**MODIFIED SERVICE- THANKSGIVNG SUNDAY- October 11, 2020**

**ZION EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH, PHLIPSBURG**

Happy Thanksgiving and welcome to everyone on this Thanksgiving Sunday, October 11, 2020. Today we continue to gather safely from the comfort of our homes as a reminder of our love for one another. Church council met on Tuesday evening and after much prayerful discussion they unanimously decided to remain closed for the time being for a number of reasons. We have seen Covid numbers rise at an alarming rate this past week and many council members lamented the loss of singing and corporate responses at our worship services. Council will revisit the issue in 2 weeks time.

We will celebrate communion today so please take a moment to gather some bread and wine or juice.

Our GotoMeeting Coffee hour meets at 11:00, please join us!

Please remember that Zion relies on your continued support each week to meet our monthly expenses. Thank you to all who support and pray for our congregation.

**GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**Call to Worship**

Come, let us celebrate the wondrous gifts that God has given us.  
Throughout all our lives, God has blessed us with love and hope.  
Praise be to God who provides for us. May our hearts be truly grateful,

and may we show our gratitude by the ways in which we live and care for others.  
Hallelujah!  
**Amen.**

**GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

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.**

**OPENING HYMN-** **For the Beauty of the Earth- ELW 879**

1 For the beauty of the earth,  
for the beauty of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies:

Refrain  
Christ, our God, to thee we raise  
this our sacrifice of praise.

2 For the wonder of each hour  
of the day and of the night,  
hill and vale and tree and flow'r,  
sun and moon and stars of light: Refrain

3 For the joy of ear and eye,  
for the heart and mind's delight,  
for the mystic harmony  
linking sense to sound and sight: Refrain

4 For the joy of human love,  
brother, sister, parent, child,  
friends on earth and friends above;  
for all gentle thoughts and mild: Refrain

5 For each perfect gift of thine,  
peace on earth and joy in heav'n;  
for thyself, best gift divine,  
to our world so freely giv'n: Refrain

**WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**FIRST READING:****Deuteronomy 8:7-18**

A reading from Deuteronomy.

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.  
 2To 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.  
 4Happy 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.  
 6You 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.  
 8Those 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.  
 10You 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.  
 12May 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:****2 Corinthians 9:6-15**

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

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!

**GOSPEL: Luke 17:11-19**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

11On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. 12As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, 13they called out, 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 made clean. 15Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. 16He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. 17Then Jesus asked, “Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? 18Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” 19Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**SERMON**

Seeing is believing is a common saying that has been used throughout history. We humans are not so good at trusting, we need to see it believe that something is true or real.

         Our gospel reading today tells of 10 lepers who meet Jesus as he is traveling on his way to Jerusalem. He was in no man’s land…an area between Samaria and Galilee. The 10 lepers approach him. They probably lived on the edge of no man’s land because of their disease. They would have been considered unclean by all accounts…socially, physically, and religiously unclean. They were outsiders who were lonely and desperate as they could not participate in the temple or any rituals. So, perhaps that is why they approached Jesus. Perhaps they had heard about this man who healed people, who listened to people, who talked to people just like them, people who were scorned and despised because of the disease they carried. They approached him cautiously and from afar and called him Master as a sign of respect. They asked Jesus if he would have mercy on them, if he would heal them.

And Jesus does! He simply says go show the priests, and as they walked away, they were made clean and healed. So, the men leave just as Jesus had told them to do, but one man suddenly stops and returns to Jesus. He saw that he was healed, and he realized that he had to come back and thank him, he had to show gratitude for all that Jesus had done at that moment. But it was more than just seeing that he was healed. For the first time, he saw who Jesus was, he knew who he was in the presence of. And at that moment, the Samaritan was changed, he saw, he believed, and he was healed. There in no man’s land, the Samaritan’s life was changed by the power of the Holy Spirit through the healing and presence of Jesus Christ. At that moment, a new relationship was formed with God and he was made whole. The other 9 were healed but, the Samaritan was made whole. He was saved.

         When he saw what had happened, he began to praise God, and he laid down at Jesus’ feet with a heart full of gratitude and thankfulness. His life would never be the same. He did not need to go and see the priests, he trusted, and he believed. In seeing, he recognized that God was indeed present in his life.

         How often do we recognize that what we see makes a difference? David Lose asks the questions…” In the face of trials or struggle do we see danger or opportunity for growth? In the face of a stranger do we see an enemy or a newfound friend? In the face of human need do we see laziness and demand or a gift? Do we view ourselves as children of God or as failures when we make a mistake or sin?”[[1]](#footnote-1)

         Answering these questions is not an easy yes or no answer, because it depends on how we see them. But when we choose how to answer them it can change or shape our outlook and behaviour. It too can make us whole. The Samaritan turned back to Jesus and gave him praise to thank him for being made whole that day. He was the unlikely hero of our gospel reading. The Samaritan was considered an outsider, an enemy that people disdained because of who he was, and the disease that he contracted. In turning to God, he was reconciled, restored, and recognized. He was able to return to community through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. I wonder what the other 9 thought. Did they wonder where the 10th man went? Did they wonder why he returned to Jesus? How were their lives changed? They certainly would have seen that their bodies were healed, but I wonder what they believed?

         Today we celebrate Thanksgiving, we celebrate and give thanks to God for the harvest that will feed us through the winter months. We take time to give thanks for relationships with family and friends. We give thanks for the warmth and safety of our homes. We give thanks for creation, for sunlight and rain, for the moon and the stars, for butterflies and wasps, for mountains and valleys, rivers and oceans. We give thanks and praise to a God who is in relationship with us offering to us unconditional love and peace. There is much to be thankful for even amid these times of pandemic and continuing isolation, even though some days it is hard to do. It is in these hard days that we must take the time to recognize that what we see makes a difference both in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

         So, let us continue to see all that is around us, let our hearts and minds be open to the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. Let us continue to be thankful, let us continue to know and trust that we are not alone, that God is indeed present in our lives. Let us turn to God as the Samaritan turned to Jesus knowing that as he was made whole, we too are made whole in his presence. Thanks be to God. Amen

**HYMN OF THE DAY- Now Thank We All Our God- ELW 839**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7gMDXylzW8**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7gMDXylzW8)

**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. 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, so that all may be loved and cared for. 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 received through the hands and feet of your servants. Send us to love those most in need of your mercy and healing of mind, body, or spirit. We remember especially Eddie, Elaine, Susie, Ruth, Mary Ann, Donelda, Lynette, Barb, Sarah, Carol, Janet, and those we name in the silence of our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy God, you offer to us the joy of thanksgiving, a time when families gather to give thanks and share a meal together. This year not all families will not be able to gather in person, accompany all who are isolated and all who are lonely. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, we give you 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.**

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

On his last night, as he shared a meal with his friends,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

**LORD’S PRAYER**

*Though we are apart, we are made one in Christ Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit, and so we pray as one:*

**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.**

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**COMMUNION**

**Let us eat together: the body of Christ, given for you; and the blood of Christ, shed for you**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Gracious God, in this meal you have gathered your scattered people, drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now give us courage to be your people in the world, and voice to proclaim your truth this day and always, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN Let All Things Now Living-ELW 881**

1 Let all things now living  
a song of thanksgiving  
to God the creator triumphantly raise,  
who fashioned and made us,  
protected and stayed us,  
who still guides us on to the end of our days.  
God's banners are o'er us,  
God's light goes before us,  
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,  
till shadows have vanished  
and darkness is banished,  
as forward we travel from light into light.

2 God rules all the forces:  
the stars in their courses  
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;  
the hills and the mountains,  
the rivers and fountains,  
the deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.  
We too should be voicing  
our love and rejoicing;  
with glad adoration a song let us raise  
till all things now living  
unite in thanksgiving:  
"To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!"

**DISMISSAL (ELW p. 222)**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

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1. David Lose, Commentary on Luke 17:11-19 in *Working Preacher*, accessed October 9, 2020, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=783>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)