

In Everything
Give Thanks
for this is God's will in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Thanksgiving 2017

*Now thank we all our God, with hearts and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.*

Happy Thanksgiving, Everyone

As I write this Pastoral Letter it is 32 degrees with the humidex and the sun is shining bright. It is hard to believe that Autumn is here and we are moving into a season of falling, coloured leaves, crisp and frosty mornings and the evenings at home with a fire in the fireplace. The juxtaposition of today's weather with what will surely come very quickly, puts me in mind of our call as Christians.

Through our own Baptismal Promises, we have pledged ourselves to worshipping in community on a regular basis, continuing in our learning from Scripture and one another, and sharing all that we have – both practically and spiritually – with those who live around us, at home and in the world. Yet, as citizens of a world so very different than that of Biblical times, or even from those days when we made our Baptismal vows, we find ourselves pushed and pulled, expected and accepting that “other things” take precedence over Church, our faith lives, and our Baptismal Promises as well. This juxtaposition of who we are in “here” (Church) and who we are out “there” (world) is one that we should celebrate and for which we should give thanks.

God has given us that great gift of Jesus Christ, who conquered and provided an example, of how to live both in the world and yet in a life of faith as well. The Church and faith traditions we have inherited provide us with security and history that remind us who we are, where we come from and where we are going.

We are moving into a future in which “inherited, traditional” church may not be something that seems as appealing to the world as it once did but this movement gives us the opportunity to emerge in the world as a church that has the one eternal truth that carries everything – Jesus Christ. It also provides us with the opportunity to slow down, take stock, give thanks and figure out just what it is that God is asking us to shout our Thanksgivings for.

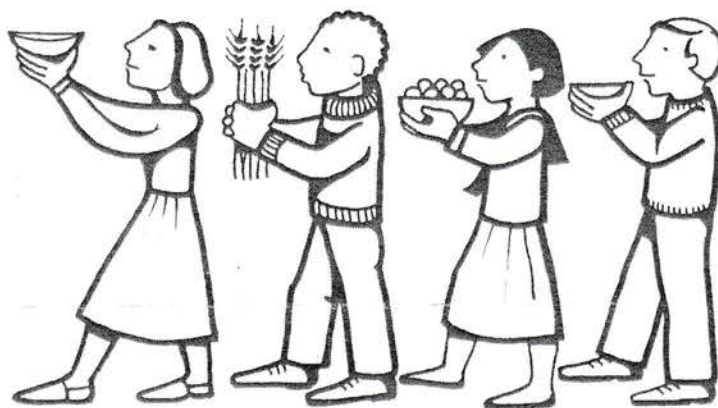
In this season of Thanksgiving that the world believes is secular, take some time to remember that it is God who has given us all we have for which we give thanks. Maybe you could also take some time to think about all the other ways that the Church – St. James, specifically and the church in general – can reach out in new, non-inherited, non-traditional ways, to share the Good News of real Thanksgiving: Jesus Christ, hope, new life, forgiveness of sins ...

Together we can sing or say: *Now thank we all our God, with hearts and hands and voices,*

Who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices. And maybe add on a new verse that says: *now thank we all our God, with twitter, Facebook, email, who wondrous things will do, in whom the world will learn to rejoice!*

God bless you all and may your Thanksgiving be joyous!

Rachael Parker+ (Rector – St. James)



Bless the God of all who has done wondrous things on earth