



OVERVIEW

*This year, growing in rest has
been the vision for All Souls.*

GRATITUDE

*Put simply, gratitude is
connecting a gift to the giver.*

welcome

“What if Christians were known as a countercultural community of the well-rested— people who embrace our limits with zest and even joy?” —Rev. Tish Harrison Warren

Introduce yourself with: Your Name + A Gift God has Given You Today +
A Memorable Time You Truly Felt ‘Overflowing’ with Thankfulness

opening reflection

Thank God! He deserves your thanks.

His love never quits.

Thank the God of all gods,

His love never quits.

Thank the Lord of all lords.

His love never quits.

Thank the miracle-working God,

His love never quits.

The God whose skill formed the cosmos,

His love never quits.

The God who laid out earth on ocean foundations,

His love never quits.

The God who filled the skies with light,

His love never quits.

The sun to watch over the day,

His love never quits.

Moon and stars as guardians of the night,

His love never quits.

The God who struck down the Egyptian firstborn,

His love never quits.

And rescued Israel from Egypt’s oppression,

His love never quits.

Took Israel in hand with his powerful hand,

His love never quits.

Split the Red Sea right in half,

His love never quits.

Led Israel right through the middle,

His love never quits.

God remembered us when we were down,

His love never quits.

Takes care of everyone in time of need.

His love never quits.

Thank God, who did it all!

His love never quits!

— Psalm 139

gratitude: a perspective we practice

*“The world is given; we did not make it, nor do we fully control it.” —Marilyn Robinson *The Givenness of Things**

Gratitude is not just an emotion, it is a way of seeing: Gratitude frames our lives as **received, not earned**. Gratitude grounds us in reality: the givenness of all things. Without gratitude, we live in a false and harmful version of the world that destroys it and isolates us. Gratitude is a participation in life as it actually is and connects us profoundly to each other and to God, the Giver. Gratitude the way we experience connection. This is why loneliness so often accompanies ingratitude and current statistics note an alarming spike in both.

In the Bible, gratitude is seen as both **occasional** (Miriam singing gratefully on the shores of the Red Sea on the other side of Egyptian slavery) but also **occupational** (Psalm 139 is an intentional reflection on what we have to be grateful for; Psalm 103:2 urges us to not forget God’s benefits; and in the first letter to the Thessalonians the people are commanded to practice gratitude). Why is gratitude so essential?

gratitude: the rich soil in which fruit grows

*“To be a saint is to be fueled by gratitude— nothing less. Gratitude is the basis of all holiness. The holiest person you know is the most grateful person you know.” —Ronald Rolheiser *The Holy Longing**

Galatians 5:22-23 describes “The Fruit of the Spirit” as an image of human flourishing. The image shows how living aligned with God’s Spirit, connected by gratitude for what God has done is doing and will do, makes us fruitful. But living by what Galatians calls “the flesh” leaves us barren. Explore below why gratitude is so vital to our flourishing and the flourishing of our communities. What fruitlessness and harm emerges when gratitude is absent? Without thankfulness, the heart drifts toward self-centeredness, fear, and impatience— producing behaviors aligned with the flesh rather than the Spirit.

Fruit of the Spirit	Opposite (Works of the Flesh / Ungrateful Heart)
Love	Hatred, selfishness, indifference, hostility
Joy	Bitterness, despair, cynicism, unhappiness
Peace	Anxiety, strife, conflict, restlessness
Patience	Impatience, irritability, anger, rage
Kindness	Cruelty, harshness, meanness, unfriendliness
Goodness	Immorality, corruption, greed, injustice
Faithfulness	Unreliability, betrayal, infidelity, untrustworthiness
Gentleness	Harshness, arrogance, aggression, insensitivity
Self-Control	Impulsiveness, indulgence, lack of restraint, addiction

“The grumpier you are, the more assholes you meet.” — Banksy graffitied truck

gratitude: how to dayenu דַּיְנוּ

In the traditional Passover Seder meal, the leader recalls God's saving acts:

If you had just brought us out of Egypt — Dayenu! pron. die-ay-new "it would have been enough!"

If you had just parted the Red Sea — Dayenu!

If you had just given the Torah — Dayenu!

If you had just brought us to the Promised Land — Dayenu!

The point is not that God stops after one blessing, but that each blessing is more than we deserve. Gratitude multiplies when we slow down to thank God for each gift and the act of noticing/remembering/cherishing protects us from joyless, cheap indulgence. We desperately need this protection today. Thanking God habitually for what He has given is a lifestyle built on God's faithfulness and God's promises rather than our fears or our worst impulses.

write your own dayenu

Recall 3-5 specific ways God has been faithful —big or small, from salvation to today's simplest mercies. After each statement, write "— Dayenu."

For Example:

"If You had just forgiven me— Dayenu."

"If You had just provided a home— Dayenu."

"If You had just opened this new opportunity— Dayenu."

The point is this: practicing gratitude can radically transform who God is and what He has given into an *abundant enough*. Try doing this weekly —or to really stretch yourself: write down 3-5 specific things daily as a gratitude journal. Use phone or calendar reminders to help.

gratitude in action

What do you want to do with your abundant enough? What fruit do you want to see growing in the soil of gratitude in your life, in your relationships, on your block, in church, at work?

How do you imagine gratitude leading to giving in your life?

Give words: Who can you write to say thank you?

Give attention: Who can you spend 5 minutes of uninterrupted time with, asking open questions and listening?

Give advocacy: Who do you know that needs help and to whom your position or skill can be useful?

Give money: How much more can you give away? What budget could be allocated toward generosity?

Give praise: What does being in close relationship with the most generous person in the world feel like?