

Being Thankful

Reflections: Part 3 “Being Thankful”

Rev. Cameron D St. Michael – November 19, 2023

Thanksgiving Sunday

Readings: 1 Chronicles 16:7-36; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28

Reflection: Psalm 30

Greeting: Give thanks to the Lord because he is good, because his faithful love endures forever. The people who do what is right are truly happy! Remember me, Lord, with your grace and favor!

Prayer: God, help us remember your steadfast love in all that we do. May your wisdom guide us and lead us all the days of our lives. Help us to continue to grow in your grace and your mercy. Bless us this day as we come before you in prayer. Help us to walk in your light and to trust in your ways. May we help each other in this journey called life so that we may remind each other of the promise we share in Christ our Lord. Let your truth strengthen us and may your love and faithfulness give us comfort in all distress. By your Spirit, let us be one with each other as we are one with you. We pray that you will help us to be truly thankful for the many gifts you have given us, and it is in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Reflection: Psalm 30

I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up and did not let my foes rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit. Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. As for me, I said in my prosperity, “I shall never be moved.” By your favor, O Lord, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed. To you, O Lord, I cried, and to the Lord I made supplication: “What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness? Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me! O Lord, be my helper!” You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.
(Psalm 30 NRSV*)

We read the words of Psalm 30, and we hear of God’s salvation. That we should give thanks for all that God is to us and all that God has done. That the Lord watches over us and helps us. What are you thankful for in this last week? Have you thanked God for his presence in your

life? Have you thanked others for their help? How can you show your gratitude in the week to come? How will you lift up others in your prayers of thanksgiving? How will you demonstrate to others that you are thankful that they are a part of your life? How may we bring hope to a troubled world? How may we share the light of Christ with all those who are in need?

Prayer: Lord, we turn to you because of your steadfast love. We know that even when we struggle you are with us. May your Holy Spirit guide us in truth and light. Help us to share the peace and love of Christ each and every day. As we come before you this day, we bring to you the joys and concerns of our lives that we have shared aloud together. We also turn to you in prayer with the unspoken worries and celebrations of our hearts. Help us that we walk in your ways and seek the path of righteousness. May you be with us to strengthen us in our gladness and our sorrow. We pray that you will help us to grow in love through our laughter and our tears. As we learn more about you, Lord, may we grow closer to you. May your steadfast love and faithfulness guide us all the days of our lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Now let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Sermon:

Our scripture readings for today comes from the New Revised Standard Version Bible. Our first reading for today comes from 1 Chronicles chapter 16, verses 7 through 36.

Then on that day David first appointed the singing of praises to the Lord by Asaph and his kindred. O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful 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 wonderful works he has done, his miracles and the judgments he uttered, O offspring of his servant Israel, 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." When they were few in number, of little account, and strangers in the land, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people, he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account, saying, "Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm." Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him; strength and joy are in his place. Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him. Worship the Lord in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth. The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, "The Lord is king!" Let the sea roar and all that fills it; let the field exult and everything in it. Then shall the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth. O give thanks to the Lord, for

he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Say also, "Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather and rescue us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting." Then all the people said "Amen!" and praised the Lord. (1 Chronicles 16:7-36 NRSV)*

Our next reading for today comes from 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 12 through 28.

But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. 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 to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. Brothers and sisters, pray for us. Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all the brothers and sisters. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 NRSV)*

This is the word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

I thought it would be nice to look at giving thanks ahead of this Thanksgiving week. The readings I picked for this highlight this idea of giving thanks. That we are called to be a people thankful for all that we have. I especially wanted to look at it this week, because I'm especially thankful this week. And I'm especially thankful because last weekend was a little bit of a chaotic mess for me and my family. That as you may have noticed, I was not here last week, and it was due to a medical emergency. Everything was worked out and everybody is alright now, but it was frightening. But I'm thankful for a handful of different reasons this week. One is that I wanted to say thank you to all of you for your prayers. We were strengthened throughout because you were praying for us. I wanted to thank you all for the fact that you were there to support us in our time of need. That you were completely understanding that I could not be here and all we got was love and support. I am thankful for that, and I am thankful for the relationship that we have in Christ. And I'm grateful that when something came up that I had people there to support us and help us and that I didn't have to worry about what was happening here. And I am truly thankful for the support, the understanding, the last-minute changes, and just how much comfort it brought me in a very long period without sleep and full of anxiety. I am always thankful that you are a part of our lives, but I wanted to especially say thanks this week. Because I am thankful that we can be together. I am thankful that you are a part of my life. That we are in each other's lives and that we are united in Christ.

As I was thinking about that thankfulness, I was reminded of 1Thessalonians. In our Wednesday evening study, we have been reading the letters of Paul, and we just recently went

over this letter. And I was reminded of it for this week's message because of the way Paul talks about giving thanks. Paul talks about rejoicing, praying without ceasing, and giving thanks in all circumstances. I was reminded of how important it is to always give thanks. Because though I wanted to especially thank you for your support in such a crazy situation, but I also wanted to think about all the things we have to be thankful for every day. That I am thankful for you being a part of my life, that I'm thankful for my family, that I'm thankful for God's presence in my life. Because as I thought about it, there was so much I could give thanks for and so much that I am grateful for each and every day. Paul's urging to be thankful is amongst this call to help each other and be kind to each other, to do God's work in the world. That we are called to do good and to be thankful for all that God has done for us. To be thankful that we are together in Christ. Thinking about this upcoming Thanksgiving Day, I wanted to talk about the way that we're thankful. Because we can be internally and externally thankful, and I think it is important that we are able to let both be a part of our lives. That it is important for us to show our thankfulness in what we do. That we are able to do good because we are thankful for all the good that God has shown us. That we are able to help others because we are thankful for the help we have received by the Holy Spirit. That we are loving as part of our thanksgiving because of the love we have experienced in Christ. I wanted us to think about it because I think it's important that we're able to show and express that gratitude.

When I thought about expressing that gratitude that we have it made me think of our reading from 1 Chronicles. I thought of it because it is such an expressive celebration of God and giving thanks. It is a song of praise and glory and honor and wonder. And it's remembering all that God has done generation to generation. It's this idea of remembering all that has been done so that we can celebrate all that has been and all that is to come. I thought about that idea of being thankful for what has been and what is to come with the approaching celebration of Advent, when we prepare our hearts for the miracle of Christmas. That it is a celebration of past, present, and future all rolled into one. So, I wanted us to be able to reflect on what it means to be thankful as we prepare ourselves for that celebration as well. Because for me, it's recognizing the things that have made a difference in my life, whether they've happened directly to me, are things I have witnessed, or things that I know. I'm thankful for so many things, and I show it by sharing those experiences that I have with others. Like how I am thankful for my children. I share with them that I'm thankful because I want them to know that I love them, that I care about them, and that I am glad they're part of my life. Because for me, that's always a part of giving thanks. That it's not just something that happens internally but it's something that I share so that they know because I want them to know how grateful I am that they are part of my life. And I try to extend that to every part of my life. That I'm thankful for my family and all that they have done throughout the years to help me. And I try to show that I appreciate all that they have done. Just as I am thankful for you. Thankful for all that we have been through together. I'm thankful that you will be with me as we move forward. I am thankful for the trust you have placed in me. I'm thankful that you have given me the opportunity to help shepherd this flock. I'm thankful that we may all grow closer to Christ our Lord together. And I

can't thank you enough for that opportunity, for the trust you have placed in me so that I may be there for you. And I'm thankful that we have been able to have this journey together. And I'm thankful that God has been there with us every step of the way.

In many ways, I am thankful for all those who have come before us, both in this place and in the church in general. That I'm thankful for all those people that were here to celebrate the love of God in their lives. That we may be here today to celebrate the love of God in our lives. For the traditions that have been passed down that give us that connection to the past and the future. I'm thankful for this life and that we may live it together. I'm thankful for God being a part of our lives, here together. I'm thankful for the Holy Spirit that is there to guide us and lead us. I'm thankful for our heavenly Father watching over us and caring for us. That we may be thankful for Jesus Christ, our Risen Savior. And we show we are grateful for the peace he brings us by sharing the peace of Christ with each other and with the world. Because for me, the thing about being thankful for all of this is that I want to share it. I don't want to keep it all to myself. We see it in Chronicles, that they are celebrating God for all the reasons they have to give thanks. They are celebrating all that God is for them by proclaiming it and sharing it with all who will listen. They share the wonder and the joy that God gives them. They share the hope they have because of God's presence. We hear it with Paul when he talks about being thankful. It is that he shares Christ with everyone because he is thankful for all the Christ has been for him. He wants everyone to share the peace and joy that he has found. He calls us to proclaim our joy and our hope so that others may know it. Because Christ is in all that we do. That Christ is present in what we say. Christ is present in how we treat each other. Christ is present in how we give thanks because Christ is always there with us.

I think part of being thankful is just making an effort to share all of that with everyone. So, as we prepare for Thanksgiving Day, we may have things to contend with. We may have the hecticness of planning traveling. We may have the logistics of making sure everyone is where they need to be. We may have to deal with knowing everything is where it should be. Figuring out if you have all the things you need. It might be figuring out something new. There will be cooking and prepping and planning and hosting and gathering and celebrating in many different forms. But I pray that among all of those things that we will remember to be truly thankful. Thankful for the opportunity that we have to do all of those things together. Thankful for the chance we have to share with one another. Thankful that Christ is with us, and that Christ will always be with us. That we can be thankful for all of those things and that we can show our thanks that we are together. And that we may give thanks for all that we have and all that we are because God is with us. So, I encourage each of you to reflect on what it is you're thankful for and find ways that you can express gratitude, love, peace, and hope as part of being thankful. That we may celebrate our journey in Christ, and we may be truly thankful for all that we have in all that we are. And that we may demonstrate being thankful in the way that we love in Jesus' name. Amen.

Prayer of Confession and Pardon: God, you are with us even when we turn away from you. Guide us back into your loving arms. Judge us not by the perfection of our actions but show us mercy and love. We have strayed like lost sheep from your ways, failing both in what we have done and what we have failed to do. Bring us back into your fold that you may guide us and lead us in all things. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us and forgive us. May we walk in your love and trust your ways. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy upon you. May the Lord forgive all your sins and lift you up in love through Jesus Christ our Lord, and by the Holy Spirit keep you in life eternal. Amen.

Offering: If you are so moved to make an offering, you may send it to the church treasurer, or you may send it to the PO Box listed below. We are still the church, and the church still needs your support to keep doing all the important work that we do.

Lord's Prayer

Dismissal with Blessing: May we go forth reflecting God's love in our lives as we go forth in the peace of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Current Series – Reflections

Our current series is called reflections. We will be reflecting upon various topics of faith and what we learn in life. We will be looking at the unknown, friendship, thankfulness, and trust through faith. We will spend these weeks reflecting upon our faith as we head into the Advent season.

Next Week: Being Thankful – Our next message is a reflection for Thanksgiving on being thankful for everything in life.

Prayer List

Rev Angie Lee	Bishop Frank Beard	Our Conference	Our Healthcare Workers
Patti Corder and the Greenup Ambulance Crew		Eric Veach	Ed & Verna Titus
Henry Catey	Jake Kiser	Cindy Cisney	Tricia Adkins
Don Stewart	Ronnie Winstead	Lauren Stewart	Tom Finley
Laura Carlen	Rosie Chancellor	Chuck Hogan	Brittany Gilbert
Phil Hawickhorst	Ray Carr	Alice Sherwood	Richard Durham
Kathy Hanks	Steve Carlen	Emily Blade	Tim Schnauz
Donna Carlen	Ernie Peters	Jess Shoot	Stanley Kiser
Corine Howard	Don Gilmore	Shirley Jester	Connie Brown
Marsha Overton	Linda Carlen	Michael Nichols	Paul Cox
Taylor Waldorf	Harriet Tucker	Becky McGuiness	Janet Yokum
Donna Farley	Gary & Mary Winterrowd	Leo Smith	Sue & Bob Smyser
Larry Thompson	Evelyn Sue Icenogle	Greg Williams	

Rev Camron D St. Michael

<https://stmichael.pw>

cdstmichael@outlook.com

(316)530-3182 (call or text)

PO Box 54, Charleston IL, 61920

* Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

+ Scripture quotations are from the Common English Bible, Copyright © 2011 by Common English Bible.