

Home Service for October 12, 2025

Welcome and Announcements

You may also find listening to some of your favorite hymns helpful in worship.

The Spirit invites us to deepen our faith in Christ and to find renewal and strength, by seeking the welfare of the community around us.

Call to Worship:

We are 10 lepers, with scars and wounds, and hope for your healing touch. From our souls' depths we raise our voices to you. "Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!"
As we glimpse the grace you pour upon us, we thank you.

Opening Prayer:

Holy One, we gather to sing your praises! We are grateful for the gift of this day and all the ways you make your presence known. We are grateful for your abiding Spirit and the ways the Spirit empowers us to be your people. In this time of worship, deepen our faith. Restore our souls and heal us. After we have spent time with you, return us to our community, that we may share your love and grace with everyone we meet. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Gracious God, there are times in our lives when we turn away from you, when we mess up, when we push aside the needs of our community, and when we ignore your presence in our lives. It is during these times that we cry out, "Have mercy on us!" In your loving, forgiving way, you reach out to heal us, forgive us, and renew us. May your everlasting faith strengthen our resolve to follow Christ's ways. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

Brothers and sisters, siblings in Christ, hear the words Jesus spoke to the leper: "Your faith has made you well." In the name of Christ, you are forgiven, renewed, and loved. Thanks be to God!

Read Psalm 66:1-12

Shout for joy to God, all the earth!

² Sing the glory of his name;

make his praise glorious.

³ Say to God, “How awesome are your deeds!

So great is your power
that your enemies cringe before you.

⁴ All the earth bows down to you;
they sing praise to you,
they sing the praises of your name.”^[a]

⁵ Come and see what God has done,
his awesome deeds for mankind!

⁶ He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the waters on foot—
come, let us rejoice in him.

⁷ He rules forever by his power,
his eyes watch the nations—
let not the rebellious rise up against him.

⁸ Praise our God, all peoples,
let the sound of his praise be heard;

⁹ he has preserved our lives
and kept our feet from slipping.

¹⁰ For you, God, tested us;
you refined us like silver.

¹¹ You brought us into prison
and laid burdens on our backs.

¹² You let people ride over our heads;
we went through fire and water,
but you brought us to a place of abundance.

Prayers of the People:

Lord, we thank you for the wondrous ways in which you have healed and restored us. There have been countless times when we wondered if the trials and struggles of our lives would overcome us and swallow us up; yet you have reached out to redeem us. Just as in the scriptures when Jesus healed the ten people afflicted with leprosy, one, when he saw that he had been healed, returned to Jesus, praising God for the healing that had taken place. Make our faith as strong as the one of

that man. Give us the wisdom to know the source of healing is not in our pleading, but in our acknowledging your love and power. As we bring before you the names and situations in our hearts that are filled with strife and trouble, we ask for their healing as well. We know that you hear the cries of our hearts and respond always in love. Help us to place our complete trust in your never-ending compassion. For it is in Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN

Lord's Prayer

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

Read the Lesson: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets and all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

⁴ This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ "Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷ Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."

Read the Epistle Lesson: 2 Timothy 2:8-15

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, ⁹ for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

¹¹ Here is a trustworthy saying:

If we died with him,

we will also live with him;

¹² if we endure,

we will also reign with him.

If we disown him,
 he will also disown us;
¹³ if we are faithless,
 he remains faithful,
 for he cannot disown himself.

¹⁴ Keep reminding God's people of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Read the Gospel Lesson: Luke 17:11-19

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy^[a] met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

Message

Both our Epistle and Gospel lessons are about being grateful. As parents we have tried to teach our children to say "thank you." When someone gives our child a cookie or a toy or something special, we will ask them, "What do you say?" And the answer is "thank you!"

We wanted to foster gratitude in our children. Gratitude is something we can work at and try to nurture in our children, grandchildren and hopefully in ourselves, too. It is possible to become a more grateful person. It is something that seems to just cascade. As we intentionally begin to look for ways we are grateful, the more and more grateful we automatically become.

If you google studies on the benefits of gratitude you would find many. I choice the Nov 23, 2014 article in Forbes Magazine on 7 scientifically proven benefits of gratitude:

1. Gratitude opens the door to new relationships. Thanking someone who is a new acquaintance increases the likelihood that an ongoing relationship will develop.
2. Gratitude also improves our physical health. Thankful people generally feel healthier and experience fewer aches and pains.
3. It improves our psychological health, too. Many studies connect gratitude with increased happiness and reduced depression.
4. Gratitude enhances our empathy towards others and it reduces aggression. Thankful people are less likely to retaliate when treated negatively. They are not so apt desire to seek revenge.
5. And grateful people sleep better! Helpful technique: if we spend a little time before we go to bed reflecting on what we are grateful for, our sleep improves.
6. Gratitude improves self-esteem. When we dwell in gratitude, we do not make as many social comparisons with other people. We can genuinely appreciate the accomplishments of others without lowering our own sense of self.
7. And finally, gratitude increases mental strength. Gratefulness fosters a greater capacity to face trauma and strain. Gratitude develops resilience so that we can bounce back after trials.

Our Gospel today tells a well-known story. Ten men suffering from leprosy approach Jesus from afar. Leprosy was once greatly feared as a highly contagious disease. That is why in the story today, the leprous men kept their distance from Jesus. Lepers were ordered to stay away from people so that no one would catch the disease. Not only were you suffering physically, but you were also shunned. You were an outcast, cut off from emotional support. It was a lonely, devastating lot.

So today we see this poor band of ten lonely lepers. They have no one but themselves for company. And the interesting thing is that they are comprised of both Jews and Samaritans! Now, Jews and Samaritans avoided each other. There was bad blood between them. But all that changed for the lepers. Once they each belonged to their own people. But now they were no people. They were simply: lepers.

These ten lepers see Jesus as he travels in the border region between Galilee and Samaria. And they think, this is our chance! There is Jesus! They call out to him from a long distance. "Jesus, have mercy on us!"

Jesus tells them to go and show themselves to a priest. Priests were the official experts on deeming whether or not a person had been cleansed from a contagious skin disease. They made the call as to whether a person was able to return to society. So, through his command, Jesus was telling them, "I'm going to heal you, so go and get yourselves checked out."

They had surely expected something more, something else. Something of their desperation, and their growing, but doubting faith and confidence led these ten men to turn and start walking towards where they would find the priests. Something about this man of Galilee led them to obey, to go and to follow his instructions.

But one of them halts in his tracks. He stops, he smiles, he turns, now walking, now running...back to the Master, back to this man of Galilee, back to this one who touched him with this mysterious force. He comes back, "shouting, laughing, proclaiming glory to God with a joyful and thankful heart." He runs back to Jesus, falls at his feet and gives the Son of God thanks for the great healing that had been done.

Only one of the ten who were touched by the love of this man of Galilee had seen beyond the miracle of healing to the one who had dared to risk for him. He saw Jesus for who he was? One who cared, one who loved, one who wanted a relationship with everyone on the face of the earth.

He saw the Son of God as a man of love, a builder of relationships, he saw the miracle as Jesus' way of building a bridge between the fallen creation, the brokenness of disease and the loving hand of God who wants to reach into that brokenness with his creating and redeeming power, He saw Jesus.

Then notice Jesus' response. "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?" Only one in ten came back to give thanks. Only one in ten. Why, Jesus is asking, why only one in ten?

By dwelling on the fact that only one in ten came back, Jesus is telling us very plainly he wanted the thanks. He wanted them to see beyond the miracle to the miracle worker. He wanted them to come into a relationship with him.

Then comes the surprise. He was a SAMARITAN!!!! Only the man from Samaria returns to give thanks! Jesus says to him, “Go on your way. Your faith has made you well.”

Here was the man who was doubly cursed. He was both a Samaritan and a leper. But he is the only one to receive the double healing. He was healed of his physical disease. And he was healed on the inside. His faith blesses him with the gift of gratitude. His heart is increased. His cup runs over.

That is what gratitude is. It is the second blessing. Our lives are first blessed by the love and the grace and the beauty around us. But when we feel gratitude, then that blessing doubles. It doubles because we KNOW we are blessed.

This is what Paul was conveying to Timothy and us in the Epistle; he says to: “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead.” Paul calls on Timothy and on us to reflect intentionally on the incomparable gift we have received from Christ Jesus. “If we have died with him,” Paul writes, “we will also live with him.” Paul tells all of us including Timothy to reflect on Christ’s faithfulness. Dwell on that, let Christ’s faithfulness fill your heart, and you will be revived.

Intentional remembering. That is why we gather here week after week. We come here to remember all of Christ’s faithful acts of grace. His is a love that conquers even death. Nothing in all of creation can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord. That is the good news. And when we remember, gratitude blooms, and we are doubly blessed.

May we all kindle and nurture the spark of gratitude. And in our thankfulness, we will receive the double portion. Amen.

Benediction:

Jesus said to the leper, “Get up and go on your way. Your faith has made you well.” Let us all claim Jesus’ healing and liberation in our lives. Get up and go on your way! In Jesus’ name, your faith has made you whole And all God’s people say: Amen.