

Service of Praise and Thanksgiving
November 25 & 26, 2020

RING PRAISE HANDBELLS (Wed.) – *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

THE OPENING HYMN AND VERSES (*Congregation stands*)
(tune of Hymn 609)

**We gather together to seek the Lord's favor,
For daily we savor God's goodness divine.
Together confessing, we seek his great blessing
And find an honored place at his table to dine.**

- P: Lift up your voices, O people; sing together for joy.
C: Break forth together in rejoicing.
P: Witness what the Lord has done, the Lord who promises and saves.

**We gather together with songs of thanksgiving.
To God ever-living our anthems we raise.
With anthems unending let praise be ascending
With hearts and lives united to show forth our praise.**

- P: Let all the nations gather together, and let the peoples assemble.
C: Gather to me my faithful ones, says the Lord, those who made a covenant with me by sacrifice.
P: How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity.

**We gather together, abundantly gifted.
Our voices uplifted ring sweet in God's ear.
O blest congregation, with high adoration
Come now to offer thanks; in God's temple appear.**

- P: I will surely gather all of you, says the Lord.
C: I will set you together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in its pasture.
P: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.

**We gather together, most firmly believing.
From God's hand receiving, wherever we go
Our Shepherd beside us, to lead us and guide us,
A table set before us, our cups overflow.**

- P: Oh, magnify the Lord with me.
C: Let us exalt his name together.

P: Let us offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay our vows to the Most High.

**We gather together, our of-fer-ings bearing,
In gratitude sharing with others in need.
Receive them, O Father, these gifts that we gather,
To spread your name abroad, like true life-giving seed.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY (spoken together)

Almighty God our Father, your generous goodness comes to us new every day. By the work of your Spirit lead us to acknowledge your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Reading – Deuteronomy 26:1-11

¹When you enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you take possession of it and settle in it, ²take some of the first ripe produce that you harvest from the soil of the land that the LORD your God is giving you. Put it in a basket, and go to the place where the LORD your God will choose to establish his name. ³Go to the priest who is presiding at that time and say to him, “Today I declare before the LORD your God that I have come to the land that the LORD swore to our fathers to give to us.” ⁴The priest will take the basket from your hand and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God.

⁵Then you will respond and say in the presence of the LORD your God, “My father was a wandering Aramean. He went down to Egypt and lived there as an alien with just a few people, but there he became a great, strong, and populous nation. ⁶The Egyptians mistreated and afflicted us. They imposed hard labor on us. ⁷We cried out to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice, and he saw our affliction, our labor, and oppression. ⁸The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm and with great awe-inspiring acts and signs and wonders. ⁹He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰So now, look as I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you have given me, LORD.”

Then set the basket down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. ¹¹Then you, as well as the Levite and the alien who resides among you, will rejoice in all the good things that the LORD your God has given to you and your household.

Psalm 65 (sing refrains, speak verses responsively)

Refrain



The earth is full of the good-ness of
God, the good-ness of our God.

Praise awaits you, O God,*
you call forth songs of joy.

You care for the land and water it;*
you soften it with showers and bless its crops.

The streams of God are filled with water*
to provide the people with grain.

Refrain

You crown the year with your bounty,*
and your carts overflow with abundance.

The grasslands of the desert overflow;*
the hills are clothed with gladness.

The meadows are covered with flocks
and the valleys are mantled with grain;*
they shout for joy and sing.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

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New Testament Reading – Philippians 4:6-20

⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if anything is excellent, and if anything is praiseworthy, think about these things. ⁹ The things that you learned, received, heard, and saw in me: Keep doing these things. And the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰ I rejoice greatly in the Lord now that you have revived your concern for me once again. Actually, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹ I am not saying this because I lack anything; in fact, I have learned to be content in any circumstances in which I find myself. ¹² I know what it is to live in humble circumstances, and I know what it is to have more than enough. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, while being full or hungry, while having plenty or not enough. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, you did well by becoming partners with me in my affliction.

¹⁵ You Philippians know that in the beginning of your experience with the gospel, when I left Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. ¹⁶ Even while I was in Thessalonica, you sent help more than once for my needs. ¹⁷ Not that I am seeking a gift, but I am seeking the fruit that adds to your account. ¹⁸ I have been paid in full, and I have more than enough. I am fully supplied since I've received from Epaphroditus the things that came from you, a sweet-smelling fragrance, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will fully supply your every need, according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever! Amen.

Choir (Thu.) - Giving Thanks

Gospel Reading – Luke 12:15-21

¹⁵ Then he said to them, "Watch out and be on guard against all greed, because a man's life is not measured by how many possessions he has."

¹⁶ He told them a parable: "The land of a certain rich man produced very well. ¹⁷ He was thinking to himself, 'What will I do, because I do not have anywhere to store my crops?' ¹⁸ He said, 'This is what I will do. I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and goods. ¹⁹ And I will tell my soul, "Soul, you have many goods stored up for many years. Take it easy. Eat, drink, and be merry.'"

²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your soul will be demanded from you. Now who will get what you have prepared?'

²¹ "That is how it will be for anyone who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

Our Confession Of Faith

Luther's explanation to the 1st Article

P: I believe that God created me and all that exists,

C: and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.

P: And I believe God still preserves me ...

C: by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home, spouse and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all I need to keep my body and life.

P: God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil.

C: All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it.

P: For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him.

C: This is most certainly true.

Hymn 615 – We Thank You for Your Blessings

We thank you for your blessings, Almighty Lord, our King;

We thank you for the harvests, Yes, Lord, for ev'rything:

For flow'rs that bloom in springtime,

For rip'ning fruit and grain,

For all the precious sunshine, And for the gentle rain.

This day of great thanksgiving We count them one by one:

Our free and fruitful country, The great things you have done,

Our family, our loved ones, The guardian angels' care,

Our very self and heartbeat-Lord, hear our thankful prayer!

But best of all your blessings, The rainbow of your love,

Are all the many mercies Your Word brings from above.

Our life now has full meaning-Christ Jesus is our God!

Thanksgiving shall be living The way the Savior trod.

Text: Unknown, alt.

Sermon – James 1:16-18

¹⁶Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. ¹⁸He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

Sermon Theme: *Thank God for His Good and Perfect Gift*

Hymn 610 – Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God With hearts and hands and voices,

Who wondrous things has done, In whom his world rejoices,

Who from our mother's arms Has blessed us on our way

With countless gifts of love And still is ours today.

Oh, 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 heav'n adore!
For thus it was, is now, And shall be evermore.

Text: Martin Rinkart, 1586-1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.

Thanksgiving Prayer

P: For the privilege of coming into your presence as redeemed children of God and heirs of eternal life:

C: We praise you, O glorious Trinity!

P: For your marvelous creation:

C: We thank you, all powerful God!

P: For our sins of thanklessness, lack of contentment, sinful desires for those things which do not belong to us, misplaced trust in material things, needless worry which displays a lack of trust in you, and impatience --all which anger you and make us deserving of eternal punishment in hell:

C: We beg you to forgive us for Jesus' sake, gracious and merciful Lord God!

P: That we may avoid the false thought that we can shape our own destinies and solve our own problems without your help:

C: We humbly ask for your help and grace, Lord of lords!

P: So we may be more grateful in knowing that you are the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and that we may be content with daily necessities instead of complaining about a lack of worldly luxuries:

C: We seek your help and wisdom dear Father of Light!

P: For Christian courage to be thankful even for the adversities in our lives:

C: We praise your name and seek your strength, our wise and faithful Lord!

P: For the privilege of being concerned about the ills and sufferings of our neighbors, and for the responsibility of tending to their needs:

C: We glorify you for making us worthy of the task, compassionate and gracious Friend!

P: For the joy and peace which fills our hearts through the knowledge of our complete forgiveness through the innocent death and glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and for the hope of eternal life which you have planted in our hearts by your Holy Spirit:

C: We bless your holy name, dear Redeemer!

P: For the opportunity to gather with fellow Christians in our house of worship, and for the opportunity to spread the Gospel of forgiveness individually and as a congregation:

C: We offer you our heartfelt thanks, Savior of all!

P: As a family of believers, we thank you for opening the hearts of members and leading them to recognize the many blessings and opportunities you have placed before this congregation:

C: We thank you Lord, who gives us all good things.

Moment of silent intercession

P: For all the blessings - physical and spiritual - which you daily shower upon us, even though we are totally unworthy of them:

C: We offer our humble praise and thanks, and dedicate our lives to you alone!

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our tres-passes, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

P: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

C: His love endures forever

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

C (sings): Amen.

Hymn 260 – Let All Things Now Living

Let all things now living A song of thanksgiving

To God the Creator triumphantly raise,

Who fashioned and made us, Protected and stayed us,

Who still guides us on to the end of our days.

God's banners are o'er us; His light goes before us,

A pillar of fire shining forth in the night,

Till shadows have vanished And darkness is banished,

As forward we travel from light into light.

**His law he enforces; The stars in their courses
And sun in its orbit obediently shine.
The hills and the mountains, The rivers and fountains,
The deeps of the ocean proclaim him divine.
We, too, should be voicing Our love and rejoicing.
With glad adoration a song let us raise
Till all things now living Unite in thanksgiving:
“To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!”**

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Serving Us Today:

Preacher: Pastor Thomas W. Kneser

Organist: Dee Ann Techlin (Wed.) / Nancy Perez (Thu.)

Flute: Elina Hofer (Thu.)