

Week 2 - Gratitude

Service Content Pack

This pack contains material and links to help you develop your own service introducing the theme of 'Gratitude'. The content has been designed with the breadth of the Church of England in mind so choose the materials that are appropriate for your context.

There is more content than you could fit into the average Sunday Morning service, so do not try to make use of every part of this pack. This is a 'pick and mix' resource enabling you to form a service that encourages the church community to grow in their giving and generosity.

The content in this pack is to be used in conjunction with the 'Service of the Word' and 'Eucharistic' service sheets. These are the standard service plans which you can use to form the basis of your service. Editable versions of these documents can be found on the website so that you can edit elements of the service to fit your context. PowerPoint files of these standard services can also be found on the website to be used either in church buildings or online.

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Bible Readings

Luke 17:11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.



Sermon Starter

The passage in Luke is one of the more famous healing narratives within the third Gospel, not least because it returns to the earlier Lukan themes of marginalisation, status and ancestry subversion, and re-forming the idea of the 'foreigner'. However, it also raises questions about the role of gratitude and thankfulness within our journey of faith.

Jesus enters a village that is situated between Samaria and Galilee. Like many geographical references in the Gospel of Luke, the scene setting is doing more work than simply locating the scenario on a journey. This is a story of Jews and Samaritans, of clean and unclean, of those who are 'in' and those who are 'out'. The ten lepers approach Jesus clearly identifying him as being a bringer of healing. His reputation precedes him. Jesus commands them to present to the priest, in accordance with the law (Leviticus 14:2-32) and in so doing, they are healed. Whilst nine follow this instruction, one (a Samaritan) turns back in gratitude.

In response Jesus appears to admonish the nine from afar and perhaps takes it a step further by counterpointing their 'in' status compared to that of the healed "foreigner". Were they ungrateful? Were they following the order of their healer? Or were they not aware of the depth of healing on offer?

And what of the Samaritan, why did he disobey Jesus? Did he turn back because the priests wouldn't accept him? Or perhaps he saw in Jesus a priest who could offer true cleansing? Perhaps in the act of being healed, he saw a deeper healing, a healing that wasn't delivered by heritage or inherited attributes, but one that was given generously and graciously by God.

It's easy to read the story in a linear timeline, where the actions of the characters are in response to the previous act. However, the final statement of Jesus could turn the story around, "Your faith has made you well." At what point did that faith spark into life and when was he healed?

What is clear, is that his gratitude is intrinsic to the faith that has healed him. As at the end of the Colossians passage, faith and thankfulness go hand in hand. The actions of the Samaritan to thank Jesus built the relationship beyond a simple transaction of mercy, into a flourishing of connection between the two. Whereas the nine saw Jesus as a healer, the Samaritan saw him as a Saviour. That is the power of a "thank you", it is reciprocal. It doesn't assume. It brings with it a desire for connection.



Sharing Stories of Gratitude

Stories from your church

Inspire your congregation to live out the life of generous discipleship by asking individuals to share their own personal story of gratitude or generosity.

David's Generosity Story

This is a five-minute video that explores generosity and gratitude in the face of terminal cancer. Told by his wife, Nicola.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5njrLnCPKU>

Seize Your Opportunity

A one-minute clip about making the most of the opportunities to be generous in the everyday.

<https://youtu.be/eKCb0vrCSoy>

Chuma's Story

A two-minute clip exploring surprising generosity.

<https://youtu.be/LiBFufjbVFQ>

Hymns and Songs

Here are a selection of hymns and songs that are focused on gratitude. Where we possible, there are links to filmed versions of the hymns and songs that could be used in either sung or reflective worship.

Praise to the Lord

Joachim Neander, 1680 (Translated by Catherine Winkworth, 1863)

https://youtu.be/bE_Vn032LFY <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFV7y3jH8dY>

How Great Thou Art

Carl Gustav Boberg, 1885 (Translated by Stuart K Hine, 1949)

<https://youtu.be/uKGf06YM7rQ>

Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

Henry Smith (1978)



Forever

Chris Tomlin (2001)

10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)

Matt Redman (2013)

<https://youtu.be/WLkcXsK2IZg>

All Through History

Nick and Becky Drake (2018)

<https://youtu.be/hQS2HHayr38>

O Worship the King all Glorious Above

Robert Grant (1833)

Generous Giver

Brenton Brown (2019)

<https://youtu.be/yS5nR9b9ReU>

To thee, O Lord, our hearts we raise

W.Chatterton Dix (1864)

https://hymnary.org/text/to_thee_o_lord_our_hearts_we_raise

For the fruits of his creation

F.Pratt Green (1970)

https://hymnary.org/text/for_the_fruit_of_all_creation

All kinds of light

Caryl Micklem (1975)

<http://ehymnbook.org/CMMS/hymnSong.php?id=pd03546>

Finished the strife of battle now

J.M.Neale (1816 – 1866)

https://hymnary.org/text/hallelujah_hallelujah_finished_is_the_ba



Life is great! So sing about it

Brian A Wren (1974)

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw2721.aspx>

Prayers

Lord, You have always given
bread for the coming day;
and though I am poor,
today I believe.

Lord, You have always given
strength for the coming day;
and though I am weak,
today I believe.

Lord, You have always given
peace for the coming day;
and though of anxious heart,
today I believe.

Lord, You have always kept
me safe in trials;
and now, tried as I am,
today I believe.

Lord, You have always marked
the road for the coming day;
and though it may be hidden,
today I believe.

Lord, You have always lightened
this darkness of mine;
and though the night is here,
today I believe.

Lord, You have always spoken
when time was ripe;
and though you be silent now,
today I believe.

*Taken from Evening Prayer from Northumbria
Community's Celtic Daily Prayer published by
Collins*

O Lord, that lends me life,
Lend me a heart
replete with thankfulness!

Henry VI, Part II – William Shakespeare

Teach us, Lord,
To serve you as you deserve,
To give and not count the cost,
To fight and not to heed the wounds,
To toil and not seek for rest,
To labour and not to seek for any reward
Save that of knowing that we do your will.

St Ignatius Loyola



Give thanks to the Lord, for he is
good;
His mercy endures forever.

Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.
This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.

Psalm 118:1, 19-23

Lord Jesus,
I give thee my hands to do thy work.
I give thee my feet to go thy way.
I give thee my eyes to see as thou seest.
I give thee my tongue to speak thy words.
I give thee my mind that thou mayest think in
me.

I give thee my spirit that thou mayest pray in
me.

Above all, I give thee my heart that thou
mayest love in me thy Father, and all
mankind.

I give thee my whole self that thou mayest
grow in me, so that it is thee, Lord Jesus, who
live and work and pray in me.

I hand over to thy care, Lord, my soul and
body,
my prayers and my hopes, my health and my
work, my life and my death, my parents and
my family, my friends and my neighbours, my
country and all men.
Today and always. Amen.

Lancelot Andrewes

