



Morning Worship

July 2021

Thank You Day

OPENING PRAYER:

Loving God.

We come together in thankfulness.

For all those around us who serve us and help us in so many ways.

We are thankful.

For leaders in our community, for our schools, hospitals, care homes and all key workers who make a difference to our lives.

We are thankful.

Help each of us to have the courage to reach out with thanks and kindness to those around us and to speak words of faith as we share the good news of your love.

FIRST READING: Ruth 1: 1-8 (New International Version)

¹ In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.

² The man's name was Elimelek, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

³ Now Elimelek, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴ They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, ⁵ both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

⁶ When Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. ⁷ With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

⁸ Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the LORD show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me. ⁹ May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.”

SECOND READING: Ruth 2:10-12 (New International Version)

¹⁰ At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?”

¹¹ Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. ¹² May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”

THIRD READING: Philippians 4:10–20 (New International Version)

¹⁰ I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

¹⁴ Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. ¹⁵ Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; ¹⁶ for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. ¹⁷ Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. ¹⁸ I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

²⁰ To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

REFLECTION:

In this service we are focussing on Thank You Day. Saying thank you to all the people that have supported us over the last 18 months.

We are well aware of the importance of saying thank you. The readings today have a theme of being thankful. The first two readings are taken from the Old Testament story of Ruth, a Moabite woman, who married into a family that had migrated to Moab from Judah. When her husband had died Ruth continued to look after her mother-in-law, Naomi, whose husband had died ten years. When Naomi returned to Judah she thanked Ruth, blessed her and showed her gratitude, expecting Ruth to remain in Moab to continue her life without the burden of caring for Naomi. But Ruth did not leave Naomi – she remained with Naomi and continued to care for her. In the same way we can think of many examples of people whose kindness and support to us, is constant.

The second reading, also from the story of Ruth, shows that people who we thank are often humble and unaware why their actions are receiving such recognition. This is the case with Ruth who shows surprise when she is thanked and blessed by Boaz, who has recognised the care and kindness Ruth has given to Naomi. We have seen many examples over the last 18 months where people have worked, volunteered, supported and showed kindness, but who are surprised when their actions receive the recognition that is deserved.

Being thankful is not simply a transaction but an ongoing recognition of the value of everything we receive from the people around us, serving us and supporting us. It is about keeping the people to whom we thankful within our hearts and within our prayers. In the reading from Philippians, Paul shows that thankfulness is more than a reaction to receiving what we desire. In the midst of Paul's trials, he knew where the strength to keep going came from and he showed gratitude. He held the Philippians in his heart and prayers.

The celebration of Thank You Day is an opportunity to hold close in our hearts and prayers all the people that have helped us, served us, supported us and shown us kindness. And continue to do so.

PRAYERS: In a moment of quiet think of all those people who we hold close in hearts, who have helped, supported and inspired us over the last 18 months. The people who have shown us constant kindness.

LORDS PRAYER:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.
Now and for ever. Amen**

CLOSING PRAYER:

In Numbers 6, God told Moses to have Aaron and his sons bless the children of Israel with an extraordinary pronouncement of security, grace, and peace. This prayer is also known as the Benediction. It is one of the oldest poems in the Bible. The blessing, packed full of meaning, is a beautiful way to say thank you to someone you love. As we say the prayer together, we hold in our thoughts all the people to whom we are thankful. Imagine you are saying the words to the people who we thank and value in our hearts.

**The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.
Amen**

THE GRACE:

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
And the love of God,
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore.
Amen.**

Here are links to some hymns that focus on being thankful. We invite you to listen to these hymns before or after the online service by clicking on the links below.

Lord for the years: <https://youtu.be/Cd14v0e1RWU>

Give thanks with a grateful heart: <https://youtu.be/2inhx3kytGQ>

Now thank we all our God: <https://youtu.be/iLjJBFIXR0>