

[Select Page](#)

A Thanksgiving Pivot

Nov 2, 2020 | Arkansas United Methodist



By Gary E. Mueller

Bishop of the Arkansas Annual Conference



2020 has been such a train wreck that any words I write will fail to communicate what it's been like. The COVID-19 pandemic has infected millions, killed hundreds of thousands, and is surging. Life has been turned upside down, the economy is in freefall, and families are having to make gut-wrenching choices. Black citizens have been killed by police, political polarization continues to create a greater divide, and Congress is mired in

posturing instead of working for the good of the nation. And if this weren't enough, all of this doesn't even begin to address your own very personal challenges and tragedies.

It's going to be hard to be thankful this Thanksgiving. I don't like admitting this, but it's the truth. And it's why I think 2020 is the perfect time to make a Thanksgiving pivot that changes the basis of your thanks from being contingent on how things are going to joyfully giving thanks because it grows out of your relationship with God who has gone all-in on the world's behalf.

You can absolutely count on God. And God's grace. And God's passionate love. And God's healing. And God's second chances. And God's ability to change hearts. And God's longing to make God's Will just as real on earth as it already is in heaven. And God's gift of Jesus that means nothing that happens in life or in death will ever separate you from God's love in him. And God's hope.

Of course, struggles, grief, heartache, tragedies, injustice and pain will continue to take a devastating toll even after you have made a Thanksgiving pivot. There's just no getting away from this. But something will also fundamentally change. Life's most horrible junk will no longer have the final word. In fact, it doesn't even have a prayer.

The Apostle Paul states this so clearly in the Seventh Chapter of 2 Corinthians as he explains the options you have as you deal with the distress that is a part of life,

10 Distress that drives us to God does that. It turns us around. It gets us back in the way of salvation. We never regret that kind of pain. But those who let distress drive them away from God are full of regrets, end up on a deathbed of regrets. ("The Message")

You are going to have a hard time giving thanks this Thanksgiving if you let struggles, grief, heartache, tragedies, injustice and pain have the final word. However, you will be overflowing with thanks if you embrace the fact that God's love always has the final word. So go ahead, make the Thanksgiving pivot.

Share this:



[Customize buttons](#)

<input type="text"/>	Search
----------------------	--------