



WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER

5

12:00 -
12:30 PM

A TIME FOR GRATITUDE: COMMUNITY HARVEST & THANKSGIVING PRAYER SERVICE

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." - Psalm 24:1

Join us for a heartfelt service of prayer and thanksgiving as we honor the close of the harvest season and recognize the gifts of our local community. We gather to express our deep gratitude for the bounty of the land and for the dedication of the people who bring the harvest to our tables.

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE for our Prayers

"When the feast of Thanksgiving is celebrated, nature is often still arrayed in autumn's glories. This is a time for the Church to offer thanksgiving for good earth, grain, fruits, herbs, vegetables, and flowers.

"If by God's grace there has been a rich and plentiful harvest, we should remember that this temporal prosperity should prepare the way for the Kingdom of God."

God has richly blessed us with an abundance of food, sufficient clothing, and homes to shelter us from the elements and keep us safe. However, thousands of young and old in this and other countries go hungry, have insufficient clothing, and hardly any shelter at all. The liturgy of the Church on this day offers us an opportunity to give thanks. As we utter a prayer of thanksgiving and ask for God's continued blessings, let us also ask the Spirit's help in overcoming the problems that often prevent us from sharing what we have with those less fortunate.

V: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R: Who is making the heavens and the earth.

Psalm 8:1, 4-10 (*Read responsively by whole verse.*)

- 1 O LORD our Governor, *
how exalted is your Name in all the world!
- 4 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
*
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,
- 5 What is humanity that you should be mindful of us? *
or our children that you should seek them out?
- 6 You have made us but little lower than the angels; *
you adorn us with glory and honor;

7 You've given us mastery over the works of your hands; *
you put all of creation under our feet:

8 All sheep and oxen, *
even the wild beasts of the field,

9 The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, *
and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.

10 O LORD our Governor, *
how exalted is your Name in all the world!

A Litany of Thanksgiving for Creation

(These prayers have been adapted from the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address. The Haudenosaunee (also known as the Iroquois) Confederacy is a union of six native nations: the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora, originating in present-day New York.)

V: Creator of all, we gather with grateful hearts. You have given us the gift of harmony with one another and with all living things. So, we bring our minds together as one, offering greetings and thanks for one another as people.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for Mother Earth, who upholds our steps and nourishes us with everything we need for life.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the waters — rivers and rains, oceans and streams — wells and municipal systems that quench our thirst and give us strength.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the fish, who purify the waters, fills them with life and offer themselves as food for our nourishment.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the plants that cover the earth with beauty and sustain life in countless ways.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the plants used for food — grains, vegetables, beans, and berries — who have long helped your people to survive.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the medicine herbs, always ready to heal and to strengthen.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the animals; our teachers and companions, and those that offer themselves as food.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the trees, for shade and shelter, fruit, nuts, and beauty, and for their deep-rooted strength.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the birds, who fill the air with song and remind us to rejoice in life.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the four winds, refreshing the air and guiding the seasons.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the thunder, whose voice brings the rains of refreshment and renewal.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for our eldest brother, the Sun, who brings light and the fire of life each day.

People: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for Grandmother Moon, who lights the night sky, governs the tides, and watches over the arrival of new born animals and our children.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the stars, who adorn the sky and guide our way in the darkness.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: We give thanks for the teachers of wisdom, who remind us how to live in harmony with one another and with you.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: And we give thanks to You, Creator, Great Spirit; the Divine Image in whom we are created, for all the gifts of life, for the Love that surrounds us, and for the beauty of this fragile earth, our island home.

R: *And now our minds are one.*

V: If anything has been forgotten, we leave it to each heart to add their thanks in silence. *(Silence while people add their own prayers.)*

R: *And now our minds are one.*

All: Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Using a piece of rice paper, write a prayer and place it in the bowl. Then after all the prayers are written and gathered, the leader will pour water into the bowl and say: "Let the waters of creation nourish and grow our prayer. As the paper dissolves into the water, are prayers are mixed together, and our hearts are united in thanksgiving and in our prayers for all to experience the abundance of God's creation. When we give thanks, the flow of blessings is enhanced and extended to all."

Let us pray.

Almighty, everlasting God, by Your Word You created out of nothing heaven and earth, the sea and things visible and invisible. You have also directed that the earth bring forth herbs and trees for the use of men and animals, and that each plant should have fruit according to the seed that was planted. You have also been so very kind as to grant that herbs should be not only food for the healthy, but also medicine for the sick. With mind and lips we humbly beg You in Your mercy to bless + these herbs and fruits. Over and above the natural powers with which You have endowed them, pour upon them the grace of Your new blessing, so that, applied in Your name to the uses of man and beast, they may become a protection against all sicknesses and misfortune, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and is King and God with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

R: Amen.

Let us pray.

O God, You commanded the sons of Israel, through Your servant Moses, to bring bundles of new fruits to the priests to be blessed, and to bring the fruit of the finest tree, and to be happy before You, their Lord and God. Kindly hear our prayers, and pour the richness of Your blessing + upon these bundles of fresh fruit, fresh herbs, and newly-gathered produce, which we offer to You with thanks. On this feast day we bless them in Your name. Grant that they may be a remedy for men, herds, flocks, and beasts of burden against all ills, plagues, sores, evils, curses, poisonous serpents, and the bite of other poisonous animals and beasts, and against every poison. Grant also that, in whatever place they may be put or carried, or where any part of them be kept, they may bring aid against all deceits, and tricks, and frauds of the devil. Grant, by the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose Assumption we celebrate, that we may, with our sheaves of good works, deserve to be received into that place to which she was taken, through our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son, who lives and is King and God with You in the unity of God the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

R: Amen.

Let us pray.

O God, on this day You took the Rod of Jesse, the Mother of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to the very summit of heaven, so that You might, by her prayers and patronage, give the fruit of her womb, Your Son, to mortal men. We humbly pray You that by the power of Your Son and by His Mother's glorious patronage, we may by the help of these fruits of the earth, work out our eternal salvation by means of our temporal well-being, through the same Jesus Christ Your Son, our Lord, who lives and is King and God with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

R: Amen.

Final Blessing

And may the blessing of almighty God; Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, descend upon us and all of creation, remaining with us for ever.

R: Amen.

(Further, we can sprinkle those present with water from Lake Ontario, using a evergreen branch and the use an earthy incense such as sage is also recommended for the room where these prayers are being said.)

Prayer Sources: *Rural Life Prayerbook*, and the *Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address*.