

November 24, 2024

Christmas Cards from Disaster Ministries

“Send joyful Christmas greetings and provide your friends and family a practical tool to get prepared for a natural disasters at the same time.

These Disaster Preparedness Christmas Cards brought to you by United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries include a complete up-to-date list of what should be included in an individual ‘Go-Bag’ – a bag that is prepared to grab and ‘go’ when a disaster strikes. A Go-Bag is a critical tool in being prepared for a natural disaster and thus able to help others. A faithful reminder to start the year off prepared!

Merry Christmas! Order from uccresources.com.



From the Addiction & Recovery Taskforce: From Someone in Recovery

As the holidays start to approach us, I’ve been thinking about the people in recovery that we’ve lost. The ones that didn’t stay in the program; the ones that were never found – and the ones that were found too late. The ones that had several years clean & decided to do it ‘just one more time’, never to be seen again. The ones with a few hours clean that didn’t think they were worth it. The loss for the recovery community, the families changed forever, the children left behind. It all sounds so bleak & hopeless. But then there are those who still go to meetings regularly, making sure the doors are open; the ones that approach newcomers and give them a hug and reassuring smile. The ones holding on for one more day. The small seed of hope deep inside us that says we’re going to make it. Just for today, I carry that hope, because today is all I ever have. May it be so for all addicts.

Grateful for Different Things

As I write this Communitas article, I’m looking out my office window and seeing the fall trees half full of that blaze of red and orange that marks this time of the year. I’ve always loved the fall for lots of different reasons: a cool down from the summer heat, and the explosive vibrancy of the colors, among others. Yet, I’m aware that others are less grateful for the fall, since it marks the end of the summer and the arrival of the cold with its long winter nights. Others swear by the spring as their favorite time of the year, or even summer when the world seems to open up to a whirl of activity.

We’re all grateful for different things, of course. You may find joy in the winter and sorrow in the summer, while I experience the opposite. We sometimes wonder how anyone could be grateful for something we see as a curse, or at least a burden. What you may find something to praise God for you may be something I wish never happened to me. A blessing for you may seem like a curse if it was given to me. Certainly, God knows what we need and what you may need from God may be different from what I need from God. So often we decide the gifts we receive from God should be the same ones everyone receives, as if we knew what God should do for someone else. But God’s gifts to us are particular gifts meant for us alone, and often, when time gives us some perspective, we can see them as exactly what we needed at that time in our lives, and we become grateful for them.

As we experience another Thanksgiving, I invite us to consider being grateful for the gifts God has given others that we could never be grateful for ourselves. We don’t need to agree on what God’s gifts to us should be but we should acknowledge God as the First Giver, and as the One who knows what each of us need in any moment. We don’t all need to be the same, or think the same, or love the same things, but we do need to appreciate – no, be grateful for - the God who gives people what they need. Having written that, I can’t imagine how anyone could be grateful for cranberry sauce...

Rev. Kevin McLemore,
 PSEC Associate Conference Minister
 for Search and Call

