

NATIONAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING

“Give Thanks in All Circumstances”

Wednesday, November 25, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 26, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

4101 Washington Street NE

Columbia Heights, MN 55421

OPENING PRAISE:

“We Praise You, O God, Our Redeemer Creator”

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.

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.

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!

“God of Our Fathers”

God of our fathers, whose almighty hand Leads forth in beauty all the starry band

Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies: Our grateful songs before your throne arise.

Your love divine has led us in the past; In this free land by you our lot is cast;

Oh, be our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay; Your Word our Law, your paths our chosen way.

From war’s alarms, from deadly pestilence, Make your strong arm our ever sure defense.

Your true religion in our hearts increase; Your bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh your people on their toilsome way; Lead us from night to never-ending day;

Fill all our lives with heav’n-born love and grace Until at last we meet before your face.

INVOCATION:

L: Our worship begins the way our lives in Christ begin in baptism: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

LITANY:

L: The theme for our Thanksgiving service this year, and what a year it has been, comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:14-18: “And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for

evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Let us pray: It has been quite a year since we gathered here last Thanksgiving, Lord. In many ways, it is a not a year we would like to repeat. And we would like to get it behind us as quickly as possible.

C: Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

L: We have experienced quarantine and shelter in place orders. We’ve stayed home from work and school. We have lost time with family and friends. Restaurants, movies, malls—we’ve given all that up. And the times we feel like smiling, our smiles are hidden behind masks.

C: Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

L: Our city has experienced the fear, turmoil and violence that accompanies injustice. Lives have been lost. Businesses have been lost. Trust has been lost.

C: Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

L: We have allowed politics to separate us from our neighbors, our friends and our families. We have lost even more of our unity, and worse yet, we have failed to do anything about it. Our nation seems so wounded and broken.

C: Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

L: Many who celebrated thanksgiving with us last year are no longer here, so we grieve.

C: Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

L: Our world has changed, Lord. Our church has changed. We’ve changed. But you haven’t changed! O changeless God—the same yesterday, today and forever—your love is just as strong, your power is just as steady, your will is still in place. So it is right that we, with all the church on earth and in heaven

All: Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

WORDS OF GRACE AND HOPE

SONG OF PRAISE: “Give Thanks” – Henry Smith

Solo by Amanda Massey; accompanied by Becky Massey

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

C: Lord God, forever faithful, as we set aside time today to be a people of thanksgiving, focus us where we need to be focused. Focus us on all the ways you are good to us. Let us find a healthy center in your perfect love. Empower us and move us in gratitude to reach out to bless others. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

HOLY GOSPEL:

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 17.

C: Glory to You, O Lord!

Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!” When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

L: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ!

SONG OF THE DAY: “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 mothers’ arms Has blest 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 harm In this world and the next!**

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Giving Thanks in All Circumstances: Part 1—Life’s Transitions

SCRIPTURE: Romans 5:3-5

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

DEVOTION: Karyn Naber

PRAYER:

C: O God who never changes, in the midst of our life changes and transitions, you remain faithful. Give us eyes of faith to see our lives as joyful adventures with you. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

SONG: “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

**Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father! There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not: As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.**

REFRAIN:

**Great is Thy faithfulness, Great is Thy faithfulness, Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

**Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!**

REFRAIN:

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Giving Thanks in All Circumstances: Part 2—2020 as a Student

SCRIPTURE: James 1:2-4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

DEVOTION: Mack Martin

PRAYER

C: Heavenly Father, students and teachers have been given extra burdens this year. Thank you for the creativity and determination that have allowed them to teach and learn in the midst of all the challenges and distractions. Bless them in all they do. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

HYMN: "Earth and All Stars"

**Earth and all stars! Loud rushing planets!
Sing to the Lord a new song! Oh, victory!
Loud shouting army! Sing to the Lord a new song!**

REFRAIN: He has done marvelous things. I too will praise him with a new song!

**Classrooms and labs! Loud boiling test tubes!
Sing to the Lord a new song! Athlete and band!
Loud cheering people! Sing to the Lord a new song! REFRAIN:**

**Knowledge and truth! Loud sounding wisdom!
Sing to the Lord a new song! Daughter and son!
Loud praying members! Sing to the Lord a new song! REFRAIN:**

**Children of God, Dying and rising,
Sing to the Lord a new song! Heaven and earth,
Hosts everlasting, Sing to the Lord a new song! REFRAIN:**

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Giving Thanks in All Circumstances: Part 3—2020 as a Family

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3:15-17

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and

admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

DEVOTION: Michelle Wermerskirchen & Finn Donovan

PRAYER

C: We have been blessed this year with increased family time and togetherness. Sometimes we have dealt with increased tension. And some families have been kept apart by quarantines. Bless all families and empower us to be who you are calling us to be. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

SONG: “Let the Peace of Christ Rule in Your Heart”

Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart, Let the
peace of Christ rule in your heart. And what - ev - er you do, in—
word or— deed, Do it all in the name of the
Lord; Giv - ing thanks, giv - ing thanks to
God, through— Christ, the— Lord, Giv - ing thanks, giv - ing
thanks to God, through— Christ, the— Lord.

(“Let the Peace of Christ” by Denny Cagle, copyright 1981 Between the Lines Music, CCLI Lic. #921494.)

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Giving Thanks in All Circumstances: Part 4—In Loss

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 31:8

“The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

DEVOTION: Florence Molin

PRAYER

C: O God who never leaves us, we praise you for your faithfulness! Take away our fears and discouragement and replace them with courageous joy and brave faith. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

HYMN: “In You Is Gladness”

In you is gladness amid all sadness, Jesus, sunshine of my heart.
By you are given the gifts of heaven, You the true Redeemer are.
Our souls are waking; Our bonds are breaking.
Who trusts you surely Has built securely
And stands forever. Alleluia!
Our hearts are pining To see your shining, Dying or living To you are cleaving
Now and forever. Alleluia!

If he is ours, We fear no powers, Not of earth or sin or death.
He sees and blesses In worst distresses; He can change them with a breath.
Wherefore the story Tell of his glory With hearts and voices;
All heav'n rejoices In him forever. Alleluia!
We shout for gladness, Win over sadness,
Love him and praise him And still shall raise him
Glad hymns forever. Alleluia!

(“In You Is Gladness”, this setting copyright 1969 Concordia Publishing House, used by permission, Lutheran Service Book Hymn License #100014518.)

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CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

BLESSING OF THE OFFERINGS

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

(Prayer response – P: Lord, in your mercy, C: Hear our prayer.)

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

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.

BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN: “Now Thank We All Our God”

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.

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