7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of Gratitude

by Amy Morin from “Forbes”

It’s that time of year where many people begin thinking about everything they have to be thankful for. Although it’s nice to count your blessings on Thanksgiving, being thankful throughout the year could have tremendous benefits on your quality of life. In fact, gratitude may be one of the most overlooked tools that we all have access to every day. Cultivating gratitude doesn’t cost any money and it certainly doesn’t take much time, but the benefits are enormous. Research reveals gratitude can have these seven benefits:

1. Gratitude opens the door to more relationships. Not only does saying “thank you” constitute good manners, but showing appreciation can help you win new friends, according to a 2014 study published in Emotion. The study found that thanking a new acquaintance makes them more likely to seek an ongoing relationship. So whether you thank a stranger for holding the door or you send a quick thank-you note to that co-worker who helped you with a project, acknowledging other people’s contributions can lead to new opportunities.

2. Gratitude improves physical health. Grateful people experience fewer aches and pains and they report feeling healthier than other people, according to a 2012 study published in Personality and Individual Differences. Not surprisingly, grateful people are also more likely to take care of their health. They exercise more often and are more likely to attend regular check-ups with their doctors, which is likely to contribute to further longevity.

3. Gratitude improves psychological health. Gratitude reduces a multitude of toxic emotions, ranging from envy and resentment to frustration and regret. Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D., who has spoken at Westminster previously, a leading gratitude researcher, has conducted multiple studies on the link between gratitude and well-being. His research confirms that gratitude effectively increases happiness and reduces depression.

4. Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression. Grateful people are more likely to behave in a prosocial manner, even when others behave less kind, according to a 2012 study by the University of Kentucky. Study participants who ranked higher on gratitude scales were less likely to retaliate against others, even when given negative feedback. They experienced more sensitivity and empathy toward other people and a decreased desire to seek revenge.

5. Grateful people sleep better. Writing in a gratitude journal improves sleep, according to a 2011 study published in Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being. Spend just 15 minutes jotting down a few grateful sentiments before bed, and you may sleep better and longer.

6. Gratitude improves self-esteem. A 2014 study published in the Journal of Applied Sport Psychology found that gratitude increased athlete’s self-esteem, which is an essential component to optimal performance. Other studies have shown that gratitude reduces social comparisons. Rather than becoming resentful toward people who have more money or better jobs – which is a major factor in reduced self-esteem – grateful people are able to appreciate other people’s accomplishments.

7. Gratitude increases mental strength. For years, research has shown gratitude not only reduces stress, but it may also play a major role in overcoming trauma. A 2006 study published in Behavior Research and Therapy found that Vietnam War Veterans with higher levels of gratitude experienced lower rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. A 2003 study published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology found that gratitude was a major contributor to resilience following the terrorist attacks on September 11. Recognizing all you have to be thankful for – even during the worst times of your life – fosters resilience.

We all have the ability and opportunity to cultivate gratitude. Simply take a few moments to focus on all that you have – rather than complain about all the things you think you deserve. Developing an “attitude of gratitude” is one of the simplest ways to improve your satisfaction with life.
In the 2018-19 program year, our visioning team put in a lot of faithful work in pulling together the congregation to hear your hopes and dreams for Westminster for the next 3-5 years. They produced an ambitious, Spirit-directed Visioning Report that was presented to the congregation in late March. So we’ve had the report for about six months now, and I thought I would give you an update on the progress of implementing the proposals contained in the report.

After the report was produced, it took a few months for the congregation to read and respond to it in our informal congregational gatherings and for the session (the governing body of the church) to read and offer guidance in implementing the proposals. Then, of course, I went on sabbatical during the summer. All this to say, we’re just now really getting started living into the vision of the report.

I’m glad to report to you what has been done and is being done to implement the vision.

Over the summer, Sharyl and John Stevens have worked with an organizing team to put together “an introductory curriculum for Bible study and spiritual practices” (part of the Spiritual Formation and Education proposal) which they have called Catechumenate. The class is currently meeting once a week with about 25 in attendance.

Over the summer, the Membership Ministry Team, with the help of Jen Cox, produced a congregational participation survey, which was a smart goal under Building Community Within. Thank you to those of you who completed one. We will be sharing the results soon. Also, Membership and Christian Education Ministry Teams have formed a Church Retreat Team that is organizing the church retreat scheduled for May 1-3, 2020, at Zephyr Point at Lake Tahoe. And one more thing under Building Community Within, Allyson Sage and her team have been working on a new church pictorial directory, which should help us all get to know one another better.

As part of the Community Outreach and Music and Art proposals, the Facilities Task Force has been re-formed with Marianne Clemmens, Peter Winslow, Susan Watkins, David Jones and Mark Swanson. They have had their first meeting and are beginning their work to envision a remodeled sanctuary, narthex and chapel. I am also pleased to report that two generous church members have contributed a gift of $5,000 to support the implementation of the vision.

Thanks to all of you for making Westminster a wonderful place of worship and service, and let’s all work faithfully to make the vision come alive!

With gratitude,

Wes
Scripture readings, sermon titles & themes for November

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nov. 3 All Saints/ Stewardship Sunday</th>
<th>Nov. 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Evil With Love</td>
<td>Former Things Not Remembered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nov. 10</th>
<th>Nov. 24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Waste the Sun’s Time</td>
<td>Choosing Paradise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Terror Management Theory and the Authenticity of Faith

At 10am on Sundays in the Club Room beginning November 10, Pastor Wes will lead a four-week discussion of Christian apologetics. Yet, this class will not focus on classical apologetics which offered a defense of the faith by asserting proofs for God's existence. Rather, we will discuss functional apologetics. That is, in what way can Christian faith and practice be a reasonable and helpful response to the beauty and pain of human existence? We'll consider the analysis of religious experience by renown thinkers like Sigmund Freud, William James and Ernest Becker, and then ponder the life and teaching of Jesus in search of an authentic faith characterized by an acceptance of the vulnerability of the human condition.

Stewardship brunch

The annual Stewardship Dedication potluck brunch will be held in the Club Room on Sunday, Nov. 3 at 10 a.m. Please bring your pledge cards and a tasty dish to share with the church. (Last name starting with A-R: Breakfast Entrees, S-Z: Fruits or Pastries.) Thanks again for giving of your time, talent and treasures!

Commissioning of Chaplains

At the 11 a.m. service on November 10, we’ll commission Pamela Inman as a Law Enforcement Chaplain and Lita Munich as a Community Chaplain.
The Fabulous Alternative Gift Fair Is Coming Soon – 11/3/19 AND 11/17/19

Please take a look at .mayanhands.org/, Women of the Cloud Forest.com and SERRV on line to shop for items to treasure and gift. With SERRV you can order directly at serrv.org?a=PWOW. For Mayan Hands and Women of the Cloud Forest pre-selecting the items you would like and let us know as soon as possible so we can include your requests in an order. We will have items from all of these groups and the Friends of San Juan at the Gift Fair but shopping ahead allows you to choose from a larger selection. This is also the time to consider pre-ordering the fairly traded products we sell every month to make sure we have the items and quantities you want to use or gift during the Christmas season including teas, coffees, chocolates and olive oils. Unfortunately, we are unable to process card payments, so please bring cash or a checkbook.

Youth Care Packages

The Youth of Westminster are preparing to make more care packages for Sacramento’s homeless community in November, December and January. And they need your help, Westminster!

Bring your items to the church office anytime during the week or to services on Sunday and one of the Youth will collect it from you.

These items will go a long way in helping bring some much needed comfort and care to the homeless. The youth are asking for donations of:

- Travel sized toothpaste & toothbrushes
- Feminine hygiene products
- Hand Sanitizer
- Gallon Ziploc bags
- Toilet paper
- Socks
- Snacks
- Deodorant
- Lip Balm
- Wet wipes

Please bring donations by the Cameron Room by March 2020.

For all youth and anyone else interested in distributing the care packages, we will meet in the Jackson Room on Sunday, Nov. 10 after the 11 a.m. service. We will assemble the packages until about 2:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided for participants. Contact mark@westminsac.org if you are interested in volunteering for this important ministry!

The youth will be distributing the care packages on November 24, December 15 or 22, January 26 and March 22.
PWOW CIRCLE MEETINGS

All women in the church are invited to join a Circle for Bible study, fellowship, and fun. Call Roberta Franklin at 916-708-2768 for more information.

NOVEMBER 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circle</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esther/Ruth</td>
<td>11/3</td>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>11/7</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>Serra Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searchers</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>11:30 pm</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary/Martha</td>
<td>11/18</td>
<td>1:30 pm</td>
<td>Serra Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia Circle</td>
<td>11/26</td>
<td>11:30 am</td>
<td>Cameron Room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twice as Nice with Equal Exchange
by Lynne Stevenson

You have two opportunities to buy Equal Exchange coffee, tea, or chocolate this month! In addition to our sale on November 10, these fair trade items will also be available at the Alternative Gift Fair on November 3. Returning by popular demand are chocolate minis: bite-sized pieces of yummy dark chocolate for those wanting just a taste ($0.25) or perhaps a small gift bag ($3). A special item this month is the small book *A Cafecito Story* by best-selling author Julia Alvarez. This “eco-fable” is based on her experiences reclaiming a small coffee farm in her native Dominican Republic. This book together with a bag of Equal Exchange coffee would make a great holiday gift! Don’t forget that now is also the time for any special orders needed for gifting or holiday baking. Hope to see you at our table on both Sundays!

100 years of Westminster

We are reproducing WPC’s history from 1856-1966. Are you interested in purchasing a copy for about $20? If so, please sign up at the church office!

Holiday Hours– Church Closure

The Church will be closed for the holidays on:

- November 11 (Veteran’s Day)
- November 28 (Thanksgiving)
- November 29
Children & Youth Animal Fundraiser

Westminster’s children and youth will once again be raising money to purchase livestock for a Kenyan community in need through the Presbyterian Giving Catalog. A dairy cow can provide a family in need with a reliable source of income and nourishment. Your gift also supports training in caretaking and sustainable breeding of livestock, improving the food and income security for families and villages in Kenya for years to come.

In previous years, participants aimed to raise enough money for one cow, but ended up raising enough for three cows and even some chickens—let’s try to beat that this year! Youth will start taking orders and payment for See’s Candies starting October 27 and ending on December 3, 2019. In addition to See’s Candies sales (which also support next year’s youth mission trip), you can also make monetary donations this holiday season. Just be sure to designate contributions for “Youth Animal Project” so that we make sure it goes toward the right fund.

2020 VBS Dates and Theme Announced!

Mark your calendars! **June 15 - June 19, 2020** VBS will be back with an all new theme: *Knights of North Castle: Quest for the King’s Armor*.

*Knights of North Castle: Quest for the King’s Armor*, invites children to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God’s power by exploring how we put on the armor of God. Kids will take on the role of brave Knights and begin their quest each session by opening the King’s Book. They’ll explore Old and New Testament stories and discover different pieces of protective armor—the Belt of Truth, the Breastplate of Justice, the Shoes of Peace, the Shield of Faith, and the Helmet of Salvation—at work in the lives of familiar Bible characters, and explore how that armor works in their own lives as they follow and serve God.

Help kids take up the gauntlet this summer and accept the challenge to “armor up” and be strong by remaining with God and sharing God’s love in a world that needs it more than ever.
A Successful Fall Gathering
by Roberta Franklin

Terri Galvin, Director of Community Against Sexual Harm (CASH), talked about its work and its successes in helping women escape sexual harm. It is unique in having established a diversion program through the Sacramento courts that enables women who are the victims to recover physically and mentally and become employed rather than spending time in jail. They have worked to shift the punishment focus to the men who victimize women. It creates a family type environment that provides a positive support/mentoring focus. PWOW has supported CASH by providing monthly birthday cakes with the name of each of its clients with a birthday that month. Some of the women have NEVER had a birthday cake and for many it has been a long time since they had one. It is a treasured experience they look forward to. PWOW collects toiletries and gently used bras which are needed. Finally, PWOW provides a Mother’s Day lunch the Wednesday before Mother’s Day. The chicken, beef and vegetarian enchiladas were enjoyed by all. The coins received through the Fellowship of the Least Coin and the Thank Offerings were dedicated. Thank you to everyone who helped, participated and/or attended this important and meaningful gathering. If you are interested in the work of PWOW or its support of CASH please contact Roberta Franklin, Maryann Hopson, Mary Jane Root or Agnes Nilsen or leave a note in the PWOW box in the office. If you would like to make a Thank Offering donation, you may leave it in the PWOW box at the office.

All Saint’s Day

On Sunday Nov. 3rd, we will honor the lives of loved ones (does not have to be a member) who have passed away this year.

What is All Saint’s Day?

from Presbyterian Church USA

In early Christian tradition, saints’ days began as a way to mark the anniversary of a martyr’s death — his or her “birthday” as a saint. By the middle of the church’s first millennium, there were so many martyrs (particularly due to the persecution of Diocletian) that it was hard to give them all their due. All Saints’ Day was established as an opportunity to honor all the saints, known and unknown. All Saints’ Day has a rather different focus in the Reformed tradition. While we may give thanks for the lives of particular luminaries of ages past, the emphasis is on the ongoing sanctification of the whole people of God. Rather than putting saints on pedestals as holy people set apart in glory, we give glory to God for the ordinary, holy lives of the believers in this and every age. This is an appropriate time to give thanks to members of the community of faith who have died in the past year. We also pray that we may be counted among the company of the faithful in God’s eternal realm. All Saints’ Day has been celebrated on November 1 since the year 835. Previously it had been connected with the Easter season as a feast of all martyrs.
RSVP Concert - November 22

On Thursday, November 22 at 7:30 pm RSVP

Donations accepted on behalf of Wellspring Women’s Center, a charity providing respite & services to women and their children. All donations for this concert series will support the center’s Art of Being program that uses creative arts to cultivate the positive qualities of mindfulness and insight.

All Voices Choral Project– November 23

Looking for meaningful ways to address injustice? Put this event on your calendar, share it with your friends and ask them to share it with theirs:

All Voices Choral Project Presents:
Listen to Herstory: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women
7:00 pm, Saturday, November 23, at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1300 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Admission is free; we accept tax deductible donations at the event and on the website at: https://fundraising.fracturedatlas.org/all-voices-choral-project

The purpose of this project is to educate, inspire, and mobilize people for peace and justice. In addition to beautiful and exciting choral music, the evening includes Native music, dance, and ritual, personal stories of those directly connected to missing and murdered indigenous women, speakers focusing on issues at the core of the problem and what you can do to help. The nature of the topic is appropriate for audiences of at least 17 years of age.

"Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) is a grassroots movement that began with First Nations women and families in Canada, and compelled the Canadian government to initiate a national inquiry. The movement has gained momentum in Washington and other U.S. states as organizers lead marches, lobby lawmakers and partner with local organizations like the Urban Indian Health Institute to collect data that backs up their lived experiences." From Lauren Frohne and Bettina Hansen’s Seattle Times docuseries, NOT INVISIBLE: Confronting a crisis of violence against Native women.

- 4 out of 5 of Native women are affected by violence today.
- The U.S Department of Justice found that American Indian women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average.
- Homicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among females 10-24 years of age and the fifth leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaska Native women between 25 and 34 years of age. – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Homicide

For more information, contact Lee Hoffman, Founding Artistic Director, All Voices Choral Project at allvoiceschoralproject@gmail.com. https://www.allvoiceschoralproject.org/
Praise Band

The Praise Band is very much alive at Westminster. Everyone is back from vacation and ready to jump into the holiday season which is rapidly approaching. We are going to be learning the Advent music which are brief topic related call and response pieces each Sunday in December. The congregation will join us in the music very similar to 2018 Advent. There will be a threshold piece at the beginning of the service and a benediction piece at the end each week. We will also continue with our regular Praise Band songs throughout the service. The 2020 Advent topic will be Joy. We are excited to experience this season with all of you at Westminster! We are also excited to have Pastor Jeff (from summer services) join us on guitar and vocals in December while Chuck Nicol and his wife are traveling. We have been enjoying Ms. Hillary Pollock on acoustic upright bass this month while Marianne Clemmens is away. She has added a warm melodic rhythm to our sound and we are very grateful to her willingness to join us! Thank you Hillary! Also a big thanks to Alice Ginosar for filling in on Oct 27 while others are out. It is so nice to be able to get to know folks from the 2nd service as they participate in 1st service music with us.

Handbell Choir


Chancel Choir

Chancel Choir is working on our special Advent gift to the Westminster community entitled *All My Heart Again Rejoices*, offered at the 11:00 am service, Sunday, December 22. It's not too early to put it on your calendar, and start spreading the word! Watch for more details in the December newsletter!

Kids Choir

The children’s choir is off to a great start with an average of 6 kids attending each Sunday morning. They are currently learning intonation, rhythm and songs for advent. This past Sunday, Oct 13, they attended the Chancel Choir warm-up and anthem rehearsal in the chapel prior to the 2nd service. That was the first time some of them had seen the chapel and heard the choir. Ms. Lee Hoffman was very gracious to include the kids in the warm up exercises for their voices and pronunciation. They also learned stretches for the neck and shoulders. It was so cute to see the looks on their faces when they were asked to sing lalalalalalalalalala in multiple scales! They will be learning how to read notes on a staff this season and this exercise will come in handy for that! Parents please encourage your kids to keep coming to choir. There is so much to learn and so much fun & fellowship to be had!
Why Scottish Sunday?
by Patty Bonnstetter

The Church of Scotland, the national church in Scotland, accepted the Presbyterian faith during the 16th century Reformation. Tradition holds that the first Christian church in Scotland was founded about 400 by St. Ninian. In the 6th century, Irish missionaries included St. Columba, who settled at Iona about 563. In 1199, the Scottish Church was declared a “special daughter” of the Roman see, subject only to the pope. St. Andrews became an archiepiscopal see in 1472, followed by Glasgow in 1492.

The earliest Scottish reformers were under Lutheran influence, but were subsequently influenced by Swiss reformers, principally by John Knox, a former Catholic priest from Scotland, who had studied with John Calvin in Geneva. Knox then took Calvin’s teachings back to Scotland and led the Scottish Reformation of 1560.

Presbyterianism first officially arrived in Colonial America in 1644 with the establishment of Christ's First Presbyterian Church in Hempstead, New York, organized by the Rev. Richard Denton. In 1703 (maybe 1706…source references differ), seven ministers, led by Francis Makemie, established the first presbytery in North America, the Presbytery of Philadelphia. In time, the presbytery would be joined by two more to form a synod (1717) and would eventually evolve into the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1789.

Coffee Hour

There are still some open spaces left for coffee hour! If you want to volunteer please call Kris Mayr at 916-967-3413. The dates still available:

December 1, December 15, and December 29
A Choral Advent Celebration

by Lee Hoffman

Rejoice with us! At the 11:00 am service on Sunday, December 22, the Westminster Chancel Choir offers their Advent gift to the Westminster community entitled "All My Heart Again Rejoices." The program includes selections from Camille Saint-Saëns' Christmas Oratorio as well as The Lord Did Send the Angel Gabriel by Fred Gramann, Christmas Interlude (harp solo) from The Christmas Alleluias by Kim André Arnesen, culminating with All My Heart Again Rejoices by David Cherwien. The music features Brad Slocum, organ, as well as solos by our section leaders, Katie Thorpe, soprano, Paige Kelly, mezzo-soprano, Matt Hidalgo, tenor, and Brandon Anderson, baritone, and special guests Robin Fisher, soprano, and Lauren Sharkey, harp. Spread the word! For more information, contact Lee Hoffman, Director of Choirs at choir@westminsac.org.

Teacher Appreciation

On Nov. 17 during the 11 am service Westminster will be recognizing all our teachers and volunteers that have helped with the children and youth this past year. After the 11 am service there will be a luncheon for the teachers and VBS volunteers in the Jackson Room!

Save the date for these Advent/Christmas activities

Advent decorating - TBD
Dec. 6: Parents’ Night Out
Dec. 8: PWOW Christmas Cheer
Dec. 8: Children’s Christmas Music Program (11 am service)
Dec. 14: Sacramento Master Singers Concert
Dec. 22: All My Heart Again Rejoices - A Choral Advent Celebration (11 a.m.)
Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Service (7 p.m. only)

A Spectacular Ending

The Kerygma Class studying Handel’s oratorio, Messiah, will have two final sessions on November 6 and 13 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. On the 6th, the class will summarize the discoveries made during the study and listen to an unusual rendition of parts of the Messiah by a Contra-tenor.

On the 13th we will see a video in which the Messiah’s performance is presented by the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, conducted by Sir Neville Marriner. This will be a fantastic ending to a most informative and enjoyable study.
November, 2019
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
TIME DATED MATERIAL
(916)442-8939
www.westminsac.org
Samantha Jones- editor
ed@westminsac.org

Our Mission Statement:
Westminster is a welcoming, inclusive community of faith, following Christ’s example by supporting spiritual growth, serving others, and promoting peace and justice.