

6th October, 2024

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's

Service.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn:

Come, ye thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home;
all is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin.
God our Maker doth provide
for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.

For the Lord our God shall come,
and shall take the harvest home;
from the field shall in that day
all offenses purge away,
giving angels charge at last
in the fire the tares to cast;
but the fruitful ears to store
in the garner evermore.

All the world is God's own field,
fruit as praise to God we yield;
wheat and tares together sown
are to joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear;
Lord of harvest, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.

Even so, Lord, quickly come,
bring thy final harvest home;
gather thou thy people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
there, forever purified,
in thy presence to abide;
come, with all thine angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest home.

The Sermon by Rev Howard Wright

Read Psalm 67 and Mark 4:1-9 – Harvest

We have sought God's blessing and he has blessed us (Psalm 67 vs. 1 & 6). What are these blessings? God has given us, Life, eternal life(!); forgiveness, a beautiful world and goodness; people – family and friends; health – relatively(!), and things, possessions and homes.

There may be blessings we would still long for from God, ask him now.

What is our response to God's blessing? Our right response is thankfulness, praise (Psalm vs. 3-5), to sing the songs of Harvest Home.

*Come, ye thankful people,
come, raise the song of harvest home;
all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin.
God our Maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple,
come, raise the song of harvest home.*

We are challenged through-out the Bible – scripture – to be a thankful people – most (all?) of the Old Testament festivals involved celebration and food. See Nehemiah (8:10). We can develop an 'attitude of gratitude' – we just need to practice.

Finally in our Psalm we are challenged to be a blessing (Psalm 67 v. 2).

Sowing is hard work and can seem pointless, especially in our instant world. It's also an act of faith, we sow in the hope that a harvest will but there is no certainty that what we sow will germinate and that tender plants will survive, as we see in Jesus' story – parable) of the sower, and in my garden many get eaten by slugs!

God wants to be produce a harvest, fruit, in our lives. He wants us to, like Jesus, invests our lives in him, and become like Jesus. He wants us to produce two types of fruit:

Firstly, that we would produce the fruit of the Spirit in our attitudes and behaviour (see Galatians 5: 22-23). We cannot produce this fruit on our own, we need the Holy Spirit's help/blessing, hence it's His fruit.

Secondly we are to produce a harvest of people (see Matthew 9:35-38, John 4:35, and Matthew 28:18-20).

Let's pray and let's sow, and we can both hope and pray like the Psalmist: *Restore our fortunes,^[c] Lord, like streams in the Negev. Those who **sow with tears will reap with songs of joy**. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.* (Psalm 26 vs. 4-6)

Let's trust in the God who brings the Harvest.

*Even so, Lord, quickly come,
bring thy final harvest home;
gather thou thy people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
there, forever purified,
in thy presence to abide;
come, with all thine angels, come,
raise the glorious harvest home.*

19th Sunday after Trinity: O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer: *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.*

Blessing to be declared over yourselves, St Andrews and The Good Shepherd, the communities around us and our whole nation. 'The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.' (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV).

At the Church of the Good Shepherd

- Tea and Chat: October 16th at 2pm in the Church Hall.
- Tea and Bowls: October 16th at 2pm in the Church.
- Coffee and Questions: October 23rd at 10.30am in the Church Hall.
- Tea and Praise: TBA
- The Community Cupboard, 2:45pm every Thursday in Church.

For Further information:

This paper and all parish details are on the website at
<https://www.parishofmedsteadandfourmarks.co.uk>