



To these bounties, which are so
constantly enjoyed that we are
prone to forget the source
from which they come...

~ Abraham Lincoln
Thanksgiving Proclamation,
October 3, 1863

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday, November 29, 2023

Rev. Susan Engholm, Interim Pastor

Thanksgiving Service, 6:30 pm

Jan Smith, Accompanist

GivePlus Text 866-298-7547

Prelude

Thank You Jesus, Arr. by Norman J. Clayton

Jan Smith & Elaine Olson

Thank You, Lord, Arr. by Jack Schrader

For the Beauty of the Earth, Arr. by Tedd Smith & Don Hustad

Welcome

CALL TO WORSHIP & LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

God the Father, Creator of all life and every good blessing,

hear us as we give you thanks.

God the Son, Giver of new hope and new life,

hear us as we give you thanks.

God the Spirit, Source of love and grace,

hear us as we give you thanks.

Our gracious God, we have bountiful wonders for which to offer you praise and thanksgiving in these and in all days. Hear our praises for all your good gifts. For all that you so generously provide,

we thank you, Lord.

For every day and season,

we thank you, Lord.

For holding us in your heart and in your hands,

we thank you, Lord.

For sustaining us with each breath,

we thank you, Lord.

For embracing us within our faults,

we thank you, Lord.

For every chance to give and to return what is yours,

we thank you, Lord.

For the beauty of this earth,

we thank you, Lord.

For all the trials you help us bear,

we thank you, Lord.

For those you send to walk with us on the way,

we thank you, Lord.

For the dear ones you share with us – family, friends and neighbors,

we thank you, Lord.

For inviting us to trust in you for every need,

we thank you, Lord.

For the gift of faith,

we thank you, Lord.

For the promise of eternal life,

we thank you, Lord.

For the blessings we remember before you now in silence . . .

For these good gifts,

we thank you, Lord.

Have mercy upon us, O Lord,

give us grateful hearts.

Gathering Hymn "Now Thank We All Our God" (ELW #840)

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Giving thanks for the many gifts that come from God.

Words of Thanksgiving: For The Good Earth

(food, water, trees, air, beaches, meadows, mountains)

Genesis 1:29-31a

God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

Responsive Prayer of Thanksgiving (by Walter Rauschenbusch, 1861-1918)

For the wide sky and the blessed sun,

for the salt sea and the running water,

for the everlasting hills

and the never-resting winds,

for trees and the common grass underfoot.

We thank you for our senses

by which we hear the songs of birds,

And see the splendor of the summer fields,

And taste of the autumn fruits,

And rejoice in the feel of the snow,

And smell the breath of the spring.

Grant us a heart wide open to all this beauty,

And save our souls from being so blind

That we pass unseeing

When even the common thorn bush

Is aflame with your glory,

O God our creator,

Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn "For the Beauty of the Earth" (ELW # 879)

*Words of Thanksgiving: For Citizenship & Freedom
(country, democracy, peace, international neighbors)*

Matthew 22:36-39

"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (by Abigail Von Buren)

O, heavenly Father: We thank thee for food and remember the hungry.

We thank thee for health and remember the sick.

We thank thee for friends and remember the friendless.

We thank thee for freedom and remember the enslaved.

May these remembrances stir us to service,

that thy gifts to us may be used for others. Amen.

Hymn "This Is My Song" (ELW # 887)

*The Words of Thanksgiving: For Daily Life
(work, service organizations, schools, etc.)*

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (by Howard Thurman, 1899-1981)

Today, I make my Sacrament of Thanksgiving.

I begin with the simple things of my days:

Fresh air to breathe,

Cool water to drink,

The taste of food,

The protection of houses and clothes,

The comforts of home.

For all these I make an act of Thanksgiving this day!

Hymn "Earth and All Stars!" (ELW # 731)

*The Words of Thanksgiving: For Gifts of Faith
(faith, scriptures, teachers, music)*

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

(A prayer for the church's ministries from All Creation Sings, 2020 adapted)

Holy God,

We praise and thank you for calling diverse people into the life of the church's work and ministry. Uphold us with your strong and loving arms. Empower our ministers to serve your people with the word of scripture, the water of life, and the meal of grace. Equip us with both beloved traditions and fresh ideas; grant us joy in our tasks; and renew us daily in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Word among us, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn "Blessed Assurance" (ELW # 638)

Words of Thanksgiving: For Relationships (family, friends, diversity, new acquaintances)

2 Thessalonians 1:3

We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.

Prayer of Thanksgiving ("Prayer" by Maya Angelou, 1928-2014)

Father, Mother, God, Thank you for your presence during the hard and mean days,

for then we have you to lean upon.

Thank you for your presence during the bright and sunny days,

for then we can share that which we have with those who have less.

And thank you for your presence during the Holy Days,

for then we are able to celebrate you and our families and our friends.

For those that have no voice,

we ask you to speak.

For those who feel unworthy,

we ask you to pour your love out in waterfalls of tenderness.

For those who live in pain,

we ask that you bath them in the river of your healing.

For those who are lonely,

we ask you to keep them company.

For those who are depressed,

we ask you to shower upon them the light of hope.

Dear Creator,

You, the borderless sea of substance, we ask you to give to all the world that which we need most—Peace. Amen.

Hymn "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (ELW # 656)

Benediction Ephesians 3:14-21

For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and [in Christ Jesus](#) to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing for the Meal

Be present at our table Lord,
Be here and everywhere adored.
These mercies bless and grant that we,
May feast in paradise with thee. Amen.

Sending God in Peace, Serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

Postlude *Now Thank We All Our God, Tune by Johann Cruger (1598-1662)*

Join us after worship for fellowship and pie!