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A Little Light Music

In the time of night and when God sleeps I stand and
view the lake

The neighbors' fires the quiet water the sweep of
stars do make

A scene so dark yet also bright the mind and soul
take flight

And mind and soul in suspended sleep are wakened
to the sight

The streak of gold from the moon so bold does with
Sun's great glow compete

Illuminates the scene inspiring thoughts and dreams
complete

With images of shadows, looming trees, imagined
shapes

As men of ages long since passed beheld the same
moonscapes

The stars alone stir wonder, spread across the night-
time sky

Like a billion shards of diamonds on velvet black they
lie

On the lake below they mirror themselves on calm
and waveless nights

To form an sequined carpet to hold the moon and
man-made lights

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time sky

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It seems to be trespassing when we invade the space
domain

With men machines and metal waste that could clutter
up this scene

But we're blind to this at nighttime when with magic
and with awe

Observe the splendored firmament feeling blessed by
what we saw

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Thanksgiving

The Giving of Thanks

Thanksgiving: a distinctively human experience which economically makes no common sense whatever! The fortunate recipient of some worthwhile item or service takes some of his or her valuable time, energy or material resources and for some strange reason, freely and voluntarily gives it back to the donor, expecting nothing further in return. The racoon at the campsite knows far better as it snatches the steaks from the unlatched cooler outside the tent door in the middle of the night, then dashes home to its lair. It leaves behind no thanksgiving gift apart from a litter of empty wrappings and unwanted food items scattered in wild abandon. Among the best and highest qualities of humankind is this strange inclination to voluntarily respond to a benefit by presenting the donor with some token gift in return, be it even the time and trouble involved in a spoken word of appreciation – “Thank you!” – sending an e-mail, or (almost unthinkable today), writing and mailing a note!

Why might otherwise intelligent, rational human beings be led to take such essentially unproductive action in response to benefits received? If our motivation is the hope of receiving yet further benefits in the future, our response is certainly not “thanksgiving”, is it? But to respond to the donor in some small way simply out of sense of personal gratitude or appreciation is an essential element in what it means to be truly human. It behoves us to cultivate the practice in ourselves, and to instil it in the minds, hearts and lives of each upcoming generation if we aspire to generate a truly human community for the times ahead.

This month of October may be a special time of year to reflect on whatever benefits we have been receiving of late, and our heart-felt, conscientious response. Every community, household and individual contends with its unique problems and difficulties, and even up here in what appears to passersby on Highway 28 as “God's Country”, our challenging issues are real and often severe. Yet as we watch, hear or read the daily news from around the world, we may well pause for just a moment to consider the overwhelming benefits of our creation, preservation, and all the blessings we continue to experience in our ongoing daily journey. In the midst of one of the most fortunate countries in which to live anywhere in the world, Canadians of personal, spiritual faith may come to discover that Thanksgiving is for us the driving force behind all that we say and do which carries any real significance. “Give thanks”, and discover a truly human existence!

Archdeacon David Peasgood
St. George the Martyr Anglican Church