



Sermon Excerpts:

## *“Thanksgiving Gumbo”*

**November 20, 2022**

***The first ingredient of this Thanksgiving Gumbo is the truth about the first thanksgiving.***

- *Learn About Whose Lands You Are On*
- *Learn the Real History*
- *Share Positive Representations of Native People*

***“Imagine if you woke up today with the things you only thanked God for yesterday.”***

***The next ingredient is 2 Thessalonians 1:1-3 (GW) “From Paul, Silas, and Timothy. To the church at Thessalonica united with God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Good will and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are yours! We always must thank God for you, brothers, and sisters. It is right to do this because your faith is showing remarkable growth and your love for each other is increasing***

MARKS from Peter Steinke’s work on healthy congregations to measure our congregational sickness and wellness. Healthy Congregations exhibit the following MARKS:

- Healthy Congregations accept differences (rather than deny them)
- Healthy Congregations focus on their strengths (rather than weaknesses)

- Healthy Congregations focus on mission (rather than “getting along,” the past, survival, the “minister,” or some other thing or issue)
- Healthy Congregations respond to anxiety and change (instead of reacting)
- Healthy Congregations manage conflict (instead of denying it)
- Healthy Congregations act flexibly and creatively (instead of rigidly)
- In healthy congregations, leaders promote health through their presence and functioning (instead of techniques or skills)
- In healthy congregations, leaders challenge people (instead of comforting them)
- In healthy congregations, leaders provide immune capacities (instead of enabling disease processes)
- In healthy congregations, people respond cautiously and truthfully (rather than judgmentally or secretively)
- In healthy congregations, people develop caring relationships (rather than willful transactions)
- In healthy congregations, people empower others (rather than dominate them or cure them)
- Healthy Congregations recognize the Creator’s interdependent design of life (rather than isolated, unrelated parts)
- Healthy Congregations practice stewardship gratefully and willingly (rather begrudgingly)
- Healthy Congregations combine money and the Christian Life (rather than separate the one from the other)

***The third ingredient of our Thanksgiving gumbo is to show our thanks to God for all that God has done by giving.***

Thankfulness puts everything in the proper perspective; God gives what is needed for service, comfort, expression, and recreation.

To increase my thankfulness, I must take an inventory of all that I have (including my relationships, memories, abilities, family, and material possessions).

We must express gratitude tangibly; look for practical ways you can show your thankfulness to your family, friends, coworkers, and anyone in your life!

Offer gifts of self, time, and resources. If you are genuinely thankful, your life will show it.

Give voice to your gratitude, talk about it, and tell others what you are thankful for. Brag about how good God is.