving Challenge". We continue to raise funds to replace our electrical service panel that has been damaged by water (approximately \$50,000). IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO GIVE! Also, our "Pumpkin Patch" opened on October 1st, and pumpkin sales are also reflected in the income figures (we will return 75% of sales to the supplier and retain 25% as profit).

You can email Bill Sanford at treasurer@brucc.org

MANNA ORDERS

You can submit your upcoming November 5 Manna Gift

Card order any of the following ways:

- Submit completed order form and payment at worship, Sunday, November 5;
- Call the church office with your order and submit payment via mail or on-line giving;
- Send an email with your order and submit payment via mail or on-line giving.

All payments must be submitted at the time the order is placed. ****please be aware if you use a credit card for your Manna purchase, there is an additional processing fee charged to BRCC by the bank.****

Next Manna Order date: December 3

TRUSTEE UPDATES

- doorbells installed at both main and side entrances
- 12 mouse bait stations placed on the exterior perimeter of building
- new and brighter LEDs installed in lounge
- snow plow contract signed for the season
- interior carpets have been professionally steam cleaned by "Bullseye"
- parking lot has been seal coated
- electrical project to be completed in November, standby for updates
- first aid kits placed in kitchenette in lounge, and kitchen in basement

Trustee wishlist items:

- Home Depot gift cards (most needed item!)
- Rechargeable spotlight/flashlight
- Turbofan
- 50 and 100 ft extension cords
- Gorilla tape (any width)
- Black and red sharpies (thick or very thick size)
- Rechargeable hand trimmer
- Desk fan/Standing fans

The Sorensen Tree Farm will be returning this year! Beginning November 18th, come and pick from the best and freshest trees available!



COUNCIL UPDATES

BOARD OF ELDERS

Please pray with us for all those listed on the prayer wall right out the Sanctuary in the Lounge. You can add anyone's name at anytime. Please feel free to speak with any of our Board of Elders regarding prayers needed.

Baby Rafique, Eric Wilson, Chuck Parrott, Nancy Tameling, Becky Malak, Mark Malak, Nick (Kathy A's nephew in hospice), Carten Family(Loss of their father), Patty Gambill, Chris & Cassie, Don, Veronica T., Eric G., Taylor B., Shari's Family, Liz Huber, Emerson (treatment for pediatric cancer), Walt McCarty, JoAnn Miller, Saltzberg Family, Bob Stoll, John J(healing prayers), Marleah K.(constant pain), Brian, Carla,, Molly, Lloyd Family, Shannon S., Gina T.(illness), Larry Woodward, Chad Seltveit, Andy Krauklis, Brenda Guethle, Carol(wrist surgery), Steve Kipnis & family, Karen T. ,Frank Sneed(family member loss)Janet & Dale Shue, Marcia, Don(open heart surgery), Jimmy, Mark Suva, Maureen's family, Evan, Joshua & Jordan Murray, Janet Suva, Brandon Suva, Chelle, Peter Hui, Barbara Jefferson, Preston Suva, David Krauklis, Foster Children everywhere, Shannon Stewart, Adam & Amelia,

Website prayer requests:

Jung-won, Ui-seop, HaYoung, Ye-young, Eun-tae, In-sock. Lorraine, Joe & Phil Chavez

Louelyn Suva, former member of Burr Ridge United Church of Christ passed away in Arizona on October 18th. Her husband Ken mourns her loss. We offer our condolences to the Suva family. Janet and Rick are out of town currently, and will return to Illinois in November. Blessings to the Suva family.

Let the Lord bless and keep you.

Kathy Alvisu
Joe & Barb DeLaVan
Barbara Jefferson
Susann K. Pedersen

BOARD OF STEWARDS

(FUNDRAISING)

• **Pumpkin Patch:** We celebrate all the volunteers who helped in the Pumpkin Patch. Wow, 1000 pumpkins were delivered, and the sale was consistent throughout the month. Thanks to BRCC members, the various clubs from Lyons Township High School, and the Scouts, we completed the decorations and unloaded all the gourds and pumpkins. Through sun, wind, rain, and cold we opened our doors and sold pumpkins the entire month of October. Our last day was November 1 st with our Dollar Day Pumpkin! Many of our patrons were impressed that we partnered up with Pumpkin USA distributor and the Navajo Native Americans, when Illinois is one of the largest pumpkin growers in the nation. BRCC netted \$3,000.00+ as of 10/27/2023, on the pumpkins.
• **Fall Family Festival:** We made a tough call to cancel the Fall Family Festival this October, but based on the weather pattern, it was a good call. All our efforts were not in vain. Some things continued to go on; however, if you are all wondering whether the Grand Prize of \$500.00 drawing still occurs, the answer is, definitely! The raffle drawing date has been pushed to December 13, 2023, during the conclusion of the Jazz Concert. Please contact Ann Fong for more tickets, 630-890-7762 or hopetoachieve@yahoo.com. Burr Ridge Community Church can do so much because of you! We sold and raffled off two Boo Baskets to generate additional revenue. Two lucky winners were pulled for the child's and the adult Halloween baskets. Congratulations to the Halloween basket prizewinners. It was so cool to see the happy recipients with their stunning baskets. We made their day! God blessed us in many ways through your participation.

• The Board of Stewards thanks all our members who work tirelessly in our fundraising efforts. Look for information about the upcoming December Jazz Concert. Here's to more successful experiences!

RESERVE ACCOUNT FUNDING

Thank you everyone for supporting our Reserve Account Fundraising! The balance is as follows:

Interior Reserve: \$738

Can be used for sound system, interior updating & repairs.

Exterior Reserve: \$0

Can be used for exterior projects such as parking lot sealcoating and new outdoor church sign.

Total Reserves (including the above): \$58,298

Feel free to either mail or drop off your donation to the church. Please indicate where you would like your donation applied.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Join us for Worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. either in-person or on Facebook Live or YouTube. If you are worshipping with us at home, follow along with the weekly Worship Folder found on our website. You can find the worship live stream by following the link below:

[Facebook Livestream](#)

[YouTube Livestream](#)

WOMEN'S WELLNESS

Women of the congregation are invited to attend Women's Wellness on **Thursday, November 16th at 6:30 p.m.**

Anyone who is or has gone through an emotional or physical situation and would like to come, relax and enjoy each other's fellowship are welcome. All conversations are personal and confidential. What is spoken at the gathering, stays at the gathering.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

We wish Happy Birthday to those that celebrate this month. We hope you have a wonderful day!

Debbie Sundwall Nov 12

Zeke Fong Nov 22

Barbara Jefferson Nov 26

Candice Fong Nov 28



Please join us after service on November 26 for cake as we celebrate all our birthdays this month!

HEAVENLY BIRTHDAYS

John DeVries Nov 9

If anyone would like a Heavenly Birthday added, please email office@brucc.org.

MEETINGS

November 5: Congregational Meeting, 11am

November 13: Decorating Committee, 6:30pm

November 21: Council Meeting, 6:30pm

November 26: Coffee & Conversation, 11am

CALLING ALL MEMBERS!

We want to highlight you - our members! The Member Spotlight is a wonderful opportunity to learn some fun and unexpected things about the members of Burr Ridge Community Church. If you would be interested in being featured in a future edition of our Messenger, please email Bethany at office@brucc.org or call 630-654-4544!



RESERVE ACCOUNT DONATION

If you would like to donate to the Reserve Account Fundraiser, please complete the below information and return with your donation to the church office. If you prefer, you can make your donation on our website, and select the funds category to which you are supporting.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Select the project(s) you are supporting and the amount of the pledge.

☐ General Operating Expenses

☐ \$ _____

☐ Exterior Projects (Parking Lot Preservation, Building Stain, New Church Sign)

☐ \$ _____

☐ Interior Projects (Lounge Updates, Office Technology, Boiler Maintenance)

☐ \$ _____

Total Donation: \$ _____



NOVEMBER

2023

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THURS

FRI

SAT

			1	2	3	4
5 Manna Due! 10am Sunday Worship 11am Congregational Meeting	6	7 Election Day	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day
12 10am Sunday Worship 11am Board of Stewards Meeting	13 6:30 pm Decorating Committee Meeting	14	15	16 6:30pm Women's Wellness	17	18
19 10am Sunday Worship	20	21 6:30pm BRCC Council Meeting	22	23 Thanksgiving Day	24 Native American Heritage Day	25
26 10am Sunday Worship 11am Coffee & Conversation 11am November Birthday Celebration	27	28	29	30		



BURR RIDGE
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