Saints,

Grace to you and peace as the weather turns chill and the hours of daylight dwindle.

Most Novembers it’s as easy as pumpkin pie to offer abundant thanks for the blessings of the year……...and then there’s 2020, a year that has made us all need to take an extra step forward to feed a hungry child, strengthen a relationship and be the voice of the vulnerable.

The unrelenting anxiety, pain, and grief brought upon us by the deadly Coronavirus has certainly presented us with challenges in terms of our discipleship as well as the ministry of \_\_\_\_UMC. But just when we think we’re at the brink of despair, in typical fashion God comes through in ways that are both concrete and miraculous! ***And how does God accomplish these incredible feats of action?*** The way that is so typical of God- ***through you, God’s people!***

I am overwhelmed with joy at the ways in which you have responded to the greatest challenge we have faced in many decades. So, with your permission, allow me to offer thanks…

* For the leadership of our church, especially our **Church Council** chaired by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the **Trustees** led by president \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who realized the severity of the pandemic at its start and have done all they can to keep our ministry moving forward and our congregation safe.
* For our **Outreach Committee** along with countless volunteers, chaired by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_who have since March fed over 25,000 of our hunger-stricken neighbors!
* For everyone who made **Worship** not only possible during this time of live-streaming and social distancing. I thank God for our worship chair, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and musical director \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Note any additional ministries like Vacation Bible School, Youth Group, Small Group leaders, etc.
* For our **Nurture** team, chaired by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who got our virtual Sunday School up and running with over \_\_\_\_\_ kids registered!
* Be sure to thank church staff.
* But mainly Saints, I give thinks to **YOU,** whose contributions of time, talent and treasure have empowered our ministry throughout the nine months of this crisis. I know that your lives have been so disrupted by what we’re going through and yet you have never forgotten your church and that’s why I firmly believe we will emerge from this wilderness stronger than ever…together!

Your Thanksgiving offering today is yet another way to say thanks to God for all our blessings while at the same time strengthening the ongoing ministry of our church as we continue our trek to the Promised Land of God’s Kingdom!

Have a Happy Thanksgiving,