

"Bless the LORD, O My Soul!"

Thanksgiving Day

November 26, 2020

Choir: *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart* (second service, words on last page)

Greeting:

"It has long been the custom of our people to turn in the fruitful autumn of the year in praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for His many blessings and mercies to us." These words written by President Woodrow Wilson for Thanksgiving 1918 in the midst of the Spanish flu pandemic are just as timely now as they were then. We are a blessed people, and there is so much for which we can turn in praise and thanksgiving to God! Let us then join in hymns and words of praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, whose mercies are new every morning. With David we say:

C: "Bless the LORD O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!"

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Jesus teaches us to pray,

C: "Give us this day our daily bread."

P: Martin Luther wrote, "God gives daily bread without our asking, even to unbelievers, but we pray in this petition that He would teach us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

C: " 'Daily bread' means everything we need for our bodily wellbeing. It includes food, drink, clothes, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money and goods, a godly husband or wife, godly children, good workers, godly and faithful leaders, good government, good weather, peace, health, law and order, an honorable name, faithful friends, trustworthy neighbors—and things like that."

P: Our Father in heaven, remember the nations of the world, and let peace and harmony prevail. Remember those who govern us, guide those who influence our lives through various media. Remember our children, our youth, our single members, and married couples, the widows, and all the lonely, forsaken, and despairing. Remember the sick, the suffering, the persecuted, and the dying. Send them help and comfort in Your merciful goodness.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

P: Finally, Father, we remember before You those who have preceded us in Your eternal harvest and we pray that we may at last join them at the marriage supper of the Lamb, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

C: Amen, amen, yes, yes, it shall be so.

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Benedicamus and Benediction

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

P: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

C: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

P: And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

C: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

P: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: Amen.

Closing hymn: *Count Your Blessings, O My Soul*

Choir: *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart (first service)*

Rejoice, ye pure in heart, Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

Your festive banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing.

O source of joy divine, I take my place in Thee,

Your cleansing blood my healing balm, the grace that sets me free.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing.

See how my worldly cares all fade when I see Your face;

That love compels me to my knees and all my sins erase.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing.

Then on, ye pure in heart, rejoice, give thanks and sing!

Your glorious banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing.



(Cong.)

Praise and thanksgiving, Father, we offer

For all things living, Created good:

Harvest of sown fields, Fruits of the orchard,

Hay from the mown fields, Blossom and wood.

P: Our Father in heaven, hear our prayer for the Holy Christian Church, that You will protect, prosper, and extend it throughout the world. We pray for pastors and teachers, that by their life and doctrine they may set forth Your true and living Word and rightly administer Your holy Sacraments. Strengthen those in the mission field, that they may remain strong, steadfast, striving faithfully in proclaiming Your Gospel.

Bless, Lord, the labor We bring to serve You

That with our neighbor We may be fed.

Sowing or tilling, We would work with You,

Harvesting, milling For daily bread.

P: Our Father in heaven, bless, we pray You, our schools, hospitals, homes for the aged, and all our institutions. Bless those who minister to earthly needs, whether of body, mind, or spirit, and grant them wisdom, strength, and love for You and their neighbor. Give us all our daily bread and let Your blessing rest upon seedtime and harvest, commerce and industry, leisure and rest, and arts and culture. Take under Your special protection those whose work is difficult or dangerous, and be with all who put their hands to any useful task. Forgive us our trespasses, give to all people the mind of Christ and lead us in the paths of righteousness. Lead us not into temptation, take from us all hatred and envy, and whatever may hinder love, and deliver us from all evil.

Father, providing Food for Your children,

By Your wise guiding Teach us to share

One with another, So that, rejoicing

With us, all others May know Your care.

Hymn: *Let All Things Now Living*

Old Testament lesson: *Deuteronomy 8:10-18*

Confession and Absolution:

P: Let us in humility and faith confess our sins to our merciful God:

C: Lord, we confess that too often, in this time and in this good land, we take Your blessings for granted. For most of our lives we have had food on the table, clothes on our backs, and roofs over our heads. We stray in our complacency and forget Your Word. We do not always strive to let Your kingdom come to us or have Your will be done among us. Forgive us our trespasses, heavenly Father.

P: Even in prison Paul wrote to his brothers and sisters in Christ, encouraging them to be thankful in all circumstances.

C: We confess that we let illness, bad weather, and economic slumps magnify our anxiety. Instead of hallowing God's name in prayer we rely on our own contrived plans and strength for the lifestyle we desire. We allow ourselves to be led into temptation by society's fixation on materialism and success. Forgive us our trespasses, heavenly Father.

P: When ten lepers were healed, only one returned thanks to Jesus.

C: We confess that when we have been delivered from evil, in our self-centeredness we focus on our sense of relief. Instead of returning thanks we are only aware of our personal comfort and gain. Forgive us our trespasses, heavenly Father.

P: Paul was inspired to write: "God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." Indeed, in Christ, both our daily concerns and eternal hopes have been met in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. By the grace of God we can be certain that these petitions are pleasing to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him. As a called servant of Christ and by His authority I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: To our God and Father be all glory forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: *Now Thank We All Our God*

Responsive Reading: Psalm 145:15-21

P: The eyes of all look to you,

C: and you give them their food at the proper time.

P: You open your hand

C: and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

P: The LORD is righteous in all his ways

C: and loving toward all he has made.

P: The LORD is near to all who call on him,

C: to all who call on him in truth.

P: He fulfills the desires of those who fear him;

C: he hears their cry and saves them.

P: The LORD watches over all who love him,

C: but all the wicked he will destroy.

P: My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD.

C: Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.

Prayer:

P: Heavenly Father, You are the author of all creation. We give thanks that in Your great love and mercy You have entrusted to us so many earthly blessings. Grant us grace to see these gifts as signs of the spiritual riches our Lord has won for us into eternity. May we then offer the best to You, share generously with those in need, and enjoy the remainder with thankful joy and according to Your gracious guidance; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Gospel lesson: *Matthew 6:25-34*

Confession of Faith:

Luther's Explanation to the First Article.

I believe that God has created me and all creatures. He has given me my body and life, eyes, ears, and all my bodily members, my mind and all my senses, and still keeps them for me.

God also preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all my property, and all I need to support this body and life. He protects me from all danger. He guards and defends me from every evil.

God does all this because He is my good and gracious Father in heaven, not because of anything I have done to earn or deserve it. For all of this it is my duty to thank, praise, serve, and obey Him. This is most certainly true. Amen.



Hymn: *For the Fruits of His Creation*

Sermon: **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Celebrate God's Kind of Thanksgiving

I. Rejoice always.

II. Pray constantly.

III. Give thanks in everything.

Prayer:

P: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name as we humbly ask You to accept these Your own gifts which we offer to You, together with this, the sacrifice of our thanksgiving and the incense of our prayers. And here we present and yield ourselves to You, asking that Your kingdom come to us and Your will be done among us as true members in the body of Your Son, Jesus Christ.

