

Message: *Unite in Thanksgiving*

May God's Grace and peace be with you this day! This is the day the Lord has made... let us rejoice and be glad in it! To God be the glory!

That's exactly what Luke tells us in the passage we read together. This text is known as the Benedictus, or Canticle(Song) of Zechariah. In this selection we hear Zechariah's prophecy for his new born son, John. Our purpose in reading this text today is not so much about John, as it is on what God has done, is doing, and will do.

The final stanza (78-79) spells it out...⁷⁸ **Because of our God's deep compassion,**

the dawn from heaven will break upon us,

⁷⁹ **to give light to those who are sitting in darkness**

and in the shadow of death,

to guide us on the path of peace."

In this we hear why we sing praise and unite in thanksgiving... God is faithful, God is at work, and will deliver & restore God's people.

Our second reading, from Colossians, is also a hymn of praise for all that God has done through Jesus the Christ.

In this text, Paul encourages us to live differently in this world: bearing fruit in good work, going deeper in knowledge of God; strengthened, having patience and endurance; giving thanks for all that God has done.

Friends, I pray that every day it is easier and easier to live differently with God ... that each of us might have a song in our heart... and that we share it with those we meet.

Praise the Lord and tell someone what God has done for you... especially in the hardest of times... how someone who 'clothed' themselves with compassion & kindness and, in that moment, shared their faith, offered prayer, and gathered hope about you. Let us go forth to unite in thanksgiving, giving glory to God. May it be so! Amen.

... Amen.