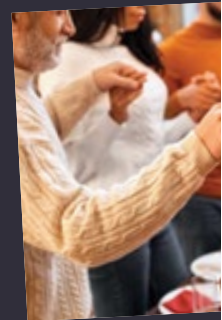


WORSHIP KIT

COME, LET US

Gratefully Rejoice



A SERVICE FOR THANKSGIVING

COME, LET US

Gratefully Rejoice

A SERVICE FOR THANKSGIVING

Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.

Hebrews 12:28

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ABOUT “COME, LET US GRATEFULLY REJOICE”

Thanksgiving is a time of rejoicing. But why do we rejoice? We rejoice because we are grateful—grateful to our God who abounds in blessings toward us throughout the year. Scripture verses that highlight the reasons why we rejoice in the Lord support the sermon and children’s sermon grounded in gratitude and surrounded by the well-known Thanksgiving hymns “Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng,” “Sing to the Lord of Harvest” and “Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing.”

Blank bulletins (8 1/2” x 11”) are available. Code TA9A

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COME, LET US

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NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for a special service for Thanksgiving called “Come, Let U Gratefully Rejoice.” Thanksgiving is a time for us to gratefully rejoice in what God has granted to us through the riches of creation, blessings of family and friends and the bounty of our faith that enriches us with forgiveness and new life. The service’s Scripture verses that highlight the reasons why we rejoice in the Lord support the sermon and children’s sermon grounded in gratitude and surrounded by the well-known Thanksgiving hymns “Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng,” “Sing to the Lord of Harvest” and “Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing.”

BULLETIN NOTICE

Welcome to a special service for Thanksgiving, “Come, Let Us Gratefully Rejoice.” Thanksgiving is a time for us to gratefully rejoice in what God has granted to us through the riches of creation, blessings of family and friends and the bounty of our faith that enriches us with forgiveness and new life. This service’s Scripture verses that highlight the reasons why we rejoice in the Lord support the sermon and children’s sermon grounded in gratitude and surrounded by the well-known Thanksgiving hymns “Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng,” “Sing to the Lord of Harvest” and “Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing.”

COME, LET US

Gratefully Rejoice

A SERVICE FOR THANKSGIVING

ORDER OF SERVICE

*Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken,
and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.*

Hebrews 12:28

Invocation and Call to Worship

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P For the beauty of the earth, the harvest of the field, the blessings of creation,

C we gratefully rejoice.

P For the time spent with family and friends, for meals shared, for love given and received,

C we gratefully rejoice.

P For Scripture and prayer, for preaching and pondering, for worship and wonder,

C we gratefully rejoice.

P For learning and growing, for work and accomplishments, for skills and talents,

C we gratefully rejoice.

P For all that deserves our thanks and praise, honor and glory, adoration and applause,

C we gratefully rejoice. Amen.

Rejoice, O pilgrim throng! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing;
Your festal banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your King.
Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

With voice as full and strong as ocean's surging praise,
Send forth the sturdy hymns of old, the psalms of ancient days.
Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

With all the angel choirs, with all the saints on earth
Pour out the strains of joy and bliss, true rapture, noblest mirth.
Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

Yet on and onward still, with hymn and chant and song,
Through gate and porch and columned aisle the hallowed pathways throng.
Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

Confession and Forgiveness

P Dear Lord who brings us great joy, we confess that we do not always live in that joy.

C Forgive us for wallowing in sadness and not recognizing your gifts to us.

P Though you have poured out your love to us in so many ways, O Lord,

C Forgive us for not loving you and others as we should.

P Though you have been by our side through thick and thin, O Lord,

C Forgive us for not always staying close in our relationship with you.

P Though you have done great things for us every day of our lives, O Lord,

C Forgive us for all the sinful things we have done in opposition to you.

(Please observe a time of quiet reflection for self-examination.)

P Rejoice in this Good News: Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). We are washed clean in the blood of Jesus Christ, who died and rose for us that we might be forgiven. Our lives are now to be living sacrifices to God, holy and acceptable to him (Romans 12:1).

C Our praises rise like incense to our God who graciously removes the stain of sin.

Prayer of the Day

Children's Sermon

Old Testament Reading 1 Chronicles 16:8-18

Epistle Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:14-21

Gospel Reading..... Luke 17:11-19

Sing to the Lord of harvest, sing songs of love and praise;
With joyful hearts and voices your alleluias raise.
By him the rolling seasons in fruitful order move;
Sing to the Lord of harvest a joyous song of love.

God makes the clouds rain goodness, the deserts bloom and spring.
The hills leap up in gladness, the valleys laugh and sing.
God fills them with his fullness, all things with large increase;
He crowns the year with blessing, with plenty and with peace.

Bring to this sacred altar the gifts his goodness gave,
The golden sheaves of harvest, the souls Christ died to save.
Your hearts lay down before him when at his feet you fall,
And with your lives adore him who gave his life for all.

Sermon

Offering

Prayers

P O bountiful Lord, you overflow with gifts and blessings to us. Continue to supply all that we need to support this body and life, and let us live ever grateful to you for every richness you provide for us day by day. Rejoicing in you,

C we give you thanks, O Lord.

P O powerful Lord, you make the oceans surge and the winds blow, the rocks tumble and the mountains quake, the plants sprout up and the trees tower toward the sky. Help us to stand in awe of your strength and humble ourselves in your presence as the ruler of all. Rejoicing in you,

P Though you have been by our side through thick and thin, O Lord,

C **Forgive us for not always staying close in our relationship with you.**

P Though you have done great things for us every day of our lives, O Lord,

C **Forgive us for all the sinful things we have done in opposition to you.**

(Please observe a time of quiet reflection for self-examination.)

P Rejoice in this Good News: Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18). We are washed clean in the blood of Jesus Christ, who died and rose for us that we might be forgiven. Our lives are now to be living sacrifices to God, holy and acceptable to him (Romans 12:1).

C **Our praises rise like incense to our God who graciously removes the stain of sin.**

• The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P O God ever good, we thank you from the depth of our hearts for the gracious ways in which you have filled our lives with your love. We are grateful for the gifts both large and small that are part of our days. The sun at its rising and its setting reminds us of your Light that guides our feet to do your will. The food we share at meals each day and especially at our Thanksgiving meals helps us to see how you strengthen our bodies in many ways to serve you more. The people that are closest to us recall for us that you have called us to work together in your kingdom to build up the faith in each one of us. The signs in your creation show us that you care deeply for all that you have made and that we, too, should care lovingly for everything around us in your holy name. Let us rejoice in you always. Amen.

• The **Children's Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

(Needed: horn-like noisemakers for each child, available at party stores for New Year's Eve)

P Happy Thanksgiving, boys and girls! Today is a day for rejoicing. What does rejoicing mean? *(Allow the children to respond.)* It means to be happy and to show joy. One way that we show that we rejoice in something is to blow a horn like one of these. *(Pass out noisemakers.)* Let's blow our horns as a sign of rejoicing every time we think of something we are grateful to God for. Let me start: Turkey and mashed potatoes! *(Blow horns.)* Your friends at school! *(Blow horns.)* Your toys that you play with! *(Blow horns.)* Can you think of some other things that you are grateful to God for? *(Allow children to shout out answers and then have all blow their horns. After a good number of answers have been given, tell the children to put their horns down so that you can continue with the sermon.)*

We have so much to be grateful to God for, don't we? We could be here all day thinking of things to be thankful to God for, couldn't we? The Bible tells us, "Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4). We should never stop giving thanks to God in our lives for everything that he has given us. How else do we give thanks to God? (*Allow the children to respond.*) That's right. We give thanks to God by singing songs and hymns. We give thanks to God by putting money in the offering plate. We give thanks to God by coming to church for worship, like you are doing now. We give thanks to God by praying to him every day. Our entire lives should be like a thank-you card to God. All that we say and all that we do should be a way of showing the world that we are thankful to God for all that he has done for us.

What should we be most thankful for? We should be most thankful for Jesus because he came from heaven to earth to live a perfect life, to die on the cross for our sins and to rise again on Easter that we might go to heaven to be with him forever. When Jesus comes back on the Last Day to take us all to heaven, the Bible says the trumpet will sound. It will be kind of like when we blew our horns. There will be great rejoicing on that day, and there will be great rejoicing evermore in heaven, the Bible says. So keep rejoicing like we did today, and keep thanking God for what he has done in Jesus, and always remember that the best is yet to come in heaven. Amen.

P The **Old Testament Reading**, 1 Chronicles 16:8-18, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples! Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice! Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually! Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles and the judgments he uttered, O offspring of Israel his servant, children of Jacob, his chosen ones! He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. Remember his covenant forever, the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac, which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan, as your portion for an inheritance."

• The **Epistle Reading**, 1 Thessalonians 5:14-21, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good.

- The **Gospel Reading**, Luke 17:11-19, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, 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 cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”

- The **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune *Wie Lieblich Ist Der Maien* 76 6 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Sing to the Lord of harvest, sing songs of love and praise;
 With joyful hearts and voices your alleluias raise.
 By him the rolling seasons in fruitful order move;
 Sing to the Lord of harvest a joyous song of love.

God makes the clouds rain goodness, the deserts bloom and spring.
 The hills leap up in gladness, the valleys laugh and sing.
 God fills them with his fullness, all things with large increase;
 He crowns the year with blessing, with plenty and with peace.

Bring to this sacred altar the gifts his goodness gave,
 The golden sheaves of harvest, the souls Christ died to save.
 Your hearts lay down before him when at his feet you fall,
 And with your lives adore him who gave his life for all.

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

Ⓟ All thanks be to our God, who is and was and is to come. Today we celebrate Thanksgiving, the time when we as a nation set aside a day dedicated to giving thanks to God. It is interesting, isn't it, that we are forced, if you will, to stop what we are doing to take a 24-hour period to say thank you to God?

What is wrong with that picture? It is a reminder to us that we so often forget to say thanks. The government should not be the one to tell us to give thanks. We shouldn't have to be forced to give thanks. In an ideal world, it should be something that comes to us naturally.

But we live in a broken world, a world that is selfish and seeks to gift ourselves and say we deserve any and all good that comes our way. The truth is that we, in this sinful world, deserve nothing but punishment and death for the wrongs we have done against God and against one another. Nothing is our own, but everything comes from our God, who is gracious and merciful.

When the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea on dry ground while their enemies, the Egyptians with their chariots, drowned in that same sea, God's people knew that this blessing did not come from them. They knew it was from God alone, so they gave thanks to God right then and there. They danced and sang, "I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him" (Exodus 15:1-2).

When have you been in danger? When have you felt there was no way out? But then God made a way. How did that feel? It felt great, right? But did you give thanks right away? Did you give thanks right then and there, as the Israelites did? Probably not. But it is something that should be at the top of our to-do list when an experience like this happens. So many times God has protected us, given us strength, gotten us out of a jam. But how often did we respond with rejoicing? If we are honest with ourselves, not very often. Maybe that is why in Philippians it does not just say, "Rejoice," and end the verse right there. It says, "And again I say rejoice." It's as if St. Paul is saying, "I know you are going to forget this, so I am going to repeat it: Rejoice."

We so often get caught up in the busyness of life that we fail to consider God's role in what is happening in our lives. We take so much for granted. We assume the sun will rise every morning. We expect we will have food on the table and clothes in our closet. We think nothing of the fact that we have a roof over our heads and a job to pay the bills. In fact these are gifts and blessings that only come from God even though we do not deserve them. As the Bible says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change" (James 1:17). Each day is a precious present from our God that we are unworthy to receive.

Our unchanging God never forgets us or abandons us. As Jesus said, "Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!" (Luke 12:27-28). Jesus also said, "Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds!" (Luke 12:24). The flowers and the birds are cared for by our God, and so are we. So we must return thanks to him for his great goodness to us.

The Bible tells us that King David took a moment to give thanks to God. David was someone who could have easily said, “I’m too busy to stop and thank God. I have battles to fight and a kingdom to run.” But David was, in fact, one of our most prolific givers of thanks to God. As we read in our Old Testament reading today, David said, “Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!” (1 Chronicles 16:10). David recognized that all the treasures he had received came from God. He saw that it was important to remember the works God had done. David knew that it was necessary to recall that he was part of God’s covenant with his people that went back generations. We, too, like David, are part of God’s people, members of God’s family through baptism. Our place in the world is not unknown or random, but special and even ordained by God. We have been chosen by God to be connected to him forever and that is something that cannot be taken away from us because of the death and resurrection of his Son Jesus, who was born in the town of David and reigns as the King of Kings for all generations to come.

David was by no means perfect, but he was beloved by God, and David was blessed by him throughout his life. And these blessings did not go unnoticed by David. In fact, David is named as the writer of 75 of the 150 psalms. These songs of thanksgiving include such proclamations as:

Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. (Psalm 30:4)

I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good. For he has delivered me from every trouble. (Psalm 54:6-7)

Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. (Psalm 63:3-4)

The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me. (Psalm 142:7)

King David did not let his role as king stop him from giving thanks to God. David realized that his station in life came from God alone. And he was humbled by that reality. We, too, should humbly come before our God in thanksgiving to him for what he has done in our lives, no matter what our station may be. Thanksgiving should never be discarded once things are going well and it is something that should never be forgotten when we find ourselves in a lowly state.

The Gospel reading for today introduces us to ten men in a very lowly state. They were suffering from leprosy, which was not only a painful and debilitating disease physically, but was even more damaging emotionally and socially, since lepers were literally ostracized from the towns and villages where they lived and were forced to shout out, “Unclean! Unclean!” any time they were approaching a person or group.

It was men in this terrible condition who cried out in despair, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” They knew even in their illness that Jesus was their Master and had the ability to heal