



Joint Thanksgiving Service

Thursday, November 28, 2024
9:15 am

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church
2437 Niagara Rd.
Niagara Falls, NY 14304

St. Peter's Lutheran Church
6167 Walmore Rd.
Sanborn, NY 14132

Thanksgiving Service (Based on Hymns)

Today's Thanksgiving service may have a different tone than we may be used to. Traditionally our congregations would sing familiar hymns of thanksgiving. This Thanksgiving service, based on hymns, moves our focus toward **Who** and **why** we are thankful as the hymns progress through the service beginning with a hymn of confession. Here we remember that we are invited to come to the Lord with a heart of repentance to receive His forgiveness. For this we are thankful. Therefore, it is appropriate to move to the next hymn in which we express that thankfulness. Being thankful for His saving grace we will next sing a hymn proclaiming our commitment followed shortly thereafter by a hymn of praise. We close with the sending hymn where we ask our Lord to continue with us until our last day.

*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.
Psalm 136:1*

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Opening Litany

L: We gather in the name of the Father, the Son +, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

L: Oh Lord, open my lips,

C: and my mouth shall declare your praise.

L: Hurry to deliver me,

C: come and help me, my Lord and my God.

L: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

C: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Introduction to the First Hymn

English poet and editor, Charlotte Elliot, grew up in a Christian home. Her grandfather was a pastor. Even though she was raised a Christian, Charlotte, an invalid for most of her life, had serious doubts about her relationship with Christ. She penned this hymn, one of over a hundred she wrote, in 1836. It is her most well-known hymn. In 1849 it was published to a tune by William Bradbury for the very first time.

Hymn of Confession: #193 - *Just as I Am*

*1 Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*2 Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*3 Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*4 Just as I am, poor, wretched blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee I find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*5 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*6 Just as I am; thy love unknown
Has broken ev'ry barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

Greeting

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

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, our lives are filled with the abundance of your grace and mercy. We thank you for the good things of your creation that fill our lives. May our gratitude be so abundant that it flows into radical generosity that reflects your boundless love for all; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Introduction to Second Hymn

The popular hymn, “Now Thank We All Our God” was written in 1636 by a Christian minister named Martin Rinkart. During the Thirty Years War in Germany, Martin Rinkart became the Bishop of Eilenberg, Germany. Since Eilenberg was a walled city it became a place of refuge for those who fled the war. It was also a place of famine and disease because of the overcrowding. In 1637 Rinkart was the only clergyman left in the city who could perform the 40 or 50 necessary burial services daily, one of which was for his wife. As if that weren't enough, the city was sacked three times by invaders, one of which imposed a large tribute payment upon the people. During this time, Rinkart managed to find the time to write 7 dramas and 66 hymns. This hymn was originally a humble prayer of thanksgiving. The second and third verses expand the hymn's focus and give it its lasting appeal. You can see the Thirty Years' War pressing on his mind as he penned the words, “And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills, in this world and the next.”

Choir - Hymn of Thanksgiving: Hymn#50 - *Now Thank We All Our God*

The Holy Scriptures

First Lesson: Deuteronomy 8:1-10

¹{Moses said to the Israelites,} “The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ²And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. ⁵Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. ⁶So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. ⁷For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the 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 in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

Lector: The Word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 67 (ESV)

¹May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us,

²that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.

³Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

⁴Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.

⁵Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

⁶The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, shall bless us.

⁷God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!

Second Lesson: Philippians 4:6-20

⁶... (D)o not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me — practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. ¹⁰I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me. ¹⁴Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

♪Hallelu! Halleluia! Give praise to the Lord for the blessings of heaven in God's holy Word. For the words of forgiveness, the words that endure, Hallelu! Hallelujah! Give praise to the Lord.

Gospel Reading: Luke 17:11-19

♪Glory be to you, O Lord

¹¹On the way to Jerusalem {Jesus} was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance ¹³and lifted up their voices, 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 cleansed. ¹⁵Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; ¹⁶and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷Then Jesus answered, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? ¹⁸Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: ♪Praise to you, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 dead, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Special Music by Zach Carr and Ella Kroening The Truth

Homily

Introduction to the Third Hymn:

In 1752, a young Robert Robinson attended an church meeting to heckle believers and make fun of their worship. Instead, he listened in awe to the words of the great preacher George Whitefield, and in 1755, at the age of twenty, Robinson responded to the call he felt three years earlier and became a Christian. Another three years later, when preparing a sermon for his church in Norfolk, England, he penned the words that have become one of the church's most-loved hymns: "Come, thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace."

Using imagery of Christ as the giver of living water and the shepherd gathering his sheep back into the fold, this hymn reminds us of the bountiful grace of God. Like Robinson, we too are "prone to wander," and are quick to seek redemption through our own power. But God continues to bring us back from our wandering, until, with songs of praise on our lips, we dance forever before the fountain of His redeeming love.

Hymn of Commitment: #227- *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

1 Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise.

While the hope of endless glory Fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore thee; May I still thy goodness prove.

2 Here I raise my Ebenezer Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure, Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, Wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, Interposed his precious blood.

3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now like a fetter Bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; Prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; Seal it for thy courts above.

Responsive Prayer

L: Let us gather our hearts together as one and offer our prayers to God.

(Silence is kept for reflection and meditation.)

L: Let my prayer rise before you as incense.

C: And the lifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

L: It is you, loving God, who breathes life into each of us,

C: It is you who calls us into existence.

L: It is you who forgives the sins of those who are penitent,

C: create a new heart in us, O God, as we acknowledge our sin before you.

L: You are the God of the living,

C: and are pleased to offer us forgiveness and reconciliation.

L: Stretch forth your right hand to save us,

C: and defend us from our enemies.

L: You, O Lord, see us who have no strength,

C: and you revive us through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

L: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 trespasses, 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Offering

Introduction to Offering Hymn

Carl Boberg was born August 16, 1859, in Sweden. He went to Christian school as a child and when he grew up he became a member of the Swedish Parliament. He was a popular speaker in his day and an appreciated writer. Boberg published several collections of poetry and more than 20 hymns in his lifetime. The text now known as "How Great Thou Art" is an English translation of his hymn entitled, "O Mighty God."

Hymn of Praise: #26- *How Great Thou Art* (Remain Seated)

1. O Lord my God, When I in awesome wonder,
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made;
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Chorus:

*Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art.
Then sings my soul, My Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!*

2. When through the woods, and forest glades I wander,
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.
When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze. (Chorus)

3. And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;
That on a Cross, my burdens gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin. (Chorus)

4. When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,
And then proclaim: "My God, how great Thou art!" (Chorus)

Offertory - ♪Give thanks with a grateful heart, Give thanks to the Holy One, Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son. And now let the weak say, "I am strong", Let the poor say, "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks.

Offering Prayer

L: Let us pray. Holy God, you are the giver of all good gifts and you provide and sustain our lives. Grant that we would be ever thankful, that filled with your goodness and mercy, we would be generous and loving to our neighbors. We pray this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

Benediction and Dismissal

L: May the God of light and truth lead you from this place,

C: be not far from me, O Lord, the rock of my salvation.

L: May the Savior of the world encourage us to follow the example of his great humility,

C: that we would be patient and long-suffering in our service.

L: May the Holy Spirit accompany and guide us,

C: and grant us peace at the closing of the day.

L: Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C:Amen.

Introduction to the Sending Hymn

Henry Francis Lyte was a pastor and poet who died in Nice, France in 1847. He penned these words as contemplated death months earlier. Originally there were 8 stanzas to this hymn that is based on Luke 24, the walk to Emmaus. In this hymn, "evening" is not the end of the day, but the end of life. Some sources say that the tune was not written until 1861 when the poem was rediscovered by Willam H. Monk. It is said that he composed the tune, *Eventide*, in just ten minutes.

Sending Hymn: #62- *Abide with Me*

1 Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

2 I need thy presence ev'ry passing hour;
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me.

3 Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me!

5 Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

L: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

**** Source: The introduction material was taken from hymnary.org and wikipedia.**

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