A Thanksgiving Prayer for Everyday Ewin Grace, *Connections Pastor*

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
—Psalm 118:1 (NKJV)

Sometimes the simplest thing can be a life changer. One example for me was when I was an undergrad at The University of Texas at Austin. I had an early class and would do a quick Quiet Time devotion each morning, and then as I was getting dressed I'd snap the radio on to a local Christian station, hoping to hear some good worship music or some biblical encouragement.

One morning I heard the shortest sermon ever. It was by the great Bishop Fulton Sheen and I didn't catch the title but here's what he said, almost verbatim, in its entirety: *"One of my favorite verses in all Scripture is Psalm 118:1. It reads, 'Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.' If you memorize that short verse and pray it every day, your life will be better."* Then he prayed that we would, and that our life would. And that was it.

I was so struck by both its brevity and simplicity that I just kind of said to myself, *"OK I can do that"* and memorized it instantly—who couldn't? It was so short and strong. But something about it and the way it was delivered in such a compact and concentrated package just really reached me. And I can testify now, these decades later, that while I haven't prayed it every single day, I do so very frequently and you won't be surprised to learn that it has kept Bishop Sheen's promise: it has made my life better. You see, somehow that little snippet seeped on down into my heart, mind and spirit and made me view our loving God as a merciful Creator who is certainly and uniquely worthy of our thanks and praise.

So this Thanksgiving season, I commend that concise and concentrated psalm of thanks to you as a powerful and potent life changing message from our bountiful and benevolent God. And I would challenge you to memorize it, recite it daily as a prayer of thanksgiving and then observe how the One who knit us together in our mother's womb can use that anointed Bible truth to refresh, renew and even refurbish us.

Praise God, you helped contribute 114 shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child!

Welcome to Journey!
EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Pastor Phil's first Friday night with the youth

Order of Service November 19th, 2023

Welcome & Call To Worship...Ron

Worship...Ryan & Congregation

Sermon.............. God Loves A Grateful Heart................... Ewin

Song of Response..Ryan & Congregation

Benediction ....Phil

Sermon Outline Ewin Grace • 11/19/2023

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.—1 Thess 5:18

Job, in dire circumstances, thanked God for these 3 blessings—can we?

You have granted me life and steadfast love, and your care has preserved my spirit.—Job 10:12

1. I'm grateful, God, for my _____

2. Thank You, Lord, for Your _____

3. I have such gratitude, my King, for Your _____ which has preserved my spirit

Praise, thanksgiving and worship terms for reflection:

The Hebrew word *todah*, originating from *yadah*, expresses thanksgiving, both the act and the meaning behind the holiday. *Todah* refers to giving thanks, including confession, raising hands, hymns, praise, and other offerings. *Yadah* means to throw out, extend or cast up the hands, or confess, a posture of humility acknowledging the Lord God Almighty as sovereign over all. The Greek word is *eucharistéo*, meaning to be grateful or to express gratitude. And the Greek word for worship is *proskunéo*, meaning turn toward to kiss or adore.

For example, Psalm 100:4 *"Enter his gates with thanksgiving (Todah), and his courts with praise (Tehillah)! Give thanks to him (Yadah); bless his name!"*

Psalm 107:1 urges us, *"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever"* and verse 22 tells us to *"sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy."* Hebrews 13:15 tells us to *"continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that openly profess his name."*

And Colossians 3:16 says we are to *"let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."*

Ways to get involved:

Today: **Thanksgiving Lunch**. Join us for a Hawaiian-themed meal after service. Many, many thanks to Moon and his hard working team!
Trailer Demolition. Please be careful and make sure your kids or grandkids do **not** go inside the fence. Praise God the trailers are being removed!

11/24: **Shoeboxes** Processing Party (1pm-6pm): help organize shoeboxes at the OCC Processing Center. Sign up: shorturl.at/tCKT4.

11/24: **Young Adult** Friendsgiving (7pm, potluck at Kaus): RSVP to Wes, Luchi, or Alan.

11/24: No Youth Group: enjoy your Thanksgiving weekend with loved ones!

11/26: GO Partner **Adam Joe**: join us as he shares his ministry: 9-10:20am, MPR for meet and greet with coffee and donuts, and after service for extended sharing

12/10: Congregational Meeting, Elections: voting will be done in-person only. All members are encouraged to participate.

12/17: Baptism: Praise God we have one person who will profess Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior! Email ted@journeyec.org if interested in baptism or transfer.

12/24: Christmas Program

12/31: New Year's Eve Service (7:30pm-8:30pm)

Deacons
Allie Wong
Anne Chou
Dave McLendon
Joshua Cain
Pat Leung
Paulah Wong
Teresa Jue
Wesley Lin

Elders
Cliff Char—Young Adults, Worship Music
Devin Wong—GO Team, Website
Hiro Kono—Cong. Dev., Pastoral Care, Women's Ministry
Peter Leung—Children, Welcome
Phil Jen Kin—Facilities, Cantonese, Security, Personnel
Rick Chou—Nominations, Multimedia, Small Groups
Ron Jue—Growth & Legacy, Deacons Liaison, CLT Chair
Victor Wong—Campus, Finance, Hospitality, SERVE, Vietnamese

Staff
Ted Kau—Senior Pastor
Paul Eng—Chinese Pastor
Ewin Grace—Connections Pastor
Phil Yoder—Youth Pastor
Ryan Kingsman—Worship Pastor

Peter Leung—Children's Director
Christian Lissner—Assistant Minister
Linzey Sun—Youth Intern
Sammie Sun—Youth Intern
Roger Yee—Business Administrator
Amy Mu—Office & Ministry Assistant