



THE PHOENIX HERALD

PHOENIX MINISTRY

November 2017

PHOENIX MINISTRY is an organization seeking to empower, educate, and serve anyone and everyone who wants to experience the love, grace, and power of Jesus Christ.

President's Corner

Hey there, reader! I would shake your hand, but mine is kind of covered in gravy and cranberry sauce at the moment (with a splash of apple cider!) I'm a foodie and sometimes there's just no stopping me, especially during holiday season! If you try to shake my hand now, you may just pull back a nub. Haha

Happy November! And thank you so much for reading our newsletter. At PHOENIX MINISTRY, we are busy bees this month, gearing up for the celebration of Thanksgiving (as well as that other holiday where we watch Home Alone and drink eggnog).

It's an exciting time for us right now. We have had several new local members join our Bible study groups these last couple of months! We have also been blessed enough to be able to make some new online friends who share our vision from afar that are keeping in touch with us through social media. If you haven't already done so, please feel free to do the same and follow up on Twitter and Instagram @PhoenixMinistry! You can also subscribe to our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/phoenixministry and "Like" our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/phoenixministry to stay connected. We are grateful to be given the opportunity to encourage and uplift you as often as we possibly can.

In November, many become excited at the opportunity to purposely not shave and tweet about it, while others like myself count the days til they are able to consume nearly an entire pumpkin pie from Costco...guilt free. (Because we all know that calories don't count on the 4th Thursday of this month.) That's right... Thanksgiving is here!

Over the years, I have learned from many of our members, as well as our leadership team, that Thanksgiving is their favorite holiday of all-time. Not only does it involve some of the tastiest food, but it's what the holiday represents that really captivates them. Thanksgiving hasn't become tainted by commercialism and it isn't religiously debated. Most people seem to not only be okay with setting time aside to be grateful, but they actually look forward to it. At PHOENIX MINISTRY, we are ecstatic about doing the same.

This Thanksgiving, we are grateful to you, our reader. We pray that this be a season of appreciation not only *from* you, but *for* you. We want you to be appreciated. We want you to feel valued for the important person that you are and all that you contribute to your families, your workplace, your school, your communities, and all of your relationships.

We want you to know that someone out there cares, somebody out there loves you, and somebody values you and thinks you are important. Somebody does...God does...and WE DO, too! I know at PHOENIX MINISTRY, we have a lot of work to do to try and make up for the pain and hurt caused to many of you by the mainstream Church, but we are up to that challenge and we ask that you allow us to be! On behalf of PHOENIX MINISTRY, I would like to personally thank you for your support (even in just reading this newsletter) and we hope you decide to get involved with our vision.

You are welcomed. You are supported here. You are loved here! God's best to you!

"In every situation [no matter what the circumstances] be thankful and continually give thanks to God; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." – 1 Thessalonians 5:18 AMP



Join Us For A Study Near You

Southern California

1711 N. Van Ness Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90068

1st & 3rd Saturday of every month at 4:00pm

Northern California

32300 Almaden Blvd.

Union City, CA 94587

2nd Friday of every month at 6:00pm

Upcoming Bible Studies

So Cal- November 18: The Power of "Thank You"

- *It's the season to grateful. We visit this theme every year, but during this special study, we are going to go a little deeper into what Scripture says about it.*

So. Cal- December 2: Psalm: The Journey (Member Request)

- *The Book of Psalm is very powerful. We tap into that power today and your mind will be blown by what comes out of this study.*

Nor. Cal- December 8: The Newborn King

So. Cal- December 16: The Newborn King

- *It's the most wonderful time of the year, and we want to celebrate it with you. Come and reflect about the birth of our Savior and what His arrival *truly* did for those who would dare to believe.*

We want to hear what you would like to study. If you have a request, please reach out to Lawrence Lee.

secretary@phoenixministry.org

Welcome

A Note From The Editor

It's hard to believe we're already talking about the holidays. I always get excited around this time, thinking about the incredible food we'll eat on Thanksgiving, putting up Christmas decorations, enjoying pumpkin white chocolate lattes, shopping at 4:00am on Black Friday, and watching all the holiday movies on Hallmark Channel. Growing up in Chicago, my family always celebrated the holidays in true spirit; Thanksgiving no exception. Aside from all the amazing food you get to eat and the quality time spent with my family, one of my favorite aspects is reflecting on all the blessings I have to be grateful for. To be honest, this time last year was a very stressful period in my life due to a combination of issues at work and the activities taking place in the political arena. However, as I reflect back on this year, I am mesmerized and in such awe over how gracious of a God we serve. He has blessed me with an incredible new promotional job opportunity at a company that is truly allowing me to be successful to the max. He has opened the door for an opportunity to serve in leadership here at PHOENIX MINISTRY that I did not anticipate. He has blessed me with several new additions to my family. To top it off, my boyfriend Corey and I are also celebrating our two year anniversary this month. There were many days during the storm of last year that I wondered if I would make it and spent a lot of my prayer time asking God how much longer I would have to wait to experience change. The response He kept giving me was one simple question: "Do you trust me?" I never lost sight of the path forward and I can say without a doubt that God truly is an amazing Father who blesses us abundantly each and every day. I hope you will take some time this Thanksgiving to reflect on the blessings God has provided in your life. Whether you're traveling to see family or staying local, I pray God's blessings on each and every one of you and hope you have a fantastic and memorable Thanksgiving celebration.

- Matthew Lonn
So. Cal Event Coordinator



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thanksgiving Dinner
Tuesday November 21: 4:00-11:00pm
Hollywood Adventist Church- 1711 N. Van Ness Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90028

Are you going to be around in the Los Angeles area? We are having a Thanksgiving Dinner the Tuesday before the actual Holiday. If you have plans on the actual day, you can still come enjoy the Holiday with us! We would be blessed to have you.



Bowling Night
Sunday November 26: 6:00pm
Pickwick Bowl- 921 W. Riverside Dr. Burbank, CA 91506

Join PHOENIX for an evening of bowling and fellowship. Cost is \$6.00 per game and \$4.50 for show rental. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Music Video/Short Film Shoot
Saturday December 2: 6:45-9:00pm
Hollywood Adventist Church- 1711 N. Van Ness Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90028

Interested in being in a music video? What about a short film? Now is your chance!! We are shooting our final scene for this year's Christmas project and we want you to be involved! Every year, our ministry does a Christmas music video/short film. It's going to be a lot of fun and refreshments will be provided. The video will be featured on our website and will be posted on our YouTube channel. Our annual Christmas videos at PHOENIX MINISTRY are watched and discussed year-round so this can be a great chance to not only be a part of something really fun, but even be recognized a little. For more information or questions, please contact our event coordinator Matthew Lonn at mattlonn@hotmail.com. We hope to see you there!



Christmas Party Potluck
Saturday December 16: 6:00-9:00pm
Hollywood Adventist Church- 1711 N. Van Ness Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90028

Please bring a delicious side dish, and join us for an incredible evening! We will have homemade tamales, casseroles, Spanish rice, and so many other goodies! We are going to end the night with some fun games and activities! We would love to spend the holiday with you, so drop by!



San Francisco Mini-Con
April 4-8, 2018

We are in the early stages of planning our 2nd annual mini-con which will be held in San Francisco this year. Come join us for an experience filled with devotional dinners, workshops and sight-seeing. We have many of our members from the Nor Cal group that are local to the area who will be able to act as our tour guides. The theme for this year's conference is "Welcome Home". We will be discussing regularly during the trip how we have a home with Christ and how He has a home with us. San Francisco is also symbolic to this topic because the Bay Area is where PHOENIX MINISTRY was born. Please be on the lookout for more details regarding specific events, costs and hotel/transportation accommodations.



One of the things that makes us truly unique at PHOENIX MINISTRY, is the work we put into our video productions. Every year, we create fun and exciting material to not only keep you encouraged in the things of God, but also entertained. We also like giving you the opportunity to get to know us in the process.



Log onto www.youtube.com/phoenixministry and subscribe to our channel. We have sermons, devotionals, music videos, interview clips from our members, and so much more! Log on today, subscribe, and join us for the ride!



MONTHLY DEVOTIONAL

The Power of Thank You

Happy November! The scent of pumpkin spiced lattes has already started to fill the air, freshly baked pies greet our noses, and colorful leaves gently fall to the ground reminding us how the change in seasons can so powerfully influence our mood. More specifically, an atmosphere of gratitude seems to surround us all.

There is much debate as to the actual origins of the holiday we celebrate today known as “Thanksgiving” (mostly between Canadians and Americans). The truth is, however, whether the first observance of Thanksgiving was in 1578 during the voyage of Martin Frobisher (in search of the Northwest Passage) or in 1621 via the traditions and customs of Pilgrims and Puritans from England once at Plymouth (present-day Massachusetts), one thing is certain; the holiday has become synonymous with gratitude. Everyone that celebrates has generally come to understand Thanksgiving as a time to reflect and appreciate every good thing surrounding each of our lives. Life can be trying, and often discussing any kind of silver lining can be difficult for some, but with a little bit of effort, we can still make a conscious choice to do so, even if it means allowing others to help us. Although this may be comforting to realize, it is actually important for us to do from time to time as our emotional, mental, and spiritual health is essential to being a happy, healthy and whole person. Isn't it wonderful that a holiday has been established that, in essence, assists us in taking care of ourselves?

There are many scientifically-proven benefits to gratitude. Independent studies in 2014 by Forbes, Time, and Emotion all unanimously found that people that said “thank you” more often had more successful and longer-lasting relationships, friendships and even held their jobs longer. People that showed gratitude more often slept better, had healthier appetites, experienced less chronic illnesses, were less stressed, and were significantly less likely to suffer depression. Other studies, including one by Harvard University, found that CEO's, supervisors, and managers of companies that hosted “thank you” brunches and gave out awards at ceremonial meetings for their employees increased the organization's sales and revenue by over 50%. It is clear that people give their best when they feel like they are appreciated.

As Christians, this can be an especially exciting time, as it reminds us of the tangible realness of God and the practical things He has done for us in our lives. Life gets crazy and often we don't remember to schedule quality time to pray or remind ourselves just how good God has been to us. This holiday is an excellent opportunity to slow down a little and acknowledge that God is still there, still loves us, still cares for us, and still affirms His relationship with us.

“Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyous songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.”

Psalm 100 NIV

Prayer is a common approach to showing appreciation to God year round. Anytime we enter into prayer throughout the year, we are suggested in verse 4 to “*Enter His gates with Thanksgiving and His courts with praise.*” I often think, “What kind of mindset does it put me in to approach God with appreciation right from the start, before I bring anything else up to Him?” The truth is, God wants you to be transparent with Him in prayer and reminding yourself of all the good things that He has done for you, reminds you in your approach that He is already on your side. He wants you to tell Him what hurts you, what you want, what you need, and what you don't understand...regularly. It seems to me, that establishing an attitude of gratitude first sets the tone that you can have confidence that anything you submit to God will, in fact, be heard and received. It's a great feeling.

“In that day you will say: “Give praise to the Lord, proclaim His name; make known among the nations what He has done, and proclaim that His name is exalted.”

Isaiah 12:4 NIV

There are many benefits to sharing our faith and our personal testimonies concerning what God has done for us individually. Sometimes in life, we can become so discouraged that we often wonder if God is still there and if He is still watching over or listening to us. It can be very encouraging to know that there are other people who have at one time or another felt the same way. Sharing an uplifting story may just be what someone needs to regain a hopeful perspective. I think, from time to time, we all could use a boost to be brought back to the basic foundations of our faith and the realness of God. Sharing our stories help. Ultimately, we all want to be reminded that we are not alone and if God can do something for you, I know that He would be willing to do something for me and vice versa.

“For God does not show favoritism.”

Romans 2:11 NIV

Don't forget to tell someone that you appreciate them this Thanksgiving season. And also, don't forget to remind yourself that you are *highly* valuable and the contributions you bring to all of us, and to the lives of everyone around you is priceless. There is only one you, and we would miss you if you weren't around, so don't leave us! At PHOENIX MINISTRY, we are grateful for the person that you uniquely are; the person that God made you to be. Happy Thanksgiving, friend! Wishing you only God's very best!

