



# All nature sings the music of the spheres

Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton NB Thanksgiving 2024

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears  
all nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world. I rest me in the thought  
of rocks and trees, and skies and seas, his hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world – O let me ne're forget  
that though the wrong seems oft so strong God is the Ruler yet.  
This is my Father's world! The battle is not done;  
Jesus who died shall be satisfied, And earth and heav'n be one.  
*M.D. Babcock*

Dear Friends,

Remember singing those words in my youth. At one time I had named it my favourite hymn. I suppose initially it was the tune that held my attention but the meaning of the words has grown. We live in an awesome world, created by an awesome God. Beauty abounds. Complexity amazes. The glory of God shows through in creation. Recent events have proven some other words of that hymn too. The “wrong seems oft so strong.” We do need to remember, especially during misfortune, uncertain and trying times, “God is the Ruler yet.”

Human nature is such that we often fail to recognize the importance of what we take for granted until it's removed. It is not until liberty is threatened that we begin to realize what it means to be free. We may not remember how wonderful it is to be fed until we are hungry. When death approaches we see life. The gifts freely given, especially in nature, are among those we too often overlook. It's the purpose of celebrations of harvest and the Christian prayers which “round us ring” at this time of year that urge us to be mindful of just how glorious those gifts really are. God's heart is pleased to hear expressions of thanksgiving in the midst of the bountiful creation.

The hymn also reminds me of just how in touch with reality our Christian practices of worship are when we celebrate the sacraments. All of the human senses are employed as the sacraments point to the most basic of God's gifts, especially those we take most for granted. Water in baptism conveys the refreshing cleansing of the grace of God; bread and wine in the eucharist remind us of the nourishment which sustains; the sign of the cross in absolution should bring to mind the great price paid for us by the Saviour. There's something very sacramental in sincere words of thanksgiving. Using the very things God has given, the stuff of the earth, we convey by their right and responsible use a kind of appreciation which is both pleasing to God and up-building for the community he calls into his presence.

For many, “Thanksgiving” is a day off work or school. Let the important symbols speak in your life as we gather to celebrate sacramentally the blessing of creation and our place in it. We'll follow a regular schedule of worship (8 and 10:30 a.m.) on Sunday October 14th set in the context of harvest thanksgiving. You are invited and encouraged to make a special effort to join your church family to sing praises to the Maker of All. As always, if you are unable to be physically present and to make your Communion, remember us in your prayers, and please do not hesitate to contact me or the Cathedral Office to make arrangements to have it brought to wherever you may be.

Yours sincerely,



Geoffrey Hall (The Very Rev'd)  
Dean of Fredericton  
GMH

**Give a thanksgiving offering here  
(and be receipted immediately)**