

## Psalm 100 The Message (MSG)

### A Thanksgiving Psalm

**100** <sup>1-2</sup>On your feet now—applaud GOD!

Bring a gift of laughter,  
sing yourselves into his presence.

<sup>3</sup>Know this: GOD is God, and God, GOD.

He made us; we didn't make him.  
We're his people, his well-tended sheep.

<sup>4</sup>Enter with the password: "Thank you!"

Make yourselves at home, talking praise.  
Thank him. Worship him.

<sup>5</sup>For GOD is sheer beauty,

all-generous in love,  
loyal always and ever.

The church is alive. For that we are grateful.

What do you imagine that a few folks were thinking, when they gathered together to sign some legal documents that organized – what is today – Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran Church?

The war was ended. Diversity abounded. People were distancing themselves from some political thoughts. War heroes were around. The mechanical means of travel were rapidly developing. Neighborhoods gathered people of like ethnicity.

The world was a “happening” place. America – land of the free! And home of the brave was ripe with life.

We celebrate the memory of what we think happened.

Midwest Lutheran theology and kindness was expressed.

The social core of the faith was expected to grow from the gathering of people who established our first steps as a statement to the growing city of Pasadena. I imagine there was a song.



Based on what has been shared on social media these past 100 days; it is apparent to me that the Living Lord celebrated with those Norwegians (and others) who gathered.

I know there was a lot of work. Well before the ELCA established the motto: “God’s Work; Our Hands” His work was being done in the evangelism, preaching, teaching and outreach to people who were seeking Jesus as a way of life.

More than 3200 people have been named on the roles of Hill Avenue. The permanent record in The Red Book, maintained by the Pastor and Church Council show that there are 225 Baptized members of the congregation. 206 of those Baptized are Confirmed.

When we gaze into the rear-view mirror of our 100 years, we see pictures of joy and celebration.

We know there have been experiences of sadness and sorrow.

We are challenged to be forgiving ... because everyone else does not always want to do ministry and outreach and share the smile and kindness of Jesus ... the way we do.

There have been periods of time when God’s presence has really been visible.

There have been times, when we have thought God was absent.

The ways of the world have not always been kind to the faithful.

But then we recall: from Psalm 100 – God is God; He made us (we did not make him) and we are his well-tended sheep.

For that we are grateful. For that, we can relax and smile along with God, as He is with us through transition.

We should not take ourselves so seriously, that we do not relax and allow God’s work to be done with our hands. Our hands are the instruments of God. He made



us. We should trust that He is directing all of us ... even when the direction is not within the purview of our personal and limited perspective.

Some days we must throw off the blinders and trust that God is leading Hill Avenue Grace down his path; taking us on His journey ... leading us His way.

We must intentionally give up our control and allow God to lead us. He made us ... we did not make Him.

As we remember 100 years of God's generous giving, as we gather in a Sanctuary that I believe few of those founding families could imagine; in a location (probably not even considered possible); with a Chapel designed and glorifying Christ with the magnificent artwork of John August Swanson;

Let us not forget that God leads the way today – just as he has for the past 36,525 days.

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**Listen now to the words** of a song inspired within this worship space. Words written by a new member of Hill Avenue Grace Lutheran. Words inspired by the banners created 20 or 30 years ago ... words inspired by the signs of Lent ... celebrated in 2018. With Paul, experience God's grace ... **AMEN**

