

# The Master's Message

## The Newsletter of the Church of the Master

### November, 2022

*Virtual Adult Bible Study*  
Wednesday, 7:00 PM  
Saturday, 12:00

2783 Lafayette Avenue  
Bronx, N.Y. 10465  
718-597-6298

*Sunday Worship*  
Sunday 11:00 am

[cotm47@verizon.net](mailto:cotm47@verizon.net)

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden, Pastor

### Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God  
With heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done,  
In whom His world rejoices;  
Who, from our mothers' arms,  
Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love,  
And still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God  
Through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts  
And blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in His grace,  
And guide us when perplexed,  
And free us from all ills  
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God  
The Father now be given,  
The Son, and Him who reigns  
With them in highest heaven,  
The one eternal God,  
Whom earth and heaven adore;  
For thus it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore. Amen.

Martin Rinkart (1586–1649)  
Translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827–1878)



WITH THE EXCEPTION of "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (October 31), this is the most widely sung hymn in Germany. Like so many other great hymns, it was forged in the crucible of the Thirty Years' War. Martin Rinkart was the only pastor in the walled city of Eilenberg. Many refugees fled there, hoping the walls would protect them, only to see the city overrun by Swedes, Austrians, and Swedes again. In the crowded conditions, hunger and plague were chronic problems. In 1637 Rinkart conducted funerals for five thousand residents—including his wife. So when he prays, "Guide us when perplexed," he is not talking about minor inconveniences.

Yet thanksgiving erupts from this stately song. The tune, by Johann Cruger, was introduced with the text in 1644 while the war still raged. It has a majesty and a resolve that few other works can match. We can thank God even during the most trying times. We can know God is with us "in this world and the next."



Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world. Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you. Isaiah 12:4-6





## SPECIAL DATES\*

- All Saints' Day, November 1<sup>st</sup>
- Daylight saving time ends, November 6<sup>th</sup>
- Veterans Day, November 11<sup>th</sup>
- Christ the King Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup>
- Thanksgiving Day, November 24<sup>th</sup>
- First Sunday of Advent, November 27<sup>th</sup>

## \*News From the Pews\*



Continued healing for:  
Allen Ford, Carole Mahon,  
Loretta Byrd & Alice & Alex Rivera

Everyone is invited to join our virtual "**Hour of Prayer Power**" every Friday at 7:00 PM. The conference call-in number is 605-475-4860, code: 371231#

Our virtual **Bible Study** meets  
Wednesday at 7:00 PM and Saturday at 12:00.  
Contact Ron Rivera (917-716-8273)  
for information on joining



## A good contagion

Thanksgiving is key in Christian prayer, but often our requests outweigh our thanks. By contrast, 85% of prayers in the Jewish prayer book are blessings of thanks, according to Rabbi Evi'el Mofic. Noting that the Hebrew word for a Jewish person — *Yehudah* — means "one who is grateful," he states, "Gratitude is at the core of how Jews pray."

Someone once asked Mofic if he might know about a blessing he'd overheard at a restaurant. After a man proposed to his girlfriend and she said yes, he walked quietly to a corner, put on a yarmulke (a sacred Jewish head covering worn in prayer) and spoke a blessing. His fiancé teared up. The rabbi said the prayer was surely this: "Blessed are you, O God, sovereign of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us and for enabling us to reach this joy-filled moment."

Why was this person so interested? "I am planning to propose to my girlfriend," he shared with Mofic, "and I want to say this prayer with her."

Unbeknown to the newly engaged pair, their gratitude transformed another couple's life. When we give thanks to God, not only is our faith strengthened but our thanksgiving may inspire others. Gratitude is contagious!

—Heidi Hyland Mann

## \*CHURCH CHUCKLES\*

The Huron River flows through the town of Ypsilanti, Michigan, a town with many small, evangelical churches. In one of these churches, a congregant found Jesus and became so involved in his newfound faith that he wanted to share it with everyone. He shared it, all right. His favorite testimony became: "Thank the Lord for saving my soul and baptizing me in the Urine River"

\*\*\*\*\*

A preacher's little boy inquired, "Daddy, every Sunday when you first come out to preach, you sit on the platform and bow your head. What are you doing?"

The father explained, "I'm asking the Lord to give me a good sermon."

The little boy asked, "Why doesn't he?"

\*\*\*\*\*

## OUR CHURCH TODAY

Father Dan got football fans to attend Sunday services by promising a "two-minute drill" sermon.

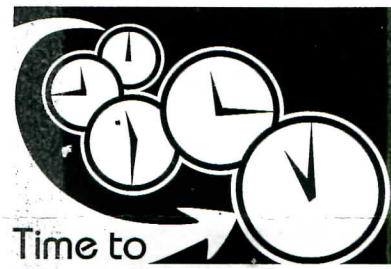
\*\*\*\*\*

A pastor asked a little boy if he said his prayers every night.

"Yes, sir" the boy replied.

"And do you always say them in the morning too?" the pastor asked.

"No, sir" the boy replied. "I ain't scared in the daytime."



Time to  
turn back your clocks!

## Enough for today

Happiness is like manna; it is to be gathered in grains and enjoyed every day. It will not keep; it cannot be accumulated; nor have we got to go out of ourselves or into remote places to gather it, since it is rained down from heaven, at our very doors.

—Tryon Edwards





## Pardon me!

The annual turkey pardon has been called America's "most absurd holiday tradition." Every November, the president oversees a tongue-in-cheek ceremony, pardoning bird pairs with yummy names such as Biscuits and Gravy, Tater and Tot, and Drumstick and Wishbone.

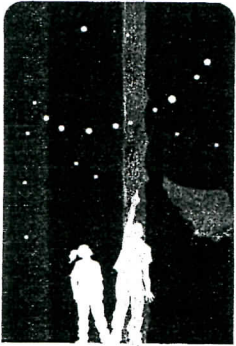
Theologically, pardon is synonymous with divine forgiveness, an action only God may take (see Psalm 130:3-4). Every sin, at its deepest level, is directed against God and his call to holy living. We can *forgive* someone for a personal offense, but only God can set aside the penalty for sin.

Pardon is also related to atonement, which refers to God reconciling sinners to himself, making us "at one" with him. The Hebrew verb usually translated into English as *pardon* involves the idea of restoration to full favor.

—adapted from *The Wired Word*



## Heavenly envoys



If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

In a society that has you counting money, pounds, calories and steps, be a rebel and **COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS** instead!

—Lisa Heckman

Let us come  
before him with  
thanksgiving.

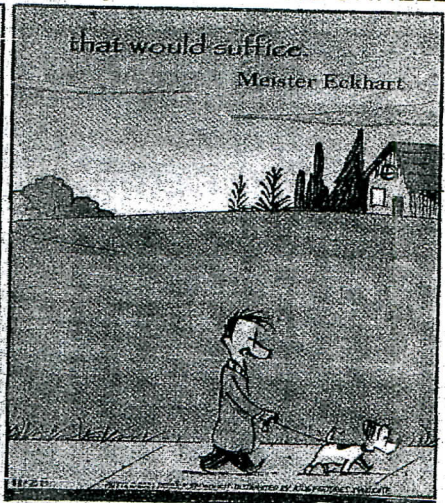
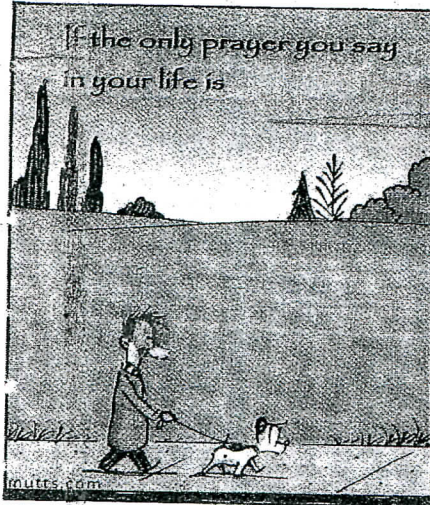
Psalm 95:2, NIV

## Prayer for the church

The following prayer, included in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (2006) and other hymnals, is often used in Protestant churches on Reformation Sunday. But it's an important petition for all Christian denominations at all times of the year, for we constantly need God's truth and peace; direction and reformation.

"Gracious Father, we pray for your holy catholic church. Fill it with all truth and peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in need, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen."

## MUTTS



By PATRICK McDONNELL



It is purportedly to have been  
**Found written on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children.**

Ed Bungert

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered.

**Forgive them anyway.**

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

**Be kind anyway.**

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.

**Succeed anyway.**

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.

**Be honest and sincere anyway.**

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

**Be happy anyway.**

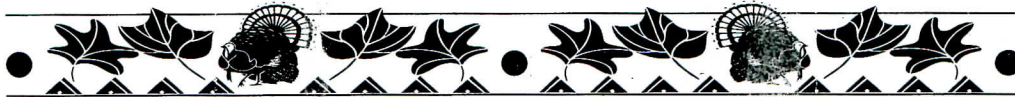
The good you do today, will often be forgotten.

**Do good anyway.**

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

**Give your best anyway.**

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.



## Be-attitudes

- Be understanding of your enemies.
- Be loyal to your friends.
- Be strong enough to face the world each day.
- Be weak enough to know you cannot do everything alone.
- Be generous to those who need your help.
- Be frugal with what you need for yourself.
- Be wise enough to know that you do not know everything.
- Be open enough to believe in miracles.
- Be willing to share your joys.
- Be eager to share the sorrows of others.
- Be a leader when you see a path others have missed.
- Be a follower when you are shrouded by uncertainty.
- Be the first to congratulate an opponent who succeeds.
- Be the last to criticize a colleague who fails.
- Be loving to those who love you.
- Be loving to those who don't love you; they may change.
- Be yourself, above all.

—Author unknown

- "To say it was a beautiful day would not begin to explain it. It was that day when the end of summer intersects perfectly with the start of fall."

—Ann Patchett





“Nothing to be Thankful for...or So It Seems”

November usually brings thoughts of Harvest time, changing scenic foliage and falling leaves, fragrant cinnamon and spice acorns that immediately bring our thoughts to fall and the Season of Thanksgiving. But more than a few people I have talked to recently find it hard to celebrate Thanksgiving and wonder how they or we can be thankful in the face of so much tragedy, loss, distrust of our leaders, and unprecedented vitriol in our body politic in the past two years. In short, it seems that some people have lost their joy and are hard pressed to give thanks because they fear the next new variant of the dreaded Covid-19 virus will rear its ugly head and take us deeper into this deadly pandemic. Some wonder if we will ever get back to normal, whatever that means today!

It seems to me that we have a choice to make. We can allow the negativity of the Covid-19 pandemic to steal our joy and shake our faith. Or, we can adapt by the grace of God and find peace and joy in the midst of this pandemic because we know that troubles don't last always when we put them all in Jesus' hands! I am reminded of a saying of Elder Don, our Vice-President of Consistory, “Jesus, you fix it!”

Believers on Christ Jesus can hold fast to our faith and our joy because we trust that Jesus will keep and deliver us from all problems and troubles that come our way. Knowing and trusting in Jesus does not mean that believers will never experience problems or troubles. But knowing Jesus gives believers not only an assurance of pardon of our sins, but a blessed assurance that come what may, Jesus will never leave us nor forsake us.

I refuse to allow this pandemic-weary world and society to steal my joy—my “*Jesus joy*”! This joy that I have, the world did not give it to me. And, the world cannot take it away from me. The joy of knowing and believing on Jesus helps me to give thanks in good times and especially in bad and challenging times.

This is my list of blessings God has showered upon me in the midst of the pandemic; blessings I am so thankful to receive. I am thankful for the blessing of not losing my job or salary during the pandemic. I am thankful for the blessing to be able to work from my home and to be able to pay my tithes and offerings, mortgage and bills. I am thankful for the blessing of being able to continue to hold our Church Services virtually or remotely. I am thankful for the blessing of not losing a single member—although several members did contract Covid—the Lord blessed them all to recover—without needing to be placed on ventilators! I am thankful for the blessing of re-entering our Church sanctuary for in-person worship services! I am truly thankful for the blessing (through technology and social media using the things of the world to be a blessing to the Lord and our Church) and ability to livestream our Worship Services. This has allowed persons from as far away as California, Arizona and Texas to join remotely to worship with us! I am thankful for all the officers and members of our Church of the Master Church family—though few in number—worked together faithfully in Teams to comply with the Covid health



requirements and kept our members and visitors safe! I am thankful for the blessing of a robust and blessed Zoom Bible Study with more attendees than we'd ever had prior to Covid attending in-person Bible Study in the sanctuary! I am thankful for the blessing of faith and a faithful congregation given all the adversities the past two years have brought our way, and yet we are still here on the corner of Lafayette and Swinton Avenues!

This Season of Thanksgiving, I urge all readers of this article to take some time, not only in the month of November but each and every day, to give thanks to God Almighty for the countless blessings He has showered upon you—especially during this unprecedented pandemic era when seemingly it is so difficult to try and find reasons to be thankful. And by all means, hold fast to your confession, your hope, your joy and your faith in Jesus!

Let us prayerfully reflect on the questions and statements the Apostle Paul declares in his letter to the Church in Rome,

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”  
(Romans 8:35-39).

Happy Thanksgiving! I remain gratefully yours in the service of the Lord!

Shalom to you now,

*Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden*

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden  
Pastor  
Church of the Master

*Reprinted from November, 2021*



thanksgiving