

*Thanksgiving Eve Service
November 24, 2021 at 7:00pm*



**United in Faith Lutheran Church
6525 W. Irving Park Rd.
Chicago, IL 60634
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Introduction

Today's readings reflect two of the strains that go into the celebration of a national day of thanksgiving: gratitude for abundant harvest (Joel) and civic prayer for a peaceable common life (1 Timothy). The core meaning of Thanksgiving for many of us—a home feast for extended family and friends—is not reflected in the readings; but it is reflected weekly in the church's meal of thanksgiving (eucharist). What we wish for both these thanksgiving meals is that they will go deeper than celebration of one another and our own blessings, to recognize in our true Host one who wants everyone brought to the table.

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things. **C: Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God. God for whom we wait,

C: in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you.

We fail in believing that your good news is for us.

We falter in our call to tend your creation.

We find our sense of self in material wealth.

We fear those different from ourselves.

We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love.

Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

C: Through the power of the Holy Spirit, ✠ your sins are forgiven.

You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace. **C: Amen.**

OPENING SONG: ELW 836 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. **C: 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.**

First Reading: Joel 2:21-27

The prophet Joel understood that a locust plague that ravaged the land of Judah was God's judgment on the people, whom he then called to repentance. Today's reading points beyond the judgment to a time when God will bless the land and cause it to produce food in abundance.

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.

A: The word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 126

The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed. (Ps. 126:3)

¹When the LORD restored the for-¹ tunes of Zion,
then were we like¹ those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with¹ shouts of joy.**

Then they said among the nations, “The LORD has done great¹ things for them.” R

³The LORD has done great¹ things for us,
and we are¹ glad indeed.

⁴**Restore our for-¹ tunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses¹ of the Negeb.**

⁵Those who¹ sowed with tears
will reap with¹ songs of joy.

⁶**Those who go out weeping, carry-¹ ing the seed,
will come again with joy, shoulder-¹ ing their sheaves. R**

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

Christians are encouraged to offer prayers and thanks for all people, including rulers. We offer such inclusive, far-reaching prayers because God desires to save all people.

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.

A: The word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW P. 142 - SPOKEN)

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 6:25-33

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught his disciples about the providence of God so that they would regard life with thanksgiving and trust rather than anxiety.

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew the sixth chapter, C: 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.” **P: The gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Pastor Carla Thompson Powell

SONG OF THE DAY: ELW 693 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;

he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*

**who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*Or, "who proceeds from the Father." The phrase "and the Son" is a later addition to the creed.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: 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. 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, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: 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. God, in your mercy, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: God, you give wisdom to your people. Enlighten all leaders. Inspire and guide our president, our governor, 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, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: God, you give nourishment to those who hunger. Bring poverty and food insecurity to an end. Give dignity and adequate employment to those who are unemployed and underemployed. Sustain us all at your welcoming banquet of love and justice. God, in your mercy, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: 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, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: 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, **C: receive our prayer.**

A: For whom else do we pray...

A: 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. **C: Amen.**

EUCCHARISTIC (THANKSGIVING) DIALOGUE

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

P: 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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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. 144)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna. Hosanna. 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. 145)

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

P: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming. **C: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth. **C: Come, Holy Spirit.**

P: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 145)

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

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

ALL ARE WELCOME AT GOD'S TABLE OF GRACE.

(Please come forward and receive an individual communion packet, carry it back to your seat, and discard the plastic once you are done)

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (ELW p. 146)

P: Let us pray. God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C: Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

P: The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait. **C: Amen.**

CLOSING SONG: ELW 822 Oh, Sing To The Lord (try verses 1 & 5 in spanish)

P: Go in peace. Set your hope on Christ. **C: Thanks be to God.**

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. **C: And also with you.**

POSTLUDE

For in person offering, please leave in offering plate at the sanctuary entrance or mail to: 6525 W. Irving Park Rd., Chicago, IL 60634. To give an online donation, please visit <https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/uif> On your first visit, you will have to create an online giving account.