

# Rebuilding with Thanksgiving

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Preacher: Ben Wilson

[0:00] Well, good morning everybody. Welcome to Union Baptist Church for this very special Harvest Festival celebration.

We have so many things to be thankful for today and one of the things that we're thankful for is to have some of our beavers and cubs and scouts and their leaders and their families with us for this special service.

Now you may notice as they come in in a moment that some of them have got different colour neckerchiefs and there's a few more flags than we normally have. The reason for that is that we're delighted that we've merged the 12th High Wycombe Scout Group, which always used to be here, with the 21st High Wycombe Scout Group, which we're meeting up at Totteridge Baptist Church for many years.

And we really see this as a wonderful thing and an answer to prayer as we've ended up with a bigger, stronger group. And we'd like to particularly welcome the leaders and young people who've joined us from the 21st Scouts, their group, their cubs and beavers.

And it's wonderful to be able to have this time to celebrate together everything that we've got to be thankful for. Do please introduce yourself to them over lollies at the end of the service. Now, I invite you to stand in a moment and we're going to sing our first song of praise.

[1:14] And during this song, the colours, which are the flags of those scout groups, are going to be presented here at the front. So please stand and let's sing our praises to God together. Praise to God.

Praise to God, the Almighty, the King of creation.

Praise to God. Oh, my soul, praise Him for He is your health and salvation. Come, O root of Him, brothers and sisters, God here.

Praise Him in blood and adoration. O praise to the Lord above all things so mightily reigning, keeping us safe at His side and so gently sustaining.

I will not see all you have needed of me, in my His gracious for daily.

[2:50] O praise to the Lord who shall prosper all work and differentness, surely His goodness and mercy shall daily attend us.

Wondering you of the Almighty and Him, who in His love will be dead now.

O praise to the Lord and all that is in me, adore Him. O that was life and breath, come now with praises before Him.

Let me all stand, let me all stand. Well, welcome. Welcome today to everybody who's here, people of all ages. We have our uniformed young people and their leaders, welcome.

[4:17] And their families, welcome to you too, especially if this is your first time with us at Union. And to you watching at home, welcome to our harvest service this morning. My name is Judy Pantridge and I'm a member at Union Baptist Church here.

And later on, our youth pastor, Ben Wilson, will be speaking to us from God's word. So today, as we celebrate harvest, we're here to worship God and we're here to be thankful.

And remember with thankfulness God's provision, God's goodness, and all the blessings He pours into our lives day by day.

Before we move any further, can I just explain to anybody who has a 0-3 year old with you, we're quite welcome to stay in the service. If you feel they need to go out into the explorer's room where they'll be able to be looked after by yourself and some other people and play.

Oh, there's a 0-3 year old just coming in. Then please feel free to, out through this door. If you don't know the way, somebody will show you. Just grab somebody to show you.

[5:26] At any time during the service, they'd be welcome to go and join. So as we come to God to worship, let us say together the words that will appear on the screen.

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Let's say that again. Now we know what we're saying and let's say it as though we really mean it.

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. And one more time. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Let's pray this morning. Lord God Almighty, we gather to you this morning to worship you, to give you thanks, to praise you for your glory.

We praise you, Lord, for your goodness and for your faithfulness. We praise you because you are compassionate and abounding in love.

[6:33] Forgive us, Lord, for the times when we don't thank you enough for who you are, for all that you do, for all you provide.

Help us to set our eyes and our hearts on you afresh this morning and seek your will. Forgive us when we grumble and complain about our circumstances or against one another.

Lord, help us to come humbly into your presence as we seek your forgiveness. We pray that you will cleanse us from all our wrongdoing and fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit who brings new life.

Father God, every good and perfect gift comes from you. You bless us beyond measure. Thank you that you have promised to be with us always, never to leave or forsake us.

Thank you for Jesus that through him we can have forgiveness and everlasting life. Help us never to take for granted any good thing that you have provided, but instead to recognise your hand at work in our day-to-day lives, filling our hearts with peace and joy and causing them to overflow in gratitude.

[7:59] Amen. Now our theme, as I've said, is going to be thankfulness. Thankfulness to God. And there are one or two little prompts to remind us what our theme is, in case we aren't likely to forget.

Catch phrases or dingbats, you might call them. So have a look at this. The first one. And you have to think for yourself, what is this? There are going to be four during the service, just to help us remember, keep us on track, and then we'll review them all.

So if you want to write them down, you could write them down on the back of your little paper that you were given as you came in, or what your thoughts are, or you could just keep them in your head, and we'll revisit them at the end.

So here's our first one. What do you think that is? Thank you. Now thank you to everybody who's brought gifts for the harvest. We have some beautiful produce here that's come from various allotments and gardens.

We have these wonderful, wonderful flowers that Heather has provided and arranged, filling our church with colour this morning. And we have gifts, tins and jars and packets of things for the One Can Trust, a charity we support regularly.

[9:11] So thank you for all those gifts. Let's pray now for these gifts and for the homes that they are going to. Lord, accept these gifts of food that we bring this morning.

We thank you for the work of the One Can Trust. We pray your blessing on those who work or volunteer in any capacity. We pray for those who will receive these gifts, for their health and well-being, and that they will be encouraged, and through these gifts that they will know your love for them.

Amen. Now we have a team of folk who are going to come and help us to unload the gifts that are on the trolleys. And while they do that, we are going to sing.

So please can I ask you to stand? This song has some actions which you might like to join in with. Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King. Thanks to the Lord, our God and King, Say, sing it to the Lord, our God and King put on those who live the songs that they are all.

forever with the mighty hand love Sing praise, sing praise.

[11:20] Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong, forever God is with us, forever.

Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong, forever God is with us, forever.  
Forever, forever. From the rising to the standing sun, love endures forever.  
By the grace of God we will carry on, love is yours forever. Sing praise, sing praise.  
Sing praise, sing praise. Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong, forever God is with us,  
forever.

[12:37] Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong, forever God is with us, forever.

Forever. Thank you. Wow, amazing. Look at this teamwork here.  
I'm going to stand back and let's see all these wonderful gifts that are going to go to the people who benefit from One Can Trust's work. Thank you, everybody. Please sit down. And I'm going to hand over to the Bible readers now.

Thank you. Psalm 18, verses 1 to 8.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love endures for everyone. Let Israel say, his love endures for everyone. Let the house of Aaron say, his love endures for everyone.

[13:48] Let those who fear the Lord say, his love endures for everyone. When a heart's brace pressed, I cried to the Lord. He brought me into a spacious place. The Lord is with me.

I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? The Lord is with me. He is my helper. I look on triumph on my enemies. I will not die but live and will proclaim what the Lord has done.

The Lord has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death. Open for me the gates of the righteous. I will enter and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter.

I will give you thanks for you answered me. You have become my salvation. The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The Lord has done this and it is marvellous in our eyes.

The Lord has done it this very day. Let us rejoice today and be glad. Lord, save us. Lord, grant us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you.

[14:51] The Lord is God and he has made his light shine on us. With buffs in his hand, join in the festival procession up to the horns of the altar. You are my God and I will praise you.

You are my God and I will exalt you. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love endures forever. Thank you to both of our wonderful readers there for doing such a lovely job in reading our passage today.

Good morning. So, it is lovely to meet you. If you have not met me before, if we have not had the pleasure of meeting you, my name is Ben and I am the youth pastor here at Union Baptist Church and also one of the scout leaders here at the 21st.

So, I don't know what you think about when you think of giving thanks. I guess it depends on the kind of people we are as individuals. Some of us may think giving thanks is simply saying thank you.

Some of us may see it as a form of remembering. Some of us may see it as a form of gift giving and others may see it as an attitude or an action that we portray.

[16:06] I can tell you what thankfulness isn't though. Actually, why don't we take a look at what thankfulness isn't in a minute. Hi Brandon, would you like a cup of tea?

Okay. Would you like milk? No, no, no. Sugar? No. Alright. A few moments later. Hi Brandon, here's your tea.

Okay. I did all the shopping and brought it all home.

Mm-hmm. So far.

Oh. Can I get down now? Yes. But is there something that you want to say?

[17:14] I want to say big thanks to the young people involved in that. That little sketch that we took and did on Friday evening, I can assure you they're not that rude.

But if that's what thankfulness doesn't look like, then we must ask the question, what does it look like? And today's passage helps us with exactly that. Now in verses 5 to 14 of this psalm, we read that the writer, who is probably King David in this scenario, was writing from his own place of

difficulty.

He had struggled with various things, and he was writing from a place where he was battling with his own enemies and his own troubles. And the first part of verse 5 reads, When hard-pressed, I cried to the Lord.

Where and when have we cried to the Lord this last year? When and where have we been hard-pressed? Over the last 18 months, we have gone through a pandemic, which has resulted in a loss of jobs, a lack of schooling, distance from friends and family, and we have been hard-pressed. And I am sure that some of us here will have cried out to the Lord. We will have prayed to him, maybe even in anger, and maybe for some of us to ask him for his help.

[18:37] But as we read on through these verses, we see that the writer also continues to give thanks to God, despite the problems and the scenario that he is in.

How many of us here tend to push away the people around us when life gets hard? Well, in this situation, the writer continues to do the complete opposite, and praises and gives thanks to God for what he has done.

And he realises that the Lord is with him, despite all that is happening. And he is grateful for the Lord's love and presence. So how can we be more like this?

What does it look like to be thankful in the face of difficulty today? Well, for months, we stood on our doorsteps, clapping and praising the NHS and other key workers, in the midst of a pandemic that had shut us away.

This was just one of the ways that we were able to show our thankfulness. How else can we show our thankfulness and our praise in the midst of difficulty to the people around us and to God?

[19:47] Well, we read on, and we see that the tone of the psalm changes to praising and thanking God for what he has already done. Not what is he doing, but what has he already done.

And in verse 15, it reads, Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous. The Lord's right hand has done mighty things.

This is then repeated again in verse 16. And in verse 21, the writer speaks of the Lord becoming his salvation. Salvation meaning to be saved.

Now, when I was in year six, my class took a trip to an outdoor activity centre for a week. And of course, because it's the UK, it did nothing but rain. And the headmaster realised about halfway through the week that I was without any sort of protection from the rain, any sort of umbrella.

So he gifted me his one. Didn't have to do that. It was out of the kindness of his heart. He gave it to me. And it wasn't just, you can borrow this to the end of the week. It was, no, this is yours. I see you don't have one.

[20:51] Here is my gift to you. Now, I didn't realise just how kind and selfless this act was, because this wasn't just any umbrella. It was an M&S umbrella.

No, of course it wasn't. Of course it wasn't. It just happened to be his grandad's umbrella that had been passed down to his father and then to him. And in this situation, what I should have done was say thank you and treat it with the respect that it deserved, as it was important to him and it was a gift to me.

What I did instead was stick it in the ground and practise bunny hopping over it, only to break it two minutes later and chuck it in the bin when it had become broken. I hear a few tuts and I can agree that's fair.

Having to explain what happened to the headmaster when he realised that I wasn't using his umbrella made me realise how I had taken a gift, given out of kindness, and rejected and discarded it instead of being thankful as I should have been.

Now, as we continue to read down in this passage, we see it point to Jesus, who is the rejected stone that would eventually become the cornerstone. Like the umbrella I was given in this story, Jesus was a gift, given out of love to teach us, to love us and to save us.

[22:11] Yet he was rejected and discarded, sent to a cross to die a painful death. Now, how should we respond to this? What should we do? Well, it says in verse 24, let us rejoice and be glad.

We have reason to be glad. We have reason to rejoice and be thankful. Thankful to be able to meet together again. Thankful for the vaccine and all who give it.

Thankful for the reopening of our businesses and our schools. We should be thankful. We should be thankful. We should be glad. And we should rejoice. And why? Because verse 25 says, Lord, save us.

And that's exactly what he's done. Through the vaccine and in everything we have been provided by the Lord, we have been saved. And we have also been saved from our sin. So that our lives here on this earth, despite being sinful and despite our wrongdoings, are forgiven.

So that we can live our lives to the fullest. Knowing what awaits us at the end when we get to live an eternity with Jesus. See, when Jesus went to die on a cross for our sins, for our wrongdoings, that was the greatest vaccine we could ever get.

[23:33] This vaccine means that to anyone that chooses to have it, never truly dies, but gains eternal life. Life with God in heaven, and our life here on this earth, celebrating, rejoicing, and giving thanks.

You may have realized that so far, I have actually missed the first four verses of this psalm. And that's because when we look at what it means to put our thankfulness into action, we can split this into two sections.

Speaking and doing. And verses one to four are very much speaking. Why is it important to recognize, though, that these are two important distinctions in this case?

Well, it's like explaining the rules of a game and then not following through and actually playing the game. It's important to explain how the game is played, but you actually then need to play it for it to be worth anything.

If I explained that in a moment there were going to be four double cards shown on the screen and you had to choose what was the one overall or common factor in all of the four double cards and then never gave you a chance to actually play the game, there wouldn't be any action to go of what has been explained.

[24:50] It would just, that would be it. Saying thanks is a good thing. Saying that we need to remember to give thanks is a good thing, but we also need to back it up and show our thankfulness.

Now, we are actually going to play the game that I just mentioned. And the four double cards are going to come up on the screen and I would like two volunteers to come and join me on the stage to have a close-up look at what these double cards mean.

So, can I have two volunteers? Just stick your hands up very quickly. Yes, Brandon, if you want to head on up. And, yeah, do you want to come up? Come on up. So, have we got those double cards for the screen?

There we go. So, at home, can you see the one common factor? And between the two of you, you want to come over here and have a look? What one do you think it is?

What do you think? Would you agree? Would you agree? What do you all think? Carrots? That's exactly what these two got. Round of applause.

[25:48] Well done, guys. Go ahead. Go and take seats. Of course, the carrots were the one common theme. Now, if I show you verses 1 to 4, can you tell me what the same is on them?

Of course. Verses 1 to 4 keep repeating the line, His love endures forever. The writer is asking for Israel, the house of Aaron, and those who fear the Lord to proclaim that His love endures forever. In other words, we are called to give thanks. All of us. Not just a few of us. All of us are called to give thanks and are called to praise His name. But why are verses 1 to 4 so important?

Well, verses 1 to 4 are reinforcing the fact that God's love does indeed endure forever. This means from the highs to the lows of life. When things are at their worst to when they're at their best, God's love never fails, regardless of the situation.

In the psalm, as we keep reading today, we see that the writer is then inviting the people he would have been writing to, with bows in hand, join the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.

[27:03] I don't know about you, but I think that's just a little bit wordy. And for us today, or for what it meant for the people of the time then, is actually want you to take your branches that you would use to start a fire and join in the celebration to the altar where they would then sacrifice their finest animal or their best crops to God.

And for us, this means to give our very best to God. So for today's One Can Trust offering, we have been asking people to bring the very best of their cans of food, tins of meat, fruit and veg, and there is a wonderful display of that right here.

And we've been doing that as an offering of thanks to God for everything he has done for us, and to show our thankfulness in action by giving to those who are in need.

The passage just before our church, verse 4, the year, is Romans 12, verse 1, and it reads, Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.

This is your true and proper worship. Now we don't need to make sacrifices like the people in the Old Testament did, because Jesus has already made that sacrifice for us when he died on the cross.

[28:28] Our sacrifice today to the Lord is what we can bring using our everyday bodies to serve and to praise God. Our bodies that can offer something that is holy and pleasing to God.

Our financial giving, which includes giving to things such as today's international vaccine appeal that we will be hearing about later. So there's no doubt, this year has been tough, and we have suffered a lot.

But much like the writer here, we are called to be thankful for what God has done and is doing, not just in our words, but in our actions.

Today, as I say, we have our food bank offering, helping to feed those in need, and our fundraising for Tier Fund's work in helping places that don't have it get access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

All of which are ways of showing our thanks to God for everything he has already given us. What is the greatest thing you can be grateful for and thankful for?

[29:40] Is it for your friends, your family, the roof over your head, the health and the safety you know that you have? Or is it the truth of knowing Jesus?

Jesus who was rejected and who went to the cross to bear the weight of our sin so that whoever believes in him, whoever chooses to come to him, could have eternal life.

who died because he loves us and deserves our praise, our offering, and our thanks, both in word and in action. Will we go to the same effort as when we clapped the NHS to give our thanks to God?

Will we write signs and put them in our windows and in our gardens, thanking God? Will we help to serve and give thanks practically for everything God has done through our difficulty?

By being living sacrifices, giving out of what we have to those less fortunate than ourselves.

Because as it says in the final verse of Psalm 118, verse 29, give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

[30:54] His love endures forever. Let us just pray. Lord, thank you.

Thank you for everything that you have done for us. Thank you for everything you are doing for us. Thank you that you have given us so much to be thankful for.

Help us, Lord, to stay thankful in both word and action for all that you do for us. Amen. Thank you, Ben.

Time for catchphrase two to store in your head or to write the answer on the back of your sheet. Thank you.

Now, we have some people who are going to help us in continuing our theme of thankfulness. First, could I ask the horns to come forward and the wingfields and Grace and Karen?

[32:05] So, if Marianne and Tim would like to come up first. They are going to, each of these groups are going to, if you just want to, just wait on the side for a moment. They're going to mime something that they are thankful for.

and you have to think, you're going to try and guess what that thing is. It's miming, miming, no talking.

Thank you.

Anybody got any guesses what they're thanking God for? Yeah? Yeah? Children. Children. Could it be children? It is indeed. Yes.

Well done. Thank you. And I think you have another one? Oh.

[33:27] Oh. Fashion. Fashion. Fashion. Any idea? Do it again. Do it again. Okay. Okay. Oh.

Elliot. You've got something else. Oh. That's a very good guess.

I might have said that. No, not that. No, good guess. Brandon. Sport. I think you're going to have to tell us.

Come and use the microphone here. We are thankful for new beginnings. Both of us are starting new careers and we are very thankful to Jesus for giving us a new start and wiping the slate clean from our sins when he died on the cross.

New beginnings. New beginnings. Thank you. Oh, there we are. That foxes that one. Well done.

Thank you. So, Wingfield Trio, please. We've got three coming up here. So, Ben, are you going to go first?

[34:29] I think if you know Ben, you will not find this one hard to guess. Anybody else?

Did you have a go? Yeah. What do you think? Food was absolutely right. Well done. Sam, your turn. We've got Brandon and... Are you Nathaniel?

Yeah. We've got Brandon and Nathaniel guessing like mad. Anybody else got one? I can't see.

Elliot. He's got his hand up. Elliot. Elliot. Sorry, I can't see him. Oh, okay. Elliot. Sorry, I can't see you behind the pillar.

Football. Yeah, well done. Bethany. Here we go. Yes. Music. Yes.

Specifically, the flute. Yeah, well done. Thank you. Okay. Karen and Grace have a couple for us.

[35:26] Oh, they've got some props as well. Number one. What do we think that might be?

Yes. Teachers. Teachers. Teachers. Yes, well done. Okay, well done. Oh, how brave you are, Grace.

Anybody else? Yeah, Bethany? Vaccines. Vaccines or vaccination. Yes, well done. Thank you.

Let's do it back to them all. Well done. So, I wonder if you're going to be here.

Thank you. So, I wonder if you'd been up here. I wonder what you would have. I wonder what you would have mimed. I wonder what you can think of that you are very thankful for. I'm sure.

There's not just one thing, is there. There's loads and loads of things we're thankful for. You have, oh, where did I put it? You have a sheet. You were given a sheet when you came in. Something like that. And if you'd like to, would you be able to write or draw on the bubble, what am I most thankful for?

[37:02] You can confer with your people sitting with you if you'd like to, or you can just do this on your own. What are you most thankful for? Okay, what are some of the things that you've drawn?

What are some of the things that are on there? You have to call out? Yep. Sorry? My boys. Your boys. So, again, children.

Anybody else like to offer? Oh, yes. Sorry. Yes. Hello. Your family.

What a fabulous one. Well done. Thank you. Yes. I can't see these hands up clearly. Oh, sorry.

Isaac. God.

Well, there's no arguing with that one, is there? Simon. Simon. Your new phone. Very important.

Bethany. Sorry, take your mask off. I can't. Jesus.

[38:40] Well done. And nice places to go. Well done. Well, do you know, we're going to sing about these things. We're going to sing about the things that we are thankful for.

And we have a song which we can sort of, we can make up the words as we go along, really. So, we're going to sing, God is good, God is great. He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power.

And then we sing, thank you God for, and I took some of the ideas from here, sports and music.

How about that? Thank you, Lord, for sports and music.

How about taking your idea of family? Family and friends. And thank you, Lord. Let's have the last one. Thank you, Lord, for God and Jesus.

How about that? Yes, let's stand. God is good, God is great.

[39:51] He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power. God is good, God is great. He's the one who did create everything

that there is by his power.

Sports and music. Thank you, Lord, for sports and music. Thank you, thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord, for sports and music.

Thank you, thank you, Lord. God is good, God is great. He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power.

God is good, God is great. He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power. Family and friends. Thank you, Lord, for family and friends.

Thank you, thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord, for family and friends. Thank you, thank you, Lord.

[40:56] God is good, God is great. He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power. God is good, God is great.

He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power. God and Jesus. Thank you, Lord, for God and Jesus.

Thank you, thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord, for God and Jesus. Thank you, thank you, Lord.

God is good, God is great. He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power. God is good, God is great.

He's the one who did create everything that there is by his power. God is good, God is good, God is good, God is good. God is good, God is good, God is good. Well done, thank you. Well done, if you kept up with all of those actions.

[41:52] It goes quite quick. So, we saw some examples earlier of how not to be thankful, but we are thinking today how we should be thankful.

Do you know, in a conversation I had with a Christian friend just recently, she was telling me that every night before she goes to sleep, she thanks God for all the things that have happened to her during the day.

Some of them have been good things. Some of them have not so good things, but she knows that God has been with her in all of those things, whether she's been struggling or whether they've been joyful.

So, and it reminded us both of a song that has the words in it, count your blessings one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

Have you ever heard of that one? And I think those are fabulous words, aren't they? Because if we're going to be thankful for something, we need to know what we're being thankful for and thinking through those things that we can thank God for is a great way to start.

[43:01] So, how can we be more thankful to God? Just imagine one of those scenes that Ben showed, that the young people showed us about giving a cup of tea or somebody doing the shopping. How do you respond to somebody who has done you a service, who you should be thankful to?

How do you respond? Yes. Buying things they like. Saying things. Saying thank you.

What a great way to start. Well done. Thank you. Saying thank you. Saying thank you is a really good way. Sometimes you might write a letter or write a card to thank somebody for something they've done.

Ben told us the story of his umbrella. Was that treating that umbrella with respect and valuing that gift? Certainly not. Please don't get any ideas from that.

We want to value something, don't we? Look after it. Care for it. Show that we appreciate that gift. So, there are lots of ways that we can show that we're thankful.

[44:07] We could be... It might prompt us to be generous to somebody else. And look, we know we're so thankful to God for all his provision for us to us. And today, we're giving to One Can Trust.

And there'll be an opportunity to give in another way that Andrew's going to explain a bit later.

Sometimes it might change your opinion of the person who's giving you that gift. If somebody gives you something, you might be surprised to think, oh, I didn't expect that from them.

And it might change your opinion and improve your relationship with them. So, let's think about God and how we can be thankful to God and show God that we are thankful for all his gifts.

We've had some ideas. We've had some thoughts. Ben gave us some. We've just heard some. So, you might just like to write on the bottom part. I've lost it again. On the bottom part of your piece of paper.

Here we go. There we are. Got it. Thank you. Thankfulness in action. Just take a moment to write or draw what you could do and how could you show your thanks to God.

[45:23] Thank you.

You might even remind yourself. You might even think of other things in your thoughts and prayers during the week that you could add to that. Or if you want to, as an offering to God this morning, there is a box on the way out which you could leave your paper in.

If you want to leave it there and this God, this is what I'm going to do. And remember what it is you've committed to do to God. To improve or to be more thankful.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your goodness and for the many blessings which you pour into our lives. Help us to thank you, to be thankful for all you have done and continue to do in your world and in our lives.

Father God, we want to thank you. Father God, we want to be living sacrifices. Joyfully living lives of prayer and praise to you. You who sent your son to save us.

[46:52] Thank you that Jesus was willing to die for us to take away our sin. Teach us as we grow closer to you to be more like Jesus.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit, we pray, and empower us in our daily lives to live as people worthy of your calling, displaying in our words and actions the fruit of your Spirit.

As we are filled with your great love, Lord, teach us in response to be generous, humbly and willingly giving to others, sharing the gifts we have received from you as we use our time, our talents, our money to bless those you call us to serve.

Give us courage to seize the opportunities you provide to speak and act for you. Lord, you are faithful and loving and we trust you to bless us.

So as we live and declare your works, we will encourage others to love and serve and trust you too. May we be people who rejoice always, pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Jesus Christ.

[48:17] Amen. Let's sing again a song of shining, about shining for God. Please stand.

Shine from the inside out, that the world will see you living me.

Shine from the inside out, that the world will see you living me.

You know me and you love me. You fill me, you fill me. You fill me, you fill me. So send me to shine. Know me, love me, love me, you fill me, send me. Shine from the inside out, that the world will see you living me.

Shine from the inside out, that the world will see you living me. You know me, you know me, you know me. You fill me, you know me, you know me, and you love me.

[49:29] You fill me, you fill me. You fill me, you fill me. You fill me. So send me. Know me, love me, you fill me, send me. You know me, love me, you fill me, send me. You fill me, you fill me, you fill me. You fill me, you fill me, send me. Know me, love me, you fill me, send me.

Know me, love me, you fill me, send me. To shine from the inside out, that the world will see you living me.

You know me and you love me. You know me and you love me. You fill me, you fill me, you fill me. You fill me, you fill me, send me.

Know me, love me, you fill me, send me. Will you send me to shine? Well done, thank you.

[50:34] We have our next catchphrase. I think, coming up. Did I forget three? I'm really sorry.

I forgot number three. Alright, we'll do number three and number four. Alright, here's number three. Keep that in your head. And now we've got number four. Sorry, David. Have we got the next one? Oh, there we go. That's the wrong way around. That's fine. Okay, Andrew, I'm going to hand over to you.

Thank you, Judy. Well, one of the things that we've already talked about in this service that we're thankful for is vaccines. Without the vaccine, we wouldn't be able to meet like this for this celebration service that we're having today.

[51:54] Now, we can be thankful today that up until now, 89% of the adult population of this country have now received at least one dose of the vaccine. Now, some people this week have received a third dose of the

vaccine.

I don't know if anyone here has. Brilliant. That's something to be thankful for. Even some of our scouts have received a vaccine this last week.

That's wonderful. But unfortunately, the situation in other countries is very, very different. And on average, only 1.9%, less than 2% of people in low-income countries have received a vaccine.

Now, we've learned that part of our thankfulness is helping those with less than ourselves. And this applies to vaccines, too. And so, as part of our thankfulness, as part of our worship today, we'd like to invite you to make a donation to Tear Fund.

It's an organization that we work with for their Recover Together appeal. Tear Fund is advocating. It's trying to persuade governments around the world to donate more vaccines to developing countries, to poorer countries.

[53:04] And they're working with communities on the ground to educate people about the vaccine. So, the way that you can donate to this is by going to the website, which is shown there.

There's more information on our webpage. And also, on your way out, you'll see these cards. You can follow the link on here, or you can scan the barcode here in order to donate to Tear Fund. So, please do that after the service. These will be on the tables by where we're serving lollies, ice lollies, by Eastern Street. So, do please encourage you to do that as part of your time giving thanks this morning.

But I wonder, what is it like to live in a country where very few people have had a vaccine? Well, last week, I spoke to a couple of our friends with Emanuel International in Tanzania.

We've learned about them before, especially their Imerika project in a previous Harvest Festival service. And through that project, they're also educating people and preparing people to receive the vaccine.

[54:03] Now, you can see from this graph, you probably can't see from this graph because the writing is very small. But this shows how many people in each country have been vaccinated. And the UK is basically one of the ones near the top.

Lots of people have been vaccinated. Tanzania happens to be the bottom on this list. And you can see from that, well, I can see from that, you may not be able to, it's 0.57%.

So, less than 1% of the population in Tanzania have received a vaccine. So, we're going to watch an interview that I did with Ibrahim and Jessica, who work with Emanuel International, telling us about what they're doing about vaccines in Tanzania.

Thank you both for joining me. Could you just introduce yourselves and tell me what you do in Emanuel International? No? I am.

I am. In FC kansu. I am working with the manager of Imariqa and I am a project manager of Imariqa.

[55:26] Can you tell us about what challenges coronavirus is bringing in Tanzania? This will be helpful.

Was this? That is too many people will help us please wish to learn from other awareness.

has anybody in tanzania received a vaccine yet and have you two had a vaccine yet so do you feel like through your education program people have started to change the way they think about the vaccine not was the vaccine and was the time they did good has stated that will be the higher and speaking Think of who we have the vaccines elephants How many more people AG and I just 25 ■■■■■■  
12 22 23 24 24 25 26 26 26 Thank you, Andrew.

I think we have some cubs who are going to come and lead us in our prayers. Thank you, Bethany and... Dear God, we thank you for the way you have helped us, especially during the pandemic.

[59:31] We have been through difficult times, but we have so much to be thankful for. Thank you for medical workers, caregivers and all key workers who have treated sick people and kept us safe.

Thank you for vaccines which have been given to many people in this country to protect them from the virus. We pray for countries which have not been as fortunate as us.

We pray that vaccines will be available to everybody around the world. We pray for leaders of countries who have vaccines to make good decisions about helping other countries. We pray for people working overseas, teaching people and helping them to get vaccines. Amen. Thank you for the world around us.

Thank you for sending us sunshine and rain to make things grow. Thank you for the good things that you have given... things you give us. Thank you for all the tasty food and yummy treats. [60:28] We pray for those near us that don't have enough to eat. We pray that organisations like One Can Trust are helping people in our town who don't have enough food.

Amen. Amen. Thank you that you have given us more than we deserve. We are sorry that sometimes we have not been thankful for what we have been given. Sometimes we have not been thankful for our words. Sometimes we have not been thankful for our actions. Help us to show our thankfulness by how we act towards others. Being kind and being generous, especially to those who have less than us. Amen. Thank you. So thank you very much to everybody who's taken part today. Cubs and Scouts and everybody being here and joining in with all those actions. We're just going to look at the four catchphrases and see if you got them right.

[61:35] Any ideas for the first one? Give thanks. Give thanks. Yes. You can just call it out. That's fine. Give thanks. Give thanks. Give thanks. And the next one.

Who thinks they know this one? Let's call it out. Yeah. Give thanks to the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord. And there it is. Give thanks to the Lord. Well done. Number three was. Hmm? Move on to the next one. There we go. Give thanks to God. Give thanks to God. Well done. And this last one, which we had first.

Anybody got that one, Bethany? Thank-fulness. Thank-full-ness. Yes. Well done. Okay. Show me how many you got right. One, two, three or four. Well done. Excellent. Round of applause. Good. Thank you. And thank you to Susanna for putting those together. Okay.

[62:39] We're going to sing our final song now. Hear the call of the kingdom. Please stand. Lift your eyes to the king.

call of the kingdom lift your eyes to the king let his song rise within you as a fragrant offering of how god rich in mercy came in christ to redeem all who trusted his unfailing grace give the call of the kingdom to the children of light with the mercy of heaven the humility of christ for he can't be before him loving all that is right that the life of christ may shine to us king of heaven we will answer the call we will follow bringing hope to the world filled with passion filled with heart to proclaim salvation in jesus hear the call of the kingdom to reach out to the lost with the father's compassion in the wonder of the cross bringing peace and forgiveness and a hope yet to come let the nations put their trust in him king of heaven we will answer the call we will follow bringing hope to the world filled with passion filled with heart to proclaim salvation in jesus jesus thank you um yeah please sit down so i have one very important notice and that is there will be ice lollies at the front please do not miss them this is your last opportunity and the sun has come out which is great isn't it next week it won't be because there will be no ice lollies we're going to be doing something different so here's your last chance for an ice lolly at the front of church if you have of your parents of cubs or scouts that they will be out there anyway so please just go straight out and meet your um your young people there they will already have an ice lolly i expect so after um so after um our blessing the colors will leave um so we'll we'll stand as the colors leave in a moment um and then um the uh you're free to go out follow follow the colors directly out of the door please stand now for our final blessing let the peace of christ rule in your hearts and be thankful and whatever you do whether in word or deed do it all in the name of the lord jesus christ giving thanks to god the father through him amen