



Thankoffering Sunday is October 18. Paul writes to the Thessalonians in his first letter: “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thess 5:18) God’s will for you is to live with a thankful heart. Not as easy as it sounds, though, is it. This year has been a trial all by itself. It becomes a challenge to “give thanks in all circumstances” yet, we as children of God are called to dig deeper, look higher and be open to hear God’s Words for us this day. And God’s Word is always, always about life.

With this in mind, God’s Word is always about life, I would ask you to look at your hand. I would like to give you five good reasons to give thanks no matter your situation, no matter the circumstances.

The Thumb. Thumbs set us apart from all of creation. We were designed with an “opposable thumb” which means we can take our thumb and touch our other fingers. We can hold on to things. We can grasp things. Our thumb sets us apart. Our thumbs can remind us that we are made in the image of God. We are created for relationship – with God and with others. We can cling to what is good. We can hold on to what is right. Tucking our other fingers into our palm, we can hold up the thumb to acknowledge the goodness of God and encourage our neighbor. Let us give thanks for being made in the image of God.



The Pointer Finger. Ever had someone point at you? Being pointed at is not a comfortable situation. Fortunately, that is not God’s way. “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.” (John 3:17) The Way of Christ is to invite. Now imagine the pointer finger beckoning someone to come closer. Think of Jesus saying “Come, follow Me (Matt 4:19)” or “Come and see (John 1:39)” or “Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. (Matt 11:28)” Jesus is always about invitation. He welcomes you always. Let us give thanks for His welcome and His continual invitations to draw near.

The Middle Finger. Displaying the middle finger all by itself has become an international sign of disdain which is not helpful for building up the Body of Christ. So, let’s take another look at the middle finger. It is the longest, the biggest of all the fingers. “...faith, hope and love remain. And the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor 13:13)” I propose we call the middle finger the Love finger! Let us give thanks for God’s love that is redeeming and everlasting. God’s love is available for all. Alleluia!

The Ring Finger. In a marriage ceremony a ring is received as a sign of faithfulness. God is faithful. “Morning by morning new mercies we see. Great is His faithfulness.” (Lam 3:22-23) We may wander, but God is constant. He is the same today as He was yesterday and as He will be tomorrow. (Hebrews 13:8) He keeps His Word. He is solid ground. Let us give thanks for God being our Refuge and Strength, a very Present Help in times of Trouble.

The Pinky Finger. The smallest and weakest finger on our hand reminds us that size doesn’t matter. Faith the size of a mustard seed is enough. A cup of water offered to one in need is great. Five loaves and two fish can feed thousands. An invitation to another to “Come and see” can change a life. A Baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger can change the world. Let us give thanks for the good measure God uses, “pressed down and shaken together and running over. (Luke 6:38)”

Yes, the world may seem a little wonky, a little fearful, a little bit unreliable this Thanksgiving season. But fear not! We have a hand full of thanks that we can pray. We have a hand full of thanks that can offer encouragement. We have a hand full of thanks that can bless not only our lives but the lives of our neighbors. Thanks be to God.



Blessings, Vicki Marthaler, Grace Unit President

A WELCA SERVANT HIGHLIGHT

This month we highlight those women who have gone before us as we prepare to celebrate All Saints Day.

In loving memory we remember:

- Cheryl Fangmann
- Dorothy Hall
- Carol Lytle
- Mathilde "Millie" Poppendick
- Ursula Zahn



We also hold up our Grace Women who have said goodbye to loved ones as well:

- Patricia Murtha on the death of husband, Val
- Carol Ontko on the death of husband, Ron
- Alice Copeland on the death of husband, Joe
- Sandy Jardot on the death of husband, Joe

"For all the saints, who from their labors rest,"
May the Lord bless and keep them and may perpetual Light shine upon them.

For us who continue to walk in the Light and Grace of God,
may we remember that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life and even though we walk through the valley of
the shadow, we fear no evil, for Jesus, our Good Shepherd is with us.
May His Presence be our comfort and our strength.



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Grace's Annual Christmas Tea

Covid is again challenging us to create our annual Christmas Tea in a new version.
We will keep you posted.....

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Circle Tidbits

Rachel Circle: This is our Circle that meets in the evening. Lynne Wenz, chair. Looking for more members!

Dorcas Circle: This Circle meets at a nursing home so all meetings are on Covid Hold.

Sarah Circle: This Circle Zoom meets on the third Thursday. Judy Stoltenberg, Chair.

Call if you are interested in zooming!

Naomi Circle: Four members of Naomi Circle met socially distanced in Stull Hall this month!

Leah Circle: On Covid Hold

Maria Circle: Prayers continue for each other and the world during these Covid Days

Prayer Shawls: Handing out prayer shawls following our drive-through communions.

- Have supplied 27 baby blankets to Pregnancy Center; 52 shawls to The Storehouse;
- 27 shawls to Stephens Ministers; Ruth Klug asking for Prayer Squares for Homeless bags!

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Please start your day, begin your devotions, or open your meeting with the Women of the ELCA Purpose Statement:

**As a community of women created in the image of God,
called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit,
we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts,
support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and
promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.**