

Seymour Christian Reformed Church

Thanksgiving Day Worship

November 28, 2019 10:00 a.m.

If you are a newcomer to Seymour Church we want you to know that you are very welcome here. If you have any questions about our family of God or are interested in affiliating with our congregation, Pastor Brian White would be delighted to talk with you. Please leave your contact information on the Friendship Register or connect with him at 616-245-8726 or brian@seymourchurch.org.

Bold Print: Congregation participates audibly; *congregation stands, if able.

Prelude: "Let All Things Now Living" Larson
"Lord of the Dance" (19th Century Shaker Music) Wagner
"We Gather Together" (Netherlands Folk Tune) Keveren

*Call to Worship: Psalm 100

Leader: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

East Side: **Worship the Lord with gladness!**

West Side: **Come into God's presence with singing!**

Leader: Know this! The Lord is God.

East Side: **Know this! We belong to the LORD who made us.**

West Side: **Know this! We are God's people, and the sheep of God's pasture.**

Leader: So, enter God's gates with thanksgiving,

East Side: **Come into the holy courts with praise.**

West Side: **Give thanks to God and bless God's holy name.**

Leader: For the Lord is good;

East Side: **God's steadfast love endures forever,**

West Side: **God's faithfulness is for all generations.**

*God's Greeting

*Hymn of Thanksgiving: "Come, You Thankful People, Come" Red 473

*Welcome / Mutual Greeting

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

*Songs of Thanksgiving: "Forever"
"Blessed Be Your Name"

Children's Message

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Scripture: Matthew 15:29-38

page 904

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Message: "Sacred Heights: Generosity Mountain"

Prayer of Application

*Hymn of Response: "Now Thank We All Our God" Red 543:1, 2

Offertory Prayer

Thanksgiving Offering

(Please sign and pass the Friendship Register)

Offertory: "He Never Failed Me" (Ray) Sanctuary Choir

*Parting Blessing

*Closing Song: "Now Thank We All Our God" Red 543:3

Postlude: "Now Thank We All Our God" Bach

Preaching Pastor: Brian White

Organist: Ilene Woldhuis

Song Leaders: Worship Team

Trumpeters: Seymour Brass

Soloist: Brian Hofstra

Liturgist: Shawn May

Pianists: Wendy Zwiers, Sondra Minnema

Ministry of Music: Sanctuary Choir

Cellist: Sara White

Seymour Christian Reformed Church
840 Alger Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Church Phone: (616) 245.8726
Email: info@seymourchurch.org

History of “Now Thank We All Our God”

Throughout the past three centuries, the hymn, “Now Thank We All Our God” is among the most used, especially for services of Thanksgiving. Frequently, song lyrics are written from times of deep distress. So it was with the writing of “Now Thank We All Our God.”

German pastor Martin Rinkart served in the walled town of Eilenburg, Germany, during the horrors of the Thirty Years War of 1618-1648. Eilenburg became an overcrowded refuge for the surrounding area. The fugitives suffered from epidemic and famine. Pastor Rinkart was the only pastor that remained to shepherd the people. In 1637, the year of the Great Pestilence, as the only pastor, he often conducted funeral services for as many as 40 to 50 persons a day—some 4,480 in all. In May of that year, his own wife died. By the end of the year, the refugees had to be buried in trenches without services.

In the face of overwhelming pressure, constant risk and horrendous conditions, Rinkart never stopped ministering to the people of his city. He gave away nearly everything he owned to the poor and needy, though he could barely clothe and feed his own children. He mortgaged his own future income to provide for his family and his community.

At one point toward the end of the war, the Swedish army surrounded the city and demanded an enormous ransom from the impoverished and starving citizens. Knowing his people didn't have the money, Rinkart pleaded with the Swedes to lower the amount, only to be rejected. It's reported that Rinkart returned to the city, fell on his knees and said, “Come, my children, we can find no hearing, no mercy with men, let us take refuge with God.” He then began to pray so fervently that the Swedish general was moved to lower his price to less than five percent of the original sum.

After nearly thirty years of ceaseless struggles, it began to look like peace was within grasp. Wanting to give his children a song to sing to God in thanks at the dinner table, Rinkart sat down and composed what would become one of the most well known Thanksgiving hymns of all time, “Now Thank We All Our God.” Yet, while living in a world dominated by death, Rinkart wrote this timeless prayer of thanksgiving for his children—a reminder to be grateful to God for all things, at all times.