



Living Thankfully by Carol Landis

*"Thank you for the world so sweet
Thank you for the food we eat (yum, yum)
Thank You for birds that sing (tra la la)
Thank You God for everything! Amen." 1*

The other day, this favorite mealtime prayer song of my young granddaughter entered my mind, and I found myself stopping to allow the phrases to create word pictures in my mind. In my haste to move on to the next thing, how often do I stop and smell the aroma of my food? Do I savor (yum! yum!), the vast array of textures and varying sweet or spicy flavors? Do I enjoy what I eat?

Within the song of birds, do I hear and feel joy? The actions to "Thank You for the birds that sing" include shaping one's forefinger and thumb into a "C" and waving the remaining three fingers while singing "tra la la." It's impossible for me to do that without smiling. Do I see and smile at nature's "tra la la" moments?

Another song comes to mind: "For I've a roof up above me; I've a good place to sleep. There's food on my table and shoes on my feet. You gave me Your love Lord, and a fine family, Thank You Lord for these blessings on me."² For the blessing of a dry place to sleep. Clean water to drink. Hot water to bathe. Healthy food. Shoes to protect feet and warm clothes to wear... Am I grateful?

"Give thanks...call on his name; make known...what he has done." Psalm 105:1

"And a fine family," brings yet another song to mind: "I'm glad I'm a part of the family of God. I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood! Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, I'm a part of the family – the family of God! Now you notice we say brother and sister around here, it's because we're a family and these folks are so dear, when one has a heartache, we all share the tears, and rejoice in each victory with this family so dear!"³ Like all siblings, there are times we drive each other crazy; times we speak without thinking; times we're more self-focused than others focused; times we feel the need to "straighten out" before praying. But we do love. When a heartache is shared – we care. When need arises – we strive to meet that need. When joy is shared – we celebrate together. This is as God intended. He planned for each of us to be part of His family.

(Continued on page 3)

November 2020 |





Making Connections

Meet **Bronwen Leister**.

If anyone would have told me what 2020 had in store for me I wouldn't have believed them. I thought my biggest challenge at the start of the year was going to be finding a healthy balance between family life and beginning a new job. I had chosen to be a stay at home mom for the past 16 years and felt very blessed to be able to do that. Along with being a stay at home mom, we decided to try home-schooling.



Since I used to teach a classroom full of preschoolers, when Emma became of age to begin school, I thought, "I can do this." And we have. Emma is a junior in high school, Blaine is in his sophomore year, and Eli is in 5th grade.

Accepting the Director of Children's Ministry position seemed like a great opportunity. I was excited to begin a new chapter and dive in with new ideas for families and children to engage in here at Franconia. I love to plan events, create projects, organize and teach.

The excitement was short lived. Like for many of us 2020 has been difficult; for our family the Coronavirus wasn't the hardest hit we experienced. Our family experienced a medical scare, an unexpected family death and brokenness all within two months. Our family was devastated. Life was hard and it was hurting the people I love most, my family. God felt out of reach. Satan's arrows felt relentless, the hits just kept coming. I kept crying out to God only to feel isolated and very alone in our struggles. One day while sharing with a friend all of our struggles she said, "Bronwen, Satan attacks those he fears." My immediate response was I give up!

Although I know God is in control and his ways are not mine, it's still hard.

This year and this position look nothing like I had anticipated. God has stretched me and used me in ways I had not anticipated. I have had to learn to use ZOOM, share children's lessons over video, and think way outside the box. I have had disappointments, failed ideas, and faced many insecurities. I have also gotten to know people on a deeper level and been able to reach out to many who have become new friends and have been a link to those who need help.

I wish that I could say 2020 has gotten better and everything is working out. It hasn't and I need to come to accept that there are things I cannot change. God is continuing to show me that he has a plan and I need to let go and let him work. Yes, I'm still hurt and time has not healed all my wounds, but I keep holding onto the promise that God Is Faithful to completion.

1 Peter 5:10-11 "And the God of all grace who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast." God isn't finished yet with our story.



(Living Thankfully, continued from page 1)

A blessing of this pandemic is that it forced us to stop. Stopping can help us see what we've taken for granted. This Thanksgiving season let's pause and be grateful for what we do have. The last hand motion to my granddaughter's song, ("Thank you, God, for everything! Amen.") is patting a closed fist into open hand ☺. Let's use this action to symbolize eyes closed to things we wish were different, and open, thankful, hearts and eyes, to the blessings around us. Our Faithful God is an Awesome Provider. Let's be intentional to be joy-filled and thankful this Thanksgiving season.

¹Zebra Nursery Rhymes (same tune; words differ slightly)

²Thank You Lord For Your Blessings On Me – The Easter Brothers

³The Family of God- Gloria and William Gaither

What's Happening for Women



Scrapbook Crop

Come and join us **November 7th**, 8am-6pm for a day of scrapbooking and card making. We will have loads of fun working alongside friends. You can work at your own pace and share ideas with friends.

Cost: \$35 with no food provided (coffee, tea & water will be provided), includes a \$15 voucher to be used at one of our vendors.

You will have your own separate workstation with electricity, practicing social distancing. We ask that you wear your mask when you arrive, but may remove it when you are seated. Wi-Fi will be available. Space is limited, **only 2-3 spots left!** Contact Janet Derstine at bjderstine2@gmail.com or 215-723-7413.

"Rag Balls and Ribbon Trees"

Saturday morning - Women's Craft

November 14, 9-11am

Cost: \$5

Each person can choose up to two crafts: Ribbon Tree, Wrapped or Strip balls, or Rag Ball

Materials will be provided (if you would like to bring your own, let the WM committee know)

We ask that you wear your mask when you arrive, but may remove it when you are seated. Registration is limited to 40 persons or "family groups." Please register by November 9th by signing up at the Women's Ministry table in the foyer or contacting one of the WM team members.



MCC Project of the Month:
Yard goods, 3 ½ yards or more

November 2020

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Scrapbook Crop 8am-6pm
8	9	10 Sewing Circle 8am-4pm	11 Sewing Circle 8am-4pm	12	13	14 Christmas Craft 9-11am
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Thanksgiving	27	28
29	30					

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