



Dear Friends,

After weeks of walking the Camino during my sabbatical, I came home noticing things that I had rarely thought much about before: the comfort of my own bed, a familiar cup of coffee, clean clothes, people who knew my name, the sound of music, and the simple pleasure of sitting around a table with family. Ordinary things that had always been part of my life suddenly seemed extraordinarily precious.

Perhaps that is one of the gifts of pilgrimage. When you carry very little and spend each day attending to what you actually need, life becomes simpler, and you begin to recognize how much is given to you along the way: food when you are hungry, water when you are thirsty, shelter at the end of the day, kindness from a stranger, encouragement when the road is difficult. Somewhere along the way, I discovered that thanksgiving is less about counting our blessings than learning to notice them—and then allowing what we notice to change the way we live.

Harvest Thanksgiving offers us that same invitation to notice what is already around us and too easily becomes familiar. Here at Christ Church Cathedral, beautiful music fills this sacred space, worship is offered week after week, people grow in faith, friendships are formed, those who are grieving or struggling find a place of prayer, and visitors walk through our doors and discover welcome. These are among the riches of our life together, and none of them simply happens.

They are possible because people offer what they have: time and talent, prayer and care, financial gifts and faithful presence. Each offering becomes part of something larger than itself, sustaining a Cathedral community in which people can encounter beauty, compassion, belonging and hope.

This Thanksgiving, I invite you to notice what Christ Church Cathedral means to you, what it has given you, and what it makes possible for others, and then to consider how you might respond. Giving thanks is more than a feeling or a single day in the year; it is a way of living in which we recognize what we have received and, with open hands, share what we have been given.

Thank you for all the ways you sustain the life and ministry of this Cathedral, and for the many ways in which your generosity becomes a blessing to people you may never even meet. I am deeply thankful to share this ministry with you.

With thanksgiving,

The Very Reverend Beth Bretzlaff
Dean