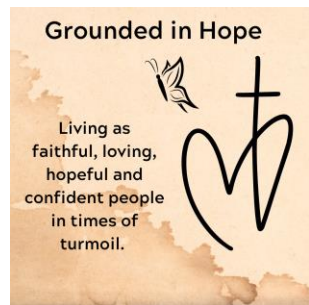


The Presbyterian Church of Okemos
November 24, 2024
Twenty Seventh Sunday After Pentecost
Agape Meal



Preparation In the biblical Greek there are many words for love. Philia is the love of friendship. Eros is romantic love. Agape is the love that God gives and calls us to. “In the Christian sense, love is not primarily an emotion, but an act of the will. When Jesus tells us to love our neighbors, he is not telling us to love them in the sense of responding to them with a cozy emotional feeling. . . On the contrary, he is telling us to love our neighbors in the sense of being willing to work for their well-being even if it means sacrificing our own well- being to that end, even if it means sometimes just leaving them alone.” Frederick Buechner in *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker’s ABC*. Our worship today is in thanksgiving for this unconditional love.

Gathering As a People of God

Prelude

Thanksgiving Suite

Charles Callahan

Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organ

- ❖ As you listen to the prelude, write your name on the place card at your seat. You are welcome to draw and color around it. Place it face out so that those at your table can see your name.

Lighting the Candles

Choral Introit

Come to Me

PCO Chancel Choir

Westin Sorrel, director

Invitation to Our Shared Ministry and Meal

Judi Harris, Liturgist

*** Call to Worship**

Embodied Prayer

Rebecca Mattern

Praise God, Creator

(reach arms straight up toward the sky)

Praise Christ, Redeemer

(extend arms out to the side, parallel with the floor)

Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter

(wrap arms around you in a hug)

*** Hymn ##367**

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come, vs. 1-4

[St. George’s Windsor]

(see page 5)

Prayer of Confession, Communal

Judi Harris, Liturgist

One: Because God is not far from each one of us, we can go to God to confess our sin and brokenness. Because God is not far from each one of us, our confession is met with grace and our sins are washed away. With that assurance let us come before God and each other.

All: Creator God, forgive our moments of ingratitude, the spiritual blindness that prevents us from appreciating the wonder that is this world, the endless cycle of nature, of life and death and rebirth. Forgive us for taking without giving; reaping without sowing. Open our eyes to see, our lips to praise, our hands to share. May our feet touch lightly on the path we tread, and our footsteps be worthy of following, for they lead to you. (Silent prayer) Amen.

Prayer of Confession, Personal

Judi Harris, Liturgist

One: Because God is not far from each one of us, our confession is met with grace and our sins are washed away. You are invited to release your sins by writing them on the small pieces of dissolvable paper at your table. Place them in the basket and have one person from the table bring them to the chancel and place them in the bowl of water

All: *Prompts for your personal prayer of confession*

- ❖ What or who do you forget to give thanks for?
- ❖ What gets in the way of noticing the wonder of the world?
- ❖ What do you need to ask forgiveness for from someone? from God?

Promise of the Gospel and Passing of the Peace

Rebecca Mattern

One: Hear the good news of the gospel: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ. Not death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: **For in Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven and washed away. Thanks be to God.**

One: Having received God's grace, let us extend grace to others through the passing of the peace. May the peace of the Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.** *Please greet your fellow worshippers in ways you feel comfortable.*

* **Act of Praise #582** *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

*Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.*

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

The Word

Prayer of Illumination

Dr. Barbara Fretwell-Cooke

Come, Holy Spirit, that through your word we may be guided into the love of God for all the world. Amen

Children's Message

Dr. Barbara Fretwell-Cooke

Old Testament Reading Deuteronomy 8:7-18 Alex Juarez
One: The Word of God for the people of God.
All: Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading Colossians 1:1-14 Rebecca Mattern
One: The Word of God for the people of God.
All: Thanks be to God.

Reflection *Bearing the Fruit of Faith, Love and Hope* Rebecca Mattern

Anthem *Give Thanks to God* Dale Grontenhuis
PCO Chancel Choir

Responding to the Word

Offering

Invitation

Offertory

We Gather Together
Based on *Kremser*

John Ferguson

***Doxology #606**

Litany of Thanksgiving Alex Juarez

One: ... Let us offer our thanks to God

All: We give you thanks, O God.

Sung Response#654 *In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful* (Repeat 3 times)
(see page 6)

Prayers of the People Judi Harris, Liturgist

One: Lord in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer

One: Lord hear our prayer as we sing together

(Please join in the sung response)

Sung Response #471 *O Lord, Hear My Prayer*
(see page 7)

The Lord's Prayer (ecumenical version).

We invite you to recite the version of the Lord's Prayer that is closest to your heart.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Blessing of the Meal

All: Come, Lord Jesus, our Guest to be, and bless these gifts bestowed by thee. Amen

Sharing of Food and Story

Rebecca Mattern

- ❖ How did you experience God this past week?
- ❖ Who would you write a letter to, giving thanks to God for their faith, love, and hope?
- ❖ What hope have you learned from Jesus? How is it bearing fruit in the world, in the church, in your life - even in trying times?
- ❖ What does it mean to live a life worthy of God?
- ❖ How can we prepare to "endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to God"?

Sent Out As a People of God

* **Sending Song #526** *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*, vs. 1-3
(see page 8)

* **Benediction**

Rebecca Mattern

Postlude

Sing to the Lord of the Harvest
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker

Dennis Elliot

* *Please rise in body or spirit*

Ushers: David & Kathi Cook, Ron & Barbara Dorr

This Morning's Fellowship Team: Thank you to all who brought food for the Agape Meal and to Tom Schaberg and Wayne Scott for taking care of the coffee.

The prayer of confession was written by John Birch, and posted on his **Faith and Worship** website. Visit that site for many other excellent worship resources.

<http://www.faithandworship.com/>. and found here:

<https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/08/thanksgiving-confession.html>

Next Week: December 1, 2024: First Sunday of Advent

Scripture: Isaiah 40:1-10; Luke 1:26-33

Education Hour: Advent Workshop: Intergenerational, all ages. Create a nativity scene for yourself, as a family, or to share with someone. Explore the scriptures for each part of the nativity.

You are in an active recording environment, and your likeness may be captured in photographs and videos. By entering, you acknowledge giving consent to The Presbyterian Church of Okemos to take, own and use images containing your likeness at its sole discretion in perpetuity. If you do not wish to convey this consent, please contact a staff member immediately.

367 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

1 Come, ye thank-ful peo - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.
 2 All the world is God's own field, fruit in thank-ful praise to yield,
 3 For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take the har - vest home;
 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come to thy fi - nal har - vest home.

All is safe - ly gath - ered in, ere the win - ter storms be - gin.
 wheat and tares to - geth - er sown, un - to joy or sor - row grown.
 from each field shall in that day all of - fens - es purge a - way;
 Gath - er thou thy peo - ple in, free from sor - row, free from sin,

God, our Mak - er, doth pro - vide for our wants to be sup - plied.
 First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap - pear.
 give the an - gels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,
 there for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, in thy pres - ence to a - bide:

Come to God's own tem - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.
 Lord of har - vest, grant that we whole - some grain and pure may be.
 but the fruit - ful ears to store in God's gar - ner ev - er - more.
 come, with all thine an - gels, come; raise the glo - rious har - vest home!

Despite its familiar Thanksgiving associations, the real concern of this text is to recall the harvest imagery Jesus used to describe the fulfillment of God's sovereignty. The tune name commemorates the royal chapel where the composer was organist for forty-seven years.

In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful 654

The musical score is written for voice and piano in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: 'In the Lord I'll be ev - er thank - ful; in the Lord I will re -
joice! Look to God; do not be a - fraid. Lift up your
voic - es; the Lord is near. Lift up your voic - es; the Lord is near.' The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords. There are two triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes) in the vocal line: one over the notes 'do not be' and another over 'Lift up your'.

This refrain from the ecumenical monastic community at Taizé, France, is meant for repeated singing. A wonderful quilt of psalm-like phrases, it would be appropriate at any time but the concluding emphasis on the nearness of the Lord makes it especially fitting for use in Advent.

TEXT: Taizé Community, 1986

MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1986

Text and Music © 1991 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

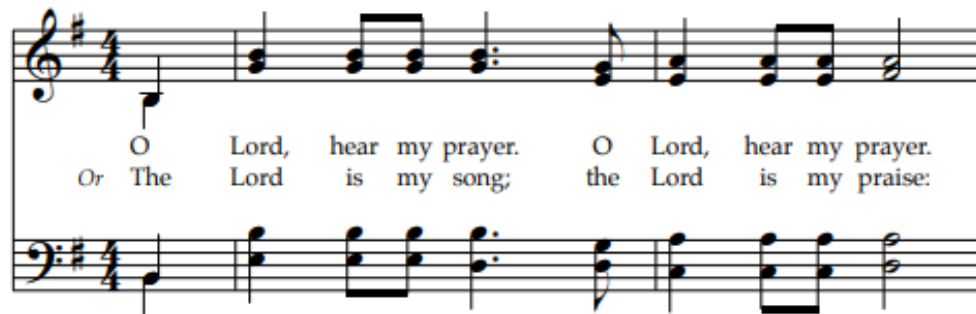
IN THE LORD I'LL BE EVER THANKFUL

Irregular

O Lord, Hear My Prayer

The Lord Is My Song

471



O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.
Or The Lord is my song; the Lord is my praise:



When I call, an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer. O
all my hope comes from God. The Lord is my song; the



Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.
Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

This chant from the Taizé Community in France is provided with two sets of words, either of which can be used as best suits the occasion. The first text is based on Psalm 102:1-2, and the second is an amalgam of phrases drawn from Psalms 118:14, 25:5, 36:9, and John 4:14.

526 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a
 2 Christ is a - ble to make us one; at the ta - ble he
 3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a



shout of joy: bread is bro - ken; the wine is poured;
 sets the tone, teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless,
 world of doubt, gives us love to tell, bread to share:



Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
 love in word and in deed ex - press. Je - sus lives a - gain;
 God (Im - man - u - el) ev - ery - where!



earth can breathe a - gain; pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

Maracas and other rhythm instruments may be used. ||: ♩ . ♩ . ♩ :||

This "communion calypso" (as the author called it) affirms the continuing presence of Christ both in the sacramental meal and in the lives of Christians. Because this text was written to fit a pre-existing tune, it has a rather telegraphic style that encourages pondering.