



The Season of Thanksgiving and Giving

Based in Scripture and The Apostles' Creed, Article 1

with explanations from
THE SMALL CATECHISM – BY MARTIN LUTHER



Introduction

All giving begins and ends with God.

At Thanksgiving we yearly celebrate all the gifts through which God has blessed us.

At Christmas we celebrate God's greatest gift, His Son Jesus Christ our Lord who gives us grace, love, forgiveness, life and hope.

As part of Good Hope's Life-to-Life discipleship experience, we invite everyone to join us in four weeks of daily devotions in this season we call Advent. Here is the outline for our four weeks.

Week 1: Thanksgiving for all God's Gifts

Week 2: Celebrating how God's Gifts have Shaped Our Lives

Week 3: Entering the Joy of Giving

Week 4: Preparing Our Gifts for Jesus, the Newborn King

Each day of reading is an opportunity to open your heart to the Holy Spirit. In the Word, God has the ability to speak to each of us. As you read, you may be struck by a single word or a phrase. Circle, underline, or somehow highlight what caught your attention. The next step is to ask yourself why the Holy Spirit has drawn you to this word or phrase. How does it connect to your life?

After answering some of the questions within this devotional booklet, you may feel like sharing your thoughts with another person during the week. We encourage you to do so! The Holy Spirit uses those conversations to help us grow and to mature as disciples.

Week 1

Thanksgiving for all God's Gifts

*All that we have, all that we are, and all we ever will be have been given us as a gift from God.
This week we consider and give thanks for all his gifts.*

Day 1 — Monday

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has created me and all that exists.

John 1:1-3

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

What was the last thing someone made or bought just for you? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scripture: Hebrews 3:4 – every house is built by someone, but...

Day 2 — Tuesday

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

He has given me and still preserves my body and soul with all their powers.

Psalm 139:13-18

- ¹³For you formed my inward parts;
 you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
¹⁴I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
 my soul knows it very well.
¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
 intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
¹⁶Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of them,
 the days that were formed for me,
 when as yet there was none of them.
¹⁷How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!
 How vast is the sum of them!
¹⁸If I would count them, they are more than the sand.
 I awake, and I am still with you.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

What is one of the things that makes you unique in all that God has created? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 – may your spirit, soul, and body...

Day 3 — Wednesday

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

He provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day.

Matthew 6:25-34

²⁵“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

³⁴“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

What are 3 things that make you anxious? _____

When did you have a need that was taken care of in a way you didn't expect? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: Deuteronomy 8:10-18 – take care lest you forget the Lord, it is he who...

Psalm 23:1-3 – the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...

Day 4 — Thursday

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil.

Isaiah 40:28-31

²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

²⁹ He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases strength.

³⁰ Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;

³¹ but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

Recall a time that God protected you, in a big way and in a smaller way? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: 1 Corinthians 10:13 – no temptation has overtaken...

Isaiah 43:1-4a – when you walk through the waters...

Deuteronomy 31:6 – be strong and courageous...

Psalms 34:4-9 – this poor man cried and the Lord...

Psalms 23:4-5 – I fear no evil for you are with me...

Day 5 — Friday

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

All this he does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it.

Hebrews 4:14-16

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

God is anxious to hear from you. Draw near. What would God love to hear you talk to Him about today?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: Matthew 5:32-45 – He makes his sun to rise on...

Lamentations 3:21-23 – the steadfast love of the Lord...

Psalm 23:6 – surely goodness and mercy shall follow me...

Day 6 — Saturday

Today is a day to recap your experiences this week. If you missed a day of devotions, use today to catch up. Look back at the previous five days. If you felt moved to pray or do something this week, how did you do? If you didn't accomplish what you felt led to do, what will your new plan to accomplish it look like?

Day 7 — Sunday

What words or stories from the sermon brought you to thankfulness? _____

Week 2

Celebrating how God's gifts have shaped our lives

*All God's gifts have shaped our lives; none more than the gift of Jesus, his Son.
This week we consider the impact of all his gifts on our lives.*

Day 1 — Monday

We are thankful for who God is, and what He has done for us.

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

Therefore, I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey him.

Psalm 100:4-5

⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him; bless his name!
⁵ For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

What is one gift you have received from God? How has it shaped your life? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: Psalm 95:1-7 – let us come into his presence with thanksgiving...
Psalm 107: 1-9 – give thanks to the Lord for he is good...
Luke 17:11-19 – he fell at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks...
Philippians 4:4-9 – with thanksgiving let your requests be...

Day 2 — Tuesday

*Worship is given to God alone.
When we worship, we also listen, offer thanks and praise, and go forth to serve and obey.*

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

Therefore, I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey him.

Mathew 4:9-11

⁹ And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,
“You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

How is worship a gift from God to you? _____

What has happened in your life within the last few days that, with or without you realizing it, created an opportunity to praise God?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: Matthew 28:5-9 – the [women] came up...and worshiped him...

Psalm 8 – how majestic is your name in all the earth...

Psalm 145 – I will bless you and praise your name forever...

Psalm 103:1-5, 10-17, 20-22 – Bless the Lord O my soul...

Day 3 — Wednesday

The words servant, serve, service, served appear over 1300 times in the Bible.

*Putting other people's needs before yours also strengthens your relationships.
It connects you with the two you're serving – the individual & God.*

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

Therefore, I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey him.

Joshua 24:14-15

¹⁴“Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

Who was the last person who used their gifts to serve you? _____

How has your life been shaped by serving? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: John 13:4-5, 12-17 – I have given you an example...
Psalm 100:1-5 – serve the Lord with gladness...

Day 4 — Thursday

If we believe God is truly God, then we will desire to show our love for him by doing what pleases Him.

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

Therefore, I surely ought to thank and praise, serve and obey him.

Matthew 7:21-27

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

²⁴ “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

The teachings of Jesus are the foundation of a life that pleases God. Name one of Jesus’s teachings that you know you follow. Describe how you are following that specific teaching (i.e. *love one another, care for the poor, store up treasure in heaven*).

How does following the teaching you described show God that you love Him? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: James 1:22-25 – be doers of the word and not hearers only...
Matthew 21:28-32 – which of the two did the will of his father...
1 John 2:3-6 – whoever keep his word, in him truly the love of...

Day 5 — Friday

The Hebrew word Amen means “Yes, this is true.”

In the Gospel of John Jesus often says “Amen” (this is true) or “Amen, Amen” (Truly, Truly) I say to you.

The First Article

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

This is most certainly true.

John 11:25-27

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

Who first introduced you to Jesus and helped you say “I believe”? What do you remember about them?

How has the gift of Jesus shaped your life? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scriptures: John 5: 24-26 – whoever hears my word and believes him...

John 8:31-36 – everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin

Romans 8:16-20 – you are slaves to the one you obey

Day 6 — Saturday

Today is a day to recap your experiences this week. If you missed a day of devotions, use today to catch up. Look back at the previous five days. If you felt moved to pray or do something this week, how did you do? If you didn't accomplish what you felt led to do, what will your new plan to accomplish it look like?

As you thought about Luther's explanation (all of the "What does this mean?" sections) to Article 1 of the Apostle's Creed, which day in these last two weeks of devotions most led you to say "Amen!"?

Day 7 — Sunday

In some Christian communities, people shout "Amen!" during worship. What is something you celebrate in your faith life that causes you to say "amen" or "this is most certainly true"?

Week 3

Entering the Joy of Giving

*Gifted by God and shaped by God, we are set free to live lives of generosity.
This week we celebrate how giving to God and others brings us joy and spreads God's love.*

Surveys of American households consistently show that people who give money, to all types of religious and secular causes, were far happier than non-givers.

Day 1 — Monday

God's gifts bring us joy. Filled with joy, we give freely and joyfully.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

What blessings are you thankful for today? What about this blessing makes you happy? _____

How can you bless someone else this week? _____

Alternate scripture: Acts 20:32-36 – [Jesus] said, It is more blessed to give than...

Day 2 — Tuesday

Joyful giving frees us from fear and opens us to God's bounty.

2 Corinthians 9:10-11

¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

When you give gifts at Christmas, how do you feel inside? _____

When a person's heart trusts God to provide every need, then they feel free to give, are eager to give, and look for opportunities to give abundantly. How has trusting God freed you to give generously?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scripture: Matthew 6:[25-30] 31-34 – but seek first the kingdom of God...

Day 3 — Wednesday

Joyful giving brings people to faith and the giver receives credit in the harvest.

Philippians 4:14-22

¹⁴ Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶ Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸ I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

²¹ Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. ²² All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

Describe an experience with giving that felt burdensome. _____

Who, in your life, has been an example of a joyful giver? What did they show you about joy and giving?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Alternate scripture: Matthew 6:19-21 – for where your treasure is, there will be...

Day 4 — Thursday

Joyful giving comes from entrusting ourselves to God; freeing us to care for others.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

¹We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ²for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— ⁵and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

The Macedonians were excited to give to God and the early church. When was the last time you were excited about giving something valuable to someone else, or to God?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Day 5 — Friday

Joyful giving binds us to one another and brings praise to God.

2 Corinthians 9:12-15

¹² For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. ¹³ By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, ¹⁴ while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

We have so much to be thankful for! Write a short prayer to say thank you to God for his love, the gift of Jesus, the gift of faith, and the gift of eternal life.

As you prepare to fill out your estimate of giving card, write another short prayer asking God to guide you in preparing your gift.

Day 6 — Saturday

Today is a day to recap your experiences this week. If you missed a day of devotions, use today to catch up. Look back at the previous five days. If you felt moved to pray or do something this week, how did you do? If you didn't accomplish what you felt led to do, what will your new plan to accomplish it look like?

Day 7 — Sunday

What words or stories from the sermon brought you to thankfulness? _____

Week 4

Preparing our Gifts for Jesus, the newborn king

The week before Christmas is a time for final preparations and gift wrapping.

This week we consider the joy of anticipation as gifts are given from God to us, from us to loved ones, and from us to God.

We celebrate stories of faith and giving.

Day 1 — Monday

The Gift of HOPE: A promise to live by – Isaiah looks forward

Isaiah 9:2-6

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.
³ You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
⁴ For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

When you look forward into the coming year, what causes you to rejoice? _____

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Day 2 — Tuesday

The Gift of PEACE: The longing of God's people – Simeon rests in peace

Luke 2:25-32 [33-35]

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹ "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;
³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation
³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel."

³³ And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵ (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

When Simeon saw the baby Jesus, he knew he had seen the Savior of the world and was ready to die in peace. What prayer has God answered for you that brought a sense of peace?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Day 3 — Wednesday

The Gift of JOY: Good news of great Joy – Angels rejoice

Luke 2:9-14

⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

How do you plan to share the joy I have in the gift of Jesus with the generations that will come after you?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Day 4 — Thursday

The Gift of LOVE: The Shepherds tell their story – Treasures for Mary's heart.

Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

Write about time that you experienced giving as an expression of love, either as the giver or the receiver of gifts.

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Day 5 — Friday

The Gift of WORSHIP: Gift giving and worship go together – Magi

Matthew 2:1-2, 10-12

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹ And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

What word or phrase in this reading caught your attention? _____

How does this word or phrase connect your life? _____

What gift can you offer to someone who has everything? _____

What can you do today or tomorrow (pick one small thing) to show God that you love Him?

Lord, what are you asking me to remember, to pray about, or to do today or this week? _____

Day 6 — Saturday

The Gift of JESUS: Christmas Eve – "...unto us a Child is born"

Luke 2:1-7, 21

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

²¹And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Today is a day to celebrate and give thanks for the birth of Our Savior. What does His birth mean to you?

Day 7 — Sunday

The Gift of IMMANUEL: Christmas Day – "God with us"

We began this devotional with Thanksgiving. How will you make time today for to thank God for his on-going presence in your life and the gift of His Son, our Savior?

Matthew 1:19-25

¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

What readings or songs from the Service of Lessons & Carols brought you to thankfulness?
