

Let Thanksgiving Inspire and Empower Our Mission
A 'Week' of scripture, prayer and reflection
on Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Parish of Lansdowne Rear

Annual Stewardship Approach - Fall 2023

'Working together to reach our full potential as God's creation'

'Day 1'

Come, let us sing to the Lord; *

let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before the presence of the Lord with thanksgiving *

and raise a loud shout to God with psalms.

For you, O Lord, are a great God, *

and a great sovereign above all gods.

(Psalm 95:1-3, ACC Inclusive Language Psalter [ILP])

Extravagant Creator, your generosity knows no bounds. May we each take time today to stand still, look around, and take in some of the beauty you share with us in nature and each other. Thank you. Amen.

(Moravian Church Daily Texts, September 27, 2023)

'Day 2'

You will say on that day: "I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, and you comforted me. Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and will not be afraid, for the Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation."

(Isaiah 12:1-2, NRSVUE)

When you are grateful, you are not fearful, and when you are not fearful, you are not violent. When you are grateful, you act out of a sense of enough and not out of a sense of scarcity, and you are willing to share.

If you are grateful, you are enjoying the differences between people and respectful to all people. The grateful world is a world of joyful people.

Grateful people are joyful people. A grateful world is a happy world.

(Brother David Steindl-Rast)

'Day 3'

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.

(1st Thessalonians 5:16-19, NRSVUE)

Gratitude, it happens, needs less room to grow than one might think—is able to find purchase on even the slenderest of ledges, is able to seed itself in even the poorest of soils.

Just today, I marveled as a small gratitude took root in the desert of me—

like a juniper tree growing out of red rock.

If I hadn't felt it myself,

I might not have believed it—but it's true,

one small thankfulness can slip into an arid despair

and with it comes a change in the inner landscape,

the scent of evergreen.

(Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer, "Gratitude")

'Day 4'

Treasure:

All the things which you could call your "possessions"—both the tangible and intangible—give them up. You cannot lose what you have already given up. Find the language, the prayer, and the practice, that enables you to treasure the fullness of life: life now and to come.

(Br. Curtis Almquist, SSJE)

Blessed are you, Lord our God, creator of heaven and earth,
You create the fruit of the land to sustain our families and neighbours,
You nurture the church, loving communities of faith, deepening our relationship with you and with one another.

You offer us the gift of baptism and the sacrament of Christ's body and blood so that we may be fed and filled with your Holy Spirit,

You bless us with generous hearts so that we may support the outcast, the hungry, the sick and all those who long for intimacy with Jesus.

You fill us with determination to be mindful of the ministry and mission to which we are called.

Blessed are you Lord our God. Amen.

(ACC Giving our Thanks and Praise)

'Day 5'

Jesus saw table fellowship as part of his divine task. He took his cue from a long line of prophets--who were often hungry and malnourished themselves--and pointed to the great feast as a sign of God's generosity, goodness, and the promise of life abundant. In God's Kingdom there is not just enough, there is more than enough.

(Gary A Chubb in 'Feasting on Gratitude', TEC)

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all you have done for us. We thank you for the splendour of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love. We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side. We thank you for setting us tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us. We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone. Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom. Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know Christ and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

(Book of Alternative Services - General Thanksgiving)

'Day 6'

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *
I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; *
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You spread a table before me *
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil, *
and my cup is running over.

(Psalm 23:4-5, ACC ILP)

Gratitude is resilience of sorts, the defiance of kindness in the face of anger, of connection in the face of division, and of hope in the face of fear. . . Gratitude empowers us. It makes joy and love possible. It rearranges the way we see and experience what is all around us. Gratitude makes all things new. It transforms how we understand what is broken and gives us the ability to act more joyfully and with hope. That is why gratitude is central to all the world's religions. As a practice, it embodies the wisdom of humanity's greatest spiritual teachers: the love of neighbor. Gratitude takes us from abstract belief to living compassion in the world. Gratitude is strongest, clearest, most robust, and radical when things are really hard. Really hard. All-is-lost hard.

(from 'Grateful: The Subversive Practice of Giving Thanks' by Diana Butler-Bass)

'Day 7'

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God the creator triumphantly raise,
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
who still guides us on to the end of our days.

(Common Praise # 403)

We thank God for the blessings in our lives. God is generous again, again, and again. Consider how you can say thank you or show gratitude again, again, and again—and in many different ways. Find opportunities to say thank you directly. Find opportunities to deliver it personally. Gratitude needs to be planned if it is to become a habit

(ACC 'Giving our Thanks and Praise')

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Our Parish Prayer:

Gracious God, thank you for drawing us together in the Holy Spirit. May you always find us, by our ministry and mission, working together to reach our full potential as God's creation. Amen.