

ELM GROVE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
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Rev. Eric C. Skovgaard, Administrative Pastor ♦ Vicar Sam Lee ♦

NATIONAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING (OBSERVED)

Wednesday, November 22, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.



("The Baptism of Pocahontas" by John Gadsby Chapman, completed in 1840, now hangs in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol.)

In the introductory remarks to his explanation of Psalm 122, Martin Luther tells us where thankfulness should come from:

“To begin with, we must rejoice at the less important good things (exiguus bonis) which we enjoy according to the Second Table of the Law in that our bodies and possessions are protected. For these gifts are of minor importance when compared with those which we enjoy according to the First Table: that God has revealed Himself, has made known what He intends to do with us, gives His Word, grants faith and the Holy Spirit, hears prayers, daily increases His church, etc. These things are so great that no tongue is able to amplify and praise them as they deserve...to this David turns his eyes; on this he meditates, and so he is moved to gratitude...”

For only those are truly thankful who receive the gifts of God joyfully and rejoice in the Giver.”

[What Luther Says, 4354]

"Omnipotent, eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I give You thanks. I praise You. I glorify You because Your hands fashioned me and made every detail of what I am. You shaped me like clay in my mother's womb. You poured me out like milk and curdled me like cheese. You clothed me with skin and knit me together with bones and tendons. You gave me life and showed me mercy. In Your providence, You watched over my spirit." Amen. (Thanksgiving for life and birth, by Johann Gerhard)

Welcome and Announcements

Responsive Reading

Adapted from the National Fast Day on April 30, 1863, and the Thanksgiving Proclamation issued by President Lincoln, 1863

P "It is the duty of nations as well as of people to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God;"

C "to confess their sin and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon;"

P "and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history,"

C "that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord!"

P "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven;"

C "we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown."

P "But we have forgotten God."

C "We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us,"

P "and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts,"

C "that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own."

P "Intoxicated with unbroken success,"

C "we have become too self sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!"

P "It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged,"

C "as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people."

P "I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands,"

C "to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwells in the heavens."

Prelude

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come — Edwin F. Childs

Hymn of Invocation

892, Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Introit

Psalm 104:24, 14-15; antiphon: Psalm 104:31

P May the glory of the Lord endure forever;

C may the Lord rejoice in his works.

P O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all;

C the earth is full of your creatures.

P You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate,

C that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine to gladden the heart of man,

P oil to make his face shine

C and bread to strengthen man's heart.

ALL 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

P May the glory of the Lord endure forever;

C may the Lord rejoice in his works.

Thanksgiving Day Collect

P Let us pray. Almighty God, You crown the fields with Your blessing and permit us to gather in the fruits of the earth. As stewards of Your creation, may we receive Your gifts in humble thankfulness and share Your bounty with those in need; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament

Genesis 8:18–22

¹⁸So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. ¹⁹Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark. ²⁰Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. ²²While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Hymn

806, Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

Epistle

James 1:16–18

¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

STAND

Holy Gospel

Luke 17:11–19

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."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

SIT

Catechetical Response

First Article of the Apostles' Creed with Explanation

P I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. What does this mean?

C I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

The Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer with Explanation

P Give us this day our daily bread. What does this mean?

C God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

P What is meant by daily bread?

C Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

Hymn

789, Praise and Thanksgiving

Sermon

“What Does Thankfulness Look Like?” (Luke 17:11-19)

Thanksgiving Offering

Praise and Thanksgiving – Hal H. Hopson

(Your Thanksgiving offerings are disbursed by the EGL Board of Evangelism to local, national, & international charities affiliated with the LCMS. This year the offerings will be designated to a missionary in the field.)

Hymnic Litany for Thanksgiving

894, For the Fruits of His Creation 785, We Praise You, O God

- P People loved by God, let us give to Him all thanks and praise this day.
For the good gifts of this country, our community, our neighbors and all things that fill life with joy and meaning. For food and drink, for family and friends, for the foretaste of the heavenly feast You grant us even in our earthly gatherings. For the opportunity to share Your good gifts with those less fortunate, for every act of kindness and compassion, for every listening ear and caring heart, O Lord, our God,
- C Your steadfast love endures forever!**

**For the fruits of His creation,
Thanks be to God.
For His gifts to ev'ry nation,
Thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
Silent growth while we are sleeping,
Future needs in earth's safekeeping,
Thanks be to God. (LSB 894, sts 1)**

- P For the freedom and liberties we enjoy here in these United States of America, especially the freedom to believe, teach, and confess the truth about Jesus Christ, our Lord, not only within the walls of the Church but also in our daily lives and work, and for that Godly heritage given to us through our nation's founding fathers down to the present day, O Lord, our God,
- C Your steadfast love endures forever!**

**In the just reward of labor,
God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbor,
God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
For the hungry and despairing,
In the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done. (LSB 894, sts 2)**

P For those who labor to hold chaos and evil at bay: those elected and entrusted with civil authority, our military, our clandestine services, our first responders, our health-care workers, and social workers. For those who tenderly care for the weak and vulnerable among us, especially the unborn, and those who work in nursing homes and child-care centers, and all who keep watch that others may sleep in peace. For carpenters, mechanics, plumbers, electricians, construction workers, and all who build our homes and sustain our lives, O Lord, our God,

C Your steadfast love endures forever!

For the harvests of the Spirit,

Thanks be to God.

For the good we all inherit,

Thanks be to God.

For the wonders that astound us,

For the truths that still confound us,

Most of all, that love has found us,

Thanks be to God. (LSB 894, sts 3)

P For those who teach and those who learn in the schools and universities of the church and of the nation, and for all who seek to impart the light of knowledge and the hope of improvement, that they would be guided by the spirit of truthful education. For the gift of the Word of God, for those who proclaim it faithfully among us and around the world, and for those who gather to hear it, ponder it, and grow in it. For those persecuted on account of Christ and His Gospel that God would grant them courage and turn the hearts of their persecutors to repentance and faith, O Lord, our God,

C Your steadfast love endures forever!

We praise You, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;

In grateful devotion our tribute we bring.

We lay it before You, we kneel and adore You;

We bless Your holy name, glad praises we sing. (LSB 785, sts 1)

P For the grace of Baptism and the gift of a fresh start to each day in Your forgiving love, heavenly Father. For the promise of everlasting life in Christ, for those we knew and love who have fallen asleep faithfully in Him, for the new heavens and the new earth, and for the city with foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And for ourselves, that in these gray and later days, there may continue to be those whose lives are praise, each life a high doxology to the Trinity. O Lord, our God,

C Your steadfast love endures forever!

We worship You, God of our fathers, we bless You;

Through trial and tempest our guide You have been.

When perils o’ertake us, You will not forsake us,

And with Your help, O Lord, our struggles we win. (LSB 785, sts 2)

P For the glory of Your holiness, the comfort of Your love, the joy of sins forgiven and the peace of death defeated. For all these blessings and so many more that we can never number or name, which we have not earned or merited, for all people and for all things, O Lord, our God,

C Your steadfast love endures forever!

With voices united our praises we offer

And gladly our songs of thanksgiving we raise.

With You, Lord, beside us, Your strong arm will guide us.

To You, our great Redeemer, forever be praise! (LSB 785, sts 3)

STAND

Lord's Prayer

**C 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 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
forever and ever. Amen.**

Benedicamus

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

P The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

Closing Hymn

895, Now Thank We All Our God

"Now Thank We All Our God" [Nun Danket Alle Gott] was composed by Martin Rinckart in 1637 originally as a table prayer for his family. Rinckart spent most of his pastoral ministry in the Saxon town of Eilenburg, Germany, which was also his hometown. His ministry overlapped the 30 Years War [1618-1648] during which there was much suffering caused by war, disease, famine, and refugees. It's only by holding onto the promises of God in Christ that anyone could compose a hymn of joyful thanksgiving in times of enormous heartache.

Postlude

Now Thank We All Our God – Sigfrid Karg-Elert

ALTAR PARAMENTS: Alternate White.

Participants

Preacher
Organist/Choir Director
Handbells
Elder
Chancel Assistant
Usher Team on duty

Pastor Eric Skovgaard
Richard C. Ewert
Exultate Ringers
Bruce Bessert
John Schaefer

Andrew Alles, Ella Donath, Pam Ganswindt, Andrea Kysely,
Steve Nelson, Shelly Skovgaard, Cathy Tuttrup, Matt Zientek, Mikayla Zientek



Presidential Proclamation 5412 - Thanksgiving Day, 1985

Although the time and date of the first American thanksgiving observance may be uncertain, there is no question but that this treasured custom derives from our Judeo-Christian heritage. "Unto Thee, O God, do we give thanks," the Psalmist sang, praising God not only for the "wondrous works" of His creation, but for loving guidance and deliverance from dangers.

A band of settlers arriving in Maine in 1607 held a service of thanks for their safe journey, and twelve years later settlers in Virginia set aside a day of thanksgiving for their survival. In 1621 Governor William Bradford created the most famous of all such observances at Plymouth Colony when a bounteous harvest prompted him to proclaim a special day "to render thanksgiving to the Almighty God for all His blessings." The Spaniards in California and the Dutch in New Amsterdam also held services to give public thanks to God.

In 1777, during our War of Independence, the Continental Congress set aside a day for thanksgiving and praise for our victory at the battle of Saratoga. It was the first time all the colonies took part in such an event on the same day. The following year, upon news that France was coming to our aid, George Washington at Valley Forge prescribed a special day of thanksgiving. Later, as our first President, he responded to a Congressional petition by declaring Thursday, November 26, 1789, the first Thanksgiving Day of the United States of America.

Although there were many state and national thanksgiving days proclaimed in the ensuing years, it was the tireless crusade of one woman, Sarah Josepha Hale, that finally led to the establishment of this beautiful feast as an annual nationwide observance. Her editorials so touched the heart of Abraham Lincoln that in 1863—even in the midst of the Civil War—he enjoined his countrymen to be mindful of their many blessings, cautioning them not to forget the source from which they come, that they are the gracious gifts of the Most High God . . . Who ought to be thanked with one heart and one voice by the whole American People.

It is in that spirit that I now invite all Americans to take part again in this beautiful tradition with its roots deep in our history and deeper still in our hearts. We manifest our gratitude to God for the many blessings he has showered upon our land and upon its people.

In this season of Thanksgiving we are grateful for our abundant harvests and the productivity of our industries; for the discoveries of our laboratories; for the researches of our scientists and scholars; for the achievements of our artists, musicians, writers, clergy, teachers, physicians, businessmen, engineers, public servants, farmers, mechanics, artisans, and workers of every sort whose honest toil of mind and body in a free land rewards them and their families and enriches our entire Nation.

Let us thank God for our families, friends, and neighbors, and for the joy of this very festival we celebrate in His name. Let every house of worship in the land and every home and every heart be filled with the spirit of gratitude and praise and love on this Thanksgiving Day.

Now, therefore, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, in the spirit and tradition of the Pilgrims, the Continental Congress, and past Presidents, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 1985, as a day of national Thanksgiving. I call upon every citizen of this great Nation to gather together in homes and places of worship and offer prayers of praise and gratitude for the many blessings Almighty God has bestowed upon our beloved country.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

RONALD REAGAN

"The Mayflower Pilgrims" interview on Issues Etc. Consider listening to this interview as a family and answering the following questions as a way to enrich your family's Thanksgiving celebration. Copy the following link into your browser and enjoy!

<http://issuesetc.org/podcast/21891124162.mp3>

#1 Who is being interviewed by Todd Wilken in this interview? Where does he serve as pastor?

#2 Roughly how many Mayflower Pilgrim descendants are there in the world today?

#3 Who were the Puritans? How were they different from the Separatists?

#4 Did the interviewee have any relatives on the Mayflower who were saved from drowning during the crossing of the Atlantic? What was his name?

#5 Which Luther commentary (on a book of the Bible) did Plymouth colony Governor Bradford have in his library?

#6 Did the Pilgrims celebrate Christmas in those early colonial years? Which national holiday that we still celebrate nowadays did they celebrate? How was this different from the southern colonies?