

**“First Watch” Touch Points for Evangel’s Prayer Vigil team**  
**For the week of November 20, 2016**

***When You’re Surprised by a Blessing***

Thoughts in preparation for Thanksgiving

*The current series of Touch Points is taken from “Time Out in Tough Times,” from the editors of Guide-posts (MIF Books, 2009). The reflections come from a variety of writers.*

**READ:** Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” *John 14:8*

**REFLECT:** Before my husband Jim was discharged from the Army, a friend invited me over for coffee. “We’ll chat, just the two of us,” she said. But soon after I arrived, her doorbell rang. Two other women I knew walked in. Gradually a dozen or so women finally settled into the living room. I sat there bewildered.

My friend looked at me and said in a rather exasperated voice, “Terry, don’t you know what’s going on? It’s a surprise going-away coffee for you,” she laughed.

I buried my face in my hands. How could I have been so naive?

How many times have I been slow to grasp that I’ve been in God’s Presence? Like when my neighbor Pat brought dog biscuits to feed the stray or when my friend Nancy drove my daughter Mandy to school because I was sick. Sometimes it’s only in retrospect that I see God’s Presence in the caring of others.

*Terry Helwig*

**PRAY:** *Lord, I’m often slow to see Your blessings. Open my eyes to Your gifts of love that always surround me.*

**DO:** Surprise someone with love this week with a kind deed, a gift, a word of encouragement.

**ADDITIONAL PRAYER PROMPTS**

- Use the Pause to Pray as a guide to focus on other concerns through the week. Copies can be found in the lobby and in the Archive section on the website ([evbapt.org/archive](http://evbapt.org/archive)). The full Pause to Pray is used in our Wednesday prayer time. An abbreviated version appears in the Sunday bulletin.
- Reflect on this week’s worship service—the music, Scripture, Pastor Dave’s Thanksgiving meditation\*—that all will help as you go through this week; for your own walk with Christ, and that you may be a blessing and witness to people you have contact with during the week.
- Continue to pray for opportunities to invite people to our services and to become engaged in spiritual discovery with the people of Evangel in other ways as well. Ask the Lord to open doors of conversation, connection and compassion with others to enable that engagement this week.
- Pray that God will bless our succession planning efforts. Pray for the Lord’s blessing on the Negotiating Team as it works with a church in Wheaton that made an offer to purchase our property (we plan to use the proceeds to establish an Evangel Missions Legacy Fund to continue our commitment to missions for 8-10 years). The initial stage of negotiation will lead to a “terms” document that must be approved by both churches before work begins on formalizing a final Contract. It is a complex process with many components that could take us well into 2017 to fully implement. Pray for wisdom and continued evidence of God’s providence in this process.

*\* A podcast of the sermon and PDF files of other material will be posted on the website by Monday.*

*Touch Points is e-mailed every Friday, posted on the website ([evbapt.org](http://evbapt.org)), with printed copies available in the lobby.*

*To be included in the weekly e-mail, use the Contact Us form on the website and request “add me to the Prayer Vigil list.”*