



Gathered

in gratitude,

lifting our
hearts in

Thanksgiving
to the Lord.

November 2025

**Lexington United
Methodist Church**

*Where We Seek, Serve and
Share Christ*

www.lexmoumc.org

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Sunday worship: 11 a.m.
Children's Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Adult Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Young Couples Class: 10 a.m.
Youth Group: Sundays 6 p.m.
Worshiping Winds Rehearsal:
Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal: Sundays 10 a.m.

A Season of Gratitude

Dear Church Family,

What an incredible time to be in ministry. There is so much to be thankful for as we see God at work in our midst here at Lexington United Methodist Church. The month of October always brings a deep sense of gratitude for me. It's my birthday month and also Pastor Appreciation, and each year I'm humbled by the love, care, and generosity shown by this congregation.

From heartfelt cards and kind words to gifts that brighten the parsonage, your support means more than I can express. Yet the most meaningful gifts are always those that further the mission of the church. This year, I was deeply moved by those who gave to our youth on my behalf. Our youth continue to grow in faith and leadership—each Sunday they help lead worship by choosing songs that fit our sermon

themes, and on every fifth Sunday, they take on every leadership role in the service. I couldn't be prouder of them—or of our church family that surrounds them with encouragement and grace.



Rev. Andrew
Sanders

This season of gratitude also marks an important moment for our church—the beginning of our annual **Pledge Drive**. This is more than a budgeting exercise; it's a time of reflection and renewal. It's an opportunity to prayerfully discern how God is calling each of

us to give, serve, and live as faithful stewards of the Kingdom. Through our tithes, offerings, and service, we continue to build on the legacy of the saints who came before us and help ensure that the mission of Christ remains strong in our community.

Scripture reminds us in **2 Corinthians 9:7–8**,

"Each of you should give what you have

Pastor continued on page 4

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sundays: Worshiping Winds rehearsal
9:30 a.m.

Choir Rehearsal: 10 a.m.

Sundays at 10 a.m.: Adult Sunday School with Liz Johnson, facilitator. Study: "Why? Making Sense of God's Will" by Adam Hamilton.

Sundays at 10 a.m.: Children's Sunday School with Donna Slusher & Katie Dye.

Sundays at 10 a.m.: Young Couples Class, "Fireproof Your Marriage," with Sarah Black, facilitator. No class 10/5 & 10/12.

BABY GRACE: Sundays 10-11 a.m.

Mondays: Quilters at 1 p.m.

HARVESTERS DISTRIBUTION: Monday, Nov. 10, 8 to 11 a.m.

YOUTH GROUP: Sundays at 6 p.m.

CHURCH FINANCE MEETING: Tuesday, November 11, at 6 p.m.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH MEET: Friday, November 14, at Noon for carry-in meal in the Choir Room.

CHURCH COUNCIL TEAM MEETING: Monday, November 17, 6 p.m.

COMMODITIES: Tuesday, November 25, 8:30 to 11 a.m. (Yet to be confirmed)

HAYRIDE: Saturday, November 15, 4 p.m. —Meet in church parking lot. Hayride sponsored by Roger McFadden. Afterwards: bonfire, hot dogs, S'mores and Pinata fun!

CHARGE CONFERENCE: Saturday, Nov. 22, 10 to 12:30 p.m. Here at LUMC. All are welcome to attend.

HANGING OF THE GREEN SERVICE, Sunday, November 23, 11 a.m.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE: By Ministerial Alliance, Sunday, November 23, 6 p.m. at the First Baptist Church.

Church office is closed for the Thanksgiving holiday, Wednesday, November 26-Friday, November 28.



NOVEMBER

birthdays

November 15 Jase Coen
November 28 David Cooley
November 28 Gracelyn Coen



Liz Johnson | Secretary

- **Present:** Liz Johnson, secretary; Sarah Black, chairman; Teri James, treasurer; Rev. Andrew Sanders, pastor; Jim Martin, PPR chair; Thomas Rowland, trustee; Sharol McMullin, finance chair; David Cooley, finance; Cheryl Cooley, PPR; Nancy Oles, Women of the Church; Jennifer Coen, Baby Grace; Josh Coen, security.
- Sarah called the meeting to order.
- Pastor Andrew opened with prayer.
- Sarah read our mission and vision statements.
- **Spiritual Development:** Pastor Andrew read the Gospel of Luke, chapter 14. Verses 28-30. He stated that Jesus is teaching us to build wisdom.
- **Leadership:** Pastor Andrew referenced our upcoming Pledge Drive and planning of 2026 budget. He also said that new congregants, Ricky and Beverly Adams are ready to join LUMC.
- **September Minutes:** Jennifer Coen's name was spelled wrong in the September minutes. Sharol moved, seconded by Cheryl to accept the minutes with the aforementioned change. So passed.
- **Finance Report:** Teri said September showed a positive note at the end of the month. She also said we've only paid \$1725 out of our 2025 set \$14,981 apportionments. Cheryl moved to accept the September finance report, seconded by Sharol. So passed.
- **Church insurance:** Trustee chair Roger McFadden is still harvesting his crops and unable to make this meeting. Liz Johnson presented the bids we've received for consideration of church insurance. Note: Jennifer Coen requested to be emailed a copy of the State Farm bid as she is now working with Baby Grace along with Lauren Negrete. The State Farm bid was emailed to the council on Thursday, October 16. At tonight's meeting, a copy of a bid from Anita Edmonds insurance was presented to the council. In needing time to study the bids and differences, and following some points made, such as differences in the value

HARVEST DINNER

The dinner was a great success. Delicious food, fun trivia games, music and our Silent Auction. We had 46 donations to the auction and sold all but 3 items.

*** \$ 804 in free will & donations**
***\$1,440 from Silent Auction**
***\$2,244 raised for church missions.**

of the church building, deductibles and premiums, the decision/discussion was tabled until the November 17th meeting – with a request to have Bill Blankenship/State Farm and Anita Edmonds meet with the council that night.

- **Harvest Dinner:** Sharol updated the council on the progress of the Nov. 1st Harvest dinner that we're on target with that planning. People are already bringing in auction items. Liz J and Mary Kate Alkire have met and are handling the Auction. Liz J will send flyers to the other Lexington churches (they've already been sent to Waverly and Grace UMCs.) Sharol said that the full set up for the dinner will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 1st. Bill Fricke and the Knipmeyer band will be the musical entertainment.
- **Charge Conference:** Pastor Andrew reminded council of the upcoming, November 22nd Charge Conference being hosted here in the Buddy Black Family Life Center from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and that beverages and snacks will be available – yet to be determined.
- **UMC Women:** Nancy said the women donated \$100 apiece to Headstart, Early Childhood Education and Leslie Bell Elementary.
- **Finance:** Sharol reported that the Pledge Drive flyer has been approved. It, along with a letter from Pastor Andrew, will be mailed out to congregants before Nov. 1st. The drive will take place in November, along with a sermon series set for Nov. 9, 16 and 23rd, with pledges to be turned in by the 23rd – all for 2026, so the new budget can be completed. The next finance meeting will be at 6 p.m., Tuesday, November 11.

Baby Grace: Jennifer reported that Lauren will be doing mostly remote work for Baby Grace and still wants to have a board for this ministry. Lauren will continue to get community support and donations. Jordyn



TRUNK OR TREAT FUN!

Our annual Trunk or Treat was a success as always. Many thanks to organizer Teri James and all those who volunteered to decorate, dress up and man tables to give away candy to the kids. Kneeling in front: Jacob Lamb. First row: Kay Alder, Pam Johnson, Janet Cado, Janae Fuller, Shawn Hodgeman, David Cooley and Pastor Andrew Sanders. Back row: Powers Alder, Glenn and Debbie Bagley, Patty Sollars, Sharol McMullin, Nancy Oles, Teri James, Cheryl Cooley, Sarah Black and Tony James. Thank you again!



Left: Guests at our Harvest Dinner enjoy a delicious meal of lasagna, breadsticks, salad, beverages and fall-themed desserts. Below: Just a few items from our Silent Auction.



- Ortega will also assist. They are looking to have some additional distribution days, such as one Saturday a month – to the current schedule of Sundays from 10 to 11 a.m. Jennifer has done some reorganization in the BG room and said they'd like to see an educator on their board, too. They would like to do a quarterly work day to include church members and keep things organized. She suggested a possible bug spray, at least monthly. We should not be accepting certain donation items such as broken items, no car seats, nothing cracked and no stuffed animals.
- **Security/Safety:** Sarah stated that it used to be that the Hicklin Hall doors would be locked at 11 a.m. on a Sunday and that we had someone sit outside the sanctuary during the service to keep an eye on the east entrance of the building. Josh Coen has volunteered to sit outside the sanctuary and keep watch on the entrance doors during the service. Jennifer suggested we have a safety meeting and safety plans in the case of an

emergency such as fire or an active shooter. Church entrance is not easily opened and doesn't have the bar on the door to open it in an emergency. We do have doors at the south wall by the sanctuary that open that way. We need to be sure we are compliant with fire safety laws. Cheryl motioned, seconded by Teri to put a security plan for the church in place. So passed. It was decided to call the current safety situation "phase one" where the Hicklin Hall entrance will be locked at 11 a.m. We will work on a safety plan at the November meeting.

- **Andrew announced that we have a new nursery worker:** Zoe, who is currently working on her Safe Gatherings certification.
- **Teri reminded council of the Trunk or Treat event coming up Sunday, October 26 from 5 to 7 p.m.** She requested that folks stay after the October 26th service to help decorate the Buddy Black Family Life Center.

UPCOMING Events

CHARGE CONFERENCE HOSTED HERE SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 10 to 12:30 p.m.

This year we are hosting the district Charge Conference remotely from our Buddy Black Family Life Center. Council Members and congregants are urged to attend. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY

Church office is closed Wed., Nov. 26, Thursday, Nov. 27 and Friday, Nov. 28 for the holiday.



ADVENT SEASON BEGINS SUNDAY, NOV. 30

Our Christmas/Advent season begins Sunday, Nov. 30. Please join us for this holiest of seasons for a time of preparation, anticipation and reflection as we prepare for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.



We are so grateful for our Finance Team: Sharol McMullin, Teri James, Mary Kate Alkire, David Cooley & Liz Johnson who organized and worked the Harvest Dinner & Silent Auction. Also, Cheryl Cooley and Pam Johnson, as well as Melissa Beal who washed so many dishes!

A big thanks to everyone who donated an item for the auction—God Bless! And to all those who bought auction items, helping to raise funds for our church missions. We also thank those who made trays of delicious lasagna, desserts and the yummy fall-themed beverages. It was a fun night!

WORSHIP: Sundays 11 a.m.

Sunday School: 10 a.m. Adult.
Children's Sunday School is 10 a.m.
Young Couple's Class: 10 a.m.

Choir Rehearsal: 10 a.m.
Worshiping Winds Rehearsal: 9:30 a.m.

ONLINE: lexmoumc.org

Oct.: 2025



Treasurer's Report

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| October Offering: | \$ 12,714.44 |
| Oct. Avg. Expenses: | -\$13,641.00 |
| Total (tithe) | -\$ 9216.56 |
| Year to Date (as of 9/30): | -\$ 7,863.07 |
| **October 2025 full expenses is not available at this time. | |
| *Avg. Expenses 2025 | \$ 13,641.00 (per month) |
| Building Rentals October: | \$ 460.00 |
| Harvest Dinner: | \$ 2,244.00 |
| (For church missions) | |

Teri James: Treasurer

Liz Johnson: Finance Secretary

Sharol McMullin: Finance Chair

Sarah Black: 2025 Council Chair

Jim Martin: 2025 PPR Chair

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Sanders

"Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor." ~ Proverbs 22:9

PASTOR ... continued from pg. 1

decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

As we look toward Thanksgiving, we recognize the blessings God has already poured into our lives—even in a season where many around us are hurting. Food insecurity, rising costs, and difficult choices weigh heavily on our neighbors. This is where we,

the Church, are called to shine. We are the hands and feet of Christ, sent to care, to love, to seek, to find, and to offer a place where transformation takes root.

So as we give thanks this season, I invite you to give generously—to support the ongoing ministries of our church, to dream boldly about what God can do through us, and to help ensure that the love of Christ continues to flow into every home, every heart, and every life we touch.

With deep gratitude,
Pastor Andrew



Our 2026 Pledge Drive is ongoing now through Sunday, November 23rd. Pledge brochures were mailed out at the end of October.

Please follow the 3-step giving process by **first Praying**—asking God what he is calling you to do. **Second: Commit.** What will you commit to God's kingdom? **And third, Give.** When and how will you fulfill your commitment?

Turn your completed cards into the church by Nov. 23rd. There is a basket on the table in the hallway or you can turn your card to the offering plate. Thank you and God Bless.

Sunday, November 2, 2025

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 1:10-18

*Trust the past to God's mercy, the present to God's love,
and the future to God's providence. —St. Augustine*

It's the first of the month. This means that, for many of you, your next Social Security check will be arriving soon, or be deposited into your bank account.

Are you aware that you owe your Social Security check to a rickety, wobbling chair?

Here's the story. It was a rickety chair that allowed the New Deal to happen. Go back to the 1930s. The United States was deep into the Great Depression. The national unemployment rate hit 24.9 percent. People were hungry, lining up for blocks in major cities to get a cup of soup.

Franklin Roosevelt, who had just been elected president, was speaking at a rally in Chicago. In the audience was a Giuseppe Zangara, an anarchist who was only five feet tall, but ten feet tall in his heart. He blamed all of his myriad problems on capitalists and politicians. He didn't know the president from Adam, but the misguided soul thought that he was responsible for all of his sordid problems. Zangara bought a five-shot .32-caliber revolver and got ready.

Zangara, a short man, was no taller than Zacchaeus, but rather than climbing a tree, he stood on a chair to get a better view. He climbed up on the chair, raised his pistol, took aim — and, just at that moment, *the chair wobbled*. His shot went wild, and — tragically — the mayor of Chicago, who was shaking hands with Roosevelt, took the bullet instead and later died.

If Roosevelt had been shot and killed, his conservative running mate, John Nance Garner, would have become president. Most historians agree that Garner would never have brought in the sweeping reforms FDR did. If that chair hadn't wobbled, our history would have been very different.

You never know. Perhaps Congress would have passed a different form of Social Security. The point is that you never know how something as small as a wobbly chair might change the course of history. The Bible reminds us that “The human mind plans the way, but the LORD directs the steps” (Proverbs 16:9). Even in the tiniest details of life, God's hand is at work in ways we may never fully understand. Life is full of moments where small, unnoticed events have huge consequences. A single conversation, a brief delay, or even a shaky chair can alter history. The same is true in our own lives. Our actions, no matter how small, can shape the future in ways we cannot imagine.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Loving and merciful God, to borrow the language of Francis of Assisi, make me an instrument of your peace. Help me to sow love, kindness and mercy. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Acts 19:11–41;
2 Corinthians 1-3
Monday: Ezra 5-7
Tuesday: Ezra 8-10
Wednesday: Nehemiah 1-3
Thursday: Nehemiah 4-6
Friday: Nehemiah 7-9
Saturday: Psalms 124-126

Verse to Remember

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves. —Psalm 126:5-6

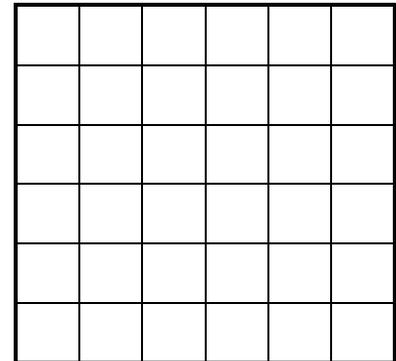
November 2025

| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
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| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| | | | | | | 30 |

WORD SHUFFLE

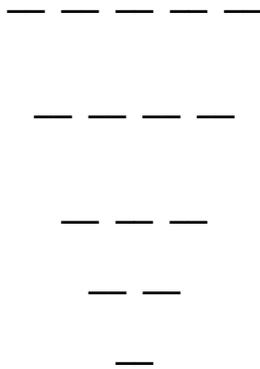
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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | O | R | E | L | Y |
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| F | L | A | M | E | S |
| S | T | O | L | E | N |
| W | A | I | T | E | R |

Notice that the diagonal letters in the box to the left spell SUMMER. Shuffle the order of the words so the same diagonal spells WARMER.



PYRAMID PUZZLE

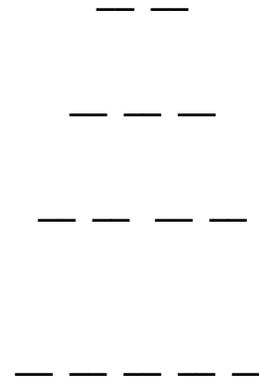
ORANGE



Reduce the six-letter word “orange” to the **left** by one letter at each descending step so each step makes a new word.

To the **right**, descend the stairs by adding one letter to the “O” at each step to make a new word.

O



Solution to Pyramid Puzzle: ORANGE, range, rang, ran, an, a, O, on, one, tone, stone.

Solution to Word Shuffle: waiter, camera, solely, flames, stolen, muster

Sunday, November 9, 2025

Scripture Reading: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

Life is God's novel. Let him write it. —Isaac Bashevis Singer

A few years ago, a headline made the rounds: “Staying in Touch with Pop Culture Key to Long Life.” It was based on a lighthearted study suggesting that keeping up with pop culture — knowing who’s who in music, movies and memes — might help older adults stay mentally sharp and socially connected. The idea was that staying culturally aware helps keep you engaged with the world, builds common ground across generations, and may even offer a small boost to emotional well-being.

Now, while knowing who Taylor Swift is or what’s trending on Netflix may spark a conversation with your grandkids, real life — true life, abundant life — can’t be measured in social media savvy or the successful tracking of celebrities. Staying in touch with pop culture may keep us in the loop, but *staying in touch with God is what keeps us alive in spirit.*

The Bible says, “And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3). Eternal life isn’t just about living forever. It’s about living deeply, purposefully and joyfully right now through a relationship with God.

So, by all means, stay culturally connected if it brings joy or helps you relate to others, but don’t neglect the spiritual connection that matters most. Here are three simple ways to stay in touch with what really matters:

Stay in touch with Scripture. Pop culture changes with the seasons; God’s word stands forever. “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever” (Isaiah 40:8). Make it a daily habit — even a few verses a day — to let God’s voice guide your heart and mind.

Stay in touch with God through prayer. We check the news. We check our phones. But do we check in with God? Prayer is how we stay connected to the One who holds all things together — including us.

Stay in touch with people. Jesus didn’t isolate himself from the world. He ate with sinners, comforted the lonely and walked with the outcasts. Staying relationally connected is part of how we live out the love of God.

It’s not just what you know — it’s who you know. So yes — know what’s trending. Laugh at the memes. Enjoy the music. Because keeping up with pop culture has benefits. But keeping close to Christ keeps you truly alive. This is the real key to a long and meaningful life.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O God, you are my strength and hope. Thank you for being the constant in my life that never changes. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

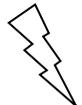
- Sunday: 2 Corinthians 4-6
- Monday: Nehemiah 10-13
- Tuesday: Micah 1-4
- Wednesday: 2 Corinthians 7-9
- Thursday: 2 Corinthians 10-13
- Friday: Acts 20-22
- Saturday: Psalms 127-129

Verse to Remember

But [God] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

—2 Corinthians 12:9

LOGIC CHALLENGE: Can you solve this?

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----|
|  | + |  | + |  | = | 60 |
|  | + |  | + |  | = | 30 |
|  | - |  | - |  | = | 3 |
|  | + |  | + |  | = | ??? |

WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE:

WHICH NUMBER IS THE ODD ONE OUT?

68 18 50 31 24

Answer to
LOGIC
CHALLENGE:
26. Odd One
Out: 31. It is
the only odd
number.



Sunday, November 16, 2025

Scripture Reading: Malachi 4:1-2a

*Lose an hour in the morning, and you will spend
all day looking for it. —Richard Whately*

I'm going out on a limb here, but my guess is that most elderly people are morning people. Agree or disagree? There is some data to support this notion.

Studies show that as people age, their internal body clock tends to shift earlier, leading them to wake earlier and feel more alert in the morning hours. Researchers often call this the “morningness effect,” noting that older adults (ages 60–80) perform better on cognitive tasks in the morning compared to the afternoon.

There is something especially sacred about the morning, particularly for those who have walked a long road through many seasons of life. For the elderly, morning is not just the start of another day — it is a blessed reminder that God has sustained them through the night and granted the gift of one more sunrise.

In some Asian households, there is a quiet daily ritual in which an aged person takes a tea cup or drinking vessel and turns it upside down at night before going to bed. Then, upon arising, turns the same cup right side up, as a symbolic gesture of gratitude. Once again, the cup is right side up, empty and ready to be filled with whatever blessings may come during the day.

The Bible says, “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22–23, ESV). The prophet Jeremiah wrote these words during one of Israel’s darkest hours: “His mercies are new every morning...” What a stunning promise! That no matter our age, no matter what yesterday held, God meets us each day with fresh mercy.

The psalmist was a morning person: “O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning, I plead my case to you and watch” (Psalm 5:3). In another psalm, he prays, “Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days” (90:14).

So, morning people, let us arise today, and say with the psalmist, “This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it!” (118:24, KJV). —Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the gift of this morning. Thank you for the breath in my lungs, the light in the sky, and that I have been given one more day to love you, serve others and reflect your mercy. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: Acts 23-25

Monday: Acts 26-28

Tuesday: Ephesians 1-3

Wednesday: Ephesians 4-6

Thursday: Philippians 1-4

Friday: Colossians 1-4

Saturday: Psalms 130-132

CAPITAL CROSSING:

Directions: Place the capitals listed below in the correct spaces to complete the crossword.

4 Letters

Lima

Oslo

5 Letters

Hanoi, Paris

Seoul, Tokyo

6 Letters

Athens, Boston, Havana, London,

Lisbon, Moscow, Pierre, Saigon, Topeka

7 Letters

Caracas

Jackson

Raleigh

8 Letters

Belgrade

Bismarck

Brussels

CapeTown

Santiago

9 Letters

Amsterdam

Bucharest

Stockholm

10 Letters

Sacramento

BatonRouge

Washington

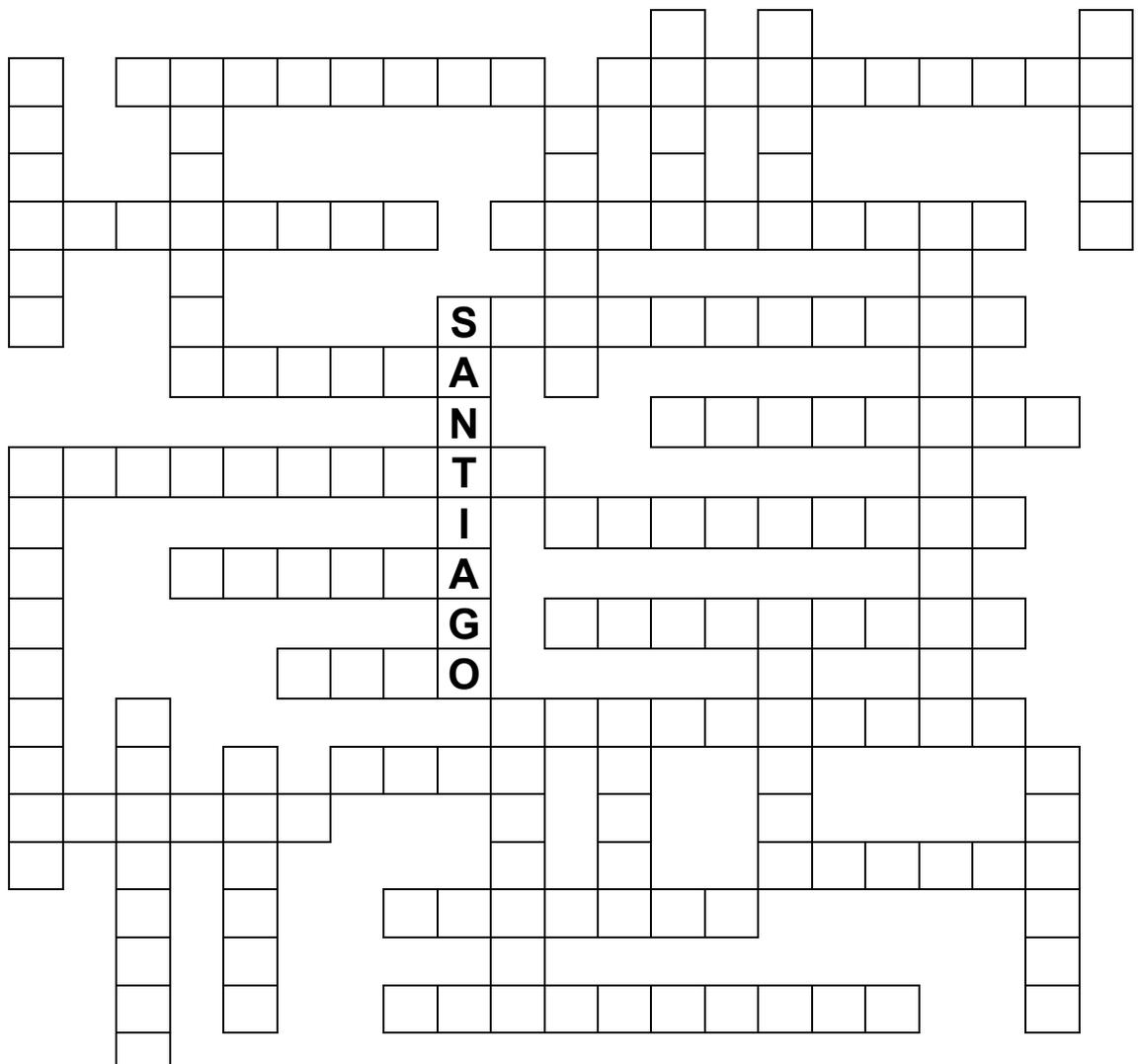
Copenhagen

MexicoCity

11 Letters

Springfield

Tallahassee



VETERANS DAY IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11. "It's about how we treat our veterans every single day of the year. It's about making sure they have the care they need and the benefits that they've earned when they come home. It's about serving all of you as well as you've served the United States of America." —President Barack Obama.

Thanksgiving Sunday, November 23, 2025

Scripture Reading: Colossians 1:11-20

Gratitude is the ability to experience life as a gift. —John Ortberg

Thanksgiving Day

*Over the river, and through the wood,
To grandfather's house we go;
The horse knows the way to carry the sleigh
Through the white and drifted snow.*

*Over the river, and through the wood—
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes and bites the nose
As over the ground we go.*

*Over the river, and through the wood,
To have a first-rate play.
Hear the bells ring "Ting-a-ling-ding,"
Hurrah for Thanksgiving Day!*

*Over the river, and through the wood
Trot fast, my dapple-gray!
Spring over the ground, like a hunting-hound!
For this is Thanksgiving Day.*

*Over the river, and through the wood,
And straight through the barn-yard gate.
We seem to go extremely slow,—
It is so hard to wait!*

*Over the river and through the wood—
Now grandmother's cap I spy!
Hurrah for the fun! Is the pudding done?
Hurrah for the pumpkin-pie!*

—Lydia Maria Child

Prayer: Loving God, I praise you for all of your bountiful blessings! You are rich in mercy and grace, and I am the grateful recipient of all you offer. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Hebrews 1-4
- Monday:** Hebrews 5-7
- Tuesday:** Hebrews 8-10
- Wednesday:** Hebrews 11-13
- Thursday:** Philemon; 1 Peter 1-2
- Friday:** 1 Peter 3-5
- Saturday:** Psalms 133-135

PROVERBIAL ANIMALS

Many expressions in our language use animals as metaphors. Consider, for example, “Wise as an owl,” or “To take the bull by the horns.” Below are more of these expressions. Unscramble the words to find the animals in the proverbs.

| | | |
|----------|-------|----------------------------------------|
| PAE | _____ | 1. To go _____ over something. |
| EBRAEV | _____ | 2. An eager _____ . |
| RDIB | _____ | 3. To sing like a _____. |
| GOD | _____ | 4. To be in the _____ house. |
| FOWL | _____ | 5. To be a _____ in sheep’s clothing. |
| RUYTEK | _____ | 6. To talk _____. |
| RUILQSER | _____ | 7. To _____ away your money. |
| SMUPOS | _____ | 8. To play _____ (pretend to be dead). |
| EMU | _____ | 9. Stubborn as a _____. |
| NOLI | _____ | 10. _____ -hearted. |



RIDDLE

I am weightless and can be seen. When I am put in a barrel, I make it lighter.

What am I?
(Answer to the right)

Answers to Proverbial Animals:
 1. ape, 2. beaver, 3. bird, 4. dog,
 5. wolf, 6. turkey, 7. squirrel,
 8. possum, 9. mule, 10. lion.
Solution to Riddle:
 A hole.



First Sunday of Advent, November 30, 2025

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. —Hebrews 6:19

There's an old story of a woman who, nearing the end of her life, asked to be buried with a fork in her hand. When asked why, she said: "At church dinners, after the meal was cleared, someone would always lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.' It meant something better was coming — dessert! I want people to see the fork and remember that the best is yet to come."

This is what hope looks like. Even after a long life full of both blessings and trials, the Christian can still say with confidence: "The best is yet to come."

Advent is the season when hope lights the first candle, pushing back the long shadows of the year. But what is hope?

Hope isn't wishful thinking. It's not crossing our fingers and hoping for the best. Real hope is anchored in the faithfulness of God.

Many of us know from experience that life is filled with seasons — seasons of illness, loneliness, loss or waiting — when hope feels hard to hold onto. Seniors especially have known the long wait for answered prayers, for healing or for reconciliation. Yet it is precisely in these seasons that Advent speaks the loudest.

Theologian Karl Barth once said: "What other time or season can or will the church ever have but that of Advent?" In other words, all of life, in a sense, is lived in Advent — in the waiting, in the longing, in the trusting that God is still at work even when we can't yet see all God has promised.

Today, we wait — not for a Savior to be born, but for a Savior to return. And while we wait, we live in hope — a hope that has roots deeper than circumstances.

The apostle Paul prays for believers to be so full of God's hope that it overflows: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

As we light the first candle of Advent, remember: Your hope is not behind you. It's still ahead. God's promises have no expiration date.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: God of Hope, kindle in our hearts a flame that never dies. Fill us with joy and peace in believing. Let our hope overflow, because the best truly is yet to come. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday: 2 Peter 1-3

Monday: 1 Timothy 1-3

Tuesday: 1 Timothy 4-6

Wednesday: 2 Timothy 1-4

Thursday: Titus 1-3

Friday: 1 John 1-2

Saturday: Psalms 136-138

Circle Scramble



DIRECTIONS: In the circles of letters below are 10-letter words. Each circle has the letters of the word in the correct order. But you must determine where each word begins and in which direction the word is reading. Write your answer in the space provided.

1.
 D
 A I
 R C
 E A
 D T
 E

4.
 D
 N O
 E S
 C C
 S R
 E

7.
 F
 E R
 R E
 E T
 R N
 I

2.
 O
 S P
 T A
 R E
 O H
 P

5.
 U
 N M
 E E
 R R
 A E
 T

8.
 N
 E O
 L R
 L T
 A I
 C

3.
 D
 N U
 A M
 R M
 O E
 M

6.
 E
 S Y
 T R
 E A
 R E
 Y

9.
 A
 N T
 E E
 V R
 U E
 J

Solution: 1. eradicat^e, 2. apostroph^e, 3. memorand^um, 4. crescend^os, 5. remunerat^e, 6. yesteryear, 7. interfer^er, 8. citronella, 9. rejuvinate.