

## Discover More: Together

### Individual Devotions

#### Discover More about the Message

**Message Introduction:** God teaches us through the scriptures when it comes to our possessions that we should always 1) Trust God, 2) Know and believe that we have enough, and 3) Have a plan for all that God has blessed us with. God's first people were called to demonstrate this loyalty and love for God and putting God first by giving the first fruits of their harvest before the rest of it had come in and they knew the outcome (feast or famine). Whatever the outcome, we give to God what is God's first, learn to be content and trust that God will amply supply us all we need to live and thrive.

Reflect on the message you heard in person or on-line.

- + What is something you heard that was interesting or engaging?
- + Is there anything that raised a question or needed more explanation?
- + What is one thing you take with you? It may be something to do, something to trust, or a wisdom of insight to have.

You can listen to the message online here.

<https://firstlutheranncr.org/resources/sermons>

#### Discover Scripture and Life

- + Read the scripture.

#### Deuteronomy 26:1-2, 8-10

<sup>1</sup>When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, <sup>2</sup>you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. <sup>3</sup>You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us." <sup>4</sup>When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, <sup>5</sup>you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. <sup>6</sup>When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, <sup>7</sup>we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. <sup>8</sup>The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; <sup>9</sup>and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>10</sup>So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me." You shall set it down before the LORD

your God and bow down before the LORD your God.

#### Hebrews 13:1-2, 5-6, 15-16

<sup>1</sup>Let mutual love continue. <sup>2</sup>Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. <sup>5</sup>Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." <sup>6</sup>So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?"

<sup>15</sup>Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. <sup>16</sup>Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Respond to one of these questions.

- + Who taught you what it means to be a giving person? What did they do or say? What has that meant for you?
- + The lesson from Hebrews considers God as the source of contentment or confidence that all will be OK. How is faith a source of contentment for you?
- + When do you most experience contentment? What contributes to a sense of contentment?

## Together in Spirit

Take time to reflect about your day, your concerns, and how God may be speaking to you.

### OPTION 1: One word

As you reflect about your day, what is one word that summarizes how you are feeling? What might God be saying to you in this word?

### OPTION 2: Reflecting on the past 24 hours

**Ask God** to calm your self and help you see your life from God's perspective.

**Review** the last 24 hours. What happened? What stands out? What captures your attention? What is a High and Low of this time?

**Give your day** to God your day. Ask for forgiveness where needed. Give thanks.

**Look forward.** How might you be more loving this day? What is God calling you to do?

Close in the Lord's Prayer

## Five Minutes with God

**Introduction.** Naming the things we are grateful for is a valuable spiritual practice that helps us become more aware of the blessings in our lives. The writer of Hebrews, however, doesn't ask us to be grateful but to be *content with what we have*. Contentment is deeper than gratitude. When we are content, we are at peace and at ease with all that we have and even all that we don't have. We have enough, knowing that God assures us, "I will never leave you or forsake you."

**Spiritual Practice.** There is no practice that can *make us* feel content. We can, however, become more open to contentment by practicing gratitude, saying no to more than is necessary, and trusting that God will never leave or forsake us. Each day from now until Thanksgiving, write down at least one thing you are grateful for and at least one time you said no to more than you needed. This is hard when Black Friday sales are already telling us we need more! When we are aware of how blessed we are with what we already have, though, contentment will follow.



**First Lutheran**  
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Personal Devotions  
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