



Dear Friends in Christ,

Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, Thanksgiving 2019

The natural rhythm of the seasons brings us to the Church's celebration at Harvest time. Christians are encouraged to give thanks at all times and in all circumstances, but the harvest brings that emphasis especially into focus as we recognize the many gifts of God's created order.

During a difficult time in my life, I had asked a Christian acquaintance for advice. What I received was not what I expected. This person said to me, "Say thank you." At that time, my response was one prompted by the suspicion that the other had not really heard my hardship. I was given assurance that I had been heard and was repeated, "Say thank you." "Thanks for what?" was my response. The answer returned, "Thanks for all you do have and for all the things that are not wrong that could be." As I look back, I realize that advice was directly from the words of Scripture. St. Paul tells the Ephesians in his letter to them that they should

... give thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*Ephesians 5:20*)

That which seemed not so helpful at the time was very good advice, both then and now, even though putting it into practice is often a challenge.

If we strive to look at the world and all that comes to us, good or bad, with an attitude of thanksgiving, it looks very different to us. What if I don't happen to feel thankful right at the moment? "Say thank you." Expressing thanks, saying "thank you," is the first step towards "being" thankful. If we make outward efforts to express thanks, we find we become more thankful and we please God who, scriptures tells us, wishes only for us to be mindful of what we receive. A world seen through thankful eyes is a very different place.

While we all have been tried, suffered significant life losses, illnesses and many circumstances beyond our control during the past 12 months, we all also have much for which to be thankful. For the Christian, every day is Thanksgiving Day, but on Sunday, 13 October 2019, during our regular schedule of worship, we'll try to focus that thanksgiving at a time when God's abundance is especially evident in the Harvest.

Join us in saying "Thank you." Why not bring a friend or family member? Have a blessed Thanksgiving!

Geoffrey Hall
Dean of Fredericton
GMH

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