

THANKSGIVING 2018.

Isn't it awesome to think about the goodness of God? When we really stop to consider all of life's blessings—our family, our friends, daily provisions, our freedom—we begin to realize just how much God has blessed us. It is important to honestly reflect because at times, we are lured to believe somehow we are the creators and sustainers of these blessings.



Jesus reminds us in Luke 12:13-21: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

The rich man was indeed blessed. He was showered with the blessing of an outstanding crop. But how does the rich man handle success? Is he thankful? How does the rich man respond to God's blessing?

The rich man states, "I will tear down MY barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all MY grain and MY goods. And I'll say to MYSELF, 'YOU have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat drink and be merry!'" The rich man sinks into self-absorbed, egotistical complacency. The problem is not the wealth of the blessing; it is the attitude in which it is received.

This month we have the opportunity to humble ourselves and GIVE THANKS for a multitude of gifts. We can give thanks to God for the freedom we enjoy and for the veterans who fought to preserve our nation's freedoms. We can thank God for the blessing of family and friends as we gather around the table to celebrate Thanksgiving.

We also thank God for the relationships we share as a Presbytery. We are thankful for our congregations, our pastors, our community partners, our presbytery staff and the mission God has invited all of us to share. We thank God for each of you!

May we continue to build relationships and encourage one another as we humbly participate in God's Kingdom.

Keep going for the Lord,
Rev. Jason Elliott, UOVP Moderator