

Family Sunday School Lesson 6 - Giving Thanks

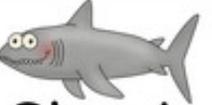
Introduction: What comes to mind when you think of Thanksgiving? Do you do anything special for this day that you look forward to? There are lots of traditions associated with this national holiday, and the story behind the first “thanksgiving” is pretty interesting. At the heart of this celebration is gratitude and giving thanks for things that we might often overlook in our lives. Take a moment this week and look around at your relationships, notice the little things that you use every day, learn something new about the world, find a way to share a sign of peace and love with someone in your life.



Start the Fun!

Animal Charades!

Take turns thinking of a creature that God created. Act it out without making any noise. Other players should shout out their guesses until someone gets it correct. If no one can guess it correctly after a minute, include sound effects. The person who guesses it correctly gets to go next.

Crab 	Hippo 	Shark 
Bird 	Turtle 	Lizard 
Sheep 	Turkey 	Horse 

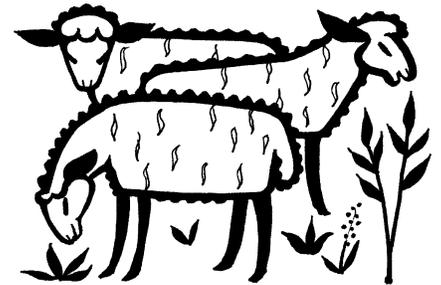
Read together

Psalm 100 *A Song of Thanksgiving*

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.
Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us,
and not we ourselves;
We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise:
Be thankful unto him, and bless his name.
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his
truth
endureth to all generations

Or read this easier translation:

Shout for joy to the Lord, everyone on earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness, come to the Lord with
songs of joy.
Know that the Lord is God who made us and to whom we belong.
We are God's people; we are the sheep belonging to God's flock.
Give thanks as you enter the gates of God's temple. Give praise as you
enter its courtyards. Give thanks to God and praise God's name.
The Lord is good. God's faithful love continues forever. It will last for all time
to come.



Discuss:

Ask: What is something we can learn about God from this Psalm?

Discussion points: The Psalm says God made us. It says we are God's people, God is good, God is merciful (or gives us things like forgiveness that we don't deserve), and God's love will last forever.

Why are we reading Psalm 100 today?

This Psalm is appropriate for Thanksgiving week since it is commonly called "A Song of Thanksgiving." The first Thanksgiving seems to have come at the end of another good harvest, which the Native people gave thanks and, for the lucky English Puritans who would not have survived their first year without the help of the Wampanoag tribe.

Here is a brief history on this holiday: <https://www.history.com/news/first-thanksgiving-colonists-native-americans-men>

But Psalm 100 is also connected to the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving. In fact, the Pilgrims may have sung a version of this Psalm, as written below. When the Pilgrims entered their place of worship, all the women and children sat on the left and the men sat on the right side. What kind of singing did the Pilgrims do?

Musical instruments were never allowed during their worship services but they did bring along published Psalters from which to sing. Psalters were books of Psalms. The Pilgrims didn't sing other hymns because their religion only allowed teaching directly from the Bible.

Here are the words Henry Ainsworth wrote in a book written especially for the Pilgrims, rephrasing Psalm 100. It was sung to the same tune we use for the Doxology or "Praise God to Whom All Blessings Flow." It may be the oldest hymn in constant use today and has appeared in over a thousand English-language psalters and hymnals.

Listen to this version and try to sing along!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2m7BTuy5Z0>

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell;
Come ye before Him and rejoice.

The Lord, ye know, is God indeed;
Without our aid He did us make;
We are His folk, He doth us feed,
And for His sheep He doth us take.

O enter then His gates with praise;
Approach with joy His courts unto;
Praise, laud, and bless His Name always,
For it is seemly so to do.

For why? the Lord our God is good;
His mercy is for ever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.

To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
The God Whom Heaven and earth adore,
From men and from the angel host
Be praise and glory evermore.

Pray

Thank God for whatever blessings are on your heart. Praise God with cheerfulness, as the Psalm instructs.

Participate

Craft Time!

Psychological studies have shown that people who are grateful tend to be happier, more engaged with hobbies and schoolwork, have better relationships and report greater satisfaction in general.



Gratitude Tree

You will need: several double-sided colored sheets of paper, string or ribbon, scissors, twigs or tree branches, some stones or marbles, a vase, and a sense of gratitude.

- Step 1: Make one or more leaf cutouts to use as a template for your leaves. You can use this pdf <https://www.firstpalette.com/pdf/leaf-mix.pdf>
Trace your leaves on your colored paper using your template(s).
- Step 2: Cut out the leaves, punch a hole at the top of each leaf, and loop your string or ribbon through each hole.
- Step 3: Put the stones or marbles in a vase and stick the tree branch or twig in the middle.
- Step 4: Have your (or your child) draw or write things that you (or your child) are grateful for on the leaves. You can also use photographs if you'd like.
- Step 5: Hang the leaves from the branches, and behold your gratitude tree!

Here's a quick how-to video on the gratitude tree:
<https://youtu.be/WcNoq8GL6tY>

Wrap Up

God loves us and will continue to love us for eternity. Since we cannot earn God's love or repay God for it, the only response we can make is to be thankful. Happy Thanksgiving!

Take a Moment to Breathe

Thankfulness Breath

Find a comfortable seated position and take a few moments to think of three or four things that you are thankful for.

When you are ready to begin, bring attention to your breath. Breathing through your nose, inhale slowly and exhale slowly. Bring your **thumb to your pointer finger** and breathe in gratitude for the **first** thing you are thankful for. Breathe out slowly. Bring your **thumb to your middle finger** and breathe in gratitude for the **second** thing you are thankful for. Breathe out slowly. Bring your **thumb to your ring finger** and breathe in gratitude for the **third** thing you are thankful for. Breathe out slowly. Bring your **thumb to your pinky finger** and breathe in gratitude for the fourth thing you are thankful for. Breathe out slowly. Feel free to repeat as many times as you are able, focusing on the same four things each time, or identifying new things.