



FROM THE PASTOR

Psalm 136

¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

His love endures forever.

² Give thanks to the God of gods.

His love endures forever.

³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

His love endures forever.

⁴ to him who alone does great wonders,

His love endures forever.

⁵ who by his understanding made the heavens,

His love endures forever.

⁶ who spread out the earth upon the waters,

His love endures forever.

⁷ who made the great lights—

His love endures forever.

⁸ the sun to govern the day,

His love endures forever.

⁹ the moon and stars to govern the night;

His love endures forever.

²³ He remembered us in our low estate

His love endures forever.

²⁴ and freed us from our enemies.

His love endures forever.

²⁵ He gives food to every creature.

His love endures forever.

²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven.

Our meditation on the Psalms this week must center on the theme of **THANKSGIVING**. It is, after all, the week of our national Thanksgiving celebration. This year, for reasons which no one is unaware, our celebration will be muted. But that is no reason that our giving of thanks should be muted. Even in the midst of a pandemic, and not minimizing the loss and suffering that it has caused, we still have much to be thankful.

By its very nature, our national Thanksgiving is as appropriate in hard times as well as good times. The Plymouth Rock pilgrims, who serve as models for our Thanksgiving celebration, certainly had no ease or worldly comforts for which to give thanks. They were giving thanks for being able to adapt to new and hard realities. They were willing to endure these for the sake of religious freedom. They were giving thanks because they could, without political persecution, follow their own consciences. They were giving thanks because they could live with strange (to each other) indigenous neighbors in peace and cooperation.

To this end, I wanted to use a psalm focused on Thanksgiving for our meditation, but I ran up against a problem that I have mentioned to you before. Some psalms are short and fit well into my little text box. But some are long, even quite long, and do not fit. I have already used most of the short psalms. So I could not find a short thanksgiving psalm which I have not already used. So I picked perhaps the best example of a thanksgiving psalm and shortened it by taking out verses 10-22. As I have said before when shortening a psalm has been necessary, this does not mean that the excluded verses are not valuable and I encourage you to look up the psalm and read it in its entirety. In this psalm, God's people praise and give thanks for the goodness of God. ***Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His love endures forever.*** That refrain, *His love endures forever*, is part of every single verse. God's goodness reverberates throughout His creation. ***Give thanks to the Lord of lords: His love endures forever. To him who alone***



does great wonders, His love endures forever. Who by his understanding made the heavens, His love endures forever. God's grace touches us through His loving providence. **He remembered us in our low estate, His love endures forever. And freed us from our enemies. His love endures forever. He gives food to every creature. His love endures forever.**

Give thanks to the God of heaven.

I hope you have a truly happy and sincere Thanksgiving celebration. I hope that even if it may not be the feast you would have it to be, you and the ones you love will be joyful, safe and truly thankful. HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

In Christ's service,

Pastor Brian Shirey

Post Scripts:

- † Our lessons for this Sunday, November 29, The First Sunday of Advent, are:
 - First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9
 - Psalms 80:1-7
 - Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
 - Gospel: Mark 13:24-37
- † If there was a single word that could summarize our present moment, it would have to be 'uncertainty'! It is not possible to do the work of St. Luke's with confidence that we will be able to do as we intend, but if there has ever been a time when we need to be faithful, patient and open to God's direction, it is now. Be assured that St. Luke's will continue to be as prudent and safe as we can be. So, as I have said so often, thank you for your patience and your faithfulness.
- † Services have been suspended for this Sunday (November 29th) and next Sunday (December 6th) as we try to help curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Services are scheduled to resume on December 13th. We pray these mitigation efforts allow us to reunite for the remainder of Advent and Christmas Eve.
- † So, for at least the next two Sundays please join us as we livestream service on YouTube. It is one more tool for living out our life together at St. Luke's. Feel free to ask friends and family members unable to worship somewhere in person to join us on line. Visit the St. Luke's YouTube channel or go to stlks.com and click on the Welcome to Worship icon. You can also view past services. This week's service will be livestreamed at 8:15 am and will then be available for viewing at your leisure.

