

22 November 2017
Eve of National Thanksgiving

St. Athanasius Lutheran Church
Vienna, VA

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“Giving Thanks and Learning Thanks”
Text: Philippians 4:6-20

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

We heard from St. Paul tonight: *do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

So, here are some things I thank the Lord for this year, along with some requests.

Thank you, Lord, when I don't always get my way. It makes me rely on you.

Thank you, Lord, when I don't always get what I want. It makes me remember that there are more important things in this world than what I want.

Thank you, Lord, for my sadness this year; for reminding me that my joy isn't here, in this world and life, but in you.

Thank you, Lord, for the things I am unable to do; the problems I am unable to solve; the things that are too big for me - so that I rely on you.

Thank you, Lord, for my sicknesses this year. They make me remember that you are the great physician of body and soul, and that my health is only from you.

Thank you, Lord, for letting me share the burdens and problems of others, that I may learn to pray.

Thank you, Lord, for my shortcomings and failures, that I know how weak I am and rely on your strength instead.

Thank you, Lord, for humbling me when I get full of myself.

Thank you, Lord, for exposing my sin that I try so hard to cover up, that I rejoice in your forgiveness.

Thank you, Lord, for the things that have been taken away from me this year, that I love not them, but you.

Thank you, Lord, for the interruptions and inconveniences, to show me and teach me what really matters, and give me opportunities to serve others.

Thank you, Lord, for the tears that you've given me to shed, that you may wipe them away.

Thank you, Lord, for shaking my faith, in order to strengthen it.

Thank you, Lord, for sleepless nights, that I may know that you never slumber or sleep.

Thank you, Lord, for speechless times, when I don't know what to say, that I rely on Your Word and speak it.

Thank you, Lord, for the crosses You have given me, to kill the old sinner in me and raise up a new man.

Thank you, Lord, for trees that fall on buildings, that I may learn that the only tree that will never fall is the one Your Son hung on to forgive all my sin.

And so forgive me Lord, when I do not thank you for all these things and *every* thing, but choose to worry, or take matters into my own hands, or doubt your love instead.

And Lord, make me hunger a little this next year, that I may learn that man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from you; and to learn to thank You for Your Word.

Lord, help me to repent and ask for forgiveness this year more quickly and more often than I have in the past, that I may rejoice in the forgiveness of others given to me; and to learn to thank You for them.

Lord, send me folks in need this year, that I may learn mercy and service and to pray; and to learn to thank You for such opportunities to love.

Lord, interrupt and inconvenience me more this year, that Your will be done, not mine; and to learn to thank You for Your goodness.

Lord, give me things too big for me, that I may see Your hand at work, how You will provide, and do things more wonderfully than I could ever imagine; and learn to give You thanks for Your grace.

Lord, humble me and banish pride far from me; that I learn that whatever I have comes from You, and to thank You for all things.

Lord, grant me times of sadness and joy this year, that I may see Your hand at work and rejoice in Your love; that I may learn to give thanks in all circumstances.

Lord, give me times to speak Your Word, that I may learn to know it better; and give thanks for the work of Your Word in my life.

Lord, strengthen my faith and weaken my grip on the things of this world; that I may learn to be content and thank You not only for what I have but for what I have not.

Lord, give me a compassionate and generous heart to share with others in need; that I may learn to give thanks when other receive good things.

Lord, help me graciously receive from others, that they may have the joy of giving; and learn to give thanks for my neighbor.

Lord, help me not be anxious about anything this year, but learn to trust in You, Your goodness, and Your love; and learn to give You thanks for peace.

Thank You Lord, for all Your Fatherly love.

Thank You Lord, for sending Your Son to be our Saviour.

Thank You Lord, for sending Your Spirit, that we may know You.

And thank You, Lord, for the Body and Blood of Jesus which we now receive, as we await Your call to the Feast which has no end.

In the Name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.