



- The **Second Reading**, 1 Samuel 2:1-10, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ And Hannah prayed and said, “My heart exults in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation. There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God. Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength. Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD’s, and on them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Old Hundredth LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Know that the Lord is God indeed; without our aid he did us make.
We are his folk, he doth us feed, and for his sheep he doth us take.

- The **Third Reading**, 2 Samuel 6:12-15, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ And it was told King David, “The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God.” So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing. And when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal. And David danced before the LORD with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn.

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Old Hundredth LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

O enter then his gates with praise, approach with joy his courts unto;
Praise, laud and bless his name always, for it is seemly so to do.

- The **Fourth Reading**, Luke 1:46-55, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Old Hundredth LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

For why? The Lord our God is good; his mercy is forever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood, and shall from age to age endure.

- The **Fifth Reading**, Acts 16:25-34, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Old Hundredth LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

To Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the God whom heav'n and earth adore,
From us and from the angel host be praise and glory evermore.

- The **Sixth Reading**, Revelation 5:11-13, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

P Grace, mercy and peace be to you on this Thanksgiving. The people in the Bible did not celebrate Thanksgiving Day like we do today, of course. There was no such holiday then. But again and again throughout the pages of Scripture, we find people of praise. That is, people who expressed admiration and delight in the Lord at very special or monumental times in their lives. They did not need a specific holiday to praise God. They praised him whenever the desire arose within them to give him thanks. Their praise was not forced or required even; their praise just came forth naturally from their experiences with God.

Take Moses and Miriam for instance. They experienced God parting the Red Sea so that they and all the Israelites could escape Egypt on dry ground before Pharaoh's armies came and were drowned when God made the sea come back together again. Moses sang a song of praise to God, one we know well, and one that explains exactly why he is praising God: "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea" (Exodus 15:1). Moses' sister, Miriam, praised God in a different way for what God had done at the Red Sea. She danced and played the tambourine, leading other Israelite women to do the same.

What can we learn from Moses and Miriam, these early people of praise in Scripture? We learn that we must take the time to stop and celebrate when God has done something great for us. Moses and Miriam could have just kept walking once they passed through the Red Sea. But they realized and recognized that something magnificent had happened to them. They were compelled to stop and give thanks and praise to the God who had saved them from slavery and from most certain death at the hands of the Egyptians. This was not a moment to go along as if nothing happened. Something happened, and that something had to be responded to joyfully.

As people blessed by God in remarkable and miraculous ways every day, how good are we at being like Moses and Miriam? How good are we at stopping to take a moment to express gratitude to God in song and even dance? Not too good, if we are really honest with ourselves. It doesn't need to be anything fancy. Maybe just sing a song you remember from church or a song you sang as a child. And have you heard of people doing their "happy dance"? That's all that your expression of praise should be, just moving your body around in a joyful manner, whatever that may mean for you.

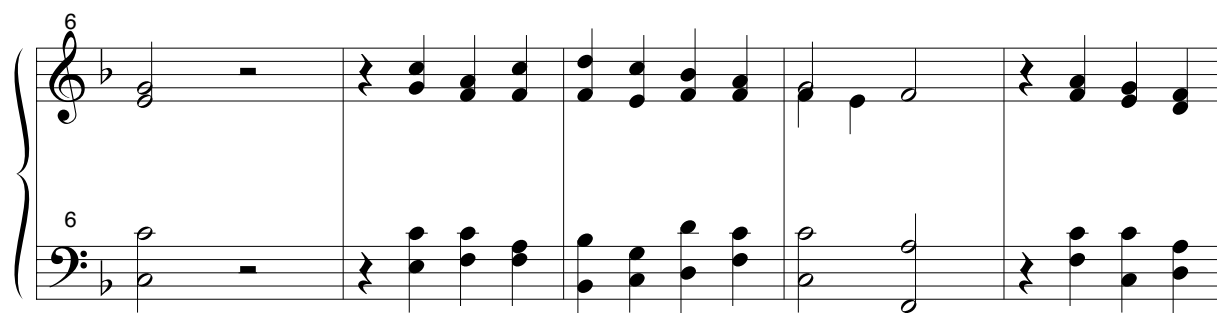
In 1 Samuel, we read about a woman named Hannah. She was desperate to have a child. She would pray fervently in the temple. She prayed so earnestly that Eli the priest thought that she was drunk. Hannah eventually told God that she would dedicate her child to the Lord, if God granted her that blessing. God, in his great love and grace, said yes to her request. Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a boy named Samuel, whom Hannah brought to the temple, the house of the Lord, to serve there.

It is at this moment, after Hannah has brought baby Samuel to the temple, that she sings a song of praise. She does not express sadness or guilt or anger, only joy and gratitude for this opportunity to give her son to the work of the Lord in thanksgiving for God's answer to her prayer for a child. Hannah's song of praise declares that God is like no other and rejoices that he can reverse the trajectory of a person's life. She saw it at work in her own life. She would go on to be blessed with five more children, by God's grace. In the kingdom of God, the poor become rich, the weak become strong, the lowly are exalted.

This song of praise from Hannah helps us to see that God has given us the blessing of prayer, and he listens to and answers our prayers. How often have we received the answer to prayer that we requested from God, only to just expect it or do nothing about it in return. Hannah helps us to see that we are called to respond to God with praise whenever we have received a gift that only could have come from God, not because of anything we have done ourselves. Hannah offered her son to the work of the Lord in response to God's goodness toward her. So we should offer ourselves to the Lord in praise for what God has done for us in our own lives. Praise like Hannah's is grounded in trust and patience and faith in God. Our praises to God this Thanksgiving should be just as filled with trust, patience and faith.

Later in Scripture, we encounter King David, who was a person of praise in many ways. He wrote many psalms of praise throughout his life and played music on the harp to praise the Lord when he was a shepherd. But it is the scene in front of the Ark of the Covenant, which was recently returned to Jerusalem after the defeat of the Philistines, that brings the most attention to readers of the Bible. In this moment, King David, like Miriam long before him, danced to praise the Lord. He danced in front of the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was where God was present. David's dance of praise meant that he was happy to be with the Lord again. He was grateful to God for the victory God had given him over the Philistines. He was joyful to be back home and at peace.

Tune..... O Dass Ich Tausend Zungen Hätte (König) 98 98 88



- The **Hymn of Response** is sung by the congregation to the tune O Dass Ich Tausend Zungen Hätte (König) 98 98 88, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Oh, that I had a thousand voices to praise my God with thousand tongues!
My heart, which in the Lord rejoices, would then proclaim in grateful songs
To all, wherever I might be, what great things God hath done for me.

O all you pow'rs that he implanted, arise, keep silence now no more;
Put forth the strength that God has granted! Your noblest work is to adore.
O soul and body, join to raise with heartfelt joy our Maker's praise.

All creatures that have breath and motion, that throng the earth, the sea, the sky,
Come, share with me my heart's devotion, help me to sing God's praises high.
My utmost pow'rs can never quite declare the wonders of his might.

Creator, humbly I implore you, to listen to my earthly song;
Until that day when I adore you, together with the angel throng
And learn with choirs of heav'n to sing eternal anthems to my King.