

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

November 16, 2022

Association Minister Message

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THANKS. "I will offer to you a THANKSgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the Lord." (Psalm 116:17). "Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground, Jesus took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving THANKS Jesus broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds...Then Jesus took a cup, and after giving THANKS he gave it to them..." (Matthew 15:36, 26:27). This Sunday is "Reign of Christ" Sunday, the last Sunday of the church calendar year. It is also the Sunday before the USA designated THANKSgiving holiday. I have chosen to focus on THANKS because this year is special for me with plans that my family is gathering together at my home. We are a small group (nine) representing three generations. I am excited to be the host for a week of conversations, games, reminiscing, outings, and especially enjoying scrumptious food.

The entertainer Bob Hope at the close of his show would always sing "*THANKS for the memories*" that enumerated both the struggles and joys of life. The selected scriptures about *THANKS* have an element of pain, sadness, wonder, joy, and hope. The Psalmist was dealing with uncertainty, yet the psalmist was embraced by God out of the land of the "*dying*" into the land of the "*living.*" Crowds followed Jesus everywhere and Matthew reports the miracle of feeding thousands with just "*seven loaves of bread and a few small fish.*" After giving "*THANKS*" Jesus instructed His disciples to feed the crowd and when they collected the "*broken pieces*" after feeding the crowd, seven baskets were returned. At the final meal with Jesus' disciples, Jesus took bread and wine and after giving *THANKS* shared the elements with them. Even at a time of sadness and knowing that He would die, Jesus gave *THANKS*.

The Psalmist and Jesus proclaimed a message of *THANKS*-giving and *THANKS*-living in all circumstances of life. The gift of life is precious and exciting, filled with both human and divine qualities. *THANKS* is acknowledging dependency upon a gracious and generous God and being blessed by the love and care of those around us. *THANKS*-giving is not just a day but a lifestyle of gratitude and love. To God be the glory. *THANKS* be to God. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS*.