

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
“Reaching Out, Reflecting Christ, Renewing Lives”



Day of Thanksgiving
November 22, 2020

Day of Thanksgiving



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

At harvest time we join the psalmist in offering thanksgiving to God: “You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths overflow with plenty.” We are grateful for the abundance of the good things of God’s creation. Paul reminds us that our thanksgiving overflows into generosity. As the body of Christ in the world, we give ourselves away as bread for the hungry.

Prelude *Come, You Thankful People, Come* (PAXTON)

Confession & Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as we take time to recognize our shortcomings, while also remembering God’s relentless grace.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved. **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,
we confess that we are not faithful in using your gifts.
We forget the least of our siblings.
We do not see your beautiful image in one another.
We are infected by sin
that divides your beloved community.
Open our hearts to your coming,
open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,
open our hands to serve your creation. **Amen.**

Beloved, we are God’s children,
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.
Through † Jesus you are forgiven,
by Jesus you are welcome,
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!
Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of the world. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn *We Praise You, O God*

#870



1 We praise you, O God, our re - deem - er, cre - a - tor;
2 We wor - ship you, God of our fa - thers and mo - thers;
3 With voic - es u - nit - ed our prais - es we of - fer



in grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
through tri - al and tem - pest our guide you have been.
and glad - ly our songs of thanks - giv - ing we raise.



We lay it be - fore you; we kneel and a - dore you;
When per - ils o'er - take us, you will not for - sake us,
With you, Lord, be - side us, your strong arm will guide us.



we bless your ho - ly name; glad prais - es we sing.
and with your help, O Lord, our strug - gles we win.
To you, our great re - deem - er, for - ev - er be praise!

Text: Julia C. Cory, 1882–1963

Music: KREMSER, A. Valerius, *Nederlandsch Gedenckclanck*, 1626

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God our Father, your generous goodness comes to us new every day. Lead us to acknowledge your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Lesson

Deuteronomy 8:7-18

Times of abundance tempt us to forget God and rely on our own power and resources. But God is the one who took Israel out of Egypt, led and fed them in the wilderness, brought them into the land, and gave them power to be productive. To thank this God is to remember and proclaim God's deeds.

⁷For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, ⁸a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, ⁹a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. ¹⁰You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you.

¹¹Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. ¹²When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, ¹³and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, ¹⁶and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. ¹⁷Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth." ¹⁸But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalms

Psalms 65

¹You are to be praised, O God, in Zion;
to you shall vows be fulfilled.

²To you, the one who answers prayer,
to you all flesh shall come.

³Our sins are stronger than we are,
but you blot out our transgressions.

⁴Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!

They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.

⁵Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,

O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away.

⁶You make firm the mountains by your power;
you are girded about with might.

⁷You still the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

⁸Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs;
you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.

⁹You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God
is full of water.

You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.

¹⁰You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;
with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

¹¹You crown the year with your goodness,
and your paths overflow with plenty.

¹²May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing,
and the hills be clothed with joy.

¹³May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with
grain;
let them shout for joy and sing.

Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Christian fellowship involves sharing with those in need. Here Paul is gathering a collection for the church in Jerusalem from all the Gentile churches he helped found. We can be extravagant in our giving because God is extravagant in providing for our lives.

⁶The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹As it is written,

“He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever.”

¹⁰He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in

every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; ¹²for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. ¹³Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, ¹⁴while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Luke 17:11-19

A Samaritan leper becomes a model for thanksgiving. He does not take for granted the kindness shown to him but takes time to thank Jesus and to glorify God.

¹¹On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, ¹³they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” ¹⁴When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were made clean. ¹⁵Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. ¹⁶He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷Then Jesus asked, “Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? ¹⁸Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, o Christ.

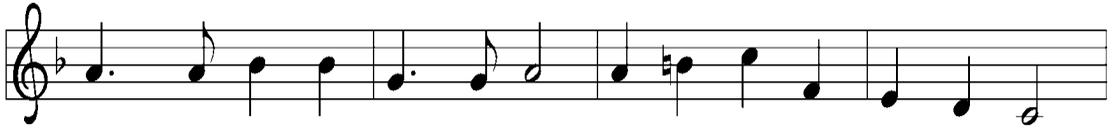
Sermon

Hymn of the Day *Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*

#693



- 1 Come, ye thank-ful peo - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.
- 2 All the world is God's own field, fruit un - to his praise to yield;
- 3 For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his har - vest home;
- 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come to thy fi - nal har - vest home.



All be safe - ly gath - ered in ere the win - ter storms be - gin.
wheat and tares to - geth - er sown, un - to joy or sor - row grown.
from his field shall in that day all of - fens - es purge a - way;
Gath - er then thy peo - ple in, free from sor - row, free from sin,



God, our mak - er, doth pro - vide for our wants to be sup - plied.
First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap - pear.
give his an - gels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,
there, for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, in thy gar - ner to a - bide.



Come to God's own tem - ple, come, raise the song of har - vest home.
Lord of har - vest, grant that we whole - some grain and pure may be.
but the fruit - ful ears to store in his gar - ner ev - er - more.
Come, with all thine an - gels, come, raise the glo - rious har - vest home!

Text: Henry Alford, 1810–1871, alt.

Music: ST. GEORGE'S, WINDSOR, George J. Elvey, 1816–1893

Prayers of Intercession

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you send from your abundance the people, talents, and resources needed for all the ministries of your church. We give thanks for the work you have accomplished through your people, and we pray for your continued blessings in our ministry together as your Covenant family. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Bountiful God, you feed us through the richness of the land, water, sunlight, and ample crops. Bless all those who cultivate the land to bring forth its bounty, especially farmers and migrant workers. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Merciful God, you shape our lives by your providence. Align our purposes with your own, that all our undertakings might bring you glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you open our hearts in compassion for one another. We give you thanks for the care and healing received through the hands and feet of your servants. Bring healing to the millions who are suffering from the coronavirus – any who are sick, dying, despairing, isolated, unemployed, and all exhausted medical workers. Guide researchers in developing a vaccine. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Hospitable God, in this time of thanksgiving, steer us from passive receiving to active response, from old quarrels to reconciliation, and from overconsumption to true gratitude. When we are separated from loved ones, embrace us with your care. Keep gatherings safe. Even in our reduced celebrations, give us voices to offer thanks to you for your perpetual blessings. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, we give thanks for the love and care we have received from saints who have gone before us. By their example, enrich the generosity of our witness to others. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving for the Word

Glory to you, O God, for your creative Word:
making and mending all things,
evoking the cosmic hymn of praise,
and singing a love-song for your beloved:
your vineyard, your flock, your people.

Blessed are you for your liberating Word:
speaking through Moses and the prophets,
encountered in the Gospels,
and proclaimed in the assembly:
your freedom, forgiveness, and life for the world.

Holy are you, O God, for your living Word:
among us wherever we gather,
welcoming everyone to your feast,
and, with grace and generosity,
bringing to earth the kingdom of heaven.

Continue to clothe us in you as the Holy Spirit,
flowing from the Crucified and Risen One,
and keep us awake to your presence
in the people and places you call us to serve.
Glory, praise, and blessing are yours, Holy God,
now and forever.

Amen.

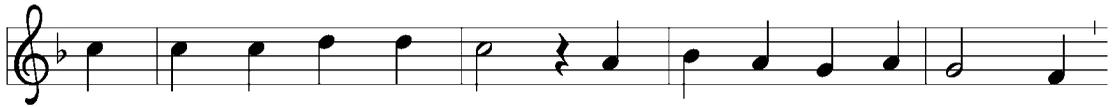
**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Blessing

May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God, Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn *Now Thank We All Our God*

#840



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
the one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;



with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ever more.

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586–1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878
Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

Dismissal

Beloved of God,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude *We Gather Together* (TURNER)

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating: Gayle Agg, Bob Buettner, Alexis Carr, Joan Clarke, John Crawford, Nicole Crawford, Chuck Dickey, Steve Dobush, Barbara Fossa, Carolyn Frajter, Ken Frajter, Nealie Gage, Barb Gaglione, Michelle Garnett, Rosa Garnett, Alex Hohenstein, Judy Jones, Tom Juhasz, Ralph Kane, Dylan King, Jason Lanese, Andrea Lanzalaca, Sara Mendes, Phyllis Nemeth, Bernice Novak, Don Rusher Jr., Arlene Stoltz, Tim Susanek, Tom Susanek, Phyllis Treichel, Phyllis Welker, Linda Wright, Wilma Dancy, Bill Helmick, Nancy Helmick, Robert Lambrecht, Kim (Novak) Leonhardt, Laura Mele, Judy Morgan, Kris Sandor, Bill Wilkens, Eugene Winfrey, the Copeland/Lane Family

LAST WEEK

General Fund receipts for week ending 11/15/2020: \$1617

At the Table Together

Old recipes are precious things. They give instructions about how to prepare a dish, but they are so much more. They are filled with memories. They connect families as they are passed from one generation to the next. They bring events and people from long ago right into the present.

I am looking at a recipe card that has that effect on me. It's my mother's recipe for stuffing for turkey. It's written in her neat hand—a skill I never mastered. It's a basic recipe, just bread and butter and onions and celery and poultry seasoning. I don't even have to read it now when I make stuffing, but I like to look at it because it puts me right back into Thanksgivings past.

Thanksgiving in our family was an *event*. The Eatons have been gathering for Thanksgiving dinner for nearly 70 years. We traded off between our house and my aunt and uncle's home. When it was our turn we got up early and started cooking.

Out came the recipes and equipment. There were no food processors in those days. We had a cast iron food grinder that clamped on to the edge of the kitchen table. It was kept in its own special box. It only made an appearance once a year and its emergence signaled that Thanksgiving had arrived. Grinding the celery was no problem. Onions were another story. My brothers and I spelled each other at turning the crank until we were overcome by the fumes.

My parents and my aunt and uncle established this tradition shortly after World War II. We have always had three and sometimes four generations present. A lot has gone on in our family and in the world these past decades. Marriages, children, moves, deaths, war, recession, elections, the '60s. We are a lively bunch and none of us lacks an opinion or the ability to express it. Conversations were spirited and sometimes heated. My father and my uncle served in the army during World War II. My older brother and older male cousins didn't support the Vietnam War. We belong to different political parties. We are Lutheran and Catholic and members of the Unification Church and unchurched. We are liberal and conservative.

But no matter what, when my mother or my aunt announced, "Supper's ready," we all came to the table together. We were family, we shared our lives, we loved each other.

A lot is going on in our church and in the world right now. We are a changing church, which brings its own tension. We live in a wired world where news is instantaneous and continuous. We don't agree on everything. We belong to different political parties. We have varied ethnicities. We're liberal and conservative and everything in between. We're in an "either/or" world. And we are contending with cultural forces that exacerbate division. But by the tender love of God, by this ceaseless pursuit of the Spirit, we are members of the body of Christ. We are family. We share our lives. We love each other.

Here is another simple recipe: flour, water, wine, the body and blood of Jesus. A meal of healing, forgiveness and thanksgiving. No matter what, when our Lord tenderly and urgently invites, "Supper's ready," we all come to the table. There in our common brokenness we meet each other in Christ.



*Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Elizabeth Eaton
(originally appeared in Living Lutheran, November,
2020)*



Thanksgiving



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| I | E | D | U | T | I | T | A | R | G | A | R | N | N | M |
| T | G | E | C | B | A | R | K | D | N | R | I | O | B | K |
| H | M | T | E | S | F | M | R | R | I | I | B | V | D | R |
| A | T | G | R | E | E | N | B | E | A | N | S | E | Z | G |
| N | C | H | G | Y | H | Q | M | S | B | G | I | M | I | Y |
| K | P | B | U | A | V | L | Z | S | B | N | S | B | M | P |
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BOUNTY
CRANBERRIES
DRESSING
FAMILY
GATHER
GRATITUDE
GRAVY

GREEN BEANS
HAM
HARVEST
NOVEMBER
PARADE
PIE
PUMPKIN

SHARING
STUFFING
THANKSGIVING
THURSDAY
TURKEY

