

# Thanksgiving Eve

November 24, 2021 ~ 7:30 pm



**INTRODUCTON** ~ *Today's readings reflect two of the strains that go into the celebration of a national day of thanksgiving: gratitude for abundant harvest (Joel) and civic prayer for a peaceable common life (1 Timothy). The core meaning of Thanksgiving for many of us—a home feast for extended family and friends—is not reflected in the readings; but it is reflected weekly in the church's meal of thanksgiving (eucharist). What we wish for both these thanksgiving meals is that they will go deeper than celebration of one another and our own blessings, to recognize in our true Host one who wants everyone brought to the table.*

**PRELUDE**

**Now Thank We All our God**

**Jeffrey Honore**

**WELCOME**

**INVOCATION**

P: We gather this night in the name of the Trinity – God, Creator of all that exists, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, our Sustainer and inspiration. **Amen.**



**St. Matthew's**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

12351 All Saints Place  
Woodbridge, VA 22192  
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**MOMENT OF SILENCE** ~ We recognize that the history of Thanksgiving is not a joyful one for all communities. The history of pain and suffering for the Indigenous Peoples of North America is not often mentioned a history that continues to take its toll on many Indigenous populations today. We ring a bell for the Monahoac Tribe, the original inhabitants of the land on which we currently stand based on documents dating back to the 17th century, and have a moment of silence in honor of Indigenous communities, past and present.

**HYMN** *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* **No. 752**  
*Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your Spirit in this place;*  
*Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.*

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: Gracious Creator, we give you thanks for all that we have and confess that too often we take it for granted. You call us to live in caring community, but too often we place our wants and needs first, with those of others a distant second. You call us to share Your gifts with the world around us, but we are worried that there may not be enough, and our worrying gets in the way of our sharing.

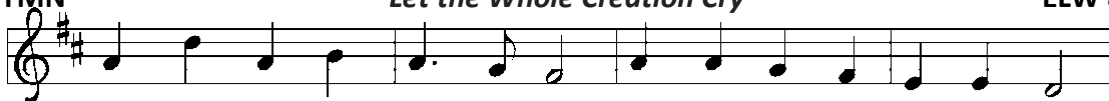
C: For all the times when we mistreat and misuse Your gifts, for all the times we assume that we get what we have by ourselves, forgive us and lead us back to the path of wisdom.

**HYMN** *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* **No.752**  
*Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your Spirit in this place;*  
*Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.*

P: God is a gracious giver. God is gracious in forgiveness. God calls us to new patterns and new life. We are a forgiven people!

C: Thanks be to God! Amen.

**GATHERING HYMN** *Let the Whole Creation Cry* **ELW 876**



1 Let the whole cre - a - tion cry, "Glo - ry to the Lord on high!"  
 2 Ser - vants striv - ing for the Lord, proph - ets burn - ing with the word,  
 3 Men and wom - en, young and old, raise the an - them loud and bold,



Heav'n and earth, a - wake and sing, "Praise to our al - might - y king!"  
 those to whom the arts be - long add their voic - es to the song.  
 and let chil - dren's hap - py hearts in this wor - ship take their parts;



Praise God, an - gel hosts a - bove, ev - er bright and fair in love;  
 Pow'rs of knowl - edge and of law, to the glo - rious cir - cle draw;  
 from the north to south - ern pole let the might - y cho - rus roll:



sun and moon, lift up your voice; night and stars, in God re - joice.  
 all who work and all who wait, sing, "The Lord is good and great!"  
 "Ho - ly. Ho - ly, Ho - ly One; glo - ry be to God a - lone!"

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray... Almighty God our Father, your generous goodness comes to us new every day. By the work of your Spirit lead us to acknowledge your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## FIRST LESSON

**Joel 2:21-27**

Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things! Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green; the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine give their full yield. O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before. The threshing floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other.

And my people shall never again be put to shame.

*The Word of the Lord; **Thanks be to God.***

## SECOND LESSON

**1 Timothy 2:1-7**

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself a ransom for all —this was attested at the right time. For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth..

*The Word of the Lord; **Thanks be to God.***

## GOSPEL VERSE

***I Am the Bread of Life (vs. 1)***

**No. 485**

***I am the Bread of life. You who come to me shall not hunger,  
and who believe in me shall not thirst.***

***No one can come to me unless the Father beckons.***

***And I will raise you up, and I will raise you up,  
and I will raise you up on the last day.***

## THE GOSPEL

**Matthew 6:25-33**

*A reading from the gospel according to Matthew...*

***Glory to you, O Lord.***

Jesus said,] “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

*The Gospel of the Lord; **Praise to you, O Christ.***

*The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world,  
and if you eat of this bread, you shall live forever,  
you shall live forever.*

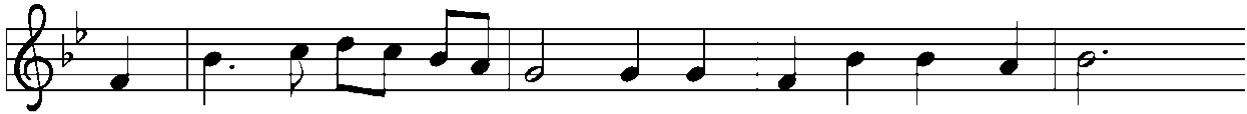
*And I will raise you up, and I will raise you up,  
and I will raise you up on the last day.*

## THE MESSAGE

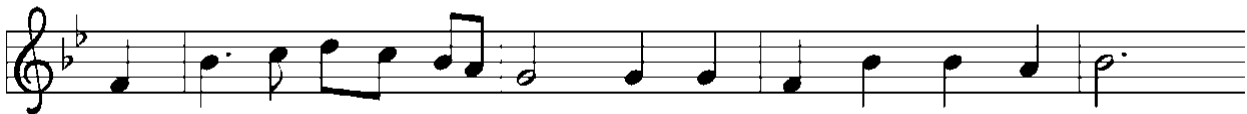
HYMN ~Please stand

*Sing to the Lord of the Harvest*

ELW 694



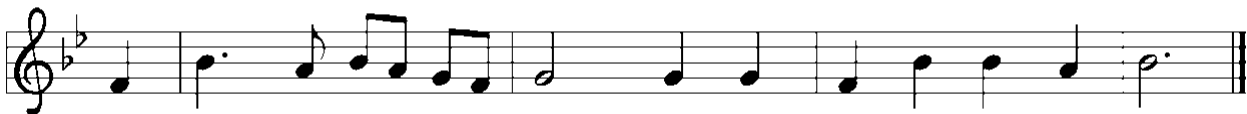
1 Sing to the Lord of har - vest your songs of love and praise;  
2 God makes the clouds drop fat - ness, the des - erts bloom and spring,  
3 Bring to this sa - cred al - tar the gifts his good-ness gave,



with joy - ful hearts and voic - es your al - le - lu - ias raise;  
the hills leap up in glad - ness, the val - leys laugh and sing.  
the gold - en sheaves of har - vest, the souls Christ died to save.



by him the roll - ing sea - sons in fruit - ful or - der move;  
God fills them with his full - ness, all things with large in - crease,  
Your hearts lay down be - fore him when at his feet you fall,



sing to the Lord of har - vest a joy - ous song of love.  
and crowns the year with good - ness, with plen - ty and with peace.  
and with your lives a - dore him who gave his life for all.

Text: John S. B. Monsell. 1811–1875. alt.

Music: WIE LIEBLICH IST DER MAIEN. Johann Steurlein. 1546–1613

**CREED STATEMENT** (from the American Indian/Alaska Native Lutheran Association Liturgy)

P: We believe in Creator, Father-Mother Spirit, who called the world and all that is in it, into being, who spoke the creative-forming word, and all came forth who created women and men and set them free to live in love, in obedience to the will of supreme love and in community with all.

We believe in Creator, Son and Brother, who, because of love beyond our understanding, love for creation, entered the world to share our humanity, to rejoice and to despair; to set before us paths of life and death, and walk them with us; to be rejected and die, but finally to conquer death and bind the world to himself for all time.

We believe in Creator, In-Dwelling Spirit, who invites us into community, that we may through faith and that community of oneness, experience uplifting and sustaining grace; that we may fulfill our human responsibility to reach out to our neighbor, whoever that may be; that we may rejoice in the constant nature of creation and the wondrous joy of life itself.

We believe in Creator, whose word teaches us that all things grow together, the Circle of Life; that the paths of life and death, good and evil, too often come together, that choices are not clearly defined; but that we confidently and responsibly tread the path we choose and only the true One can be our judge.

We believe in Creator, who is present and working in this world through all creation. **Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH~** *Please stand, sit, or kneel for the prayers~*

P: God whose giving knows no ending, you invite the whole world to your table of mercy. Hear us as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

*~ A brief silence.*

A: God, you give all people a place at the table. Nurture and encourage campus ministries, new congregations, and workplace chaplaincies. Support all parts of the church that meet people where they are and offer accompaniment through daily challenges and joys.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

A: You give nourishment to the birds of the air and the lilies of the fields. Sustain all creatures who rely on the earth for sustenance. Water parched ground, dry flooded fields, temper heat waves and frosts, and give sunlight and shade.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

A: God, you give wisdom to your people. Enlighten all leaders. Inspire and guide our president, our governor, our local leaders, and all who represent us in our government. Give them patience and perspective to choose wisely for our common good.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

A: God, you give nourishment to those who hunger. Bring poverty and food insecurity to an end. Give dignity and adequate employment to those who are unemployed and underemployed. Sustain us all at your welcoming banquet of love and justice.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

A: God, you give community to those who are lonely. Be with our biological families, our chosen families, and our church family as we gather for the Thanksgiving holiday. Send your compassionate presence to those who are lonely, those who are separated or estranged from their families, and those whose loved ones have died.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

A: God, you give a feast of endless thanksgiving. We are grateful for the saints gathered at your table who have gone before us. Unite us with them whenever we give thanks to you.

God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

P: God, your welcome is wider than we can imagine. Receive our prayers for the sake of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us. **Amen.**

**OFFERING** *We give thanks to God by offering the gifts we have been given for the sake of the world.*

*In lieu of passing the offering plate, we invite you to place your donations in the plate as you leave the sanctuary, or donate online at [stmatthewsva.org/give](http://stmatthewsva.org/give). Your offerings go toward the mission of the church, and allow us to respond to the needs in our congregation and community.*

**ANTHEM**

**The Lord of Harvest**

**Martin  
Senior Choir**

## OFFERTORY

### *The Doxology*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise Him all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts.  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

## THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Let us pray... Holy God, the earth is yours and everything in it, yet you have chosen to dwell among your creatures. Come among us now in these gifts of bread and wine, and strengthen us to be your body for the world through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## COMMUNION *(Spoken)*

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them gladly to the Lord.**

P: Let us praise and thank our God.

**C: It is good to do so.**

P: The eyes of all look to you, O Lord,

**C: And you give us our food in due season.**

P: Lord, you open your hand,

**C: And satisfy the desire of every living thing.**

P: On the eve of this Thanksgiving Day,

**C: We raise our thankful hearts.**

P: O Lord, our God, especially we thank you for your only Son, Jesus Christ who gave his life for us.

Who when he was with his friends on the night he was betrayed, gave thanks to you as we do now. Then taking a loaf of bread, he broke it, and gave it to his friends saying:

*Take this bread and eat, for it is my body, broken for you. Do this for my remembrance.*

Then He took the cup of wine and gave it to them, saying:

*Take this cup and drink from it. This is my blood, the blood of the New Covenant, shed for the forgiveness of all. Do this for my remembrance.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: So, come to this table, You who have much faith and you who would like to have more. You who have been to this sacrament often, And you who have not been for a long time. You who have tried to follow Jesus, and you who have failed. Come. It is Christ who invites us to meet him here. These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Amen.**

## THE DISTRIBUTION

*All who believe Jesus is present in this sacrament are invited to receive the bread and wine. Know that if you only take the bread that you have fully communed. If you are receiving communion alone, we extend to you: **The body of Christ given for you. And the blood of Christ shed for you.** If you are taking communion with others, give the bread to the person sitting next to you and say, "**The body of Christ given for you.**" Then, giving the wine/grape juice say, "**And the blood of Christ shed for you.**"*



**Ministers: ALL the People of St. Matthew's**

Interim Pastor: Rev. Kirsten Laderach

Music/Choir Director: Kathy Lundgren

Organist: Melvin Goodwyn

Administrator: Nancy Zimmerman

Communications Coordinator: Evoke Experts

Ushers:

Lector: Pat Victorson

Tech Volunteers: Melody Stachour, Joyce Forbes & Mike Mazzucchi, Michael Stachour

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For announcements and upcoming events, please go to our website at [www.stmatthewsva.org](http://www.stmatthewsva.org)

**Heavenly Father,  
From whom come all good and perfect gifts,  
from whom come mercies new each day,  
from whom come blessings beyond measure:**

**Accept our thanksgiving  
for protection and those who provide it,  
for daily bread and those who prepare it,  
for clothing and those who manufacture it,  
for family and those dear to us,  
for friends and those associated with us,  
for jobs and those working with us,  
for social security and support programs.**

**We confess we think too little  
about the fact that we deserve nothing,  
about the many who serve us,  
about the blessings of Your Spirit.**

**We pray You,  
forgive our ingratitude,  
open our eyes to behold Your goodness,  
fill our hearts with thankfulness,  
make us respond in appreciation,  
help us to serve in love.**

**We thank You: through Christ, our Lord,  
Your best gift to us. Amen.**

***(1970 Lutheran Book of Prayer)***



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Liturgy adapted from writings by Thom Shumer and liturgies from "Sundays and Seasons".