
PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The liturgist is often asked to compose a prayer of thanksgiving. In our service this prayer is offered following the offering. The purpose of this prayer is to give thanks to God for gifts received and the blessings of this life and for God's Providence and care. It is also appropriate to offer words of dedication of the gifts the church has received in the offering and the gifts each of us has received from God.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving is NOT a prayer of supplication (asking for more) or even intercession (praying on behalf of others.) It is a response to what we have already received and our commitment to use those gifts in faithful discipleship.

As you compose your prayer read the scriptures of the day. In worship be sensitive to what the preacher says and what news is shared during the time of "Joys and Concerns." For example, if someone announced the healing of someone, and the pastor offering the "Prayer of the People" did not mention it, you may want to by saying something like, "We are grateful for the signs of healing and wholeness that were shared today." Or, if a member of the congregation died, you may want to offer a word of thanks for that person's faithful life. Or if one of the choirs moved you/congregation, share a word of thanks.

An Outline of a Prayer of Thanksgiving (following the offering.)

- Ascription to God
 - Gracious God, Our Heavenly Parent, or similar
 - Attributes of God

- Specific examples of things for which we are to be grateful
 - Creation, families, health
 - Specific occasions in the congregation's life

- Dedication
 - What we will do with the monetary gifts received
 - What we will do with our lives in response to the gifts of God we all have received.

- Closing phrase
 - "...Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."
 - "...in the name of the One God we pray. Amen."

EXAMPLES OF PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

Traditional (no Communion)

Eternal God, creator of the world and giver of all good, we thank you for the earth, our home, and for the gift of life. We praise you for your love in Jesus Christ, who came to heal this broken world, who died rejected on the cross and rose triumphant from the dead. Because he lives, we live to praise you, our God forever.

Gracious God, who called us from death to life, we give ourselves to you; and with the church through all ages we thank you for your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Traditional (following Communion)

We thank you, O God, that through Word and Sacrament you have given us your Son who is the true bread from heaven and food of eternal life. So strengthen us in your service that our daily living may show our thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray, "Our Father...."

A recent prayer by one of the Elders:

Our Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the many ways you have provided for us to know you, and the many gifts you have provided to us, through your Son Jesus Christ. We thank you particularly for the lives of faithful members of this congregation such as (here named was a person who had died in the previous week), and for the many of us still striving to know you in our daily lives. Thank you especially for your material gifts to members of this prosperous congregation, a small portion of which we are now returning for your work.

[And reflecting the sermon text of the day] In the words of Psalm 19—"Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in they sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer." In Jesus name we pray. Amen.