



Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

Navigating Life In Thankfulness

Finish the sentence before you read today's TEDDY TALK (of course I won't demand you follow this instruction, and during, or after will work). Just know the completed sentence is for you to use as a comfort, a memory, a joy, a praise worthy event...or whatever/wherever your words lead you:

It is November 2020. Thanksgiving is next week. Today I am thankful for...

For as long as I have been afforded the opportunity to write stories, blogs, articles for the churches I serve, I have asked people to complete the sentence above during the Thanksgiving week. Often, I get a card or letter telling me some of the things friends are thankful for. Should you decide to share your completed sentence with me, I still like cards and letters, but a text or email is just fine.

I would like to share some of your comments with other readers next week. So text to 817 228-6632 or email to tedm@martinmethodist.org so I can share in your joy and perhaps share your words...I won't mention your name (except if you ask me to).

Like many of you, Sandy and I experienced loss of a mother, a brother, and some friends this year. Sandy's mom was the last of our parents and grandparents to wonder the fields of God's Planet Earth creation. Sandy's Mom and my brother have connected with the husband and brother they lost so many years ago. A joyful reunion in action. It is my belief that all of us should be thankful we see another day to spend with family and friends.

So how do we navigate life when we face disease statistics and conflict scrolling across the bottom of our TV screens or in stories on mobile devices. Families are having a rough year in 2020. Many of us, me the writer, you the reader are included in the category of "having a rough year in 2020." Now the question is what we might find to be thankful for in the days leading to a New Year. We have to ask ourselves, "What have we learned that will make going forward a positive in our 2021 lives, and beyond?"

Excitement for young people in America who, in the face of a pandemic, continue to educate themselves under most unusual circumstances. They adapt and make the most

of new ways to creatively learn. Each student shares in ways that will set the pace for the future in America and around the world. God's peace and courage is my prayer for young men and women, our leaders in the future.

Let's pray the lessons learned will benefit us in the balance of this lifetime and for generations to come. We have learned to meet pandemic proportioned viruses head on. In so doing, we know to take precautions immediately when contagious disease is evident. Collectively, we will know to take it seriously, not flippantly. We will know to trust the scientist who warn of the intense consequences of contagions like Covid-19 and take defensive action.

Let us pray that divisions are conquered by renewing unity among all people. Divisions over political agendas, racial inequality, loss of life on Dallas streets by gunfire, and lack of tolerance are unacceptable. These were issues discussed, fought over, lives lost in a Civil war, dissention in the women's rights movements, and rebellion over war and racial tensions in the 1960's in America.

What happens today is not new. The same rhetoric, anger, destruction, and dissention have been at the forefront many times in the history of the USA. In 1962, Pete Seeger questioned events that were much like happenings in 2020. His song "Where have all the flowers gone" asks listeners to consider "When will they ever learn?"

This year has been both troubling and exciting. Regardless of the tensions and uncertainties in 2020 something profound is trending. There are leaders and good Americans seeking to renounce exploitation and oppression. Systems of justice and equality are being reborn.

Let us in full unity with brothers and sisters of all nationalities, races, religious leanings, political affiliation, and conflicting health opinions find reason for being Thanksgivers from this day forward. It may feel challenging to be enthusiastic about the future, but I believe it is time once again to "Give Peace a Chance."

Together we pray...let it be so!

Peace always

Ted