

Sermon
Rev. Lang Yang

“Fill with Joy”

Thanksgiving Eve and Day
St. Michael’s Lutheran Church – Richville, MI
November 25-26, 2015

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Psalm 126:3 *“The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.”* This is the Word of God.
(Cross reference – Isaiah 25:9, Joel 2:21, 26, Zephaniah 3:14)

Illustration “Hope for a better life” (Show saying good bye on the bus)



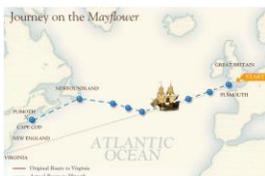
After the Vietnam War many Hmong families had escape or made a journey to neighboring country of Laos. The majority settle in a refugee camp in Thailand. While living at the refugee camp in Thailand the United States started to sponsor many of the Hmong families to come to the United States of America. Many Hmong families are overjoy because they will no longer be persecute, rule under the oppression of dictatorship and will be free from the communist rule in Laos. The hope is for a better place to live, a better life for their children and mostly it will have peace. The hope for a better life brings tears of joy to the Hmong families. As they got on the bus and saying

their good bye to their families and love one, the one that are still waiting for their turn and those that are on the bus on their way to Bangkok to be process with immigration paperwork to legally coming to live in the US are fill with joy that a new life will finally begin.

I. When we look back at last year, how much our lives have change? (Show persecution)



What did you do in your life that you are at peace? Some of you probably scratching your head and try to think, what did I do for this past year? You don’t really have to think much about it because God’s had been good and His abundant grace are upon you each day of your life. You have the freedom to worship freely while many Christians in others country are being persecuted. They are jail, torture, and even kill for being a Christian. (Show the Mayflower)



Our founding father of this great nations came to this land so that they may be free to worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In 1620, the Mayflower came to the new world in search of religious freedom. In England, the believer were being persecuted for their faith. Putting their faith in God, they pack and left their homeland the birth of their ancestor for generation. (Show history of map)



In the year 1839, German Lutheran begin to arrive in the United States. While they cross the great Atlantic Ocean and went north on the Mississippi River, they finally settle in St. Louis, Missouri. The German settle in Perry County and this is where The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod begin its root. What are the German Christian looking for when they came to the United States? They are

looking for the freedom to worship the Triune God so that they may fill with peace and joy in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (Show celebrating Thanksgiving)



Many of the pilgrims that came to the United States celebrate their first Thanksgiving with the Wampanoag Indian by giving glory and honor to God. People from different nations such as Europe and Asia begin to arrive in the United States, business begin to develop, job opportunities increase, and many became rich and fill with joy for the blessing that God had blessed this land with increase and overflow with milk and honey. (Show successful Hmong person)



Many of the Hmong people had nothing when they come to the United States. Just a couples sets of clothes on their back and look at today. Many had become business owner, congress, senator, doctor, lawyer and judges. Living from a house of straw and bamboo hut in Laos and Thailand to a nice brick house in the US. Today, many are fill with joy for the opportunities to succeed in life.

II. We live in a word that people tend to think about themselves instead of giving thanks to God. People tend to say, “My house is too small, my car is not as fancy as others, gas are too high, and the list goes on and on.” (Show Thank you Lord)



Have you ever thank God and be content to what you have? A place to live, a car to drive, and still food on the table for your family. I always encourages people when people complaint about not liking chicken, beef or pork. I told them that when I live in Thailand and without a parent, you only eat vegetables and rice. I have to go out at night to set trap for mice and my brothers have to dig cricket during the day so that we may have meat. You should fill with joy by thanking God for the blessedness that He had given you.



We tend to forget of not thanking God for the abundance that we have. Others people in others country have nothing except a little shelter with plastic wrap around the house to keep from rain. Even with this living condition, the people are content. But most people that has a lot constantly complain that they need more. Many years ago Chrysler has to cut some hour for their hourly wages employees in order to bring the company back to profit. During the wage cut, the

news media interview a female employee. During the interview, she cry and cry and stated that “I’m making \$20.00 per hour and now my wages was cut to \$18.00 per hours. I will not have enough money to support my family.” You see, she only think about her wages been cut and she did not appreciate that she still had her job. (Show complaint)



Recently, I was interpreting for a Hmong female concerning a review for her welfare and Medicaid benefit. During the interpretation, all she did was complaint that the case worker purposely pick on her. She stated, “Others people had less children in their family and they still received benefits. Why does the case worker had to do the review? I should just receive the benefit permanent and no review ever needed.” The case worker said, “Every case have to be review in every six month so that the benefit can be appropriately apply to each family status. Family status change and benefit can be more or less depend on the situation.” This

Among ladies still complaint stating, “Oh... I have so much headache, I still don’t understand it...I don’t need this review.” After interpreting for her, I thought to my-self, “This is the people tax money that help pay for her benefit. The government doesn’t have to help her. It is a free gift that they are trying to give her all the benefit that she qualify for.” Instead of appreciating and be thankful, she still complaint. What about you? Do you appreciate what God’s has provided for you? Do you fill with joy? Everything that you have is a gift from God.

III. Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks and always remember all the goodness that God’s had provided for you. United States is the riches country in the world. **(Show rich and poor)**

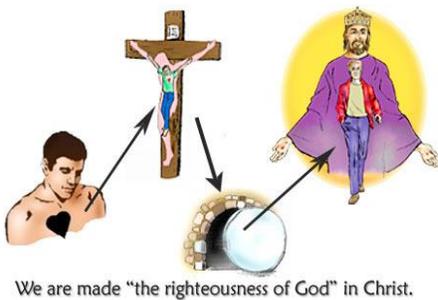


Every house has 2-4 bedroom with running water with electric, heat, refrigerator, and others amenities. People still complaints. Others country has no home to live. No electric, no running water, no stove – every day everything has to begin from scratch: building a wooden fire, bringing water from the outside bin, preparing meals before going to work on the farm. This people content with what they have. In the US, hospital or medical clinic are everywhere. Others country you have to walk for a day

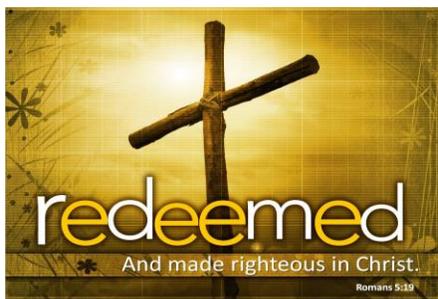
just to be seen by a doctor. United States have overflow with food where others country and many people doesn’t know when their next meals will be. When you here all these, do you fill with joy to what you have and thank God for his goodness or do you still complaint and want more? **(Show give thanks)**



Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, don’t only give thanks on Thanksgiving Day but you should fill with joy in everything and always give thanks every day of your life. You give thanks because our gracious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has forgiven your sin on the cross. While you were sinner, live in darkness, Christ came to this world and set you free from the bondage of sin and make you righteous so that you may have life in Him. **(Show made righteous in Christ)**



This is what the Apostle Paul write to the Corinthians, he said “*It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*” (1 Corinthians 1:30) We become righteous in Christ because He live in us and we are in Him. Let us celebrate Thanksgiving and be fill with joy knowing that He is with us always to the end of the age. Let us celebrate Thanksgiving and fill with joy of knowing that you already have life with Him in heaven forever and ever.



Let us celebrate Thanksgiving and Fill with joy that you are redeemed and made righteous in Christ. (Romans 5:19) Let us celebrate Thanksgiving and fill with joy by singing, praising, and giving the glory and honor to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen