

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



Day of Thanksgiving
November 20, 2022



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



We welcome you to worship here at the Lutheran Church of the Covenant! Here are a few notes to make you feel more at home as we praise this God of new life together!

- Bulletins and Communion (wheat or gluten-free wafers, wine or grape juice options) are available to be picked up at the back of the sanctuary.
- Portions marked with * are when we invite you to stand as you are able to do so.
- We encourage you to participate throughout the worship by speaking the **bold** print and singing along with the hymns!
- There will not be a separate time for an offering, so a basket is placed in the back for those who wish to support our local ministry as well as the wider church.
- We will commune from our respective seats, where the presiding minister will invite you to open your respective cups with the Communion elements. We believe this meal is for everyone who wishes to partake, regardless of church affiliation or lack thereof. This tangible gift of God's love is meant for the world to enjoy!

Our Worship Leaders & Staff

Ministers
Presiding Minister
Organist
Lector
Parish Administrator
Custodian

All People
The Rev. Bradley Ross
Robin Crawford
Ted Lockmiller
Jennifer Lasher-Dobush
Vince Besednjak

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Day of Thanksgiving

Every gathering for worship has elements of thanksgiving. When we are nourished with God's bounty in holy communion, when we partake of Jesus' word that gives life to the world, and even when two or three of us simply join our hearts in prayer to make our requests known to God, we do so "with thanksgiving." Let us give thanks to God, who is good and whose mercy endures forever.

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

Welcome & Greetings

*Thanksgiving For Baptism

We praise God for the gift of baptism that forever unites us through God's love with one another, and sets us free to serve as disciples for the sake of the world.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Holy God, fountain of living water,
source of mercy, tender and mighty,
you are clothed with majesty and splendor.
Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Your love flows through water,
satisfying the thirst of all living things,
sustaining life in our communities we call home,
nourishing and delighting us.
We bless you for all the gifts of water surrounding us.
Your love flows through the water of baptism
joined to your life-giving Word:
your well of mercy and cleansing flood,
your sea of deliverance from death into life,
your healing river washing any sin away,
your living water springing up to eternal life.

of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. ³You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, “Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us.” ⁴When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, ⁵you shall make this response before the LORD your God: “A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. ⁶When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, ⁷we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. ⁸The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; ⁹and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me.” You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. ¹¹Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house

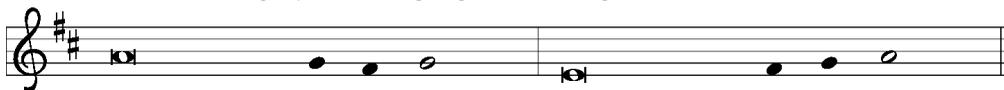
Word of God, word of life!

Thanks be to God!

Psalm

Psalm 100

The bold verses are sung by the congregation using the tone below:



Antiphon: *Enter God's gates with thanksgiving.* (Ps. 100:4)

¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, ¹all you lands!

²Serve the LORD with gladness; come into God's presence ¹with a song.

³**Know that the LORD is God, our maker to whom ¹we belong;
we are God's people and the sheep ¹of God's pasture.** *Antiphon*

⁴Enter the gates of the LORD with thanksgiving and the ¹courts with praise;
give thanks and bless God's ¹holy name.

⁵**Good indeed is the LORD, whose steadfast love is ¹everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from ¹age to age.** *Antiphon*

²⁵When [the disciples] found [Jesus] on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” ²⁶Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. ²⁷Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.” ²⁸Then they said to him, “What must we do to perform the works of God?” ²⁹Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” ³⁰So they said to him, “What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing?” ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” ³²Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” ³⁵Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

This is the holy Gospel of our Lord!
Sermon

Praise to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day *Now Thank We All Our God*

ELW #840

*Apostles’ Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Prayers of Intercession

United with your saints across time and place, we pray for our shared world.

A brief silence.

We give thanks for the church in every land, including for our Covenant family. Sustain us all with your living word. Inspire radical hospitality toward all who are searching, and call us into a more generous way of living. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the earth. Bring forth plentiful harvests and renew our commitment to share abundantly. Preserve the lands and waters that bring nourishment. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for leaders in our communities. Kindle a passion for justice and peace in every national and local elected official. Curb selfish impulses and guide us toward collaborative solutions. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for all who provide for others. Sustain caregivers, social workers, and volunteers in their efforts. Provide homes, food, employment, and medical care to all who are struggling. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the faithful who now rest in you. Teach us by their example and bring us with them into your loving embrace. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Accept these prayers, gracious God, and those known only to you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen!**

*Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Risen Christ be with you always!

And also with you.

Music Interlude *We Gather Together* (Larson)

*Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And al - so with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
 pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy God,
 our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food,
 you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life,
 and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven.
 You sent your Son to eat with sinners
 and to become food for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
his life given for us
and his rising from the grave,
we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

Holy Spirit, nurture and sustain us with this meal:
strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want,
and by this bread and cup make of us the body of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
both 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.**

*Invitation to Communion

Christ spreads a table of new life before you.
Taste and see that the Lord is good!

Thanks be to God!

Communion

Music Interlude *Simple Gifts* (Birchwood)

Prayer after Communion

We give you thanks, most gracious God,
that you have fed us with the bread of heaven
and given us a foretaste of Paradise.
Enliven us to be your body in the world
and to serve those who are in need;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen!**

*Blessing

The God of peace,
who creates all things and calls them good,
who makes us alive in Jesus,
and who breathes on us the Spirit of hope,
✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen!**

*Sending Hymn *We Praise You, O God*

ELW #870

*Dismissal

Go in peace. Be a blessing in the world!
Thanks be to God!

Postlude *Now Thank We All Our God* (Thompson)

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating: Gayle Agg, Sheena Cameron, Joan Clarke, Barbara Fossa, Carolyn Frajter, Ken Frajter, Donna Franz, Barb Gaglione, Michelle Garnett, Rosa Garnett, Clare Hanusz, Alex Hohenstein, Dylan King, Jason Lanese, Sara Mendes, Debbie Morris, Phyllis Nemeth, Gary Smith, Arlene Stoltz, Marie Storms, Tom Susaneck, Phyllis Treichel, Phyllis Welker, Maud 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.

General Fund receipts for week ending 11/13/2022: \$1682

From all of us at the Lutheran Church of the Covenant, we wish you and yours:





SEARCHING for Biblical Dialogue?

The adult Bible Class lead by Pastor Harry Werner is resuming Sunday mornings following worship. This one hour class with lively discussion reviews the Scripture lessons of the day. Pastor Werner's diligent research of the Sunday scriptures is always enlightening! Please consider joining us in the parlor following the Sunday service. It's an hour of your time well spent in Christian fellowship and learning. Help us insure that the class will have sufficient participants to make Pastor Werner's hard work worthwhile by signing up in the back of the church at the end of the service. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

- Board of Christian Education

Giving Thanks can Make You Happier



The word gratitude is derived from the Latin word *gratia*, which means grace, graciousness, or gratefulness (depending on the context). In some ways, gratitude encompasses all of these meanings. Gratitude is a thankful appreciation for what an individual receives, whether tangible or intangible. With gratitude, people acknowledge the goodness in their lives. In the process, people usually recognize that the source of that goodness lies at least partially outside themselves. As a result, being grateful also helps

people connect to something larger than themselves as individuals — whether to other people, nature, or a higher power.

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.

Science has proven that chronic, low-grade inflammation can turn into a silent killer that contributes to cardiovascular disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes and other conditions. Get simple tips to fight inflammation and stay healthy -- from Harvard Medical School experts.

People feel and express gratitude in multiple ways. They can apply it to the past (retrieving positive memories and being thankful for elements of childhood or past blessings), the present (not taking good fortune for granted as it comes), and the future (maintaining a hopeful and optimistic attitude). Regardless of the inherent or current level of someone's gratitude, it's a quality that individuals can successfully cultivate further.

Research on gratitude

Two psychologists, Dr. Robert A. Emmons of the University of California, Davis, and Dr. Michael E. McCullough of the University of Miami, have done much of the research on gratitude. In one study, they asked all participants to write a few sentences each week, focusing on particular topics.

One group wrote about things they were grateful for that had occurred during the week. A second group wrote about daily irritations or things that had displeased them, and the third wrote about events that had affected them (with no emphasis on them being positive or negative). After 10 weeks, those who wrote about gratitude were more optimistic and felt better about their lives. Surprisingly, they also exercised more and had fewer visits to physicians than those who focused on sources of aggravation.

Another leading researcher in this field, Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman, a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, tested the impact of various positive psychology interventions on 411 people, each compared with a control assignment of writing about early memories. When their week's assignment was to write and personally deliver a letter of gratitude to someone who had never been properly thanked for his or her kindness, participants immediately exhibited a huge increase in happiness scores. This

impact was greater than that from any other intervention, with benefits lasting for a month.

Of course, studies such as this one cannot prove cause and effect. But most of the studies published on this topic support an association between gratitude and an individual's well-being.

Other studies have looked at how being grateful can improve relationships. For example, a study of couples found that individuals who took time to express gratitude for their partner not only felt more positive toward the other person but also felt more comfortable expressing concerns about their relationship.

Managers who remember to say “thank you” to people who work for them may find that those employees feel motivated to work harder. Researchers at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania randomly divided university fund-raisers into two groups. One group made phone calls to solicit alumni donations in the same way they always had. The second group — assigned to work on a different day — received a pep talk from the director of annual giving, who told the fund-raisers she was grateful for their efforts. During the following week, the university employees who heard her message of gratitude made 50% more fund-raising calls than those who did not.

There are some notable exceptions to the generally positive results in research on gratitude. One study found that middle-aged divorced women who kept gratitude journals were no more satisfied with their lives than those who did not. Another study found that children and adolescents who wrote and delivered a thank-you letter to someone who made a difference in their lives may have made the other person happier — but did not improve their own well-being. This finding suggests that gratitude is an attainment associated with emotional maturity.

Ways to cultivate gratitude

Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hopes it will make them happier or thinking they can't feel satisfied until every physical and material need is met. Gratitude helps people refocus on what they have instead of what they lack. And, although it may feel contrived at first, this mental state grows stronger with use and practice.

Here are some ways to cultivate gratitude on a regular basis.

Write a thank-you note. You can make yourself happier and nurture your relationship with another person by writing a thank-you letter or email expressing your enjoyment and appreciation of that person's impact on your life. Send it, or better yet, deliver and read it in person if possible. Make a habit of sending at least one gratitude letter a month. Once in a while, write one to yourself.

Thank someone mentally. No time to write? It may help just to think about someone who has done something nice for you, and mentally thank the individual.

Keep a gratitude journal. Make it a habit to write down or share with a loved one thoughts about the gifts you've received each day.

Count your blessings. Pick a time every week to sit down and write about your blessings — reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for. Sometimes it helps to pick a number — such as three to five things — that you will identify each week. As you write, be specific and think about the sensations you felt when something good happened to you.

Pray. People who are religious can use prayer to cultivate gratitude.

Meditate. Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on the present moment without judgment. Although people often focus on a word or phrase (such as "peace"), it is also possible to focus on what you're grateful for (the warmth of the sun, a pleasant sound, etc.).

- Harvard Medical School (August 14, 2021)

From our worship resource *Sundays & Seasons*:

Grateful to the Giver

TV shows and movies portray a Thanksgiving custom that is easy to copy. People around the table take turns naming things they're thankful for. They seem delighted to do it. It isn't hard for them, and their tributes bring smiles and warm feelings to others at the table. Maybe you have used this custom. It's a good start for a civic holiday. But there's more—don't forget the main course! The scripture readings remind the community of faith to center on the one "in the kitchen" who generously provides all the persons, places, and things we are thankful for. It's God who gives all the good gifts! There would be no gifts without the giver, no blessings without the one "whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from age to age" (Ps. 100:5). The first reading

highlights God who as creator provides people with the land and its bounty, and as liberator gives them their story of blessing through time. Paul offers encouragement to connect with God by both asking and thanking. A needy “please” and an acknowledging “thank you” are two sides of the same coin, since God is always with us to listen and give us peace no matter what the situation. The gospel tells how God the giver moves even closer, becoming the gift itself. Embodied in Jesus, God nurtures and fulfills people with the bread of God’s own life. We experience this in our church thanksgiving meal, also known as the eucharist (a name that means thanksgiving and gratitude). We “come as we are” to sit at table with God and find that God’s generosity is able to flow into blessings for all.

Connections with Creation

National days of thanksgiving give us the opportunity to consider the blessings we share in a diverse society. We give thanks for the fertile soil, flowing water, and fresh air that sustain us and all creatures. Giving thanks is a primary expression of faith, expanding our sense of connection and community to the abundant reach of God’s grace. At the same time, we ought not narrow our thanksgiving to nationalistic ends. At the heart of Christian worship is holy communion, also called the eucharist, a Greek word meaning “thanksgiving.” In Christian faith, our gratitude extends beyond worldly barriers, including national borders. The Psalms invite us to join our voices to those of all creation. Ecological systems transcend national boundaries and invite us to join a song of thanksgiving that is cosmopolitan indeed.

John 6:25-35

The Gospel of John, written in the late first century, alternates “signs,” that is, supernatural events, with explanatory “discourses.” In John 6, the sign of the feeding of the multitude has been narrated, and now the evangelist discourses on its meaning. John relies on two central images from the Old Testament for this explication of Christology. (1) The Son of Man is an eschatological judge, but here in John this judge gives food for life. The seal refers to the authorization of an official by the monarch. (2) The manna came not from Moses, but from God, who now gives the manna that is Jesus Christ. Verse 33 can be translated either “that which” or “the one who.” So, both the Son of Man and the manna are metaphors for Christ. In a parallel to Jesus’ conversation with the woman at the well (ch. 4), people who think they want food and drink receive Christ.

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

The book of Deuteronomy, presented as Moses' final speech to the Israelites while still in the wilderness, was written sometime in the seventh century bce, its authors encouraging the Jews to remain faithful to the covenant, despite the power of Assyria. The passage describes an offering of first fruits made to the priests and includes a creed that summarizes Israelite myth-history. The offering occurred at a festival, probably that of Unleavened Bread, that historicized the Canaanite celebration of the barley harvest. In keeping the covenant, the people are to worship God in gratitude and to present offerings for the poor.

Philippians 4:4-9

Paul, writing to the church in Philippi sometime in the 50s, testifies to the joy he receives from his faith in Christ and his expectation that the second coming is near. Even in prison, he urges gratitude and contentment in the peace of God.

The world rings with praise—lovers praising their mistresses, readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game—and whatever they value, they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it: “Isn’t she lovely? Wasn’t it glorious?” I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation. It is not out of compliment that lovers keep on telling one another how beautiful they are; the delight is incomplete till it is expressed. The worthier the object, the more intense this delight would be. The Scotch catechism says that man’s chief end is “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.” But we shall then know that these are the same thing. Fully to enjoy is to glorify. In commanding us to glorify Him, God is inviting us to enjoy Him.

—C. S. Lewis

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

N E L P P A B C F E A T H E R
L R I I V T L O O N A R Q M P
T U O P W P E R O N A R C C I
U H F C Q X S N D P H I V H L
R A A E A D S Q U A S H D W G
K B F N T R E B M E V O N N R
E O K X K A D P U M P K I N I
Y N K C X F R D T N J H K P M
T K A X U H U G N Q V K Z X W
M Z X P R U H L P Y G H C H K
N K P Q U Q H A F G K C Q U Z
K C Q O J I E S A G C B D V S
F E I Y F I X B Q S D D S T H
A D R C H T W F E L L C E W A
B U U Q D L U T A J A Q C D L

ACORN
APPLE
BLESSED
CORN
FEATHER
FOOD

GRATEFUL
INDIAN
NOVEMBER
PIE
PILGRIM
PUMPKIN

SQUASH
THANKFUL
TURKEY

