

“Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good and His love endures forever”

(Published in *The Morning Sun* on Saturday, November 12, 2011)

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. (Psalm 100)

Ahhh . . . the smell of turkey roasting in the oven; family and friends gathered around a table overflowing with delicious food; games, conversations, reunions with loved ones; the Lions and Cowboys on T.V. Thanksgiving Day – one of the best days of the year. A day set apart for feasting and resting; a day set apart for fellowship and reunions; a day set apart for giving thanks.

But, for what, and to whom, do we give thanks? That is the question. You see, Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday, a holiday which is not bound to the constraints of religion, race, or creed. It is a holiday celebrated by the faithful and unfaithful alike. For many, it is simply a day off from work; it is simply a tradition to gather together with family and friends on this day. Many do not realize to whom they owe their thanks. Many do not acknowledge the fact that everything they have is from the love and generosity of the Lord. The sad reality is that many are lost.

But, we Christians are not lost. We have been brought to faith in Jesus Christ. We know to whom we owe our thanks. We give thanks to God for all things – for our lives, families, friends, daily food, clothing, and all other material possessions. We acknowledge that everything we have is from the loving hand of our God.

But mostly, we give thanks to the Lord because “He is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.” We give thanks for our salvation, for the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, who lived the perfect life required of us and died on the cross to redeem us from all our sins. We give thanks that God loved us so much that He sent His Son to live and die in our place; to fulfill His Holy Law to perfection because we can’t, and to endure the wrath and punishment of God we deserve for our sinfulness so that we don’t have to. We give thanks because we know that we would be doomed if left on our own, but our loving God has not left us on our own. He has had mercy on us in the most remarkable way imaginable, by sending His only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior.

It may seem that this article is a little premature, since Thanksgiving Day is still a couple weeks out. But, the truth is that each Sunday is Thanksgiving Day for Christians, because each Sunday we come to the Lord’s house to receive His gracious gifts, responding in praise and thanksgiving for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation He delivers to us through His Holy Word and Sacraments. In fact, every day is a day of thanksgiving for Christians, for we realize that it is only by God’s grace that we have been brought to, and are sustained in, the one true faith; the one true faith that clings to, and trusts in, the Word of God, which declares us justified in His sight through faith in His Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let us not limit our thankfulness to Thanksgiving Day, but let us take time each day, and especially

each Sunday, to give thanks to God for everything He has provided us, especially for the salvation He has won for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Give thanks to the Lord and praise His name, for He is good and His love endures forever! In Jesus' Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

Rev. Thomas C. Messer, Pastor

Peace Lutheran Church ~ Alma, MI

www.peacealma.org ~ (989) 463-5754

You may contact Pastor Messer by calling the church or by email: pastor@peacealma.org