

Service of Thanksgiving

November 25, 2020 – 7 PM

*** *Please stand in body or in spirit***

“Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving”

Prelude

Opening Hymn of Praise: *“Look at the World”*

– John Rutter (Performed by The Cambridge Singers)

Welcome/Announcements

*** Call to Worship: (Based on Psalm 147)**

Leader: Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving. Make music upon the harp. How good it is to celebrate God's presence and sing praise throughout each day!

People: **How good it is to sing praise and give honor to our God!**

Leader: Our God rebuilds the people of earth. The wandering ones are gathered together, the brokenhearted are healed, the hungry are fed, the prisoners are freed, the blind are given sight, the lonely are befriended.

People: **How good it is to sing praise and give honor to our God!**

Leader: All of nature sings aloud God's goodness— clouds, rain, grass, creatures great and small. Our God creates and sustains our world with his ever-growing, never-ending love.

People: **How good it is to sing praise and give honor to our God (Psalm 147)**

Leader: Our help is in the name of our God, who made heaven and earth. Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Christ Jesus our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

Hymn of Praise: *"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" v. 1-4*

"To God the Creator triumphantly raise,"

Prayer of Confession

Leader: Loving God, we gather today rich in blessing, somehow believing that we merit the wealth and comforts that we enjoy. Forgive us, our God, for comfortably closing our eyes to the faces of the poor that stare blankly in our direction.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us.**

Leader: With bellies full of grain and meat, we offer token gestures to the hungry in our world and we feel we have done enough. Forgive us, God, for keeping a distance between "us" and "them," for closing our ears to the cries of the hungry.

People: **Christ, have mercy on us.**

Leader: With hands tightly clasping our treasures on earth, we cannot reach out to our oppressed brothers and sisters around this world. Forgive us for clinging to our own possessions rather than to you. Unite us with hearts of thanksgiving that we may work to ensure freedom and justice for all.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us.**

Assurance of Forgiveness: Psalm 145:13-14

Leader: The Lord is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds. The Lord upholds all who are falling, and raised up all who are bowed down.

The Law of God: John 15:12-13

Leader: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."
(John 15:12-13)

Ministry of Music: LUYH #19:1-5 *"For the Beauty of the Earth"*
-Van Hofwegen Children

*"Who fashioned and made us,
protected and stayed us,"*

Scripture Readings: Psalm 107:1-32, 43

Psalm 107:1-3: ¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. ² Let the redeemed of the LORD say this—those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, ³ those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.

Psalm 107:4-9: ⁴ Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. ⁵ They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away. ⁶ Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. ⁷ He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle. ⁸ Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men, ⁹ for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Psalm 107:10-16: ¹⁰ Some sat in darkness and the deepest gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains, ¹¹ for they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High. ¹² So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help. ¹³ Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. ¹⁴ He brought them out of darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains. ¹⁵ Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men, ¹⁶ for he breaks down gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron.

Psalm 107:17-22: ¹⁷ Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities. ¹⁸ They loathed all food and drew near the gates of death. ¹⁹ Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. ²⁰ He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave. ²¹ Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. ²² Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.

Psalm 107:23-32: ²³ Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. ²⁴ They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep. ²⁵ For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves. ²⁶ They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. ²⁷ They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end. ²⁸ Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. ²⁹ He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. ³⁰ They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. ³¹ Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. ³² Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders.

Psalm 107:43: ⁴³ Whoever is wise, let him heed these things and consider the great love of the LORD.

Message: *“Giving Thanks for the Perfect Love of God”*

Prayer of Application (Concluding with Lord’s Prayer)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 debts
As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
Forever. Amen.

* Hymn of Application: *“Let All Things Now Living” – Michael Card*

“Who guides us and leads to the end of our days.”

Expressions of Gratitude and Thanksgiving

(Congregational members will have the opportunity to verbally express the various things they are thankful for)

Prayers of the People

Leader: Let us give thanks to God our Creator for all the blessings we share this day.
For all of those who have gone before, people strong and brave, willing to put their lives on the line for the causes they believe in, we give you thanks.

People: **Grant us, our God, the courage to step out in faith for that which is true and right.**

Leader: For freedom of speech and of the press, for the avenues open to express ourselves, and for opportunities to effect change, we give you thanks.

People: **We pray for those who are voiceless victims of unjust governments.**

Leader: For fertile soil, abundant rain, and seasons of refreshment, we give you thanks.

People: **We pray for those whose land is parched and whose wells are dry.**

Leader: For our families, friends, and the church, who provide us with food and drink for our journey, we give you thanks.

People: **We pray for those who are hungry and tired, hopeless and wandering, finding no place to rest.**

Leader: For strong bodies and minds, for opportunities that encourage us to grow and become more the servants of thanksgiving you call us to be, we give you thanks.

People: We pray for the sick, for the stagnant who are unwilling to dream or change.

Leader: Help us, O God, to be responsible stewards of your blessings, people who care for the earth and all its people. Keep us connected with all humanity, even though miles and cultures tend to separate us. May we always respond to your call with a true spirit of thanksgiving. Amen.

* God's Blessing

* Closing Hymn: *"Now Thank We All Our God"* – John Rutter
(Performed in Cape Town, South Africa)

* Postlude

