

CREATIVE IDEAS FOR THANKSGIVING

by Daniel T. Benedict, Jr.

Share Holy Communion on Thanksgiving Day.

Communion is also called Eucharist -- sometimes from the Greek word in the NT eucharisteo, which means "thanksgiving." Holy Communion, in the forms that it is given in The United Methodist Hymnal and The United Methodist Book of Worship, is a festive and celebratory gathering, praising God for God's goodness.

Consider your community. Who is hungry? Who is lonely or alone for the holiday? Could your congregation or some of your people find ways to share the holiday's feasting and plenty? This may help your congregation get beyond boredom to a sense of reconnection with the root meaning of our true religion (see James 1:19-27). Not everyone in the congregation will be able or will want to engage in this kind of sharing and caring, but that does not need to stop those God is prompting to do it.

Invite people before the service or during the service to write down or talk in their households what they have experienced as gifts, blessings, or surprises during the last year. Find a way to "offer" these to God during Thanksgiving worship.

Create a visual expression of "thanksgiving" that represents your setting and community. If you live in a farming community, use some of the harvest to express plenty and "the good seed of the land." If you live in a manufacturing community, bring some of products that are useful in meeting human needs into the worship space. This affirms that what we do in daily life is a way we serve God and others; for that, we can be very grateful!

For more ideas and resources, visit www.gbod.org/worship and search "Thanksgiving."

Daniel T. Benedict, Jr., previously served as the director of worship resources for the General Board of Discipleship. He retired in 2005.



www.ngumc.org

North Georgia Conference
Information Office

Prayers of Thanksgiving



"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above."
—James 1:17 (NRSV)



North Georgia United Methodist Conference
4511 Jones Bridge Circle NW
Norcross, GA 30092
678-533-1371 • sdavidson@ngumc.org

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 God, thank you for your peace that surpasses all understanding and guards our hearts and minds. Philippians 4:7	2 God, thank you for loving the world so much that you gave your only son so that we may have eternal life. John 3:16	3 God, I give you thanks for the many blessings I receive every day. Ephesians 5:20	4 God, thank you for the opportunity to be a good neighbor, to lend a hand or a listen when I am needed. Proverbs 14:21	5 God, thank you for your unending love and mercy. 1 Chronicles 16:34	6 God, thank you for being near and comforting me when I pray to you. Deuteronomy 4:7	7 God, thank you for offering hope in what seem like hopeless situations. 1 Peter 1:3
8 God, thank you for being the lamp unto my feet and the light unto my path. Psalm 119:105	9 God, give me a thankful heart and a willing spirit. Teach me to give thanks in all circumstances. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18	10 God, I am thankful for my place in your world, and for the gifts and talents you have given me. Psalm 24:1	11 God, thank you for blessing us with friends family and even strangers who love, encourage and comfort us. Luke 1:58	12 God, thank you for the volunteers who respond when communities are struck by disaster. Psalm 41:1	13 God, thank you for the wisdom and compassion of our doctors, nurses and healthcare providers. 1 Corinthians 12:9	14 God, we give thanks for the mentors, leaders and teachers who inspire our children. Proverbs 22:6
15 God, thank you for the gift of the Sabbath. Teach me to honor it and honor you. 1 Chronicles 29:13	16 God, thank you for forgiving my sins. Help me to be forgiving of others. John 13:15	17 God, thank you for being our refuge and our strength, an everpresent help in times of trouble. Psalm 46:1	18 God, we give you thanks that nothing can ever separate us from the love of Christ. Romans 8:35	19 God, thank you for the diversity of your creation. Inspire us to learn from the world around us. 1 Corinthians 12:7	20 God, thank you for renewing me, transforming me and giving me peace. Psalm 119:18	21 God, thank you for the abundant life and joy we experience in Jesus Christ. John 10:10
22 God, thank you for all those who answer your call to ministry. Guide their way as they serve you. 1 Samuel 3:10	23 God, thank you for blessing us with friends family and even strangers who love, encourage and comfort us. Luke 1:58	24 God, we give you thanks, for you are good; your love endures forever. 1 Chronicles 16:34	25 God, thank you for my abundant life. Help me be engaged and enthusiastic. John 10:10	26 God, thank you for making me a living sanctuary for you. John 4:13-14	27 God, thank you for giving us your word and thank you for speaking through the scriptures today. 2 Timothy 3:16	28 God, thank you for the blessing of children. Mark 10:15-16
29 God, thank you for being our companion in times of loneliness. Psalm 23:4	30 God, teach me to effectively express my heartfelt thanks to you and to others. Psalm 30:12					