



Perley Lutheran Parish  
November 26th, 2020  
Thanksgiving Day



- P: O God, creator of us all, the little ones, the young and the aged: As we gather at our bountiful tables, may we be ever mindful of the many hands of preparation from field, to market, to kitchen, and to tables.
- C: **With our celebration of a harvest of plenty you also send us challenges and opportunities to be caretakers and partners with brothers and sisters who go to bed hungry and homeless. God help us and guide us to learn and to understand from one another. May we know that we need each other for a life that is full. We pray all this in the name of Jesus. Amen**

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering Hymn: Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God  
With heart and hands and voices  
Who wondrous things has done  
In whom his world rejoices  
Who from our mothers' arms  
Has blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love  
And still is our today

All praise and thanks to God  
The Father now be give  
The Son and Spirit blest  
Who reign in highest heaven  
The one eternal God  
Whom heaven and earth adore  
For thus it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore.

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

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 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:

**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**

P. The Lord be with you.

**C. And also with you.**

P. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

**C. God's steadfast love endures forever.**

P. Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name.

**C. Make known God's deeds among the peoples!**

P. God blesses us with gifts of love:

**C. With food and clothing, home and family.**

P. God blesses us with daily work:

**C. And all we need from day to day.**

P. God protects us in time of danger:

**C. And guards us from every evil.**

P. God calls us into relationship with him:

**C. And forms us into one holy people, the Church of Jesus Christ in this place.**

P. Therefore shall we offer thanks and praise to the Lord our God.

**C. O Lord our God, we will give thanks to you forever.**

An adaptation of A Matter of Praise by Glenn A. Hascall

Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

Worthy of praise? What is praise?

Something you provide to someone whom you believe to have value or worth

Offering praise begins with a sense of awe and wonder.... Praise

Praise the Lord, everything he has created, everywhere in his kingdom. As for me – I too will praise the Lord.

Many praise God for His wonderful attributes – the qualities that make up His wondrous character.

Majesty

Glory

Holiness

More often, God is praise for what He has done.

The work of creation. The work of divine intervention. The work of mankind's redemption

Praise

Praise is expressed first as an inward emotion.

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again – rejoice!

Praise is the music of the soul.

Praise is found in prayer

In sacrifice and in song

He has given us a new song, a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see what he has done and be astounded.

Praise invites others to join in

Praise

Gratitude

Thanksgiving

We sow the seed of gratitude

We form a habit of praise

Wake up, my soul!

Praise the Lord, with our whole hearts – praise his holy name

Praise the Lord and never forget the good things He has done

We will praise you!

### **Praise the Father, Praise the Son**

Oh sovereign God, oh matchless King. The saints adore, the angels sing  
And fall before the throne on grace to you belongs the highest praise.

These sufferings, this passing tide under Your wings I will abide,  
And every enemy shall flee, you are my hope and victory.

Praise the Father, praise the Son, Praise the Spirit, three in One.  
Clothed in power and in grace, the name above all other names.

Yours is the kingdom, yours is the power, yours is the glory forever,  
Yours is the kingdom, yours is the power, yours is the glory forever

Psalm 100. Read responsively

**P:** Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

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

P: Know 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.

C: **Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name.**

P: For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord

C. **My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

P. For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

C. **From this day all generations will call me blessed.**

P. The Almighty has done great things for me.

C. **And holy is his name.**

Preaching Text: Phillipians 4:4-8

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Children's Message

Good morning children. Do you know what day we are celebrating at church this morning? Yes! It's thanksgiving. Although we should always be thankful to God this is a special time of remembering the many wonderful blessings that we have. When someone gives us something or does something to help us it is important to say "Thank you" to them. It's very important that we don't forget to say thank you to God too. This morning I wanted to share with you a little rhyme I learned when I was very young. But first I want to see if you know what this is. (Hold up your doughnut) You're right. I'm not very good at crafts but this is supposed to be a doughnut. I brought it because my little rhyme is about a doughnut. It goes like this: "As you go through life make this your goal; look at the doughnut and not the hole." We'll say it together. (Get the children and the congregation to say it a few times.) Let me explain what it means. If I gave you a doughnut I bet you'd be pretty happy. Wouldn't it be sad if you focused your attention on the hole in the middle and complained about the hole! If you did that you'd be drawing your attention to what **isn't there** rather than what **is there**. Sadly, some people go through life noticing what they are missing and they never really notice the good things they do have. Our little rhyme about looking at "the doughnut and not the hole" can remind us to see the many good things in life we do have. That's important to do as we go through life and it's especially important for us to do on the Thanksgiving Sunday.

Prayer: Dear God. We have been blessed by you in so many ways. Help us, through your Holy Spirit, to focus our thoughts on what do have and not on what we don't have. Thank you for your love and your life known to us through your son Jesus – in his name we pray, Amen!

## Message

It's been such a crazy busy week with a funeral, preparing for newsletters and Advent and figuring out our Children's program when we can't bring the children together. I decided therefore to share a story with you for our Message today. It's a story that as we all experience the Thanksgiving holiday in 2020 – one of separation, one of distance, one of perhaps loneliness and even one in which it's hard to be thankful – I thought that this story may help us to be reminded. Reminded of times when we have been blessed with our family and friends and abundance in our lives. This story is called Uno, Popcorn and Laughter and was written by Drema Sizemore Drudge.

Our eight-year-old son could barely hold the handful of cards. "I'm hungry" Zack said as he laid down a "skip" card.

"Nice play," I said, looking at my teenaged daughter, Mia, over his head. She grimaced back.

Times had been tough since their father, Barry, had been laid off. He wouldn't get his unemployment for another two days, so heading to the refrigerator wouldn't really help.

Barry Came upstairs from checking the oil in the car.

"It needs a quart," he said.

"Can it wait until Wednesday?" I asked.

He shook his head. "I guess it will have to."

Our landlady had already been to the door earlier in the day. She certainly didn't want to wait two more days. I was still sick to my stomach that even though I had sent them to their rooms our children had overheard her wrath and threats, her inability to understand that we were doing the best we could. We had sold everything we could; Ebay was my near constant employer as I got rid of anything we could spare.

Now we had just enough in the cupboard so that it looked like we had food, but it was mainly boxes of tea, old bottles of herbs and spices, and an expired box of powdered milk that I was hanging on to just in case.

The refrigerator was even more of a mirage because of all the condiments inside: bottles of soy and teriyaki sauce, my son's favorite peppers, mustard and such.

"I'm hungry," Zack repeated. He wasn't the only one.

I rummaged among the pantry shelves, pushing things aside, standing on tiptoe, and looking inside containers. Suddenly I came across a lumpy package of something tucked at the back of the cupboard: popcorn.

"Popcorn," I said, holding the bag aloft as if I were holding a prize. I was! My heart sank just as quickly as I wondered if we had any oil. A search revealed that we did have a bit of vegetable oil, enough to make a big pot full of the fluffy white stuff. We'd have to hold the butter, because we were fresh out. I didn't care. It wasn't a fancy dinner, but it was something.

Within in no time the house smelled like a movie theater. Mia and I put out dishes of various sauces and a selection of salts and spices. I knew how much she liked popcorn so I hoped she would enjoy it.

"It's popcorn buffet night!" I said jollily, hoping the pot would fill everyone. We'd worry about tomorrow when the time came. Maybe we could find a few overlooked CDs to sell to the local music shop. For tonight, we were okay. I couldn't help but look upward and utter a silent thanks.

Our characteristic humor soon erupted over bowlfuls of the fluffy corn. We joked about all the permutations possible: deadly hot teriyaki, so salty soy, popcorn a la pickle juice. We burst into laughter as we came up with another strange and exciting option.

By the end of the night we'd created so many different kinds of popcorn we could have started our own company selling specialty snacks.

When our turns came to play Uno we wiped our hands and laid down a card, grateful that we were inside, together, protected from the wind that whipped the leaves around the yard.

We made blueberry tea, though we didn't have sugar. This was not deprivation, I thought, as I gradually relaxed at seeing how the food brought us together; this was happiness. And everyone went away if not full, then satisfied.

The next day a friend brought over an extra pan of lasagna she "Just happened to have." I thanked her profusely.

"Does this mean we can't have a popcorn buffet again tonight?" Zack asked. We all laughed as I quickly explained our impromptu dinner of the night before to our neighbor. I tried not to notice the look of pity in her eyes. She's endured her own tough times.

Even after Barry found a job, popcorn buffet remained a tradition in our family, a kind of communion, a way to remember tough times that have come before.

Nowadays when we get together as a family someone is always watching their calories or pushing away the desserts. We have more than enough now. And we did then too; we had Uno, popcorn and laughter oh and the most important part – we had each other.

I don't know what your Thanksgiving is going to look like today. I don't know if you have enough people to play games with. I do know that we are all missing normal, we are all missing family and friends and we are all missing how things used to be.

We are also still very blessed. We have each other, we have neighbors who will care for us if we just ask and we have God and all the amazing gifts that he has promised us.

As the preaching text said "Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

A blessed Thanksgiving from my family to yours. I am blessed to have you in my life and pray that you too may find the blessings and thankfulness in your own lives on this Thanksgiving Day. Amen.

Special Music: The Thanksgiving Song

Thanksgiving Prayer (P: Loving God **C: we give you thanks**)

Almighty God, from whom comes each good gift of life, we remember your loving kindness and your uncounted mercies as we join in grateful praise. For all your gifts to us and to our human race; for our life and the world in which we live. Loving God, **we give you thanks.**

For the order and constancy of nature; for the beauty and bounty of the world; for day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest; for the varied joys which every season brings, Loving God, **we give you thanks.**

For the work and the truth we are permitted to discover; good there has been in our past, and for all the hopes which lead us on toward better things to come. Loving God, **we give you thanks.**

For all the joys and comforts of life; for homes and families; for our friends; for the love, sympathy, and goodwill of persons near and far. Loving God, **we give you thanks.**

For the discipline of life; for the tasks and trials which train us to know ourselves and which bring us to accept one another just as you have created us. For the desire and power to help others; for every opportunity of serving our congregations and our generations in ways large or small. Loving God, **we give you thanks.**

For the gift of Jesus Christ, and everything which is ours as his disciples; for the presence and inspiration of your Holy Spirit throughout our days. For the tender ties which bind us to the unseen world;  
for the faith which dispels the shadows of earth and fills the closing years of life with the light of hope.  
Loving God, **we give you thanks.**

God of all grace and love, we have praise you, for all the richness and meaning that life holds for us. Now send us into the world to praise you with our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. And thank you for the prayer that you gave to us as we pray it together on this Thanksgiving day,

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing – adapted by a writing from Ralph Waldo Emerson

For each new morning with its light, for rest and shelter of the night, for health and food, for love and friends, for everything Thy goodness sends. We thank you. In the name of the Father, and the +Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Dismissal: Go in peace, **give thanks and praise!**

Sending Song:

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;  
He chastens and hastens his will to make known;  
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing.  
Sing praises to his name; he forgets not his own.

**Mark Your Calendars:**

Sunday, November 29th – 9AM Facebook Live Stream from Nora – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup> – 9AM Facebook Live Stream from Nora – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent