



# In the Loop

Centennial Christian Church  
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October 31, 2024  
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## Listening and Talking . . . by Rev. Tom Cici

Both Jesus and the apostle Paul present an enduring, and stable notion of love *as the very nature of Being itself*. This love is not at all dependent on changeable feelings. Paul's supreme masterpiece of poetry and theology is read at most weddings – 1 Corinthians 13:1–13. Paul gets this substantial notion of love, “which alone lasts,” from Jesus who makes it into an actual commandment (see John 15:12; Luke 10:27).

For Jesus and Paul, *if you don't live in love, you just don't live at all*. Jesus tells us that love is the very structure of the universe, and a place where we must learn to rest, pray, and abide (John 15:1–10) at all costs. Read 1 Corinthians Chapter 13 slowly and see how Paul treats love as a state of Being and an infinite source, from which the entire Christian life can be drawn: “Love is....,” “Love does not....,” “Love never ends.” We exist inside of Love, and occasionally we realize it and live out of our deepest purpose and identity. Love is not something we do now and then; love is who we are all the time.

This is because we are created “in the image and likeness” (Genesis 1:26) of God who is Love. It is so hard to believe that this imperfect, insignificant creature that I am could somehow bear the eternal mystery. The very nature of being is communion, infinite generosity, and unhindered giving and receiving between three. The good news is that the communion of God, Spirit and Christ embraces us (loves us) and calls us to be in that holy communion.

It's not that this Being we call God occasionally decides to love; love is the very nature and shape of God, who cannot not love! Divine Life knows and sustains us in our deepest being, for in God “we live and move and have our being ... for we too are his [God's] offspring” (Acts 17:28). We come from God's love; we exist inside God's love; and we grow in God's love.



We are justified not by good works, but by faith in an Infinite Mercy that we call grace (love). All it requires is a deep act of confidence in a loving God. When you feel loved, when you feel safe, and when you know your dignity, you just keep growing! This kind of love is far from sentimental; it has real power.

That's what loving people do for one another – offer safe relationships in which we can grow. Fall in love with a God who loves you just so you can be free to increase in love. If we try to grow bigger by any criteria except divine mercy (Love) itself, we only grow in narcissism.

Blessings to all as we share and live in the oneness of God together!



## All Saints Day – Sunday, November 3, 2024 Remember Loved Ones

We will be celebrating All Saints Day on Sunday, November 3rd. If you have a beloved family member who passed away during the months of November 2023 and October 2024, and you would like us to remember and celebrate them during our All Saints Day program, please let Pastor Tom or our office know by Sunday, October 27th.

Our office already has these three names to honor and celebrate at the service: Denny Pritchard (d. 1/07/2024); Tom (Billy) Robey (d. 4/15/2024) and Ruth Roley (d.4/24/2024). After reciting an individual's name, a candle will be lit in their memory. A litany of prayers will be said between names. After reciting all the names, there will be a moment of silent prayer and remembrance.

All are invited to our All Saints Day celebration to **HONOR** and **REMEMBER** loved ones during our 10:15 a.m. worship service on Sunday, November 03, 2024. We hope this All Saints Day program will be a meaningful celebration for everyone

## You Surprised Me Again!!

I was greatly surprised when Gwen Peebles stopped me in the hallway outside the pastor office before our worship service this past Sunday, October 27, 2024. She said, "I know you don't like to make a big deal out of being appreciated, but the entire congregation wanted to show their appreciation to you." And then she handed me a basket full of items! I was totally surprised and speechless to be the recipient of such an enormous and special Pastor Appreciation so secretly planned by my faith community.



I was overwhelmed with all the gifts everyone had given me: Sixteen items from various places accumulating an enormous value of over \$300. The greeting card from the congregation read in part, "With a smile or a kind word, you spread Christ's love in the best way there is – with a gentle spirit and a generous heart." – Thank You, Your Centennial Christian Church family.

That was only a portion of what was written in the card on behalf of CCC. Again, I am overwhelmed by your enormous generosity and appreciation for me. I also love everyone in our faith community and hope to continue showing you. **Again, Thank you!**



**OUR VISION STATEMENT**  
**Spreading the message of God's Love,**  
**in our church and in our community,**  
**through caring for each other.**

## HOLIDAY BAZAAR

NOVEMBER 9, 2024

8AM-3PM

LUNCH 10:30AM-1PM

### *Come and browse*

- *Homemade Craft items*
- *Attic Treasures and KnickKnacks*

### *Take Home*

- *Caramels and candies*
- *Noodles, Baked Goods and More*

### *Stay and enjoy*

- *Lunch of sloppy joes, soup, and pie*  
*(Carry-out available)*



## Congregational Meeting



There will be a congregational meeting immediately following worship on **November 17<sup>th</sup>**. The purpose of the meeting is to ratify Centennial's 2025 budget.

Copies of the budget summary, in pink, and copies of the detailed budget are in white. The reports are available at the education table.

You may contact Janet or Bill at [finance@centennialcc.org](mailto:finance@centennialcc.org) or 309-828-2185 if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you!

Janet & Bill

# Grateful for What Unites Us

## INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

**Y M C A**

202 St. Joseph Dr.  
Bloomington, IL

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2024**

**4:00 PM**

- ASL interpreter will be present.
- A freewill offering will be taken for the Red Cross.
- About twenty churches represented.





# NOVEMBER 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				<b>31</b> TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah <b>Trunk or Treat</b> <b>5:30P-7:30P</b>	<b>November 1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> <b>All Saints Day</b> Worship 10:15A	<b>4</b>  <b>Bazaar set-up</b>	<b>5</b> <b>General Election</b>  <b>Bazaar set-up</b>	<b>6</b> Choir 6P-choir loft  <b>Bazaar set-up</b>	<b>7</b>  <b>Bazaar set-up</b>	<b>8</b>  <b>Bazaar set-up</b>	<b>9</b> Bazaar 8AM—3PM
<b>10</b> Second Sunday Food Pantry <b>Veterans Day</b> <b>Worship</b> 10:15A	<b>11</b> Veterans Day	<b>12</b> CWF 9:30A-FH	<b>13</b> Choir 6P-choir loft	<b>14</b> TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> Worship 10:15A <b>Congregational</b> <b>Meeting following</b> <b>Worship</b>	<b>18</b> PRC 12P-Isaiah	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Choir 6P-choir loft	<b>21</b> Worship 12P-FH Monthly Prayer Service-5P-FH TOPS#559 5:15P-Isaiah Book Club 6:30P	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Bridge 12P-GH
<b>24</b> <b>Loose Change</b> <b>Offering</b> Worship 10:15A	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Elders 6:30P	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Thanksgiving</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>

## Pastor Vacation Time

Pastor Tom will be on vacation from  
 Sunday, November 3 through Saturday, November 16, 2024.



### **Continuing Prayers**

Larry Carius, Perry Watson, Hope's baby August, Debbie Holiday, Sisters Kelly Bestful and Lisa Behl, Jeff Kanchak, Randy Seibert, Tim, Kris Carius, Leonard Bates, Greg Firkus and Pat Murphy, Taylor, Charlie Middleton, James, Neil and Tammy and their caregivers, Cameron Cook, Angie Simpson, Jackie Steinhilber, Megan Brown, Mannie Martinez, Ann Burmaster, Cole, Ron Geske, Pam, Dick Tarter, Scott Griffith, Jessica, Marsha, Pete Rasmussen, Robin, Fern Scaggs

### **At Home/Assisted Living**

At home-Doris Miller, Frieda Foland; The Pointe, Pontiac-Rae Geske;

### **Nursing Home**

The Arc-Rev. Barbara Short, Don Short; Westminster-Anita Poling; Earl McIntyre; Evergreen Village-Pat Iloff; Hopedale Nursing Home-Dick Tarter; Accolade, Pontiac-Ron Geske;

### **Military**

Mark Brien, Keyla Folsom, Troy Guyran, Benjamin Horn, Michael Iverson, John Thomas, Darrell Walton, Glen Whitecotton, Christopher Wilson-Poston

**Prayers for CCIW congregations and ministries:** FCC Bloomington, IL; Cameron CC, IL; Coldbrook CC, IL; FCC Quincy, IL

<b>November Birthdays and Anniversaries</b>	
Marian Cici	11/06
Dan Frizzell	11/15
<b>Joe and Gwen Peebles</b>	<b>11/16</b>
Jeff Hatten	11/26

### **Our challenge for the week – Pray this prayer every day –**

Gracious God, we are always growing in your Love. Please deepen our awareness of your joyful Love within us. Help us to be faithful to your Presence, and faithfully carry your Love in our relationships with all others.  
[Listen and receive.]