Dear Members of Friends of Wollaston Congregational Church,

At the end of November, our nation pauses and gives thanks. For me the Thanksgiving holiday is a perfect reminder to practice gratitude. In fact, the entire month of November has begun to take on the feeling of a season of thanksgiving.

We begin, on November 1st by giving thanks for all our saints. Our saints are “the great cloud of witnesses” (Heb 12:1) who have served our church, here in this place and also in the world, and have now gone on to eternal life. We would have no church without their dedication, gifts and service. And we can imagine, with the writer of the book of Hebrews, that they still encourage us, cheering us on from the balcony of heaven.

On November 11th, in this nation we observe Veterans Day, with many other nations who commemorate Armistice Day and the end of World War I. This day provides another opportunity to pause and give thanks, this time for the selfless service and sacrifice of veterans of wars for our safe-keeping and security.

And, of course, the Thanksgiving holiday falls just eleven days later this year. The history of this holiday is often told in a rosy light, but we would do well to reflect soberly on the tragic history of relations between the settlers and Native Americans. And, yet, most Americans do take this opportunity to give thanks to God, for the good gifts of the Earth and the nation.

All these observations of our community and our world call us into a time of gratitude during the month of November. And so, I invite you to participate with me in a special practice of gratitude. On each day, during the month of November, I will share on social media something for which I am giving thanks. Perhaps you will do the same. If you don’t use social media, perhaps you could resolve to phone one person each day and say “thank you” for something. Or perhaps you could send a thank you note each day. Or a combination of all these! Be creative and feel free to mix and match, but let us give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thess 5:18)!

After we have spent time reflecting on the things for which we are grateful, I invite us all to turn our thoughts to our church. Our stewardship theme this year is “Joyful Giving.” May our hearts be filled with gratitude and joy as we commit our gifts for continued ministry of our church.

Deep blessings to you,

Rev. Liz