

WORSHIP THANKSGIVING

(To watch the videotaped version of the worship service, click the link below)

<https://youtu.be/tH5tW7tcwhA>

(To read the service, continue on from here)

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

CALL TO WORSHIP

Worship is a time to learn the ways of God.

As God's love is genuine, may our love toward one another be authentic.

Worship is a time to be caught up in the Spirit of God.

We call upon God to instill within us a spirit of generosity, hospitality, and hope.

Worship is a time to nurture peacefulness within and among ourselves.

We pray for a humbleness of heart and a willingness to forgive and receive forgiveness.

May this time of worship nurture us in the ways of God.

A BRIEF CONFESSION

If we say we have no sin, if we believe we are not broken; we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

God of forgiveness, God of healing ... fill us with your truth, your grace.

We trust that your mercy is our forgiveness, your compassion our healing.

God of forgiveness, God of healing ... fill us with your truth, your grace.

We live in the power of a forgiving God.

We live in the presence of Jesus the Christ ... we are forgiven, thanks be to God. Amen.

GREETING

The Lord be with you

Be filled with the spirit of God today.

We worship to open our hearts for God's blessing.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1st Reading

Deuteronomy 8:7-18

For 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, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a 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. You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you.

Take 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. When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid waste-land with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you

from flint rock, and 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. Do not say to yourself, 'My power and the might of my own hand have gained me this wealth.' But 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.

2nd Reading

Psalm 65

To the leader. A Psalm of David. A Song.
Praise is due to you,
O God, in Zion;
and to you shall vows be performed,
O you who answer prayer!
To you all flesh shall come.
When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us,
you forgive our transgressions.
Happy are those whom you choose and bring near
to live in your courts.
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,
your holy temple.

By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance,
O God of our salvation;
you are the hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the farthest seas.
By your strength you established the mountains;
you are girded with might.
You silence the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples.
Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs;
you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.

You visit the earth and water it,
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide the people with grain,
for so you have prepared it.
You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.
You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.
The pastures of the wilderness overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,
the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together for joy.

MUSICAL OFFERING – Kristan Youn

Gospel reading

Luke 17:11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

SERMON – Pastor Joseph Dillion

Thanksgiving Eve, Nov. 26th, 2020. "In the Midst of Fear: Thanksgiving." Bethany

Please listen carefully to these words: "Restore O Lord, we beseech Thee, to our country, the blessings of a speedy, honorable, and permanent peace and unity, and secure those blessings to all the people of the earth." Take a moment to reflect upon those words and guess as to when they were first spoken. They could have been spoken anytime in the past couple of years, what with the divisions in the nation, the foreign conflicts that we are involved in around the world, but they weren't. They could have been spoken any time after 9/11, but they weren't. No, they were not uttered during Viet Nam, the Korean War, World War II, or World War I either. Actually, this prayer was composed by the Episcopal Bishop of Pennsylvania in October of 1863. President Lincoln had just issued a proclamation of Thanksgiving from Gettysburg in early September of that year as he established a national cemetery on the battleground that had seen the death of over 30,000 men from the North and South. Yet these words seem also fitting for this Thanksgiving as we deal with a year filled with a pandemic that will leave over 250,000 empty chairs at Thanksgiving tables around the nation; a year that finds millions out of work and using food banks and help for the first time; a Thanksgiving that finds our nation divided in ways not seen since the Civil War. But still we come to Thanksgiving with remembrance and hope for the future as our ancestors have done throughout the centuries.

It has always fascinated me that be it in the Bible or in the history of our nation, Thanksgiving has come on the heels of great adversity. The words Thanks and Thanksgiving occur 37 times in Scripture: Neb. 11:17, "the Leaders began the Thanksgiving in prayer." Israel had just returned from exile, and Jerusalem was in ruins, yet the people of Israel gave thanks. And from Luke we read that 10 had been cured of leprosy by Jesus and only one foreigner came back to give thanks to God.

It is said that the very first Thanksgiving that was celebrated by Europeans was in September of 1621, and we should remember, that they survived because of the aid of the native American tribe that helped them farm in this new world. That first year had been horrific: of the 95 souls that had landed on Plymouth the year before, only 55 were still alive, but yet the survivors gave thanks for the blessings of God in their survival.

And as we come to this Thanksgiving Day, I know that many of reflecting upon the events that have taken place in our lives and in the life of our nation and world in this past year. For a number of us there are chairs that will no longer be filled; loved ones whose health concerns us; family members and friends who are struggling with employment and finding a job in this difficult time. We may be worried about grandchildren or children who may be in the military, or are police officers, or firefighters, or in the health professions and pray that they return home each day safely. In these days when the darkness of the world seems to be gathering around us once more, we are grateful for even the smallest lights that remind us no matter what, God is still in charge and still walks with us.

St. Paul writes in his letter to the church at Philippi: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with THANKSGIVING let your requests be made known to God." Paul wrote those words from prison. In that dark cell, the light of Christ shone, and Paul gave thanks and tells us not to worry for Christ is with us no matter what. From that distance of time and place these words of St. Paul bring light also into our dark times.

Tomorrow is a time of Thanksgiving. We will remember with joy the lives that we have shared; the happiness that many in our families and those of our friends who bring to our lives; we will give thanks for their lives shared with us. We will celebrate the overcoming of illnesses; of love found and love renewed. And of having a roof over our heads and food in our stomachs.

As you gather tomorrow and perhaps feel that the world is falling apart and couldn't possibly get any worse, I would share with you this prayer. It was written in the depths of the Blitz in England, September 1941 by Pastor Fairfax Downey. It was a time when the Nazi darkness has spread over almost all of Europe and seemed unstoppable: he wrote: "I thank The Lord, for this my bed; for a roof unbombed above my head; and for thy other gift, my daily bread. Lord, why is it that we must come to know belatedly, the gratitude we always own to you?" And St. Paul tells us: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be known to God. Amen. May you have a blessed Thanksgiving. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING – Kristan Youn

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

*We believe in God,
Creator of the universe,
Giver of every good gift,
Author of life itself.*

*We believe in Jesus Christ,
who reminded us of the coming of God's kingdom,
who commanded us to care for those in need,
who taught us to store up treasures in heaven, not on earth,
and who gave us the example of self-giving love.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who inspires us to faithful stewardship of God's gifts and
that God has given us gifts to be shared freely and generously, in a spirit of love and joy.
We believe that faithful stewardship is an act of worship,
a means of praising God who has blessed us abundantly.
We believe that God has great things in store for us,
for it is in giving that we receive. AMEN*

(Allen & Sara Ewing-Merrill, 2004)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Holy God, giver love and blessing ... bless our lives, lead us in your ways, gives us hearts for gratitude and service. Fill us with your grace, that what we desire is also what you desire. Grant us the understanding that our hearts' true desire is the love of you. May the love of Christ urge us on, may we walk by faith. In your grace and love Lord ... hear our prayer.

Holy God, giver love and blessing ... bless those who govern. Bless the leaders of nations, countries, towns, and cities. Bless all those who lead in all manner of ways – social, political, and religious. Fill the hearts of all with your wisdom. Guide us in the way of justice and integrity for all. Guide us to walk by faith. Holy God, tend to those who suffer in mind, body, and spirit. Tend to the tired, the dying, the poor and the hungry. Help us to follow the love of Christ, a love which urges us on to seek and serve Christ in others. In your grace and love Lord ... hear our prayer.

Holy God, giver love and blessing ... We pray for Bethany members on our prayer list. Give them the blessing of your presence amid their times of trial. We pray for our congregation in this time of suspended worship that we will still continue to be a committed community of faith seeking to be the light of Jesus in our community and world. In your grace and love Lord ... hear our prayer.

Holy God, giver love and blessing ... We pray for our world in a time of pandemic and societal distress and change. Give our leaders wisdom, compassion, insight, and courage to lead in ways that serve all the people under their charge. We pray for doctors and nurses, EMT's, and all those on the frontline of healthcare amid this COVID-19 pandemic. Give them health, energy, compassion, and the strength to care for those struggling with illness and hospitalization. In your grace and love Lord ... hear our prayer.

Listen to each of us, Lord, as we come to you in a moment of silent prayer

Into your hands, great and compassionate God, we commend all for whom and about which we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OFFERING *(Please mail your weekly offering to the church - 4300 N 82nd St. Scottsdale, AZ 85251)*

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of all blessing, giver of all good gifts; day by day you shower us with what we need to live and prosper. With glad and generous hearts and in a response of thanksgiving, we return a portion of our wealth. May what we give be a symbol of our gratitude and a blessing of your love for those who may be helped through our offering. AMEN

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.**

BENEDICTION

People of God, look for Jesus!

Seek him as a treasure in this great wide world.

Seek him in the eyes of your loved ones and in the eyes of strangers.

May your heart burn within you as the Lord draws close to you this week.

DISMISSAL

Go in Peace ... to live and serve in the way of the cross

Thanks be to God.