

---

## A MESSAGE FROM 'MARTIN LUTHER'

---

November 25, 2015

# Thanksgiving

Dear members of the LA Diocese, Bishops, and Friends:

The holidays are upon us! We do not want Thanksgiving to pass by unacknowledged, though we and our legendary 'Vicar of Starbucks' have been drinking out of Christmas cups since Halloween! So, our St. James the Great community wanted to take a few minutes to give you an update and express our gratitude for the unexpected blessings we have experienced this year. Our Thanksgiving blessings are many. The following are just a few:

- In Thanksgiving for a parish community that has sparked or revitalized our faith. We still gather together each Sunday to be fed in Word and Sacrament also in the dismissal to 'go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.' While there is certainly pain in the Bishop's seeking to sell our church property and locking us out, we are thankful that he agreed to let us stay together as a community under the spiritual leadership of our Vicar, Reverend Cindy.
- In Thanksgiving for the opportunity to grow, serve and outreach to those in need. Even without physical space, we are still able to collect donations of canned goods and bring guests to our services. Many of us are excited to cook and serve dinner at the O.C. Rescue Mission on Christmas Day.
- In Thanksgiving for new friendships formed at St. James the Great. Our growing, vital community has created a sense of family for every one of us – from 8 weeks to 88 years old. We have sustained each other through this spiritual journey.
- In Thanksgiving for the support and concern so many of you showed us at all the pre-convention deanery meetings these past several weeks. We are grateful for the many expressions of encouragement and support through this difficult time.
- In Thanksgiving for the strength to move forward in faith, hope, and love. As like many of you, we are preparing ourselves for Diocesan Convention coming up next week.

Finally and ironically, we are thankful for this adversity that has befallen us. No other event would make us so deeply appreciate a pew, an altar rail or kneelers; a place to celebrate the Eucharist and Episcopal liturgy that we all know so well. And most importantly, the bonds of affection towards each other created far beyond the 'familiar face in the next pew.'

Happy Thanksgiving from your family in Christ,

The congregation of St. James the Great