**Day of thanksgiving- october 10, 2021**

**zion EV. Lutheran, philipsburg**

**GATHERING**

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

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Have mercy on us, O God.

**We confess that we have sinned against you** **and against our neighbor.**

**We have built walls instead of tables** **and have turned away the stranger.**

**We have sought glory for ourselves** **and have treasured that which does not satisfy.**

**Help us to love as you love,** **to welcome those you send,** **and to treasure mercy and justice.** **Turn us from our ways to your ways,** **and free us to serve those in need. Amen.**

God, who makes all things new, forgives your sins for ☩ Jesus’ sake and remembers them no more. Lift up your heads and your hearts. Yours is the kingdom of God. **Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG *We Plow the Fields and Scatter*  (ELW 681)**

1 We plow the fields and scatter
the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered
by God's almighty hand,
who sends the snow in winter,
the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine,
and soft refreshing rain.

Refrain
All good gifts around us
are sent from heav'n above.
We thank you, Lord,
we thank you, Lord,
for all your love.

2 You only are the maker
of all things near and far.
You paint the wayside flower,
you light the evening star.
The winds and waves obey you,
by you the birds are fed;
much more to us, your children,
you give our daily bread. Refrain

3 We thank you, our creator,
for all things bright and good,
the seedtime and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food.
No gifts have we to offer
for all your love imparts,
but what you most would treasure--
our humble, thankful hearts. Refrain

**ANNOUNCMENTS**

Welcome to worship on this Thanksgiving Sunday, October 10, 2021. Thank you to everyone who has donated to our food drive so far, know that we will continue to accept food until the end of the month.

Congratulations to Ron and Dikkie Wettlaufer who are celebrating their 55th Anniversary on October 15!

In your pew are some thanksgiving notes, I would ask that you fill out these notes answering the question…what does thanksgiving mean to you? I will give you a few moments and when you are finished I invite you to come up and stick them to our tree.

**GREETING (ELW p. 98)**

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 (ELW p. 102)**

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.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**WORD**

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

**FIRST READING:****Joel 2:21-27**

A reading from Joel.

 21Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things!
 22Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green;
 the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine give their full yield.
23O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before.
 24The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.
25I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you.
26You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame.
 27You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 126**

 1When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.
 2Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.
  Then they said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”
 3The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.
 4Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses of the Negeb.
 5Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.
 6Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

**SECOND READING:****1 Timothy 2:1-7**

A reading from 1 Timothy.

1First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, 2for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. 3This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, 6who gave himself a ransom for all, this was attested at the right time.7For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 6:25-33**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said,] 25“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 28And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ 32For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 103)**

Grace and peace to you on this day, where we celebrate with thanksgiving all that God provides for us.

Thanksgiving is a time where we gather with family and friends, a time where we eat too much and then flop ourselves down on the couch in front of the tv to either have a nap or perhaps watch a football game. Thanksgiving in Canada has a rich and varied history.

According to sources, the Spanish first celebrated a form of Thanksgiving in the mid 16th Century in what was then known as Spanish North America. Decades later, in 1579, Englishman Martin Frobisher sailed to North America in search of the Northwest Passage.[[1]](#footnote-1) Frobisher's hope was to start a small settlement in the present area of Nunavut. The journey was a difficult one. He sailed with a fleet of fifteen ships full of men, building supplies and provisions, but lost one of the ships carrying the building supplies due to the fierce Canadian winter storms of ice and wind. The fleet found themselves separated, and his dream of starting a new settlement was lost.

When the ships finally found one another in Frobisher Bay, “Mayster Wolfall, a learned man, appointed by Her Majesty's Counsel to be their minister and preacher, made unto them a godly sermon, exhorting them especially to be thankful to God for their strange and miraculous deliverance in those so dangerous places".[[2]](#footnote-2) They celebrated Holy Communion together giving thanks for the journey and that they were reunited at last.

In 1604, French explorer Samuel de Champlain arrived in Canada, and they held feasts giving thanks with their First Nations neighbours where food was shared.

Throughout history, we have given thanks for all that we have received.

But sometimes, our thankfulness is individual and self-satisfying and self-congratulating. In a secularized society, we sometimes forget just who provides for us, who cares for us, and who has made all things possible in our lives. And this is what our gospel is speaking to today.

Our gospel text today is taken from Jesus’ sermon on the Mount. The sermon on the Mount can be read as a guidebook of Christian values and ethics. The words that Jesus spoke teach us how to be disciples in the world.

 I would like to read the preceding verse 24 which may frame our reading today and give a deeper understanding of what Jesus was trying to say, “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Jesus is basically asking who do you love? Do you love God, or are worldly possessions and wealth more important?

We are reminded in our Psalm that God has indeed done great things. God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in it. God provides plentiful rains and warm sun that aid the growth of crops that sustain both animals and humankind.

In our reading today, Jesus is asking us to love God, the creator and to trust that our needs will be met. In doing so, Jesus reveals that there is little need to worry. Worry happens when we place our trust in power and wealth and the need to gain earthly possessions, believing that it will lead to happiness. Our lives are full of worry because there will never be enough. There is always an insatiable need for more.

Reading this passage also brings on some questions which are not simple to answer. What if we read this passage in the eyes of those who do not have enough money to put food on their table? Those who have tried their hardest but due to circumstances beyond their control simply cannot provide for themselves or their families. Is God really asking them not to worry? And I struggle with this because this is the reality for many in our communities. We only have to go to the grocery store to see that food prices are on the increase. There are ongoing food shortages throughout the world. The cost of housing is skyrocketing in Canada, and there is not enough affordable housing. Every day I see posts on local community pages of folks who are looking for a place to live, something that is clean, safe, and affordable. There is little to be had. So, would a loving God just say, Don’t worry, be happy, trust in me, and it will all work out? Does that trust really put food on the table and provide a bed to sleep in at night?

Worry and anxiety exist in our world. It is present in many of our days. And if we negate worry, we negate the reality of the person who is experiencing it.

On this day of Thanksgiving, we are invited to give **Thanks** for all that we receive, but there is also a call to do more. It is thanks, but it is also **Giving**.

And perhaps this is where Jesus is leading us in this passage. As Christians, as beloved children of God, as members of the church of God, we are called to not only give and receive thanks, but we are also called to give and serve humankind. We are called to reach out to our neighbours and share in the bounty that has been given to us. We are called to care for creation, to not have dominion over creation so that our lands continue to provide for others. We are called to use our voices in speaking up for those who are forgotten in society.

What can we as churches do? I know that many churches in the NVMA provide food, meals, and other needs, but can we dream bigger? What if the NVMA could partner with our other ecumenical partners and provide affordable housing in our regions. What if we created community gardens? Or could we as a collective go to our local governments and speak on behalf of those who feel they have no voice. This is what the kingdom of God looks like. This is what Thanksgiving is all about! This is what loving our neighbour looks like. This is how the church can reach beyond its walls and help people worry less and trust in God more. This is the good news of the gospel working in us as disciples of Jesus Christ. This is what the love of God looks like, the one who created us, the one who loves us even more than we can imagine.

So, let us share our love with one another. Let us work to make a difference in the lives of those around us so that there is less worry and more joy in their hearts. Let us give thanks and let us continue giving so that all can experience the kingdom of God. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY*****Now Thank We All Our God* (ELW 840)**

1 Now thank we all our God
with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom this world rejoices;
who, from our mothers' arms,
has blest us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

2 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 all in grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all harm
in this world and the next.

3 All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and Spirit blest,
who reign in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heav'n adore;
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

God whose giving knows no ending, you invite the whole world to your table of mercy. Hear us as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need. *A brief silence.*

God, you give all people a place at the table. Nurture and encourage campus ministries, new congregations, and workplace chaplaincies. Support all parts of the church that meet people where they are and offer accompaniment through daily challenges and joys. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You give nourishment to the birds of the air and the lilies of the fields. Sustain all creatures who rely on the earth for sustenance. Water parched ground, dry flooded fields, temper heat waves and frosts, and give sunlight and shade. We give thanks for the harvest that feeds us through winter. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, you give wisdom to your people. Enlighten all leaders. Inspire and guide our prime minister, our premier, our local leaders, and all who represent us in our government. Give them patience and perspective to choose wisely for our common good. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, you give nourishment to those who hunger, provide housing to those who are homeless. Bring poverty and food insecurity to an end. Give dignity and adequate employment to those who are unemployed and underemployed. Wrap your loving arms around all who are injured or ill. We remember today, Eddy, Elaine, Lynette, Barb, Sarah, Bonnie, Mary, Tilly, Robert, Helen, Katie, Nicole, Esther, Phyllis, John and Ruth, Norma, the lives and memory of the thousands of buried children at residential school sites across Canada, and those we name either out loud in the silence of our hearts. Sustain us all at your welcoming banquet of love and justice. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, you give community to those who are lonely. Be with our biological families, our chosen families, and our church family as we gather for the Thanksgiving holiday. Send your compassionate presence to those who are lonely, those who are separated or estranged from their families, and those whose loved ones have died. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, you give a feast of endless thanksgiving. We are grateful for the saints gathered at your table who have gone before us. Unite us with them whenever we give thanks to you. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, your welcome is wider than we can imagine. Receive our prayers for the sake of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us. **Amen.**

**PEACE (ELW p. 106)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**OFFERING Prayer*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*  (ELW 885)**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 107)**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, you cause streams to break forth in the desert and manna to rain from the heavens. Accept the gifts you have first given us. Unite them with the offering of our lives to nourish the world you love so dearly; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

 **DIALOGUE (ELW p. 107)**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**PREFACE (ELW p. 108)**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ;

who on this day overcame death and the grave,

and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 108)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,** **God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.** **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 108)**

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,

so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed, 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,

we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able;

we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving

and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,

and these your own gifts of bread and wine,

so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ

may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,

may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

 To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 112)**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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**

All who hunger, come the table is ready.

**COMMUNION**

The body of Christ, given for you.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation. Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, bearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord **Amen.**

**SENDING**

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

**BLESSING**

People of God, you are Christ’s body, bringing new life to a suffering world. The Holy Trinity,☩ one God, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG*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**

Go in peace, the living word dwells in you

**Thanks be to God.**

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1. Thanksgiving-Canada, Wikipedia, last modified October 2, 2021, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving\_(Canada)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanksgiving_%28Canada%29) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Wikipedia, “Thanksgiving-Canada.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)