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Rev. Dr. John Rickert, Pastor

OUR REDEEMER'S VOICE **November 2019**

COME, YE THANKFUL PEOPLE, COME

In November, we will join the rest of the USA in celebrating Thanksgiving. Part of our celebration will be our annual Thanksgiving Eve worship service. The "Harvest and Thanksgiving" section of the *Lutheran Service Book* has only four hymns (892-895). Our hymn review committee marked each one as well-known. I expect this is so, in part, because these hymns would be the "go-to" hymns for any Thanksgiving service, so we have a great chance to know them well.

In our country, Thanksgiving began as a harvest festival. That is why we celebrate it in late Fall. The crops were in and it was time to give thanks to God for his providential care. This practice is in complete harmony with how the people of God have always responded to the loving care of our loving God. In Exodus 23:16, Moses tells the people, before they ever reached the Promised Land, "You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor."

We have far more to be thankful for than simply a great harvest, though a great harvest is certainly something to thank God for (just ask our gardeners). We are thankful for all the many temporal blessings God pours on us through services like the police, firefighters, doctors, nurses, street workers, factory workers, garbage collectors, grocery store employees, pharmacists, book binders, computer designers and repair people, the internet, writers, poets, musicians, and on and on. Sure, these gifts are damaged by sin, but that damage does not completely destroy the sweetness of the goodness encased in the gifts by God. Take Main Street in downtown Newark as an example. I'm sure when it was first completed, it was a smooth ride, a wonderful gift for the community. Throughout the years, though, the flaws began to show, and it was patched. Those patches were good gifts also, but it can be patched just so many times. So now it is being completely restored. It is being torn down to the bed and completely rebuilt. It is certainly an inconvenience, but the results will be appreciated by all who drive down the road. We will be thankful, not only when the work is done and we are no longer being inconvenienced, but that the road is so much improved.



As believers in Christ, our thankfulness is not limited to such temporal and physical blessings. Our greatest debt of thankfulness belongs to God for his spiritual blessings, especially for our salvation by grace through faith in Christ. So, Jesus once said, "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36). The answer to that rhetorical question is, obviously, "No profit at all!"

The question of Jesus could easily be reworked: "What does it profit a man if he wins a Nobel Prize, an Oscar, an Emmy, the Medal of Honor, this or that election, the love and adoration of thousands, or whatever, and forfeit his soul?" So, while such things are certainly a blessing, they will never be the chief blessing of our lives, at least not if we have received the salvation of our souls.

When we sing those well-known hymns of thanksgiving, we will sing, not only about temporal blessings, but even more so about eternal blessings, of which our temporal blessings are – at their best – intended to remind us. A great Thanksgiving meal is intended to remind us, not only of the Lord's Supper, but also the Feast of Victory we will celebrate in Heaven (Revelation 5:12-13; 19:5-9). A great harvest is intended to remind us of the greater harvest of souls for salvation. (In fact, that harvest festival we read about in Exodus is better known to us as the Feast of Pentecost.) The gathering of loved ones should remind us of the greater gathering of loved ones in Glory (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). Shoot, even our new Main Street downtown can re-



mind us of the streets of gold in the heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 21:21).

So, while I certainly do not want us to limit our thankfulness to just one day or season, nonetheless I also wish to encourage each and every one of us to join in giving thanks to our Lord this Thanksgiving Day (and eve). Join us for our Thanksgiving Eve service and then join your family and friends in giving thanks to the Lord of all mercies on Thanksgiving Day.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor



Digging In The Nicene Creed Second Article, Part 6

And [I believe] in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

Last month we continued our consideration of the phrase "Lord Jesus Christ" by thinking about the name "Jesus" and began thinking about the title "Christ" (which means "Anointed One"). I ended by saying, "Jesus is the 'Anointed One' to whom all the Old Testament anointed ones pointed. They were 'types' and Jesus is the 'antitype.' This is to say, they are shadows of the fulfillment, who is Jesus. They were reflections of Jesus. These types, shadows, images, reflections, were always less than the fulfillment, but nonetheless pointed to the ultimate reality, our Lord Jesus Christ." I then promised that we would unpack this a bit more this month. I will do this by showing two ways anointing anticipated Jesus. More could be added.

Psalms 2, 72, 101 and 110 are often considered "coronation" Psalms. They would have been sung when the new king was anointed and installed into office. Using a typological approach to these Psalms, we also see they are pointing to Jesus as the ultimate "Anointed One." Though none of these Psalms are long, we can't look at all of them so, instead, we'll look only at Psalm 110 and keep our comments very brief.

The LORD says to my Lord:
"Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool."

The LORD sends forth from Zion
your mighty scepter.
Rule in the midst of your enemies!
Your people will offer themselves freely
on the day of your power,
in holy garments;
from the womb of the morning,
the dew of your youth will be yours.
The LORD has sworn
and will not change his mind,
"You are a priest forever
after the order of Melchizedek."

The LORD is at your right hand;
he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.
He will execute judgment among the nations,
filling them with corpses;
he will shatter chiefs



over the wide earth.
 He will drink from the brook by the way;
 therefore he will lift up his head.

Jesus himself singled out this Psalm as referring to himself (Matthew 22:44). Hebrews 5:6 cites the Melchizedek reference of this Psalm and applies it to Jesus. So, while this Psalm may well have first been sung when Solomon was anointed as king, it was never simply about another fallen man becoming the leader of Israel. The kings were types of their ultimate leader, Jesus. Therefore, the Psalm is rather expansive speaking of a worldwide impact. None of the earthly kings of Israel or Judah ever achieved the goals of these Psalms, though some did better than others. In Christ, however, they either were fulfilled in his First Coming, are being fulfilled in his current rule, or will be fulfilled at his Second Coming, stretching out into eternity.

The next point about anointing is easy to overlook. People were not the only things anointed. In Exodus 40:9-11 we read, "Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it may become holy. You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, so that the altar may become most holy. You shall also anoint the basin and its stand, and consecrate it."



This, of course, set the entire worship facility apart for the holy purpose of worship, but it also carried a typological meaning. That is to say, the Tabernacle and all its furnishings also pointed to Jesus. To sum this up as tightly as I can, this anointing of the worship facility taught that the true worship of God is always and only through Jesus. He is our Tabernacle, our Temple, our altar, our entrance into the presence of the Father. [If you would like to learn more about this, Kitty says, "Come to our Wednesday Bible study on the

book of Hebrews; this is the kind of stuff we are learning about!"]

Certainly, much more could be written about this. We could speak of how each part of the tabernacle pointed to Jesus and all he has done for us, we could speak of how the prophets were anointed and Jesus is the final eschatological prophet, and so on, but we need to move on if I am ever to finish this series. So next month we will move on to the phrase "the only-begotten Son of God." Until then, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Amen.

Theirs Is The Kingdom Of Heaven

Matthew 5:3 - ... *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*



I have to confess, that the Beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5 were never my favorite. I would read "Blessed are the pure in heart," and immediately all of the impurities in my own heart would leap into my thoughts. Or I would read "Blessed are those who mourn" and think that I don't want to mourn! I don't want to be sad or grieve. I knew these were Jesus' words, but I really didn't want to read them. I found no pleasure in them, and I got on to the next chapter as quickly as I could.

But lately I begin to wonder if I was reading them all wrong. Have you ever noticed that, except for the first one and the last, all of them have a statement in the future tense? For example, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Clearly, the earth doesn't belong to the meek right now; this is a statement about the future. Or try, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." This is also clearly about the future, and you can try it yourself: just try to make peace between two enemies and see what they call you right now! It won't be anything as nice as "son of God!"

But it isn't just the second half of each statement that has a meaning set in the future. Take a look at the first halves. "Blessed are the meek ... the merciful ... the peacemakers ... those who hunger and thirst after righteousness." These are words that might describe me on my best days, but certainly they are not true 100 percent of the time. I am meek, but only sometimes. I am merciful, well, I try to be. I am a peacemaker -- when I'm not exhausted. And my hunger and thirst for righteousness is definitely part-time.

These are all things the Holy Spirit is growing us into. They are not things that any of us is all the time. Rather, this passage-as-a-whole is a picture of what the Spirit is making us into: people in the image of Jesus Christ. Someday, in fact, we will be pure of heart - peacemakers -- meek -- merciful. And when we are completed, we will have the gifts that God promises in the future

Blessed are...
 ... the poor in spirit
 the meek those who mourn
 those who hunger and thirst for righteousness
 the pure in heart
 the merciful the peacemakers
 those who are persecuted
 because of righteousness

tense: we will see God; we will be called "children of God"; we will inherit the earth; we will be shown mercy. All of this will happen because Jesus has saved us through His own life, death, and resurrection, and has given us His Holy Spirit to live in us and remake us in His image.

But how does this happen? Let's look at the two present-tense verses, the first and the last. "Blessed are the poor in spirit ... Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Right now, theirs is the kingdom of heaven. God's reign has already begun. They -- or I should say we -- are not waiting for their King to come. He has already come and is already ruling over their lives and all things. Jesus is our King, and our lives are in His hands. This is true right now. Thank God!
[This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.]

Arlen D. Besel – Ambassador

November — The End of Pentecost

This period starts with All Saints Day that looks at the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes featured in Dr. Kari Vo's devotion [see article above].

The Gospel focus is on resurrection at first and then moves to the Olivet Discourse and Jesus' description of the end times and His sacrifice.

For our Thanksgiving message the healed leper returns to thank and praise the Lord.

The Old Testament lessons start with the call of Moses at the burning bush. This launches the removal of Israel from Egypt. Malachi warns of the end times destruction of evil. Which is preceded by God's sending of the *Messenger*.

The Thanksgiving message is Moses' reminder of the mercy of God toward Israel if they abide by the commandments He had given them.

The Epistle lessons for this time include a reminder of the events in the end times and the exhortations to pray, to labor in the Lord, and the consequences to those who fail to remain firm in the faith. Paul's letter to the Philippians reinforces these messages.

The Pentecost season ends in October and the remainder of the church year includes All Saints Day, and the final three weeks of Pentecost and Thanksgiving.

Take advantage of these service reminders.

Arlen D. Besel– Worship

THROUGH THE WORSHIP WINDOW



God's Mercy – In the Book of Ezekiel?

Then they will know that I am the LORD. Ezekiel

As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? Ezekiel 33:11

In the Bible reading list that is included in this newsletter each month, we are currently in Ezekiel. This book has many challenges for the modern reader, and it wasn't until about a year or so ago that I came to realize that there is a simple theme that weaves throughout Ezekiel's visions and prophecies: God's mercy.

Ezekiel has so many visions and prophecies, and the list of condemnations and warnings to Israel and surrounding nations takes up most of the book. However, if you look closely, at the end of nearly every word of the Lord that comes to Ezekiel, God says, "Then they will know that I am the LORD." That's the whole point of everything the prophet speaks – bringing people to repentance and restoration: saving faith in the One True Triune God!

That is why the book of Ezekiel is also interwoven with images, visions, promises about restoration, growth, cleansing, healing, salvation. As God clearly states in Ezekiel 33:11, He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (note that the wicked are in the house of Israel, not the unbelievers outside). We all need constant repentance and restoration; it is our lot in this sinful world, in this sinful flesh, beset by Satan and his demons.



That is also why Ezekiel's prophecies resound with God's plan of salvation for all mankind: "Then they will know that I am the LORD." We do not know what it takes for anyone to acknowledge their sin and accept forgiveness, but God does; He will stop at nothing to bring lost humanity back to Himself, even coming in human flesh to die for all mankind. And this He did – Jesus, born of the virgin, suffered and died, and rose again from death, ascending to heaven, guaranteeing eternal salvation to all who have faith in Him.

It is our privilege in this life to speak forth God's word of mercy to all who cross our paths, that they might know the Lord of Life and live forever with Him in heaven. May Jesus Christ give us the courage to be like Ezekiel, ever holding forth the mercy of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Kitty Rickert
Evangelism Chair



Pet Portrait Auction: Kathy O'Malley is auctioning off a portrait of your favorite pet! More info & a bid sheet are posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. The entire proceeds of the winning bid will go to our LWML to be used as needed. Deadline for bids is after worship on 11/10, so get your bid in today!

We will have an LWML meeting Saturday, Nov. 9 from 9-12. We'll have bagels & cream cheese for a snack & we'll be making plans for 2020. Even if you can't attend the entire meeting, we'd love to have you!

Resource Center

Take a look at our revamped Resource Center just off the sanctuary! All things related to ORCHARD and gardening in general are located in one rack; the other rack has Christian publications like The Lutheran Witness, Lutherans Engage, the LWML Quarterly, along with books, magazines, cards for all occasions, tracts and more! All items in the Resource Center are either free to read (books, newspapers, etc.) or free to take (tracts, gardening info, cards, etc.).

ORCHARD

Our fall plants are growing well; soon we will reap another harvest to share! We will have a planning meeting on Monday, 11/18, 6:30 pm; please plan to attend & bring with you a list of the plants you grew in the spring/summer (name, variety, etc.; bring the sticks or packages if you still have them) so we can make a log of what plants did well (& which ones did not!); we also want your input on pests or other garden problems we should document.



2020 Pledges

On Thanksgiving Eve, 11/27, during our worship service (7 pm) we will receive the pledges for the upcoming calendar year. Please prayerfully consider all of your giving: time, talents & treasures. Pledge forms will be available in your worship folders; fill one out prior to this 11/27 service. If you are unable to attend this service, we will receive those pledges the following Sunday, 12/1. 2019 pledges are in the narthex to be picked up and reviewed in preparation for your 2020 pledge.



BAB Project

Our Build-A-Bag sleeping bag ministry continues to meet; we meet on the 1st & 3rd Saturdays (the days prior to communion Sundays) & the Tuesdays following communion Sundays. For November, the dates of meeting are: 11/2, 11/5, 11/16 & 11/19. Bring your lunch; we meet 10am-2pm. See you



then!



Church Flowers

Thank you to all who have worshiped the Lord by providing flowers for the altar area of the sanctuary this year! We only have 1 open date, Sunday, 12/8 to fill; please consider giving flowers in memory or honor of someone or something that God has given you. A new flower chart for 2020 is up so that you can begin reserving your special dates. Info will be provided & posted soon regarding poinsettias for Christmas. Thanks.

Fall Back!

Just a reminder that Sunday, November 3rd is the end of Daylight Savings Time for the year & we "Fall Back" one hour, so remember to reset your clocks the previous Saturday night.



November is for LIFE

Once again this month, we will be collecting food for Lutheran Community Services in Wilmington to be distributed to the hungry among us. A list of always-needed supplies can be found on their website:

<http://www.lcsde.org/>; a copy of this list will also be posted in the narthex & included in Sunday's bulletins.

November Birthdays

3 Dennis Boon
17 Mitzi Steltz



*If we missed your special day, please call or email the church office with your info so we can celebrate with you!
(302) 737-6176; secretary.orlcde@outlook.com*

NOVEMBER BIBLE READINGS

1	Exodus 15:1-18 Hosea 8-10	16	Psalm 136 Malachi
2	Psalm 122 Hosea 11-14	17	Psalm 137 Matthew 1-2
3	Psalm 123 Joel	18	Psalm 138 Matthew 3-4
4	Psalm 124 Amos 1-5	19	Psalm 139 Matthew 5-6
5	Psalm 125 Amos 6-9	20	Psalm 140 Matthew 7-8
6	Psalm 126 Obadiah, Jonah	21	Psalm 141 Matthew 9-10
7	Psalm 127 Micah 1-3	22	Psalm 142 Matthew 11-12
8	Psalm 128 Micah 4-7	23	Psalm 143 Matthew 13-14
9	Psalm 129 Nahum	24	Psalm 144 Matthew 15-16
10	Psalm 130 Habakkuk	25	Psalm 145 Matthew 17-18
11	Psalm 131 Zephaniah	26	Psalm 146 Matthew 19-20
12	Psalm 132 Haggai	27	Psalm 147 Matthew 21-22
13	Psalm 133 Zechariah 1-5	28	Psalm 148 Matthew 23-24
14	Psalm 134 Zechariah 6-10	29	Psalm 149-150 Matthew 25-26
15	Psalm 135 Zechariah 11-14	30	Exodus 15:1-18 Matthew 27-28

