

## Scripture Lessons for a Special Service of Thanksgiving Old Testament

**Jeremiah 17:13-14 NIV** O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You will be put to shame. Those who turn away from You will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD, the Spring of living water. 14 Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for You are the One I praise.

### Epistle

**Galatians 5:16-24** So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under Law. 19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no Law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

### Gospel

**Luke 17:11-19** Now on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance 13 and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" 14 When He saw them, He said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. 15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16 He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him - and he was a Samaritan. 17 Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18 Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19 Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."



✠ CLOSING HYMN *Now the Light Has Gone Away* ELH #570 MÜDE BIN ICH

1. Now the light has gone away; - Father, listen while I pray,  
Asking Thee to watch and keep - And to send me quiet sleep.
2. Jesus, Savior, wash away - All that has been wrong today;  
Help me every day to be - Good and gentle, more like Thee.
3. Let my near and dear ones be - Always near and dear to Thee.  
Oh, bring me and all I love - To Thy happy home above.
4. Now my evening praise I give; - Thou didst die that I might live.  
All my blessings come from Thee; - Oh, how good Thou art to me!
5. Thou, my best and kindest Friend, - Thou wilt love me to the end.  
Let me love Thee more and more, - Always better than before.



## The Service of Vespers ✠ ELH p.120



11/26 SPECIAL THANKSGIVING EVE 7pm. INVOCATION (Please *rise*.)

*P: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son ✠, and of the Holy Spirit. C: Amen.*

**THE CONFESSION OF SINS** *P: Dearly beloved! We have come together in the presence of God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at His hand, to set forth His most worthy praise, to hear His holy Word, and to ask for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and salvation. O come, let us worship Him! Let us kneel and bow down before Him. Let us confess our sins with penitent hearts, and obtain forgiveness by His infinite grace and mercy.*

**C: Almighty and most merciful Father, we have strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed the devices and desires of our hearts. We have offended against Your holy Law. We have done those things which we should not have done, and we have not done those things which we should have done. Have mercy on us, O Lord! Spare us and restore us, according to the promises You have declared to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord. For His sake grant that we may live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of Your holy Name.**

### THE ABSOLUTION

*P: The Almighty and merciful Lord has granted us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins, grace for true repentance and amendment of life, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**OPENING HYMN: "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" ELH #461 ST. GEO'S**

1. Come, ye thankful people, come; - Raise the song of Harvest-home.  
All be safely gathered in - Ere the winter storms begin;  
God, our Maker, doth provide - For our wants to be supplied,  
Come to God's own temple, come; - Raise the song of Harvest-home.
2. All the world is God's own field, - Fruit unto His praise to yield;  
Wheat and tares together sown, - Unto joy or sorrow grown;  
First the blade and then the ear, - Then the full corn shall appear.  
Lord of harvest, grant that we - Wholesome grain and pure may be.
3. For the Lord, our God, shall come - And shall take His harvest home;  
From His field shall in that day - All offences purge away;  
Give His angels charge at last - In the fire the tares to cast,  
But the fruitful ears to store - In His garner evermore.
4. Even so, Lord, quickly come - To Thy final Harvest-home;  
Gather Thou Thy people in, - Free from sorrow, free from sin,  
There, forever purified, - In Thy garner to abide.  
Come with all Thine angels, come, - Raise the glorious Harvest-home.

### The VERSICLES

ELH, p.120

*P: ♪ O Lord, open my lips. C: ♪ And my mouth will show forth Your praise.*

*P: ♪ Make haste, O God, to deliver me. C: ♪ Make haste to help me, O Lord.*

The GLORIA PATRI C: ♪ Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. - As it was in the beginning; is now, and ever shall be, for-ever-more. - A-men.

LECTION: SCRIPTURE LESSONS for Thanksgiving (printed on back page)

RESPONSORY P: ♪ O Lord, have mercy upon us. C: ♪ Thanks be to You, O Lord!

MAIN HYMN "We Praise Thee, O God, Our Redeemer" ELH #466 KREMSER

1. We praise Thee, O God, Our Redeemer, Cre-ator,  
In grateful devotion Our tribute we bring;  
We lay it before Thee, We kneel- and adore Thee,  
We bless Thy Holy Name-, Glad praises we sing.
2. We worship Thee, God of our fathers, We bless Thee;  
Through life's storm and tempest Our Guide hast Thou been;  
When perils o'ertake us, Escape- Thou wilt make us,  
And with Thy help, O Lord-, Our battles we win.
3. With voices united Our praises we offer,  
To Thee, great Jehovah, Glad anthems we raise.  
Thy strong Arm will guide us, Our God- is beside us,  
To Thee, our great Redeem-er, For-ever be praise.

3<sup>RD</sup> HYMN "Now Thank We All Our God" ELH #63 NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT

1. Now thank we all our God - With heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done, - In whom His world rejoices;  
Who from our mother's arms - Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love, - And still is ours today.
2. Oh, may this bounteous God - Through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts - And blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in His grace - And guide us when perplexed  
And free us from all ills - In this world and the next.
3. All praise and thanks to God - The Father now be given,  
The Son, and Him who reigns - With them in highest heaven:  
The one eternal God, - Whom earth and heaven adore!  
For thus it was, is now, - And shall be evermore.

The VERSICLE P: ♪ Let my prayers rise before you as incense:

C: ♪ And the lifting up of my hands-- As the ev'ning sacrifice.

The NUNC DIMITTIS ("Lord, Let Us Depart in Peace" - music on page 124)

- C: ♪
1. Lord, now You let Your servant ... .. de-part in peace:  
Accord-... .. -ing to You Word.
  2. For mine eyes have seen... .. Your Sal-va-tion;  
Which You have prepared before the face... .. of all peo-ple.
  3. A-- Light to light- ... .. -en the Gen-tiles:  
And the glory of Your... .. peo-ple Isra-el.

4. Glory be to the Father ... .. and to the Son / And to... .. the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and... .. ever shall be / Forev-... .. er-more, A-men.

KYRIE ELEISON (Lord Have Mercy) C: ♪ Lord, have mercy upon us. -  
Christ, have mercy upon us. - Lord, have mercy upon us.

LORD'S PRAYER (Pastor prays/chants, Congregation join if comfortable)

C: ♪ *Our Father, Who art in Heaven, Hallowèd be- Thy Name--;  
Thy Kingdom come-, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven;  
Give us this day our dai-ly 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.*

The (Evening) COLLECT (Pastor prays, Congregation Amen) C: ♪ A- -men.

The BENEDICAMUS P: ♪ Let us bless the Lord. C: ♪ Thanks be to God.

The BENEDICTION P: ♪ The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God,  
And the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. C: ♪ A- -men.

CLOSING HYMN "Now the Light..." (words on back page →) You may be seated.

#### A Thanksgiving Proclamation

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the LORD.

We know that by His divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to, feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.

--Abraham Lincoln - October 3, 1863

## HARVEST THANKS 1.Timothy 2:1-4 "ALWAYS BE THANKFUL" 11.26.14 OSL

The Text for our homily is taken from 1 Timothy 2:1-4 **First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

*Lord God, Heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your Truth, Your Word is Truth. Amen.*

INTRODUCTION As a nation, for now, we still cherish our freedoms. For example, we were freely able to come to worship today, without the fear of being imprisoned or even executed for our faith. We don't fear any severe backlash from the community at large for what we believe. Sure, there are always those around who might smirk or even say we are loonies to our face, but we don't feel threatened too much by their comments.

Furthermore, it is not demanded of us by our government who we are to reverence. (For the most part) We still have **separation of Church & State**. We believe that the State shall not tell the Church what to believe. But for all their differences, both of these realms still have **one thing** in common. Both of these have been **given to us by our great and gracious Giver, God**. For this reason, **St. Paul** (also) encourages us to pray for, among other things, our secular rulers so we can live in peace. He writes, *First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.* This passage applies to **all Christians in all nations**, for God has instituted government, regardless of its form, for the general welfare and protection of the entire nation, Christians and non-Christians alike.

We are obligated to give thanks to the Lord, not because the government says we must, but simply because we are moved by God's goodness. God gives, and we respond to all of God's gifts to us through our prayers to Him, our praise of Him, and our giving Him thanks.

As Christians, we live a **liturgical life**. This means that even as we, through the liturgy of the Church, respond to what our Lord has done for us, we in **our daily lives** respond to what our Lord has given us by giving thanks to Him. **The way we live is a liturgical life of response to God's gifts**. It is for this reason that we are here today, just as when we are here each Sunday. But it does not matter on which day we are here in the Lord's house. **Our lives are to be a daily thanksgiving to the**

**Lord**. The blessed Reformer, **Martin Luther**, spoke well of what it means to **give thanks** in a lecture on this Text. He says:

*This also pertains to Christians. Gratitude always merits the receipt of more; ingratitude drains the fountain of divine goodness. Gratitude consists of more than the expression "I thank You, Lord God." It also involves acknowledging first that it is a gift of God, ... This gratitude consists not only in our words alone but principally in our acknowledgement of the blessing we have received. Those people are rare who make such an acknowledgement. Gratitude must be involved with prayers, because we must confess the gifts we have received. [LW 28:258]*

This is so very true, and yet, there is something else we must confess, and that is **our sin**. All of us are guilty of the **sin of ingratitude**. Our sinful hearts are selfish. We are more interested in what we can get rather than from Whom we have received our gifts - Namely, **Our Heavenly Father**. He gives us not merely the extraordinary things, but He also gives us each day our daily bread. As Luther teaches in the **Fourth Petition** of the Lord's Prayer, *"God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realise this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving."* Luther explains also what is meant by daily bread, *"everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbours, and the like."* **All that we have and all that we are have their origins in our Creator, the Triune God**. Yet we are so absorbed in our own lives, in our own problems, that we fail regularly to recognise the Source of our gifts, our possessions. We are selfish, and we are self-idolatrous. We would rather get things than give thanks. Not only are we selfish and self-idolatrous, we are also ungrateful. The stunning part is though, that **God gives everything we need whether we thank Him or not**. If you fail to give thanks to God for your food today, He will still provide food for you tomorrow. In fact, He provides food for all people, whether they thank Him or not. Even when people give thanks and credit to a false god, the Lord still provides what they need for this life anyway, **to give them time to live and believe in Him**. That's why it is so good and right for us to have a harvest thanksgiving service, so that we would be reminded to give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endures forever.

One of the many things you would have learned through your church life is the major **difference between the Ten Commandments and the (Apostles') Creed**. In the Ten Commandments, God tells us

what **we are to do and not to do**. In the Apostles' Creed, we confess what our Triune God **has already done for us**.

In our study of the Creed, we learn to confess that "...*all this He does purely out of Fatherly, divine, goodness and mercy, without any merit and worthiness in us. For all this we are duty-bound to **thank and praise, serve and obey Him**. This is most certainly true*" (First Article). Our God has made us, given us each day our daily bread, defends us, has redeemed us, called us by the Gospel, enlightened us with His gifts, sanctified and kept us in the true faith, forgives us, and will raise us and **give us Eternal Life. And for all of this we get to thank our God**. God has first given us all of these things, and, in our liturgical lives we respond to our Lord's goodness and give Him thanks - every day as we live our **Baptism** through daily contrition, repentance, ...**and thanksgiving**.

The Greatest Gift for which we give thanks **is the Gift of God's Son**, our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our Lord has come into this world to **take our sins upon Himself**, to become our sin, and pay with His very life the penalty we by our sins have deserved, giving His body and shedding His blood for the forgiveness of all our sins. (This is the same body and blood He gives us in the Holy Eucharist. Eucharist is Greek for "*thanksgiving*." **The Lord's Supper is the Great Thanksgiving**) When we come to receive the Sacrament, this "Thanksgiving," we see **and taste** what He won on the Cross for us, and **we in turn give thanks for the gifts** He has given us in this great Feast. We thank our Lord for first loving us, for dying for us, and for rising from the dead for us, that we will, through faith, one day dine with Him at the eternal Feast.

**CONCLUSION** Until that (Great) Day when our Lord comes again, let us keep in mind, and put into practice, the encouragement given to us by the great Church Father, **St. John Chrysostom**: *Let us then exhort the saints to give thanks for us. And let us exhort one another toward gratitude. Drawing near to God, **we give thanks for the whole world and the good things** we commonly share. So then **let us give thanks also for the faith** that others have toward God. This custom is an ancient one, planted in the church from the beginning.*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God; for it is good and right so to do,  
"O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever."

*In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen. SDG***

*The Peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, to Life Everlasting. **Amen**.*

## PRAYER FOR HARVEST THANKSGIVING

God our Father, You have created the universe in great wisdom, and sustain it by Your powerful word. You are good to everyone, and have compassion on all that You have made. We enter Your house of prayer with thanksgiving, and come before You with songs of joy. We thank You for the many blessings and joys You lavish on our lives. We thank You for soil and seed, sunlight and rain, health and strength, machinery and technology, and every other blessing by which You give us our daily bread. You have given us a plentiful land, rich in resources for agriculture, mining, and industry. You have blessed us with education and skills to use these resources for the good of our country and its people. Although You do not always spare us from severe weather and dark days, we still must confess that our cup of blessing is overflowing, and so we praise Your Name. Make us continually aware of Your goodness, O Lord. Increase our trust that in all things You are working for our good.

But, Lord, You not only care for our bodies; Your richest love is reserved for the salvation of our souls. Because You have revealed Yourself to us in Your Word, we know You in Your limitless grace, and live in the light of Your truth and love. We thank You especially for Your greatest of gifts: Jesus Christ our Saviour, and for all the blessings of the Gospel and the Church. Help us to appreciate fully these choicest gifts, and to produce in our lives a rich harvest of faith, goodness, and love.

Free us from every temptation to trust in uncertain things like **material wealth**. Free us from covetousness, envy, and jealousy. Increase our joy in what You provide, and make us content. Make us more sensitive to what others need. Give us compassion to help those who have too little, and the opportunities to share Your blessings. Let our service to others pave the way for witness to the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ Your Son. Teach us to use wisely the things You place at our disposal.

Bless and strengthen the poor and the hungry, those who cannot work, the lonely, the depressed, and especially those who are suffering because of their Christian faith. Give them all the generous help of friends, but, above all, strong trust in Your presence and care.

Guide the nations on earth, and particularly those countries whose people are desperately poor. Grant that all who look up to You for material blessings may find Your kingdom, and Your righteousness. Bless our Country America with a united spirit and godly goals. Teach our leaders and people to know, believe, and do Your Will. Remove from us things that are unwise and harmful.

Continue to supply the spiritual needs of our families, so that truth, love, and high morals may bless our homes.

We offer You our prayers and our songs of praise, heavenly Father, in the Name of Your dear Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honour for ever. **Amen**.