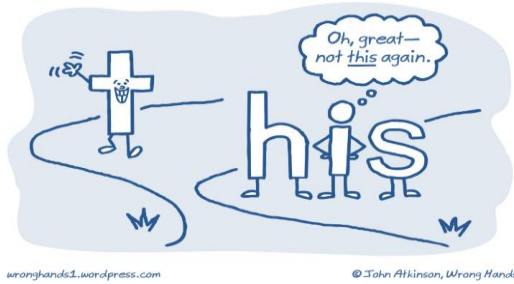


## Interactive lesson

*his pet peeve*



picture from <https://wronghands1.com/his-pet-peeve-2/>

What are your pet peeves? <Let them respond>

Why do those bother you? <Let them respond>

I really like this cartoon. It reminds me of when someone (like me!) wants his way, and Jesus comes along to show this better way, like He taught.

Many times, people would grouse about something, and Jesus would make them look at it differently.

So, to look at your pet peeves differently, what blessings are evident in them? <Let them respond; for an example, someone chewing with mouth open - there is food to eat!>

Can blessings be found in every situation?

<Let them respond>

How do we respond to those blessings? How should we?

<Let them respond>

<Hand out/read poem "I am thankful for..." by Nancie J. Carmody>

Let us remember to give thanks to God at all times and in all places, for the bounty we have already received.

## Gospel lesson

We continue in John this week with yet more discussion on “the bread of life.”



background picture from  
<https://onedishkitchen.com/french-bread-recipe/>

**John 6:51-58**

(NRSV)

<sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

<sup>52</sup> The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

<sup>53</sup> So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

<sup>54</sup> Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day;

<sup>55</sup> for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.

<sup>56</sup> Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.

<sup>57</sup> Just as the living Father sent me, and I live

because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.

<sup>58</sup> This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

*The word of God for the people of God*

<Hymn "Give Thanks" TFWS #2036>

## Message: Giving Thanks



picture from <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/geared-up-for-life/twelfth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/twelfth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-graphics>

Please pray with me?

Holy Restorer of all good that we are, as we take time now to further consider today's scriptures, please

- speak Your words through my mouth,
- open our ears to hear Your message, and
- abide in our hearts,

That we overflow with thanks given for Your glory.

Amen.



Gearing up for life, we are “Giving Thanks” today. In summary:

“Every fourth week of November, we tell ourselves that Thanksgiving should not just be a once-a-year thing, but a way of living every day. Ephesians 5:15-20 is a call to remember that belief. This brief text sums up with “giving thanks to God the Father at all times.” At all times! What if we held a thanksgiving service here in the middle of August?”

There were two brothers, one of whom was an optimist and one who was a pessimist. The parents tried to get them a little less extreme one Christmas with the gifts given to them.



picture from <https://www.amazon.com/Rescue-Shooting-Lights-Extending-Vokodo/dp/B01M2VB8TR>



picture from [https://stablemanagement.com/image/t\\_share/MTQ1NDU4NTA1NDE2NzEzNzgz/making-the-most-of-manure-promo-image.jpg](https://stablemanagement.com/image/t_share/MTQ1NDU4NTA1NDE2NzEzNzgz/making-the-most-of-manure-promo-image.jpg)

To the pessimist, they gave the toy he wanted most, a shiny firetruck with extendable ladders. Upon opening it, he was awestruck, and then began to cry. When asked why he was crying, he said that he could not play with it, or it would get dirty and broken.

Sighing, the parents gave the optimist his gift: a pile of manure. The boy took one look at it, gave a

cry of glee, grabbed a shovel and began digging in it. Confused, his parents asked what he was doing.

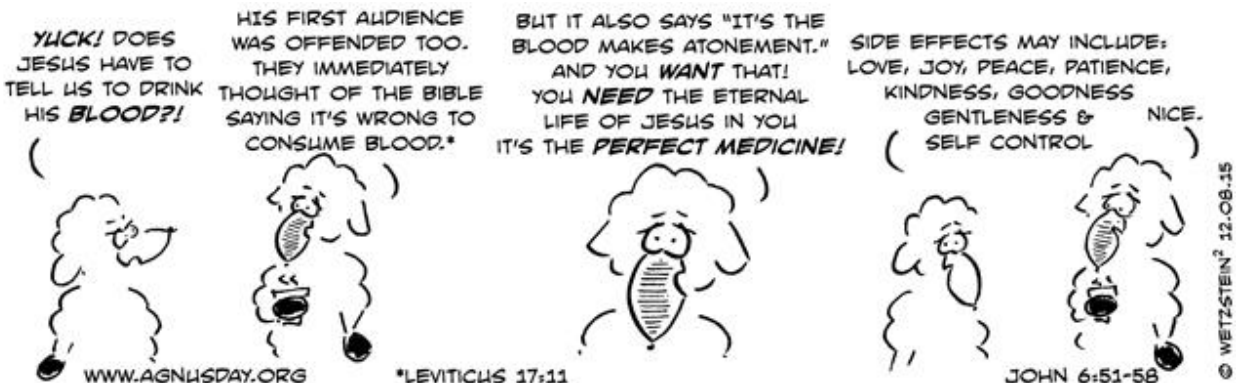
He replied, "With all these droppings, there must be a pony around here somewhere!"

How often do we receive gifts from God, but either not accept the joy they can bring or misunderstand what God is giving us?

Young Solomon inherited a great kingdom. Like the boy with the firetruck, he recognized that it was great, but he was overwhelmed with the responsibility of ruling.

Some of the Ephesians, told that they were forgiven and that Jesus would be returning, thought that it did not matter how they behaved, and so were causing problems for the community instead of honoring God.

The Jews, listening to Jesus talk about being the "bread of life," got caught up in cannibalistic concerns without understanding what was before them.



<https://www.agnusday.org/comics/542/john-06-51-58-2012>

We've been talking a lot about the "bread of life;" this is the third week it is in the lectionary.

- † In the Gospel of John, the celebration of the Eucharist is established during His countryside ministry rather than at the Last Supper.
- † In John, to share in the eucharist meal is to be in relationship with Jesus; it is not to commemorate one event, but to share in all of Jesus's life, including His death and resurrection, that we can live in this new life now as well as later.

Two weeks ago, I spoke about how the only life worth living is the one rooted in the love of God. Last week (in Georgetown) I talked about Jesus speaking the truth to us regarding our need for forgiveness and restoration.

This week, we focus on giving thanks to God for the blessings of restoration given to us, much like we see in the Bible.

- † Solomon used the gift of wisdom that God gave him to rule the Israelites well, and in thanks built the temple to honor God that David had envisioned.
- † The early Christians in Ephesus sang psalms and hymns in their hearts, giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

† Those who shared in the life Jesus offered them were satisfied, renewed both physically and spiritually as a whole person, more than those who were hungry and thirsty in the desert during the Exodus were satisfied with manna and spring water. From those who shared in the life of Jesus came the new people of God.



*picture from personal photo*

We are part of that family, children of God. We can and we should give thanks at all times and in all places for the love and joy God enables us to have... though it does not always feel like we want to give thanks.

Nancie J. Carmody wrote a poem, "I Am Thankful For..." I handed it out to you earlier. She says in it that she is thankful for things we often view with distaste, because of the blessings inherent in them. Here some things I thought of after reading hers:

† I am thankful for the pile of dirty dishes after each meal, because it means we have food to eat, a place to prepare it, and dishes from which to consume it.

- † I am thankful for when my sleep is disrupted at 2 am by my pager, because it means I am healthy enough to help someone else, and I know how to.
- † I am thankful for the piles of laundry to fold, because it means I have [more than one outfit of clothes to wear], non-clothing items like towels & sheets, and a washer & dryer for cleaning them.
- † I am thankful when I have to stop for gas, because it means I have a car in which I can drive around.
- † I am thankful for breathing through the cloth masks we are being asked to wear again when in crowded areas, because it means I am able to breathe without a ventilator and not under quarantine.

I am sure that when you look around your life this week, you can notice blessings underlying the hassles you have to deal with. When you get upset, make a point of taking a moment to breathe and think of those blessings. Then give God thanks that you are so blessed, and once you have done that, deal with the hassle in the love of God.

And now let us express that Good News by which we are so blessed and for which we are so thankful, using

**Affirmation from 1 Corinthians 15:1-6 and Colossians 1:15-20**

UMH #888

*Leader:* This is the good news which we have received, in which we stand, and by which we are saved:



*People:* Christ died for our sins, was buried, was raised on the third day, and appeared first to the women, then to Peter and the Twelve, and then to many faithful witnesses.

We believe Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One of God, the firstborn of all creation, the firstborn from the dead, in whom all things hold together, in whom the fullness of God was pleased to dwell by the power of the Spirit.

Christ is the head of the body, the church, and by the blood of the cross reconciles all things to God. Amen.

### <Doxology>

#### <Prayer of Dedication and Pastoral Prayer>

Let us pray:

Eternal God, our time in this life is limited, and our days are numbered.

Yet you have reminded us that if we are wise and use that time well, you have an eternity waiting for us that is beyond our imagining.

Help us to focus on what we have,

and what we can share,

and how the gifts we offer this day can bless others until we are joined with them

and your children give you their thanks and gratitude for the rest of eternity.

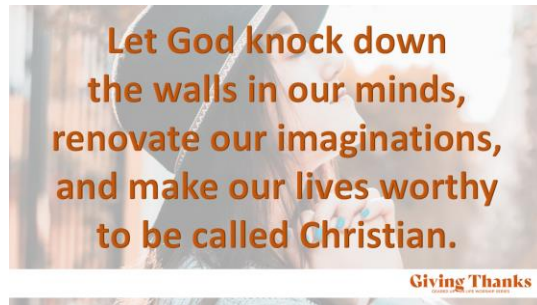
Use our gifts and guide us with Your wisdom in our daily lives.

- Help us, Lord, with healing touch and comfort for:
  - -
  - -
  - -
  - -
  - -
  - -
  - -
  - **Covid** - delta outbreaks, vaccine issues worldwide
  - **Haiti** - earthquake
  - **Places devastated by fires** - US, Canada, Siberia, Mediterranean; downwind air quality
- Thanks for
  - -
  - -
- Hold those who cannot be with us in Your loving embrace until we see them again.
  - Family far off
  - Travelers
- Send Your Spirit to address world/social problems
  - end bigotry, dismantle racism, reform systems persist
  - bring world peace
- Guide our Leaders - local, state, federal, international, and especially of Your church.

All these things we pray as You taught us to pray,  
<Lord's Prayer>

<Hymn "Now Thank We ALL Our God"      UMH #102>

<Benediction>



background from <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/geared-up-for-life/twelfth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/twelfth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-b-graphics>

Gearing up for **life** in the Spirit,  
Let God knock down the walls in our minds,  
renovate our imaginations,  
and make our lives worthy to be called Christian.  
Go forth **giving thanks**  
for God's grace in the world. Amen.