

Madison Mennonite Church
Koinonia Worship

November 22, 2020

GATHERING

Greet one another and add names to the liturgy of those who would like to lead, read, or facilitate. Each blank can be filled by a different person, and all ages are encouraged to participate in leadership! Help non-readers with their lines. Everyone reads the "Many" parts, unmuted for groups reading virtually. Re-mute afterward.

Call to Worship: Leader _____

Leader: However we arrive to Worship today, worried, wondering, weary, or waiting,

Many: We thank you, oh God.

Leader: As we look forward to Thanksgiving, apart from our families yet drawn together in our faith,

Many: We thank you, oh God.

Leader: As we weave your truth into our lives through prayer and your Word,

Many: We thank you, oh God.

Lighting our Candles: Leader _____

Leader: Each week, we light a candle to symbolize Christ's presence with us and the unity we have with our beloved siblings at Madison Mennonite.

Light candles

Leader: Christ, our light, bless our fellowship with your Spirit's presence. We remember other MMC Koinonia Groups and pray that we are all united in love and peace. Amen.

HEARING the WORD

Optional tactile activity during worship: Reader: _____

All ages, but especially children: This week, we celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday, but many of us will be far away from the family we usually get to see because of Covid. Think of someone you will not get to spend time with this year—a grandparent, a cousin, or another family member or close family friend. Using words and/or drawings, make a card for that person that you can send to them this week.

Scripture: Matthew 25:32-46 Reader 1: _____ **Reader 2:** _____

**This version comes from Shine On. If kids would like to read along, the passage is on pg 258.*

Reader 1: The Son of man will come in glory and he will be like a king sitting on a throne. All the people of the world will come to hear him.

To some people he will say, "You are blessed. For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me."

Reader 2: Those people will ask the king, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty and give you food and water? When did we welcome you or give you clothing? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?"

Reader 1: The king will answer, "When you cared for those who needed you, you cared for me."

And then the king will say to the other people, "You have treated me badly. I was hungry and you didn't give me anything to drink. I was a stranger and you did not welcome me. I was naked and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and you didn't take care of me. I was in prison and you didn't visit me."

Reader 2: Those people will ask the king, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison? When did we not take care of you?"

Reader 1: And the king will answer, "When you did not take care of others who needed you—this is when you did not take care of me."

Guiding Reflection: Reader(s): _____

"The reflection comes from a recent New York Times article by Brett Anderson, "The Thanksgiving Myth Gets a Deeper Look This Year," You may want to have more than one reader, switching every paragraph.

It is now widely accepted that the story of a friendship-sealing repast between white colonists and Native Americans is inaccurate. Articles debunking the tale have become as reliable an annual media ritual as recipes for cornbread stuffing.

But this year should be different, say Native American leaders, scholars and teachers. The holiday arrives in the midst of a national struggle over racial justice, and a pandemic that has landed with particular force on marginalized communities of color. The crises have fueled an intense re-examination of the roots of persistent inequities in American life. "I've seen a growing awareness, a wake-up, to the systemic oppression of people of color," said Native American Activist Winona LaDuke, an enrolled member of the White Earth Ojibwe Nation. "There is a movement toward justice for Native people. People want to listen."

Thanksgiving, of course, is a time for listening, a welcome opportunity for prayer, reflection and looking back, and many Indigenous people celebrate it in their own way. But the problem with its origin story, Ms. LaDuke and others say, goes beyond misrepresentations about what was served on Cape Cod in 1621.

"There was an event that happened in 1621," Wampanoag historian and tribal member Linda Coombs said. "But the whole story about what occurred on that first Thanksgiving was a myth created to make white people feel comfortable."

The caricature of friendly Indians handing over food, knowledge and land to kindhearted Pilgrims was reinforced for generations by school curriculums, holiday pageants and children's books. These stories were among the few appearances made by Native Americans in popular historical narratives, effectively erasing history-altering crimes.

"Erasure isn't taking down a conquistador statue," said Ms. LaDuke, 61. "Erasure is when you don't even know the name of the people who own the land where you live."

Work to reverse this historical amnesia has spanned decades. The National Day of Mourning dates back to 1970, established on Thanksgiving by activists in New England to recognize the suffering of Native Americans. Fourteen states and the District of Columbia now celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of Columbus Day, recasting a holiday that honored an explorer who presided over the enslaving and killing of Indigenous people.

Dana Thompson, co-owner of the Sioux Chef, an organization in the Twin Cities devoted to revitalizing Native American cuisine, says during the period between Indigenous People's Day and Thanksgiving, she is "inundated with people who might have some awareness with the pain over the characterizations that comes with this time." She urges anyone who asks to focus on "the true Indigenous wisdom that is behind the philosophy of Thanksgiving — it's about not taking, but about giving back."



Questions for Group Reflection: Facilitator _____

(The facilitator reads the questions aloud and invites response. At 25 minutes into your gathering, or when the conversation has dwindled, the facilitator closes the time with prayer, below.)

1. What do you understand about compassion when you try to apply the parable of the final judgment to two very different stories: 1) the partly-invented traditional Thanksgiving story, and 2) the true story of 400 years of interaction between Native and non-Native people?
2. Reflecting on the NYT reading for today, what did you learn that surprised you? How does your Christian faith help you take an honest look at our collective history and current actions?
3. What are you thankful for this year? Does this Thanksgiving feel different to you this year than other years?

At the closing of this time of sharing, pray together:

Facilitator: Loving Spirit, we give you thanks for this time of openness and discernment with one another. We pray for wisdom as we consider our shared history and our positions of privilege and want, and ask you to guide us as we continue to walk in your way. Amen.

RESPONDING in PRAYER and FELLOWSHIP

Sharing Joys and Concerns: Leader _____

The Leader invites each person (children included!) to share any joys or concerns they bring to the group. Remind your group that if anyone does not wish to share, they may simply say "pass." After all, including the Leader, have been invited to share, and if no one has something to add after a first round, join in a spirit of prayer (below).

Level 1B adaptation: *If the group is 15 people or larger, invite people to type their name in the chat if they would like to share, as we do on All-Church Sundays. Call on people in that order. If the group is smaller than 15 people, follow the instructions above.*

Praying Together

Leader: Holy God, we offer these prayers to you this day, trusting your wisdom and deep compassion. We pray for ourselves, and for loved ones near and far.

(a moment for silent prayer)

We pray for honesty, openness, and humility in our community, our nation, and our world.

(a moment for silent prayer)

Loving God,

Many: Hear our prayers. Amen.

Sharing the Peace of Christ: Leader _____

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Continued Fellowship

Invite children to share anything they've created or worked on during this worship time.

The Koinonia Worship for 11.22.20 was curated by Sara Phillips and the Worship Planning Committee.



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Sources used:
Bible reading from the Shine On Story Bible, Herald Press.

Brett Anderson, "The Thanksgiving Myth Gets a Deeper Look This Year," *New York Times*, November 18, 2020,
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/17/dining/thanksgiving-native-americans.html>

Announcements:

*Pastor Valerie is on vacation from Nov. 24-Dec.1. Please contact Tim Wyse or Elizabeth Gokey (Care Team chairs) for any immediate pastoral care needs. For all other needs, please be in touch with Jocelyn Milner, Core CLC chair.

*Submissions for the December newsletter will be due to Andrew S. on Wednesday, Nov. 25. What would you like to share with the community this month?

***Note that CE starts at 3pm and worship starts at 4pm next week!**

This Week's Calendar:

Wed., Nov. 25 – Community Care Call, 8:15
Thurs., Nov. 26 – MMC Virtual Thanksgiving, 1-2 pm
Sun., Nov. 29 - All-Church Adult CE 3pm, Worship 4pm, and Fellowship Time

For links to these virtual gatherings, please see the weekly e-calendar. To add an event, please email Erica Boehr.

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