

2018 a year of gratitude

The Power of a Thank You Note

In 2018, the entire AHUMC family is being encouraged to participate in a **Year of Gratitude**.

Studies have shown that those who live with a sense of thanksgiving report that they are far happier than those who do not. As a family of faith, we know that we have been blessed and that it is important to give thanks to God. It is also essential to our well-being to express our gratitude to one another, and to those who have made a difference in our lives.

As a way of learning to express gratitude to others we are encouraging members of AHUMC to write 365 thank you notes this year.

This idea comes from John Kralik's book *365 Thank Yous: The Year A Simple Act of Daily Gratitude Changed My Life*.

But wait, you say: It's already January 14 - I'm already behind! *No worries!* We are intentionally making this suggestion after

January 1, so you will not give up on this project just because you missed a day. Maybe you'll write more than one card on some days and none on others. Perhaps you'd rather pick a different number: maybe one card a week, or one every other day is better for you.

We hope you will join us for worship each week as we encourage one another to find reasons for gratitude all around us. This year-long focus on gratitude will enrich you and those around you.

"A field of research on gratitude in kids is emerging, and early findings indicate parents' instincts to elevate the topic are spot-on. Concrete benefits come to kids who literally count their blessings.

Gratitude works like a muscle. Take time to recognize good fortune, and feelings of appreciation can increase. Even more, those who are less grateful gain the most from a concerted effort."

- Wall Street Journal

Gratitude for the Whole Family

Adults are quick to prompt children to say "please" and "thank you." We hope these promptings teach habits that eventually become internalized and create a sense of kindness and appreciation toward others as our children grow into their teenage years and young adulthood.

Throughout 2018, children's and youth activities and curriculum will reflect the Year of Gratitude.

How to Participate

Get ready to say THANK YOU! It's that simple!

(over)

Beyond just the simple phrase, try to say thank you in a meaningful way to someone every day. That is 365 thank-yous to family & friends, individuals & groups, loved ones near, far & passed away and even strangers.

These thank-yous can take the form of written letters, emails, postcards, social media posts, photos with notes . . . the sky's the limit with your creativity.

Posting on social media? Add the hashtag

#ahumcgrateful

to your post. As we use this tag throughout the year, people will be able to click on it to see a whole gallery of what makes our church members grateful.

A Litany of Gratitude

We gather together today in the presence of God to remember the many blessings we have been given in our lives.

Let us listen to the Word of God: 2 Corinthians 9:8-15

Mindful of the generosity of many, the prayers and labor of all in our midst, we offer these petitions to you Lord. Please respond by saying: To you, Lord, we give thanks.

We give thanks for the generosity of many in our communities: for teachers, artists, parents, volunteers, medical professionals, caregivers and business men and women who every day share their gifts and talents with others. **To you, Lord, we give thanks.**

We give thanks for those who provide food for our nourishment: for farmers and migrant workers, for single parents and kitchen workers, for all, anywhere, who work and sacrifice to ensure that your children are fed. **To you, Lord, we give thanks.**

We give thanks for the opportunity to come together in this space: to worship, learn, share, and grow in a common ministry. **To you, Lord, we give thanks.**

We are mindful of the many who are lacking adequate food, proper clothing, safety and security around the world. We give thanks for all those who work for justice in our communities and around the world. **To you, Lord, we give thanks.**

And we give you thanks for simple pleasures: for a meal with family and friends, a beautiful garden, a job well done, an unexpected reward, a child's laughter. **To you, Lord, we give thanks.**

Lord, we thank you for the bountiful love you show to us, especially to the love we know through your Son, Jesus, both now and forever. Amen.