

THANKSGIVING DAY

November 23, 2023

We Praise You, O God

Lutheran Service Book 785, Lutheran Worship 494, The Lutheran Hymnal 568



1 We praise You, O God, our Re - deem - er, Cre - a - tor;
2 We wor - ship You, God of our fa - thers, we bless You;
3 With voic - es u - nit - ed our prais - es we of - fer



In grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
Through tri - al and tem - pest our guide You have been.
And glad - ly our songs of thanks - giv - ing we raise.



We lay it be - fore You, we kneel and a - dore You;
When per - ils o'er - take us, You will not for - sake us,
With You, Lord, be - side us, Your strong arm will guide us.



We bless Your ho - ly name, glad prais - es we sing.
And with Your help, O Lord, our strug - gles we win.
To You, our great Re - deem - er, for - ev - er be praise!

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L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen

Matthew 28:19

P O Lord, open my lips,

C and my mouth shall declare Your praise.

Psalms 51:15

Psalms 95:1-7

L Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;

C let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

L Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

C let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

L For the Lord is a great God,

C and a great King above all gods.

L In his hand are the depths of the earth;
C **the heights of the mountains are his also.**
L The sea is his, for he made it,
C **and his hands formed the dry land.**
L Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
C **let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!**
L For he is our God,
C **and we are the people of his pasture,**
and the sheep of his hand.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

L The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
L Let us Pray.
C **Lord God, heavenly Father, through whose kindness we have again received the fruits of the earth in their season, grant us ever to rejoice in Your mercy that neither prosperity nor adversity may drive us from Your presence; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and rules with You the Holy Spirit, for whose blessed peace we give thanks**

“God of Our Fathers”

Lutheran Worship 501

By: Daniel C. Roberts

**God of our fathers, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies:
Our grateful songs before your throne arise.**

**Your love divine has led us in the past;
In this free land by you our lot is cast;
Oh, be our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay;
Your Word our law, your paths our chosen way.**

**From war’s alarms, from deadly pestilence
Make your strong arm our ever sure defense.
Your true religion in our hearts increase;
Your bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.**

**Refresh your people on their toilsome way;
Lead us from night to never ending day;
Fill all our lives with heaven born love and grace
Until at last we meet before your face.**

Note: God of Our Fathers was written in 1876 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence.

Deuteronomy 8:1-10

¹“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ²And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. ⁵Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. ⁶So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. ⁷For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, ⁸a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, ⁹a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Philippians 4:6-20

⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

¹⁴Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

²⁰To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Luke 17:11-19

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 17th chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹¹On the way to Jerusalem [Jesus] was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance ¹³and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master,

have mercy on us.” ¹⁴When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. ¹⁵Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; ¹⁶and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? ¹⁸Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” ¹⁹And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Lutheran Service Book 892, Lutheran Worship 495, The Lutheran Hymnal 574



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 un - to His praise to yield;
 3 For the Lord, our God, shall come And shall take His har-vest home,
 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come To Thy fi - nal har-vest home;



All be 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 His 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 His an - gels charge at last In the fire the tares to cast,
 There, for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, In Thy gar - ner 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 His gar - ner ev - er - more.
 Come with all Thine an - gels, come, Raise the glo-rious har-vest home.

Devotional thoughts:

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays. Maybe it is for this reason that when I actively served as a pastor, I annually held a Thanksgiving Day service on Thanksgiving Day! After all, that's the purpose of the day.

However, as you know, few people see Thanksgiving as a day for giving thanks! For example, over the years, many have chosen to call it Turkey Day. It has become "a day for family" or "a day for sports." All of those are fine, as long as we never forget that it is primarily a day for giving thanks to God!

Some pastors downplay Thanksgiving because it is not part of the historic Church Year. However, Thanksgiving, as well as Christmas and Easter, are firmly rooted in our Christian heritage.

There was a time when all children learned in school that what we call "The First Thanksgiving" was observed by the Pilgrims after their first harvest in the New World in October 1621. It was a three-day feast attended by 53 Pilgrims and 90 Wampanoag.

But of course, this wasn't the real "First Thanksgiving." The Bible is filled with people who turned to God in thanksgiving for all of their blessings.

Many Christians are aware of Psalm 50:15, "Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." But we should also remember the previous verse, "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High" (Psalm 50:14 KJV).

Some of our most sincere and heartfelt thanks come when we recognize that God has delivered us from trouble! That was the case for the Pilgrims. Almost half of the original pilgrims died during their first winter in the New World. Now, they recognized the goodness of God in the bounty of their harvest. As faithful Christians, they were compelled to offer thanks to God!

In the Gospel reading for Thanksgiving Day, we learn of ten lepers who were sentenced to a life of misery and distress because of their disease. They cried out to Jesus for mercy. In His love for them, Jesus healed them all from the unimaginable distress of leprosy.

All of them turned to Jesus for help. Only one gave thanks. Unfortunately, that seems to be about right.

God has abundantly blessed us, too. We are all compelled to cry out, "Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever" (KJV). Unfortunately, sometimes it seems that only one in ten do.

God has delivered us from a greater trouble than hunger or leprosy. He has delivered us from sin and death! Our hearts are so overwhelmed by His compassion that we not only thank Him one day a year but we thank Him every day.

On this Thanksgiving Day, it is also appropriate that we thank God for every blessing that He has granted to our nation. We are not the first generation to recognize the shortcomings of our country. But sometimes it seems as though we are becoming the first generation to forget the blessings of living in the "home of the brave and the land of the free."

As a country, we would do well to read again George Washington's proclamation of the first national Thanksgiving Day in 1789—the first year of our constitutional republic. It begins with these words, "It is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor."

(I have included His entire proclamation below.)

The Creed The First Article and Explanation from *Luther's Small Catechism*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil.

All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me.

For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.

This is most certainly true.

Now Thank We All Our God

Lutheran Service Book 895, Lutheran Worship 443, The Lutheran Hymnal 36



1 Now thank we all our God With hearts and hands and voices,
2 Oh, may this bounteous God Through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God The Father now be given,



Who wondrous things has done, In whom His world rejoices;
With ever joyful hearts And blessed peace to cheer us
The Son, and Him who reigns With them in highest heaven,



Who from our mothers' arms Has blest us on our way
And keep us in His grace And guide us when perplexed
The one eternal God, Whom earth and heav'n adore;



With countless gifts of love And still is ours to-day.
And free us from all ills In this world and the next!
For thus it was, is now, And shall be evermore.

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C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

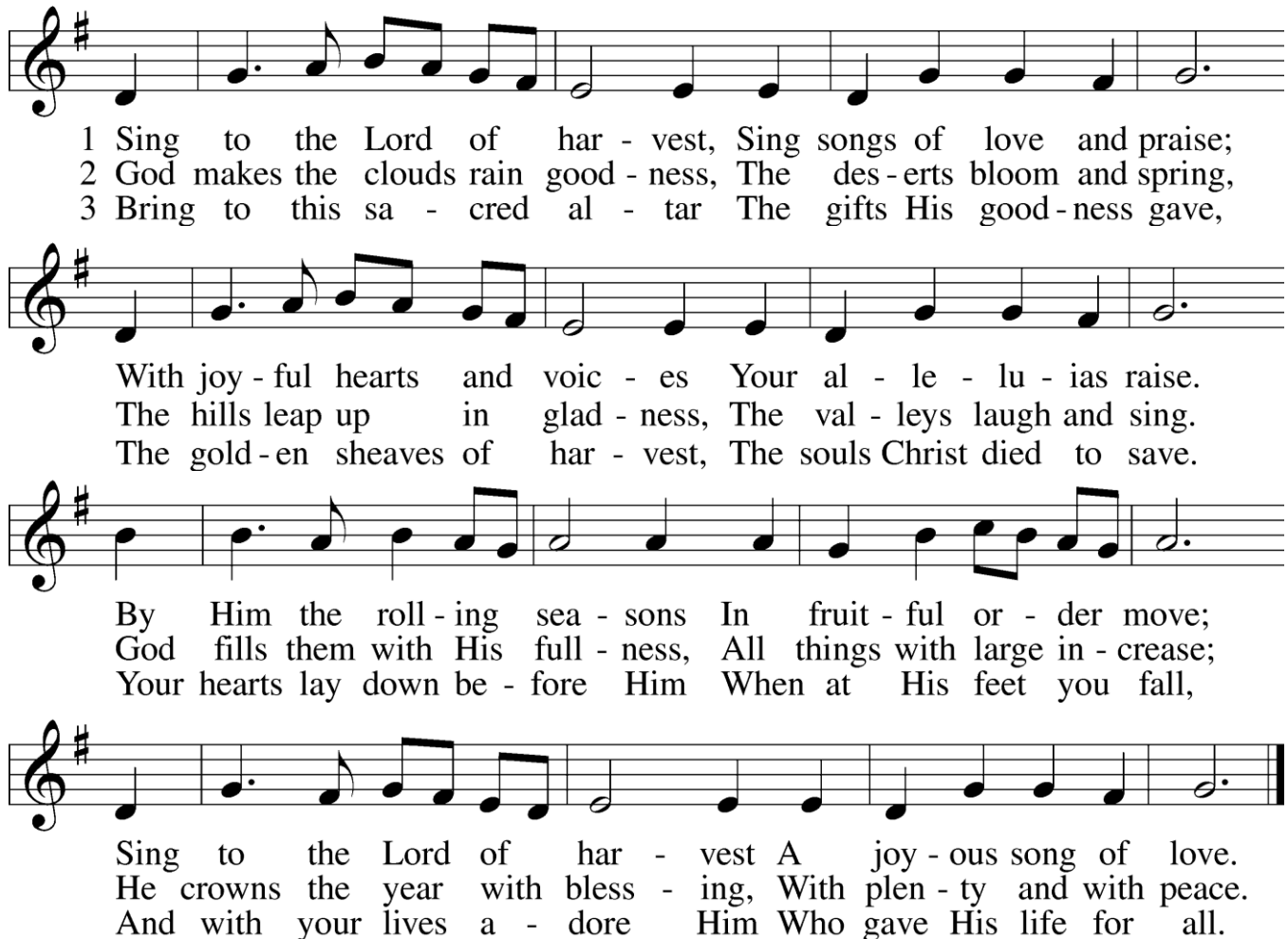
C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.



1 Sing to the Lord of har - vest, Sing songs of love and praise;
2 God makes the clouds rain good - ness, The des - erts bloom and spring,
3 Bring to this sa - cred al - tar The gifts His good - ness gave,
With joy - ful hearts and voic - es Your al - le - lu - ias raise.
The hills leap up in glad - ness, The val - leys laugh and sing.
The gold - en sheaves of har - vest, The souls Christ died to save.
By Him the roll - ing sea - sons In fruit - ful or - der move;
God fills them with His full - ness, All things with large in - crease;
Your hearts lay down be - fore Him When at His feet you fall,
Sing to the Lord of har - vest A joy - ous song of love.
He crowns the year with bless - ing, With plen - ty and with peace.
And with your lives a - dore Him Who gave His life for all.

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George Washington's Thanksgiving Proclamation 1789

By the President of the United States of America, a Proclamation.

Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor-- and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.

Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be-- That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks--for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation--for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war--for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed--for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted--for the civil

and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

and also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions-- to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually--to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed--to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord--To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and us--and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.

Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

Go: Washington

Washington issued a proclamation on October 3, 1789, designating Thursday, November 26 as a national day of thanks. In his proclamation, Washington declared that the necessity for such a day sprung from the Almighty's care of Americans prior to the Revolution, assistance to them in achieving independence, and help in establishing the constitutional government.

<https://www.mountvernon.org/education/primary-source-collections/primary-source-collections/article/thanksgiving-proclamation-of-1789/#:~:text=Now%20therefore%20I%20do%20recommend,unto%20him%20our%20sincere%20and>

Service Notes:

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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