

## **Sunday September 20<sup>th</sup>** For at 10.30 am or at another time

Today's Worship at Home Sheet is celebrating Harvest Festival.

### **Opening Prayer**

Lord of the harvest, we offer you our worship.  
We adore you and thank you for the beauty and the bounty  
of the world which you have made.  
Lord of the harvest, accept our offering of praise.

### **Hymn** MHB 967

Now the year is crowned with blessing / as we gather in the grain;  
and, our grateful thanks expressing / loud we raise a joyous strain.  
Bygone days of toil and sadness / cannot now our peace destroy;  
for the hills are clothed with gladness / and the valleys shout for joy.  
*To the Lord their first-fruits bringing / all his thankful people come,  
to the Father praises singing / for the joy of harvest home.*



Shall not we, whose hearts are swelling / with the thought of former days,  
sing a joyous song foretelling / future gladness, fuller praise?  
for the cloud the bow retaineth / with its covenant of peace,  
that, as long as earth remaineth / Harvest-time shall never cease.

Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler (1860 – 1929)

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

EITHER: Think of a foodstuff beginning with each letter of H A R V E S T and thank God for each OR look in your cupboard for packets and tins, make a small display and thank God for the foodstuff and for the provision of their raw ingredients... (If you would like to send a photo of your home display to [centralnorfolk@outlook.com](mailto:centralnorfolk@outlook.com) or by post to Pine View, Moor End Lane, Stibbard, NR21 0EJ we will create a photo album on our website to celebrate our personal harvest festivals).

### **Reading for Harvest: Psalm 65**

#### **To think about**

How many 'blessings' or 'gifts' from God can you find in the Psalm? Make a list and then think about which blessings mentioned here (OR not mentioned here) are the most significant ones for you today.

#### **Message from a Circuit Friend**

We went blackberrying recently to a place on the North Norfolk coast where we knew there were blackberries. All the same, I was again struck (as I have been so often in the past) by the sheer abundance of the fruit. There were ripe juicy ones a-plenty for the picking and many red ones for future ripening. I thought about other people who might also want a home picked blackberry and apple crumble but, on a moment's thought, I cried out spontaneously, "There is plenty for everyone!" And so there is in our world – even though we over-pick, collect for ourselves only, do not share, allow injustice and unfair trade, waste food, and engage in pollution and de-forestation, driving animals to extinction through our thoughtlessness and unhealthy behaviours.



I love verse 9 of Psalm 65: “You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance.” God doesn’t just give his children good things, he gives them an abundance of good things and wants us to give abundantly back to him, and abundantly to others. Harvest Festival in our own day and age is somehow a time for celebration, repentance, and commitment to do better in the future – all rolled into one!

*Jacqui Horton (Superintendent of the Central Norfolk Circuit)*

### **Prayer of Confession**

O God our Father, we confess that we have often used your gifts carelessly, and acted as though we were not grateful. Hear our prayer, and in your mercy, ***forgive us and help us:*** When we enjoy the fruits of the harvest, but forget they come from you then, Father, in your mercy, ***forgive us and help us.***

When we are full and satisfied, but ignore the cry of the hungry and those in need then, Father, in your mercy, ***forgive us and help us.***

When we are thoughtless, and do not treat with respect or care the wonderful world you have made then, Father, in your mercy, ***forgive us and help us.***

When we store up goods for ourselves alone, as if there were no God and no heaven then, Father, in your mercy, ***forgive us and help us. Grant us thankful hearts and a loving concern for all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

**Offer to God your offertory for the week, pray for others, and say the Lord’s Prayer...**

### **Prayer of Commitment**

Almighty God, you have provided the resources of the world to maintain the life of your children, and have so ordered our life that we are dependent on each other.

Bless us all in our daily work and, as you have given us the knowledge to produce plenty so give us the will to bring it within reach of all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From ‘Prayers for the People’ published by Marshall Pickering 1992

### **Hymn StF 130 H&P 352**

We plough the fields, and scatter / the good seed on the land,  
but it is fed and watered / by God’s almighty hand.

He sends the snow in Winter / the warmth to swell the grain  
the breezes and the sunshine / and soft refreshing rain:

*All good gifts around us / are sent from heaven above.*

*Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all his love.*

He only is the maker / of all things near and far;  
he paints the wayside flower / he lights the evening star;  
the winds and waves obey him / by him the birds are fed;  
much more to us, his children / he gives our daily bread:

We thank thee then, O Father / for all things bright and good:  
the seed-time and the harvest / our life, our health, our food.

Accept the gifts we offer / for all thy love imparts,  
and, what thou most desirest / our humble, thankful hearts:

M Claudius (1740 – 1815)

Photo above by Sarah Rodgers – beyond the garden fence!



**May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.**