

October 8, 2023
Thanksgiving Sunday / Creation 5

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Come, You Thankful People, Come" George J. Elvey Arr. By Victor Labenske

Lighting the Christ Candle

Moment of Silent Reflection

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Call to Worship

Our help is in the name of the Lord who made the heavens and earth.

We glorify our God with songs of thanksgiving and joy.

We will not forget all that God has done,

feeding our ancestors with manna in the wilderness,

quenching their thirst with streams of living water.

We will not forget to speak the simple words, "Thank you!" to our God.

As we sing and shout together of God's amazing love.

Hymn VU 518 "As Those of Old Their First-fruits Brought"

As those of old their first-fruits brought

of vineyard, flock, and field

to God, the giver of all good,

the source of bounteous yield;

so we today our first-fruits bring:

the wealth of this good land,

of farm and market, shop and home,

of mind and heart and hand.

A world in need now summons us

to labour, love, and give,

to make our life an offering

to God, that all may live.

The church of Christ is calling us

to make the dream come true:

a world redeemed, by Christ-like love,

all life in Christ made new.

With gratitude and humble trust

we bring our best to you,

not just to serve your cause, but share

your love with neighbours too.

O God, who gave yourself to us

in Jesus Christ, your son,

help us to give ourselves each day

until life's work is done.

Opening Prayer (unison)

Blessed are you, O Lord, creator of the heavens and the earth. You brought forth grain from the earth and fruit from the trees. In the midst of the work of gathering in your bounty, we turn to you to give you thanks. Even so, sometimes we forget that is you who provides all that we need, and we need to be reminded to give you thanks. Sometimes we forget that others too have needs, and we need to share your bounty with all. Remind us that we are only tenants of this earth and not owners. Remind us that all that we have we owe to you. Help us to be better stewards of your creation and to share your blessings with all your children around this world, that all may have their daily bread. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Anthem: "A Thanksgiving Hodie" Joseph M. Martin

Time for the Young and the Young @



Hymn: VU 535 "For the Music of Creation"

For the music of creation,
for the song your Spirit sings,
for your sound's divine expression,
burst of joy in living things:
God, our God, the world's composer,
hear us, echoes of your voice;
music is your art, your glory,
let the human heart rejoice!

Psalms and symphonies exalt you,
drum and trumpet, string and reed,
simple melodies acclaim you,
tunes that rise from deepest need,
hymns of longing and belonging,
carols from a cheerful throat,
lilt of lullaby and love song
catching heaven in a note.

All the voices of the ages
in transcendent chorus meet,
worship lifting up the senses,
hands that praise, and dancing feet;
over discord and division
music speaks your joy and peace,
harmony of earth and heaven,
song of God that cannot cease!

Responsive Reading: Psalm 65

Refrain: Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion.

Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion;
to you shall vows be performed.

You give heed to prayer; to you all mortals shall come.

The burden of our sins is too great for us,
but you will purge them away.

R: Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion.

Blessed are the people you choose
and bring to dwell in your courts.

We shall be filled with the blessings of your house, your holy temple.

With awesome deeds you answer our prayers for deliverance,
O God our saviour -

**you that are the hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the far-off seas.**

By your strength you make fast the mountains,
and gird yourself round with power.

You still the raging of the seas,
and the roaring of the waves, the tumult of the peoples.

Those who dwell at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your wonders;
the gateways of both morning and evening shout for joy.

R: Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion.

You visit the earth and water it,
you make it very fruitful.

The waters of heaven brim over their banks,
providing us with grain, for so you have prepared the land,
drenching its furrows, settling its ridges,
softening it with showers, and blessing its growth.

You crown the year with goodness,
and your paths overflow with plenty.

The pastures of the wilderness abound with grass,
and the hills are girded with joy.

The fields are clothed with sheep;
**the valleys are decked with wheat,
so that they shout and sing for joy.**

R: Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:7-18

For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you. Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

The other readings for this week are: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Luke 17:11-19

Meditation: "Gratitude"

Hymn VU 300 "God, Whose Farm Is All Creation"

God, whose farm is all creation,
take the gratitude we give;
take the finest of our harvest,
crops we grow that all may live.

Take our ploughing, seeding, reaping,
hopes and fears of sun and rain,
all our thinking, planning, waiting,
ripening into fruit and grain.

All our labour, all our watching,
all our calendar of care,
in these crops of your creation,
take, O God: they are our prayer.

We Respond To God's Grace

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

Gracious and Holy God, you created the heavens and the earth, and brought life into being,
and so we give thanks to you.

We thank you for the beauty and wonder of creation.

We thank you to have been able to take a trip up north
to that beautiful rugged part of Ontario which restores one's spirit.

We thank you for the gift of life, with all of its blessings, hopes, and hardships.

We thank you for a clear report at the Cancer clinic

We thank you for work to do and for food to eat, for minds to think and hearts to love.

We thank you for marriage; for the mystery and the joy of flesh made one.

We thank you for family; for shared celebrations and sorrows.

We thank you for the health of our families.

We thank you that wrinkles don't hurt.

We thank you for family, including our church family, friends, and neighbours.

We thank you for our pets who provide us with companionship.

We thank you for the help of others in doing work that we find increasingly difficult to do.

We thank you for the energy and curiosity of our children, for the irreverence towards worn-out values
and the dreams of our youth, and for the wisdom of our elders.

We thank you for the church into which we have been called to transform lives and transform the world
into your vision of what life could be for all, and for our life together with you.

We thank you for Woodslee United church and their spiritual leader, the Rev. Carl Emke.

We are thankful that we live in Canada.

We thank you for the blessing of living in a country where citizens respect each other
and work together for the good of all.

We thank you for brothers and sisters the world over, with whom we share the gift of life,
especially for the people of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama.

We are thankful for our homes.

We are thankful for memories shared by and with family and friends
who are no longer with us.

We thank you for your help in times of sorrow and doubt, for your comforting presence with those who
mourn; especially we think of the friends and family of Sheila Greason....

We thank you for your healing presence with those who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention or
recovering from treatment: especially we think of Marje MacMillan....

and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....
We thank you for all these things, and so much more. May we be ever thankful for the blessings you lavish upon us, O God. This we pray in the name of the one who taught us to pray, saying...

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
for yours is the kingdom the power and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

In extravagance, God has blessed us with life, and passion, and all that we have, all that we are, and all that we shall be. And so, in joy and in gratitude and with generosity we offer back a portion of what God has blessed us with. Our tithes and offerings will now be accepted, via CanadaHelps and Canada Post, PAR, the offering plate or the mailslot.

Offertory Hymn *to the tune VU 232 Hymn to Joy*

Joyful, joyful, Lord we bring you gifts that you can use today.
Take them, bless them, may your kingdom spread to all the world, we pray.
We are here: our time, our talents, we would dedicate as well.
May we show Christ's love within us, by our lives our faith to tell.

Prayer of Dedication

Vineyard of our delight, you yield abundant fruit for all to share, and invite us into your chamber to feast and celebrate. As we present our gifts, fill us with your passion to feed the world, that, leaving no one poor or hungry, all may dwell with you in peace. Amen.

Hymn: VU 227 "For the Fruit of All Creation"

For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For the gifts to every nation, thanks be to God.
For the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labour, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbour, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Commissioning and Benediction

May God, who clothes the lilies of the fields,

And feeds the birds of the sky,

Who leads the lambs to pasture and the deer to water,

Who multiplied the loaves and fishes, and changed water into wine,

Lead us, feed us, and change us

To reflect the glory of our Creator,

To whom we offer praise and thanksgiving,

Now and through all eternity. Amen.

Response: "Go Now in Peace"

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.

God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.

Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

God will be there supporting us with love.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

Amen, amen, amen.

Postlude: "Now Thank We All Our God" Johann Crueger

