

Sermon Title: Time with Jesus 11.22.2026

Themes: Joyfully gathering with Jesus and family. Live-streaming and sermon notes are at trinitycg.org.

Focus Question: Will you invite Jesus to the feast this Thanksgiving?

Sermon Points: 1. The gathering. Thanksgiving is one of those holidays that is firmly rooted in American culture and history. The *Mayflower* set sail in 1620 and, after 10 weeks at sea with 102 passengers, including William Bradford and Captain Myles Standish, and a crew of about 30, it reached the United States (at the tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts) on November 21, 1620. **John 21:1-6.** They didn't know it yet, but the disciples were about to gather with Jesus. The disciples had worked all night and caught nothing, never realizing that Jesus was already on the shore, preparing breakfast and an unforgettable encounter. They saw empty nets. Jesus saw an opportunity to reveal His provision. Jesus was going to remind them that all they needed could be found in Him. Gratitude doesn't begin when the net is full. It begins when we recognize that Jesus is present, even when the net is empty. Before you count your blessings this Thanksgiving, remember who is standing on the shore.

2. The Savior. Matthew 18:20 “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” It's difficult to follow Jesus if we don't invite Him into our life. If Jesus is not present at your Thanksgiving meal it's not because He doesn't want to be there, it's because you chose not to invite Him. **John 21:7-12.** Peter jumped in the water to be with Jesus. He didn't sit in the boat counting the fish. Yes, count your many blessings, count them one by one, but don't forget to invite Jesus while you're counting your blessings.

3. The gratitude. God wants us to be grateful in our hearts and with our hands, not just by our words. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-19.** Thanksgiving is not pretending that everything is good. It is recognizing that God is good in every circumstance. You may not be able to rejoice over everything that happens, but you can always rejoice in the One who walks with you through it. You may not understand what God is doing, but you can keep praying. And even when life doesn't give you what you want, you can still thank Him for who He is, what He has done, and the promises He will never break. Don't wait for your circumstances to give you a reason to be thankful. Let your relationship with Jesus give you a reason to be thankful in every circumstance. That is the difference between gratitude as a reaction to life and gratitude as a response of faith. Is your heart thankful today? Prayers of thanksgiving to God for the blessings in your life are a great way to change your heart to one of gratitude.

4. The purpose. John 21:13-19. You cannot follow Jesus at a distance and expect to make memories that matter for eternity. Invite Him into your life, love the people He places in your path, and follow Him wherever He leads. One day, the greatest memories you leave behind won't be about what you owned, where you went, or what you accomplished, but about whom you loved, whom you served, and whom you helped bring closer to Jesus.

Invitation: Lord, help me to gratefully and meaningfully gather with You and others this Thanksgiving.