Rev. Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager
Pastoral Prayer

November 22nd, 2026

Poet Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer wrote,

"So I can't save the world-
Can't save even myself,
Can't wrap my arms around Every frightened child,
Can't Foster peace among nations,
Can't bring love to all who feel unlovable.
So, I practice opening my heart.
Right here in this room and being gentle with my insufficiency…"

Let us pray,

God of All of Us

We give thanks today (even with all our insufficiencies) for all that surrounds us; the gifts of this faith community, of our families and friends, and for moments that animate us and bring us joy.

For the remaining brilliant leaves of the Japanese Maple tree and the majestic carpet of cranberry surrounding its steadfast trunk.

For the wild geese flying above me announcing, as the poet says, "Our place in the family of things."

We are made of gratitude today, stewards of this place and our shared ministries. That we can gather across generations and households is a rare gift not lost on us. We thank you for every face before us and those who could not be with us. Use this time to knit us together, weaving disparate parts back toward a shared origin. Help us to see the beauty in our belonging and the gifts of one another, earth and all creatures.

As we prepare to gather around for Thanksgiving and Friendsgiving tables, may we relish the imperfectness of relationships, the sweetness of yams and homemade pumpkin and blueberry pies. For the preparations, the rough edges, the endless dishes. gatherings, exhausting and May we remember to give thanks for the abundance in our lives and remember those who struggle to make ends meet. May there be an extra seat at the table for an unexpected guest.

For all that Home means…those among us who savor being home, for those waiting for others to come home, for those wishing home was elsewhere, for making a new home, for knowing home is where the true north of the heart rests.

We give thanks for our neighbors and friends on our right and left, the giggles and prayers of children, and music. Music saves us whether we're leaning into the soaring Gershwin melodies played at the Garde last night or the hearty hymns we sing together here, verse after verse after verse.

May we fine tune our hearts for compassion and gestures of love that can change a life and maybe even make a difference today in someone else's. May we listen to one another with exquisite attention.

For our Volunteers those who show up to help each week at the food pantry, giving out turkeys yesterday and an assortment of vegetables and smiles that do make the world a kinder place.

We pray for neighbors and to our Immigration volunteers who are ready to share the ministry of accompaniment when called upon. We give thanks for all our leaders, teachers and families in God's Neighborhood Sunday School who help to teach our children well the ways of love and belonging.

We hold dear all who are struggling today, to find a safe place, to remember that they are worthy, to heal from deep wounds.

We pray for those in the hospital and hospice. We remember the ones who are in prison and in need of prayer today. And we remember all who are grieving those they love. For the empty seat at the table and in this next moment of silence, let us pray for what is deepest in our hearts.

To these silent prayers O God, we add the world's needs, especially for the war weary where the violence that seems to never end. For the children of Gaza Sudan, Chad and Haiti, Nigeria and Ecuador, Ukraine and Russia and throughout our own country.

God of Belonging,

In our silence and in our conversation, may we know your face today, in the shared company of newcomer and friend, may we know our kinship.

In the Name of all that is sacred, we say in Jesus Name Amen.

Rev. Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager