

Sunday, November 8, 2020

A Service of The Word for Thanksgiving

*CALL TO WORSHIP

¹O come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

²Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

³For the LORD is a great God,

and a great King above all gods.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved. **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One, we confess that we are not awake for you. We are not faithful in using your gifts. We forget the least of our siblings. We do not see your beautiful image in one another. We are infected by sin that divides your beloved community. Open our hearts to your coming, open our eyes to see you in our neighbor, open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.

Beloved, we are God's children, and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.

Through † Jesus you are forgiven, by Jesus you are welcome,

in Jesus you are called to rejoice! Let us live in the promises prepared for us from the foundation of the world. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray 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 Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

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FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 8:7-18

Times of abundance tempt us to forget God and rely on our own power and resources. But God is the one who took Israel out of Egypt, led and fed them in the wilderness, brought them into the land, and gave them power to be productive. To thank this God is to remember and proclaim God's deeds.

⁷For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in 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 where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. ¹⁰You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you.

¹¹Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. ¹²When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, ¹³and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, ¹⁶and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. ¹⁷Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth." ¹⁸But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

Psalm: Psalm 65

¹You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; to you shall vows be fulfilled.

²**To you, the one who answers prayer, to you all flesh shall come.**

³Our sins are stronger than we are, but you blot out our transgressions.

⁴**Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!**

They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.

⁵Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,
O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away.

⁶**You make firm the mountains by your power; you are girded about with might.**

⁷You still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

⁸**Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs;
you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.**

⁹You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous;
the river of God is full of water. You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.

¹⁰**You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;
with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.**

¹¹You crown the year with your goodness, and your paths overflow with plenty.

¹²**May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, and the hills be clothed with joy.**

¹³May the meadows cover themselves with flocks,
and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; let them shout for joy and sing.

SECOND READING: Psalm 100

¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

²**Worship the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing.**

³Know that the LORD is God.

**It is he that made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him, bless his name.

⁵For the LORD is good;

his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

THIRD READING: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Christian fellowship involves sharing with those in need. Here Paul is gathering a collection for the church in Jerusalem from all the Gentile churches he helped found. We can be extravagant in our giving because God is extravagant in providing for our lives.

⁶The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹As it is written,

“He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever.”

¹⁰He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; ¹²for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. ¹³Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, ¹⁴while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together.....**God of all goodness, generations have turned to you,
gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings.**

**Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance,
and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self
and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and
Servant. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you send from your abundance the people, talents, and resources needed for all the ministries of your church. We give thanks for the work you have accomplished through your people, and we pray for your continued blessings in our ministry together (*specific ministries could be named*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bountiful God, you feed us through the richness of the land, water, sunlight, and ample crops. Bless all those who cultivate the land to bring forth its bounty, especially farmers and migrant workers. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Merciful God, you order our lives by your providence. We give you thanks for laws, infrastructure, and leadership that structure and support our human endeavors. Align our purposes with your own, that all our undertakings might bring you glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving God, you open our hearts in compassion for one another. We give you thanks for the care and healing received through the hands and feet of your servants. Send us to love those most in need of your mercy (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Hospitable God, you connect and strengthen us through meals and conversation with family and friends. In this time of thanksgiving, steer us from passive receiving to active response, from old quarrels to reconciliation, and from overconsumption to true gratitude. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal God, we give thanks for the love and care we have received from saints who have gone before us. By their example, enrich the generosity of our witness to others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad!

The blessing of God, Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**