



November 20, 2022

## Thanksgiving Thoughts

*"If God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers—most of which are never even seen—don't you think he'll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you? What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.*

- Matthew 6:30-33 (from THE MESSAGE)

As a preacher, it shouldn't surprise you that I am a lover of words. I constantly listen to podcasts on my phone as I walk our dogs throughout the day, and because of those dogs I'm always looking down to see where and what they are sniffing at or what they are doing their business on. The words clog my ears with politics, culture, history, and a few odd and ends interests and my eyes are mostly on the dogs, as they explore the world through their noses. Still, I think even before we started adding dogs to our household, I was prone to looking down when I walked, watching my steps, being careful, being prudent, worrying that I might trip and fall.

But I've missed a lot because my gaze is naturally turned downward out of caution. There are moments when I look up and I am just stunned by what I am missing, the beauty I was missing because my eyes were focused elsewhere. Jesus points to the wildflowers in this

passage from the Sermon on the Mount, but it was the trees bursting into red and orange flames that I almost missed out once again this year. It's good thing to be cautious, to be responsible, to make plans, to carry doggy bags and clean up after your dogs, but, according to Jesus, it is a better thing to look up at this big, beautiful messy world, and trust that God will take care of us, of others, and all of this world. In seeing the small ways God shows up to care for all creation, in the flowers, in the now trees, I am reminded that I too am taken care of. Every time I look up, I am reminded that God has this, whatever it is, and for that I am thankful. May God bless you during this season of thanksgiving and praise.

- Rev. Kevin J. McLemore

Associate Conference Minister for Search & Call



## Abuse Prevention Considerations: Keeping Your Ministry Safe

**Wednesday, November 30, 2022 @ 2pm EST**

**Featuring: Christy Schiller – Vice President of Account Services, Praesidium.**

Failure to discover a sex offender can affect those in your care, your reputation, financial stability, and trust within the community. Join us on

November 30th at 2 p.m. EST to learn about targeted solutions that will strengthen your ministry's abuse prevention efforts.

Register at:

<https://www.insuranceboard.org/abuse-prevention-considerations/>

