

BELLS CORNERS UNITED CHURCH

October 8, 2023 – 10 am Creation Time 5 / Thanksgiving Sunday

* *The live service will be broadcasted and recorded on YouTube, check your email for the link.*

Gathering Music

*Indicates stand as able

***Opening Hymn: It's A Song of Praise to the Maker – More Voices #30**

1. It's a song of praise to the Maker,
the thrush sings high in the tree.
It's a song of praise to the Maker,
The gray whale sings in the sea,
Refrain And by the Spirit you and I
can join our voice to the holy cry
and sing, sing, sing to the Maker too.
2. It's a call of life to the Giver
when waves and waterfalls roar.
It's a call of life to the Giver
when high tides break on the shore,
3. It's a hymn of love to the Lover;
the bumblebees hum along.
It's a hymn of love to the Lover,
the summer breeze joins the song,
4. It's the chorus of all creation;
it's sung by all living things.
It's the chorus of all creation;
a song the universe sings,

Lighting of Christ Candle: Acolytes: Crow-Morris Family

Creation responds to God's call. Live, grow, dance, sing!
Let this light of Christ remind us of God's wonderful works
around us and within us. **Thanks be to God!**

Sung Response: A Light is Gleaming – Voices United #82 (Refrain only)

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is shining bright. living in the light.

Welcome and Centering for Worship: Rev. Kim Vidal

Good morning! Welcome to this sacred place of belonging where we embrace God's presence and the sacredness of life. Welcome in the spirit of Jesus Christ in whom we live and move and have our being. Welcome as we celebrate Thanksgiving. Join us for coffee and conversation after the service in the main hall. announcements... Friends, on this Thanksgiving Sunday, we come with grateful hearts, not just for all the blessings that we have received, but for who God is within us. We gather now in worship to show our gratitude in song, in word and in prayer.

****Call to Gather & Opening Prayer: (Responsively)*** Susan Young

(Phil Hobbs, Gathering, Pentecost 2, Year C, 2016. Use with Permission.)

We gathered this morning to celebrate the Harvest Home!

We are surrounded by the beauty and bounty of the earth.

We gather with hearts filled with gratitude as our senses take in all that we've received;

the warm embrace of our church family;

the sight of produce fresh from garden, orchard and field;

the aroma of roast turkey and fresh baked pumpkin pie;

the sound of wild geese overhead and the crunch of leaves beneath our feet;

the expectation of a feast awaits us.

For the bountiful blessings, in praise and thanksgiving,

Let us worship God!

Prayer of Approach: (Unison) (Richard Bott, Gathering, Pentecost 2, Year C, 2016. Used with permission.)

**From our hearts, with our hands, through our voices,
in our love, we thank you, God!**

**For every sunrise and sunset, for every smile and tear,
for every moment that has passed, and for every moment yet to come.**

May our thanksgiving fill the world with gratitude and joy. Amen.

Special Music: Giving Thanks - Schram CGS/Bell Canto

Time for the Young at Heart: Susan Young

The Prayer of Jesus / Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

*Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.*

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kin-dom, the power and the glory,

Forever and ever, Amen.

***Children's Hymn: Ev'ry Day is A Day of Thanksgiving - More Voices #185**

Ev'ry day is a day of thanksgiving, God,
you've been so good to me.

Ev'ry day you're blessing me.

Ev'ry day is a day of thanksgiving.

I will glorify you, O my Lord, today! *Repeat*

You keep blessing me, blessing me, blessing me.

You opened the door that I might see,

you're blessing me.

And you keep blessing me, blessing me, blessing me.

I will glorify you, O my Lord, today! *Repeat*

Prayer for Illumination: (Unison) Reader: Mary Jones

Loving God, open our hearts to receive your word this day.

Teach us to give thanks and rejoice. Amen.

Psalm Reading: Psalm 65 (Voices United pg782)

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 9: 6-15 (New Living Translation)

Giving Cheerfully ⁶ Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. ⁷ You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." ⁸ And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. ⁹ As the Scriptures say, "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever." ¹⁰ For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, God will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. ¹¹ Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. ¹² So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God. ¹³ As a result of your ministry,

they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ.¹⁴ And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you.¹⁵ Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words! Hear what Creator God is saying to all of us. **We listen and we respond with action.**

Ministry of Music: Thank You – Schneider arr. Frank, adapt. BCUC Choir

Sermon: “A Cheerful Giver!” Rev. Kim Vidal

A Prayer of Thanksgiving: “Choose Thanks”¹ (Responsively) Rev. Kim

God, there are days we do not *feel* grateful. When we are anxious or angry. When we feel alone. When we do not understand what is happening in the world or with our neighbors. When the news is bleak, confusing. God, we struggle to *feel* grateful.

But this Thanksgiving, we choose gratitude.

We choose to accept life as a gift from you, and as a gift from the unfolding work of all creation.

We choose to be grateful for the earth from which our food comes; for the water that gives life; and for the air we all breathe.

We choose to thank our ancestors, those who came before us, grateful for their stories and struggles, and we receive their wisdom as a continuing gift for today.

We choose to see our families and friends with new eyes, appreciating and accepting them for who they are.

We are thankful for our homes, whether humble or grand.

We will be grateful for our neighbours, no matter how they voted, whatever our differences, or how much we feel hurt or misunderstood by them.

We choose to see the whole planet as our shared commons, the stage of the future of humankind and creation.

God, this Thanksgiving, we do not give thanks. We choose it. We will make this choice of thanks with courageous hearts, knowing that it is humbling to say “thank you.”

We choose to see your sacred generosity, aware that we live in an infinite circle of gratitude.

That we all are guests at a hospitable table around which gifts are passed and received.

We will not let anything opposed to love take over this table. Instead, we choose grace, free and unmerited love, the giftedness of life everywhere. In this choosing, and in the making, we will pass gratitude onto the world. ***We choose thanks. Amen.***

Musical Offering: For the Autumn Sky – Schram BCUC Choir

Invitation to Offer:

In this season of harvest and plenty when we are grateful for God’s amazing bounty, we are called to share the gifts we have been given with others. Time, talents, and treasures are all wonderful ways to further the mission of this church and the building of God’s kin-dom in the world. You will find the offering plates on the table as you enter the sanctuary. There are many additional ways you can

¹ Diana Butler Bass

financially support the work of the church – through PAR, by dropping into the office or by e-transfer.
Thank you for your continued love and support of Bells Corners United Church.

***Offertory Hymn: We Plough the Fields and Scatter** – Voices United #520

We thank you then, O Maker, for all things bright and good,
the seedtime 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.

Refrain: All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above;
We thank you God, O Holy God, for all your love.

***Offertory Prayer: (Unison)**

Fill us with gratitude, O God. From you, all blessings flow.

**To you, all gratitude shall return. Empower us, as gracious, cheerful givers,
overflowing with compassion and love, to shape our lives and the world for good. Amen.**

***Closing Hymn: Sing to the Lord of Harvest** – Voices United #519

1 Sing to the Lord of harvest,
sing songs of love and praise,
with joyful hearts and voices
your hallelujahs raise;
by whom the rolling seasons
in fruitful order move;
sing to the Lord of harvest
a joyous song of love.

2 God makes the clouds drop fatness,
the deserts bloom and spring,
the hills leap up in gladness,
the valleys laugh and sing.

God fills them all with fullness,
all things with large increase;
and crowns the year with goodness,
with plenty and with peace.

3 Bring to this sacred altar
all things God's goodness gave,
the golden sheaves of harvest,
the souls Christ died to save:
your hearts lay down before him
when at his feet you fall,
and with your lives adore him
who gave his life for all.

***Sending Forth: (Responsively)**

Rev. Kim Vidal

(Inspired by the prayer of David Spark, Gathering, Pentecost 2, Year B, 2015. Used with Permission)

We go from here a thankful people.

Our songs, our prayers, our praises reflect our gratitude to God.

We will turn our thoughts and our words into action.

We will make our thanksgiving a blessing to others.

Go now in the name of God of new beginnings, of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life,
and of the Holy Spirit who embrace us with love. **Amen.**

Sung Blessing: Shalom Cheverim – Songs for a Gospel People #114

Shalom good friends! Shalom good friends! Shalom, Shalom!
Till we meet again, till we meet again, shalom, shalom.

Sjalom chers amis! Sjalom chers amis! Sjalom, sjalom!
Jusqu'aurevoir, jusqu'aurevoir, sjalom, sjalom.