

Harvest Online

Collect: Creator God, you made the goodness of the land, the riches of the sea and the rhythm of the seasons; as we thank you for the harvest, may we cherish and respect this planet and its peoples, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our confession: Most merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we confess that we have sinned in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are, and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. **Amen.**

Words of Forgiveness: Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord **Amen.**

It's another Harvest Festival, and all is gathered in our barns,
The crops, the animals and also the yarns.
We look in the mirror and what do we see -
Bad hair, blemishes and false teeth too
We need to look deeper, deeper to see
The real flourishing soul that is within you and me.

It's another Harvest Festival, and all is gathered in our barns,
The crops, the animals and also the yarns.
We look in the mirror and what do we see -
A soul being hidden, needing to be set free
Hesitation is holding us back, we don't always see -
That others feel the same, and need to be free

It's another Harvest Festival, and all is gathered in our barns,
The crops, the animals and also the yarns.
We look in the mirror and what do we see -
A soul living a life, humble and proud
Knowing that Jesus is just at hand
Others see the courageous soul set free.

So, look in the mirror and what do you see -
Jesus sees a soul worthy and true
Ready to be revealed and seen by others too
A beacon of hope and a heart full of love
Jesus knows that your soul can shine in the dark
Have faith, in time, I will gather you in too.

Harvest Poem. - By Adam Friend

Reading: Matthew 6 25-33: 25 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 28 And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" 32 For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Sermon. When do we stop and look at the creation around us, it is times when the sun is shining and the grass is green, the birds are singing that we can appreciate being in a rural setting. With the world clothed with all the natural beauty that we can see. If we look around at everything that is there in the countryside. If we look at the way we can grow and produce plants, flowers and food from the seeds that the land has to offer. If this is all good and beautiful, with all the intricate detail that we can see. Jesus says how much more value are we to God. We as a human being tend to neglect our beauty and for so long this has been about what we wear, how we look, however it is very much part of the inner self. The part of us that is inside, our soul, our essence, our consciousness. This is who we are, and just like the world around needs some care, to keep it looking good, and producing the food we eat. We need to look after ourselves, our minds, our souls are very much at the top of that list. We plough the fields, we plant the seeds, we wait for the rain and watch the crops grow. Then the fields are harvested and this is a cycle of farming. We give thanks to the farmers, and those who have a part in the food production industry. How about our souls, we don't always think about our soul very much, the part of us that is so fragile that it is easy to break and difficult to mend, is hard to see but is always there. Our soul is planted with the seed of faith and over our entire life we are asked to let it grow, but it needs support to do that. To read the words of Jesus in the bible, to learn how we live a life of faith is part of that. To weed out those parts of our life that does not enable our soul to grow and flourish. When we are at our best we are shining with beauty in the field of our lives, we are full of goodness for others to receive from us. The ultimate part of the growth of faith is the harvest, where our faith turns into eternal life in heaven. That is what happens to us all, we are not able to avoid it. However, before that we have a choice of how we treat our soul. God has created the world, but we care for it, God has given us the seeds, but we sow and grow. God has created you, given you his seed of faith, you have the power to let it grow and give it all that it needs to flourish, to grow tall and bright. As we give thanks to the farmers for the food, we give thanks to God for our soul, the seed of faith and ask him to continue to cultivate it in our lives.

Intercession Prayers: Let us pray to God, the Lord of the harvest, that he will bring to fruition all that he desires for his creation. Lord of creation, we see that the fields are ripe for harvesting: we pray for your Church, that it may be ready to gather fruit for eternal life. **You have created** the universe by your eternal Word, and have blessed humankind in giving us dominion over the earth: we pray for the world, that we may honour and share its resources, and live in reverence for the creation and in harmony with one another. **Your Son has promised** that the Spirit will lead us into all truth: we pray for the community in which you have set us, for one another and for ourselves, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace. **You have given your people** a rich land, yet by sin we have made a world of suffering and sorrow: we pray for those who bear the weight of affliction, that they may come to share the life of wholeness and plenty. **Your Son Jesus Christ** is the first-fruits of the resurrection and will reap the harvest of the dead at the end of time: we pray that he will gather us all together with those who have gone before in the banquet of the age to come. **Source of all life** and giver of all that is good, hear our prayers and grant us all that is in accordance with your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

Blessing: May God our creator, who clothes the lilies and feeds the birds of the air, bestow on you his care and increase the harvest of your righteousness; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**