

Greendale Ecumenical Group

Central MA partners in ministry



*I will give thanks to You, O Lord, with my whole heart;
I will tell of Your marvelous works. Psalm 9:1*



Celebrating Thanksgiving
November 21st, 2021

3 PM – Zion Lutheran

All are welcome here!

These churches and altars of Grace belong to God, and not to us. All people are welcome to participate in every aspect of our communities! We are honored by your presence this day and hope you find peace and refreshment as we celebrate the extravagant love of God, as followers of the Way of Jesus.

There is a place for you, here!

The Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us in community as people of the Way.

PRELUDE

Festival Prelude on Old Hundredth

Clarence Eddy

GREETING In the name of the One known as Spirit, Creator, Allah, Almighty, God and Lord. **Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace from the One be with you, **and also with you!**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Gracious God, we have come to praise You! We may identify as Unitarian Universalists, Covenanters, Free-Church, Episcopalian and Lutheran, yet are together siblings in Your blessed name!

Gathering together, let us leave behind our worries and stress. May we let go of our unrealistic desires for the perfect holiday. Rather, help us in opening our hearts to Your grace all around us. Let us pause now and count our blessings. **Amen.**

The congregation stands

GATHERING HYMN

All people that on earth do dwell

ELW (red book) 883

PRAYER OF APPROACH

The Lord be with you. **And also with you!**

Let us pray; Almighty God, Your generous goodness comes to us anew every day. By the work of Your Spirit, lead us to acknowledge Your goodness, give thanks for Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience in Your holy name. **Amen!**

The congregation is seated

The Liturgy of the Word

God speaks to us in poetry, creative writing, scripture, preaching & song.

A READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE (*Tanakh*): Deuteronomy 8:7-16, 18

*Good News Translation**

⁷The LORD your God is bringing you into a fertile land—a land that has rivers and springs, and underground streams gushing out into the valleys and hills; ⁸a land that produces wheat and barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and honey. ⁹There you will never go hungry or ever be in need. Its rocks have iron in them, and from its hills you can mine copper. ¹⁰You will have all you want to eat, and you will give thanks to the LORD your God for the fertile land that [God] has given you.

¹¹“Make certain that you do not forget the LORD your God; do not fail to obey any of [God’s] laws that I am giving you today. ¹²When you have all you want to eat and have built good houses to live in ¹³and when your cattle and sheep, your silver and gold, and all your other possessions have increased, ¹⁴be sure that you do not become proud and forget the LORD your God who rescued you from Egypt, where you were slaves. ¹⁵[God] led you through that vast and terrifying desert where there were poisonous snakes and scorpions. In that dry and waterless land [God] made water flow out of solid rock for you. ¹⁶In the desert [God] gave you manna to eat, food that your ancestors had never eaten.

¹⁸Remember that it is the LORD your God who gives you the power to become rich. [God] does this because [God] is still faithful today to the covenant made with your ancestors.

Response Holy Wisdom, holy word! **Thanks be to God!**

PSALM 100 *

read responsively

Shout happily to the LORD, all the earth.

² **Serve the LORD cheerfully. Come into [our Lord’s] presence with a joyful song.**

³ Realize that the LORD alone is God; [who] made us, and [whose we are].

We are [the Lord's] people and the sheep in [our Lord's] care.

⁴ **Enter [the Lord's] gates with a song of thanksgiving.**

Come into [our Lord's] courtyards with a song of praise.

Give thanks to [the Lord]; praise [the holy] name.

⁵ The LORD is good; [whose] mercy endures forever.

[The Lord's] faithfulness endures throughout every generation.

ANTHEM

Look at the earth

John Rutter

A READING FROM CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3:1-4, 12-14

*God's Word Translation**

Since you were brought back to life with Christ, focus on the things that are above—where Christ holds the honored position—the one next to God the Father on the heavenly throne. ²Keep your mind on things above, not on worldly things. ³You have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴Christ is your life. When he appears, then you, too, will appear with him in glory.

¹²As holy people whom God has chosen and loved, be sympathetic, kind, humble, gentle, and patient. ¹³Put up with each other, and forgive each other if anyone has a complaint. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴Above all, be loving. This ties everything together perfectly.

Response Word of God, Word of Life! **Thanks be to God!**

MESSAGE

Pastor Andrew

The congregation stands

HYMN

Let all things now living

ELW 881

The congregation is seated

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

You who are the mystery at the heart of all things, source of all that is, to You we give thanks:

For the gift of creation, and wonder of this world, we thank You:

Holy One, hear us.

For every creature and the web of all living things to which we belong, we thank You:

Holy One, hear us.

For the gift of life, and the miracle that we are able to gather in-person today, we thank You:

Holy One, hear us.

For gifts of sight and hearing, the gift of movement and touch, for all wonders that we behold, we thank You:

Holy One, hear us.

For all our loved ones, for any who have taught us, helped us, loved us, accompanied us or prayed for us, we thank You:

Holy One, hear us.

For the food we eat, and all those around the world who provide it, we thank You:

Holy One, hear us.

May our gratitude overflow to others, especially those who do not have what we do;

We give thanks.

May our thanks take form in giving and in working for the world You intend for us. O God, fountain of our souls and earth of our lives, we thank You, and pray that we may always live in humility, gratitude and joy. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF PEACE

God, when we close our eyes to this world ***may Your presence nudge us awake.***

When we are weary and ready to quit, ***may Your passion for this world energize us.***

When we are hopeless, may Your gaze raise us up. ***When we are afraid, may Your love enfold us.***

When we are angry, and want blame, ***may Your kindness sweep us off our feet.***

When we are bitter and ready to fight, ***may your forgiveness quiet us.***

When we find ourselves in a land of sorrow, ***may Your presence accompany us.***

When we are broken and we despair, ***may Your delight make us whole.***

God of grace, as You send us into this world, ***may Your hope live in us, Your love, Your joy. Amen!***

The Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

The congregation stands

BENEDICTION

We pray the One, holy and unfathomable Creator, through whose Essence as Grace and Mercy has revealed Godself and blesses us with the opportunities of breath and life, teach us to accept and walk in *the Way* of truth more faithfully, and to share the Divine witness through prophets and teachers more lovingly in this world; that by the power of the Spirit we may come together as one family in the work of the present kingdom on earth as we look to unity in the life that is to come.

With thanks-giving, we offer our prayers to You, Holy One, this day! **Amen!**

SENDING HYMN

Now thank we all our God

ELW 840

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord and each other. **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

Now Thank We All Our God

arr. Paul Manz

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Today's free-will offering supports resettling Afghanistan refugees locally.

<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/ascentria-care-alliance/help-afghan-families/melany-gronski>



Greendale Ecumenical Group sponsors & participants:

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester (UUA)

The Rev. Aaron Payson, **Minister**
Matthew Johnson, **Music Director**

Salem Covenant Church (TECC)

The Rev. Mark Nilson, **Pastor**
Brad Hendrickson, **Director of Music**

Greendale People's Church

The Rev. Dr. Douglas Cederburg, **Pastor**
Annie Arsenault, **Music Director**

Saint Michael's on the Heights (ECUSA)

Father David Woessner, **Rector**



ries (ELCA): Zion & Bethel Lutheran

The Rev. Andrew Borden, **Pastor**
Karen Couturier, **Organist/Director**
Lois Toeppner, **Deacon, Associate Organist/Director**
Brenda Salvi, **Principal Organist/Director**



RECONCILING IN CHRIST



Wednesdays, Zion Lutheran @ Noon
Free Meals, those 50+