

**Applewood United Church
An Affirming Community
Hybrid Worship for October 8, 2023
Thanksgiving Sunday**

Territorial Acknowledgment and Announcements

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississauga of the Credit First Nations. The territory is mutually covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibway and other allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in their community, and to share and respect Mother Earth.

Centering Music: "Gather Us In" MV 7

Gather us in, ground us in you.

Gather us in, ground us in you.

Gather us in, gather us in, ground us, ground us, in you.

*** Call to Worship and Opening Prayer**

One: We come to worship and give thanks.

**All: Praising our God the Creator,
we give thanks for the blessings of the earth.**

One: We come to sing and give thanks.

**All: Lifting our voices to God the Holy Source,
we give thanks for all our relations.**

One: We come to pray and give thanks.

**All: Lifting our hearts to God the Comforter,
we give thanks for this faith family, and for our lives.**

One: This Thanksgiving Sunday, we come as God's beloved people,
in beloved community,

All: with praise and gratitude in our hearts and voices.

One: Let's pray together:

**All: Creating God,
today we have gathered to celebrate
the beauty and bounty of your good earth:
crisp autumn air and brilliantly coloured leaves,
fields ready for harvest,
gardens and grocery store shelves overflowing with goodness.
Help us to live thankful and humble lives,
as we remember your good gifts to us.
We pray in the name of your Good Gift, Jesus the Christ. Amen**

*** Opening Hymn: “God We Praise You for the Morning” VU 415**

God, we praise you for the morning;
hope springs forth with each new day,
new beginning, prayer, and promise,
joy in work and in play.

God, we praise you for creation,
mountains, seas, and prairie land.
Waking souls find joy and healing
in your bountiful hand.

God, we praise you for compassion,
all the loving that you show;
human touching, tears, and laughter,
help your children to grow.

God, we praise you for your Spirit,
Comforter and daily friend,
restless searcher, gentle teacher,
strength and courage you send.

God, we praise you for the Saviour,
come that we may know your ways.
In his loving, dying, rising,
Christ is Lord of our days.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
hallelujah, hallelujah!
Hallelujah, hallelujah!
Christ is Lord of our days!

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: “God of the Harvest” by Ruth Bowen(*adapted and used with permission*)

God of the harvest
God of the land
forgive our greed,
our over-building
and mass production,
our wastefulness.
Bless those who work on the land:
farmers,
fruiterers,

labourers
and those who must try to live and work by the seasons.

God of the harvest
God of the seas
forgive our greed,
our over-fishing
and needless killing for unnecessary delicacies,
our wastefulness.

Bless those who work on and in the seas:
sailors,
fisherfolk,
marine rescue crews,
marine biologists,
and those who must try to live and work by the seasons.

God of the harvest
God of the skies
forgive our greed and pollution,
our desire for fast food delivery
and excessive travel across the globe,
our wastefulness.
Bless those who work in the skies:
pilots and plane crews,
helicopter pilots fighting forest fires or transporting medical emergencies,
crane operators and mountaineers,
astronauts and explorers.
Bless fair trade partners around the world,
and those who must try to live and work by the seasons.

Make us ever mindful of the true cost to your creation:
of our disconnection to time and place
of our disconnection from the seasons you created
of our disconnection from you, Creator God.

Creator God
reconnect us to your creation,
to its order and resources.

Redeemer God
reconcile us to your creation,
to each other and to you.

Spirit God

renew us to live within your creation,
aware of its seasons and our neighbour's needs.

Amen

Sung Response: "Deep In Our Hearts" MV 154 verses 1 & 2

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.

Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.

Scripture Readings:

2 Corinthians 9:6–15

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written,

'God scatters abroad, God gives to the poor;
God's righteousness endures forever.'

The One who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that has been given to you. Thanks be to God for this indescribable gift!

Luke 17:11–19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?'

Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' Then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.'

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Choir: "We Come Rejoicing"

Reflection: What happens when we say 'thanks'?

*** Hymn:** "Praise God for the Harvest" VU 517

Praise God for the harvest of orchard and field,
praise God for the people who gather their yield,
the long hours of labour, the skills of a team,
the patience of science, the power of machine.

Praise God for the harvest that comes from afar,
from market and harbour, the sea and the shore:
foods packed and transported, and gathered and grown
by God-given neighbours, unseen and unknown.

Praise God for the harvest that's quarried and mined,
then sifted, and smelted, and shaped, and refined;
for oil and for iron, for copper and coal,
praise God, who in love has provided them all.

Praise God for the harvest of science and skill,
the urge to discover, create, and fulfil:
for dreams and inventions that promise to gain
a future more hopeful, a world more humane.

Praise God for the harvest of mercy and love
from leaders and peoples, who struggle and serve
for fairness and kindness, that all may be led
in freedom and safety, and all may be fed.

Introduction to the Offering

Gift of Music

*** Hymn of Dedication:** "For the Gift of Creation" VU 538

For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,

and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,
we thank you and give you the fruit of our hands.
May your grace be proclaimed by the gifts that you give.

*** Offering Prayer:**

**All: Generous and Loving God,
you provide a rich bounty to nourish all,
and allow this world to flourish.
As we present our gifts,
fill us with your passion to feed the world,
leaving no one poor or hungry,
and all creation dwelling in peace.
In your name we pray,
Source of Plenty, Staff of Life, Spirit of Generosity.
Amen**

Prayers of the People *including the hymn "For the Beauty of the Earth" VU 226, tune DIX VU 81*
*For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies.
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

We thank you, God, for the simple beauty of autumn leaves as they brighten our neighbourhoods and add colour to our lives. We thank you for the taste of pumpkin and the smell of roasting turkey, for the sounds of conversation around tables and warm feelings shared with friends and family.

Today, God, we pray for those who will not feast for Thanksgiving, who will be hungry today, without shelter today, without employment today. Remind us that we can help to provide what others may lack.

*For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light,
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

We thank you, God, for the gift of time and the changing of seasons. Time to share with friends and family and church community, time to relax and celebrate, time to work and study, time to care for others.

Today, God, we pray for those who don't seem to have enough time. People who must work more than one job to pay the bills, families who can't find time to be together, those who are facing time-consuming treatments or time-limiting illness. Remind us that we may have the gift of our own time to give.

*For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild,
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

We thank you, God, for the gift of relationships, those that continue to grow in our lives, and those we have known with loved ones who now reside in your care. We are grateful for our friends and our families, for our faith family here at Applewood, for the connections that we can make with others around the world.

Today, God, we pray for the lonely ones, the grieving ones, the forgotten ones. Remind us that we have the gift of love and caring to share.

*For each perfect gift sublime
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine,
flowers of earth and buds of heaven,
God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

We thank you, God, for times of celebration but also moments of peaceful reflection. We are grateful that you continue to watch over and care for us throughout all the stages of living, and dying, and in the life yet to come. Remind us that we have your important message of love and acceptance and grace to share with the world, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen

*** Closing Hymn:** "We Plow the Fields and Scatter" VU 520

We plough the fields and scatter
the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered
by your almighty hand;
you send the snow in winter,
the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine,
and soft refreshing rain.

All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

You only are the maker
of all things near and far;
you paint the wayside flower,
you light the evening star;
the winds and waves obey you,
by you the birds are fed;
much more to us, your children,
you give us daily bread.

All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

We thank you then, O Maker,
for all things bright and good,
the seed-time and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food;
accept the gifts we offer
for all your love imparts,
and, what from us you long for,
our humble, thankful hearts.

All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

*** Commissioning /Blessing**

*** Sung Amen** VU 974