

## What's Happening for Women

### November

5th– Tapestry Dinner: Speaker Mary Jo Sharp, 6:30pm

12th– Christmas shopping at the Weekday Christmas Mini Bazaar, 8:30am– 2:30pm

### December

3rd– Lighthouse of Hope, 7pm– 9pm

13th– Glory to the King, Contemporary Christmas Music Program, 11:00am

20th– Savior, Traditional Christmas Music Program, 9:30am and 11:00am

24th– Family Friendly Christmas Eve Service, 5:30pm

24th– Candlelight/ Lord's Supper Service, 11:00pm

### January

13th– The Big Dig begins– go to [ubc.org](http://ubc.org) for details

A three week practical challenge that will change the way you read the Bible! Bring a friend and learn together. Only offered during these three weeks in January. Save the dates!

### UBC Groups for Women

Tuesdays, 7pm

EB 101 - led by Karol Peters

Wednesdays

Right at Home Moms - 9:30am-11:45am, 3rd Floor Lounge

Thursdays

Precepts- 9:45am– 12pm, EB226

Crossing Cultures– 9:45am– 12pm, EB222

Sermon on the Mount– 9:45am– 12pm, EB210

Sundays

9:30am, EB 202 -Second Wind led by Pamm Muzslay

11 am, EB 209 - The Lydia Group for Working Women led by Angie Reeves

11 am, EB 102 - Journey to Joy led by Debbie Hampton

5 pm– 7pm, East Foyer - Book Club for Women; Gospel Treason led by Jennifer Broddle

**New!!**The Big Dig is coming for 3 weeks in January 2016. Check the website for more information and to register. <http://www.ubc.org/women/groups/>

### Connect with us

Facebook: Women of UBC

Pinterest: UBC Women

Twitter: @ubchouston

Need to talk to someone? Contact Lora Doremus at [lora.doremus@ubc.org](mailto:lora.doremus@ubc.org) or 281-488-8517.

Questions about programs? Contact Lisa Stiles at [lisa.stiles@ubc.org](mailto:lisa.stiles@ubc.org).

Want to contribute to future newsletters? Let us know!

Joy

Joy:

## A UBC WOMEN'S MINISTRY MAGAZINE

### When Thankfulness is Hard

By Kristin Hamon

"You know what we should do? Let's all go around the table and say one thing we are thankful for before digging into this wonderful feast!"

Here we go. I knew it was coming. Every year we do this, yet I always seem to struggle to think of one thing to share out loud. One thing. They seem to be going counter-clockwise. So I have exactly 6 family members before me to think of something I feel comfortable sharing publicly with my family.

What do I say. What am I thankful for?

My family? My mother-in-law is aging rapidly. She has Rheumatoid Arthritis. On most days, she hurts and, being recently diagnosed with ulcerated colitis, has left her feeling physically and emotionally defeated.

My children? My sister-in-law cannot get pregnant. She's emotionally broken. So far, she's two years into her fertility battle with no end in sight. I just spoke to her early this week. We cried. She said holidays are so hard because they have started to remind her and her husband of the family they so desperately want to grow.

My friends? I just cannot believe my friend's marriage is over. The divorce papers were just finalized. They seemed so perfect. I don't know what to do. How do I help her? What do I say?

"Ok, your turn! What are you thankful for? Hurry up! The sweet potatoes are getting cold!"

Tell me I'm not the only one who has sat at a family gathering and faced this socially stressful task. It seems strange. A year come and gone and I struggle to think of one thing to share? As Christians we know there should be so many blessings rolling off our tongues in moments like these, yet sometimes we are still left tongue tied. Why is this? What holds back our praise? More importantly, are we asking this question in our daily prayers and our walk with Christ?

A friend posted on Facebook the hilarious reality and definition of what life without gratitude looks like for many of us. "I am the queen of worry. Worrier: noun. (wu-ree-er) – The opposite of warrior. The insane ability to scare yourself senseless." Yes. This defines a heart that is focused solely on that which is missing or broken in this life. And yet, Christ implores us in Matthew 6, "Do not be anxious about your life...do not be anxious about tomorrow." Our Savior even lovingly suggests ways to battle our worry when it desperately attempts to steal our gratitude. Jesus invites us, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." We only need to release the tenacious grip that we have on our burdens. They are heavy and hard to carry and instead of clinging to them, we can let go and rest in Him. This is our one thing. It is bigger than being thankful for the food on our table or the love of another person. It is bigger than disease that ravages our bodies or trials that exhaust our hearts. In the quietness of our hearts, this November, may you find peace in this one thing that offers a genuine chance to experience gratitude in a life-altering way.



The Word

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)

Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. (Psalm 106:1)

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. (Colossians 2:6-7)

## The Blessing of Hosting Thanksgiving

Sharing meals together is one of the hallmarks of life as a Christian. During his life and ministry we read about Jesus enjoying food and drink at a wedding, teaching 5,000 people while providing enough bread and fish for all, and his last meal with his disciples he spoke of the importance of taking the bread and wine and remembering him. As members of the church most of us have experienced this sacrament in some form or fashion whether by participating in a small group potluck, giving or receiving meals in celebration of a new baby, or in mourning for the death of a loved one. Thanksgiving is such a beautiful time of year as an entire day is set aside to make good food, to spend time with loved ones, and to acknowledge the blessings God has bestowed, give thanks, and to remember-just as Jesus instructed. The following is a list of tips that I have come to rely on as we've become the de facto Thanksgiving hosts over the years. As an admitted list maker and lover I hope that this helps to either encourage you to host Thanksgiving if you've never done it, or perhaps to the professionals, gives you a new idea or two.

### \*Make a list!

Of what you're making and when it needs to be ready, and what you can do ahead of time so that you can eat a hot meal! You can take this further by assigning serving and cooking dishes so you know you have enough, and by writing down page numbers in cookbooks for your recipes.

### \*Farm out the extras

Let your guests bring desserts, side dishes, appetizers, refreshments, whatever they offer take them up on it!

### \*Best turkey tips

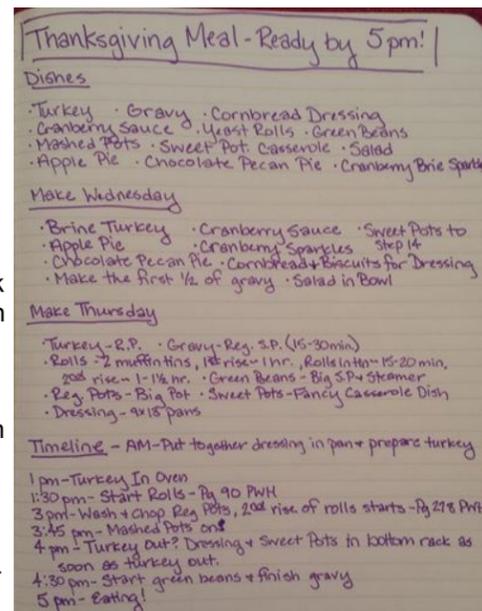
Brine it to tenderize the meat (overnight brine-1/2 C table salt per gallon of water for 12-14 hours), roast it on a v-rack starting breast side down to cook the dark meat without drying out the turkey, flipping the bird halfway through (remember dark meat-175° white meat-165°), and use an instant read thermometer!

### \*Make your own Cranberry Sauce

1 bag cranberries, 3/4 C water, 1 C sugar, dash salt, boil it all in a saucepan for 5-10 minutes till most of the berries have burst, let set in the fridge for at least an hour, and you've got fancy looking and delicious cranberry sauce with minimal effort that can be done the day before!

### \*Don't stress!

Enjoy the process, enjoy the time with your loved ones, and remember your blessings and offer thanks to God throughout the day.



## Bay Area Turning Point: Encouragement

At the Bay Area Turning Point Survivors' Banquet a woman who I remembered from the Shelter came up to me to ask if I remembered her. Yes. I remember a very tired looking, discouraged woman with many children, frequently softly crying during Bible study. This night she was smiling broadly, wearing makeup, had lost weight and her hair shown beautifully. She told me she was great and stated that we had saved her life. When I started to protest and give her platitudes about how she was the survivor, she looked me in the eye and insisted that the Bible Study classes had saved her life. She said when she would get down she would remember what we kept saying about God's love, and how we gave her hope.



If you would like information about joining the BAP Bible Study team for women or teens please contact [lora.doremus@ubc.org](mailto:lora.doremus@ubc.org)

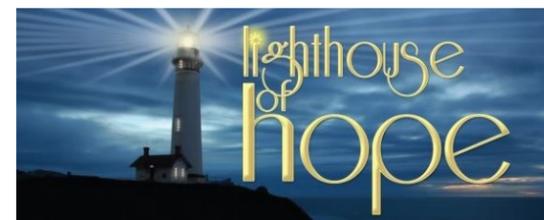
## UBC Foundation

The UBC Foundation was chartered in 2001 for the purpose of supporting the vision and efforts that UBC has for our own community as well as supporting causes and missions throughout the world. For most people what we know about the Foundation comes from two events that happen throughout the year: scholarships awarded to high school graduates in May, and the annual golf tournament in November which is aimed at raising funds and raising awareness about the Foundation. The Foundation allows for the long term use of funds by accumulating gifts and combining them over the course of many years so that long term funding is possible. This past year \$5,000 was given to the Beltway 8 South Crisis Pregnancy Center to help establish a foundation for families, \$10,000 was given to finance The Porch and Faith@Home ministry start-up costs, and \$5,000 was awarded in scholarships. An accounting of the current fiscal year balance and breakdown of funds for the Foundation can be found on the last page of the current Focus book. There are several ways that you can give to the UBC Foundation: you can sign up for a spot in the golf tournament, you can leave a testamentary gift, you can donate for a memorial or give an honorary gift, and you can give by one time donation either online or with the green envelope located in the pews in the sanctuary. There is a more detailed FAQ page on the ubc website under the Giving tab for more information about how the funds are used and what the Foundation does. The UBC Foundation is a wonderful way to invest in the future of our church and it's impact for the kingdom of God.



## Lighthouse of Hope Testimony: Andrea Stephens

It really does take a village! The Thursday after Thanksgiving approximately 400 very special people will come to UBC. Women and children living in shelters due to domestic violence; people who have been homeless and are working to gain education and skills to support their families; women (often themselves just girls) either in or recently in a crisis pregnancy; families simply struggling to survive; and all of them in need of Christ's hope and love. At this time of year I'll hear God say "Suck it up, Andrea" (yes, I confess, sometimes that's been my attitude) and volunteer in some capacity. Because, hello, it's not about me. Over the years I've wrapped bunches of toys and sweatshirts, unloaded and sacked a gazillion pounds of groceries to help bolster the pantries of the homes and shelters, I've helped with getting the guests picked-up, brought to UBC, then delivered back again on all those buses. I've served meals and drinks, I've sat with families, held their occasionally fussy babies while trying to chat about their children/situation/school/the weather hoping they can A) actually eat with two hands for a change, and B) feel like we're genuinely glad they're here. I've sat in the worship center, listened to the gospel being presented, sang along to Christmas songs and laughed at how much everyone totally rocks Feliz Navidad! Every year, on LOH night, I've watched the guests awkwardly file in the UBC doors, somewhat quiet, looking tired or uncertain, sometimes sulky (the teens...obviously). Every year I've watched those 400 souls file back out the UBC doors smiling with joy, hugging people, waving, and handing over cards on which are written heartfelt and sometimes desperate prayers. Then it happens - I get choked up, teary eyed and overwhelmed by my own joy and gratitude! I know it's a privilege for me to be there and it humbles me. The blessing is not just for our guests. I'm



grateful Lighthouse of Hope is not about me. Then again, in some ways, I'm pretty sure it is.

The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' Matt 25:40