Cigarette smoking is dangerous. Not only is it responsible for almost 90% of lung cancer deaths, it also causes most cancers of the bladder, larynx, and esophagus. Tobacco smoke contains 4,000 chemicals, including over 60 that are known to cause cancer. **Carbon monoxide, arsenic, and lead are all found in tobacco smoke.**

Secondhand smoke – even the smallest amount – is unsafe for everyone exposed to it. Children are especially hurt by it because their bodies are growing at the very time they are inhaling poisons. Unborn babies whose pregnant mothers smoke and babies exposed to secondhand smoke after birth are more likely to die from SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome). Women who smoke give birth to smaller babies and babies with weaker lungs – which both put those children at higher risk for several health problems. When the parent smokes, the child is more likely to have bronchitis and pneumonia. An asthmatic child will have more frequent, more severe attacks. More ear infections and other ear canal problems are often part of the picture, too.

**Quitting smoking is hard work – but it can be done.** While the process is uncomfortable, it is not painful. The discomfort lasts a short time, but the benefits last a lifetime. People who have quit smoking feel better. They have more energy, a healthier look about themselves, and aren’t as worried about their health and the health of their children. They’re proud of their accomplishment! In quitting smoking, former smokers give themselves and their loved ones a wonderful gift.

**November Is Great American Smoke-out Month**

**Prayer:** Loving God, thank you for giving me the capacity to love. Show me how to put love to its best use in everything I do today. Amen.